

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Mr. Philip Burton “PB” Snyder

Date of Interview: July 18, 2013

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Interview in progress.

Ed Metzler: This is Ed Metzler. Today is the 18th of July, 2013. I’m in Fredericksburg, Texas at the Admiral Nimitz Museum, and I am interviewing Mr. “PB” Snyder. This interview is in support of the Nimitz Research and Education Center Archives, for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Historical Commission, for the preservation of historical information related to this site. So, let me...start, PB by thanking you for spending the time this afternoon to share your World War II experiences with us. And I’d like to get started by having you introduce yourself. Give us your full name and when and where you were born, and we’ll take it from there.

Mr. Snyder: Alright. Uh, I’m PB Snyder, short for Philip Burton. I was named after my two grandfathers – Philip and Burton, and I was going by PB all of my life ever since I was a toddler because both grandfathers were...in proximity, and so they wanted ...didn’t want to show preference and...so, I’m PB, like peanut butter.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Okay, and...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), PB and J, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Well, J was Betty; her name was Betty Jean.

Ed Metzler: Oh okay!

Mr. Snyder: And on a whitewater raft trip down the...uh, Colorado, they called her Jelly, so...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: So, we were Peanut Butter and Jerry...so far as that trip was concerned.

Ed Metzler: So, where were you born?

Mr. Snyder: I was born in Vernon, Texas...on June the 25th, 1927, and that makes me eighty-six, and...Vernon, Texas is...uh, on the Red River right close to Wichita Falls. I was darned near an Oakie.

Ed Metzler: Close encounter, huh?! (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: But fortunately, I...I'm a Longhorn. And so, my father was a drilling contractor. He happened to be working in north Texas at the time drilling some deep cable to a well and that's where I happened to be born. What else, Ed?

Ed Metzler: Well, let's see; what about brothers and sisters; tell me about the (unintelligible).

Mr. Snyder: Alright, I...I have one brother, Donald Aldon (sp?)...Donald A. Snyder; he's ninety-two at the present living in San Antonio. He was a...Air Force gunner; he was top turret gunner on B-24, Liberator bombers, and...and...

Ed Metzler: Was he in the Pacific or the...?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, he was Stateside as an instructor, a gunnery instructor.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: I only have the one brother, and so...

Ed Metzler: So, your mother was a homemaker and...

Mr. Snyder: Yes, my mother was a homemaker; her name was Gwendolyn Watson Snyder; my dad was...uh, he...he went by the name of Dutch. He was Leslie J. Snyder; he...he did not like the name Leslie.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: But, none-the-less.

Ed Metzler: Now did he move...and did your family move around a lot when you were young?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, when...in the early days, yes. In 1930 the family settled down; they moved to San Antonio on the south side and built a home and that's where I grew up. I went to Harlandale High School and graduating in 1944. And...

Ed Metzler: So, you were in high school when the war started for the United States?

Mr. Snyder: Yes, I was a...a freshman in high school when...the...war started when...Pearl Harbor was bombed.

Ed Metzler: What do you remember about that day?

Mr. Snyder: I remember that was...a very dark day...because the country was still recovering from the Great Depression, and this just seemed to be a...a crippling blow to morality...the...the bombing of Pearl Harbor. And we were trying to stay out of the war and yet we were drawn into it through this action, and so...

Ed Metzler: So, what were you doing when...on...on December the 7th? Most people seem to know exactly what they were doing (chuckles)?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, as I recall, that was a Sunday, but...

Ed Metzler: Yes, it was.

Mr. Snyder: ...I was...I was home. No, I don't recall anything in particular other than the reaction of my parents.

Ed Metzler: What was their reaction?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, they were very...depressed about this really. Uh, I grew up in the oil patch, and...so...we moved around a lot in the...in my younger years, but...uh, he was drilling in Mississippi and...I remember I was...pre-school, I was five years old, I think, at that time.

Ed Metzler: In Mississippi then?

Mr. Snyder: In Mississippi, yeah. He was drilling over there...some test wells. But...after the war started, well, of course, I was very much interested in it. And all of my friends...over guns...my older brother's friends were...all in the service.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, he must...did he go in fairly early on...your...your brother?

Mr. Snyder: He was married, and...uh, I'm not quite sure, so it must have been...I'm going to say 1943 that he was...uh, went into the Air Force; it was the Army Air Corps at that time.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: And...so...he...he was stateside; he did his...basic training at Sheppard Field...up in north Texas and then Gunnery School was at Harlingen and I think that's where he served his tour...

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Snyder: ...was at the...Gunnery ranges down there. He was flying a...training flights over the Laguna Madre.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Don said he fought the battle of Laguna Madre.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Uh, women were towing target sleeves and I think they were...oh, B-26s I believe and these WAFs and the...students that he would take up...they dipped their fifty-caliber projectiles in paint, different colors, and so when they would strike the target sleeve, they'd leave a smudge of that paint color. And so, when they got back...landed, well, then they would evaluate...

Ed Metzler: Who made the hits and who didn't.

Mr. Snyder: ...yeah, who made the hits and who didn't.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: And so, that was...his extent there.

Ed Metzler: Well, you were...just an early teenager then when the war started.

Mr. Snyder: True.

Ed Metzler: So, you knew you were going to stay in school, but you graduated, if I remember correctly, fairly young for a...

Mr. Snyder: I graduated when I was sixteen.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: The reason being is...at that time, there were only...eleven grades although we, as a group, got moved up one grade in number, but the...in reality we only went to school eleven years.

Ed Metzler: Uhm, uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: So, I graduated when I was sixteen, and this was in the summer of '45. Then I...in the fall, I enlisted in the...fall semester at Trinity University.

Ed Metzler: That must have been the summer of '44...not '45.

Mr. Snyder: '44.

Ed Metzler: Right because the war...you...you went in...in like March or something, didn't you?

Mr. Snyder: I stand corrected, yes, thank you, Ed.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: The...the...I graduated the summer of '44, and went to Trinity, the fall semester and had just started the spring semester of '45 when I got antsy and all my

friends were in the service and...I wanted to be, too, and Don was there and...so, I...conned my folks into signing for me and I enlisted...

Ed Metzler: So, you were seventeen, so you could go in, but you weren't eighteen, so they had to sign...

Mr. Snyder: They signed for me, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...isn't that the...yeah, right.

Mr. Snyder: My folks vouched for me and...

Ed Metzler: So they...so they signed for you, uh?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: Did they do that reluctantly; you think or what?

Mr. Snyder: I don't think so; I don't know. It just...whatever I wanted to do, I guess.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's pretty good.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, we were all patriotic. They were...uh, my folks were very active in the Civil Defense Program. At that time, my...my dad was a...sector warden; my mother was an air raid warden; and me being a...a kid...I was a fire watcher and we were all issued helmets and gas masks and tools, and...I had...a bucket of sand.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle), your very own bucket of sand, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and a helmet and a gas mask, yeah. Of course, rationing was in full effect. Rationing of gasoline and tires and...food stuffs like...uh, like sugar and...and...shortening and that sort of thing.

Ed Metzler: Coffee, I guess, and...

Mr. Snyder: Coffee, yes.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: We were issued books of stamps, and...I think I still got some of those, but...

Ed Metzler: Did you have a victory garden...at your...?

Mr. Snyder: Oh, absolutely!

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: We raised a lot of our own food stuff; we...uh, we lived on three acres out there in Mayfield Park, south of town, and...we had a garden tractor and...uh, being a

teenager and able-bodied, I...I used that tractor a lot...as we raised our...vegetables.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Snyder: And...and Mother would can...things; we had a cellar, and I can remember those shelves lined with...cans of...they had their own canner, and pressure cooker and all that sort of thing.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Green beans and...

Mr. Snyder: Oh, green beans and corn and squash and...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: ...that sort of thing, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Tomatoes.

Ed Metzler: Hum.

Mr. Snyder: Well, anyway, I dropped out of...second semester at Trinity, you know, the fall semest...uh, spring semester and that's when I signed up for...the Navy, and...

Ed Metzler: Why the Navy?

Mr. Snyder: Oh, that was the slogan at the time, "Join the Navy and help Texas win the war."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), help Texas win the war, huh? (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, well...and so, I guess I was indoctrinated perhaps, but...no, I just loved the Navy and...and besides that I...I couldn't see sleeping in the...in the mud and a foxhole. I was smart enough at that time to...know there was a difference, you know? I...

Ed Metzler: So you...so you got the bunk five up?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Shared with a...fifty other people (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Well, I was...I was three up, but...

Ed Metzler: Okay (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: ...and the guy above me...he had...slack (?) laces on his bunk and his butt was hanging in my face.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), got to know him real well, did you?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Well, anyway, uh...interesting times. So...

Ed Metzler: Where'd you go to basic?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, I went to boot camp at...San Diego, yeah, Naval Air...uh, Naval Training Station at San Diego. And I graduated from there.

Ed Metzler: How was...basic training for you? Was it a breeze; was it tough; was it what you expected?

Mr. Snyder: Well, what I expected, but it was tough, yeah. We learned a lot of things. I still think one of my most valuable skills that I learned...was how to tie a bowline.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and that's a very useful knot if you...do you know how to tie one?

Ed Metzler: I don't, I don't.

Mr. Snyder: I...I think that's what...(unintelligible), of course, a square knot was the Navy standard.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Oh...

