

NORTH TEXAS STATE UNIVERSITY
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION
NUMBER
568

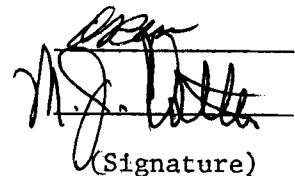
Interview with
M. J. COTTER
May 15, 1982

Place of Interview: Austin, Texas

Interviewer: R. E. Marcello

Terms of Use: _____

Approved: _____


(Signature)

Date: 5-15-82

COPYRIGHT



1982

THE BOARD OF REGENTS OF NORTH TEXAS STATE
UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF DENTON

All rights reserved. No part of this work may be reproduced or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying and recording or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the Coordinator of the Oral History Collection or the University Archivist, North Texas State University, Denton, Texas 76203

Oral History Collection

M. J. Cotter

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Austin, Texas

Date: May 15, 1982

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing M. J. Cotter for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on May 15, 1982, in Austin, Texas. I am interviewing Mr. Cotter in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was aboard the battleship USS Maryland during the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Mr. Cotter, let's start this interview by having you give me a brief biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education-- things of that nature. Just be very brief and general.

Mr. Cotter: I was born on June 14 at Big Spring, Texas.

Dr. Marcello: What year?

Mr. Cotter: In 1923.

Dr. Marcello: What education do you have?

Mr. Cotter: I have a high school education.

Dr. Marcello: When did you join the Navy?

Mr. Cotter: I joined the Navy in March of 1941.

Dr. Marcello: Why did you decide to join the service in 1941?

Cotter: Well, at the time, jobs were pretty scarce, and I had previously tried to get into the CCC--that was Civilian Conservation Corps--that was still in progress about that time. They were a little slow in taking me, and I didn't know whether they were going to take me or not. So I decided, well, "I will go into the Navy," provided my parents would sign up for me, which they, reluctantly, finally did.

Marcello: How old were you at the time you went in?

Cotter: I was seventeen at the time.

Marcello: That meant that you would probably have gone in for what was called the "minority cruise."

Cotter: Yes, that's exactly what I did. I went in on the "minority cruise."

Marcello: How many years was that?

Cotter: That was until,,well, until I would have been twenty-one years old, which was in 1945, I believe, just sometime before they dropped the atomic bomb.

Marcello: Why did you decide to join the Navy as opposed to one of the other branches of service? This is always an interesting question to me because, in your case, I'm talking to someone who comes from Big Spring, Texas, which certainly is nowhere near the sea.

Cotter: Well, probably the reason I decided to join the Navy is that I always liked the water. With the Navy, I assumed that I would travel a lot, and I would see a lot of water.

Marcello: Where did you take your boot camp?

Cotter: At San Diego.

Marcello: At the time that you went into the Navy in March of 1941, how hard or easy was it to get into the Navy?

Cotter: I don't believe it was particularly hard to get into the Navy, I know I got in within a short length of time. I don't believe there was any problem at the time, if a person was in good physical condition,

Marcello: How long did boot camp last at that time?

Cotter: I believe it was six weeks,

Marcello: Which means that they would have cut it down considerably over what it had used to be. At one time, I think it was twelve weeks, was it not? And then I guess, with the national emergency coming along, they cut down on boot camp.

Cotter: I don't really know how long it had been previous to that, but I believe that after the war started, they cut it down possibly to even less time. I'm not even sure, but it may have been eight weeks. But I believe it was six at the time.

Marcello: Was there anything eventful that happened in boot camp that you think we need to get as part of the record, or was it the normal Navy boot camp?

Cotter: Oh, it was the normal Navy routine, I suppose. Of course, I had lived out on the farm and worked a lot on the farm, and I do remember that during boot camp, everyone complained about all the drills--having to walk so much. They complained about the food and things like that. Well, to me that's some of the best food I had ever had in my life. In fact, I gained a lot of weight while

I was in boot camp. A lot of people were losing weight, and... I don't know... I had been used to hard working, so it was no problem.

Marcello: Awhile ago you seemed to indicate that economic factors played an influence in your decision to enter the Navy.

Cotter: Yes, that is true. We had been farming. We lost the farm that my dad had been farming, and, of course, being an ol' farm boy, the only thing that I knew to do was farm work. Of course, we didn't live in town, so it was rather hard to find a job that paid very well. Of course, going into the Navy at \$21 a month, you know, wasn't too good a pay either, but it was a living.

Marcello: And it did offer a certain amount of security, did it not?

Cotter: Oh, certainly.

Marcello: You know, economic reasons were very important to a lot of people who entered the service at that time. Even as late as 1941, times were tough in various sections of the country. The effects of the Depression were still there.

Cotter: Yes, that's true.

Marcello: Where did you go from boot camp?

Cotter: From boot camp, I requested duty on a battleship. At the time, a person leaving boot camp could request what type ship, or even what ship, they wanted to go on, and if the ship happened to be in port, and the Navy felt that it needed certain men or certain type men on a different ship, they would try to put you on the ship that you wanted.

While in boot camp, I met a person that had been in the Navy before. He had gone out of the Navy,,,well, he came back in again. He had been on the Oklahoma, the battleship Oklahoma. He told me what a great ship the Oklahoma was, so naturally I requested the Oklahoma. I decided I did want to be on a battleship. Of course, the Oklahoma wasn't in port at the time, so they sent me up to Bremerton, the Navy yard, to the battleship Maryland.

Marcello: Why did you want to go on a battleship?

Cotter: Well, being a young kid that knew very little about the Navy, and knowing that the battleship was the greatest thing in the Navy at the time, that is what I wanted to become--a battleship sailor.

Marcello: I guess they were a pretty impressive sight, were they not?

Cotter: Oh, yes, they were.

Marcello: You mentioned that you picked up the Maryland in Bremerton Navy Yard. How closely were you keeping abreast of current events and world affairs at that time?

Cotter: I really don't know just how close that I was keeping up. Of course, I do remember keeping up with Germany and Britain and the war over in Europe, but it didn't seem of any great concern at the time,

Marcello: In other words, when you possibly did think of the country getting into war, your eyes were turned more toward Europe than toward Asia,

Cotter: Yes, that's true,

Marcello: Since you were only seventeen years of age, I would assume that a

possibility of your being drafted into the Army would not have played a role in your decision to join the Navy. They weren't drafting seventeen-year-olds at that time.

Cotter: No, that played no role whatsoever.

