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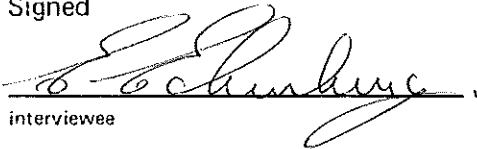
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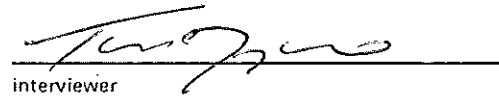
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interviewee

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interviewer

Date

10/04/79

Interviewee- Eddy Echenburg

Interviewer- Tim Joyce

Interview- Mr. Echenburg's office in Sherbrooke, Quebec.

Were you in the Eastern Townships during WWII?

Yes, the early part of the war I was going to Sherbrooke High. At the out break of the war, I was there until 1942, and then I went to Bishop's for a year and a half, till the Spring of '44, and then I went into the Navy, then I left. But I was here from '39 to '44, I was in Sherbrooke.

When and where were you born?

I was born in Sherbrooke in 1925, and I lived in Sherbrooke right up till the beginning of the war.

Are you married, or were you at the time of the beginning of WWII?

I am married now I wasn't then.

Tell me a little about your family background.

Yes, my family and my mother and father were Jewish. My father, they came to Canada from Russia at an early age, both of them. They were married and settled in Sherbrooke. My father was in Sherbrooke in 1907 or so and then my mother came to Sherbrooke after they got married in 1914. My father was a merchant and well, in Sherbrooke, he was one of these that started off with a pack on his back out in the country selling as a peddler and gradually with two of his brothers he started up his own store

Did he go after it?

Yes, he had a nice business.

Tell me a little about his business.

Yes, he had at that time, at the outbreak of the war, well it was just 1939, there were three brothers that had a store in Sherbrooke. It was in on Wellington Street. It was a combination of a clothing store and a furniture, appliances, almost a general store except there were no food, very wide variety shoes and hardware ... In 1939 they split up, probably just before the outbreak of the war, the three brothers, and each one started their own store and my father at that time went into a ladies' wear store so during the war he had a ladies' wear store here in Sherbrooke.

What was your occupation during the war?

I was a student, I was going to Sherbrooke High. Well, Sherbrooke High and then Bishop's.

Were you working at all during the summer, any kind of employment?

No the only well, I said no yet I did a couple of times the most notably was not a summer employment but in the early fall in '42 I guess it was. A gang of us from Bishop's went out west to the harvest there was, of course a shortage of labor in those days so we went out west in the early fall and for the wheat harvest and I went out to Alberta and most of us were in around that general area. It was very interesting.

Did you serve in WWII?

I was in the Navy from 1944, Spring of 1944, to about the end of the war.

When WWII began, had the Great Depression ended in this area, or was it still affected by it, was it still recovering from it?

I wouldn't have had too much to do with it you know growing up in those days, for instance 1939 I was 14 years old. I wasn't very much aware of the economic situation. Even the people around me, I had a lot of friends who I know their families were hard pressed at that time or I would never, personally we always had plenty and I was never too aware that other people didn't seem to have as much. I know that I had a lot of friends that if I had a quarter to spend and go to the store they were always a lot of friends around but I think that in '39 the worst was over certainly and things were beginning to straighten up around here, it seemed to me anyway.

In what way did WWII affect you or your family?

That's a hard thing, I don't know if there was several so many different things that happened.

Any small thing that you can recall due to the fact the war was on it really affected you, it wouldn't have been so bad if the war wasn't on.

Well, I don't think it was bad there was a lot of shortages. Such as rationing.

Yeah things were rationed like gasoline and meat and sugar and butter and alcohol was one of the main things. But I don't think people suffered from the shortages you know. I think

it only more than anything there were coupons and people seemed to have pretty much what they wanted. I didn't find that there was a shortage. What I did find was that the, it made people aware, and of course in those days, that war was very much different than the Vietnam war which would be in your days. People were very, very patriotic, there was no question about who were the good guys and who were the bad guys and because there was rationing people tended to be more careful. But other than that, I don't think I was affected that much, lost a lot of friends you know the people join the army and the navy, air force and people getting friends getting killed. This was something that everybody grew up with during the war you know. Everybody knew a lot of people that were that had been killed or had been missing in action and I had several friends that in that category.

