

Interviewer: Heather Graham

Interviewee: John Harder

Subject: World War II

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Interviewer: Heather Graham (H.G.)
Interviewee: John Harder (J.H.)

H.G.: This is an interview with John Harder for Northern Michigan University given November 26, 1994. Please state your full name.

J.H.: John Harder.

H.G.: Okay, and where and when were you born?

J.H.: I was born in Detroit November 28 of 1927.

H.G.: And your parents' names?

J.H.: Neoma, now her name is Jenson, but I mean she's remarried because she divorced and remarried. And my father's name was Fred Harder.

H.G.: Okay, and where did you go to school?

J.H.: Detroit. I was born and raised in Detroit. Do you mean the names of the schools or, I don't remember all the schools.

H.G.: That's fine.

J.H.: I mean the grade schools or, I graduated from the ninth grade Hutchins Intermediate School in Detroit, I know that and that's the extent of my education.

H.G.: Did you marry before, during, or after the war?

J.H.: During.

H.G.: During. Did you have any children during the war, the war period?

J.H.: No, no, our first born was born in '46 right after the war.

H.G.: Okay. What were your life experiences up until the war? What were you doing?

J.H.: I was in school.

H.G.: Okay.

J.H.: I had lied of my age and went in the Navy when I was fifteen. I didn't have an occupation.

H.G.: What made you join the Navy at fifteen? Why?

J.H.: At the time it was quite the patriotic thing to do, is go fight for your country. I mean, we were in a war and I couldn't hardly wait until you got old enough. I mean, you know, a lot of people, a lot of kids tried to join or tried to. I was successful in falsifying my birth certificate so I could get in.

H.G.: And why did you join the Navy?

J.H.: I guess it was, I had a dear, dear friend. I used to call him uncle but he really was no relation, but he had been in the Navy in World War I, and he said at least in the Navy if you're on a ship you've got your bed with you and you've got your food with you, you're not living in a mudhole. I think that that would be a reason why I liked to have gone in the Navy.

H.G.: Do you remember where you were and what you were doing when you heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor?

J.H.: Yeah. My mother and I were coming through Canada on a greyhound bus. We had just taken my great grandfather's

J.H.: car over to Buffalo, New York to --- --- bought a new car after he died and we were on this greyhound bus coming from Canada when we heard about it and I, at the time, I, where the hell is Pearl Harbor? I'd never heard of it, you know.

H.G.: Did you follow international news before the war?

J.H.: Pardon?

H.G.: Did you follow international news before the war?

J.H.: No. At the time I wasn't old enough to be interested in anything but girls.

H.G.: What's your ethnic background?

J.H.: How do you mean that?

H.G.: What nationality?

J.H.: Well, my father was German I believe, his parents came from the Old Country, I think. They died when I was pretty young. I don't know if my father ever talked German, but I've heard my mother say that, it would have been my grandmother on my father's side was, she was a thoroughbred kraut. But my mother's a mixed breed. I don't know. English, I know her grandparents on her mother's side, they were from England.

H.G.: How did your family feel about you going off to war?

J.H.: Well, because I had lied my age and everything in getting in they were kind of disappointed that I, I don't know. It was, at that time I had a stepfather in which he was more of a father to me than my own

J.H.: father was. I don't think there was any hate in the family or anything like that there, but at wartime, I don't know. They didn't want to see me go, I mean I know that, but when I convinced them that's what I wanted, why, they let it go at that until after I got in, then my mother tried to get me out.

H.G.: Alright. What was your military rank when the war began?

J.H.: What was my what?

H.G.: Your military rank.

J.H.: When the war began? I wasn't in when the war began.

H.G.: Well, when you...

J.H.: Well, I went in as apprentice seaman when I joined the Navy. You start out at the bottom.

H.G.: And what was it when you left the Navy?

J.H.: I was a shipfitter third class.

H.G.: And were you on the same ship the whole time you were in?