Marcello: Describe the reception that you got when you went aboard the Maryland at Bremerton. You were out of boot camp, but I'm sure that to most of those "old salts" aboard the Maryland, you were still a "boot."

Cotter: Oh, yes, yes, very definitely. A person going on a ship for the first time is definitely a "boot." And, of course, I had never slept in a hammock. We were shipped out to Seattle and took a ferry over to Bremerton, went aboard ship, and they assigned the different men to different divisions as you came aboard ship. A great ol' big, tall boy, they would naturally want him in an antiaircraft battery because for handling five-inch shells, you had to have a little height to load the shells, such as that. I was reasonably short, and they could use the short men in the powder handling room, so they assigned me to a deck division on one of the 16-inch batteries.

Of course, they had impressed on us, from the time that I first went into the Navy, that you can't walk in your sleep and all those sorts of things. So that first night they assigned me a space to hang my hammock. I had never slept in a hammock. We had practiced getting in a hammock, and after I finally did manage to settle into a hammock that night, well, sometime during the night I woke up, and I was on the deck. I didn't fall out. I did walk

in my sleep a lot when I was a kid, and, of course I didn't want the Navy to know that because if you walked in your sleep, they would discharge you. So anyway, I woke up, and I didn't know what part of the ship I was in. Naturally, I was right underneath my hammock, I woke up, I suppose, as I got out of my hammock, and I felt that I was on the opposite side of the ship. I didn't have time that afternoon as I came in to explore the ship and find out where everything was, so, naturally, I started walking around; and thinking I was on the wrong side of the ship, I ended up on the other side of the ship. I think I wandered around for about an hour before I ever found my hammock again. I got back in my hammock, and no one ever knew I had been up,

Marcello: So when you went aboard the Maryland, you were assigned to the deck division, and your particular battle station was down in the powder handling room,

Cotter: Yes, in the lower part of the ship, in the powder handling room,

Marcello: That's usually where they start out people, is it not?

Cotter: That is true,

Marcello: And then I think gradually you work your way up to the turret, do you not?

Cotter: Yes, yes,

Marcello: You mentioned the hammocks awhile ago. Let's talk just a little bit about the living quarters that you occupied aboard the Maryland. How did you like sleeping in a hammock?

Cotter: Oh, I loved it. The hammock was the most comfortable bed I had

while I was in the Navy.

Marcello: Why was that?

Cotter: Well, in the wintertime, in particular, you get into your hammock, and it will just kind of roll up around you, and you go to sleep. I seemed to have no problem tumbling and turning because you couldn't tumble and turn. It was a very comfortable way to sleep. Also, if the ship happened to be in a storm, your hammock would swing with the ship. You look underneath,,and at the time the petty officers and some of the ranking seamen would be assigned cots. Of course, their cots would be sliding all over the place, but a hammock is swinging with the ship. It was just a real comfortable way to sleep.

Marcello: Where did you swing your hammock aboard the Maryland?

Cotter: Each ship had a designated area that their division stayed in. Of course, we used just that certain area, and we would hang the hammock from the beams--the overhead beams, the frames, as they were called. Each morning you'd take your hammock down and stow it in a compartment--an open compartment--alongside the area.

Also, the same area would be used for the dining area. The tables would also hang up. They would be placed on the overhead, and they would take the tables down at mealtime. The mess cooks from each division would go to the galley and bring the food to that particular area.

Marcello: Talk a little bit more about mess cooking because I'm sure that you had your turn at mess cooking aboard the Maryland.

Cotter: Yes, I did. I had my share of mess cooking. It's one thing that most of the sailors didn't like. It was no big chore. You got out of a lot of the other work duties by being a mess cook. You were assigned on a rotating basis, and I don't even remember the length of time, maybe three months at a time, possibly. You would serve your time at that, and they would have other men relieve you and take over the mess cooking duties, and you would go back on the deck force, sweeping, cleaning, holystoning.

Marcello: What advantages were there to being a mess cook?

Cotter: Well, the advantages to being a mess cook, if anyone called it advantages, was that naturally you could get the best portions of something to eat, I would say. Of course, with everything coming into the division, it was all the same. Maybe some people liked to eat a little more than others, and they certainly had the chance of filling themselves up that way.

Marcello: Is it also not true that if a person did a particularly good job of mess cooking, he would be given some tips at the end of the pay period?

Cotter: Not really. As it worked out with us, just within our own division, no, that didn't apply. Certain areas of mess cooking you might have,, each division was assigned duties also in the chiefs' mess at times. Maybe one or two men from certain divisions would be assigned to the chiefs' mess area, and some of them might do a little tipping in there.

Marcello: What was the food like aboard the Maryland?

Cotter: It wasn't bad, I enjoyed the food. The main thing I ever found wrong with the food was that by cooking in quantities, you know, like barrels and barrels of scrambled eggs, naturally you are going to have bad eggs in there occasionally, and shells. The food was plentiful, but the preparation wasn't always what you would get, you know, maybe at home or in a cafe.

Marcello: Awhile ago you talked about holystoning the deck as part of your chores on the deck force. Describe how holystoning the deck worked. I'm asking you that question because it's a part of the Navy that's no longer in existence.

Cotter: Okay. You have some type of a pumice brick. It's not a full-sized, long brick; it's a square brick, possibly about half a brick. It's some kind of pumice material. It has a hole that goes about halfway through the brick. In order to holystone the deck, you use an old mop handle, old broom handle, that would fit into the hole, and there is a certain position...you get your arms in a certain position around the stick--one hand down lower--and you just usually follow the grain of the wood. You go back and forth, back and forth. It's used on teakwood and keeps the wood smooth and clean.

Marcello: Would they also put some water or saltwater or something on there?

Cotter: Oh, yes. They used water, usually saltwater, of course. I don't remember what we...it seems like there was some kind of a compound that we used occasionally in spots that maybe had an exceptional amount of grease or something like that. It seems like there was...

I don't know whether it was saltwater soap or...I don't even remember. We would use some kind of a compound occasionally.

Marcello: What would be the result of holystoning? What would the deck look like?

Cotter: It would look almost white. It would have a good, clean color to it, a clean look. Not a bright white, but it would bring it out to a light color.

Marcello: Was holystoning a distasteful chore, or was it simply something else that had to be done?

Cotter: Oh, anything that was work, I think, was distasteful to a sailor. If you could find anything you could "gold brick" at, it was better. It was something that most anyone didn't like to do, but if you had a petty officer back there behind you--standing right behind you--and if you slowed down, well, "Let's pick it up a little!" They were good-natured about it, but they did keep you busy. It wasn't all that bad.