Do you remember what you were doing when you heard the outbreak of war had happened?

No, I remember, of course, those were the days of radio and there was always a lot of talk on the radio and I knew we had our radio and every night the radio was on all evening and of course the news was the big thing leading up to the war and the question of Chamberlin and the rest so the we were very much aware that there was going to be a war. I can't remember exactly what I was doing at the time. The only thing I do remember is on a Sunday morning hanging out in

front of a store in our neighborhood with a bunch of fellows at the time of Pearl Harbor, when we first heard about Pearl Harbor in December '41. That I remember quite vividly.

At that time did you feel that this war was going to be long and stretched and did you start to feel a little scared or anything like that?

I don't know.

People began to get more concerned at that time.

There was always a concernness, but when we grew things were very different in those days and there was no everything was black and white it was right and wrong and we knew it was cheap to go to a movie in the 30s or 40s. The questions of moral were very tight. The bad guys were always caught and the good guys always went out. This was the feeling basically with the war. There was no question about who was going to win, there was a question about how long it was going to take. This is in my thinking I think most people felt the same way. It wasn't a question if we were going to loose the war, it was a question about how long it was going to take to win it.

Did any of your family volunteer or were they in the war?

Yeah, my brother joined the army right after the outbreak of the war. He was one of the first. I remember him drilling on the parade grounds which was just a couple of blocks from our home when he first joined the army in Sherbrooke.

Did he join, or was he called in?

No, he joined, he joined. There was no conscription until about May, two or three years later. But in those days he was one

of the first that I knew of to join the army. I think the war was declared on the sixth of September and I think he joined by the ninth he was in the army ... it wasn't very long. And my brother-in-law, my sister's husband, joined the air force and they weren't married, they got married in '42 and he joined I think in '42 I think he was just about 18, 18 or 19 at that time.

What were the living conditions in Sherbrooke in that time? Were they more dirty because of lack of workers or something like that? Did you find they changed the living conditions due to rationing and everything? Did you really have to struggle more?

There were changes but not from, now I talking from the way I remember it because obviously, Sherbrooke was always a nice town, of course, the north of Sherbrooke was a small community there were a lot less paved streets particularly where I lived I think it was just in the process of being paved around the outbreak of the war. But I don't think there was a problem there, I think there are a lot elderly people working for the city in the late 30s there would be plenty of people looking for work. People over army age or whatever. I don't think Sherbrooke as a town suffered, in fact I think that it flourished because there was a lot of work around. The living conditions did not change that much, no. There was a lot less young men around that was the only noticable difference I can remember. Could you tell me a little about the rationing? What kinds of things do you remember were rationed in the Townships, around

this area in Sherbrooke? What kinds of things do you they remember that were rationed?

The first thing obviously is gasoline. That is the one that everybody noticed the most. Although I don't think there were any hardships. But meat was rationed, butter and sugar, alcohol was rationed. I remember the first time I bought a bottle of liqueur.

Do you remember any certain amounts that you were allowed?

No, that I can't remember. I don't remember that at all.

Did the ration change like on a weekly basis? Were you allowed maybe more the next week than the week before?

Not necessarily on a week to week basis, but if things got tighter they changed. I remember that the first came out with meat rationing with a little blue so sort of a ... almost, a cardboard heart, pressed cardboard token that we used for meat and then later it was changed to the books. For sugar there were ration books. Sugar, meat, and butter, I think, they are the only things I remember as far as food.

Was there any evidence of people cheating or a black market at the time due to the rationing?

