

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Mr. Ray Smith

Date of Interview: August 18 2017

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Interview in progress.

Ed Metzler: This is Ed Metzler, and today is the 18th of August, 2017. I am in Fredericksburg, Texas at the National Museum of the Pacific War, and I am interviewing Mr. Ray Smith. This interview is in support of the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Historical Commission, for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

So, also join ... joining us in the room is Ray's son, Lloyd, and Ray, thank you, and you, too, Lloyd, for coming all the way over here so that we could do this interview. And Ray, I'd like to get started by having you introduce yourself. If you'd give us your full name, date of birth and we'll take it from there.

Mr. Smith: I'm Ray Smith; born March 7th, 1925.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so let's do a little math here. Twenty-five ... ninety-two!

Mr. Smith: Two.

Ed Metzler: Wow! Okay, well', you're about middle of the pack; I seen them as young as eighty-nine and as old as a hundred and one, so (chuckles) ...

Mr. Smith: Wow!

Ed Metzler: ... anyhow, thank you for coming over. Where were you born?

Mr. Smith: Emilee.

Ed Metzler: Spell that please.

Mr. Smith: E-m-i-l-e-e. It's not on no map anymore.

Ed Metzler: Is it ... it's not on the map anymore?

Mr. Smith: Uh uh.

Ed Metzler: A ghost town now.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay (chuckles), and ... what did your father do for a living or your parents?

Mr. Smith: Farmed and cattle.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so ... you raised cattle. And where is that? Is that over in the Beaumont or central Texas?

Mr. Smith: No, uh, really about ... seventy-five miles, eighty miles from ... north of Beaumont ... between Woodville and ... Jasper.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you're up in the Piney Woods, so ...

Mr. Smith: That's right, uh hum.

Ed Metzler: ... okay. And did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, I have one brother and four sisters.

Ed Metzler: Okay. Were you the youngest, the oldest or what?

Mr. Smith: Right in the middle.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), you ... in ... in the middle, huh?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, I was (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: I've heard about those middle children, haven't you?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter).

Mr. Smith: I was fourth and had two under me.

Ed Metzler: Okay. And so, where did you go to school; in the local schools or ...

Mr. Smith: Uh yeah, I went to Emilee (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. And is that where you went to high school?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And tell me again, what your date of birth was.

Mr. Smith: March the 7th, 1925.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so ... wasn't ... you weren't ... four or five years old before the old Depression hit then.

Mr. Smith: Five ... uh, four.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, so ... were times pretty tough on the farm?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Tell me about that.

Mr. Smith: Well, I mean, back in those days ... there was no money. People had no money.

Ed Metzler: Yeah!

Mr. Smith: And ... cotton was ... was our money crop, and ... it ... you ... at that time, uh, it was five cents a pound for lint, cotton, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: A five-hundred-pound bale ... pay twenty-five dollars.

Ed Metzler: Golly!

Mr. Smith: And that's what we, you know, (unintelligible). It was ... but we had ... we raised our own food. We raised cotton, corn, peanuts, potatoes, all kind of garden stuff like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, and cattle, so you always had red meat.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter).

Mr. Smith: Oh, we had woods full of hogs.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter). Oh man. So, you went to high school ... where?

Mr. Smith: Colmesneil, I didn't ...

Ed Metzler: Colmesneil, okay, alright. And I guess a lot ... back then, a lot of the rural high schools had only eleven grades.

Mr. Smith: That's right.

Ed Metzler: They didn't have ... take you to the twelfth grade.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, you must have been about ... sixteen when the war started.

Mr. Smith: That's right.

Ed Metzler: And so, tell me ... about when the war started. Do you remember the ... excitement about December the 7th?

Mr. Smith: Oh, (unintelligible), yeah, I remember it real well. They was out on a ... we was out on choir, and ... but we heard about it. And we had an old man (unintelligible) a retired sergeant from, oh, Oklahoma ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: He wrote a ... script for a paper, uh, called Old Sarge.

Ed Metzler: Old Sarge, yeah.

Mr. Smith: And ... he had ... big old hounds and ... guns and stuff, and he and I used to hunt together. In fact, he and I'd been hunting when we heard about the war, you know. And the old fellow says, "Ray boy, Ray boy, you're going to be in this ole war!" So, like I say, I wasn't ... I was just sixteen; I thought he ... didn't know what he was talking about. But sure enough ...

Ed Metzler: But he did know what he was talking about (laughter)!

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: Whoa!

Mr. Smith: Sure enough, he did, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Man! So, you were probably ... like in the tenth grade or ... something like that when the war started.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Uh, I went to the war ... right after my eighteenth birthday.

Ed Metzler: Okay, that way your parents didn't have to sign for you ...

Mr. Smith: Oh, no, no.

Ed Metzler: ... yeah, you could go.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, you ... you didn't actually go in until '42 or maybe '43.

Mr. Smith: '43.

Ed Metzler: '43 ... '43.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, '43 ... April of '43.

Ed Metzler: April of '43. So, did you get drafted or did you volunteer?

Mr. Smith: Yes, I was drafted.

Ed Metzler: Okay, alright.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, uh huh.

Ed Metzler: So, they drafted and told you where to go?

Mr. Smith: Oh, didn't ... I ... think ...

Ed Metzler: You didn't get to chose anything.

Mr. Smith: ... drafted ... I ... I signed a paper ... they handed me the thing and I was gone.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Now, what about your brothers? Had they ... any of them gone yet?

Mr. Smith: Uh, my brother was a draftsman, you know, tree army.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: The CC Camp. And they offered him a job at Paddybowl (sp?). Okay, this all happened at once, and so he took the job at Paddybowl and he ... he was down there when, you know, for about a year and a half.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Then he came home and joined the Air Force, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum. And so, when ... where did you do basic training?

Mr. Smith: Camp Barkeley, Texas.

Ed Metzler: Where is that?

Mr. Smith: Abilene.

Ed Metzler: Okay, well at least you were still in the same state.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Uh, that really was a hell of a big, ole camp there, training camp.

Ed Metzler: Yeah?!

Mr. Smith: Of course, there's no ... no trace of it anymore.

Ed Metzler: No.

Mr. Smith: And ... it was awful hot. We were ... started training in ... I guess May for twelve weeks out there in that hot sun; it was pretty rough.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), yeah. Had you traveled much away from the farm before you went off to the ...

Mr. Smith: Not really, no, hell, no. Uh, I went in ... I weighed a hundred and forty-one pounds; twelve weeks later I weighed a hundred and sixty-five pounds. I was tough as this (pounding on a surface sound).

Ed Metzler: You were a haw ... and all that addition was muscle.

Mr. Smith: Fact.

Ed Metzler: Yeah! Well ...

Mr. Smith: Best shape I ever was in!

Ed Metzler: Yeah! Did ... did you find it ... difficult, the physical ... exertion that they put you through during the war ... I mean during the ... during boot camp?

Mr. Smith: Well, no. Uh, we had one of the tough ... toughest boot camps they said. But I never had it ... of course, I worked on a farm and all that; I ... I was so used to work ... so, I didn't ever (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Farm boys ... got along a lot better in boot camp than the city boys (chuckles) from my ... from what I've heard from the guys.

Mr. Smith: That's true, yes.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: We ... our last ... test (unintelligible) a twenty-five mile (unintelligible) full ... full field pack.

Ed Metzler: Full field pack.

Mr. Smith: And I walked right on through it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, but you sweat a lot I'll bet.

Mr. Smith: Oh, god, yes, yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it was hot!

Ed Metzler: So, what were you doing ... sleeping in ... uh, bunks or in a ...

Mr. Smith: Just ... old barracks ...

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Smith: ... and you seen the (unintelligible) anywhere, and they'd have little sandstorms out there ...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), those ...

Mr. Smith: ... you had (unintelligible) blankets (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle), shake your blanket out (laughter).

Mr. Smith: But, it would be a hundred and ten in the day time (unintelligible), and on ... at night it would get cool out there. It would get cool around ... I ... I didn't ...

Ed Metzler: I think it's the low humidity allows it to cool off at ... in the evening.

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: You never had that in east Texas.

Mr. Smith: No!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: No, that ... no, no. I didn't, uh uh, uh uh, no.

Ed Metzler: So, did they do a lot of (throat clearing) did they test you a lot there? I mean, things like written tests and stuff to ... to decide whether you should be a radioman or an infantryman or whatever?

Mr. Smith: Oh, they did ... yeah, yeah. They did give us tests, yeah, yeah. But they fed good! They had the best food I ever ate in my life!

Ed Metzler: Is that right?!

Mr. Smith: That's true.

Ed Metzler: Fresh baked bread and ...

Mr. Smith: Fresh baked bread, fresh beef, you know? The reason I know ... I worked in the KP and stuff. And them big old iceboxes, you know, your walk-in deals?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Beef hanging everywhere, hogs hanging everywhere. Some of the best food I ever ate!

Ed Metzler: Uhm, that's one reason you put that weight on.

Mr. Smith: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: But it was the right kind of weight.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And it was muscle.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: What about ... things like marksmanship with a rifle, target shooting and that kind of stuff?

Mr. Smith: I done pretty good.

Ed Metzler: I'll bet you aced that because you're an ole hunter from the ... from the woods!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Uh, I shot a ninety-six or ninety-one ... in fact, I was the best one in my battalion with a pistol.

Ed Metzler: Is that right?! (Laughter), they give you an award of some sort?

Mr. Smith: Well, they give me a little ole deal ...

Ed Metzler: (Throat clearing).

Mr. Smith: ... not much.

Ed Metzler: They give you a pat on the behind ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: ... and said, "Now ... "

Mr. Smith: ... (unintelligible) a ribbon ... they ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah. A ribbon (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yes, for (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), when you completed boot camp, did you have any idea what ... your role was going to be in the Army?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, I mean ... our boot camp was for ... the medical field.

Ed Metzler: Okay, I didn't realize that.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and ...

Ed Metzler: So, you ... you and all the other guys were ... likely to become field medics then?

Mr. Smith: No, no. That's all we were, combat medics.

Ed Metzler: Combat Medic, okay!

Mr. Smith: So ...

Ed Metzler: Did you get to know any of the guys there in boot camps? Kind of ... become your buddies when you were there?

Mr. Smith: Well yeah, uh, one guy in particular ... (unintelligible) Sattler (sp?) from Pennsylvania.

Ed Metzler: Hum.

Mr. Smith: Ole tall, skinny boy; foot about that long.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter).

Mr. Smith: And a double "A." If you know ... (unintelligible). But he and I went to the same division in ... we went to ... when they shipped us overseas ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: ... he went ... we went to the 37th (unintelligible), and he went to the 129th Regiment, and I went to 148th. So, we didn't see us ... each other very much.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ... when this was on Bougainville, we ... were ... we went into Bougainville ... they had a lot of Japs on the other side. We had mountains 'cause we come back there ...