Marcello: So there would be a great many people...

Cotter: Oh, yes,

Marcello: ...holystoning the deck at one time.

Cotter: Oh, yes, side by side, one a little farther up in front or behind so that the whole surface would be covered uniformly.

Marcello: How often was the deck holystoned?

Cotter: I really don't know. Possibly once a week. I'm not sure about that. It's been a long time ago. I don't remember the length of time in between; I just remember the holystoning itself.

Marcello: How important was the band aboard the USS Maryland?

Cotter: I would think that as time went on during the war, I believe it was really important.

Marcello: How about before the war?

Cotter: Before the war, it was just music. I was not a music lover, and I really paid very little attention to it. They did have a band, and it was something that people would listen to. They would play maybe on the quarterdeck, maybe before the flag ceremonies, at different times, it was enjoyable, I'm sure, to a lot of people. It wasn't particularly enjoyable to me, but I think that later on, during the war, it was pretty important.

Marcello: Why was that? Why was it pretty important during the war?

Cotter: I think it helped build morale, and some of the songs they would play, some of the patriotic songs, just seemed to pick a person up.

Marcello: How important were athletics in the life of that pre-Pearl Harbor Navy and especially aboard the Maryland?

Cotter: Well, that was a form of recreation, and as far as the athletics, everyone, all sailors, at one time or another thought they were a baseball player, basketball player, or something. Anytime that we were in Pearl or maybe during war around a little island somewhere that they would let us off for a little while, we would maybe try to get up a baseball game with another division. Of course, we'd take a little beer along with us. It didn't turn into much of a baseball game, but we had a lot of fun. It was relaxation.

Of course, another thing that was helpful in the way of athletics was boxing. We always had boxing smokers. Anyone interested in athletics, . . . it helped them along.

Marcello: I understand that the boxing smokers were always very, very well attended.

Cotter: Yes, they were. Occasionally, when we weren't right in the war zone, we would have a smoker aboard ship with maybe a ship nearby. We had a full quarterdeck out there, and we usually had them on the quarterdeck. Everyone would come out to watch the boxing action, you know, "Our ship can beat your ship."

Marcello: In general, as you look back upon life aboard the Maryland before Pearl Harbor, how would you describe the morale?

Cotter: Oh, I would describe the morale as reasonably good. Before the war, the men that were on the Maryland, or on any ship, had a choice. They could have gone Army; they could have stayed at home. I think the morale was good.

Marcello: Are you saying that the morale was good basically because all the men were there because they wanted to be there?

Cotter: Yes, I would say that.

Marcello: After you boarded the Maryland in Bremerton, did you leave shortly thereafter for Pearl Harbor?

Cotter: They were in the process of overhauling the ship--repainting and adding torpedo blisters to the side of the ship, which that's an extension off the side of the ship where extra fuel is kept and also to keep the torpedo maybe four feet farther away from the

armored side of the ship. We stayed up there probably for about two to three months. Then we left Bremerton, went down to Long Beach, and eventually on to Pearl,

Marcello: So you actually weren't at Pearl Harbor too long before the Japanese attack,

Cotter: We were there, oh, two or three months. I don't remember when we did get to Pearl, but we were there two or three months. But we were in and out of Pearl a lot. We would go out on maneuvers for gunnery practice during the week, and we'd always come in usually on the weekend,

Marcello: What did you think about the idea of being assigned to the Hawaiian Islands?

Cotter: When I went into the service and when I was in boot camp, I heard the different sailors say they wanted to go to Pearl Harbor, I had never heard of Pearl Harbor, I had no idea where Pearl Harbor was, I was an ol' farm boy. I hated to ask, you know, and be that stupid, but eventually I found out where Pearl Harbor was, Oh, I was thrilled at the chance of going down there.

Marcello: Did you have visions of a tropical paradise and all that sort of thing?

Cotter: Oh, certainly,

Marcello: After the Maryland arrived at Pearl Harbor, describe for me what one of its training exercises would be like. Now again, this is prior to December 7, For example, when would the Maryland normally go out on a training exercise? How long would it stay out? What

would it do while it was out there?

Cotter: Usually, we would go out on a Monday, We would stay out, I believe, just one week. We may have stayed out more than one week, but usually we'd just stay out one week. We would be over around Lahaina Roads, and the gunnery practice, of course, would consist of,,as it did all the time I was on the ship, every morning you would have loading practice until every person knew exactly what to do. You would get it down to perfection--loading the gun, any type of gun--the aircraft people with their guns, us with our 16-inch battery--and we would have gunnery practice with some ship, small ship, towing a sea sled with a target on it.

Marcello: In that gunnery practice, I would assume that you didn't fire those 16-inch guns,,you had, what, 14-inch guns?

Cotter: No, 16-inch,

Marcello: You had 16-inch? I would assume you didn't fire those too often in these exercises, did you?

Cotter: No, we didn't do firing too often. Most of it was the loading of dummy projectiles and dummy powder bags, and we would do that every morning for probably an hour-and-a-half. You worked it out to perfection,

Marcello: Which guns would normally be fired at the sled? Five-inch guns?

Cotter: Well, the 5-inch would usually be fired at a towed sleeve from aircraft. And, of course, at the time we also had broadside guns, a 5-inch /,51-caliber, that would normally be used against surface vessels. They could be used against aircraft, but they didn't have

high elevation. They were more a surface gun. They would be fired at the sled. The 16-inch would be fired at the sled, but usually the 5-inch/.25-caliber antiaircraft gun would be fired at sleeves towed by aircraft,

Marcello: How much emphasis was placed upon antiaircraft practice?

Cotter: Equally as much as we used our surface guns,

Marcello: On the other hand, before the war started, the Maryland probably had very few 20- or 40-millimeters, did it?

Cotter: We had no 20-millimeters, I say we didn't. I don't believe we did before the war started. We had .50-caliber water-cooled machine guns. And we had no 40-millimeters. We did have...I believe it was made by the English...an English gun. It was a 1.1.

Marcello: This was the Bofors?

Cotter: The what?

Marcello: The Bofors. Was it called the Bofors or the pom-pom?

