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Name: Joe Pitcher  
Regiment: The Royal Navy

Date transcript: 11<sup>th</sup> August 2014  
Transcribe by: Gillian Healey

Time code	What is said
01:00:00	<b>Start of Film 1</b>
	My name is Joe Pitcher; my number in the navy is CJX290211.
<b>01:00:15</b>	<b><i>Joe where are you from?</i></b>
	Well, I originate from Suffolk, I was born in Suffolk, my dad was born in Suffolk, he was one of three sons and they all joined the navy because work wise in East Anglia was not too good. When he married my mother wherever he was he tried to get us as children with him. I mean I went to school out in Malta for two year.
<b>01:00:52</b>	<b><i>So, what do you remember about the outbreak of war?</i></b>
	Well, at that period I mean, (Dad finally decided), well as I was saying I was in the church choir I was walking through the village one day it was always surnames with the vicar "Pitcher" he said, "There's a job going down at Halesworth as an apprentice hairdresser if you wish" It was a job so I went down and got the job, my job obviously at the start I was taught how to shave with the old cutthroat and believe it or not I mean a shave in those days was tuppence and a haircut was four pence. Well, I mean I finally got to shaving the head bloke, the head bloke there I was more nervous than he was, yer anyway I succeeded.
<b>01:01:53</b>	<b><i>Okay, so let's move on to the war then, what do you remember the outbreak of war where were you and did you expect to get into the navy at that point?</i></b>
	People were saying, I mean I was obviously that type of age should be called up and they'd make you a cup of tea, and well my sons in the army or in the navy and I was glad when I finally got my calling up papers.
<b>01:02:19</b>	<b><i>So you didn't volunteer you were called up?</i></b>
	No, no I was called up and the railway warrant was for Afon-wen I thought surely not China. So, I looked it up and it was Pwllheli, North Wales. HMS Glendower, and so finally had come the day and I had to turn up at HMS Glendower.
	<b>Start of Film 2</b>
<b>01:02:48</b>	<b><i>What was it like going to Glendower then?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	<p>Well, there was a train journey, train journey and cause funnily enough I met in with other lads who were being called up the same day so you got chatting to them. I mean every week they'd be a crowd of lads come in and you'd see um come in your now you got your uniform your in the navy and you'd see the train come in and other lads come in and all of them you done your seamanship, and then you were allowed a week at home, sorry not a week a weekend at home and then back and do gunnery and get drafted to a port.</p>
<b>01:03:31</b>	<b><i>Which was your port?</i></b>
	<p>My first port was, I'll think of the name of it in a minute, Hull and again you'd go on a pool, report to a certain place. I was amazed stepping out of the station at Hull, the bombing, they were quiet heavily bombed. So you get on this pool and finally I had the ship, a little coaster, a collier "The HMS Kenrix". HMS Kenrix, I've got a photograph of her here in my bundle. HMS Kenrix and I mean the, it was a collier and we were taking coal, I mean our object was from Goole to Poole. I mean having got loaded at Goole which is like inland from Hull you went up the Humber a little bit and these trains come along and just tip up and the dust I mean everywhere was saturated with dust, it would slide into the hold and suddenly you're full up. Anyway going down the Humber the skipper said to me, our main argument (armament- is what should have been said) on a little ship coaster, they'd be three gunners aboard that's all we had, three gunners</p> <p>'If you like you can try your gun" So, I had a blast away, I tried to just miss a buoy you know. Anyway having done that I see the chief engineer below deck he said "For God's sake before you fire that gun another time tap on the deck- because it's unbelievable the noise down there. I didn't appreciate that and there we were at sea.</p>

Time code	What is said
