

UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

AN INTERVIEW WITH NEAL O'STEEN

FOR THE
VETERAN'S ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF WAR AND SOCIETY
HISTORY DEPARTMENT

APRIL 2, 2002
KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

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KURT PIEHLER: This begins an interview with Neal O'Steen on April 2, 2002 in Knoxville, Tennessee, with Kurt Piehler ...

DEE BROCK: ... and Dee Brock.

PIEHLER: And, let me just begin by asking when and where you were born?

NEAL O'STEEN: I was born in Bedford County, Tennessee—Middle Tennessee, on the nineteenth day of July in 1919.

PIEHLER: And your parents were Susannah W. Reid and John Edward O'Steen?

O'STEEN: That's correct.

PIEHLER: And you know your parents were married in 1901, but you're not sure where they were married?

O'STEEN: I've never seen their marriage certificate or anything, and when I was a child, I didn't bother to ask them where they were married. (Laughs)

PIEHLER: Do you know how they met—your parents?

O'STEEN: No, I don't really, probably at a church social or something of that nature.

PIEHLER: Well, they were both Methodists. How active were they?

O'STEEN: My mother was Presbyterian and my father was a Methodist, and she joined in the Methodist church.

PIEHLER: And how active were they growing up in the Methodist church?

O'STEEN: Very active; very active.

PIEHLER: You had a lot of brothers and sisters?

O'STEEN: I had; I was the youngest of seven.

PIEHLER: And, um, it sounds like your father started out as a sharecropper; how old were you? Was he still farming when you were growing up?

O'STEEN: They had bought the farm where I grew up about a year before I was born. Before that, they were living on different farms around that part of the state.

PIEHLER: And, and they bought the farm a year after you were born; were they able to hold on to the farm?

O'STEEN: They did, and it's interesting because he was able to pay off the mortgage on his farm in the middle of the Depression because he was also a substitute mail carrier. The mail carrier retired; my father was able to carry the mail for fourteen months, and in that time he paid off the mortgage on his farm.

PIEHLER: So, this fourteen months as the, sort of, substitute mail carrier gave him enough hard cash that he could pay off the mortgage?

O'STEEN: Correct.

PIEHLER: Which probably made your father, in some ways, unique in his county?

O'STEEN: Well, possibly.

PIEHLER: Possibly? ... Did you have running water on the farm?

O'STEEN: No, they had a well.

PIEHLER: Did you have electricity?

O'STEEN: No electricity.

PIEHLER: Did the farm ever get electricity?

O'STEEN: I think it has in later years, yeah.

PIEHLER: But growing up you never had?

O'STEEN: No, no; oil lamps.

PIEHLER: And I assume an outhouse?

O'STEEN: Yeah, and an outhouse.

PIEHLER: ... How much in terms of the farm, did you buy at the store and what did you grow on the farm or raise on the farm?

O'STEEN: Well, it's hard to say; I don't know. We raised garden crops—most everything that we ate. We had to buy staples at the store. We raised our own pork, our own hogs, so there wasn't a whole lot that you had to buy at the store.

PIEHLER: So it sounds like it was like salt, and sugar, and coffee. Is that so?

O'STEEN: That's right, things like that.

PIEHLER: What was the main crop on the farm, and how big was your father's farm?

O'STEEN: I believe his farm was about ninety-five acres, and corn. We did raise some cotton and tobacco on the farm. He also had sheep; that was a money crop, when you sheered your sheep or sold your lambs. And cotton was a money crop. We sold cream, milk, that sort of thing. Of course we had chickens; we had our own eggs, and some times he would sell some eggs, if we had more than we needed, but, uh, it wasn't luxurious living but . . .

PIEHLER: But it sound like the farm was pretty secure even in midst of the Depression, because your father had paid it off?

O'STEEN: Yeah, oh yeah.

PIEHLER: You had a lot of brothers and sisters, and I assume you all worked on the farm growing up, is that?

O'STEEN: Oh, yeah.

PIEHLER: It seems like an obvious—you're probably thinking it's an obvious question ...

O'STEEN: That's right.

PIEHLER: But I think a lot of students [don't know these things]. How old were you ... when you remember doing your first chores on the farm?

O'STEEN: Oh, about six, seven years old. You know, they'd give you little things to do and then you would take on bigger things.

PIEHLER: Did your farm have any hired hands at all?

O'STEEN: No.

PIEHLER: No? It was just father and your ... mother and ...

O'STEEN: Luckily, he had enough sons to do a lot of the work

PIEHLER: Did the farm stay in the family after your father passed away?