Ed Metzler: You're getting ahead of me here. We're coming to Bougainville, but let's talk about ... when you got out of boot camp. Did they let you go home for some liberty before you went overseas?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, we did ... went over a week, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, and you knew you were going overseas at that point?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: And you knew you were going to the Pacific, I guess.

Mr. Smith: No.

Ed Metzler: You didn't know that?

Mr. Smith: No. Fact, they told us we were going to England.

Ed Metzler: Oh really (chuckles)?!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and they sent us to Shinagle (sp?), Pennsylvania. And we stayed around there and drank beer and we ... (unintelligible) so ... just ... (unintelligible) is all it was, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: You had ... didn't have (unintelligible) to do.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And one night ... uh, one day they come out there and started hollering, and I think they started ... (unintelligible) orders ... well, right in the middle of the alphabet (unintelligible) see, and ... they had had a trainload of us.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Train, that's how many people that was on there, and said, "Now, you boys going to the west coast."

Ed Metzler: Yeah?

Mr. Smith: And so, it ... it was all supposed to be conf ... you know, during a war ... pretty quiet. But, we went over there to San Francisco and went to Angle [s/b Angel] Island, right beside of Alcatraz.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ... we stayed there ... couple of weeks. And ... then we got on one old ship, old, long ... went about three hundred and fifty feet long, an old tub ... what it was. And we ... didn't have no escort.

Ed Metzler: None?!

Mr. Smith: None. We would change direction every ten minutes.

Ed Metzler: Zig zagged.

Mr. Smith: Okay?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And we went to New Caledonia for twenty-three days.

Ed Metzler: That is a long haul ... (chuckles) to New Caledonia!

Mr. Smith: Oh, the people ... aggravated! It was ... we're tired of it, yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), now, did you get sea sick when you first hit the open water?

Mr. Smith: I got a little sea sick ... the first ... or second day, but just a ... just a little bit. Boy, some of those people were ... were, you know, asked ... every time they (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: But after I ... after I got ... used to it ... I ... I never did get sick anymore.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, some people just doubled over and never could ...

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: ... function, and other people just walked on board and it never bothered them at all.

Mr. Smith: Well, I ... about ...

Ed Metzler: You were kind of in the middle, but you got over it, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah. But ... after ... two days out, I was ready.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. So, how are you feeling at this point? You're on this old tub, and you're crossing the Pacific Ocean, and you're all alone out there (chuckle) ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... with no escort.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: What's going through your mind at this point?

Mr. Smith: Well, I was a long ways from home. Hell, I was just eighteen years old, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: But ... you're ... you make friends and you talk to people and ...

Ed Metzler: And you're only eighteen! My god, you're just a kid!

Mr. Smith: I see eighteen-year olds out ... oh, what the hell I was doing over there (laughter).

Ed Metzler: You look at eighteen-year-old kids today ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that's right!

Ed Metzler: ... and you go ... I don't think they would have made it (chuckles)!

Mr. Smith: They wouldn't have!

Ed Metzler: But you had to!

Mr. Smith: Oh ...

Ed Metzler: You didn't have a choice, did you?

Mr. Smith: No, uh uh. No, I ... I ...

Ed Metzler: Do you remember crossing the equator the first time?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: What'd they do?

Mr. Smith: Oh, a little celebration, you know?

Ed Metzler: You did that Shellback thing where, you know, they ... they make, you know, sometimes they dress you up in ... in little ... uh, hats and this kind of stuff?

Mr. Smith: No, no.

Ed Metzler: They didn't do any of that silliness?

Mr. Smith: No.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's good.

Mr. Smith: Well, we didn't have any, you know, it ... it was all business back then.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. Still pretty early in the war.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Things are not going so well.

Mr. Smith: It wasn't well. Uh, it wasn't going well at all. And ... went to New Caledonia and stayed ... two or three weeks.

Ed Metzler: Doing what?

Mr. Smith: Messing around mostly. Uh, there are a lot of white people ... live on New Caledonia.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: It's a French island; I'm pretty sure ... I believe it was ... French, and they scared us to death. They ... they ... everybody had ... syphilis or something; they also had leprosy, so we stayed on the (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: They kept you on the straight and narrow a little bit (laughter).

Mr. Smith: That's exactly right!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), did they give you a bunch of pills and stuff for things like malaria and all this other stuff?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, yeah, atabrine they called it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, did you take your atabrine?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Like a good boy?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you turn kind of orange ... like ... (laughter)?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that's right! Oh yeah ...

Ed Metzler: I've heard those stories, too.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah, instant suntan (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Oh my gosh!

Mr. Smith: There was ... I'll tell you about ... sickening mess, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now you knew ... at that point, you were going to be a combat ... or you were a combat medic; you just hadn't been in combat yet.

Mr. Smith: That's right.

Ed Metzler: Uhm, how extensive was the training in the medical procedures? I mean, 'cause you ... you'd hadn't had any of that before you went to boot camp (unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: They crammed it into you.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Smith: They crammed it into ... you ... you'd be surprised at how much you can ... oh, pressure points and all that stuff.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: You'd try ... try to save a person's life.

Ed Metzler: Absolutely!

Mr. Smith: And even to the point of doing a tracheotomy, and I did see one, one time.

Ed Metzler: But you didn't have to do one?

Mr. Smith: I didn't do it. Well, I mean, uh, I'm not supposed to do it; I'm not qualified for it.

Ed Metzler: So, what a doctor ... you have to be a doctor to do that?

Mr. Smith: Yes, uh hum. You have to be ... or ... or a nurse or something like that maybe. But ... I thought ... often thought, I could do it.

Ed Metzler: If you ...

Mr. Smith: I saw it done. They ... you ... (unintelligible) four deals and just slit ... about a half, three quarter inch, and open up that ... (unintelligible) and you could just start breathing. The only way you ever ... only way that I know of ... that you would ever do ... do that job is when a person stops breathing, when he can't get breathing ... breathe no more, he's probably not going to last much longer.

Ed Metzler: No, you don't have any choice at that point.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, his brain ... even if he comes to, his brain's gone.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Smith: And, yeah, it wasn't nothing to it. I mean, like I say, you just kind of (unintelligible words) ... even if he was on combat, well, (unintelligible) ... just take your knife ... whittle a little piece out and turn himself to keep the ... thing open, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uhm, uhm, uhm!

Mr. Smith: But ...

Ed Metzler: When you were in New Caledonia, you knew at that point you were in the 37th Division?

Mr. Smith: No, no.

Ed Metzler: You ... you hadn't been assigned yet?

Mr. Smith: No, no. It was (unintelligible) ... just ... free.

Ed Metzler: So, what was the next ...

Mr. Smith: We didn't ... we didn't belong to any ... anybody.

Ed Metzler: So, what was the next thing that happened to you then? ‘Cause you only stayed there for what ... a couple of weeks and ...

Mr. Smith: Well, we went from there to New Hebrides. From New Hebrides we went to Guadalcanal.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And that’s where we joined the 37th Division which is an Ohio National Guard.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ...

Ed Metzler: I thought they had an interesting shoulder sleeve insignia. It looks like a target (laughter). I thought, “Ooh, ooh, maybe not a good choice.”

Mr. Smith: You know what they called it?

Ed Metzler: No.

Mr. Smith: The Flaming Assholes.

Ed Metzler: Is that (laughter), well, now that you mention it.

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: I guess I can see a resemblance.

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), okay, typical Army guy, bad as the Navy, I swear!

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), so, you got assigned to ... the 37th, and you mentioned the 148th Regiment, is that correct?

Mr. Smith: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: So, what happened? What they ... put on a ship ... and shipped you down to Guadalcanal?

Mr. Smith: Ah well, oh, we ... we ... they sent us ... of course, we had to get acquainted with everybody, you know, we was on Guadalcanal. And ... Guadalcanal was very interesting. That was the turning point of the war – Guadalcanal, I mean they had hell.

Ed Metzler: It was a tough one.

Mr. Smith: It was all (unintelligible) but that was just about over with when I got there. There were some Japs there, and we did do some training there with ... with the

regulars and put people out, you know, to ambush us, you know? They were the enemy, and could try to spot them before they spot us.

Ed Metzler: They snuck around a lot at night, I guess, probably.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. It what?

Ed Metzler: They probably snuck around a lot at night, the Japanese, what was left of them.

Mr. Smith: Oh they did, yeah, but we didn't ... we didn't get any ... we didn't ... knew that now.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Now, I've told that to you, they went out at night. It's something that I didn't see.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Now, of course, anybody (unintelligible) see, we'd probably run like hell.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: But ...

Ed Metzler: What was Guadalcanal like – tropical, hot, mosquitoes, what?

Mr. Smith: It was ... yeah, it was ... parts of it was pretty. They had ... coconut plantations, big ones, and it belonged to England. And the people there ... before our first ... (unintelligible), local people, you know?

Ed Metzler: Fuzzy Wuzzies?

Mr. Smith: Fuzzy Wuz ... I don't know what you call them.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: And so, they had elephantiasis, well, some of them.

Ed Metzler: Oh, goodness.

Mr. Smith: Whole legs ... this big.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Testi ... testicles ... like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I've heard about that.

Mr. Smith: And ...

Ed Metzler: There were so many diseases in the tropics.

Mr. Smith: Oh heck, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: But I ... think they lived off the fat of the land. I don't ... I don't know how ... what they did. They didn't farm! They either had to cook clams for (unintelligible) as cold as it was. Every ... but ... I felt sorry for them, but I didn't, you know, they were ... very, very ...

Ed Metzler: Short people, uh small.

Mr. Smith: Oh, yeah, they were about ...

Ed Metzler: Five feet or so.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now, when you were down there, was it only Americans or were there some Aussies and Brits and ...

Mr. Smith: They were some ... a few (unintelligible) I'm going to say. There were some British on there on (unintelligible; they were, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: But ... a few.

Ed Metzler: What were they like?

Mr. Smith: Good people. I liked them; they was good people.

Ed Metzler: They talk funny, don't they?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, they do (unintelligible), yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: But they ... they was good people. Uh, later on, I ... there was a friend of mine, later on, named Groves (sp?), he was on Guadalcanal ... same time I was.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And we ... met after we got back. We had a lot to talk about. Anyway, they had ... ammunition dump about a half mile wide and ... mile long. I don't know how long, it was just (unintelligible). They had (unintelligible), that was supposed to be the ammunition dump of the South Pacific, and it was ... big ... biggest thing I ever saw in my life. They had tanks, cars, and everything else. And so we ... uh, been there a while, and then we was ... sent to Guadalcanal to take ... care of business over there, yeah. (Pause)

Ed Metzler: 'Cause I know that's where you were later.