	<p>Convoy, you were always in convoy on that east coast because of E-boats were quiet frequent, you know German e-boats. We'd pick up escorts and more escorts from The Wash they'd come out MTB's come out you know. Having got in the Southend area there's a boat there, the convoy sort of sails past this boat and as you come by there's a hailer "Where you from and where you bound?" So it's from Goole to Poole and we had another gunner lower down honestly on deck from this ship and all he'd bring was his toothbrush and what ever and to get through the channel, to go through the channel at night because they were at times, although we got through alright, they were bombing from Dover from Europe to that coast line. I mean at one period one convoy we went into there's a deep sea ships would come all round the coast and join us and suddenly we ran into fog and at that period they were on tacking well that means you know suddenly, I was off duty but I was on the deck and we're a little coaster and suddenly I see this whacking great deep sea ship making direct for us and I thought I'm too late to ring the bridge they can't alter course and this is a true story and cause your life boats hang over board as you know on a little coaster you'd have a lifeboat hanging each side and they hit the life boat and the life boat and we lost the lifeboat , but we got out of it. We had a few days in port there and a new lifeboat fixed.</p>
<b>01:07:54</b>	<b><i>Did you ever come into contact with any German e-boats?</i></b>
	<p>Never. Never, it was still the luck of the draw really. But another amusing thing I mean the skipper his wife come down by train and I mean in his cabin he had a four poster bed with the old brass knobs on the bed job you know on the corners and he said "Gunner," he said "brass up these knobs once a week and there's sixpence for you" It's a laugh now but I mean it was a pint of beer. Yer. Anyway, this one time going north to get to the Humber again, why this time the crew were so friendly, and all I remember I'm aft on the Oregon and you know keeping watch, looking round and suddenly two sides of the bridge there was a bloke who was on the wheel and there was a second mate on the other side and they put their hands up and said "Look – no hands". I mean its ridiculous I know but we was in convoy, yer, things like that you know it's a friendly old crew you know-very friendly.</p>
<b>01:09:15</b>	<b><i>Were you ever worried on those convoys, because they were attacked quite a lot weren't they?</i></b>
	They were, but never no. There was on the next ship I was on.
	<b>Start of Film 3</b>
<b>01:09:31</b>	<b><i>How long were you on the Kenrix?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	Well I mean, you were suddenly allowed leave. A case it's up to you I mean I could have stayed aboard her. But Obviously you like to have a leave, you know when your entitled to leave you apply and you leave the ship and then come back to that port and you pick another ship up. This I did I went home on leave, come back and I picked up the Cambrian Coast another coast boat and she was running from Kirkcaldy, Scotland, to London. It was quite good I mean cause one day at winter time I was in London for the Christmas and up in Scotland for the New year. Och aye. Friendly old crowd.
<b>01:10:31</b>	<b><i>What year was that?</i></b>
	I can't give you the year – well I mean I was called in 1941 so your talking about '42 . It'll be 1942 I can't give dates
<b>01:10:46</b>	<b><i>Can I ask which port division were you assigned to? Were you a Chatham?</i></b>
	I was a Chatham rating but I never got to Chatham. You were a Chatham rating and that was it. Never got to Chatham- no
<b>01:10:59</b>	<b><i>Did you ever have any issues with other ratings? Port ratings or was it did you have a pride to be a Chatham rating?</i></b>
	Well, I mean my Dad was a Chatham rating. I mean he finished up as a signalman, a chief petty officer. On one trip, we had to on the way going north we had to call into Middleborough, so we didn't go along side we anchored cause the actual town was quite inland any way we anchored in the harbour, there was a harbour there. So, to get ashore we had to a little liberty boat and I'd never sculled, I don't know if you've ever done any sculling in your life, they lowered the little boat in to get the chaps ashore and I learnt to scull I didn't go ashore but I was so happy getting lads ashore and picking them up again I thought it was wonderful. Again, by this time again 3 gunners, they'd be three gunners on board again. Well, I had a colleague George, he was a Londoner and he had a gold tooth and he was quite a lad, he was a barrow boy sort of thing. He spent his spare time writing out 3d a pound pears on a bit of paper type of thing. Quite a lad, so George was a shore so anyway suddenly up anchor and we're away and George is not with us so I thought oh! God so I thought, oh! You should have reported it, but I didn't. If he's got the sense to come up by train and pick us up you know no body's going to know anything about it, if he come up by night. Well, ongoing into port, in Kirkcaldy the procedure was the gunners helping to take the lifeboats in and as a mate I mean I was the below deck so "Come on you bloody gunners come up were getting the life boats in" "Where's George?" So, I had to tell the first mate. So I said well I'm afraid he's not here hopefully he'll come up tonight.