O'STEEN: Uh, no, it was sold it. It was sold, I think, even before he died. He was incapacitated for the last seven years of his life. He was, ah—had a stroke and so he was. I think my older brother saw to the sale of the farm. My mother had died previously though in 1947, and he died in '59, so he lived about twelve more years. But he spent,

oh, about seven years in a nursing home, so the farm had to go.

PIEHLER: Your parents were Republicans. What did they, what did they think of Franklin Roosevelt?

O'STEEN: You know, I never heard 'em really complain about Roosevelt, but I've heard others. A lot of other people did.

PIEHLER: So other neighbors did? (Laughs)

O'STEEN: Oh yeah (Laughs). I've heard lots of people complain about him. (Laughs) They weren't really active in politics, except, they voted. They usually voted Republican, and I think my father—somebody in the community talked him into running for magistrate one year, and [he ran], but he didn't—he didn't win.

PIEHLER: He didn't? (Laughs)

O'STEEN: That was his only . . .

PIEHLER: That was his one effort into (Laughs) at elected office?

O'STEEN: That's right.

PIEHLER: You also listed as your father's occupation, he was a storekeeper. When was that? Before you were born, or?

O'STEEN: That was before I was born. He and his brother, my uncle, had a store. And I remember, when I was just a little kid, they had sold the store and, but we still had quite a bit of merchandise to dispose of after they went out business, and they kept it on the back porch; it was a screened in back porch and they had shelves. I can remember shelves with, oh, goods: tobacco, and so on, and they tell this story on me. I was too young to remember it, but I got up, climbed up somehow and got a plug of tobacco, and ate part of it.

BROCK: Oh no!

O'STEEN: (Laughs) They used to kid me about being so sick.

PIEHLER: ... It did not agree with you? (Laughs)

O'STEEN: Apparently not; I don't remember it at all.

PIEHLER: Oh, you don't even ...

O'STEEN: It was before my memory kicked in.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) Where—you went to school in Cedar Grove?

O'STEEN: Cedar Grove was a one-room country school about a mile from where we lived.

PIEHLER: And you would walk to school? And I assume this was a school with a potbellied stove ...

O'STEEN: Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: ... in the middle?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And in a one-room school, how many students all together roughly?

O'STEEN: Oh, maybe twenty-five or thirty.

PIEHLER: And all grades from K [Kindergarten] ... through Eight?

O'STEEN: Through Eighth it was all in the same room.

PIEHLER: And what do you remember ... did your one-room school have teachers?

O'STEEN: What do I remember?

PIEHLER: What do you remember of your first teacher?

O'STEEN: Of my first teacher? Well, not too much; she was only there one year and I was in the first grade and I just can't remember her very well. I know we had—she was an older woman, I remember that. And then later we had younger women and prettier women, (Laughter) and I can remember them better, as I was growing up a little.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) Well ... I have always read about one-room school houses, but I, you know, I never attended one and they are very uncommon now. What was school like to be all in one room? What ... memories do you have of it?

O'STEEN: Well, there were advantages to it, and a lot of disadvantages, of course. One advantage I saw in it; you could sit there and listen to the grades ahead of you recite, get up and have their class, and you could learn from that. And, I think that that was one advantage to having a one-room school; then, when you've moved on up you knew a little more that you would have if you hadn't been there.

PIEHLER: What would you mention as disadvantages; what were the disadvantages?

O'STEEN: Oh, well, it was crowded and noisy and just hard to keep order in one room.

PIEHLER: Cause it was one teacher trying to teach all grades at the same time?

O'STEEN: Yeah, yeah; that's right.

PIEHLER: ... You went to high school at Forrest, Forrest High?

O'STEEN: Forrest High School.

PIEHLER: In Chapel Hill, Tennessee?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: How far was that from home?

O'STEEN: That was about six miles, and I walked two miles to catch a bus and rode four miles. It came to the county line; I lived in Bedford County, the high school was in Marshall County, and the bus came to the county line.

PIEHLER: County line.

O'STEEN: So, I met it at the county line.

PIEHLER: Two miles is a long walk.

O'STEEN: Well, back then it didn't ...

PIEHLER: It didn't?

O'STEEN: Didn't seem long.

PIEHLER: And did you think you—when you were going to high school, then, did you do college prep or did you do another ... course? Did you do a commercial curriculum?

O'STEEN: No, when I got out of high school I didn't know whether I would get to go to college or not. It was my brothers, my older brothers—I had six siblings, five brothers—and three of them went to college and got college degrees. Two of them didn't, and, back then during the Depression, I really didn't know whether I would ever get to go to college and I may not if I hadn't gone into the military.

PIEHLER: ... So the GI Bill was pretty crucial?