Cotter: Yes, yes, we called it the pom-pom. We did run into a little problem with that type of a gun. The shell that you fire from a ship...they are armed after they get a safe distance away from the ship. We started using those one time...of course, I wasn't in the antiaircraft part of it, but we did start using those one day in a rainstorm. Of course, they all started exploding. They would go out there, and they would hit a raindrop. They had a little button on the end of them, a contact fuse. So eventually we did get rid of those. Later on in the war, you know, after the

war started, we did get 40's and 20's,

Marcello: You mentioned that you would stay out for about a week?

Cotter: Yes,

Marcello: And when would you normally come in?

Cotter: We would usually come in just prior to a weekend, probably on a Friday.

Marcello: And this was pretty much a standard routine?

Cotter: Oh, yes, it was pretty much a routine.

Marcello: In other words, it would not have taken a very smart person long to realize that on a weekend the ships were in.

Cotter: Yes, that's true,

Marcello: And was this true of virtually the entire battleship division?

Cotter: With the battleships in the area, it was,

Marcello: In other words, on virtually any weekend, all the ships would be tied up at Battleship Row?

Cotter: Yes, most of the ships.

Marcello: As one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as conditions between the United States and Japan continued to deteriorate, could you detect any changes in your training exercises?

Cotter: Yes, I could detect some changes. We had reports, while we would be out on exercises, of seeing a periscope occasionally or something like that. I think that we were aware that we were actually getting possibly a little closer to war.

Marcello: Did the frequency of the general quarters drills increase or anything of that nature?

- Cotter: No, I don't believe that the frequency of the general quarters drills increased. We kept up about the same routine of our gunnery practice, our loading drills, and such as that.
- Marcello: How about sailing under blackout conditions and things of that nature at nighttime?
- Cotter: I believe that possibly,..yes, I believe at night, the best I can remember,..it wasn't the same blackout we used during the war, but I believe that even at that time we were using some blackout conditions.
- Marcello: When you thought of a typical Japanese in that pre-Pearl Harbor period, what kind of a person did you usually conjure up in your own mind?
- Cotter: Well, I really don't know, but I would think that possibly I would be thinking of maybe someone inferior or maybe a smaller person and maybe a cocky person.
- Marcello: Suppose war did come between the United States and Japan. Did you have any doubts about the outcome?
- Cotter: No, not really. I never had any doubts of that.
- Marcello: In other words, you thought that the United States Navy could handle anything that came along pretty easily.
- Cotter: Well, yes, I thought that. Of course, I did wonder a little bit about it a few minutes after the attack had started.
- Marcello: When you and your buddies sat around in your bull sessions, did the subject of a possible Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor ever come up?

- Cotter: Oh, no, never.
- Marcello: Okay, let's talk a little bit about the liberty routine aboard the Maryland. Let us suppose that the Maryland came in on a Friday. How did the liberty routine work for you personally?
- Cotter: Usually, we would be divided into what we called four watches. That would be four watches in every division. We would have a port and a starboard watch in two sections of each. Usually, in port half of the people would be allowed to go ashore at one time, either the port watch or the starboard watch. Now that was previous to the war. Later on, of course, you would keep more men aboard ship; therefore, the two sections of each the port and starboard might only go ashore every fourth day possible.
- Marcello: When would liberty usually commence?
- Cotter: I think it was around...probably four o'clock in the afternoon. On Saturdays and Sundays, of course, it would be different. It would be earlier.
- Marcello: When you went ashore, what did you usually do?
- Cotter: Oh, depending on what port we were in...if we were at Long Beach, most all the sailors went down to the Pike Amusement Center there along the waterfront.
- Marcello: How about in Honolulu? What would you do when you went ashore in Honolulu before the war?
- Cotter: In Honolulu, of course, we would usually rent a camera and go over and take pictures. We'd go down around Waikiki Beach, down to the Royal Hawaiian Hotel, and just snap pictures of each other usually

and start building our photo albums,

Marcello: Picture-taking and photo albums were a favorite pastime during that period,

Cotter: Yes, that and sitting in a bar drinking beer (chuckle). Of course, at the time, I was young. I didn't start drinking beer until I was about twenty-one years old. But that was one of the pastimes, of course, sitting at the bars, drinking beer, and just walking around and looking at the scenery and taking pictures.

Marcello: Awhile ago, you mentioned renting a camera. I can't imagine that sort of thing happening today,

Cotter: Well, that was standard then. Most sailors didn't have a camera, so every shop around town in Honolulu would rent you box cameras, whatever, at the time. Of course, that was about all you had at the time. You could run and take your pictures and bring your camera back,

Marcello: These were the old Kodak box cameras?

Cotter: Yes,

Marcello: What were some of your favorite drinking establishments in downtown Honolulu? You mentioned that you didn't do much drinking until you were twenty-one, but what were some of the favorite places?

Cotter: I don't really remember the names of them. Some of them were along the street close to the harbor, close to the Honolulu Harbor,

Marcello: Hotel Street or Canal Street?

Cotter: Well, Canal Street possibly. Hotel Street, I don't remember bars being there. I'm sure they were. That was where the women hung out

(chuckle). The area out toward Waikiki Beach, there were some bars out in through there. Of course, you could take a bus and go anywhere on the island. You'd have your bus go down to where you wanted to get off in order to see the scenery or go to a bar. I don't really remember the names of the bars.

Marcello: Do you remember the Black Cat Cafe?

Cotter: Yes, I think I remember that. It sounds familiar.

Marcello: When did you have to be back aboard ship if you had liberty?

Cotter: It seems like it was,, it must have been around midnight. Wait just a minute. It could have been later than that, but we didn't have a place to stay over there, so we would usually come back around midnight. Now possibly it would last until morning. I don't really remember. It's been a long time ago.

Marcello: When people came back aboard the ship after liberty, especially on a Saturday night, what kind of condition or shape would they be in?

Cotter: Oh, well, (chuckle) the same as the people you see down here on the street now--teenagers, anyone else. You would find people coming back pretty inebriated, and you would find the rest of them sober. I don't know,, it's probably the same as it is nowadays.

Marcello: Okay, this brings us into that weekend of December 7, 1941, so we need to go into this particular period in a great deal of detail. I assume that once again the Maryland came in on a Friday?

Cotter: I believe it was, yes, Friday afternoon. I'm pretty sure that was the day it was. I think that is correct.

Marcello: Where did the Maryland tie up?