Ed Metzler: They feed you decent?

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah, yeah. We were fed abundantly, and you know, it was good wholesome stuff, too, and...yeah. I think the food was...very good. And so, when...

Ed Metzler: So, are you starting to worry that maybe the war will be over before you'll get in?

Mr. Snyder: Yes, that was a concern which was...prompted me to drop out of Trinity.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Snyder: 'Cause I was afraid it was going to wind up before I...I could get...in, and so, I...after I completed...boot camp we...of course, we had a week's...boot leave before we were assigned. I was sent to the receiving barracks...at Camp

Shoemaker...in...California right near Oakland, California. Just a bunch of...clapboard, tarpaper...shacks, and as you might know, I being a youngster on the block, I...I caught all the work details. And I remember I had scullery duty, and the thing that stands out in my memory, one night they had...they served pork chops. So, they had these big loaf-pan trays with these pork chops standing on edge in...I think about three or four rows of them in this big...three by two loaf pans; hundreds of them; just...beautiful fried...pork chops. And...they never knew how much...the cooks never knew how much to cook because these drafts would go out to the...fleet, and so...they may be...might be expecting a...a big crowd. And then if there was a draft that went out, well, then they had a lot of surplus food. The thing that still stands out in my memory, and I still regret, is that...uh, we had all...several trays of those...those loaf pans full of...hundreds of these beautiful pork chops, and the...cook says, "Dump them." I said, "Well, what do you mean...dump them?" And he said, "Yeah, there's...there's the GI can there, dump them." I said, "Well, they're still good!" "Well, we can't keep them, so dump them." And so, oh, several hundred of those beautiful fried...and they were delicious...I tried to eat two or three of them, and I couldn't eat that whole pan full, so...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), I wouldn't think so (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: (Chuckles), so, I dumped them as he told me, and...that was a sad memory.

Ed Metzler: Just think of all the neighborhood dogs that would have given anything to have (laughter) access to...

Mr. Snyder: Well, think of the folks back home that didn't have meat!

Ed Metzler: That's right. That's right, they were on rations.

Mr. Snyder: Uh, we were on rations; there...the folks back home were...were...eating...I don't know what, spam, I guess. But...I...speaking of spam, I still can't...it turns my stomach to think about it.

Ed Metzler: You can't face it, huh? (chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, they had that on TV, too.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: Get's to me. Well anyway...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: ...that was sad that...we had...

Ed Metzler: Yes.

Mr. Snyder: ...but that was all that could be done because...the...apparently there was a large draft that went out, and they were expecting them to be there for...evening meal. Well, while I was there at Camp Shoemaker, uh, I...I think it was probably a day...day or so...from that...time that...in the evening I went down to the...camp theater, and during the movie, I don't remember what movie, it was something to kill time, they stopped the movie and turned the lights on and chief petty officer came out on the stage and he said...make the announcement that they had...dropped an atomic bomb on the Japanese city of Hiroshima. And he told the...extent of that. Well, myself and everybody in the theater just couldn't...couldn't visualize this. We knew about block-buster bombs and that sort of thing, you know? A thousand pound or two thousand pound bombs which we thought were...hellacious, but he said that the entire city, and he...he gave the extent of...the estimated population that was vaporized in an instant...and...well, this was just...I don't even remember if the movie continued. I don't think it did; everybody left.

Ed Metzler: What was the reaction when they heard that?

Mr. Snyder: Well, just astounded! Uh, myself included, I just could not...visualize anything like that. We hadn't even been told anything...that this was even...a consideration or...well, anyhow, everybody was just...just astounded that the...

Ed Metzler: People are starting to think, "Well, this ought to put an end to the war," though, right?

Mr. Snyder: Not then. We...we...felt that they had it coming. From...we did know about...the Japanese atrocities, and...to some extent. They didn't tell us too much; they didn't want to demoralize us, I guess.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: But they...wanted to...let us know...what to expect. Uh, anyway, it was...the next day I think...uh, was put on...call; went to the bulletin board and there was my name, and we were shipping out. So, I had to...lash my sea bag and...and

bunk and...I don't know if you're familiar with...lashing your gear in seagoing fashion, but...the...hammock and...mattress pad just wrapped around the sea bag and then lashed together, and...so that's what these guys are carrying on...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...you...it's about a hundred pounds of stuff. Well, had my gear down to the fleet landing, and...at such and such a time.

Ed Metzler: Did you know what ship you were going to go on before you...?

Mr. Snyder: No. So, they loaded us...on a...LCVP and took us out into San Francisco Bay and [USS] Arenac was anchored there and I was put aboard. Now, Arenac was just back from Okinawa for a turn-around; they had landed troops and equipment in Okinawa, and so they were back for...quick turn-around and this was August the 10th when I went aboard. And on the 11th, the next day, we put to sea and we were...uh, destined for the Philippines.

Ed Metzler: Did she go out alone?

Mr. Snyder: Yes. Yeah, we...we went out unescorted...alone and made our way to Pearl. When we got to Pearl Harbor, it was beautiful.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about going under the Golden Gate Bridge.

Mr. Snyder: That was wonderful. Uh, the...railing above the...the channel there was just lined with people and they were waving and cheering and...

Ed Metzler: Just think of all the ships that must have gone out (unintelligible words).

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: And everybody got to wave!

Mr. Snyder: That's a busy channel (chuckle), and you sail past...Alcatraz, you know?

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Snyder: Under the Golden Gate and we made it to sea and...so...

Ed Metzler: You get sea sick?

Mr. Snyder: No. I...I'm blessed, I guess, that I...I do not get sea sick. Now, I had some companions that did, and...that's...that's sad. But...when we made it to Pearl...being the new kid of the block, I got put on the work detail. And so we went over to the supply depot and...and loaded five gallons of...cans of paint.

And if you don't know, were you Navy? Uh, the life of a sailor is the chipping and painting. And so...

Ed Metzler: In that order (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: In that order, yeah. Okay, and so...

Ed Metzler: So, what...what was...Pearl Harbor like? I mean, that's your first visit really outside of the United States to any place and it's all famous and...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and I do not...recall. I...I do remember seeing some wreck, but I don't really recall what this was. Obviously, it must have been the...[USS] Arizona and the [USS] Utah, and...perhaps the [USS] Oklahoma. Now Oklahoma was so severely damaged they didn't put it back in service.

Ed Metzler: But they cut it apart, I think.

Mr. Snyder: Well, it was destined for scrap, and they were head...taking it back to the States to cut it up...to break it up on...stateside, and in route...somewhere between Pearl and California, it sank. They lost it in heavy seas and apparently it wasn't watertight, so it...they lost it. So, we didn't even get scrap out of that. Now the, I think, two of the gun turrets they used for shore batteries, but they never...fired them.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. So, did you go into Honolulu on liberty?

Mr. Snyder: Yes. Yeah, got pictures of that, yeah.

Ed Metzler: I've heard some wild stories about...life in Honolulu.

Mr. Snyder: Would you like to see it?

Ed Metzler: Alright, show me some pictures.

Mr. Snyder: (Laughter), okay.

Ed Metzler: You thought I'd never ask, didn't you (laughter). So, that's a nice little scrapbook you've got here.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, now, this was in Honolulu and these (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Look like sailors to me!

Mr. Snyder: This...this guy here, Henry Cocklin (sp?), introduced me to Betty.

Ed Metzler: Huh!

Mr. Snyder: He and Betty were like brother and sister. When we...got out of the Navy and...Betty was having a hayride and...she invited Henry...naturally because they were...such dear friends.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Snyder: He says, "Can I bring a...a friend, P.B.?" And she said, "Sure, bring him along." So...well, I...I went and...once our eyes met...that was it! That...

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: It was hot and heavy from then on.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned! Love at first sight then, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Absolutely!

Ed Metzler: Isn't that wonderful?

Mr. Snyder: That's me.

Ed Metzler: That's you; you're not smiling.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, yeah, that's me there. This is Earl Crellick (sp?), he was a...postman after we got out.

Ed Metzler: So, you went...so you had...liberty in Honolulu?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, just the one night, and then we went back to sea. And...

Ed Metzler: I heard it was crowded there; it was just...

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...I mean, there was just servicemen everywhere, huh?

Mr. Snyder: It...all sailors. The...we...made it to Eniwetok Atoll to refuel, and then on to...uh, Ulithi Atoll, and we joined a convoy. We went into convoy at...at Ulithi to...to Manila...Philippines, Luzon.

Ed Metzler: Now, the war's not over yet at this point, correct?

Mr. Snyder: It's over, yeah, the Japanese have surrendered, but we were still running in blackout and...we were...uh, the lookouts and the radarmen were all on high alert for...uh, rogue submarines...because they knew there were some out there that were...caught at sea when...when the Japs surrendered.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, some of them don't get the message, for some reason.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and...they didn't have anything to lose anyway; they had...vowed to die for the emperor so...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...what'd they have to lose?