O'STEEN: Right, I went on the GI Bill.

PIEHLER: Three brothers ... to have three people from a family, from a farm family in Tennessee, to go to college was pretty remarkable. How were they able to do it?

O'STEEN: Well ...the oldest one, my oldest brother, started to college but he never did finish; he dropped out and got a job. The next brother, I think, borrowed some money from an uncle or somebody, and then my older brother probably helped him—the one that had the job. They did it by helping one another, the ones that would get their degree then they would help the next one coming along. Then I had a sister in there, there were six boys and one girl in the family and she was fifty-something years old when she got her degree, finally. So it wasn't easy, you know, to get a college degree back then.

PIEHLER: But it ... sounds like your ... family ... your mother and father could do very little; there was little financial help within the family, that you had to figure out ways to come up with money?

O'STEEN: Right. Yeah, I doubt if my father would see over a couple hundred dollars a year in cash.

PIEHLER: Right, cause a lot of it was borrowed.

O'STEEN: A lot of it was barter—you'd take things to the store, eggs and whatnot, and you'd get something else. It was—it was pretty rough back then.

PIEHLER: How much, growing up, how much traveling did you do?

O'STEEN: How much what?

PIEHLER: *Traveling*. How far? What was the biggest journey before ...

O'STEEN: Oh well, back then I think I can remember the first time I ever was out of Tennessee. We went down into Alabama, I believe.

PIEHLER: And how old were you?

O'STEEN: Oh, I was probably twelve or thirteen years old.

PIEHLER: And that was the first time you left Tennessee?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: What was, sort of, the—Alabama was the furthest south. What was the furthest north you ever got?

O'STEEN: Uh, probably Nashville, until I was in my teens.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and what about, say, to the coast. Did you ever make it to the ocean shore when you were growing up?

O'STEEN: No, not until I joined the Navy.

PIEHLER: And what about going West? Did you ever make it, say, to Memphis, or?

O'STEEN: No, I don't guess I had been even as far west as the Tennessee River until ...

PIEHLER: Until service?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Dee?

BROCK: When you went to Forrest High School, did you change teachers for each of your subjects or did one teacher teach you all day?

O'STEEN: I had a teacher for each subject.

BROCK: For each subject? Now, was Forrest High School strictly high school, nine through twelve, or ... did it also include the lower grades?

O'STEEN: It had the lower grades back then; I don't think it does now. I'm not sure about now, but it did back when I was there.

BROCK: Well ... my nephew goes there and about two years they made the Forrest High School strictly nine through twelve, and they built a middle school and moved the lower grades out because it was getting so big.

O'STEEN: I thought they probably had done that.

BROCK: So, when you enlisted in the Navy ...

PIEHLER: Before we go to the Navy, I have some questions.

BROCK: Oh, I'm sorry.

PIEHLER: I just had a few more questions, before we go to Navy. One question I had was: your father, was he in the military at all?

O'STEEN: No, he was never in the military. In World War I he registered, but he was thirty-nine then and had all these kids so he was never called. I had two uncles in World

War I.

PIEHLER: ... Growing up, what did you think you wanted to do?

O'STEEN: What did I think I wanted to do?

PIEHLER: Yeah, when you—you know, did you want to be a farmer or did you want to?

O'STEEN: No, I didn't really want to be a farmer. I wanted to either get a job somewhere and make some money, or, I always liked to write and I used to think maybe I'd be an artist, but that didn't work out. But, I have done some writing [O'Steen was the managing editor of the *Kingsport Times News* from 1952-55, and was Director of Publications for the University of Tennessee, Knoxville from 1957-1985].

PIEHLER: So, very early. And so, what did you like to read when you were growing up?

O'STEEN: Oh the Zane Grey [westerns], the Frank Merriwell books, Tom Swift—all those boys' books. I used to borrow them; I had a neighbor who had several books, and I used to borrow books from him. Back then, I could order one from *Sears Roebuck* or someplace for twenty-five cents.

PIEHLER: So, the *Sears Roebuck* catalogue was an important fixture?

O'STEEN: Yes, it was very important back then.

PIEHLER: Um, what did you do for fun, growing up?

O'STEEN: Oh well, we were always playing some kind of ball. We had a big front yard and I had a couple of cousins who lived not too far away, and we were always doing something. (Piehler laughs) I never was much of a hunter; a lot of people hunt.

PIEHLER: You didn't?

O'STEEN: I wasn't much of a hunter or fisherman, either.

PIEHLER: But you liked to play baseball or softball?

O'STEEN: I liked sports and we ...

PIEHLER: How ... often did you make it to the movies growing up?