- Cotter: The Maryland tied up...I don't remember the quay number that we tied up to, but we tied up on about the first one on Battleship Row, except for the dock where they loaded fuel. There was another spot or so up there, but we were in the forward part of Battleship Row.
- Marcello: I know that the battleships were usually tied up together. Which one were you tied up to?
- Cotter: We were tied up closest to the dock or quay--whichever you want to call it--and the Oklahoma came in after we did, and she tied up just outboard of us.
- Marcello: So you were inboard of the Oklahoma.
- Cotter: We were inboard of the Oklahoma.
- Marcello: I gather that some of the crew, at least, weren't too happy when the Oklahoma came in because by tying up outboard of you, it cut off the fresh breezes and the fresh air that might come in.
- Cotter: Oh, it possibly cut off some. I'm sure it did. I don't remember it being any particular problem, really.
- Marcello: What was your routine on that Saturday of December 6, 1941?
- Cotter: I had been assigned for two or three months to "officers' country." I was working in the deck division, Fourth Division, and we took care of the "officers' country," the back part or the aft part of the ship. I had been assigned with another person to take care of the floors and the heads and such as that down in "officers country."
- Marcello: So you did have the duty on that Saturday of December 6,
- Cotter: Oh, yes,

Marcello: You did not go ashore.

Cotter: Now wait a minute. On Saturday...I don't even remember, I don't believe I did go ashore that day. I don't remember, I'm referring to my normal, everyday routine. That is the duty that I had regardless of whether I was ashore or whether I was on board. When I came back, I would have that particular duty. It was on a daily basis except when, of course, I was ashore. Then, you know, you would have that taken care of maybe the day before, where it would be okay until you got back, or another person would be taking care of it while I was gone.

Marcello: So you don't remember whether you went ashore or not on that Saturday,

Cotter: I don't remember whether I was ashore Saturday, December 6, or not,

Marcello: Okay, let's talk about December 7. What I want you to do at this point is give me a blow-blow account, as you remember it, from the time you woke up until all hell broke loose.

Cotter: Well, I woke up that morning. They had reveille at the usual time. I finished breakfast, and as I finished breakfast, I started down into "officers' country." I did go down into "officers' country" to check on the floors, the head--anything that needed to be done down there,

Marcello: Unless you had specific duty, you really didn't have to get up at any particular time on a Sunday, did you?

Cotter: Oh, yes, you did.

Marcello: Oh, you did?

Cotter: You bet. You still had reveille on Sunday. I don't remember the time, but you couldn't lay in your bunk because at the time we didn't have bunks. We had cots and hammocks, and you had to get up and get them out of the way for the access to the mess facilities and passageway, such as that,

Marcello: Okay, proceed with your routine on Sunday morning.

Cotter: I went down to the "officers' country," and I came back, for what reason, I don't know. But I came back, and then I went back again. I started up the hatch just before...well, just before the attack, I started up the hatch going up on the quarterdeck. I possibly had finished what I was doing. I really don't remember what I had been doing other than just the normal routine--checking on such things as needed to be checked on Sunday morning,

As I started up the ladder...I reached the top of the ladder, and the chaplain was standing at the top waiting on me to get up so he could come down. I assume I said good morning to him--what--not--and then just as he was getting ready to go down, after I had cleared the way, we were standing there face-to-face, and all of a sudden the searchlight broke above us. Of course, we turned around to see what was happening. The glass had started falling down around us,

Just as we looked up, a plane crossed over the top of the ship, I assume it was probably strafing Ford Island. Of course, we were in the way, and it hit us before it got over there. But as soon

as the glass started falling, we looked up, the plane came across, and immediately we...oh, it was directly above, just barely cleared the mast of the ship. Of course, as soon as we saw that, we knew what it was. We knew it was a Japanese plane, no doubt about it. That insignia was just shining.

Marcello: So this Japanese plane had actually released a bomb that hit the Maryland at this stage?

Cotter: No, no, it was strafing, machine gun fire.

Marcello: I see, Okay.

Cotter: I assume that it was strafing Ford Island. We were tied right beside Ford Island, and I don't know whether it was strafing us or Ford Island, but it did hit us. I don't remember any of the machine gun bullets hitting right around us, but they did hit one of the searchlights and broke the searchlight out directly...oh, about a third of the way up the mast, we had a level of searchlights. It had hit one of those.

Marcello: So what happens at that point? What do you do?

Cotter: I have always tried to remember. I don't know what happened. Normally, you would let an officer go in front of you going down a hatch or down through a ladderway. I don't remember. It seemed like we both went down. I don't remember whether he was in front of me or behind me because immediately I knew what was happening. My battle station was down below, and rather than go across the deck with machine guns firing to go to the upper part of the turret and down, well, I could go down through the third deck and go down

on below that, down through passageway, and get to my battle station, which was the lower powder handling room.

Marcello: So you were heading for your battle station.

Cotter: Immediately, yes, before they sounded General Quarters or anything. I knew what was happening, so I was heading for my battle station.

Marcello: So what happens then?

Cotter: Well, I got to the battle station before anyone else. I was down in the powder handling room.

Marcello: Which is how many decks down?

Cotter: Oh, it's just right above the double bottom. There is one compartment below that where the screws, propeller shaft, come through. It's just all the way to the bottom of the ship.

Marcello: Okay, so what do you do when you get down there, and you see there's nobody else around?

Cotter: Well, immediately others started coming in. I had a head start because I knew what was happening, and I was well on my way. At that point, when I went down to the next deck, well, I was well on my way down to the area of my battle station.

As soon as I got down there...of course, the ship was shaking occasionally--right away-- with torpedoes hitting...not hitting us but hitting the other ships nearby. Later, within just a few minutes, we saw that there was nothing that we could do there, so we started drifting topside. We came up through the gun turret and started coming up topside because we couldn't fire the guns. There was nothing to shoot at, and being in the harbor...we had never heard of

16-inch guns being fired inside the harbor.

Marcello: So you come back up on topside again. What do you do at that point?

Cotter: First, I came up through the gun turret, up to the guns where the loading crew loads the guns. Several of us collected or accumulated in there and stayed for a while.

Marcello: You are inside the turret?

Cotter: Yes, we are inside the gun turret. Then as people came in and out--scared to death and talking about the ships being torpedoed... the Oklahoma was capsizing...well, as that happened...I was speechless for quite awhile. I opened my mouth, and I couldn't say anything.

Shortly after that, I went outside just about the time the Oklahoma capsized. I went outside, and then, of course, we had a pretty busy job manning fire hoses--anything we could do--and helping pass ammunition to antiaircraft gunners, helping get people aboard ship from the Oklahoma or any of the other ships around there where they had been blown off of or had jumped off and swam from the ship that had been hit or whatnot. We started trying to bring people aboard, and also fight fires.