Mr. Smith: Well, one of the ...

Ed Metzler: Here we go, alright, so we're (unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: It happened ... uh, they were sending ships to Rabaul (unintelligible), and it was a big harbor, and they would turn over those people who informed, see?

Ed Metzler: Yep.

Mr. Smith: And, the only fighter plane ... planes that we had that would make that long run with extra tanks was the P-38.

Ed Metzler: Lighting.

Mr. Smith: And they come back, you know, and do their rolls (unintelligible). They come right down over those (unintelligible), you know?

Ed Metzler: They were show-offs, weren't they?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, sure (unintelligible) ... showing off for us yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: And one day, two of them ... radioed ... they wanted to know if (unintelligible) could come in to land, (pop sound); hit (unintelligible) and was gone.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Smith: Two of them, yeah.

Ed Metzler: My gosh!

Mr. Smith: Now, I didn't see this, but it ... it happened.

Ed Metzler: Uhm uhm! Well, sometimes you can get a little too crazy, I guess.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, (unintelligible) can happen to you. When you ... when you hit that air pocket ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you'll just drop like a rock, won't you?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, so that's about it.

Ed Metzler: So, about how long were you on Guadalcanal? I mean, is this months or weeks or ...

Mr. Smith: Oh no. Three or four weeks.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that was all.

Ed Metzler: At this point, you still haven't really been ... able to ... I'll use the term "practice," being a combat medic?

Mr. Smith: Oh, no, no, no, no, no.

Ed Metzler: So, you hadn't really been in the heat of battle yet?

Mr. Smith: No, no. In fact, they talked about sending us to Australia which I wanted to go, you know?

Ed Metzler: But you never did, huh?

Mr. Smith: Uh, they (unintelligible) but we had to go to Bougainville, now we're going to Bougainville.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. So, tell me about Bougainville then.

Mr. Smith: Well, that ... we went over there ... see ... (pause) about the 8th or 9th of November of '40 ... of '43.

Ed Metzler: Okay. So, you still hadn't been over there all that long?

Mr. Smith: No, I had not, but we ... we got into combat, you know, right away there.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: In fact, I got shot the fifth day.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that's all. (Unintelligible) back to the hospital in ...

Ed Metzler: I'm just reading from Wikipedia here. It says, "The division's next assignment was Bougainville as part of the First Marine Amphibious Corps landing," and this is the 37th, "landing between the 8th and the 19th of November. The 37th expanded the western beachhead sector constructed roads and bridges and engaged in extensive patrol activity." So, you were there!

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, tell me what happened to you.

Mr. Smith: Well, the first day we went into the beach ... just get onto the (throat clearing) ... (unintelligible). We didn't meet any opposition right there. So, (unintelligible) airplanes come over, stuff like that. Told us to dig in. So, right there, you know, and got out in the woods and dug it by the water (unintelligible) now, see? Well, I had about a six foot ... about like that ...

Ed Metzler: So, what is it ... sandy?

Mr. Smith: Sand, yeah, it was hard to dig, but it was sand where water run all over it. I backed ... backed off, "Who in the hell do you think would get into that?" The ole sarge said, "You will get your ass in there if they start strafing." It wasn't

but a few minutes, here come a ... a Zero (machine gun firing sounds),
(laughter).

Ed Metzler: You suddenly focused on digging (laughter).

Mr. Smith: I ... I went right in there!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), water and all (laughter).

Mr. Smith: (Laughter), yeah, that was ...

Ed Metzler: So, the Japanese had ... not control of the air, but they were using aircraft then in defense ... at Bougainville?

Mr. Smith: Uh, yes! Uh, we get to have ... like I say, it was a big ... mountain tree, a big, big deal, but there's about a half a mile between us, and ... the Japs were on the other side ... the big, big bulk, but they was over here fighting. We still had plenty of fighting going on. In fact, like I say, I got shot the fifth day, and I think it was the 13th.

Ed Metzler: So tell me what happened.

Mr. Smith: And (unintelligible) shot me, shot me right there.

Ed Metzler: Shot you ... right in the back, huh?

Mr. Smith: You want to see it?

Ed Metzler: Oh, my gosh, right there close to your spine!

Mr. Smith: That scar was on my spine.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: It was on my spine.

Ed Metzler: So, is it shrapnel or a ... or a bullet or what?

Mr. Smith: It was ... they called it shrapnel, but it was a bullet. And man, they get in there and ... in the Army everything is shrapnel.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it's always shrapnel, yeah.

Mr. Smith: It's always shrapnel, but it went in here, then it took out over yonder.

Ed Metzler: So, it came out ... kind of on your shoulder, above your shoulder.

Mr. Smith: It didn't come out.

Ed Metzler: Oh, it stayed in?!

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, oh yeah, they had ... and it was deep ... they went in there. And I stayed in the hospital about ... about thirty-one days. They put ... you got a hole

here, you're not a hole here, you see? And they'd put gauze in there and every day or two they'd have to pull it out and put new gauze in so it would heal ... inside out, you know, so I ...

Ed Metzler: Right, right, right, makes sense.

Mr. Smith: ... so, it was a pain for me all ... to pull ... pull ...

Ed Metzler: So, what were you doing when you got hit? Were you ... administering to somebody else?

Mr. Smith: No, no, I was ... I was in a foxhole.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: Well ...

Ed Metzler: And so, who took ... took you away? Some of ...

Mr. Smith: I walked away.

Ed Metzler: You walked away?

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Once I ... when I got (unintelligible) into it, well ... I was bleeding like a stuffed hog.

Ed Metzler: I'll bet you were!

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you ever pass out ... from loss of blood?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: So, what'd they do, put you ... on a gurney and take you away or you walked away?

Mr. Smith: I walked away. They sent me back to ... the hospital, of course. An old Dutchman, uh, a German from ... doctor from Pennsylvania, real ... hell of a nice guy, and he said, "Well, we're going to have to take this damned thing out." Said, "I'm going to have to cut you open." Said, "Okay." And so, they got (unintelligible), you know, and he went in and he said, "I'm going to tell you what I'm doing." And I said, "Alright." And he said, "Oh, we're going in there," and he started digging. I ... I could hear it when he hit it, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: A (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: No kidding!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. And ... they ...

Ed Metzler: But you're not feeling any pain because you got a local anesthetic?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, uh huh.

Ed Metzler: But they didn't put you under, huh?

Mr. Smith: No, no. I think he ... he and I talked (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Now, where was this compared to where you were wounded? Was this just back in a field hospital?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, you were still in the neighborhood, so to speak.

Mr. Smith: Oh hell, I was right there at it, I mean, it was right there just ... just ... few hundred, three or four hundred yards was what it was, maybe (unintelligible). Uh, but ... I felt something warm going down my back, you know? I got ... I got ... got away from the anesthetic, see? I said, "What the hell is that (unintelligible) warm running down my back?" He said, "That's your blood. (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), how reassuring (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yeah, "That's your blood."

Ed Metzler: Oh, thank you (chuckle).

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: So, I guess they were giving you transfusions probably because you'd lost a lot of blood.

Mr. Smith: No, they didn't give me no transfusion.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: No, (unintelligible) ... not with the Army (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, (chuckles) so they pulled it out, they sewed you ... well, they didn't sew you up, they left those open wounds ... with the gauze.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, (unintelligible) and they ... they ... (pause). I took thirty-one days.

Ed Metzler: That's a lot.

Mr. Smith: It was ... it was longer than that because I went back to ... the front lines ... after Christmas, so it was ... it was almost two months. No, well, I ... I (unintelligible) and ... month, two or three weeks, whatever it was.

Ed Metzler: So, you liked the ... Pennsylvania German doctor?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, fine, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, what about the nurses?

Mr. Smith: We didn't have ... they ... nurses, hell, they were all men!

Ed Metzler: Well, that's no fun!

Mr. Smith: That's no fun (laughter), no.

Ed Metzler: I mean, I've been seeing all these things on TV about the pretty nurses out there!

Mr. Smith: No, there wasn't over there! (chuckles)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible), I went about ... day seven for one USO show that Bob Hope ... uh, brought over to ... (unintelligible), it was (unintelligible). Fourteen months without seeing a white woman! Fourteen months, and oh, (unintelligible) and ... they had was a ... a Frances Langford and some other lady, I don't know much (unintelligible) and Bob Hope (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. So, when you got out of ... when you recovered and went back to your unit after your ... your wound, were you still in Bougainville?

Mr. Smith: Uhm.

Ed Metzler: So, your outfit was ... still trying to clear out the Japanese or had they secured the area?

Mr. Smith: Well, we had secured our area, but we still fighting the damned Japs. They were still ... still there, see? And uh, they didn't think that we could build a ... airstrip on that side of the island 'cause it was swamp, you know? Well, we went in there, and ... the Seabees were right there behind us, they just ... (unintelligible) right on the ...

Ed Metzler: Pushing dirt! (laughter)

Mr. Smith: Yeah! That's right. And they had that ... (pause) ... right ... right after Christmas, too, I believe. I could be a little wrong there, but ... it was (unintelligible). Everybody ... less than two months, they had an ... airport, uh, the air ... airstrip built. And they laid ... laid those ... iron mats, you know?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, those steel mats; yeah, I've heard about those; I've seen them, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and ... of course, they brought those Corsairs over, the F ... F4Fs. And then (unintelligible), if you put airstrips where our ... we could fly fighter pilots to go into a ... a B-24 to go on down the runway. They had to get to Rabaul; they had (unintelligible) Rabaul (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, Rabaul was a big problem.

Mr. Smith: And they (unintelligible); it was their main hub. And then big boys went up there and I didn't ever see them, but ... they got rid of it.

Ed Metzler: They pounded it, yeah.

Mr. Smith: They got rid of it, yeah, so they ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: So ... so, these ... this ... uh, on Bougainville this was fighters that were going up to support ... like B-24s who were bombing?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And B-25s, too, I think, bombing.

Mr. Smith: Well, they did (unintelligible) B-25s, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: But the main bulk were 24s.

Ed Metzler: Really?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: The old Liberator.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, they (unintelligible) ... (whoo, whoo, whoo sounds) high as you (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, those B-38s ... P-38s ...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: ... would go for Guadalcanal (unintelligible) drop their (unintelligible) and go back home.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: But they would be so high, those P-38s looked like Captain bars.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter). Yeah, the two ... the two bars.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, right, right.

Mr. Smith: I mean, when they get up there above that ant ... anti-aircraft fire at Rabaul ... (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: Absolutely.

Mr. Smith: ... kicked their ass off!

Ed Metzler: Yeah, that's right, that's right.

Mr. Smith: But ...