Ed Metzler: So, why not?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and so...we did not encounter any. Uh, I do recall we had some alerts, uh, even radar would pick up swab handles floating in the water (unintelligible), the Navy is...high on cleanliness and so you have...sweep down and...and swabbing the deck...several times a days. I think its about three times, something like that, and so these swabs...string mops...were called swabs, would get black with the soot from the...from the funnel, you know? And all that soot on the deck...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...well, the way we washed those...those swabs, we would tie them in a bundle, about three or four of them together on a line and throw them off the fantail and trail them in...in the wake. And then about an hour those things would...we'd reel them in and...and they would be white as snow. And we even washed clothes like that sometimes, and dungarees and...but...every now and then, those swab handles would slip out of the knot, out of the line and...so, quite frequently, you would see those things at...at sea. And about...the top...ten, twelve inches...would be floating straight up out of the water, and...

Ed Metzler: Look a little bit like a periscope potentially (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, if we had our...radar tuned pretty good, uh, the SG radar, well, we could pick those up. And then they would...the lookouts would have to verify by visual contact...well, that's just a swab, and so...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: Well, let's see...and then...after we got to Manila and I do recall there...the Manila Bay.

Ed Metzler: Now, Manila was the first land...landing after Ulithi?

Mr. Snyder: Yes.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and that...

Ed Metzler: And you were going to the Philippines for...what...about...purpose?

Mr. Snyder: Well, we were taking our...our...uh, charges there, our...troops that we had aboard. We were taking them to...the Philippines because that was to be one of the staging areas...for the invasion of the homeland. And...so, when we got to Manila and we discharged our troops, uh, we...embarked the...MacArthur's 25th Division; that was the Tropic Lightning division that...cleaned up the resistance on Luzon. And so, there were still some hold outs up in the caves, but...they...apparently just starving them out...and...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...so, we picked up the Tropic Lightning...for a...Army 25th Division; took them up to...we were going up to...Nagoya, Japan...take them up there for...occupation. And when we got up to...Honshu, that's the big island of Japan...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...the...we received word that...the harbor of Nagoya was heavily mined and they...the minesweepers were working at that to clear it before we could go in there. So, we...anchored in...at Wakayama on the south end of...Honshu, and we were there, I think, perhaps a couple of weeks. While we were there and they were sweeping mines at Nagoya, the (phone ringing in background) hurricane...a hurricane blew in, and so we had to put to sea and ride that out. And then we came back.

Ed Metzler: So, what was that like? Those typhoons in the Pacific are infamous!

Mr. Snyder: They're rough! I...I'll kid you not, those are rough! But...we...we weren't in the midst of it. It was...we just had to put to sea for safety. And so, when the...the storm had passed, we were cleared to go into Nagoya and we discharged...the Army troops there for occupation. And so...

Ed Metzler: Tell me what Nagoya looked like.

Mr. Snyder: That was a big city and it was an industrial city. And...I think they had a very extensive naval base there, too, if I recall. I do remember, we tied up...uh, against a pier; we didn't anchor. We tied...tied up on a pier and there were warehouses along this pier, and I had...freedom to go down into the warehouse and look around; see what it was like. And...there were...big canvas sacks

stacked up...head high along one wall of that warehouse, and some of those canvas bags were breaking open. And...I went over to see, and these were...Chinese coins, brass Chinese coins...that they had confiscated out of China.

Ed Metzler: Liberated from China! (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: Yeah...

Mr. Snyder: So...

Ed Metzler: ...during their occupation.

Mr. Snyder: ...I picked up several and I still got them.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, what do you figure they were going to use those coins for?

Mr. Snyder: Oh, shell cases.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, whatever brass...is needed. And...bearings, whatever. So they...they liberated them from China. Of course, they invaded China, uh, in 1937, so they...they, you know...

Ed Metzler: Now what did...did you see any bomb damage or damage to...?

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah, their buildings were bombed out. There would be...uh, vacant blocks and they...they'd cleaned them up for the most part; there was still some damage, but...some ruins, but for the most part, they had pretty well cleaned up the...bomb damage, and so there were vacant lots and they had concrete foundation. You could see that they were building floors (coughs), excuse me, and...

Ed Metzler: 'Cause Nagoya must have been...one of the primary, you know, targets for...

Mr. Snyder: Yes.

Ed Metzler: ...you know, the B-29 bombings, both fire bombings and...

Mr. Snyder: Yes, it was. And...that was a major target because it was an industrial complex.

Ed Metzler: And a big city, too.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, a big city! And I remember that so many of the civilians...were...running around, the women that was kimonos and so many were wearing these...uh, face masks, the hospital...masks.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, like breathing...like masks that, yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Just masks or something.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, right, right.

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: Why do you figure they were doing that?

Mr. Snyder: Well, I don't know...for dust protection or...maybe they thought...there was industrial pollution; I have no idea. I didn't smell anything out...unusual, but...

Ed Metzler: Did you have any interactions with the Japanese civilians?

Mr. Snyder: Yes, in Wakayama. Of course, the war had really hit them hard. They were on severe rationing and were short of food and everything else, consumer goods. And the housewives...we'd come down on the street and they would spread...household goods out...on blankets to see to the...us, the...

Ed Metzler: The GIs, huh?

Mr. Snyder: ...the GIs that were...walking the streets. And I bought a...some souvenirs plates and...that sort of thing, small items.

Ed Metzler: Did they seem deferential or were they antagonistic or...?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, the...the civilians were...were just...neutral; they...they...didn't mind us being there. Of course, I'm sure they hated our guts, but they...they didn't show it...as civilians. But then you'd see a GI, a Japanese GI, and...

Ed Metzler: Military guy.

Mr. Snyder: ...military garb and you got some very...stern looks from them. And we didn't say anything. But if you were...they would cross the street rather than meet you and that sort of thing.

Ed Metzler: So, they still had their uniforms on, some of them, huh?

Mr. Snyder: That's all they had.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's a point.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: That's a point.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Yeah, they were under very severe...tight rationing and a lot...lot of them were starving, you know?

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Did you see any indication from what you could see of preparation for the impending invasion of the homeland by...the Americans, I mean, anything, you know, uh, weapons...sequestered away or preparations on the part of the civilians?

Mr. Snyder: No, I did not see any...of the...uh...

Ed Metzler: You know, the stakes and all?

Mr. Snyder: ...kamikaze planes or anything like that, no. Uh, now I've got some pictures here over in Sasebo. Now, after we left...Nagoya...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...uh, we went back to the States and came back and...this time...

Ed Metzler: So, did you do a Magic Carpet run back the first time?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, now, we...while we were at Nagoya, we were placed in Magic Carpet, and so we made three, round-trip crossings...taking the GIs home.

Ed Metzler: 'Cause I think they had signed in early September the final...surrender on...aboard the USS Missouri.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, everything was official at this point, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Now here...uh, this was at Sasebo (showing pictures), and they had these...these shore guns here and...

Ed Metzler: Shore batteries at...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...at Sasebo?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Kyushu?

Mr. Snyder: That's right. Here I am sitting on one, but...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it's dated January of '46.

Mr. Snyder: But it interesting that our engineers had gone in there and dismantled those things. They put...one charge under the...the mount, under the carriage; blew it off of it's mount, and then they stuck a...charge down the...the muzzle and set it

off. And so, each one of these guns had a big old bulge in it, and usually it split.
So...

Ed Metzler: So, they'd been totally disabled then?

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah. Yeah, the engineers came in...did that early on.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, now here's a photo of you and some of your mates in Nagoya.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And it looks cold!

Mr. Snyder: It was cold! Yeah, it was cold. Now, this was...uh, this October, 1st of October?
Uh, this is Nagoya.

Ed Metzler: Railcars.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and that a little narrow-gauge...

Ed Metzler: Little short railcars in a narrow gauge.

Mr. Snyder: (Unintelligible) trolley.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. Yeah, some CVE carriers, some CL cruisers.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah yard oilers. Here's a car...uh, a cruiser, and well, you can look at these
later. But...

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Now, one of things that you showed me earlier, P.B., was a...was what
was apparently a spare...eighteen-inch rifle for...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, the eighteen was...

Ed Metzler: ...for the super battleships.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about what you saw.

Mr. Snyder: Alright, now this was in the...yard, the machine shop...complex at Sasebo on the
naval base. I assume this probably an ordnance...machine shop. And...I
gathered up some tools, small ones, they're in the archives here. I turned all
that in to...I don't know if you've seen any of that stuff or not, but I...I sent
home a lot of stuff, and...it's in the Nimitz archives.

Ed Metzler: That was one large...rifle, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah, that...that eighteen...point one, uh, inch rifle was for the main battery
of either the Musashi or the Yamato, I guess whichever they needed it. Uhm,
the...Musashi was sunk at...uh, Leyte and the Yamato met it's end going

toward...a suicide mission to Okinawa; it never made it...sank it before it...could get there. Uh, so...that was a very interesting...machine complex.

Ed Metzler: What did it look like? I mean, were you pretty impressed with the technology or was it...?

Mr. Snyder: Well, they had...just machine shop equipment – lathes and drill presses and stuff.

Ed Metzler: Seemed to know what they were doing.

Mr. Snyder: Oh, yeah, well they were very skilled. And...so...there were hand tools scattered around, and...drills. I...I picked up a...set of...of...character punches of Japanese characters, and the...they would stamp...equipment with those, and I gave them to the Museum here. And I think there was about a set of twelve or...I have no idea in the world what those characters mean, but...it reminds me of the...uh, 105Naughton (sp?) howitzer we have over at the...Pacific Combat Zone. All of the Japanese printing on the breach up there, I'm sure you've seen that, and Chinese and Japanese...I had a Chinese person in my...one of my tours that...read that Chinese script.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, she told me what it said. It's mainly number; I think a date.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, probably (unintelligible).