Time code	What is said
	<p>He said “Well, we’ll leave it but if he comes in nothing no problem. But, if he don’t I’ve got to inform the skipper he’s missing” I often thought if we’d been torpedoed on the way up and George, I don’t know what he’d of done, I don’t know whether he’d have reported it you know- it could have been one of us that had sunk. Anyway George turned up and he’d got with a young lass, he’s late whether he stayed with her the night I don’t know but any way he came up by train. So, he were saved. Again we’ve now left Kirkcaldy heading south suddenly they realise no cook and the cook- the skipper said to me, cause they’d only be three gunners and I mean we used to have the cook would cater and serve us only a little cabin and a half where we used to eat our meals. I mean he’d look after the skipper and mate and the first and second mate and the engineer, the first engineer, the second engineer, the crew looked after themselves they had the use of the cooker, you’d fuel it with coal so you couldn’t control any heat. “Pitcher” he said,” you’ll cook” So, I had to do the cooking- I was doing fine until we hit heavy weather- I was seasick! Any way that was it. I got over it, we survived .Yer.</p>
<b>01:15:13</b>	<b><i>What was the galley like on something like that?</i></b>
	<p>Well, it was just, I mean a cook was a professional cook, he was a good cook, well he got his stores, but I don’t know whether he was suppin’ up on shore or what. But you’d have thought they’d have checked before all hands on board. Nothing though and away we went.</p>
<b>01:15:38</b>	<b><i>How did you personally feel leaving a ship when you’d had a nice time with the crew?</i></b>
	<p>Oh! Horrible because you got to make new friends and get used to other people, it is horrible- well you couldn’t imagine that because I mean life at sea wasn’t all that happy. Really, you was tense a lot of the time. Yep (is it recording now or not?) yes I mean from that aspect but well as I say there’s quite a story here really. I wasn’t the only one on this first trip on a Silverstone.</p>
<b>01:16:16</b>	<b><i>Can I ask what did you think of the Silverstone when you first saw her?</i></b>
	<p>Well, I mean (are we recording?) well my first I done my watch, my quarters were aft, we had a four inch an old four inch gun aft from the last war and I saw a rat- well I’m a country lad you don’t keep rats. I told um, which is probably why they didn’t take to me. I said come on rats; you don’t want rats “Oh! That’s Joey we feed him” I said well I don’t feed rats. I went and got a trap off the mate, baited it, caught it and killed it! So that was the end of that so whether they took a liking I don’t know.</p>
	<b>Start of Film 4</b>
<b>01:17:08</b>	<b><i>Can I just ask as well, I mean most of your sea ship, seamanship now is being coastal how did you feel going out to...</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	<p>Deep sea? West? Well, it was quite an experience really I mean obviously the old Atlantic is a bit tricky but, well I mean every day you get the old Sunderland and come and circle the convoy, be flashing of lights and contact and all of that and we'd say they're away home again, they'd be home at their own base at night. Anyway we finally come in through this harbour so, I can't think of the name of the harbour, anyway Nova Scotia there's an island there, there was a harbour, finish all guns you can unload your guns and that's it-so we'd all unloaded ours, back in the mess and brewing up having a cup of tea, well suddenly this lad, who you know it was his first trip to sea I think, he come in with a Marlin gun I think he had, well with a Marlin gun the trigger, I think it was used in aircraft as well, was a sort 'L' shaped job and then you fired it. Well, we're all sitting round supping our coffee and he flung it on to the mess table 'I can't unload the bloody thing " prittttt- the tracer round the mess honestly the tracers and the armour piercing through the ships side we're all down on the deck. Well, of course there is that one blast and we're all down and they stop it the triggers released the mere fact of hitting it on the deck hitting it on the edge of the mess table started it.</p>