Yes, or yeah, there was always somebody who had extra tickets or extra coupons. If you, if you were hard pressed, if you needed extra gas there was always a way to get it. I think a lot of the things that we used to notice at home was people would come to visit and they would bring, if they had extra



sugar coupons, some houses used less sugar than others, for instance. They had extra sugar coupons they used to say they we'll bring them in when we come to visit they would say here are some sugar coupons.

Were you allowed to do this or was it illegal?

No, it wasn't illegal. I don't think you were supposed to but

It wasn't really pressed.

As I said before, and I think it is very, very true, I think people were very patriotic and the fact that the things were rationed, people realized that it was the thing to do was to be careful.

Everyone had a very togetherness feeling together.

That's right. That right. And people I think were more careful because they felt that there was a shortage. Not beacuse they were worried like today when there is a shortage of coffee everybody goes out and tries to get all the coffee they can. In those days there was more of a patriotic feeling. People were glad to suffer a bit to feel that they were doing their share.

Did the change male female ratio affect social life in Sherbrooke due to the fact that there were a lot of people fighting overseas?

I wouldn't have noticed that until at the time I was growing up, I just a bit under that stage. You know going to high school and even at Bishop's there were it wasn't all that

noticeable. But I'm very sure that it was, because all, just about all of my friends that were a year or two older than I was had gone before I left you know. Everybody joined the service, army, navy, or air force.

Did everyone feel, you know, that they had to join the service?

Everyone wanted to. Everybody that I was socially involved with. We noticed in Sherbrooke the same as it was in other places the English speaking people felt much stronger about this. The French speaking people didn't have the same feeling it wasn't as much their war as it was ours although I had a lot of French Canadians who joined, friends, who joined the service and felt extremely strong about it because there were a lot of others who felt less strong about it. But basically the people that I grew up with wanted to go. Very, very rarely that somebody was looking for an out. They were anxious to go to the services.

Do you remember either of the conscription crises 1942 or 1944, and how did you feel towards them?

I only remember them vaguely. I wasn't too concerned with it because I felt that I wanted to join, I wanted to go into the service myself. I don't think that it affected me very much I don't remember. I remember that there was quite a furor over it and I remember that there was a lot on the radio. But personally and in our home it didn't affect us.

Do you call the end of the war. What was the area like at the time? Do you recall any celebrating or anything like that?

I wasn't here, I was here it would be "J" Day. In "D" Day I was in St. John's Newfoundland and there was a real celebration there. I remember that has nothing to do with locally but I found it interesting. I was on a ship, I was in the Canadian Navy but attached to the Merchant Navy. I was on the Merchant ship and we were in St. John's harbor on the "D" Day. As soon as peace was declared, ... official every ship in the harbor started blowing their whistle. And that was long ago. That afternoon everybody that could get off the ship and everybody was happy. A lot of drinking. Do you remember coming home, what it was like.

There was a lot of meeting friends that you hadn't seen for a long time.

Realising some weren't back and

Yeah, pretty much kept aware you know we would get mail and the odd time a copy of the news paper. We had a pretty good idea about who was not coming back. But it was more of a rejoicing. I don't remember what I was doing on "J" Day. I know I was home at that particular time I was on leave. I don't remember what I was doing. I remember that there was a celebration but not as great, there was less concern about who was going to win that war, and who was going to win the war in Europe because everybody felt that what the Americans so much involved in the Vietnam war and Vietnam in the Japanese that you know that was really just

a question of time. Nobody felt pretty ... The problem you know, about the way people felt, I think was a question of propaganda. The movies that we saw and even the news <sup>c</sup>reals was a lot of propaganda in those days during the war. Everybody, you know the Japanese and the Germans were always portrayed as the stupid, like the Hogan's Heros, only slightly more exaggerated than what we used to see. People just felt that it wasn't possible that the Germans or the Japanese could ever ... win the war. It was only a question of how long it was going to take and as I said much more strongly with after the war in Europe was over, much less trouble, much less concern about what was going to happen.

You mentioned news <sup>e</sup>reals, you used to find out how the war was going on by these news <sup>e</sup>reals.