O'STEEN: I can remember the first one. I was about seven years old and my brother took me to a movie. I saw just very few.

PIEHLER: What was the nearest movie theatre growing up?

O'STEEN: What?

PIEHLER: Where was the nearest movie theatre?

O'STEEN: It was about twelve miles away.

PIEHLER: That was pretty ...

O'STEEN: That was pretty far and, of course, I had no means of getting there unless somebody took me.

PIEHLER: Did your family have an automobile growing up? Or a truck.

O'STEEN: Yeah. When my father ... was carrying the mail, I remember he bought a car for that purpose and he used it for a year or more. But the first car I remember, I think I was about eight years old and they bought us an old, I think it was a Model-T Ford. (Piehler laughs) It had the curtains you put up on the sides (Piehler laughs) and all that, but we went. ... A lot of the times I remember, when I was real small all we had was a buggy.

We would go in the buggy.

PIEHLER: You remember the buggy as the way to get around?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What ... else do you remember about—and I have a feeling there is a “Part One” to this memoir, which we’d love to ... have. ... What do you remember about, sort of, life growing up on a farm? ... Even [for] most Tennesseans ... who live in rural areas, this is in some ways ancient history?

O'STEEN: Well, it was pretty isolated. We went to church on Sunday; we’d go to visit relatives occasionally. It was, we’d get in the buggy and go eight or ten miles; that was a big day’s trip. And it was, it was hard work, it was hard work. Isolated, and you had to make your own fun. We didn’t have electricity, we didn’t have radio; ah, when I was about twelve I think, ah, I got a crystal set that you used to ...

PIEHLER: Yes, I’ve seen pictures, yeah.

O'STEEN: Yeah?

PIEHLER: So that was the first time you really listened to radio?

O'STEEN: That was the first radio I had, and that’s when I really got a love of opera; I

would listen to the operas on Saturday.

PIEHLER: You listened to, was it the Metropolitan Opera broadcast?

O'STEEN: Mm-hmm.

PIEHLER: And that's when ...

O'STEEN: I used to I used to write out the—what was his name, the one that, the commentator that—I can't think of this name now, but he would always tell the plot.

PIEHLER: Oh yes, yeah. And there was a very famous—I can't think of the ...

O'STEEN: And I would write it down. I would write it down, so I would learn a little bit about opera just by doing that. But I really like opera now.

PIEHLER: And you've kept that from ... those Metropolitan Opera broadcasts?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Well, that's fascinating ... there was a question just on the tip of my tongue. Did your family read a newspaper; did you get a newspaper?

O'STEEN: We did. My father subscribed to the *Nashville Banner*. It was a Republican paper, and ...

PIEHLER: So you would regularly have a paper in your household?

O'STEEN: It came by the mail, and it was a day late always, but yeah, we got a newspaper.

PIEHLER: How much, growing up, how much were you aware of what was going on, say, in Europe in the 1930's? What recollection do you ...

O'STEEN: Very little, just what I saw in the paper occasionally. I knew there was trouble over there and it looked like we might get into it, but I really didn't know too much about it up until, well the forties, the early forties.

PIEHLER: How well ... were your neighbors doing in the Great Depression?

O'STEEN: Huh?

PIEHLER: How well were your neighbors doing? Because it sounds like you, in some ways, while you weren't a wealthy family you were, in some ways, well off in a sense.

O'STEEN: Well, some of them were pretty well set. I know we had one neighbor that they were just about to loose their farm, because they had a mortgage on it and they couldn't make the payments and that sort of thing. But it was a pretty rough on some farmers, and if my father hadn't been able to take the mail, carry the mail there for awhile, we could have lost ours, but they were still paying. They would pay very little on the principal, but they would try to always meet the interest every year, and pay that. So, they'd carry the loan, you know, and he was just lucky that he was able to make enough in that time; and I think he was making about \$150.00 a month, which was real good money, back then.

PIEHLER: Yeah. Oh yeah, for that era that was.

O'STEEN: Yeah, so that I always felt that that saved our farm for us.

PIEHLER: ... I've often been told that for farm families ... going into town was a big ritual. Where would you go into town, say, on a Saturday afternoon or evening?

O'STEEN: Well ...

PIEHLER: Or if was there another time when?

O'STEEN: I don't think we did that.

PIEHLER: That wasn't a big ritual?

O'STEEN: No, that wasn't. In fact, I very seldom got into Shelbyville was the county seat in Bedford County.

PIEHLER: And you seldom got into it? So life basically revolved around the farm and neighbors.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And occasionally and going to church on Sunday.