	<p>So, it was the luck of the draw you know. Nobody didn't tell the skipper or nothing like that. I mean he's one of forecast you can't handle a bloody gun do you? No! That was that and the other thing on the same trip my first trip on her when I was off duty I walked round the deck I mean your off duty you can do as you wish if you don't want to sleep I saw this hose and I thought oh! the weather was warm what about a shower and I saw this stop cock and I had a little go and nothing and I suppose I'd switched it off I don't know any way one of the things , I didn't know at the time, that was the magazine for all our 4 inch guns- to fire it you push your shell in , ram it home and then you put a cordite in a silk bag in and then a sparky was to fire it . Well, they come aboard to see if we'd had any action, which we hadn't and examined it you know "Where's your ammo, where's your ammunition?" "In the locker".... I'd flooded the locker please don't say anything I did say, "Please sir, I did it". So, I kept quiet but I mean no problem, took it all ashore, and dried it out. The cordites in silk bags- you can dry it out. It's one of those things but that was I should have reported it I suppose I didn't know you see. I mean there should have been a lock on the thing but there wasn't so I done wrong there.</p>



Time code	What is said
	<p>Anyway we had a trip ashore we was allowed one trip ashore at Montreal, it was Montreal wasn't it, well, we had a trip ashore and the lights were all on it was lovely, we done shopping for the girls. I mean, well you know we were all lads 20, 21, 22, the bloods rising type of thing and well we'd got a girlfriend at home you know could you just put that dress on and what ever and put that brassiere on, have a twirl round and we did all this. They fell in it was lovely it was great. Anyway that was it and then we went down further and picked up wheat from another port and away out to sea again. I mean they tell me the Lawrence freezes up in the winter and we were praying there was going to be a heavy frost, but no we was out back to sea again, out to sea again. Anyway finally we come in to North Shields with the cargo, this cargo of wheat I mean we had tanks, which they welded to the top deck and that's where you ride there. Well, I didn't get on to well with the, I couldn't somehow, I wasn't part of it, I don't know whether its cause I killed their rat, I don't know I wasn't getting on too well with the crew so I thought well I did have a problem with the a wisdom tooth so I thought well I'll go sick and get off. So, that was it and what a do the wisdom tooth.</p>
01:23:10	<p><b><i>When you say you weren't getting on very well with your crew, I mean how does that manifest itself on a ship for somebody who doesn't know what life is like on a ship. How did you feel why did you feel that way?</i></b></p>
	<p>Well, it's a funny feeling I mean it's rather suppose like a marriage that's gone wrong you'd like to get out, rid of it really I wish I could. I did have problems with my wisdom tooth – well I thought I'd use that to get off the ship but funnily enough having said that that ship was clobbered on the next, what I'm thinking I've lead a very, well a fortunate life I suppose I survived and that ship was sunk and I've got all the details here, was sunk the next trip.</p>
	<p><b>Start of Film 5</b></p>
01:24:05	<p><b><i>What was it like to get on to a new ship?</i></b></p>
	<p>Well, lovely because everything was brand new, everything was brand new so yes so from that aspect.</p>
01:24:14	<p><b><i>What was your mess like?</i></b></p>
	<p>Ah, well just an ordinary mess, we slept in bunks it wasn't hammocks- you slept in bunks so you were reasonably comfortable, quite comfortable.</p>
01:24:28	<p><b><i>Where was that sailing then?</i></b></p>
	<p>Well, I well remember I mean we actually loaded and we didn't know where we were going but we loaded at Leith, come out of the Tyne, yes the Tyne, to Leith travelling north to load and that was a sort of a general sort of cargo and cause it turned out to be the torch effort by Algiers where the Yanks and the British went into Algiers Casablanca and Iran , So er,</p>



Time code	What is said
<b>01:25:08</b>	<b><i>So what was your cargo do you know?</i></b>
	General cargo, I mean they'll be guns we took guns aboard and general NAFFI stores, general cargo.
<b>01:25:20</b>	<b><i>Did you have any sense that this was a different convoy?</i></b>
	Well, we just didn't know. We were not told anything on that score so we just accepted it. It wasn't till we got sort of down nearer the Meddy that we knew we was involved somewhere in the Mediterranean. So, I mean that first trip we got through, got into port, and discharged our cargo and away back- we went back to Newport in Wales to another cargo and away we went to sea again and we knew then we were going back to Algiers again.