Ed Metzler: So, after you got patched up and you went back to work, so to speak, did anything ... uh, else happen in Bougainville that ... that sticks in your mind?

Mr. Smith: Well, the one thing that does stick in my mind ... about March the 6th, I really probably got it here (unintelligible) ... it's about 9th of March or 4th or 5th, Ole Nimitz picked up a ... message from Tok ... Tokyo, and he passed it down to us. We ... I'll tell you what they told us. And ... they told ... the Japs on the other side to go through that pass, run our ass out and shoot the last one. (Unintelligible). Well we got every machine (unintelligible) we could find, and we put ... got ready for them.

Ed Metzler: You were waiting for them.

Mr. Smith: We were ... we were, hell, we were ... we were ... we had to even throw some tops over our foxholes, and we were getting ready. We were ready for war. And they (throat clearing) hit ... the reason I know so much about that ... Mar ... or the 9th ... of March the 6th ... and that night ... uh, somewhere around nine o'clock ... they had to come through this ... uh, half a ... mile (unintelligible) and my friend, Sattler, he was right in front of it. I was lucky on this deal. We were ... we were over here on the side. Well, we was fighting Japs, but the main force was ... and they had ... it took about a hundred and fifty yards or maybe two hundred yards (unintelligible), and we had to take tanks and go up there and blow them out. Our American people (unintelligible) wasn't there. But that night, uh, March the 6th, they put a barrage into that half inch; they had ships in the harbor which ... they was ... it was either five or seven miles (unintelligible), anyway, ship could get ... and all our artillery and all the ships' artillery ... they said ... they put in seventy-eight thousand ... rounds of ammunition. It was continuous of *boom, boom, boom, boom!* ... coming from every direction, you

know? I mean, it was something to hear! And it lasted about two hours or maybe a little longer.

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Smith: And it ... seventy ... they said there was ... seventy-eight thousand rounds of ammunition went in there. But the Japs kept coming in ... and they got hold of one of our flame throwers, and they ... and they burnt two or three of them up (laughter). It blowed them on their ass (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: So, of course, we liked to hear about that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, that sound like a good story.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and ... after ...

Ed Metzler: Did you deal with any wounded, uh, during this period of time as a combat medic?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, yeah, (unintelligible) not like they did now up ... in the 149th. They got some blood over there, but we still had a lot of casualties, too. So, you know, wounds and stuff like that.

Ed Metzler: How'd you feel about being able to help these guys that were in bad shape?

Mr. Smith: Well, you just do the best you can, and I'll tell you about a little of that in time, further on down.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: Uh, we had ... we had ... some ... like (unintelligible) and then ... when we ... we stayed there fourteen months! We ... we stayed there ... on that front line. I think we had mortar at the time; front line fighting,,,anybody else. And ...

Ed Metzler: All of this on Bougainville?

Mr. Smith: All on Bougainville.

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Smith: And uh, when somebody is ... after that ... uh, after we hit their airfield, it got ... it killed us, uh, they killed us ... flew ... I went over there in that pass after those boys ... after it was over with. All that was left of those big trees ... and there was lots of them, was stumps, you know, ole ... ole stumps.

Ed Metzler: Just sticking up, yeah.

Mr. Smith: There wasn't a place ... on any of those trees that you could put your fist there wasn't a piece of shrapnel. That's how ... devas ... devastated it was. It was just ... so, that ... I ... can't imagine how many Japanese they killed in that damned thing. They (unintelligible). They were shooting ... for a long distance ... just half a mile this a way, but they were shooting from front ... frontline, I don't know, miles (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: They blanketed it, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Did you see any Japanese prisoners of war? Did any of them sur ... surrender?

Mr. Smith: I've seen them try to surrender (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: That didn't work?

Mr. Smith: Nah ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), oh dear.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Well, they ... you couldn't find a more brutal bunch of bastards ... those Japs were. You ... you ... they're the most brutal ... uh, I was a ... when I wasn't ... been doing (unintelligible) my rifle, I'm a rifleman. I carried a gun just like everybody else. Oh, the ... the red cross (unintelligible) ... a red cross there? That would just be a target.

Ed Metzler: Right, you're right.

Mr. Smith: And our ambulance, frontline ambulance, no red cross, no nothing. Now, in Germany, it was a different thing. The Germans did respect the ... medics and they were (unintelligible) and ... and they were, too, but they didn't have Japs (unintelligible) everything.

Ed Metzler: They didn't care.

Mr. Smith: Well, they didn't, they didn't, and so we ... get ... get something like that, well, you ... you (unintelligible), first you (unintelligible) and if they won't surrender, well, you take care of that, too.

Ed Metzler: Did you feel like your training as a medic was ... sufficient for you to do your job well there?

Mr. Smith: Under the circumstance.

Ed Metzler: Right. You ... did you kind of learned as you went along, too, I guess.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah. Yes, yes, yes. No, we ... oh ...

Ed Metzler: Did you minister to wounded who died while you were there with them?

Mr. Smith: Oh, (pause) right there? No, no ... now ... now, I've seen dead right there that died.

Ed Metzler: Of course.

Mr. Smith: But then they ...

Ed Metzler: Of course.

Mr. Smith: ... you know. But ... damn when you can't do anything for them.

Ed Metzler: No (unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: Hell (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Did you ever see any ... uh, kind of ... these wild suicide charges that the Japanese would do, you know, with their swords and ... what's the word I'm looking for?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: It's not kamikaze, but ...

Other Person: Hari-kari?

Ed Metzler: Hari-kari, yeah ... type thing.

Mr. Smith: Well, that hari-kari ... they ... they were bad. I mean, if they ... if they saw you was looking, yeah. Now, you asked me what ... like ... if I ever saw one doing it, I ... I've never seen that.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: But I do know it happened. They had an old suicide knife that they'd stick here ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: ... and push up, and there ... you ... you go.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: You ... you're (unintelligible), no ... so it was hari-kari, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: The banzai charge, that's where ... the other word I was trying to think of that I couldn't come up with.

Mr. Smith: Well, banzai, they ... they're charging you; they (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: No, no, I understand. That's different than hari-kari, yeah. So, when you look back on that fourteen months in Bougainville ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and (unintelligible) pretty women.

Ed Metzler: No pretty women?

Mr. Smith: None!

Ed Metzler: What else sticks in your mind (laughter) besides no pretty women?

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: What is, you know, when you think back on Bougainville, what's the first thing that comes to your mind?

Mr. Smith: Well, you ... you want ... to get out of the war; you want to get the hell out of Bougainville, that's the main thing.

Ed Metzler: So, it's not a place you went back and visited after the war, I imagine.

Mr. Smith: Well, they ... I had a chance to do that.

Ed Metzler: Is that right?!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Uh, a free deal, but what the hell? They said ... oh, they played it up; it wasn't (unintelligible), it was Guadalcanal. Said, "A P-38 ... (unintelligible) one that went down in the lagoon," there (unintelligible) after all that. Well, I'd done seen all that damned mess, I didn't want to see it again.

Ed Metzler: No, you didn't need to ... you didn't need a ... a replay.

Mr. Smith: No! Uh, Dorothy said, "(unintelligible), uh, "Ray," you should go! Ray, you go there! No ... uh, you should go?" I said, "Well why," you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Well hell, I don't ... I ... I've seen enough of that bullshit.

Ed Metzler: So, what did you do ... when ... there was time on your hands? Did you ...

Mr. Smith: Played poker.

Ed Metzler: ... I was headed there. I was wondering if you did ... Black Jack?

Mr. Smith: Both.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Mostly ... pok ... mostly ... seven card stud and draw.

Ed Metzler: Seven card stud and draw, yeah. So, how'd that work out for you?

Mr. Smith: Well, it worked ... oh, I went over there, and like I say, I didn't know a damned thing about ... well, I had played poker, but I mean, I didn't know anything about poker. And first two or three months, I'd go over there and get my sixty dollars. And there was a guy from Ohio, his name was Whitey Bigelow (sp?); they called him Whitey. "I just lost my money (unintelligible)," ... he says, "You don't know a damned thing about poker, do you?!" I said, "No." He says, "Well, I'll tell you what," said, "I've never ... asked ... told ... told a person this before in my life." He said, "I," ... said, "I do this for a living back home. I'm a ... I'm a gambler."

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Smith: He said, "If you want to learn something ... about gambling," said, "you ... when you're gambling go ... when we get a card game going, come and sit behind me. You watch my hand; you keep your expression ... almost dumb, see, you don't know nothing, and your mouth shut." Said, "Watch every ... how I bid, how I play the card." And of course, he'd lecture me after the game.

Ed Metzler: Tell you what ... was going on, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. And I ... all that month I was right behind ole Whitey.

Ed Metzler: You went to school.

Mr. Smith: You went to school (laughter), and I made ... oh, I ... I got good. I sent home ... over five thousand dollars that I won.

Ed Metzler: Wow, and that's a lot of money back then!

Mr. Smith: Back then that ...

Ed Metzler: That was serious money!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. And ole Whitey, we stayed friends, you know what I mean? Yeah. Are you Jewish?

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible)

Mr. Smith: Alright. I was telling about (chuckles) ...

Ed Metzler: You can tell a Jewish joke (laughter).

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: We don't have any red lines around here.

Mr. Smith: Oh ... There are two Jews got into it; one on one side and one on the other ... poker game. Man, I done dropped two hundred dollars before you just ... turn around. Well, Whitey saw what was going on, see, they were ... betting ... on both sides, see, going ... just (unintelligible) just running me out.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ... he broke it up and ... the next day we got another game, and ole Whitey told me says, "Don't get between them bastards, you ... you had to, but if they do, ... when I ... regardless what you got," said, "just bet like hell; just bet ... them out of there!" Well, he put some good hands and put some ... oh, one or two bad hands and I was right ... worried, but I kept (unintelligible); I tore their ass up!

Ed Metzler: Did you?

Other Person: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: That was part of the five thousand you brought home?

Mr. Smith: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: And what ... uh, he also told me ... said, "Well, when you get a bad hand and you bump ... bump them out," says, "show it to them." Said, "You run their ass out." And hell, I done that.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned! So, Bougainville you survived even though you had wound.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And ... and you survived that. What was the next chapter in your ... career in the Pacific?

Mr. Smith: Now, for sure we're getting to ... to the best stuff.

Ed Metzler: Okay, let's go there.

Mr. Smith: Oh, we had an eight hundred ship convoy.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Going to the Philippines.

Ed Metzler: Eight hundred ships?!

Mr. Smith: Eight ... that's what they told us!

Ed Metzler: That is a bunch!

Mr. Smith: Well, it was supposed to be a two ... two (unintelligible); the biggest convoy that was ever ... assembled.

Ed Metzler: And it left from where?