J.H.: No. I went, after I got out of boot camp I was, I had volunteered for submarine service, and I got sent to a submarine base at Kodiak, Alaska, and I was there for, I believe it was about eleven months, it was a little under a year at that base, and that's when I started training on the shipfitter end of the --- picking up welding and stuff like that. And then it would be in the first part of '44, I got transferred for destroyer training for deconstruction,

J.H.: so I came back to the States. At that time Alaska wasn't a state, it was a territory, and we went through training in San Francisco, and then I went to Seattle to put the destroyer in commission.

H.G.: What was the name of it?

J.H.: U.S.S. Jarvis, 799, DD 799.

H.G.: And where were you stationed overseas, then?

J.H.: Well, we, after we put this new destroyer in commission, we went on a shakedown cruise off of San Diego, then we went back to Seattle and we escorted, I believe it was the South Dakota battleship, two destroyers, we escorted her back to Pearl Harbor and then we headed north up to the Aleutians. Up until the occupation we operated out of the Aleutian Islands.

H.G.: And then, after the occupation?

J.H.: Pardon?

H.G.: After the occupation?

J.H.: Well, we went in for the occupation. We signed the surrender for the, the captain of my ship, Commander Ellsworth, we would, he accepted the surrender of this Naval base in the northern end of Japan, I forget the name of it right now, but it was, we went in for occupation at the northern part of Honchu and then Hokkaido, which was where we did, I got pictures of where we took some of their seaplanes down and used them for target practice, and we were disarming them Japs.

H.G.: What were your reactions to the atomic bombs dropped on Japan?

J.H.: Pardon?

H.G.: What were your reactions to the atomic bombs dropped on Japan?

J.H.: I think it's the most wonderful thing that ever happened. It ended the war that I thought would never end. I'll never forget it.

H.G.: Did the other men on your ship share your feelings?

J.H.: I believe they all, we all felt the same way. I mean it seemed like we were, I, I thought I'd never know what peacetime was. Because I went in so young and everything, and when we heard about this wonderful bomb and how it brought the war to an end, well, okay, okay, it was, it was wonderful. It was something that we, I know personally myself I can say that I thought, I'm gonna be at war the rest of my life. I didn't know what, what peacetime, I didn't know if I'd ever get home or to see peacetime or anything, because I was so young, you know, but no, I think it was the most wonderful thing that we ever invented because see it brought something to an end and it saved, I think it saved a lot of peoples' lives. Maybe mine.

H.G.: Did you make any good friends in the military?

J.H.: Oh, yeah, sure. Yeah, we have ship's reunions now and, not very dear friends as you would say, but,

J.H.: you know, you always exchange Christmas cards and then we hear from them, I got a couple of them, I hear from them quite often.

H.G.: What are your most vivid memories of basic training?

J.H.: Basic training? I suppose learning discipline. I think it was very important. At the time it was, only being fifteen, I didn't realize what I was getting into, I guess, when I got in there, and you learn discipline and you take orders, I guess that was the hardest thing.

H.G.: Where did you receive your basic training?

J.H.: Basic training? Great Lakes.

H.G.: What was on your mind as you were headed off to war? What were you thinking about, what were you worried about, what were you hoping for?

J.H.: I think really to see some action. It was like I say, Patriotism was on everybody's mind, I believe, at that time, and after what the Japs did to us, and everything and at Pearl Harbor, and I, it was just, gung ho, eh, let's kill them guys, you know.

H.G.: What did you feel? How was it for you being so far away from home, out in the middle of a foreign ocean? How did you feel?

J.H.: Oh, there was a, maybe I got a little bit ahead of myself, see when I put the, when we put the ship in commission after I left, got transferred from the sub base in Kodiak, and I came home on short

J.H.: leave and I met, I looked up a buddy of mine, uncle ---, which he lived in Detroit, and then I met what was to become my wife. So I, therefore, I lied of my age and, again, and got married when I was sixteen. I had a young start, went in the Navy when I was fifteen, got married when I was sixteen, I was, when I was eighteen, that was right after the war, I had a baby. So, naturally, and especially after I got married I, yeah, I was homesick.