<b>01:26:11</b>	<b><i>Can I ask you about Algiers because it was quite a big convoy wasn't it?</i></b>
	Well, it was. I mean when we finally, when we finally went through the straits of Gib, well initially before we went through the Straits we were actually bombed with a high level bomber coming over, it was so high but I mean our guns couldn't touch it but we had on the deck a we had a rescue launch which we had ex pilots who I don't know whether they'd lost their nerve or what but they were going to crew these rescue craft if any ship was in problems in the Mediterranean, that was the idea. Well, they said after the trip I may even have got a bucket out there with if you wanted a drop of rum- you had a sip which they did. Well, I said well you know well they said we were used to dropping bombs we're not used to being here where they are coming down. So, anyway that was that. Anyway we finally got through bigger escorts come out of Gib, we had a destroyer and I think we had a cruiser with us. Oh! you think well we're safe here now; cause the other trip went ok. But, no we weren't we were torpedoed – we got a hit for'ard and um well immediately – I mean having been hit the hatch covers are blown up in the air there are bits of timber which covers the hatch, well as one come down one of the long bits of wood it landed on a wire which ran from the funnel to the bridge, well that sets off the siren, well a long blast on the siren is abandon ship. Well, well I mean we weren't sinking although we were well listed the skipper immediately left the convoy and started making for the shore this would be more or less opposite Oran we were sort of a nights trip from Algiers where we were making for. So, panic aboard, no I mean these lads come up from the engine room with all their little suitcases trying to clamber, well they couldn't we were listing well they were trying to get in the lifeboats. Well, the ship wasn't sinking so we had to get rifles out to get um “come on get back down below deck we're alright we're safe, we're going, we're still under way. So, that was it
<b>01:29:02</b>	<b><i>Who were these people below?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	<p>They were mostly Indians, they weren't English, they weren't English they – I don't know about the engineer whether he was – he wasn't coming up – I don't know what he was doing – he didn't know how to handle it really, well who did? When your hit you don't quite know um I mean suddenly there's a list in as much all as you could see the cargo and guns and everything just sliding into the Mediterranean. It's clear water you could actually see the stuff just floating – it cleared that hold out entirely. A Corvette left the convoy and escorted us, cause guns were useless we listed too much we couldn't use anything but we weren't attacked on the coast. I was thinking I'm wondering whether that coastline would be mines, but anyway we made Algiers. Having got in, being listed we tied up alongside in Algiers and the army was now established ashore and they would come in to discharge the ship ,you know, handle the derricks and everything and discharge . Well, we got friendly with them, and you know we used to feed them because they'd come aboard we had plenty of food aboard and on this particular morning "Where's old so and so this morning?" and course he has his "Well, he got stopped at the gates on the way out last night and he had thirteen pair of pants on" Obviously he saw to flog them on shore I suppose I don't know. I mean we had NAFFI stores, we had all that type of thing, we had everything aboard there. Yer.</p>
<b>01:30:54</b>	<b><i>Where exactly were you when the torpedo hit? What was your first reaction?</i></b>
	<p>Well, panic really. I mean what do you do? The noise is deafening, immediately it takes a list. Well, I mean once you start to list the waters pouring in that hole /hold obviously the cargo is going out so, I mean having said there's a list you could still- it's like walking up a hill- but we were still afloat.</p>
<b>01:31:27</b>	<b><i>You were very lucky to be.....</i></b>
	<p>We were lucky – we were lucky. Well, I mean having got in harbour, I was telling the story there. Well finally having the army lads discharge this cargo we then got in another part of the harbour and um I mean most of us was allowed ashore, we went ashore and everything. Well, then we had a bombing raid in the harbour and I think, I think the ship that was in there as well, I think that was what they were after HMS Sussex, I'm not sure but I think that's what it was a cruiser. Anyway, well they missed her and hit us and we got hit the same exactly the same and she just broke up in the harbour. She just sunk in the harbour and nobody was killed. I mean a lot of us was ashore. But, I mean with the commotion we got back and I think the skipper told quite a story. I think he was having a shower or something. I don't know quite what happened there but anyway nobody was killed.</p>
	<b>Start of Film 6</b>

Time code	What is said
01:32:43	<b><i>It's interesting because you know you've had a pretty inoffensive war really until you got to Gibraltar you've been torpedoed and you've been bombed. How were you reacting to real war situations now- can you remember?</i></b>
	Well I think it comes automatic – I think it comes automatic. I mean we'd seen other ships sunk. I mean at sea suddenly you'd see a destroyer, I mean we were always in convoy you'd see a destroyer put a, I think they used to put a black flag up and they'd come through the convoy just dropping depth charges and I mean, in fact I well remember one convoy the ship broke down, a lot of old ships, some of the old ships merchant ships were very old and it broke down and they had to tow it into Gib. But um the old ship, your ship would think you'd been hit cause there was a terrific movement of water a surge of water when they're dropped yer.