O'STEEN: Going to church on Sunday. Yeah, the church, this Methodist church – and it's still there – was founded by my great-great-great grandfather, and he was the first minister back in 1827, I think it was. And uh, the cemetery—he gave land for the cemetery over by the church and it was called “The O'Steen Graveyard” for years and years. In fact, I was there just this past summer; I went down and looked over the old gravestones. A lot of my ancestors are buried down there. When ...

PIEHLER: ... when you were in high school were you active in any clubs or did you play in any sports?

O'STEEN: I'm sorry, what?

PIEHLER: When you were in high school did you play any sports or were you active in any clubs?

O'STEEN: No, not any clubs.

PIEHLER: Did you play and sports? For any teams?

O'STEEN: Well, they would, ah, I know we would get up a team. You'd—one neighborhood probably would get a team organized and play some other.

PIEHLER: But you never played for the—on a school team?

O'STEEN: No. Oh, no.

BROCK: You said that during the Depression, one of neighbor farms was having troubles making ends meet. Did your father, or your brothers, or yourself ever go over and help them, you know, try to farm a little more to help their ends meet or did you notice that at all with any of the farms?

O'STEEN: Well we—I know my father used to maybe bring them some, some food or something like that, give them, you know, something out of the field, corn or whatever. No, I can't remember them ever going over and actually working. They had a very small farm and, ah ...

BROCK: Oh.

PIEHLER: In your high school did you ever have any dances or any other—any dances in your high school?

O'STEEN: Any what?

PIEHLER: Dances.

O'STEEN: Dances!?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: No, no.

PIEHLER: What was the social life like in your high school?

O'STEEN: They didn't dance much back then; the Methodists didn't like dancing. They thought it was sinful.

PIEHLER: After high school ... what did you do ... did you go back after?

O'STEEN: After high school?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: Oh, boy. I, ah ...

PIEHLER: You graduated in 1937?

O'STEEN: 1937. Right after I graduated I went up into Ohio to sell Bibles and almost starved. I didn't—I think I sold two, and I came back in about less than a month.

PIEHLER: How'd you get this job selling Bibles?

O'STEEN: ... I think it still exists, there was a company in Nashville that sold Bibles. They would ah...

PIEHLER: Thomas Nelson?

O'STEEN: I've forgotten the name of the place. They would, um, somebody would be in charge of a group. He would recruit salesmen, mostly kids, you know, or young people who wanted to make some money, and he recruited, I think there were three or four of us out of my class that graduated, and we decided we would do that to make some money.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) But it didn't, it didn't go so well. (Laughs)

O'STEEN: I ah, I went up into Eastern Ohio, and I can remember sleeping in old barns two or three nights. You'd get out in the field, you know, to sell your Bibles, and what you'd try to do is to have somebody to invite you to spend the night in their home while you were out. And I did a couple of times, but some of the time I slept in barns, and it just wasn't a very successful experience.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) Did any of your friends do better as Bible salesmen? Did any of your friends do better as Bible salesmen, or?

O'STEEN: No, one fella stayed up there; he went to work on a farm. He spent the summer up there, but he was working on a farm.

PIEHLER: On a farm?

O'STEEN: I came back home and ah another fella came back home, you know. I think there were three of us.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. And then after your efforts as a door-to-door Bible salesman, where, what—what did you do next?

O'STEEN: Okay. For two or three years, I had a brother living in Detroit, Michigan and ah, he said I could probably get a job up there, and I think I was about eighteen. This was a year after I graduated from high school, I guess. And I went up there and I went to work in a very nice restaurant there. I was a dishwasher and cleaned up after they closed and that sort of thing. I worked there for about a month and the man who was the manager of the restaurant owned a farm north of Detroit and he asked me if I would like to go up there and work on the farm; they needed somebody. They had two men, hired men, working on the farm. So, I decided I would go up there and try that, and I did. I spent the summer up there. I spent one summer there on the farm, and then the next year—I went up there two summers. One, I worked on the farm, the next year some friends of mine from back home had been up there working with a landscaping company. So, I went up with them and mowed yards all through the summer up there. That was the year before I joined the Navy, I guess. I was twenty, I guess. Then, I guess, the next year I got a job working for a meatpacking company in Nashville and I worked there for about, I don't know, several months. And then my cousin and I, we decided to join the Navy, and this was in 1941, January of '41 and we went down and joined the Navy. You know we were registered for the draft ...

PIEHLER: Yes, I was gonna ...

O'STEEN: ... and neither ...

PIEHLER: The peacetime draft.

O'STEEN: Neither one of us wanted to go in the Army and they hadn't called us or anything but ...

PIEHLER: But you thought ...

O'STEEN: We could see it over the horizon, you know.