Mr. Snyder: And...here are some smaller characters...uh, dif...of...I thought they were Chinese, too, and she said, "Well, I can't read that; that's Japanese." And so then I had another...oriental in my...one of my tours and they said, "Well, there's no difference between Chinese and Japanese...read both of them." And I said, "Well, that's not what I heard. I wanted to know...," so apparently their different dialects have...

Ed Metzler: Even in their characters, I guess, huh?

Mr. Snyder: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned!

Mr. Snyder: So, that's still a mystery to me. Next time I have...one that can read (chuckles)...

Ed Metzler: You'll have to ask them.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, I'm going to...pursue that.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: Okay.

Ed Metzler: I'd like to go back for a moment...

Mr. Snyder: Okay.

Ed Metzler: ...to when you were on your way to Japan. We kind of...

Mr. Snyder: From where?

Ed Metzler: We kind of skipped by...the Manila thing. I know you had some observations of what you saw and...

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Can we go back and discuss that a bit?

Mr. Snyder: Absolutely! Let's go into Manila. Now, this is on the west side of Luzon, the main island of...of the Philippines, and Manila Bay...when we came in there...was...there must have been a dozen Japanese...I...I suppose they were cargo ships, merchant marine (cough), and they were all sunk and burned out sitting on the bottom...of Manila Bay. They were just...all over.

Ed Metzler: It was kind of Iron Bottom Sound, too.

Mr. Snyder: It was.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: But the bay is so shallow that, for the most part, they weren't even up to the gunnels (cough). So, we tied up alongside one of them waiting for an anchorage. We were to be assigned an anchorage out there somewhere (cough), and...so we tied up alongside of one of these wrecks and...me being an adventurous sort, I went down...I went over the side and...down onto that Japanese wreck and into one of their twenty-five millimeter gun tubs, anti-aircraft gun tubs, and the whole bottom of that gun tub was filled with shell cases. And I picked one of those up and brought it home as a souvenir (cough).

Ed Metzler: I guess you conclude from that...

Mr. Snyder: (Cough)

Ed Metzler: ...that they were...pretty...uh, pretty stiff resistance.

Mr. Snyder: They put up a stiff resistance; you bet they did! And I'm not sure, I guess our...TBMs or whatever...sank them.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. And what about the city of Manila? What did it look like?

Mr. Snyder: That's interesting, uh, as I remember...Manila it reminded me a lot of...of the park down on the waterfront; that's the only part I saw. It reminded me a lot of...of border of Mexico.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. In fact, it was very reminiscent of...of the border cities along Mexico on the Mexican side. Little shanty town and that sort of thing. And I remember there was beer joint, they called them cantinas, and...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: ...there was a beer joint and I...I remember the...they had a juke box playing, and...they weren't too far primitive, but...they had this juke box playing, "Home in San Antonio."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and it was really belting it out.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle), well that...I guess that...connected with you, didn't it when you were there?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, I'm...being an ole San Antonio boy, it sounded like home!

Ed Metzler: That was...yeah (laughter). Now, you also...you also went to...to Lingayen Gulf as I remember.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, that's further north up...up...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...well, first we stopped at...(pause)...Subic Bay. Subic Bay was...a big naval base; it was important to our Navy...Subic Bay way.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And we left...I think a couple of three of our LCVPs there; I don't know for what reason, but...we did...and then went on up north to...Lingayen Gulf. And...there...there was a very stiff battle fought there; well, resistance with...25th Division, I guess...eliminated it. And...

Ed Metzler: Did you get any exposure to any Filipinos...I mean, a chance to interact with them?

Mr. Snyder: No, no I didn't. I don't recall...any interaction at all with...with them, the Filipino natives. Later on, but not there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: Well, let's see, and then...from there we went on...we picked up troops there and took...was what we had and took them up to Japan for occupation.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: And that's where we...waited our turn at Wakayama to get into Nagoya. And from Nagoya, we came back stateside, and the...

Ed Metzler: Now, how long would it take the Arenac to get across...couple of weeks?

Mr. Snyder: About, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, we...

Ed Metzler: Now you picked up a pretty good storm on one of those trips, didn't you?

Mr. Snyder: That was our return trip out of Seattle back to Japan.

Ed Metzler: Ah!

Mr. Snyder: This was at Christmas time, and the North Pacific up around the Aleutians is...pretty heavy seas. You know how to make a...we made a great circle route...from Seattle and if you stretch a rubber band on a globe, you can see that that goes pretty close to...

Ed Metzler: Goes further north than you'd think it would.

Mr. Snyder: ...you...it's way up there...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...just...almost to the Aleutians.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And...that's where we encountered that storm. Well, that...that was a horror story really.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about it.

Mr. Snyder: Well (laughter), uh, in addition to the heavy seas, it...they just got worse, and...the...

Ed Metzler: Was the ship alone or was it...in convoy?

Mr. Snyder: No, we were...we were alone. And...the...seas were running probably...fifty foot, uh, maybe...seventy foot waves.

Ed Metzler: Geez!

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: That's a wall of water!

Mr. Snyder: Oh, every one of them, and...so, you know, in order to...survive, you got to go into the wind. You got a headway...make headway. Well, we weren't making much headway with that...strong wind, but...uh, as we would come up on one of the waves, the bow would pitch up and then as the...the crest of the wave passed under the keel, well the...nose...the bow of the ship would plow downhill into the oncoming wave, and it would dip the water in so that...just...tons of water coming over the Fo'c'sle would crash into the superstructure, and...

Ed Metzler: You must be wondering if you're going to make it!

Mr. Snyder: Well, we were doing okay; we weren't worrying about it. I guess we were...we were worrying about it, but we were...we were surviving. And...when the bow went down...downhill on...after the crest passed, the screw, the stern would kick out of the water and the screw would back...back the water and so everything was just shaking. Uh, anything that would rattle...rattled...*boom, boom, boom* as that...flukes of the screw hit the water.

Ed Metzler: In fact, it would rev up when it would come up out of the water, wouldn't it?

Mr. Snyder: Well, yeah.

Ed Metzler: 'Cause it didn't have anything...

Mr. Snyder: No resistance, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...bite into. Yeah, right.

Mr. Snyder: And then...the instant it would bite the water, well, then it shook everything. Well, we were doing fine...surviving, but with all of that water coming over the...the bow and...crashing on the foredecks, uh, water got into the vent pipes under the railing. The...these fuel tank vents had a...(pause) had a reversal end on them so that...

Ed Metzler: So, they did a one-eighty to...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: ...pointing down.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, so it wouldn't rain into it, yeah.

Mr. Snyder: But...so...so many of the...waves came over that eventually water got into the fuel tanks and the fires went out in the boilers. And...

Ed Metzler: That's never good in a storm.

Mr. Snyder: Well, no! We were...we were just fighting for survival up to that point. Well, as that happened, then the begin...the ship began to...rotate into the trough of the waves.

Ed Metzler: Because you've lost power.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, we lost power; we couldn't maintain headway. And so...every...wav...passing wave, the roll would get...would increase, and as it did, uh, all the...anything that wasn't lashed down just...real securely wash crashing from bulkhead to bulkhead, yeah. And that was our...our mess hall. They had these folding tables that...were on high legs because we...in heavy weather you have to eat standing up; you can't sit down anymore, and so, the...the legs were extended. Well, all of those...broke lose and those tables were crashing back and forth against the opposite bulkheads...and just...destroying anything that got in...in the way. It was just...like battering rams. And the big cook pots in the galley, you know, they're probably fifty gallons or more...uh, they broke lose and they were rattling around. And so, our galley and...and mess hall was just destroyed (cough). Uh, the rolls continued until they got up to the maximum...they recorded was forty-three degrees (cough). They...I...that was beyond the...estimated survival (cough)...I think was guaranteed for thirty-seven or something like that (cough).

Ed Metzler: So, I guess...the way you got it ballasted is going to have some impact here.

Mr. Snyder: Oh, absolutely. Now, see...before we hit this heavy weather, they lowered all the cargo booms; they lowered them to...horizontal, lashed them down and all the boats were double secured. See, we had...four Well & David's (sp?) with three boats each, and so, we had to secure all those; double secure the boats. All

of the hatches were...all the hatch covers were...doubly secured and...to keep water out of the holds. And...well, anyway, uh, they had some sort of an emergency fuel source. I don't whether it was...what they started the boilers with or not, that's not my depart...department, but...they got the fires going and...in a short period of time, they got the screw turning and...and we were able to...gradually get back into...meeting the wind head on...and the waves. Uh, that was the...I would say the most...uh, frightened I believe I've ever...been. I just can't imagine...

Ed Metzler: Kind of like...a pretty close call.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. I've never encountered anything like that before or since.

Ed Metzler: What was your station aboard the Arenac?

Mr. Snyder: I was a radarman, and so I was in the CIC. Combat Information Center was...just adjacent to the wheelhouse...uh, to the charthouse and just aft of the wheelhouse.

Ed Metzler: So, you'd gotten that kind of training before you...you went aboard?

Mr. Snyder: No, I was striker, so...

Ed Metzler: Tell me what that means.

Mr. Snyder: Well, a striker is a...learner, and so...