Mr. Smith: Bougain ... uh, we ... congregated from all ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: From all different, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Oh, yeah, yeah ... yeah.

Ed Metzler: And headed for?

Mr. Smith: Uh, Luzon.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And we had to stop in the Admiralty Islands. We go into a big harbor because they had a storm.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And, we lost a lot of aircraft and some ... uh, light ... destroyer escorts. We lost a lot of ships.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, a lot of little ships; they tend to go.

Mr. Smith: A hundred and fifty mile an hour wind.

Ed Metzler: What kind of ship were you on?

Mr. Smith: Troop ship.

Ed Metzler: A troop ship?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And it did okay in those storms?

Mr. Smith: Well now, we wasn't in the storm.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: See, we went into the harbor and ... the storm was ... awful ... in the Philippines (unintelligible) is what it was. We just ... backed off and waited. But we only made a ... landing on land ... on Lingayen Gulf.

Ed Metzler: Lingayen Gulf, yeah. That's ... north of Manila, I think.

Mr. Smith: Well, I don't know, it ...

Ed Metzler: Can't remember.

Mr. Smith: ... yeah, it's on the opposite side of the ... Manila; it's on the opposite side ... of the island from Manila.

Ed Metzler: Oh, it is, okay, alright.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. I got ...

Ed Metzler: I got to back and study my geo ...

Mr. Smith: It's about a hundred and thirty miles.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: And fought all the way over there.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. How was that landing; how did it go?

Mr. Smith: It was ... we was unopposed, uh, really. The first casualty was a (unintelligible) killed, a radioman.

Ed Metzler: Really?

Mr. Smith: Uh, those guys ... they're ... small fellow and he had one of them big, heavy radios like they had back then ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: ... in them days. And this old cariboo [s/b carabao?] was shell shocked. See, they ... they shelled their place. That's where we were unopposed; they left ... they left.

Ed Metzler: The Japanese left?

Mr. Smith: Oh ... oh, for right there, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Oh, they ...

Ed Metzler: They withdrew into the ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. But this old (unintelligible) ... he stuck his horn in that pointy head; he died instantly. His (unintelligible). I don't even want to think about it, but it was ... did that.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Smith: And then we started to fight ... (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: So, you went in on landing craft, is that correct?

Mr. Smith: Right. And the bad part of it was we passed right in front of a battleship.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Smith: Just as we got in ... front of that battleship, you know, well the battleship (unintelligible); we were like this ... (moooo sound) that whole side of that ship went up.

Ed Metzler: You hit broadside.

Mr. Smith: That damned landing craft ... everybody lost their guns and everything; they had guns everywhere (laughter). It was the biggest mess you ever saw in your life.

Ed Metzler: They almost caused a tidal wave.

Mr. Smith: No wonder I can't hear! (laughter)

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it took ... took your ears out, didn't it?

Other Person: (Coughs)

Mr. Smith: (Laughter), but we went on in and started fighting.

Ed Metzler: Now, was that early in the ... in the landings on one of the first waves or were you ... coming in after other people had already landed?

Mr. Smith: We were on ... uh, (unintelligible) shot to pieces. We all landed together.

Ed Metzler: All together.

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible words), but we was all ... we were all going in at ... at ... as soon as we could, you know? It was ... it was ...

Ed Metzler: But not a lot of resistance. They let you ... come ... all in?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible), we got right (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: But after we got ahead of them ... a few miles, four or five miles ... we ... we ... we had to fire our way ... all the way in to ... clear the (unintelligible); it was a bad deal!

Ed Metzler: Now, what was the terrain like – mountainous, wooded, tropical?

Mr. Smith: This was ... this was flat.

Ed Metzler: Flat, okay.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it was ... it's on ... it was ... I think it was flat all the way into ... now we went by some mountains. There's some ... MountPinatubo that blowed up here.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, Pinatubo, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Well, we went right by that.

Ed Metzler: Is that right?

Mr. Smith: In fact, I went (unintelligible). Uh, but it was ... Clark Field.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I've heard of that!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Well, we went right through Clark Field and that's where we saw ... we were fighting on our way ... was into Clark Field ... back in ... trying to get there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And there was P-38 flying around, and he wasn't on that island ... (unintelligible) Clark Field at all. He was up there ...

Ed Metzler: He was based somewhere else, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. And ... damned ... shot ... a damned Japanese shot ... got lucky and shot him down. Oh, we was ... we was ... tore up.

Ed Metzler: Heartbroken, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah. Now, where ... that's what we were, we were heartbroken.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: But we went on through that and ... uh, one Claradale [s/b Clarkdale ?] I believe it was ... we had fallen on our asses; we lost ... a lot of people.

Ed Metzler: Now, where was this?

Mr. Smith: Claradale, I think, I could be wrong on that.

Ed Metzler: Claradale?

Mr. Smith: I believe it was.

Ed Metzler: So, this is what ... on the way to Manila from ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... where you landed?

Mr. Smith: Uh hum. And ...

Ed Metzler: So, you're out ... in field taking care of wounded?

Mr. Smith: Yes.

Ed Metzler: And getting shot at?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: That's pretty exciting.

Mr. Smith: No, it wasn't exciting; it was scary!

Ed Metzler: Was it? Were you scared?

Mr. Smith: Damned right it was scary; yeah, it was ... a man tell you he's not scared (unintelligible) ... for a fool!

Ed Metzler: Just doesn't know ... any better!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, (unintelligible). And ... everything settled down, you know. It ... one of those damned battles roll with ... it's over with. So, and damned (unintelligible) foxholes; nobody paid any attention to the damn things, you see? And somebody says, "There's a Jap in this damned hole over here!" Well, shit ... everybody got ... come to attention, so I ... walked on over ... pretty close, and ... just ... this just all happened ... fast. Somebody threw a phosphorous grenade in there.

Ed Metzler: In the foxhole?

Mr. Smith: In the foxhole. It was a big, big ole outfit.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: It wasn't just a foxhole, it was a big ole, I mean, ... he throwed it in there and *boom*. (Waaaa sound), he come screaming out of there, and the guy with a Tommy gun ... (brrrrrr sound) killed him.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Smith: But that ... that ... phosphorous will eat you up; it sticks, it sticks.

Ed Metzler: And burns.

Mr. Smith: It sticks ...

Ed Metzler: All at the same time.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now, you got ... two Bronze Stars.

Mr. Smith: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: Have we come to the first Bronze Star even yet or ...

Mr. Smith: Well, uh ... no. We haven't ... we got ...

Ed Metzler: Okay, well we'll keep working our way along then.

Mr. Smith: Uh ... then we went ... went on (unintelligible) after that ... after ... we still falling (unintelligible) on the way up to (throat clearing) Manila. I got a story

about ... and we was at the Pasig River; this is where the bullshit and blood started. But when we got to Pasig River, there was big brewery there.

Ed Metzler: Yeah?

Mr. Smith: So, we captured the brewery and tested it. It was ...

Ed Metzler: You tested it?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: Darned right. Oh yeah, everyone tasted ...

Ed Metzler: Well, somebody has to do quality control, yeah (laughter).

Mr. Smith: So, we drank beer there (unintelligible), and ...

Ed Metzler: Was it pretty good beer?

Mr. Smith: Oh, it was good beer! (Unintelligible), it was good! And (unintelligible) the Pasig River we ... we were going to have to cross that and ... those ... uh, buffalos or whatever they're called, the ... I think it was called ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, kind of like water buffalo kind of thing, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and ... we was having ourselves a good time, and some little ole lieutenant ... put a guard at the gate, says, "Can't go in there anymore," you know, "too many guys." But we had really ... it wasn't long for ... just a short time ... two-star general come up for the ... field artillery, and we had artillery all around that thing ... all around Manila and hadn't used any of it on the city of Manila, none!

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, trying to ... not level it, yeah.

Mr. Smith: And ... he walked up to that guard, you know, he said, "Who put you ... on ... who ... put ... assigned you here?" He said, "Lieutenant so and so." He said, "I'll personally relieve you; go get you some beer." He walked over and he tore that lieutenant's ass up.

Ed Metzler: Did he really (laughter)?!

Mr. Smith: He told him (unintelligible) something terrible.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter).

Mr. Smith: So, (unintelligible), you know, we ... we drank beer all the way to ... and that night, I believe it was that night or the next night, anyway ... anyway, we

crossed the ... uh, Pasig River and got into a park. And they told us before we crossed the river that this town ... would be taken with small-arm fire.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Nothing bigger than a hand grenade going to be ... used.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: You talk about a morale hit ... the bottom. We got across at night and then ... dug in, and ... the next morning those damned Japs in those ... in big ... mot ... hotels, you know ...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: Were shooting at us point blank with those big rif ... big bar ... oh, artillery shells.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Oh, we were ... we had casualties over the top. Finally, they lifted that order. (Unintelligible) that's a sorry bastard. They lifted that order (pause) ... (unintelligible). Uh ...

Ed Metzler: They lifted the order.

Mr. Smith: They lifted the order and our artillery shells come in.

Ed Metzler: That was welcomed, I bet.

Mr. Smith: Ooh, that was music to our ears!

Ed Metzler: Music to your ears, of course.

Mr. Smith: That's right! *Boom, boom, boom, boom* ... and they shoot that son of a bitch all to pieces. Them old field (unintelligible), you know. But MacArthur ... was giving that order ... , "Take it with nothing bigger than a hand grenade." And ...

Ed Metzler: Well, they really missed that one, didn't they?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, (unintelligible) sorry bastard. Iwo Jima, I wasn't on that (unintelligible), but I've already touched upon it. That should have never been invaded; it should have never been invaded! All ... they said they ... messing our planes up going up there. All they had to do was go around [like] ... air ... aircrafts 'cause there's five isles at the most, and we lost seven thousand people there.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it was horrible.

Mr. Smith: But that's ... that's (unintelligible) different story.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it is; I've heard it before, too.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. But we ... well ...

Ed Metzler: So, you finally got into Manila then?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, we got into Manila and we were ... we ... after ... shot, but we had some firing there. We got the ... the bicycle factory.

Ed Metzler: Tell me about that.

Mr. Smith: Well, it was one of the ... worst battles we had. Uh, it ... it was a ... son of a bitch. They had ... we had ... Filipino tried to get out of there. We had Japs shooting at us, and they were still throwing that artillery at us, and ... but not like it was. I mean, it was ... it was ... (unintelligible) at first, and we ... got there and ... and we had one of the damnedest battles ... we ... you ever saw, and ole Doctor Boot, uh, Doctor Phillips (sp?) was talking to that guy. He turned around ... and I ... I was within thirty or forty feet of where this happened.

Ed Metzler: Now, who's Doctor Phillips?