Marcello: Did you actually see the Oklahoma turn over?

Cotter: No, No, the Oklahoma capsized just before I went outside.

Marcello: When you went outside, could you see what had happened to it?

Cotter: Oh, yes.

Marcello: What were your thoughts when you saw this huge battleship having

turned over?

Cotter: Well, I just couldn't believe something like that could happen, and then, of course, we had smoke coming from everywhere. Everything was afire. It seemed like the whole fleet was burning up. I really don't know. I'd never seen anything like that, and, of course that's another thing that had me so speechless, I suppose.

Marcello: What were you doing, then, the rest of the morning?

Cotter: The rest of the morning, we were fighting fires, trying to keep fires from spreading. Mostly the fire we were fighting was the oil fire that was around the ship--trying to force it back with water hoses. Of course, the smoke was so thick that you could see very little and could hardly breathe. Other than fighting the fires and trying to get people on board, that's about all we could do.

Marcello: Do you recall when the Maryland caught the two bombs? For example, one bomb hit off the port bow, and, as I recall, the other hit the forecandle and set some awnings on fire. Do you recall when those bombs hit?

Cotter: No, I have no idea because there were so many, many jarring noises that I had no idea when we were hit, and I was at the aft part of the ship. I am sure I probably heard when they hit, but I had no idea it was us.

Marcello: As you look back on what was taking place, would you say that most people were acting in a professional manner, or was there a great deal of confusion and chaos?

- Cotter: I think there was a great deal of confusion and chaos for a short length of time, but with the training these people had at their battle stations, I think that within a short time everything was working to perfection. A person doesn't really realize what or how they are doing it. They had been through so many drills that you can do it and never think.
- Marcello: You mentioned that you were manning fire hoses through a great deal of this period,
- Cotter: Yes,
- Marcello: The purpose was to keep the fire and the oil and so on away from the Maryland?
- Cotter: Yes, that's true,
- Marcello: Did you see the Arizona blow up?
- Cotter: No, I didn't see the Arizona blow up, I don't know, at the time, where I was when it blew up. I do remember seeing some of the others-- the Cassin, Shaw, and Downes over in the Pennsylvania area. When the Shaw blew up, then I thought at the time...I didn't have any type of a hat on, you know, the protective head covering, and I was thinking at the time...it was a long ways over there, but I thought, "My gosh, an explosion like that! Well, there's going to be things falling on us from that distance."
- Marcello: Was this the Cassin or the Shaw that blew up?
- Cotter: The Cassin, Shaw, and Downes were all over in the area. Two of them were in front of the Pennsylvania, which was in dry dock, and I don't remember now which one...I just always placed those three

as an explosion, But there's one of them that did blow up, and I'm not sure which one it way,

Marcello: Do you remember a lull between the attacks?

Cotter: Oh, yes,

Marcello: What occurred during this lull?

Cotter: Just a continuation of fighting fires,..just continuous fires, and, also, at the time, they were trying to decide what to do with the crew of the Oklahoma that was still inside.

Marcello: I have read that the Maryland band actually played during the lull. Do you recall this?

Cotter: I don't remember that. I don't believe they did because I think, at the time, everything,..I think if a band had been out there, someone would say, "Well, this is a hell of a time for some music. Let's throw those instruments overboard and pick some of those sailors up and get them on board,"

Marcello: Did you actually participate in any of the rescues of the sailors that were taken aboard?

Cotter: Yes, I helped them get aboard and whatnot, I didn't go out on any of the boats. Of course, they had boats in the water--any boat you could find to put in the water to help pick the sailors up. I didn't go off the ship. I helped some sailors get aboard ship.

Marcello: What was the condition of those sailors that were being pulled aboard?

Cotter: Oh, most of them were oily. Most of them had been in the oil in the water--the oil that maybe hadn't caught fire at the time. They

were slimy and oily.

Marcello: What kind of injuries could you detect?

Cotter: I don't particularly remember any particular type of injuries except maybe some,,well, if they were burned, you really couldn't tell because of the oil all over them. I'm sure probably some of them were burned and maybe scraped up--damaged a little--but very few people, that I can remember, that got off the ship right in our area was in real bad shape. Most of them that were in real bad shape were the ones that were trapped or were completely blown up when the ship blew up. Most of the injuries from around our area,,the torpedoes, of course, would hit the ship, and you were either okay or you were gone--the ones that were trapped in a compartment,

Marcello: What did you do with those sailors that you pulled aboard? In other words, were they simply told to go someplace, or did they participate in the activities or what?

Cotter: I really haven't very much of a memory as to what happened. You'd just get them aboard, and then you'd maybe look around in the next minute, and they would be gone. They would be somewhere else on the ship. Of course, just being a "boot," I was given no instructions and really didn't know what happened to all the men that did come aboard. They drifted around to different parts of the ship, I assume.

Marcello: How serious a threat were the fires and flames from the Arizona and the West Virginia?

Cotter: Well, of course, anytime you have fire and flames, you are expecting your ship to catch fire. Then gradually there are the explosions--ammunition explosions--such as that. The biggest threat, it seemed to me, at the time was that the smoke was so thick that we couldn't see to do anything. We couldn't hardly breathe, and we were just thinking that the ship would catch fire from the flames in the water, which it eventually would have if we had not kept trying to push it back with a fire hose,,,and the wind was coming our direction. Of course, the oil was all washing down on us. As far as a serious threat,,,as long as we kept it back, there was really no threat of catching fire. I would assume there wasn't. Of course, we didn't know at the time.

Marcello: How was the water pressure?

Cotter: Well, the water pressure seemed to have held up pretty good because, as far as I know, we had no damage to our ship that would cause our pressure to fall. The best I remember, the water pressure was reasonably good all during the time we were trying to keep the fire back,

Marcello: What kind of resistance was the Maryland putting up?

Cotter: Well, it took quite awhile to get the ~~ammunition~~ up. They didn't have ~~ammunition~~ up in the ready boxes. Normally, you have a ready box with some ~~ammunition~~ up there. I'm not sure whether we even had any ready ~~ammunition~~ at the time. It took a little while to get the ~~ammunition~~ started up. The ~~ammunition~~ lockers were all locked up, and no one seemed to know where the keys were. Of course,

I think a lot of the locks were broken off.