Ed Metzler: Apprentice (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Apprentice, yeah, okay. Well, the Navy calls them a striker.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, right.

Mr. Snyder: And so, I...they asked me, I guess, the first day...and I was about to freeze to death, but that's another story, uh, "What do you...uh, what would you like to do?" And I said, "Well, I'm fascinated with radar; I would, if possible, I'd like to be a radarman." "Okay, well we've got an opening." So...

Ed Metzler: You are one (laughter)!

Mr. Snyder: ...low and behold, I...they took me...uh, up to...on the bridge and showed me the gear. I've...got pictures of it.

Ed Metzler: I did; I saw some pictures of you in front of some of those...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...huge machines.

Mr. Snyder: Well, now the radar equipment, the SG Surface Search and the SA Air Search radar...are...they're not nearly as...sophisticated as your color televisions at home, but they did the job.

Ed Metzler: One of those hand-held telephone or...(unintelligible)? Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, they did the job, and we were, I suppose, light years ahead of...the Japanese in radar, but they were developing it. They...they had some primitive radar, but their strong suit was optics. And...they...all of their fire control and everything was optical sighting. They had binoculars with...lenses on them...ten inches across.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, size of dinner plates, yeah (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: And...so they had to see their target in order to...zero in on it with their...artillery.

Ed Metzler: Which can be a problem is you're more than about twenty miles because of the curvature.

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah. Well we, I suppose their scout planes probably was the way they sighted over the horizon.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: But for...on...on-sight...uh, fire control, they...they was all optical. We could see it in the dark or fog or smoke or...you know that's why they didn't bomb the...uh, fuel supply at...Pearl Harbor was because they...didn't want to obscure their targets with smoke, and so...that was purposely left. I thought it was accidental that they left the...the...all that tank farm of...fuel for the entire Pacific Fleet...untouched.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I guess the other big mistake was supposedly they didn't take out the submarine pieces in the dry docks.

Mr. Snyder: Submarine base and dry docks, they...they left. Well anyway, we got back...heading into the waves and we rode it out. The...I remember on Christmas day, now this was all in December 1945, we were heading from Seattle to Nagoya, and...the sun came out on Christmas Day, and the clouds

broke, and...but it was snowing, and I remember that dry snow...was swirling around on the bridge deck up there on the navigation bridge, and, “Oh my gosh, isn’t this interesting? Snowing at sea and...”

Ed Metzler: Well, it’s a white Christmas, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: So, we had a white...well, anyway...it had been a day or two since...the big catastrophe, and so they got things cleaned up. The cooks got their galley working again, and they had frozen turkeys, which is another story; I’ll come back to that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I want to hear that (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: (Laughter), I’ll come back to...well, anyway...they prepared a big Christmas dinner for...for the crew. Now, we had some Navy personnel aboard, passengers, but...we weren’t nearly fully loaded but they were...we were taking them to Nagoya. And...so we had a big Christmas dinner; they prepared those turkeys and man, all the trimmings, and the...the Skipper came down and had...had Christmas dinner with us.

Ed Metzler: That’s a nice touch.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah! Well, it...it was. And after what we’d been through and...we...we’re kind of proud of him that he got us out of that...mess.

Ed Metzler: Is he a good...is he a...good...?

Mr. Snyder: He was a good man.

Ed Metzler: ...Captain?

Mr. Snyder: He was a good man.

Ed Metzler: He was killed it sounds like.

Mr. Snyder: James Carrington, yeah. We didn’t see much of him even...us on the...in the CIC didn’t see much of the Captain. For the most part, he...either stayed down in his...sea cabin just below the...the...wheelhouse, or...uh, he was up on...in the bridge...sitting in his chair. He had this high elevated chair. And that’s the way I remember him, not...uh, he would...certainly be busy when we were going in

or out of port and that sort of thing, but...you didn't see much of the Captain mostly. Now we were also...uh, we had a flag officer, so we were a flag ship.

Ed Metzler: Had a Commodore aboard, did you? Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, Commodore Chauncey Crutcher.

Ed Metzler: Chauncey Crutcher (chuckles).

Mr. Snyder: (Chuckles) (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: That sounds like a British name almost.

Mr. Snyder: It is, yeah, you can...you can pull him up on the internet.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, Commodore Chauncey Crutcher and...

Ed Metzler: What does it say about Chauncey?

Mr. Snyder: Well, he was...Commander of...Transport Division 68 and...he...I think he was with us the first couple of trips. I don't remember...I don't remember...

Ed Metzler: Did he show his face very much?

Mr. Snyder: Well, he had another one of these...chairs over on the other end of the bridge and so...sometimes there were the two of them, but he was in command of this transport division.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: He...his...probably his big duty...was when we were in convoy coming out of Ulithi to Manila.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: So, I would guess that...

Ed Metzler: That's when...that kind of a role...

Mr. Snyder: Right.

Ed Metzler: ...becomes...important.

Mr. Snyder: But heck, I was just a kid, so I don't (laughter)...I...

Ed Metzler: You were just...

Mr. Snyder: ...I didn't know about that.

Ed Metzler: ...just eighteen, yeah, you were...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: What about the other officers, the ones that you had more direct interaction with...

Mr. Snyder: Well...

Ed Metzler: ...Petty Officers or Executive Officers?

Mr. Snyder: ...well, we had...uh, Chief...uh, no we didn't have a Chief; we had a...First Class Petty Officer. Now, that was a rare animal.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about that.

Mr. Snyder: A First Class Radarman...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...Petty Officer; they didn't give those ranks out...indiscriminately.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: Uh, I was able to make Third-Class before I was discharged, and...but we had this First-Class Petty Officer that was in charge of all the...CIC, and well, he wasn't in charge of it, but he was...direct the radarmen. And then...Billhurtz (sp?), Lieutenant Billhurtz was the...Communications Officer.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And he was a...Lieutenant. I think he was Full Lieutenant; maybe it was JG, I don't remember, but...now he was in charge of the CIC and the radio shack which was the next deck down...radio shack was next deck down.

Ed Metzler: Was he a good officer?

Mr. Snyder: He was a good officer; he was from San Antonio.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Uh, going back to the...turkeys for Christmas Day.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Snyder: I remember I was going up on the bridge for the mid-watch one night, uh, and whoever was going up for duty at...on the mid...mid-watch always circled by the bakery and the bakers had these...big cracks filled with fresh bread, you know, loaves of...and so, we'd watch those guys...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: ...and snatch one of those loaves...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: ...and take a...take up to the...the radio...radar shack to...and we had lots of butter and that sort of thing; it was all canned, but...it reminded me of cheese, but they called it butter.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: It was kind of a spread, and that on that fresh baked bread in the middle of the night when you were going on duty was really, really tasty. Well, back to the turkeys. On the way to the bakery I passed the...butcher shop, and they were preparing those turkeys for...to bake. And I did not know, but...as I recall, those turkeys were not...drawn, they were frozen with the head on the and still had...their insides, and they were...cleaning those turkeys there in the butcher shop.

Ed Metzler: So, they were gutting them, uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And that was...the smell was awful, and...

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: ...so, that was just a...a quick recollection.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), you still managed to eat the turkey even though...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah well...

Ed Metzler: ...you got (unintelligible) to that.

Mr. Snyder: ...after they were...cleaned and cooked, they were okay.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), so, but in general, food was pretty good aboard?

Mr. Snyder: Depended on how long you were at sea.

Ed Metzler: That's...probably right; the longer you went the worse it got.

Mr. Snyder: It went...it went downhill (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, it...it was nutritious and...

Ed Metzler: How many in the crew on an (unintelligible)?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, we had about four hundred and fifty.

Ed Metzler: That many!

Mr. Snyder: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: That's a bunch!

Mr. Snyder: Well, you know, a...a Navy ship has to have about...three crews or...

Ed Metzler: Well, that's right, three shifts.

Mr. Snyder: ...yeah, because...

Ed Metzler: Tell me...tell me an APA; how big...how big were these ships?

Mr. Snyder: Well, they were four hundred and...about...four hundred and fifty feet long; we got the dimensions (unintelligible)...and about sixty feet a beam, I think.

Ed Metzler: I mean, you just...that's a pretty good size ship. I mean, that's...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Sixty-eight hundred tons, four hundred and fifty-five feet long...

Mr. Snyder: We...

Ed Metzler: ...twenty-four-foot draft!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Fifty-six officers.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you have ice cream onboard?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I heard destroyers didn't, but...a lot of other ships did...'cause I've talked to some of these destroyer crew and they were always anxious to...visit another ship or...

Mr. Snyder: Well, we weren't nearly as...sophisticated as...a cruiser or...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...an aircraft carrier...whatever.

Ed Metzler: Did you have any close buddies that you...got to know really well? I mean, you showed me some photographs.

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah, well...there was a draft I was...went out of San Antonio...all together...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Snyder: ...to San Diego, and...I think there were probably...I'll say about ten of us were in this draft from San Antone to San Diego...train station, and...and after we completed our basic or boot camp training, we...we went to receiving barracks there at San...Camp Shoemaker, and...there were about...five or six of us that were still together and went aboard the Arenac, so...

Ed Metzler: So, you stayed together as it happened.

Mr. Snyder: Well, we stayed together...there...there were probably about a half a dozen of us that stayed together all the way through.

Ed Metzler: Did you stay in touch with them after the war?