Mr. Smith: He was a Captain.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: And the guy ... the guy hit with one of those shells. It wasn't much left, and I asked Doc, I said, "What the hell are you going to do? How do you want to turn this in?" He said, "Well, hell, just (unintelligible); he'd gone!" That's ... (unintelligible) I ever ... (unintelligible). Anyway, another bad thing happened there I'll never forget. One of the worst (unintelligible). It was a ... right there at the bicycle factory ... that thing went off ... took a couple of days ... (unintelligible), it went on for a couple of days.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Smith: And we lost lots of men, lots of men. But this poor bastard ... he was hit and I saw he was in trouble and I run to him, and ... shrapnel ... had took the (unintelligible) of his head off ... like ... the skull ... just the color; one was gone and I think the other one was, too, but I couldn't ... swear to it, but it ... I think it was gone, but (unintelligible) was gone. And where this skull was off, I'm looking down on his brain. The good part of it is, it didn't look like it was

(unintelligible). It looked ... it stuck in my mind (unintelligible), I don't know.
But looking at it ...

Ed Metzler: Looked ... looked whole and okay.

Mr. Smith: Looked ... looked whole. And he ... he was conscious, he was conscious. He says, "Doc," said, "why can't I," he even called ... Medic are all called over there is by Doc; he said, "Why can't I see?" I said, "Well, you got some dirt in eyes." I said, "They can probably wash it out when you get back here." And ... I knew I had to cover that, I thought I did, and so I got a bunch of damned gauze and ... I made it around to where it wouldn't touch it.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: And ... put tape all around that ... I put ... the reason I done that was to keep dirt from getting in it.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Smith: Or ... or dust.

Ed Metzler: Protect it.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and had that ... I looked ... and I ... I stayed with him till the day (unintelligible) ... I ... I didn't leave that boy. And finally, I ... made a (unintelligible), I don't ... (unintelligible). Anyway, later on, here they ... here they come and ... we talked ... and but ... he ... he was conscious and that ... like I say, if he hadn't of been conscious, it wouldn't have (unintelligible), but to be talking to him and had life to him ...

Ed Metzler: It's not easy.

Mr. Smith: No! It ... it was hard.

Ed Metzler: Do you feel like he lived? Do you know?

Mr. Smith: I have ... I have no idea. Uh, he ... he was ... he was conscious. I mean, he might have lived; he might have lived, but I don't ... I don't ... just ... as a medic doctor, I ... I ... anyway, I talked to him, ole Doctor Browne (?) I ... I was worried about it. And it ... it got on my ... it got on our minds ... I ... and ... I talked to him about it ... told him what happened, and ... he said, "Well hell, Ray, you done all you could." He said, "I couldn't have done no more!" He said, "When you're out there in the field," said, "we ain't got nothing to work

with.” Said, “You’ve done just exactly right. You tried to keep the dust that ... and the dirt out.” And that’s where one of the Bronze Stars come in. I was ... I, you know ...

Ed Metzler: That’s the Bronze Star for ...

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: I was ... after I looked ... (unintelligible) that guy. So ...

Ed Metzler: How do you feel about that Bronze Star?

Mr. Smith: Well, I’m proud of it.

Ed Metzler: Damned right.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Do they award that to you in some sort of a ceremony or do they just drop it in the mail to you or what?

Mr. Smith: No ... yeah, they just ... dropped it in the mail ... deal. Oh well hell, I don’t ... oh (pause) I don’t ... don’t remember. We ... there wasn’t no celebration seems to me like ...

Ed Metzler: No, no.

Mr. Smith: ... well, I don’t know where the hell it is.

Ed Metzler: You still have it?

Mr. Smith: Yes, I got it. Uh, but it was a ... it was a bad, bad, bad deal. It was ... it was ... they were waiting for us. God damn they were there and we had to kill them to the last damned one. And they was still good fighting even when the last one went down.

Ed Metzler: So, it was two days plus to be able to take that one spot, huh?

Mr. Smith: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, hell, it was, yeah, we fought there for ... all one day and part of the next I believe it was. Yeah, it was ... it was a mess. And we talked about that one; that was one of our ... (unintelligible) battles to talk about, you know, because it was so bad.

Ed Metzler: What happened next?

Mr. Smith: Well, after we got (unintelligible), cleared up a ... we killed them all, that's what we done. And ... we was starting to get a little rest, see? Manila, hell ... hell, women! So, we was ready to have fun, and we did for a few days. We ... we ...

Ed Metzler: Manila was ... torn up pretty much, wasn't it?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Or was it ... still in half way decent shape?

Mr. Smith: Oh, well it was still a town, but it ... it was blowed up.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: I mean, those big, old motels and (unintelligible), you still had a fear to us and (unintelligible), you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And stuff like that. And ... women; they had a hell of a lot of women there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ... we were having a ... well, we were supposed to stay there a while ... for a while, and that's when the 129th got in trouble up in Baguio.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And ... we had a ... they give ... they give us two hours to get out. That old ... that old ...

Ed Metzler: So, Baguio is another town that's ...

Mr. Smith: Up in the mountains.

Ed Metzler: Up in the mountains, kind of north of Manila, I guess.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it's ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Or north and east.

Mr. Smith: ... went into (unintelligible) Manila and all. We saw ... same altitude as Denver, Colorado.

Ed Metzler: Ah so, it's mile high?!

Mr. Smith: Yeah. They do have snow up there occasionally.

Ed Metzler: Really?! (laughter)

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it's ... all the way ...

Ed Metzler: So, what'd they do, send you guys up there to help?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible), they talked to us and told us they got in bad trouble so they sent us up there, and we got into another bad deal. And I got screwed up ... messed up up there and ... they ... they hit us with everything in the world. D Company which is heavy equipment, mortar shells, machine guns and all that ... they just wiped it out. The (unintelligible) ... our mortar shells was (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: Those are those big old Japanese mortars that ... yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it was terrible. They just blowed ... we (unintelligible) ... one man, Williams, ole sergeant, uh, supply man, he had a team of course, and he was out there on the road leading (unintelligible ... to do something; one of them big things hit him right in the middle of the back. All that was left was his legs.

Ed Metzler: Lord!

Mr. Smith: All that was left was his legs. And ... uh, we ... (pause) ... we got out of that damned mess, and ... we started fighting around the mountains. And being an old hunter, you know, I saw something way off; I have no idea how far it was now, but to me it was like ... (pause) uh, I saw (unintelligible) down there, and of course, (unintelligible) all you had was rode them out, you know what I'm saying (unintelligible) hill side of the road there. And I hollered at ole Doc Phillips, he come by, (unintelligible). "What do you want, Ray?" I says, "What ... what's that down on the ... way down yonder, that old house looking thing (unintelligible)?" He said ... he said "Damned Japs." I said, "That's what I thought it was." Well, we were standing there talking about the time a jeep come by with ... fifty caliber machine gun on it. He brought it ... backed him up there. He (unintelligible) a fifty-caliber machine gun (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Rat a tat tat!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, boom, boom, boom, boom! But that was ... that was ... close to the end of my ... fighting days ... they, I said ... now I messed up, and they sent me back to Leyte on a plane and a ... I stayed there probably a month, roughly. And ... got straightened out, and ... he called me in one day, he says (throat clearing), "Tell you what ... where you want to go?" "Home!" (Unintelligible) was your home. He said, "I ... I can send you ... anywhere in the Orient, but I can't ...," I said, "Hell, send me back to my old outfit." He said, "Are you (unintelligible) this

thing or seen too much of that?" I (unintelligible) that. Uh, but ...
(unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: So, how many Purple Hearts did you get?

Mr. Smith: I only got one.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: But I ... I got shot twice.

Ed Metzler: Well, tell me about that second wound.

Mr. Smith: Well, it was a (shooting sound); that's another story. Going into the walled city in Manila ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: ... a big ass deal.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Only way to get in and out was to ... they sent some tanks out there and blowed a hole in it, and the hole was ... probably big as that chair ... probably.

Ed Metzler: Size of this room (laughter), yeah.

Mr. Smith: Well, the wall, yeah.

Ed Metzler: The wall in the room, yeah, so ... eight feet by eight feet anyhow.

Mr. Smith: And so, they had it all blowed out, you know what I'm saying, so ... come out ... time to go in, see? And all riflemen ... so we went in ... looking (unintelligible), and they let us get (unintelligible) pretty damned good, and then they cut down all our asses. Well, shit, we were ... come back through that hole a hell of a lot faster than we went in, see?

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah, I'll bet!

Mr. Smith: And I smelled something, you know? I says, (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: So, this is your ...

Mr. Smith: Do you see those cars anymore?

Other Person: It must be something out there, I wonder what's going on.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, this is just above your left knee?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, there was two of them, and ... and ...

Ed Metzler: So, you got grazed by bullets ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... yeah?

Mr. Smith: Two machine gun bullets.

Ed Metzler: So, were you bleeding?

Mr. Smith: Just a trickle.

Ed Metzler: Just a trickle.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, it was burned ... by (unintelligible) so, I ... I (unintelligible) my wound, see?

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: With a red ass. I said, "Those sons of a bitches got ... got to me!" Boy standing by me, well hell, we're all right there together. Said, "What you get?" I showed him. He said, "Hell, you got small troubles!" I said, "You got troubles?" He turned around ... the cheek of his ass ... here ... it all the way across and opened up; you could put a ... laid a cigar in it. That's how much meat was gone (chuckles); it was a mess, you know? I laugh now.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, laugh now.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: And I said, "God dog!" I said, "You know, " I said, "fellow, I bet you going home!" He said, "You think so?" "I think you gone!" So, I ... tagged him and sent him back.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And I ... (unintelligible) ... I said, "I'll tell you what, I'll trade with you!" He said, "No, I'm going home!" (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), now, how many Bronze Stars did you do? We've talked about one, but let's talk about the other one.

Mr. Smith: That other one was ... when we got ... ass blowed off up there in Baguio after (unintelligible) where they hid those ... I was out taking care of men, and I don't know how I got ... got wounded but I did, and ... (unintelligible) and they ... recommended me for ...

Ed Metzler: So, what ... what was it that you did that ...

Mr. Smith: Take of ...

Ed Metzler: ... just taking care of these guys out in the ...

Mr. Smith: Take care of people ... under fire ... un ... und ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: ... (unintelligible). That's about the ...

Ed Metzler: That Baguio must have been a real mess!

Mr. Smith: Huh?

Ed Metzler: That town ... that you guys went up to Bag ... Baguio is that how you ...

Mr. Smith: Baguio.

Ed Metzler: That must have been a really difficult ... thing for you guys.

Mr. Smith: Well, it was. Uh, it was fire all the way up there from ... from the time we got up into the mountains and ... they ... it was ... it was a battle all the way to Baguio. Fact, uh, (pause) I ... I might have been right in the area of Baguio is where I saw my last combat. But they sent me back to Leyte and old Fort Sims (?) and then I went ... come back to Manila, and ... (unintelligible) and they ... uh, put me to guarding nurses. That was like ... getting out of hell and going to heaven, you know?