But the first resistance we had was a sailor that was up near his battle station, which was a water-cooled .50-caliber machine gun with no water in the water jacket. He started firing immediately when he saw what had happened. He started firing. That was the first firing that the Maryland did. It took several minutes before we actually could start any 5-inch antiaircraft guns firing.

Marcello: By the time the second wave comes along, had the antiaircraft fire increased quite a bit? In other words, were you kind of ready for that second attack?

Cotter: Oh, yes, yes. Of course, on the second attack, we didn't have the same type of planes. You didn't have the torpedo bombers coming in. We were firing at a different angle at the high-altitude bombers than we were firing at the dive-bombers.

Marcello: While all this is going on, do you have any opportunity or chance to think about what's taking place and what it means to you?

Cotter: No, I don't remember having any particular thoughts except, well, "We have got to sail the ship," or "We are just in a hell of a mess here," or "Ships are all getting sunk, and the Japanese are going to be around here in a little while." We really didn't know what to think.

Marcello: What did you do that afternoon and on into the evening?

Cotter: Well, the ship behind us kept burning all day, and we kept fighting fire--pushing water back--and other than that, I really don't remember. I had kind of a memory lapse in there, I suppose. I

I really don't remember much about what happened the rest of the day until, oh, about dark,

Marcello: What kind of an appetite did you have?

Cotter: I don't remember having an appetite.

Marcello: How about thirst?

Cotter: Thirst?

Marcello: Yes,

Cotter? We had water available. Our water was still flowing--fresh water. I don't remember anything about thirst. I remember possibly my throat being dry and a few things like that, but as far as thirst, I'm sure I took an occasional drink of water because water was available,

Marcello: I do understand that in a stress situation like that, that is, in battle conditions, one does become very, very thirsty either before or immediately thereafter,

Cotter: Well, yes, I'm sure that's true because I had noticed that, or I did notice that, later on in the war. Before we started any type of battle action, my throat would feel dry. I'd be thirsty. Of course, I would be nervous until it started. As soon as it started, I would forget all that. I suppose it's just like an athlete for a track event or something like that. They are nervous, but then as soon as they start, it's all over. The practice that we had with our loading drills and such as that, well, everything just...you know...you didn't have to remember anything. It just came naturally. You'd load a gun and never

even know what you were doing; I mean, you'd never even think about it,

Marcello: What kind of rumors were circulating around the ship in the aftermath of the attack?

Cotter: Well, to the best of my knowledge, the rumor that hit me the most was, of course, that the Japanese had landed over at Waikiki and different places like that; and also that we had a German spy aboard. Everyone gathered in groups. They were afraid to be caught by themselves. Everyone would have anything they could get in their hand--dog wrench, something like that, one of these wrenches you use to dog hatches down with. You couldn't find a dog wrench around a hatch--somebody had it in their hand. The rumor was going around, of course, that there was some spy on board, and he had a German accent. Then, of course, we had all the rumors of landings at Waikiki and different places.

Marcello: Did you have any reason not to believe those rumors?

Cotter: Oh, no, not really.

Marcello: Not considering what had happened.

Cotter: No, not at the time. Then a little later on, you would hear, "Well, that was just a rumor; they haven't landed." We did use .30-06's that night and completely lined the deck all around--sailors just a little ways apart. Everyone, just about, had probably four hours on and four hours off. I don't remember. I don't even remember sleeping that night. But we did have sailors just every few feet apart with a .30-06, and, of course, we were issued live ammunition

because they were expecting someone to try to come aboard ship, maybe saboteurs or no telling who or what. They thought they might even have a landing right there in Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: When you had a chance to survey the damage that had been done to Battleship Row, which, I assume, was closest to you, describe what you saw,

Cotter: Well, forward of us was the Neosho, the tanker, that was never touched. The California, which was in front of it, was capsized. We were next, on the side toward Ford Island, and the Oklahoma was laying down on its side behind us. Of course, we were sitting on the bottom--the front part of our ship. Directly behind us was the Tennessee, and you really couldn't tell about the damage on it. I thought it was in terrible shape, but what I saw was mostly the smoke, you know, coming from the West Virginia and the Arizona. Immediately outboard of the Tennessee was the West Virginia, and immediately behind was the Arizona. Of course, the Nevada had been behind it, but it tried to get underway, and it ran aground to keep from being sunk in the harbor.

Everything looked like it was just lost forever. All the ships behind us seemed to be sunk. The Tennessee wasn't, but we really thought at one time...I mean, I thought it had burned all to pieces, but I just remembered all the smoke. Well, of course, smoke was still on it at the time, and it just appeared that it was burning.

Marcello: In your wildest imagination, did you ever think you would see a

battleship turn completely over?

Cotter: No, I had never thought that I would see one turn completely over,

Marcello: What did you think when you saw it?

Cotter: Well, I saw that, and the first thing I thought was I really didn't know a battleship was that flat on the bottom.

Marcello: Describe what you saw over where the Arizona was.

Cotter: Well, we couldn't...it was a day or so before we could even see the Arizona because of the smoke. But when the smoke had cleared up, you could see the Arizona with the mast tilting forward just like it had blown up. We knew it wasn't turned over. It just looked like the ship had busted in the middle, and the mast fell forward.

I was on the Arizona before it had completely quit burning. It was either the next day or the second day. I went over on a work detail, to try to get one of the towing cables from around the gun turret. They have the large towing cables that are four inches thick possibly and covered with cloth to keep from scratching your hands on them and whatnot. We went over to salvage a towing cable to...they wanted to try to anchor the California to keep it from capsizing. In the meantime, they finally flooded the other compartments and got it settled down--not on an even keel, but they did keep it from capsizing.

I don't remember what happened. We got over there, and I don't remember whether we couldn't get the cable off or if there wasn't any cable there. I know they took us over on a boat and told us to start getting the cable loose and be prepared to load it up on

something. I don't know what they were going to load it on, but they were possibly going to pull it over to Ford Island and pull it down that way. But we stayed over there for an hour or so before the boat ever came back, and, of course, we walked around over the Arizona. You could still see bodies down inside the ship. It was just, you know, torn all to pieces. Where we could walk, we would walk and look around the Arizona.

Marcello: Was the deck still hot?

Cotter: No, no, the decks weren't still hot. The parts we couldn't get to, I'm sure, were because there was still some smoke coming from some of the compartments on us as far as the quarterdeck. But, no, the decks weren't still hot in the area where we were. In fact, so much of the deck was under water...the part where we went in to work at was just about under water. Some of the after deck, you know, was under water.