Mr. Snyder: Some of them, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you go to any of the reunions or...any of that kind of stuff that a lot of the ships had?

Mr. Snyder: Well, we didn't have any ship reunion. Uh, the only reunions...I got...involved with...was after, oh well, it was about ten years ago. I became the...newsletter editor of the...the...

Ed Metzler: US Amphibious Force Veterans Association Newsletter.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. So, I...then we had annual reunions and so the one for this year, we're going up to Dayton, Ohio. Two years ago, we went...no that was not two years ago, 'cause Betty was there (cough), uh, we went to...Washington, D.C., and, you know, we made all the...uh, memorials there.

Ed Metzler: That was before the World War II...uh...

Mr. Snyder: No, that's after.

Ed Metzler: Okay, it was after.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible words).

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, I...I've seen it...three times.

Ed Metzler: Wow! So, let's talk about...the final...trip home then. You were still Magic Carpeting it?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. So, we went to...(pause)...Long Beach for an overhaul. We had...uh, had repairs and we were in the...in dry dock in...repair facility at Long Beach, and then we were ordered to decommission...on the east coast. So, we...we left...Long Beach and headed down the west coast of Mexico...and in route...we dumped all of our ammunition, all of the forty millimeter and twenty millimeter fixed ammo went over the side. And...but they retained the...two piece, five inch thirty-eight projectiles and shell cases; that...those were two piece, and we kept them, went through the Panama Canal, around...uh, Virginia and we tied up...alongside the Naval Mine Depot at Yorktown, Virginia...in the river and a

nest of five APAs. Two of them were alive and three of them were...uh, dependent. They...they were docked fore and aft...alternate...like you sleep in bunks.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Snyder: And...and so the...two...there was a center, dead, I think that was us, if I remember right, was the...dependent. We were taking power and meals off of the [USS] Barnwell, the USS Barnwell, and...so while we were there, that was where we mothballed everything. We...and that was long hours of chipping paint and painting and...wire brushing and...

Ed Metzler: Lots of red oxide paint (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Oh! Well, it was zinc chromate; it was all yellow.

Ed Metzler: Well yeah.

Mr. Snyder: And I've got one picture there and I can...

Ed Metzler: Just think of all the lead paint you got exposed to...over the years (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Well, you know, when I do these tours, I think about...all...all those guys like the forty millimeter and the five inch thirty-eight; we didn't know anything about hearing protection. Who...who cared, you know?

Ed Metzler: Who knew?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: I guess they figured we weren't going to last anyway, so...(laughter), anyway...we...we...cocooned all of the...gun mounts, the ones that were in gun tubs and waterproofed them. They...they stretched...masking tape over the tops of the guns to the...uh, to the edge of the gun tub and sealed it all around. And so, this was a web of masking tape and then they'd come in with a gun that spun a spider web of...I guess it was plastic or rubber and sealed that thing, the whole gun tub. But before they did that, everything, all the mechanism and the inside of the barrel and everything was all...coated with cosmoline, and...

Ed Metzler: Vaseline everywhere (laughter)!

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: It was a black sticky stuff called cosmoline, and...we...we even did things like that with our navigation instruments up in CIC, coated everything up and...

Ed Metzler: Well, I guess she was never...she was never reactivated, was she?

Mr. Snyder: No. When we got it finished and had the deactivation ceremony and the...and Skipper received his...commissioning pennant...this was a long...probably ten feet long commissioning pennant, uh, that belongs to the Captain.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. And...they...presented him with that, and then they towed us down to Hampton Roads...down...where's that...southern Virginia or somewhere in that...?

Ed Metzler: Right, it's...yeah, it's down there close to Norfolk, I believe.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, Norfolk, yeah. And...then they...tied us up in an anchorage there...a whole bunch of us...of APAs and AKAs and...ships of that type. So, then...they...they were through with us, and so we got...got to take a train home. I remember...

Ed Metzler: You got discharged at that point?

Mr. Snyder: No. Uh, we left...Norfolk on the...on the train to...Camp Wallace, Texas. Camp Wallace was one...another one of those clapboard, tarpaper...

Ed Metzler: Cities?

Mr. Snyder: ...camps, yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: And it was down by Galveston. And...so that was where I was discharged. We...of course, railroads at that time were steam trains; diesels hadn't gotten in vogue yet. And so, coming over the mountains, we were behind a double-header, I don't know, it was a...two, eight (unintelligible) or two, eight, two or what it was, but I remember that smoke from my train. You just breathing that stuff all the time, so we...our skin just got coated with that soot and you're all black around your nostrils and...we were in a troop sleeper. I don't know if you were familiar with those? Uh, they had bunks in them, kind of like...we had on the ship, but...it had open doors, open doors on the side, kind of like a boxcar with a rail across it. And so we were...coming over the mountains, the

Appalachians and...those old...uh, steam engines were belching smoke and...and...one of our guys I remember was standing there in the doorway looking out and...and he says, “Oh, feel that spray...in that steam!” And somebody else got up and, “Yeah, it was...,” and then about that time, the water...toilet paper went...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: ...floating by.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), ah, don't tell me anymore! (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: So...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: ...(chuckles).

Ed Metzler: So much for the water spray!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, so much for the...steam and spray.

Ed Metzler: So, much for the nostalgia of...train travel (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Well, like the...just like the snow swirled around on the...bridge deck, the soot...was swirling around in the corners of this little...troop sleeper. We came over the mountains, boy, he was really huffing and puffing!

Ed Metzler: Now, you went through the...uh, the Panama Canal, correct, when you were coming back?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, that's the way we got to the east coast.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about that.

Mr. Snyder: Well, of course, I was fascinated; I...I always been scientifically minded and...read a lot about the Panama Canal, the construction and the hardships they had and all that and so I was just literally fascinated...going through the locks. And then we got up to Lake Gatun, and we were under our own power at that point; sailed across the lake to the...Miraflores Locks and...there, uh, we were...again attached to these mules, little electric locomotives.

Ed Metzler: Mechanical mules, yeah.

Mr. Snyder: And they...they towed us through. And, oh, we got...it's about an eighty-five-foot differential...between...going...you cross the Continental Divide on Lake Gatun.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Snyder: And so, that was a fascinating trip through the...Canal. Well, of course, I've been through, I think, two or three more times, but...uh, first time was complimentary.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), you paid the rest of the time, right?

Mr. Snyder: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, on the cruises, okay.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Well, that was fascinating. Well, when I got out, of course, I wanted to go back to school, and so I...enlisted in the...spring semester at Trinity, spring semester of '46. And...I had bought a...motorcycle. My brother, Don, had one, and when he got out...we bought these surplus WLA Harleys that...were military bikes, and then we...made civilian bikes out of them, new fenders and lots of chrome and all that. So, I bought one and that's what I was riding back and forth to Trinity from home, about ten miles, and that was a lot of fun except...till it was raining.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Snyder: Then...about that time...about the time I started school...is when I met Betty, and...so, I made lots of trips back and forth to her house out in the country. But...I...continued in Trinity, and I was taking geology...that...that was my major...was geology major, and I was carrying chemistry. I...I was also a chemistry buff; I had my own laboratory, and so I had a...actually a double major of chemistry and geology at Trinity. And then I graduated in 1951. Well, uh, Trinity was kind of a poor-boy outfit in 1946, not anymore!

Ed Metzler: No, I know.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: It's highbrow now.

Mr. Snyder: It's highbrow. And so in 1946...(pause)...it was about...is when I met Betty and then, of course, we just...were...it was hot and heavy from then on and then we got married in July...16th of 1947. Then almost a year later, we got pregnant with Rocky. Well, there wasn't room on that motorcycle for all three of us.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: So...

Ed Metzler: I guess not.

Mr. Snyder: ...so, an old friend of the family had died and...I bought his car from his widow, a 1935 Studebaker Dictator, four-door, six cylinder.

Ed Metzler: Big ole sedan, yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, uh hum. And...so, that's what I had...well, until I got out of school in 1951. Well, then I went to work...uh, well, every summer...I grew up in the oil patch. My dad was a drilling contractor, so...I roughnecked on drilling rigs and everything else and roustabouted in the...oil patch laying pipeline and that...kind of...sort of thing. So, each summer I would go down to Cotulla and roughneck on a drilling rig with Newman Brothers Drilling Company down by Cotulla. And the money was fabulous, you know? I was getting...ninety dollars a month subsistence from the government for...being a GI, and I was making a dollar, ten an hour with time and a half for overtime, seven days a week.

Ed Metzler: You're talking serious money.