01:33:50	<b><i>So had you seen ships being sunk around you by then?</i></b>
	Well, again we had that one actually when I was on the Cambrian Coast, one ship we were picked up in convoy and a ship ahead got sunk, one of the little coasters got sunk and well you heard the bang and suddenly the ship had gone. So, I mean you just plod on you don't know the situation. There was usually, they'd be a ship a tug go a stern of the convoy to pick up the survivors, so they'd pick up survivors. Yer.
01:34:32	<b><i>What is a gun layers course and why did you go on that?</i></b>
	Well, it's a step up from the seaman gunner, which I was, you got, I don't know what, a little bit of an increase in wages and as I was on coastal ships I was the other two were seaman gunners you were in charge of the gunnery so from that aspect and you got a rise in wages and this was done at Leith and I mean in the end you had to go to sea to fire off, there's a little story there, on a little coaster and a biddy and the skipper to pass you out on this course to pass as a gun layer and you had to fire a twelve pounder gun, different positions on the gun and the procedure if, if the gun failed to fire according to the annual you just put it to safety and leave it but the bloke in charge of it he just opened the breach took it out and said "Gun," now what was it, he give an order and threw it over board and then carried on with his lesson. But, I mean that was not according to the book. But, I mean if that gun couldn't use it we couldn't pass because we was at sea – so that's how it went on. Anyway I passed that. I mean another one I had to go in one of these where the bloke in charge was sitting and they got these rockets each side which they fire and as your learning the trade you'd sit beside one bloke one side and the bloke in charge here and he fired these rockets, well the poor bloke do you know there was blood coming down his nose I mean when they go off it's unbelievable. Cause they're on ships, not on merchant ships they'd be on a cruiser or whatever – there's terrific noise. So, you had to pass that. This was done at somewhere on the south/east coast – Hartlepool area where we went – yer.

Time code	What is said
01:37:02	<b><i>Well the next ship you did was the Malayan Prince... and that was an unusual cargo, just tell me about that. Were you in convoy with that cargo?</i></b>
	Malayan Prince, hang on I've got to think on that one. Oh! Yes we had a very unusual cargo here, we loaded, this was money, it was printed in Britain and we had to take this out to Alexandria in Egypt. So, having got out there when it was being discharged we had to have rifles own stand on guard quite a bit of money passed hands there I assume.Yer.