The movies home news. Every navy base that we were at or every town that we were in port there were of course the movies were very popular. Before I went to the Navy the Granada and the Premiere were very active in those days. Those were known as the radio days but movie days too. The theaters were very popular. And the Granada theater here in Sherbrooke and the Premiere theater were particularly I recall in those days Friday nights and when I was going to high school Friday night all the high school kids went to the movies. This was almost a ritual, rarely a Friday night that you wouldn't go to the movies. In fact, they

used to at the Granada theater, they used to have special nights, I remember there was a Skinner, A.C. Skinner had a Jewish store at the time in Sherbrooke. They used to sponsor a program, a stage program, put on at the shows and it was called OK Skinner. They would call up from the audience, to the audience, if you had a particular item on your person and if you had it you stood up and you yelled "OK Skinner" then you got a prize, well, I don't remember if it was a couple of dollars or what it was. We used to go to the theater loaded down with all kinds of junk in our pockets. This was a Friday night and one of the teachers at the movies in those days were the Movie Tone News, which is a very great feature.

Would it be before the film or after?

Usually before the feature.

How else did you spend your leisure time during WWII? Like on a weekend or something.

Oh, I trying to think. High school days.

Did you used to have a group of people together?

Yeah we were always a bunch of kids that hung around together you know, and in the summer we used to go swimming or canoeing or go down to the Magog river

It was a lot cleaner then.

Yes, and we were with my father then he had a canoe on the river and he had a bid boat house right there, there used to be a nice house on the river and beside the ... house was a large boathouse

and a lot of canoes were stored there. My father had a canoe and he used to pay rent to keep it on the river. It was very often on a nice day during the summer particularly during the weekend we use to get into the canoe and go for a ride on the river and then go for a swim, usually two or three of us.

Do you remember any military exployision in Sherbrooke?

The only one that really strikes me, apart from the two armries is, I've been here since year one, was the internment camps that they had over back where the Chataline Apartments are now. I don't know if you know where that is but over in east Sherbrooke. There used to be a very large internment camp there and these were, I don't think there were any prisoners of war, but there might have been.

There might have been.

Yeah, but I'm not sure, but there are a lot of Germans and a lot of German Jews that were there and I'm not exactly sure what these were refugees or just exactly what the story was. The reason why ~~I~~ recall that part of it is that there was one particular fellow by the name of Freddy Grickland and he later changed his name to Freddy Grant. He wrote songs, he was a songwriter. He spoke a very poor English and very, very strong German acccent. When one of the songs that I remember he came to our house to visit and one of the songs that he claimed he had composed himself was called, "Lets Carve a V on Every Navel <sup>maybe</sup> ~~Tree~~ Crew." It was quite popular for a while.

It was aye.

Do you remember any other prisoner of war camps in Sherbrooke?

No, I'm trying to think there was something

There was one up towards Lennoxville on the Massiwiippi River.

That would be the I think that was called an Internment Camp.

I don't think it was a prisoner of war. There may have been some. I think there some prisoner of war. I don't think it was exclusively that.

Do you recall any kind of security measures against espionage or sabotage?

No, all I can recall from that point of view is there is always a lot of slogans you know, you don't say anything because somebody might hear it, a slip of a lip will sink a ship. But I don't remember any great security.

How would you describe French-English relations in Quebec at the time during the three month period. Was it like it is today or much different?

Of Course, over the past couple of years there have been some marked changes in the French-English relationship. On an individual basis, of course, the French and English ... had been, and still is noted for the markable faturnaty between the French and the English, they've always got along very, very well in Sherbrooke. In those days, up until just about eight or ten years ago, Sherbrooke alternated, one term there would be a French mayor, and the next term would be an English mayor, the alderman were always bilingual and I think that

during the war this was pretty much the attitude. The French and English individually got along as two races, they were always problems between the two ... it not necessarily all that new. I had a lot of French friends in those days. But I don't recall that there were any, to my knowledge, people that I was involved with, my social life, we wouldn't be very much aware of what was going on in the governmental level, particularly in the provincial government, which would have a <sup>e</sup>haring of the whole thing.