Mr. Snyder: Oh, I was making money hand over fist. Well we...they didn't have a...stockpile of that, that was...to...last us over until...next summer. And of course, I would take any kind of little ole cotton-picking jobs hanging wallpaper or painting houses or...driving cars and that sort of thing.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Snyder: Any little ole two-bit job, well, I would take, and...while I was in school. Well, it all paid off. I...went...got Rocky in the...(chuckles) during that interim. And then I went to work for an industrial water consultant. I was...was a laboratory analyst for...couple of years. And then...I went to...the field calling on...refineries and petrochemical plants and...uh, compressor stations and that sort of thing treating water for...cooling waters...like cooling tower waters and...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...jacket waters and process waters for...scale and corrosion. We had a line of chemicals for that. Well, I got tired of that traveling all over south Texas; we had moved to Corpus Christi, and...but I was having to drive clear to the valley and over as far as...as Houston and...almost to San Antone covering all of south

Texas. “Well, this...this is for the birds!” So, I put in, and this was 1963...I like..., “I’m...I’m going to do something else; I like to...,” I’ve always been interested in...in teaching and studying and so forth and one day I said, “I’m going to put my application in...Corpus Christi public schools. So, I...this was just before the...fall semester of 1963...started, so I went by the personnel office and filled out an application and dropped it and before I got home, they were calling me.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Snyder: Well, I...I wasn’t planning on going to work that soon, you know, but...they...they were desperate for science teachers and math...math teachers. And me being a geologist, well, actually I took my degree in chemistry...so, I had an immediate job. And I stayed with Corpus Christi schools for...I think it was...two years and I applied for...uh, two National Science Foundation scholarships while I was teaching science there in...in Corpus Christi. Well, low and behold, I got both of them. One of them was...was an earth science institute...teaching earth science and I did have a good background in geology, and that was at Lamar State College of Technology, they called it Tucker Tech, but...it was Lamar Tech. Well, I went through that...excuse me, I went through that institute in the summer and following that, in the fall semester of ’64, I believe, I got an academic year institute at the University of Texas in Austin for a full year. Well, that summer institute, ESAP and at Lamar and the academic year institute at UT...I got my...master’s degree in...earth science education. So, then I went back to Corpus and taught...about two more years. And my mentor there at...in the geology department at UT Austin...uh, invited me back to pursue a doctoral degree, and so, I went back and pursued that, and...he was a...he was my mentor. I...he guided me through all these programs. And I did my...uh, doctoral thesis on micropaleontology, uh, micro-fossils specifically for (unintelligible). And so, I got my PhD in...December...of ’72. Well, actually there was an opening at...I was aware of at Lamar for a geology teacher, a professor at...at Lamar, so I...I took that job in 1972 and I stayed with Lamar for seventeen years.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned!

Mr. Snyder: I taught geology and science education; I had...wore two hats.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Snyder: And taught teachers to teach science and...I...I...uh, directed a...energy institute for graduate students and graduate-level teachers, and I did that for...oh, I think that four...ten...ten years, ten years. I did that for ten years. Well, anyway, Betty and I...she was in the...University library. She'd gone to work six years before we retired at Lamar library, and so, that was...a good move because we got...not only retirement, but...hospitalization insurance and we both retired from Lamar in August of '89, 1989. Well, from that point, we did a lot of things. We took a lot of cruises and...about ten elder hostels. Are you familiar with elder hostels?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: Well, we did about ten of them all over the country; some of them were just outstanding (cough) like the...one at Missouri, Independence, Missouri was on the Lewis and Clark Expedition, Voyage of Discovery of the West, uh, things like that. Betty was a...a avid genealogist, and so, she had documented and proved ten ancestors in her family that were citizens of the Republic of Texas from 1845 to 18, oh I take that back...1836 to 1845 for the Republic of Texas. And so she was a Daughter of the Republic of Texas. And...she was...she kept all her records on computer. She had something like...I believe about fifteen-hundred family members and...

Ed Metzler: My word!

Mr. Snyder: ...that she had traced her family...clear back to...England and she was a Wentworth (sp?) was...was her maiden name...Wentworth.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And...traced my family clear back to...east Germany. My great...grandfather was the immigrant, the one that came to the...the States.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And he was from...Cassel, in east Germany. Hess...he was a Hessian...uh, Hess Castle in east Germany and he came to...Indiana. He was just a...young sprout,

and I suppose he was very early 20s or maybe still a teenager, but...he settled up at...Warsaw, Indiana. And somewhere in his (unintelligible) or getting settled, he had met this...Pennsylvania Dutch girl and married her, and so that was my great-grandmother.

Ed Metzler: Is that where your dad got the name Dutch?

Mr. Snyder: Well, uh, I guess because he was...was a Dutchman (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: He...well, Great-Grandpa settled in...Warsaw, and he had ten kids. My grandfather, great-grandfather, what'd I say? Uh, the...the immigrant was my...great-great-grandfather. My great-grandfather was...uh, one of ten kids and he came...I got this all screwed up. Let me tell you...do that over. Uh, Great-Grandfather...came to...from Germany to Indiana, that's correct. He married the Pennsylvania Dutch girl, and they had ten kids. The youngest was my grandfather, and he was...that was Philip Snyder, and...he settled in Kansas and he married a girl up in Kansas at...(pause)...I'll think of it, well, anyway, that was at the time in 1893 that they opened the Cherokee strip for settlers, and so he ran from the Kansas line on a buckboard down to...

Ed Metzler: Just like in the movies.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and he...he stakes a hundred and sixty acres there west of Ponca City.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I know where that is.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and...

Ed Metzler: Home of Continental Oil Company.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, that's not now. And...uh, that...that hundred and sixty acres is still in the family undivided. My cousin lives on it.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned!

Mr. Snyder: And...but she has four kids and not one of them can buy out the others, so they're going to have to sell it and divide it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, well that happens.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay, well...uhm, let me ask you one...other question about World War II.

Mr. Snyder: Okay.

Ed Metzler: Uhm, when you came back...how do you feel your war experience, brief though it was, affected you, changed the way you saw the world...

Mr. Snyder: Oh, (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: ...affected you as a person?

Mr. Snyder: Deeply and completely. Uh, I...I...my entire outlook in...on...my maturity was the result of being in the service, and it's so different. It was...at a time...totally unlike today. We were...during my entire growing up years, uh, we were embroiled in the total war effort...civilians, and...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, total mobilization.

Mr. Snyder: Absolutely, and so...the scrap drives and...when I was a kid, we'd go door to door and begging the aluminum pots and pans. And I can remember my mother would take every tin can and wash it completely, cut out both ends, slip the...the ends inside, lay it on the floor and step on it and...and turn these in to the scrap drive. Uh, we as kids would gather up rubber and, oh, I...everything. Well, as I told you, my family was all committed to the Civil Defense and so we had air raid wardens. The great expectation was that we would probably...be fire bombed, incendiary bombs, 'cause that's...was...what was happening...what we were doing. And then Germany, too, you know. But that never happened. And we were issued gas masks and...so, no doubt there was the expectation that we would probably suffer chemical warfare as well.

Ed Metzler: So, you figured it...helped you mature quickly then?

Mr. Snyder: Oh absolutely! I was...well, look I...I was...

Ed Metzler: Seventeen.

Mr. Snyder: ...seventeen, and kids don't even get out of high school now and all they can think about is getting...high or...

Ed Metzler: Or playing games.

Mr. Snyder: ...yeah, playing...computer games and that sort of thing, and...

Ed Metzler: It is a different world.

Mr. Snyder: So, we were...I would say...five...somewhere between...five and seven years advanced in our maturity above today.

Ed Metzler: Uhm! How do you feel about the Japanese?

Mr. Snyder: Well, I've got great respect for them, for their accomplishments. Uh, at the time of the war, we were taught to hate them because of their atrocities, but they were steeped in the...Bushido code, and they...even the housewives and the children were pledged to die for the emperor, and they...they expected to die. I mean, that...when we...when we encountered in the amphibious ridge, I didn't see any of this, but you've read it, too, uh, they...they expected to die.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah!

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: It was an honor.

Mr. Snyder: ...it was an honor, and surrender was not an option because that was dishonor. And that was a dishonor to them, their family and to the emperor.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: And so, it was...understood. So, kamikaze was a great honor. And they even had...manned torpedoes where they would steer them to target.

Ed Metzler: And boats.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, and during the Okinawa Campaign, I know. Okay, well what else can we talk about on the World War II experience?

Mr. Snyder: Well, ask me. I...

Ed Metzler: I've...I'm out of questions; are you out of answers?

Mr. Snyder: I'm out of answers.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: (Laughter), yeah, uh, we can look at these pictures. Maybe something will come...

Ed Metzler: Well, let's just go through them quickly and then...we'll call it a day.

Mr. Snyder: Maybe something will come up; maybe that'll generate some questions for you. That incidentally is the Cruiser Salt Lake City back there. That was at Long Beach.

Ed Metzler: Okay, that's uh, January of '46.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And here's these photos which we've seen already.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, that's Honolulu.

Ed Metzler: And...yeah, here's some of the radar units.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Gol...it's amazing how large those consoles are, aren't they? Look at the size of those things!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, yeah. I...I really enjoyed the CIC display downstairs.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Yeah, I'll bet...that really brings it home to you, doesn't it?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Here's more shots aboard...the ship.

Mr. Snyder: They're sure fading, aren't they? (chuckles)

Ed Metzler: Well...

Mr. Snyder: It's been a long time.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. I see...uh, that's not the Golden Gate, but it's a suspension bridge of some sort; I can't see what it is.

Mr. Snyder: What does it say?

Ed Metzler: It doesn't.

Mr. Snyder: Oh okay. I don't know...

Ed Metzler: But it's got a support in the middle...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...and I don't...that may be the Bay Bridge...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...come to think of it.

Mr. Snyder: Could be. Yeah, here's one of the cargo (unintelligible) that...horizontal.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah.

Mr. Snyder: This is just shots. Now that...I think is the...

Ed Metzler: That's Wakayama, Honshu.

Mr. Snyder: Now here we are underway with a lot of troops, and...