H.G.: How did your wife feel about your being so far away from her? Was it really hard?

J.H.: I think she was just as lonesome as I was. I guess she was, I know she was.

H.G.: Was she staying with her family while you were gone?

J.H.: Yeah, she lived with her parents.

H.G.: How did you feel towards the enemy? Not just the Japanese, but the Germans? How did you feel toward them?

J.H.: I guess I hated them just as much as what the Japanese were, but I was, I happened to be in the Pacific, we were looking for Japs.

H.G.: So, how did you feel about the Japanese-Americans that were incarcerated in the United States?

J.H.: I think a lot of them got a raw deal out of that. I mean they were just as patriotic as a lot of other people were, and just because of their ancestry or whatever, why, I think that a lot of them got a raw

J.H.: deal. Well, I think they proved they were willing to fight for our country. I guess there were quite a few of them in the European theatre of the war.

H.G.: How did you feel when you heard that Roosevelt had died?

J.H.: It was quite a sad thing, I guess. I think everybody kind of wondered if that was gonna have any change in the way the war was being run. I think everybody kind of wondered that. I believe Truman came through on what Roosevelt started. In fact, it was because of Truman that they dropped the A-bomb.

H.G.: When did you learn about the concentration camps in Europe?

J.H.: I really don't remember. I mean it was, we used to have a, well we used to call it the newspaper, I mean we had a little printshop aboard ship. It was a destroyer I was on, I mean it was only 360 feet long, you know, I mean we had 300 people on it or better so we didn't have much. It wasn't like being on a battleship or a carrier where you have everything you know. We were, but we used to have a little, ah, daily newsletter more or less, newssheet was our newspaper. I suppose I probably read about it in there. I, I really couldn't, don't remember.

H.G.: Do you remember any initial reactions upon hearing about it?

J.H.: Pardon?

H.G.: Do you remember any of your initial reactions upon hearing about them?

J.H.: No, I don't remember. Really I don't.

H.G.: When the war was over, did you celebrate or did you just slide back into your new life?

J.H.: We came off of a bombardment and we heard about Japan. We were bombarding the Kurile Islands, I believe Matsuwa, and we were running away from, we were operating and we didn't have any air coverage or anything, we'd go in and bombard and then we'd have to get out before their planes got to us, or their torpedo boats which they had sent after us, but we were leaving from a bombardment when we heard that Japan had unconditionally surrendered and, well, like I say, it was the end of a war that we thought would never end. Everybody was happy. And we got back to Adak. There were two Naval bases in the Aleutians that we operated out of, Adak and Attu, and we got back to Adak and the captain, Commander Ellsworth, some way he got a, made arrangements for us to have, get a, in a Quanset building there and we had a big party and I can remember there's always some clown when you get that many people together and this one guy got up and he introduced the captain and they, we had beer and they had a gallon pickle jug and filled it with beer, and about two thirds of it was beer and one third of it was foam, you know, and somebody went up and gave it to the captain. And he started

J.H.: chug-a-lugging it and the more he drank, the more everybody stood up and clapped and he drank that whole damn thing.

H.G.: Do you need a break?

H.G.: So, the war was over. What did you do when you went home?

J.H.: Well, the only thing I knew is what I learned in the Navy, is like maintenance type work, welding and that. Four days after I was discharged, why, my oldest son was born and I had to do something. I went to work in the gas station pumping gas and mechanic work, that kind of thing. You learned it as you did it. I mean, I had no real trade, you know, I was a sailor.

H.G.: Was this in Detroit?

J.H.: Yes.

H.G.: And how long did you do this for?