The population of Sherbrooke at the time, was there more French than English, or more English than French at that time?

Around that time I would think that there would have been more French than English.

How do you see Armistist Day and Veteran's Day? How do you look at that now?

Quite funny, I'm a veteran but I've never felt very, very patriotic as far as the, I'm not active in the Legion or these things, but I thing that the Legion has a very good function and I think that Armistist Day and this type of thing is worth while. I think that people should remember that there were a lot of sacrifices but other than that it doesn't excite me.

Did you or any of your family, or any friends have any home front volunteer efforts to the war? Like they were working



for the war, but staying over here?

I'm trying to think. One of my sisters was sick during the war and she wasn't very active but my other sister, I don't remember what she did. I know that my wife's family they were from the small town of Scotstown and her brother and her father were in the army and she later joined the army herself. She her mother was very active in those days, in knitting, knitting socks for men and this type of thing. But I don't remember in our family that there was any great movement in this direction, nothing that would impress me to any great extent.

Before we finish, is there anything else you would like to add about how Sherbrooke has changed over the years, like how it was different back then it is today?

Well, the obvious thing, of course, is that Sherbrooke is grown so very much since the early days. I don't know how well you know Sherbrooke, but where Jacques Cartier Boulevard is today, it used to be called the Mile Road, that was the city limits. And that was a dirt road and it was almost impassible as it was hardly ever used, it was the Sherbrooke Country Club was just on the outskirts of Sherbrooke in those days and this can give you an idea because now, of course, it goes way up past the Carrefour and or into the Carrefour. So this has been a fantastic amount of growth I notice it more, of course, in the North ward because I was born and brought up in that area. But as there were

so many big fields that today are just city blocks. In the days when I was growing up, in comparison to today, but the biggest thing I think is the traffic, the city is not only spread out but has become the population has increased. I would say it has probably doubled since the time of the war. I think the population that the population then would probably have been in or about the 40,000 mark and I think today I'm sure it is over 80,000 now.

How about street cars. Where were the runs for street cars in Sherbrooke?

The street cars, now they were taken out before, I believe they were taken out before 1939.

Oh, they were taken out before the war.

The street cars were, but the tracks were mostly there. The tracks were still there for many years after. I remember they used to go from Park Avenue up, the street cars ran from there was one up Park Avenue where it used to be the Fair Grounds or it still is the Fair Grounds, but in those days it was much more active center then it is today. It ran from there and they would go, of course, downtown and up into the North ward. In the days I was twelve, the days of the street car, Ontario Street was as far out of town as they cared to go that was getting into the outskirts of Sherbrooke in the North ward. About the East ward I'm not very sure of, I'm sure they went around on the, in those days there was the Orient Hosiery Dominion Textile were

two of the biggest mills. And, of course, the Ingersoll Rand was there. They would have gone up and around those areas. But I don't think they went very far further than that. Galt Street in those days was Drummond Road. There used to be a Dummond farm way out at the end of Galt Street. There were a lot of farms immediately surrounding the area.

Oh yes. The University of Sherbrooke is situated on what used to be the Monday farm. This was all, a lot of this was farm land.

How about downtown, what was the, were signs or posters all around town telling you about join the war and stuff like that, were there a lot of stuff like that?

There were.

... on the corner or something giving information ... stuff like that.

I don't remember them handing out pamphlets or this type of thing. But they did have a lot of recruiting drives and you would see a lot of the big posters. Posters "we want you" type of thing. And it was I'm not sure about the how they went about the recruiting drive but I know that they used to have very often the, on a regular basis you know a full raft of army personnel would come into Sherbrooke and try to recruit for the Army occasionally for the Air Force. I don't think the Navy was very active in Sherbrooke but on a recruiting basis. There was a lot, particularly the Army was very heavy in their recruiting. Everybody when I was

growing up the big thing was everybody wanted to be a pilot, all my friends. A friend of mine and myself both went down we hadn't even turned eighteen and we went and tried to join the Air Force to become pilots. We were both turned down for medical reasons but later on I joined the Navy. Can you tell me a little about your serving with the Navy, what it was like, what it was like to work with ...?