PIEHLER: And you decided to preempt the Army?

O'STEEN: Right, we decided we didn't want to go in the Army.

PIEHLER: Going back, going to Detroit. I mean, you hadn't—growing up, you hadn't you really hadn't been past Nashville and you hadn't really ... been past the Tennessee River, and you hadn't been south of Atlanta. You were just in, I think in northern Alabama. What was going to Detroit like?

O'STEEN: Well it ... of course I had been up—hitchhiked up into Ohio.

PIEHLER: Ohio, so you had that experience?

O'STEEN: That was ... before I went to Detroit. So, that was really the experience of getting to see some part of the world I had never seen. I rode a bus to Detroit, but ah, (Laughs) I was hitchhiking on this other trip ...

PIEHLER: Yeah, Ohio. What do you remember besides, sort of, you weren't a very good *Bible* salesman. What was your—what did you think of the rest of the country in both Eastern Ohio and then Detroit?

O'STEEN: Well it was all very interesting and different, and looked a lot more prosperous than Middle Tennessee.

PIEHLER: In what ways had it ... struck you that it was more prosperous?

O'STEEN: Well I thought the houses were, you know, better and bigger and better kept, and that sort of thing; a much more prosperous looking appearance.

PIEHLER: And how did you like Detroit? You worked—how did you like working in a restaurant?

O'STEEN: Ah, well, that was interesting too. Another boy and I, he was from Poland or some place. He could barely speak English and I couldn't speak any Polish, so we used a lot of sign language. (Piehler laughs) But we, we worked together and we, after they would close the restaurant at night, at midnight, then we would have to clean up. We would run the vacuum all over and all that stuff; it was the first time I'd ever run a vacuum cleaner. And they had a bar in there, and one of the most interesting things was, that we could find all kinds of money that they had dropped sitting on the stools, you know?

They'd get a few drinks and then (Laughs) they would lose their change ...

PIEHLER: And you would clean this—this would be your tip for ...

O'STEEN: We would clean it up and then we would split the money. It was (Laughs) a little bonus.

PIEHLER: How ... did you like working on the—you said the owner had you work on the farm, then. How did you like living on—how did you like the farm work there and how did ... this farm differ from the farm you grew up on?

O'STEEN: Well, it was more mechanized. He had a tractor, and of course we didn't.

PIEHLER: You had a—you used a plow?

O'STEEN: We had mules and a plow.

PIEHLER: Very traditional?

O'STEEN: Right, yeah that was the main difference and he had two hundred pigs. He was into the pig business.

PIEHLER: And how many pigs would you [have]...by comparison?

O'STEEN: Oh well, we might have a dozen or so, but Lord two hundred? I had to feed those pigs.

PIEHLER: The two hundred?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And then ... what made, why did you leave Detroit and the Detroit area? Why'd you come back to Tennessee?

O'STEEN: It got *cold!* (Laughter) I told them I was going home when it snowed and I did.

PIEHLER: So, the cold did not agree with you.

O'STEEN: It didn't agree with me then.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) You then got a job with a meatpacking plant in Nashville. What year was that; was that 1939?

O'STEEN: Nah, that was '40.

PIEHLER: 1940?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And where did you live in when you were in Nashville?

O'STEEN: Where did I live?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: At a rooming house. I remember it was near the Vanderbilt campus on West End. I don't know, I just found a room and, well, my brother of course lived in Nashville and I'm sure he helped me.

PIEHLER: So, that's partly why you ended up in Nashville, was the connection. Your brother was in Nashville.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What was he doing at the time?

O'STEEN: What was he doing?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: He was working in the wholesale grocery business there. He was just one of their hired people, and he later went into the Navy himself. He was thirty-nine years old. He didn't have any children and ah...

PIEHLER: Was he married?

O'STEEN: He was married and he just thought he ought to volunteer, and he did, and he was in the Navy too. I had another brother who was in the Army and he was the one who lived in Detroit and he was married and had a little baby. He was drafted, and he was killed in the war.

PIEHLER: And in fact, you had written down that he ... was killed in action near Saint-Lô in August of ...

O'STEEN: Right.

PIEHLER: ... in August of 1944?

O'STEEN: Right.

PIEHLER: And that was your brother Paul that was drafted?

O'STEEN: Paul. Right.

PIEHLER: Ah how did you like working in the meatpacking plant?

O'STEEN: Well, I didn't like that nearly as well as I did working on the farm, because it was something new and as it was hard work. Boy it was hard!

PIEHLER: Well, what did you do in the plant?

O'STEEN: Oh you had to move this meat around, the boxes weighing, oh, a hundred pounds, that sort of thing. It was really hard labor.