Marcello: Was it kind of a weird or eerie feeling to be over there aboard the Arizona?

Cotter: Yes, it was. It was real weird. It kind of brought home what had really happened, I suppose, when we started seeing Marine bodies, in particular, in the casemate where there battle stations were and where the Marines lived on a battleship. That's mostly what we could see in that area, was dead Marines.

Marcello: So they had not retrieved those bodies?

Cotter: No, no, they had not retrieved...at that time, I assume they hadn't started taking any of the bodies off the Arizona at all. They had

been pretty busy doing other things at the time.

I do remember, also, that night planes coming in and hearing anti-aircraft fire during the night. Of course, it was some of our own planes coming in. We thought at first it was Japanese, and someone said they failed to get a proper identification. I imagine what happened, ..probably some one, little, lone gun somewhere started firing, and everybody else joined in. We were pretty trigger-happy at the time.

Marcello: This occurred on the night of December 7?

Cotter: Yes, that's right.

Marcello: Did you actually witness that fireworks?

Cotter: No, I didn't. It seemed like I was sitting in the gun turret when I heard the firing.

Marcello: What did you do in the days following the attack?

Cotter: I know we weren't allowed to go ashore anymore except for a few of the petty officers, and I don't really know what they were doing. They equipped a lot of petty officers with sidearms, and they made some trips into Honolulu or different places, for what reason I really don't know. But as far as liberty, we had no more liberty to go ashore.

Marcello: What kind of work were you doing in the aftermath of the attack?

Cotter: One of the things I did, ..of course, you had work parties trying to clear up different parts of the ship that had been damaged. One work party I was on, ..I had to help clean up one of the forward compartments that was flooded, and what had been stored in that area,

in that compartment, was cereal, Rice Krispies, I remember a whole compartment of Rice Krispies and seawater and oil, all mixed together. The deck was level. It might have been tilting just a little to the bow, but I remember being unable to stand up on the deck at all. We had to sit down in that and try to clean it up because everytime you would stand up, you know, with the deck at that level, our feet would slip out from under us. Rice Krispies, seawater, and oil--mixed together,

Marcello: What kind of damage had been done to the Maryland? Did you actually see where those bombs had hit and the damage they had done?

Cotter: The best I can remember, there was one that had possibly hit the bow. Now at this time, I don't remember. But the one that they thought had gone underneath and hit the side, no, I didn't see that part of it. I don't even remember the other one, but I think one hit on top of the deck and come on down. One did hit alongside the ship and ruptured the side. At first they thought it was a torpedo that had done that, but it wasn't. Of course, we just had a small opening up there in the forward part where a torpedo could have come through, should one have been in that area.

Marcello: Did you ever play any part in the attempts made to rescue the men who were still trapped inside the Oklahoma?

Cotter: No, I stood on deck and watched them trying to rescue them,

Marcello: What did you see taking place?

Cotter: Well, quite a number of people were up on top. They were trying to cut holes in the ship and trying to decide where to cut holes

where they wouldn't blow up fuel or ammunition. They had air hoses over there pumping air down to them, Now I don't know whether this is true or not, but I heard that they were also feeding soup to some of them through a hose, a water hose, or something. That was a day or so later--trying to give them food.

Marcello: Did you actually see them pull any men out of the side or out of the bottom of the ship?

Cotter: Yes, I saw someone come out,,.at one time I saw someone. Of course, I had other duties, so I couldn't stay out there and watch as much as maybe I would have like to, but I do remember watching, and I remember someone coming out and throwing their arms up in the air,

Marcello: Was there any yelling and cheering on the Maryland when somebody,,.

Cotter: Oh, yes. We were sitting over there, and everyone was just waiting for a steady stream of them to come out,

Marcello: I also understand that during the attack, there were ropes or lines strung from the Oklahoma over to the Maryland, and Oklahoma sailors were actually shinnying across these lines to get over to the Maryland. Do you remember that?

Cotter: I don't remember that because I didn't go outside until after the Oklahoma had capsized, but if there is any such thing as that, I don't think they would have time to have strung lines over. If there was any such thing as lines, they might have been crawling across on the lines that had the two ships tied together. It capsized within just a few minutes, and I don't believe anyone had time to

try to throw lines over there.

Marcello: I guess, sooner or later, they had to get the Maryland away from the Oklahoma. When did that take place?

Cotter: That took place within a couple of weeks. They got us out and sent us...they did some temporary repairs on the bow of the ship and sent us back to Bremerton. I know we were at sea somewhere between Honolulu and Bremerton on Christmas Day.

Marcello: During the period from the time the attack was over until you left, were you ever on any of the more distasteful details such as retrieving bodies and things of that nature?

Cotter: I did a little bit of work on retrieving bodies. That wasn't immediately afterwards; that was when bodies would start coming up...ones that were on the bottom. I helped a small amount with that, not very much. We'd go out in a boat and try to retrieve the bodies. I know that most of the sailors, even at the time, felt compassion for the people that were dead. They knew they were dead, but they hated to damage the body or anything. We had an old...I know we had one old gruff boatswain's mate--he was a coxswain, I believe--who was one of these men that I was with. He was trying to pick a sailor up by his belt or something or other, and the boatswain's mate or coxswain or whatever got tired of watching them, and he just got a boat hook, grabbed him, and pulled him aboard. Most of us...we...just compassion, I guess. I know the sailors... (weeping)

Marcello: I imagine that must have been a pretty distasteful job. I guess

you were glad you weren't on it too long.

Cotter: Well, that's true.

Marcello: When you came back to the West Coast, I would assume that the Maryland underwent all sorts of refitting, did it not?

Cotter: Yes, the best I remember, it was mostly antiaircraft guns. We had just had an overhaul, and we weren't really suffering in that respect. But we did get some different--and more--antiaircraft guns, not 5-inch but a smaller caliber.

Marcello: I guess they crammed that ship with all kinds of 20-millimeters and 40-millimeters...

Cotter: Yes.

Marcello: ...when you went back to the West Coast, did they not?

Cotter: Yes, they added a lot of 20's and, I assume, 40's at the same time. They realized that what we needed then was antiaircraft protection.

Marcello: Well, I think, Mr. Cotter, that's a pretty good place to end this interview. I want to thank you very much for having participated. You said a lot of very interesting and important things, and I'm sure that students and researchers are going to find your comments quite valuable.

Cotter: Well, thank you, I have enjoyed it.