Well, the I was with a particular batch of the Navy which is not very well known, it was called the Dense Batch, because deensively equiped merchant ship. During the war, what they used to put guns on merchant ships and they needed Navy. personnel commanding ships. So that ... branch of the Navy was a to some extent looked down upon by the regular Navy. Partly because we had a particular friendly group of officers and we used to get away with a lot. The discipline was a lot less strick in the Dense Branch then it was in the regular Navy branch. And we started off, you know I went into the Navy and took the regular Navy training and then when they started to know they asked you what you wanted to go in for, whether it would be communications or telegraph or this type of thing. I chose ... I was interested in the Navy, don't ask me why. And so I chose this particular branch. And it was very interesting. We were, or I was stationed, on a merchant ship. The first ship that I was on was a costal ship going up and

down the coast of Canada and the United States.

Did you ever go overseas?

Not on that ship. This was called a Five Thousand Ton Merchant Vessel and it was a coal burning ship which meant it was a very dirty ship, inside and out. And there were four of us in the Navy and we manned the gun and stood watch. We stood a watch every, you know we would be four hours on watch and eight hours off. The third, the fourth man was a gun-leader, he was in charge of us, he was like our boss. He didn't stand to watch us, he just gave the orders but the three of us would stand and watch and we would be four hours on watch and eight hours off and then four hours on and eight hours off. And we were watching, of course, we were supposed to be watching for submarines and the light and there were submarines. The first trip that we took was out of Halifax, we were going to Sidney Mines I guess to load up with coal for a cargo of coal. And we hadn't gone, we could still see the Halifax harbor when one of our escorts was sunk this was unusual because it was usually the merchant ships that were sunk. This was a Corvet that was torpedoed, it broke right in two. Two men were men were killed on that apparently. And of course, everybody on the merchant ship headed right back for the harbor. And we almost had a serious accident with the, no, we weren't going to Sidney Mines because they were some big ships in there, there was the Isle of the, what was it called, Isle de France, it was a hospital

ship any way with the French hospital and it was in the same convoy as we were. And as soon as this happened it ... together fast and it cut right across our bow, we almost ran into it. I recall that very vividly. But I remember, we were gone, we left Halifax the next day and without incidence and this apparently was a land mine. There were a lot of depth charges going off after this happened but most not land mines but mines that submarines had made and this apparently was not unusually because the I think we were gone from Halifax ... it was the day after Christmas that we left until the end of January. I think there was something like thirty ships that were sunk just around Halifax harbor in that period, just in that very, very short time. That was in the towards the end of 1944. How these, I don't know what they called them, some kind of a mine that ...

They are round with a

Yeah, but they are in the water opposed to being on the ground.

With a little spike sticking up you hit it with just a little and it blows up.

I think that most of the ships, this was the cause as apposed to submarines torpedos you know ... But there was no publicity in that people like in Sherbrooke never heard about that. That wasn't any extent of the good publicity. They know that it is not good propaganda to let people know that the Germans were that close to Canada. So, I remember that we had a friend, or

I had a friend that I grew up with in Sherbrooke who was in the Navy, he was stationed at Halifax and when I came back, I went down and went to Porto Rico, and when I came back I brought him a bottle of wine because you could pick it up for next to nothing, no it was not wine, rum. And when I went to see him to bring the rum he told me about that there had been a terrific amount of sinking. He was the one who said there had been thirty ships sunk within thirty five days. Just outside of the harbor we could still see land from where we were when that first ship was sunk. That was a pretty rough time as far as that, from that point of view. But other than that, that's one of the rare war experiences that we had. Basically being on a merchant's ship being on a costal ship, because I was on that costal ship for about nine months. It was a real party. We were usually at sea for three or four days and on land for about a week, so we were just having a great time.

What were conditions like on the ship?