PIEHLER: How big was the plant, do you remember, in Nashville?

O'STEEN: Oh I can't even visualize it anymore.

PIEHLER: Was it a big plant? Was it?

O'STEEN: It was, uh, Neuhoff—Neuhoff Packing Plant.

PIEHLER: Was there any union activity in the plant?

O'STEEN: No, if there was any I didn't wasn't...

PIEHLER: You didn't know about it?

O'STEEN: I wasn't aware of it.

PIEHLER: And how many days a week did you work? What was your shift like?

O'STEEN: Uh, I can't even remember the hours that I worked. I think they were daytime work. I'm sure it must have been five days a week; I can't remember. That wasn't a very happy experience for me and I just kind of blotted it out (Laughs).

PIEHLER: (Laughs) So, you were you were eager to get out.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Do you think your decision to join the Navy partly had to do with you were ready for a change?

O'STEEN: I think so, I'm sure it did.

PIEHLER: Ah, but you also wanted to avoid the Army.

O'STEEN: Yeah, I did.

PIEHLER: Why did you want to avoid the Army so much? Why did you what were the reasons at the time.

O'STEEN: Well, I just thought it would be—I didn't especially like the idea of living in tents. Of course World War One was—you heard stories about trench warfare and all that. It was very brutal, and I didn't want any part of that.

PIEHLER: What about movies? Did you see any movies about World War I growing up?

O'STEEN: Did I see movies?

PIEHLER: Yeah, for example did you ever see *All Quiet on the Western Front* when it was out?

O'STEEN: Not until later.

PIEHLER: Not until later?

O'STEEN: No, no, I hadn't seen it back then.

PIEHLER: When you said you, sort of, you knew something about trench warfare and it wasn't very pleasant, who did you learn it from? Was it another vet? Was it veterans?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah. I had a cousin that was in over there, and he had tales about it. He was a machine gunner, I know, and when he came back all right, but he—he saw a lot of action over there and uh, I guess I read some books about it, and people who were gassed. That was that was a bad thing about World War One, was people being gassed.

PIEHLER: Did you know anyone growing up who had been gassed?

O'STEEN: Um, I think there was one fella who had gotten some gas over there, yeah.

BROCK: I was going to ask, now, your wife went to school in Knoxville. How did you end up meeting Miss Margaret?

O'STEEN: Oh well it was when I started to UT; I started in 1947.

BROCK: So, it was after the war?

O'STEEN: And it was interesting. I was going into journalism and Mr. Tucker, who was the head of the department, asked me if I would like to do some part time work in public relations. I said "Well, yeah I could make a little money." So my wife, Margaret, was the editor of the news bureau. She already had her degree; she got a journalism degree from the University of Missouri. And so I was the student assistant working under her supervision. Of course, I was about four years older than she was, and we started dating. I took her out a few times. Her father, who had been a World War I hero, he came back with a Distinguished Service Cross and a Navy Cross, and I have them framed in my den at home, his two medals that he won. And uh, he died about that time, and so, we started getting pretty serious about that time; I think that within about a year we were married.

PIEHLER: Um what did you think of the peacetime draft? Did you think?

O'STEEN: Think of what?

PIEHLER: What did you think of the peacetime draft, uh, the peacetime draft of the 1940's at the time.

O'STEEN: Oh, what did I think of the draft?

PIEHLER: Yeah. Did you think it was necessary at the time?

O'STEEN: Ah, at the time I probably didn't think too much about it. It was just something that we were going to have to do. I didn't have any real strong feelings about it.

PIEHLER: And ... you probably joined the Navy, it sounds like, because you wanted to avoid the Army, but were there other reasons why you joined the Navy?

O'STEEN: Um I, I really can't think of any other real reason.

PIEHLER: You had never been to the ocean ... growing up?

O'STEEN: No, I'd never seen the ocean until I joined the Navy.

PIEHLER: What did you think the Navy would be like before you joined? Did you have any images of it?

O'STEEN: Well, I thought it would be a lot of going around on a boat. (Laughter) I really didn't have that much of a concept, I guess, at that time.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. Well, you would enlist January 16th, 1941 in Nashville. Where would you go to, initially, after enlisting in Nashville?

O'STEEN: Where'd I go then?

PIEHLER: Yeah, where did the Navy send you for the ...

O'STEEN: To Norfolk, Virginia to the training station over there. I spent about ...

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PIEHLER: How much time did you spend at the Norfolk Training Station?

O'STEEN: Three months.

PIEHLER: Three months.