J.H.: Well, until I could, then I got a job as a welder, trade that I had learned in my work in the Navy and at a town, well up near Fenton, Michigan about fifty miles north of Detroit. And we moved, then we moved away from Detroit at that time around I think ever since the, when the war ended I kept wanting to move north and get away from the city and so I started making a living really in steel fabrication, welding and the Korean War broke out. Of course I had been, I'd say foolish enough, I don't know, when I was

J.H.: discharged from the Navy I signed up in the reserves. Then when the Korean War broke, well, I got called back in for that. At that time I had two children and I got out on dependency hardship when my wife got pregnant with the third one, so I was only in for, oh, I think around nine, nine or ten months during the Korean War.

H.G.: And were you in Korea then?

J.H.: No, I went to Philadelphia to put, to put a tanker that we had to take out of mothballs, that had been put in mothballs during, well, preserved, you know, for after the war and we had to put it back into commission and, well, after we got into operation and everything, we had some training cruises and then my discharge came through up at Newport, Rhode Island, and I got discharged. Then I came home and because of my welding experience, mainly I guess, I got, I got into construction and I worked at that the rest of my working life. Heavy construction, I mean, setting machinery and welding and everything.

H.G.: Alright, I'm going to go back to the war years. I guess what I want is, what can you tell me specifically like vivid memories you have of your life on this destroyer and people there?

J.H.: Well, I don't know, there's so many different experiences I mean. I can remember, one time we were cruising in the Sea of Okhotsk, that's the other side of the

J.H.: Kurile Islands, anti-shipping patrol. And we ran across some Japanese ships and on this five-inch, we had five five-inch guns aboard ship and this one they couldn't close the breech on it, on the gun, the barrel was hot from its firing and I was in the repair party. The five-inch gun was two, it's a two piece, you had a projectile and then you had a powder case. So they extracted the powder case, they couldn't close the breech on the gun but the projectile was in there, in the hot barrel and the chief gunner's mate said we got about 95% that she's gonna blow and if it does, it's gonna split wide open. And the only way to do anything about it was to cool it off and then I had to be the guy that volunteered to get up on that barrel and then I remember took a knife and there's like a leather boot on this to keep the sea out of the gun, the mechanism of the gun barrel, and I had to cut that open and stick a firehose in there to cool it down and all I could think of was that if she blows I hope I don't hear it, but it, I mean, that's one experience I'm not saying that I was a hero about it but it was something that had to be done and I'll never forget it. I thought oh, god, if it blows I hope I never hear it. And then we went through some, a lot of storms and we went through, I mean up in the North Pacific there, the seas used to get so rough that, why like in that

J.H.: book there, it tells how the rough seas were estimated to be 70 to 100 feet high. That's like a ten-story building but it's water coming at you, you know. And, oh, the storms, I think that was worse, I mean you couldn't cook. The only thing that they would do was you have to make spam sandwiches and that's what you lived on, you, they couldn't cook, they couldn't make soup, they couldn't make coffee. The ship was, it was too rough you know. Until you got through the storm, or the bad weather. Those are, I mean those are just some of the things that come to mind.

J.H.: I think during the war I missed being home for Christmas and whatever, you know. I really don't, I didn't say I know my first Christmas in the Navy I was up in Kodiak, Alaska at the sub base. I was well, let's see, yeah, I would have been sixteen, yeah, and I mean I, except for being homesick during the holidays I don't remember much about it. You get in a, actually your buddies are your, practically your family by that time or whatever, you're away from home that much. In fact, I remember we used to exchange Christmas gifts, you know, just amongst the guys, you know some kind of little something, carton of cigarettes or something. Everybody smoked then. There was no such thing as smoke free. And, oh, I think, I don't know but as far as during the holidays, I would say

J.H.: that it's a, that was mostly a good time to get homesick, you know, lonesome.

H.G.: Did you get a lot of letters from home then?