Not really that good. Food was not bad, but the ship was small, we would hit a bad storm and the ship would fill up with water. When I say fill up with water, if you were sitting on one side of the ship and the ship was rocking, rushes of water would go from one side of the ship to the other. It wasn't that the ship would leak but the water would come in because the waves would go over the ship, you know, and we had one really bad storm, it

was just incredible the amount of water. There was at least a foot of water.

How was seasickness?

The seasickness was in more of the calmer weather. The first few trips that we took I used to get seasick, until we hit that first storm, once we hit that big storm, well it was fine. The first, the first big storm, then you really get your feelings. But what one of the things that I remember about the ship is, of course, the type of job we had. Being four hours working, you know, four hours on watch and eight hours off gave us lots of free time. If there were any merchant seamen that was not well, or couldn't perform his job for one reason or another we would take over and we would do four hours on watch and do four hours doing the seamen's work, whether it was painting or shovelling coal, or whatever he happened to be doing or wherever a job happened to be needed. And of course we were paid for that. We were being paid by the Navy and we were also being paid by the Merchant Navy or by the ship.

What were your wages at that time? How were you getting paid?

I don't remember exactly of course I remember the song, the American song was \$21 a day once a month. Our fee was not much greater than that, of course, we had our food and clothes and ... But, it seemed to me that it was around \$30 a month, around a dollar a day. It was considered good wages. Of course, you didn't have things to spend your money on.



Most people, myself included, were able to send money home on that, we sent money back and my parents would put it in the bank for me.

How was the mail situation while you were on the ship like that?

Well, there was always, there was always a center. My mother if she wanted to send me a letter, she would send it to the center in Halifax and they would, my mother had no way of knowing where I was at any time. But she would send it there and they would distribute it to us. Really it would take, as a general rule, if we were anywhere near Canada we would get our mail once every week or every two weeks. It wasn't that bad. But I did make one trip over to England, but that was after the "E" Day.

What was that like?

Well, that was a real picnic. We did not stand watch. So we slept most of the way over and the way back, we slept and read. It was very easy, very easy life. The thing that I remember the most about the ... was a gunner on a merchant ship was, the guns were very ineffective, and we had one four-inch gun that was suppose to be able to hit an opponent at some range. Anybody could hit a submarine with a four inch in a really good shot. And we were never, the idea of the Merchant Navy, generally, whenever there was any action well, the Merchant Navy went out, you know.

You were never really under heavy attackers.

If we were ever in a convoy and there were any problems, the Navy comes in and the Merchant Navy goes out. It's only when we were alone that there are any problems. One night we did sight a submarine and we were between, oh somewhere between Nova Scotia, not between Nova Scotia and St. John's, we were more on the other side of Newfoundland. Probably closer to Port Obaska on the other side of Newfoundland. And we sighted a submarine, but yet it didn't bother us. I was talking to the captain and I thought it was probably one of ours. He says no, it was, he would have been advised if there was going to be any submarines in the area. He said he was quite sure it wasn't sure it was going to be one of ours. But he did say that, at least we felt that we were a small ship to begin with and we were riding high on the water which meant we had no cargo and he wasn't about to waste a torpedo. He was just up for air and we knew he wasn't going to hurt us, and we weren't going to hurt him. We weren't ready to start anything along as he didn't.

Anything else you would like to add before we finish you feel might be interesting?

I think we've covered pretty much. It brought back a lot of memories that I had forgotten about.

Before we finish I've been staring at this building, I notice that it was erected just before the war.

Skinner Building, the new Skinner Building.

The new Skinner Building

Well, it was meant to be the stores from the ground floor, and apartment buildings above it.

It was an alfully hard time to build a building like that, in 1939.

Not necessarily, that was actually a very good time to build because

The Depression had just ended.

Labor was very cheap in those days and there was money around you know, in spite of the depression there were a lot of people still working and, of course, you dollar went much further.

It was actually that was the ideal time ... to build it.

That's great. That you very much for the interview.

My pleasure. I hope its been useful to you.

I'm sure it will be.