Ed Metzler: Is that like a fox in a hen house?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, that's what it was!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter). So, tell me about that gig that you had ... guarding the nurses.

Mr. Smith: Oh, that ... that was something else. I (unintelligible) those ole girls, you ...

Ed Metzler: Now, this was in Manila?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Are these ... Filipino nurses or American nurses?

Mr. Smith: Well, it was some of both, but ...

Ed Metzler: Some of the ...

Mr. Smith: ... the ... basically, they were American nurses.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: Uh, those Filipino women is something else.

Ed Metzler: Is that right?

Mr. Smith: You can (unintelligible), you can bet on it. Those American women ... they had some WACS there, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: They ... they ...

Ed Metzler: Women's Air Corps, yeah.

Mr. Smith: ... close to the end of the war, but they were there in town, and they can't get a damned date. They wanted one of those married tomorrow and run around ...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: ... boy, I mean, they'd tell me, I had hell ... you ... "I can't get a date!" I says (unintelligible). These women you ... 'cause these ... want the fellow to get ...

Ed Metzler: Too much competition, huh?

Mr. Smith: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah (chuckles). But ... lots of ... you ... you ... get what you ... put out for, but I ... was the order of the guard; I was supposed to turn their ass in; I was supposed to do this, do that. As long as they stayed in line, I never bothered ... none of them.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible) left them, let it go.

Mr. Smith: And ... they ... didn't take them long to know that, you know?

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: I mean, and they treated me super. I mean, hell, we ... I was ... I was on guard one night at the ... they could get whiskey 'cause we couldn't. I'm talking about American whiskey. We'd get that (unintelligible) ... about eleven o'clock. I didn't get off till twelve. She slipped by me, you know, I let her go. She come back, she said, "You know, you seem like a pretty nice guy." I said, "I try to be." She said, "You know, you look like you need a drink of whiskey." I says, "Yes mam, worse than a dead man; they just (unintelligible)." (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible) ... pilot and we sat down and had a few drinks.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned.

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: Now, you ... you got bit by a centipede? What's that story?

Mr. Smith: Ah, that's back ... we're getting back to Bougainville then.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's okay, we didn't talk about it when we were in Bougainville, so tell me what happened.

Mr. Smith: (Throat clearing), we had to have ... we...we was in these holes, you know, and right about that time, we were ... not firing shots, you know? We were ... had them damned mosquito nets, and how that sucker got by them, I don't know, and that thing bit me ... right there.

Ed Metzler: Right there on the left shin.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. And I never had (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: How big was it?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: A foot! Fifteen inches?!

Mr. Smith: No, no. About ten ... ten ...

Ed Metzler: That's a big centipede.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, he had a hook like that, and ... he bit me and they ... (unintelligible) sick bay, and like I say, I'm carrying morphine all the time; I was ... I ...

Ed Metzler: Sure!

Mr. Smith: ... for other people.

Ed Metzler: One of your tools, yeah.

Mr. Smith: So, I ... I ... give myself a shot of morphine. I never prayed for daylight ... and it ... (unintelligible) hurting a bit, and the ole Doc (unintelligible) Doc Phillips ... uh, give me a shot of ... morphine. And about noon, ten o'clock ... around ten o'clock, my chest started hurting. I said, "Doc, I'm in trouble," I says, "and my chest hurts." He said, "We're going to have to send you back to the hospital." Said, "I ... I can't treat you." So, they ... put me in the jeep and run me back to the hospital ... back behind the lines ... about two hundred yards, and that's where ... uh, I got back there and they give me another shot. Well, they fin ... finally (unintelligible) ... I believe it was a half a gram on top of (unintelligible) ... half ... anyway, half drunk and that's a pretty good load of ... of morphine. And I mean, they told us ... taught us how to use this.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: We knew what to do. And they taught us how to use it, and we knew how to do that. But I (unintelligible), I used it, and I went to ... got ... (unintelligible) he give me another bottle of ... shot when I got there. And I think he gave me another shot, too ... (unintelligible). But just before dark, so doc ... doctor, a young guy, say ... hell, all ... nearly everybody was young then, see, and hell, I'm a kid!

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you were a kid and he was young, yeah.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. And ... he ... (throat clearing) ... I told him now, I said, "Doc," said, "I know a little bit about morphine. I been taught ... taught about it ... as long as you're in pain, (unintelligible) ... here, but if you don't have pain, that's when it goes over here. But as long as you got pain, it concentrates on the pain, and it won't bother you upstairs, and I didn't want to get messed up. So, I told him about this and I said, "Doc, I have ... don't have any pain whatsoever, so I don't think I need it." He said, "You don't have pain now, but you going to have that later on on the back." And I said, uh, he said ... I knew this and he come tell me at night ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum

Mr. Smith: So, he jacks another shot into me, and hell, it wasn't long before I (chuckles) I ... I was dancing, laughing and raising hell, singing. The guys (unintelligible) the next day something terrible, and they'd tell me about ... I had forgot, see?

Ed Metzler: You don't remember any of this, huh?

Mr. Smith: But ... but when they started talking about it, I remembered everything but ...

Ed Metzler: Is that right?!

Mr. Smith: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: My ...

Mr. Smith: It ... it (unintelligible) like a playback, you know? It ... it would come back to the old brain.

Ed Metzler: So, did you swell up?

Mr. Smith: Oh god damn, I tell you ... it ... it got ... a big ole (unintelligible) on there as big and thick as my hand!

Ed Metzler: My gosh!

Mr. Smith: And I stayed in the damned hospital ... that time ... several days; I don't remember, several days, week or two.

Ed Metzler: And ... but your body finally dealt with it, huh?

Mr. Smith: After months and months. That thing stayed there and stayed there. Now, I wasn't in pain but it was just hard.

Ed Metzler: Yeah! Yeah, on scar tissue or something.

Mr. Smith: And I ain't too ... too sure it wasn't (unintelligible), but it ... it ... made it ... it was ... like that. Stuck out there where you could see it ... for months, and my whole body (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Did you know of anybody else that got bit by those things?

Mr. Smith: No.

Ed Metzler: So, it's ... it wasn't a general problem, but boy ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... it was ... a problem for you!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, yeah. In fact, I'm the only one I know has gotten really ... bitten by the damned thing.

Ed Metzler: Now, let's go back to ...

Mr. Smith: (Throat clearing)

Ed Metzler: ... after you ... you went over to what ... to Leyte at ... you said they sent you?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, took me back to Leyte, yeah.

Ed Metzler: And that was after ... the Baguio ...?

Mr. Smith: Well, Baguio fell shortly after I was gone, yes.

Ed Metzler: Okay. And so why did they send you back there?

Mr. Smith: I got all messed up there ... and ...

Ed Metzler: What do you mean all messed up?

Mr. Smith: I was (unintelligible) a little bit.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you get over that ... quickly?

Mr. Smith: I ... I was ... they sent me back, well, uh, let's see ... most of the time I was (unintelligible); I was alright.

Ed Metzler: So, at that point, the war is almost over, isn't it?

Mr. Smith: Yes. Well, close to ... overall, on that ... they sent me back to Leyte. I went back to guarding nurses. They dropped the bomb.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: Then the next week, they dropped another ... another bomb.

Ed Metzler: Yeah!

Mr. Smith: And that's when they got out on their knees and brought the white flag out, and I ... I was back guarding nurses when that happened.

Ed Metzler: When the white flags came out?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, uh huh. Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: How'd it feel to have that war over?

Mr. Smith: Oh, it was ... you can't believe it. Really something. (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: And you survived!

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: And you had a few close calls!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, a lot of close calls.

Ed Metzler: Yes sir!

Mr. Smith: I had a *lot* of close calls.

Ed Metzler: How do you feel about the Japanese after all these years?

Mr. Smith: Uh, I don't ... uh, I don't ... have any, you know, (unintelligible) now; I drive their car. I've been driving ... their pickup trucks for the past thirty-three years.

Ed Metzler: They got good ... good cars (laughter), yeah!

Mr. Smith: Yeah! Well, I got a ... Americans weren't making any good cars.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, it's a fact!

Mr. Smith: And ... '71 I bought a Ford ... Torino, and me and my son here had (unintelligible) he had ... in fact, all the time working on it. So, I ... (unintelligible), and my wife said, "Hey, somebody got a Toy ... uh, Datsun for sale." It was a school teacher (unintelligible) thirty-two thousand miles, (unintelligible). I went over and looked at it and bought it. I drove that thing I

don't know how many years ... here ... drop a year, get twenty-nine miles to the gallon.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Smith: It was standard shift; I hated that. Well, I drove it till I retired. Yeah, I retired (unintelligible). And so ... I bought me a Toyota pickup truck and sold that little devil. And I've been driving Japanese cars every time.

Ed Metzler: Okay, alright. You ever ... when you ... when did you come back to the States?

Mr. Smith: Oooh, you want me to tell you about it? I left Japan ... they sent me to Japan, see.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, you were ... you were ... uh,

Mr. Smith: Uh ...

Ed Metzler: ... in the oc ... part of the occupation.

Mr. Smith: Yeah, (unintelligible) ... they sent me ...

Ed Metzler: Where were you in Japan?

Mr. Smith: Wakayama. That's almost ... same island of the ... Tokyo.

Ed Metzler: Honshu?

Mr. Smith: O ... Osaka and all that bunch in there.

Ed Metzler: Okay, and what was your duty there?

Mr. Smith: Occupation. I mean ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: There was no wounded to ... to ... deal with, so what were you just ... patrolling and guard duty and hanging out?

Mr. Smith: Dut ... dut, hanging out, yeah, mostly ... (unintelligible) just hanging around.

Ed Metzler: How's the Japanese seem?

Mr. Smith: They treated me about as good as you can be treated. I ... I ... the women were pretty and ... they were ... nice ... nice to me. And of course, I hated those damned Japs. I guess I had ... had a little too much drink one day and ... me and another guy, and them damned Japs, old Jap men, you know, they ... they're holding their head down ... but seemed to be looking at you.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: I says ... I forget his name, I said, “You watch me wink at that son of a bitch, huh!” And I walked up ... and I hung one on him.

Ed Metzler: You bopped him with your fist?

Mr. Smith: Knocked ... (chuckles) knocked him on his ass and broke that little finger.

Ed Metzler: Oh, your finger is *still* crooked!

Mr. Smith: (Laughter), I’m afraid, sir, it is. I ... I knew I was afraid to (unintelligible) ... (laughter). So, I said, “Oh hell, just let it go!”