J.H.: Yeah. But especially after i got married, I used to get a lot of letters. My mother never wrote very much I don't think, I mean, I don't remember. But after I got married, the wife used to write. I won't say every day, but quite often. And the thing with us writing home, we, all our mail was censored. All the officers used to sit up there in the ward room and censor your mail and if they see something in there sexy or something, they'd get a chuckle out of it you know. I mean, they'd, I had one officer come down and tell me something that I had written to the wife, I don't know if I was horny or what, I mean, he made some remark out of it. I remember I blew my top. I figured that was personal and if he come down and said something like that in front of my buddies in the shipfitter's shop, well, what the hell did they do up in the ward room when the officers are all reading it and joking about this guy writing home about this or that or, and I remember my chief, the chief shipfitter, he told me, he said it's a damn wonder I didn't get court-martialed the way I told that officer off, but I think he had it coming, I mean it was getting into reading my personal mail, you know just because he had a right to, why,

J.H.: to make jokes of it or comment to somebody else, why I think that was that he was a little bit out of line. But incoming mail was never censored, it was just the outgoing because you weren't supposed to tell where you were or what you were doing and I remember getting letters from the wife, she said it looked like someone had cut paper dolls out of it. They'd cut, you know, they'd cut the words out. But that was, until the war ended that was something you couldn't, we had a code, oh, I say a code, I remember that if I was up in Alaska way I would always refer to somebody by name of Alice. We didn't know anybody by name of Alice, but Alice, I mean they knew that I was in the North Pacific and we had, I mean that we had made up while I was home that to let them know what vicinity I was in, you know. I don't know I can't think of a, many other stories right now.

H.G.: What can you tell me about Iwo Jima?

J.H.: About what?

H.G.: Iwo Jima?

J.H.: Iwo Jima, I was never there. I mean, I remember hearing of it, I mean, you know what I mean, to hear about it in the news and everything.

H.G.: There was no profound effect on anything for you?

J.H.: No, except that it was a hell of a battle, I guess.

J.H.: I mean, you know I, we were up in the north and we really weren't involved in it. I mean except to hear about it, you know, and no, I really couldn't say that I had any personal feelings. I mean we were at war. We, I suppose we, I, or everybody aboard ship probably felt well, if it had been us, somebody else would have reading about us. I mean, because you know we've been shot at, too. No, I can't say as I remember I mean you know what I mean, I remember reading about it, but it was just another war story to us.

H.G.: What would you say would be the worst part of the war for you?

J.H.: The worst part of the war. I think it was when the war ended and the people that were in the reserves or just in for the duration of the war were being transferred, and sent home and I couldn't go. I think that was about the worst part. As far as when we went in for occupation, and everything, well it was interesting. It was interesting, we'd be on Japanese soil when we would get liberty. And you know, nobody'd take any shit from any Japs, I'll tell you that. I remember this, we used to have to have shore patrol duty every so often and there was this one guy and we carried sidearms a .45 automatic at that time, and we went in to, we were at this Japanese Naval Base and we went in and there was, oh, probably eight

J.H.: or ten Japs they were sitting there at a table, like, and this guy was with me and he said, 'Give me your money! Any money you got, you give me!' And I thought you know, that guy's nuts you know, I forget his name, but those Japs I believe one of their phrase or whatever, their what is it, wa kadi masin or something like that, I think it means I don't understand. Pretty soon he pulled his gun out and I guess they started to understand. He says, 'I fought you sons of a bitches all of my life,' he says, 'it seems like,' and you know he says, 'Now, gimme.' They, after he got his gun out, they understood what he was talking about. They started shelling out. Their yen and sen. That was an interesting, yeah, the, as far as that goes and the, the actual occupation and the whole different times you know and Hokkaido and places on the Northern end.

H.G.: You said you spent a little time in Hawaii. When was that?

J.H.: During the war? Well, we went we were operating out of the Aleutians and then we went down for repairs. We had some damage from the seas plus they had new they were coming out with new radar. And we went down to Pearl Harbor from the Aleutians. I think we were there about a month, or a month and a half having new equipment having it put on the ship. And at that time the Royal Hawaiian Hotel had been taken

J.H.: over by the Navy and because we were down there for well, for R and R, every third day you could apply for permission to stay at the Royal Hawaiian. But it wasn't like the Royal Hawaiian of today or anything. I mean, I think there were six bunks to a room, and I mean it wasn't no lavish hotel. It was beautiful because it was on the beach in Waikiki, and that was, must have been about the first part of '45. While the war was still on and, well, I guess that was the main thing, you get drunk and tattooed. I got a couple tattoos while I was there. I got drunk a couple times too.