01:37:46	<b><i>You went through the Suez Canal... What was that like?</i></b>
	Well, I did remember one thing I told you I had to learn the art of hairdressing – I went as an apprentice. Malayan Prince was quite a bigish ship, it was a twin screw so we were Commodore ship going through the Mediterranean so we had a Commodore on board so I'm aft in our quarters and they sent one of the boys down, down below decks to see me "Will you, they say from the bridge they tell me there's gunner down there that can cut hair – the Commodore wants a hair cut, would you come up and give him hair cut?" Well, I mean just by hand clippers, so I mean I did it I well remember doing one bloke at sea, just an ordinary rating – well army lad where we had a Bofors we had an army crew come down for a hair cut down the mess . Well, I give him a haircut but I give him a Mohican haircut, if you understand me, he had a tuft which he didn't know he had down, he went back to his mess and come back "What the hell do you think you're doing?" I said well it's only a joke come on I'll put it right. Well, any way went off and there was the skipper, the commodore we're up on the boat deck in the Mediterranean it's a lovely day and there's me with my hand clippers giving the commodore a hair cut, I never spoke about it I'm only the lower decks really so um, having done it he said "Well, I haven't got any money on me at the moment gunner but see me at Alex , I'll see you get a bit of money for it sort of thing " So, that was it so we arrive in Alex well I knew he'd be going a shore so obviously I'm sort of on deck looking up and he I see him sort of go over to the skipper and I don't know I suppose he give me a couple of bob or something like that he went ashore . Yes, that was the end of him.
01:40:06	<b><i>Was he nice?</i></b>
	Oh! Quite pleasant , quite pleasant . Yes. Well he was getting a cheap haircut wasn't he and at sea.
	<b>Start of Film 7</b>
01:40:17	<b><i>And the Talma was an interesting ship, it was a hospital ship?</i></b>

Time code	What is said
	Well, she was a very old ship, old ship but. I mean we had all English doctors, nurses aboard so I mean we didn't have much to do with them really apart from the different ports we went to we had to do sabotage watch. I well remember one place this was at Calcutta you sort of walked round the firm had a Indian bloke there to make sure the right chaps were coming aboard and I well remember him turning round one bloke he said "Him no good Johnny him sick cock" So, I don't know whether he'd got venereal disease I don't know. But then he'd go and make me a cup of tea and things like that, so friendly, yes.
<b>01:41:24</b>	<b><i>Did it; was it a different experience at this point to the war I mean is it any more enjoyable period?</i></b>
	Well, yes I mean the war with Germany is over but at this period I mean the Japs, I mean the thing with Singapore that's where we were bound for. Well, I mean there we spent quite a bit of time having got up to Calcutta, by this time the British had re-conquered Rangoon on the Burma side and we were going down the Ganges over to Rangoon with Indian troops, leave them there, coming back, more troops and that's what we were doing for quite a while. Then finally the convoy left Rangoon and cause we had the big boys with us then making for Singapore that was the idea. So, I mean going down that coast I was friendly with the sparks and he kept me informed he said "Well, we just had a phone call come through, not a phone be a message come through the Yanks have just dropped two atom bombs and the Japs have apparently surrendered" So, well that was a good news that I mean to go into Singapore that was we'd be well armed so all we done really was mine sweepers ahead of us and we just sailed into Singapore and the being a hospital ship we was tied up, we were tied up alongside and cause prisoners of war flocked to the docks and well we had food aboard but obviously nature you'd say you know well obviously give him something . Course they stopped all that, we weren't allowed cause they had to be bought back to life again, you know on a normal diet, they couldn't eat a sandwich as you put it. They were shocking.
<b>01:43:51</b>	<b><i>What did they look like?</i></b>
	Well, thin obviously thin. But, they stopped all that.
<b>01:43:57</b>	<b><i>But, were you shocked when you saw them?</i></b>
	Well, they were in a state they were horrible Yes, I expect you've seen photographs of them – horrible, yes horrible.
<b>01:44:08</b>	<b><i>How did you, do you remember how you felt when you saw things like that?</i></b>
	Well, I don't think, you got used to everything, you accepted it I mean we was quite interested with I don't know what officer we had there we had a ship there anchored the other side, I think it was going to take the Japanese surrenders. I'm not sure who it was but again I knew at the time I've forgotten the years have gone by, many moons have gone by haven't they.

Time code	What is said
<b>01:44:51</b>	<b><i>Can I ask how do you reflect on the war now?</i></b>
	Well, well I'm glad to be alive and you know and pleased I survived. I mean cause a lot of the lads lost weren't they – lost a lot of boys – yes. Sorry I'm stammering now – it's emotion - sorry –
<b>01:45:32</b>	<b><i>Glad to have done your bit then?</i></b>
	Well, yes yes.
<b>01:45:46</b>	<b>End of Films</b>