Ed Metzler: Here you are sailing under the Golden Gate coming home.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Let me tell you about this...hauling troops. Now...now, this...is it still recording?

Ed Metzler: Yep!

Mr. Snyder: Uh, the...troops...always wanted to stand on the rail, lean on the rail and...watch the water go...go by. Well, that's the number one no-no if you want to avoid sea sickness.

Ed Metzler: It's rule zero for (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. Well, and then they...they were always sea sick, and then you can see we're rolling there, and...uh, the...these guys were always sea sick. Well, down in the troop compartments, where our bunk racks would...maybe be only four or five high, they...they had some that were like...six and eight...high...in those troop compartments, and these guys would get sick down there in that hot...oh, it was all hot down there in the...see, we didn't have any air conditioning.

Ed Metzler: I can (unintelligible). I understand (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: They would go down there and they would get sea sick and upchuck. Well, you know, that's contagious.

Ed Metzler: Yes, it is.

Mr. Snyder: Very contagious, and...

Ed Metzler: Yes, it is.

Mr. Snyder: ...so, then it would just go all around. And they were slipping and sliding in it and...

Ed Metzler: Oh, my gosh!

Mr. Snyder: ...and somebody was always having to clean it up...And well, anyway, that...that was one of the sad things about the troops; they...they didn't know how to avoid sea sickness. And...we could tell, "Now don't look at the water right down there and kee...get you a package of crackers and just keep a little something on your stomach."

Ed Metzler: And keep your eye on the horizon (laughter).

Mr. Snyder: Right, and don't look at that. Well, of course, we still had silver dollars then...back in that day.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: And one of their favorite past-times, the troops, they would take those silver dollars in a spoon and they'd...rotate those things and...and make a ring, finger ring.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, and then they would carve out the...the center of it...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Snyder: ...and they would have a nice...silver ring.

Ed Metzler: I've never heard of that.

Mr. Snyder: And so, always on the railing there, you'd see these guys...wickety-wack and...packing with a spoon that they confiscated from the mess hall.

Ed Metzler: Okay, we've seen the shore batteries in Suse...Sasebo.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I keep wanting to say Susebo, I don't know why.

Mr. Snyder: Sasebo was in...

Ed Metzler: And here's Nagoya, and the navigation bridge on the Arenac.

Mr. Snyder: Uh, you skipped one there.

Ed Metzler: Oop, did I skip a page? Oh yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Oh, you saw that anyway.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, we've seen the...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...carrier, the CVE.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And...the light cruisers, and a yard oiler.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And the back of a sailor's head...

Mr. Snyder: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: ...looking at another...light cruiser, Saint Louis class.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Mine sweeper. Photos of the Arenac.

Mr. Snyder: Well now, see the Arenac are all splotched with...zinc chromate.

Ed Metzler: Well, you must be doing some chipping and...painting (unintelligible).

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, a lot of guys bent over the side.

Ed Metzler: Oh boy! Liberty Line, what does that mean? Here's a bunch of guys lined up.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, getting ready to go on liberty.

Ed Metzler: Alright, so that's...getting ready to...go ashore or are they already ashore?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. I think they're already ashore there...getting ready to go back.

Ed Metzler: Alright, now...

Mr. Snyder: And I'm real proud of that.

Ed Metzler: That photo of the eighteen-point one inch...main...main turret guns off of the super battleships.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Japanese...

Mr. Snyder: Now here's...

Ed Metzler: ...Japanese prisoners loading mail.

Mr. Snyder: Now this is interesting. I don't know if you got a magnifier or not, but look at their boots. Here, I'm a geologist, I've got a hand lance.

Ed Metzler: Oh, you got to have one of those.

Mr. Snyder: Uh, (unintelligible) rub it (chuckles). Look at the...the...their boots. No, you got to get close.

Ed Metzler: Got to get close.

Mr. Snyder: Well...

Ed Metzler: I'm...

Mr. Snyder: ...it's so dirty that you...

Ed Metzler: ...I'm doing better without it.

Mr. Snyder: Oh okay.

Ed Metzler: But looks to me like it's wrapped.

Mr. Snyder: No, the big toe is...

Ed Metzler: I see it.

Mr. Snyder: ...is separate.

Ed Metzler: I see it.

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: It's like a...

Mr. Snyder: That's because...

Ed Metzler: ...flip flop...

Mr. Snyder: ...because as kids they grew up with...with those thongs, you know?

Ed Metzler: Right, in between the big and the number two toe.

Mr. Snyder: And...and so, the...the combat boots, uh, if they had deformed toes...I...I don't know if they had an option or not, but some of them...they were...had the...

Ed Metzler: Now where were these prisoners?

Mr. Snyder: Uh, that was at Nagoya, I believe or maybe it was Sasebo, and all of those are rifles that the GIs are sending home, Japanese rifles.

Ed Metzler: My gosh!

Mr. Snyder: I got two of them.

Ed Metzler: A lot of them made it home, didn't they?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible words).

Mr. Snyder: I've got a...very nice twenty-five rifle that...twenty-five caliber and it has...the chrysanthemum seal that...

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Snyder: ...that was the emperor's...

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Snyder: ...that was his personal property, yeah. And now, Grant being in field artillery...he knows all about...rifles and guns and things...he did the provenance on that and he found out that was from the Nagoya Armory.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Snyder: And...he...he loads his own ammunition.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Snyder: And for a long time, he would fire that; he'd take that gun out on the range. Now, notice that these little girls here...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: ...all in kimonos and things.

Ed Metzler: Right. And here's a photo of a street scene in Nagoya.

Mr. Snyder: Now see, they have the face masks on?

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah, they do! Some of them do, especially the kids it looks like.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, well there's some more of adults over here, I think.

Ed Metzler: Hum.

Mr. Snyder: Boy those things are fading. Well, here's...here's Japanese invasion money that they issued in the Philippines. This is scrip, you know? They confiscated all of the original...money and then they issued this scrip.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Snyder: And that's...that's a real yen; you can spend that. That's what their money looked like.

Ed Metzler: Hum. Now... here's more pictures of...

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, now see...see...

Ed Metzler: ...yeah, they're wearing those masks.

Mr. Snyder: ...face masks, yeah. Here's a rickshaw (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: And...what is that? A...just a large building of some sort.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Look like it might be a train station or something; I can't tell.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, office buildings or something.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: Now, all the little kids...were in uniform.

Ed Metzler: All the small...the Japanese boys in military uniforms.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, there's Alcatraz.

Mr. Snyder: Yep (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: "Welcome home, well done," signed...

Mr. Snyder: Yep.

Ed Metzler: Alright...it's still being patched and painted.

Mr. Snyder: (Unintelligible) right there was our chaplain. Now, that jeep there, you know, the Navy wasn't issued jeeps; they would confiscate those things on the beach.

Ed Metzler: They would liberate them (chuckles).

Mr. Snyder: Liberate them.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah.

Mr. Snyder: So...the Captain had one.

Ed Metzler: Ah, here you are coming through the Panama Canal.

Mr. Snyder: Right. Yeah, that's when we were...going toward the east coast.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, coming...back home for the final trip, huh?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah. (Pause while looking through more pictures.)

Ed Metzler: Well, you've got a lot of pictures of the Canal.

Mr. Snyder: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I can tell you were a...a student of...

Mr. Snyder: (Chuckle)

Ed Metzler: ...the Canal, weren't you?

Mr. Snyder: Yeah, I...I was fascinated with it. Well, I've been back through it...uh, two more times. I've been there three times, and that's all.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's it! Well, I'm going to go ahead and end the interview. P.B., thank you for the time that you've spent with me this afternoon.

Mr. Snyder: You're quite welcome.

Ed Metzler: I think we've pretty well covered the waterfront, so to speak.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I want to end it by...thanking you, again, for what you did for our country, and our generation still doesn't say that enough, so I want to go on record one more time.

Mr. Snyder: Thank you. Well, I certainly was not a hero; I just served, and...

Ed Metzler: Did your...but you did your part.

Mr. Snyder: ...I did my part. And...uh, very grateful for those that...saw the...the heavy fighting and all. Well, I thank you, Ed, for...for reminding me of...a lot of things that I haven't thought about in years.

Ed Metzler: It was a long time ago, wasn't it? (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: It's a long time ago, yeah!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: And...every...every experience adds to our...maturity, you know?

Ed Metzler: You bet!

Mr. Snyder: And...I was just a kid. This was a whale of an adventure for...a kid from San Antonio (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Seventeen-year-old kid.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: Not old enough to vote.

Mr. Snyder: ...not old enough to vote and not old enough to...

Ed Metzler: Drink or...(unintelligible).

Mr. Snyder: ...get married or...

Ed Metzler: Anything! (laughter)

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Snyder: But...it was a...a wonderful opportunity and an experience. The benefits that I've received from it, not only in maturity, but...as a...uh, recipient of programs...that...offered by the government.

Ed Metzler: GI Bills, etcetera.

Mr. Snyder: The GI Bill and...I still have my National Service life insurance; ten thousand dollars.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Snyder: And...

Ed Metzler: That'll buy you three tanks of gas now, but it used to be (laughter), yeah.

Mr. Snyder: The Navy.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it used to be...really big deal.

Mr. Snyder: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, I'm going to go ahead and end this.

Mr. Snyder: Alright.

(end of interview)

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