H.G.: How did Hawaii look after being attacked by the Japanese? Was it visibly broken up?

J.H.: I never got ashore there until that part of '45. When we went there the first time all we did was escort the battleship, I believe it was the South Dakota, and we escorted the battleship there and I don't believe we ever even got liberty. I mean, we were only there like maybe two days. I think we refueled and then we took off for the North Pacific. So I never got ashore until maybe about the first part of '45. And I don't remember, I mean as far as the, I mean I don't remember seeing anything, there was still some hulks of the ships there at Pearl that had been, couldn't be salvaged. They were still, you know, I don't know what you want to call

J.H.: it --- or what, but I mean you could still see, like the Arizona, of course that's still there, but I really don't remember seeing much, what damage, I mean by the time I got there in '45.

H.G.: Did you notice that the Japanese in Hawaii were treated any differently? Was there a lot of tension?

J.H.: See, I can't remember, I don't remember that because I think that anybody, that by the time I ever had my first liberty in Hawaii, I think the Japanese had all been sent to their what do they call them, relocation camps, or something, over in, on the mainland there, you know. And I just don't remember, I don't remember seeing any Japs in Hawaii at that time. I mean, you know I, whether they had all been taken care of or what, I mean you know, been locked up or put in camps or what, I don't know. I have no idea on that. I don't remember anything, any Japs being in Hawaii. They're there now, but they bought the place. They couldn't win it, they had to buy it.

H.G.: What can you tell me about your time in Kodiak? You were working on a submarine?

J.H.: I never, when we, when I got to the submarine base in Kodiak, there was one sub at the base, and it left while I was there. I don't know where to or anything, so we were actually more of a repair base. That was the only sub that I saw in Kodiak was when

J.H.: we, when I first got there, it was there. It operated out of there but there, it was a submarine base but they were eliminated. I guess, I don't know how they still call it a sub base. They had a sub base, a Naval air station, and a Naval operating base, but the only one sub that we ever saw, I can't remember even the name of it now, but it was a submarine base in the sense that that's what it was called, because the Navy called it that and after that one sub left we never saw another sub.

H.G.: So while you were there you mostly did repairs on ships, then?

J.H.: Yeah, yeah. This was, let's see, this was about the time that the Japs were driven off, out of the Aleutians there, out of Attu and Kiska, and there weren't no there wasn't hardly any war going on then in that area at the time, so it was more like a maintenance work done out of a shop, like a blacksmith shop or a welding shop or a plumbing shop, and it was mostly like, well, if a ship come in and it needed some work done that they didn't have the facilities aboard ship to do, why we would, we would do it, you know, I mean build this for them, or do that for them, or whatever. It was, Kodiak at that time when I got there in '43 it was, I think it was, well, there just wasn't much to do there because the Japs had already been pushed out of the Aleutians and we didn't

J.H.: have much repair work, just more or less maintenance type work. After I got transferred from there to new construction and destroyer training, why, then I went to San Fran-well, Treasure Island, San Francisco, and that's where we went through the training there on how a destroyer was built and how, I mean what its functions were, I mean. you know, everything about destroyers. I mean, because we were going to be putting a new one in commission and we were, well, it was just like a training school about the ship, what kind of a ship we were going to be on.

H.G.: How did you feel towards the war going on in Europe? Did it seem to you that it was a completely different war or did you feel related to it?

J.H.: I would say it was, we kind of figured it as maybe a completely different war. I remember, when the war ended in Europe we thought, oh boy, now we'll have some more help with these Japs. I figured everybody'd gang up on them, you know. I would say it was, you just about said it, I think, it should be it was like another war. I mean a separate war. That was off half a world away. We were just interested in where we were at.

H.G.: Did you have much contact with other destroyers?