Ed Metzler: And after that, they sent you home, I guess (laughter). So, did you go back to the States from Japan then?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, and that was another eventful deal. (Throat clearing). They put us on ... one of those fast KAs ... with screws, troop ship.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: We were supposed to be ... we left Japan and it was supposed to be in Seattle in eight days.

Ed Metzler: My word, that is quick!

Mr. Smith: Oh (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: It didn’t happen, did it?

Mr. Smith: It didn’t happen, no. But there ... that’s when (unintelligible) ... Them other old ships went (Ooooo sound); this boat went (Ooooooh sound), it was gone! We got up there close to the Aleutian Islands, and we hit a storm, I mean storms, bad storms – three! And of course, we got the scuttlebutt, it was (unintelligible) ... commuter ... it was a flat slider, you know, on ship ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Smith: ... you know, (unintelligible) each other, and they ... and those boys! They had to stay up there in the ... in the damned open, see? (Unintelligible) ... say no more, and one of them asked them, “Were you going?” And ..., “We ... we’re going to Seattle,” and he said, “You better turn that son of bitch around; you’re going the wrong way!” (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), oh! How did that happen?

Mr. Smith: Huh?

Ed Metzler: How did that happen?

Mr. Smith: That storm!

Ed Metzler: Yeah, the storm blew them ... that far off course?

Mr. Smith: (Unintelligible), everybody had a red ass; the ones getting closer to home were getting worse. And one day, there was five or six of us, maybe five, six, seven, I don't know, hell, I was still twenty years old, you know?

Ed Metzler: You're an old man at that point.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: And we decided (unintelligible). We went up to the top and cracked ... your door, you know, which we was not supposed to do, but that was one of the most beautiful sights that I've ever seen. We ... we stayed there and watched for a while. But we ... we were young, we were strong and we all ran our hand on that damned door. One minute ... you'd be ... way ... (unintelligible) a big ole ship, you know. And those waves are something else! The next minute, you'd be down yonder ... looking at way ... way over yonder. And when it would come down like that ... them twin screws would come out of the water and it would shake the shit out of that whole (laughter) whole ship ... *boom, boom, boom, boom!* And boy, when we got to ... Seattle we ... finally ... fifteen days ... instead of eight, it took fifteen days. And ...

Ed Metzler: Did you kiss the ground?

Mr. Smith: Oh, I ... no, it was ... we had a damned ... seagulls, there must be a haven for them up there, looked like millions, and everybody was (unintelligible) on deck, you know, and even though it was cold, we were all on deck waiting to get (unintelligible). And them damned seagulls shit on everybody! They missed me; I was a lucky guy, I didn't ... they missed me!

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle), well you finally got some luck (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yeah, we finally got some luck, yeah. And we got off to ... (unintelligible), you know, so we finally got to some barracks, but I didn't like Seattle at all. It was cold, it was damp and I was ... used to that good hot weather.

Ed Metzler: You were worn out by then anyhow.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Wanting to go home.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah. But one thing, one good thing, about it. They ... gave us a good steak dinner; the first steak dinner I had (chuckles) in years!

Ed Metzler: Yeah, the food wasn't so good when you're out in combat, huh?

Mr. Smith: Oh, you're ... your eating C-rations, and I couldn't eat C-rations. I could eat the D-rations; I'd trade out. But I ... of course, after we got in the Philippines now, we could ... uh, trade for rice and stuff like that. We could trade ... yeah, they'd be glad to get C-rations and we'd be glad ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum!

Mr. Smith: ... I would be glad to get the rice.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: For ... papayas or ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: ... mangos or stuff like that.

Ed Metzler: Right, fruit and ... stuff like that.

Mr. Smith: Well, on Bougainville, you had nobody to trade on. I think if I had to get ... (unintelligible) on the Philippines, I might have starved to death (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), did you ever ... dream about your experiences ...

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... after you got home?

Mr. Smith: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: How long did that last?

Mr. Smith: I still do it sometimes.

Ed Metzler: Do you really?

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, what do you do ... just wake up and ...

Mr. Smith: Oh, it just ... history.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: You can't let it worry you, you know? Heck, you ...

Ed Metzler: No, I mean, it's not that unusual either ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... for guys that went through what you went through.

Mr. Smith: Yeah. Yeah, but it's ... uh, I've done fairly good. I get ... (cough), oh, I went to Port Arthur to visit my uncles; I had three of them down there, and one of, "Go work, sign up, we want to go ... (unintelligible) for Shell." "Hell, I don't want to work; I want to party for a while." Well, he decided he'd talk me into going out, and so I went and signed up ... or ... or what ... put my application in. So, I (unintelligible) so I went by ... town and played slot machines, drank a few beers. I got back to his house and he said, "Man, let's go; they done called you!" I ... oh shit, so I ... (unintelligible) out there; they wanted me to start that week. I ... I started Monday.

Ed Metzler: Started doing what now?

Mr. Smith: Work ... go to work for ... (unintelligible) hire as a laborer.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you're kind of in a labor pool at this point?

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, (unintelligible) and so ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: I finally got enough seniority, I got into (unintelligible) and went on as a pipefitter and ... I stayed there ... thirty-eight, thirty-nine years.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: Uh huh.

Other Person: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: Huh?

Other Person: (Unintelligible)

Ed Metzler: We'll shut her down; is that fair?

Mr. Smith: Sounds good. (Recording stopped momentarily).

Ed Metzler: Alright, so here we go. Okay, Ray, you were ... you mentioned snipers several times. Give us a little more insight as to ... how the Japanese snipers worked things and what they did.

Mr. Smith: Well, I was born and raised in the woods and I did a lot of squirrel hunting all my life, and I was ... before I saw what happened while I was young fellow (unintelligible) see the Japanese, but they were experts at camouflage. They were experts in camouflage! And they'd get up in those tr ... trees and tie their

self ... and sometimes ... the only time you go as ... they'd take a machine gun and shoot ... to shoot ... just riddle the trees, you know? And maybe see blood and stuff like that (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: So, they never fell out because ... they were tied up.

Mr. Smith: No, no ... you ... you couldn't fall out, no, no, that is a true deal.

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Smith: Yeah, but ... they were all for that ... live tree and ...

Ed Metzler: But you couldn't see them because of the camouflage, huh?

Mr. Smith: That's right! (Unintelligible). But now, uh, you have to see those jungles to understand why, see? See, up there ... and they could see you a lot better than you can see them, and they ... they took advantage of it. They trained for that ... there's no doubt.

Ed Metzler: Uhm. So, we were talking earlier about ... you hanging out in Seattle and it was cold and ... you wished you could go home. So, how did you finally get home after the war was over? They put you on a train or what?

Mr. Smith: Yeah, a big ... long train. When we went through the Rocky Mountains, you know? You'd look back down behind you see cars ... two or three ...

Ed Metzler: See the end of ... the rest of the train (laughter) down there (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yeah, but ...

Ed Metzler: So, a little sightseeing after being in the Pacific.

Mr. Smith: It was ... it was beautiful! They all ... have snow and ... uh, going through those Rocky Mountains ... something that impressed me ... a lot. Some of those big, red trees ... would be caved over ... laying ... almost horizontal ... (unintelligible). And you'd see wild animals, not ... some, but Elk, stuff like that you see. One thing that impressed me, uh, an awful lot, uh, I ... I like to fish, too. They ... we got way up there and it was one of the prettiest lakes that I've ever seen in my life. Nobody to fish! There's nobody up there! The reason I know ... we had ... snow is half deep until (unintelligible). And they had a station ... for (unintelligible) water, stuff like that ...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: ... and they had three or four families for, you know, houses there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: And the only way they could get in was by train, you understand what I mean?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Smith: It was ... it was so isolated!

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Smith: So, they stopped to get a train, uh, uh ... water, and they let us ... they let us get off (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Smith: And of course, they (unintelligible), see? So, we all got out and here come a ... sup ... uh, officer (unintelligible), you know? Well, that was a damned (unintelligible) ... (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter).

Mr. Smith: Thank (unintelligible) for a while, we (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: You got him, huh?! (laughter)

Mr. Smith: Yeah, (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: My, that's a contrast to being shot at and helping wounded people in the tropics.

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: You need that change ...

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah!

Ed Metzler: ... I suspect ... (unintelligible)

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, yeah, I needed ... needed to laugh, you needed ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah! Man!

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So ... so, you rolled into town and ... went back home and ...

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... how ... how'd it feel to be back home?

Mr. Smith: Oh, it felt good. Of course, you know, wanted to know who ... Ray ... or the big man or anything.

Ed Metzler: No, there wasn't any parades and stuff?

Mr. Smith: Oh no, hell no. I went home and ... I carried a bottle of booze with me and me and Dad had a drink or two and ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Smith: ... got back to ... a normal ... and I was ready to party and (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: And the rest is history as they say.

Mr. Smith: Huh?

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Anything else that ... you want to get out on the table with regard to your World War II experience that we haven't touched?

Mr. Smith: After ... I ...

Ed Metzler: We've covered a lot of territory.

Mr. Smith: Uh, I don't know, I worked for Texaco and ... I ... did (unintelligible) too bad. I kept a ... I ... I put my ... egg ... if they'd of had a savings, I would get in. And I kept it till I, you know, I retired, so I had a lot of company stock. And ... I retired at fifty-nine and a half. I was ready to get the hell out of there.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Smith: And ...

Ed Metzler: I know that feeling, yep.

Mr. Smith: ... but after I left Texas, I mean, well Chevron took over ... right ... thereafter took over Texaco, and I ... I have Tex ... uh, Chevron stock instead of Texaco; that was a good move for me.

Ed Metzler: Nothing like having a little oils tock (laughter).

Mr. Smith: Yeah, especially Chev ... uh, Chevron.

Ed Metzler: Chevron did well, huh?

Mr. Smith: About a hundred and ... eight dollasrs a ... a share.

Ed Metzler: That's great.

Mr. Smith: Paid four dollars and thirty-two cents share a year, you know, a year.

Ed Metzler: That's good.

Mr. Smith: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, thank you for spending the time ... with me today.

Mr. Smith: I enjoyed it; thank you very much.

Ed Metzler: I ... your ... your stories are ... uncomfortable, but that's what the war was ... was (unintelligible).

Mr. Smith: Oh yeah, well I ...

Ed Metzler: ... was uncomfortable.
Mr. Smith: Oh yeah ...
Ed Metzler: That's the way it is.
Mr. Smith: ... I ... well thank you. Get a little.
Ed Metzler: We thank you for what you did.
Mr. Smith: Enjoyed it very much.
Ed Metzler: Yes sir!

(end of interview)

FINAL copy

CD – #OH04899 – Mr. Ray Smith

Transcribed by: K. Matras

Houston, TX

March 24, 2020