J.H.: Oh, yeah. I think it was nine in our squadron, nine destroyers in our squadron, and three cruisers. They were the old World War I cruisers, I believe. They

J.H.: were what we used to call the four stackers, the old-time cruisers and that was the extent of our fleet up there. I mean, out in the Aleutians and there was a tanker there if I remember right, that if we were on anti-shipping patrol and that why sometimes I think there was one stretch the only land we saw was Japanese land for around a month. We would get new fuel at sea, and take on provisions and mail, had our mail transferred from the tanker and our supplies and that. We'd never set foot on ground. I mean, we were you know, we'd take on fuel and groceries and everything I mean, right out of the sea, you know, they'd bring it out to us, like. So but there was I'm sure it was nine destroyers in our squadron and we were all pretty close. I mean, you know, if you'd go ashore you'd meet guys off of the different ships and everything and you'd have beer with them or you know, in Attu and Adak, either one of them when you was back in the Aleutians. And there was, used to always be a bit of friction between the cruiser sailors and the destroyer sailors. When we'd go in for liberty when we'd be in at Adak or Attu why they'd have motor launchers that come out and pick you up, we'd be either anchored or we would be moored to a buoy and the motor launchers would come out and they'd pick you up and drop you, and then when they'd bring you back, they'd bring you back

J.H.: to your ship or you'd stop at several different ships then and there used to be every once in a while a fight break out between the cruiser sailors and the destroyer sailors. This one time in the Sea of Okhotsk, when we ran across this anti-shipping patrol, they were firing like mad and one of the cruisers, they, we had heard about it that they had on the radio they'd said 'screen me, screen me,' which meant to come and protect the cruiser. Here we were fighting the Japs and the cruisers figured that we weren't protecting them. The smaller ships are supposed to surround the bigger ship and protect it, and we were busy fighting I mean, oh, you know what I mean, we'd run across these Jap ships and when we got in and went on liberty in, I think it was Adak, or Attu, one of the two, some of them cruiser sailors were in this launch coming back from liberty, of course we were all half-schnockered on beer, I guess, and everything and we had quite a brawl there, and somebody hollered, 'screen me, screen me' and the cruiser sailors didn't like being razzed like that. We had a brawl right on the launch.

H.G.: Was there a lot of tension between enlisted and officers? Did you feel that there was a definite difference?

J.H.: Oh, definitely. There was, yeah, there was, I don't know. Some of them officers, they could I think come down to our shipfitter's shop or something like that

J.H.: and they sit there and drink coffee with us and shoot the breeze and that when they were out of sight of any other officers, but there was a definite distinction between the enlisted men and the officers. They were in a different class. I mean, it was like you had to well, just like they didn't put their pants on the same way you did, you know, I mean one leg at a time. Yeah, they were supposed to be better or something. I don't know, there was always something.

H.G.: Was it the same when you went ashore? Did they act like that?

J.H.: Well, you could never associate with an officer. At that time there was no, I'm trying to think of the word they used, fraternization, or something, with any officer. I mean, an enlisted man and officers didn't, they couldn't mix. They would never come to our beer hall or we could never go in theirs. I mean, that was the only thing there was to do in the Aleutians there, when we had liberty is, the only thing there is to do was to go to the beer hall. I mean just the enlisted man's club and they had their officer's club. They could get booze all we had was 3.2 beer.

H.G.: I lost my train of thought,,How did the war change your life?

J.H.: That's kind of hard for me to say. It changed my life because I grew up, that was all. I mean, I was

J.H.: nothing but a school kid when I went in the Navy, and when I got out I found myself a papa and had to go make a living. Well, as far as changing, I just happened to have grown up at that time.

H.G. Would you do anything differently if you could do it over?

J.H.: I guess not. Anybody that can say they haven't made mistakes hasn't lived, so, but I don't know, I think you learn from your mistakes. there's probably some stuff I would've done differently but I can't think of what they would be right now.

H.G.: Looks like we're about at the end of the tape.