O'STEEN: Three months, and then I didn't know where I would go then, but they gave

us some aptitude tests and from that they decided I should go to the Hospital Corp School in Portsmouth, which was across the river. So, I went over there in March or around the first of April and I believe that was a three-month course, and then I graduated from Corp School and I guess it was about sometime in June I was sent up to Philadelphia Naval Hospital. And I was there then until, at the hospital until the eighth day of December.

PIEHLER: What do you remember about the first three months in the Navy at Norfolk, training; what sticks out?

O'STEEN: Well, it was, I thought—I didn't mind it at all. I sort of enjoyed it; I liked the training and it wasn't an ordeal for me. I remember we spent most of our time on the base. I can't even remember once going into Norfolk on liberty, though I sure we got some liberty.

PIEHLER: But then nothing sticks out?

O'STEEN: No, no.

PIEHLER: What about, a lot of people I think said firefighting stuck out in their [minds]; remembered the first time that they had some firefighting practice. Did any memories like that stick out?

O'STEEN: I went to firefighter's school; that was later on.

PIEHLER: Later on.

O'STEEN: Yeah, that was after I was assigned to this ship, and I think the whole crew had to go to firefighter's school. The thing that I remember about that is going, they had a mock-up ship, part of a ship there. And, you had to go down; they had a fire down below, and you had to go down in there and put it out. I remember doing that.

PIEHLER: The people when you were in Norfolk, where ... were your fellow bunkmates from in your barracks?

O'STEEN: The one fella that I, oh, remember and was with for quite a while was from Georgia, and ... he was, ah, also sent to the Hospital Corp School, and we stayed together for over a year, and then about the time the war was going good, he went off to England and I went to recruiting duty there in northern Philadelphia.

BROCK: When you were sent to Philadelphia, you were doing physical exams for other enlistees. Did you wish that you could go somewhere else, go to bigger and better things or did you find that contenting?

O'STEEN: Well, I, ah—yeah, I was ready to be—I wanted to go somewhere and get on a ship and I was stuck there for about a year and a half at that recruiting station, and I was

glad when I finally got orders to go to sea. But it was interesting work. One thing I remember about it that really sticks out in my mind; right after I was transferred down there the um, Philadelphia Eagles football team, a lot of them, I don't know how many of them, came in to volunteer and we examined all those guys. Big husky guys, you know, football players. And there weren't many of them that could pass the physical examination, which was ironic.

PIEHLER: And they really couldn't pass it? It wasn't like you were ...

O'STEEN: No, you know they had been ...

PIEHLER: Because the people in the public would view that as funny business going on.

O'STEEN: No.

PIEHLER: You know, when athletes couldn't pass. Why couldn't they pass the physical? Because, you would think they could pass.

O'STEEN: You know, their knees, their arms, there was limitation in the movements. They could play football, but they couldn't pass the physical examination for the military.

PIEHLER: It was legitimate that they [couldn't]?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: It sounds like that surprised you, I mean, it's really stunning.

O'STEEN: Well, it did! I thought, "These big husky guys, oh boy, they'd make good sailors." Yeah, but very few of them could actually pass the physical exam.

PIEHLER: Just backing up a little, what was your training; what was covered in your training at Portsmouth prior to the hospital? What did you learn?

O'STEEN: Well, they had courses in, I'd say, nursing and and then internal medicine, learning about medicines. They didn't give us much in the way of surgery, but of course we weren't expected to do much surgery.

PIEHLER: In terms of medicine, were you taught what to prescribe—on illnesses, and what to prescribe to them? Was it expected that when you actually finished you could actually prescribed medicines?

O'STEEN: Well, of course, now, we could ... see, when I was on the ship, I was on independent duty and I was the only medical staffer on there, but we had very simple medicines. If we ran into something that we couldn't treat, we'd have to either send them to the hospital or to the dispensary or someplace to try to get them where they could get

proper treatment. But ours was mostly first aid type.

PIEHLER: Training.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: But at school where you learned ... about medicines and you learned about nursing ...

O'STEEN: Nursing, yeah.

PIEHLER: You said you learned a little about surgery; what did you actually learn? What sticks out?

O'STEEN: I can't remember whether they actually had a class where they told us to make sutures, stitches. I only had to do that two or three times when I was at sea, and they were very crude then (Laughs) when I did.

PIEHLER: In your role, you ... were part of the physical examination process. What would you do?

O'STEEN: I took a million blood pressures.

PIEHLER: So, you would be the guy who would take the blood pressure?

O'STEEN: That was my job for six months. For a year and six months, I would say, that's all I did.

PIEHLER: You would just come in and the day would start by?

O'STEEN: I would sit there and they would come in and sit down, and I would wrap that around their arm and take their blood pressure, and I would put it down and take the next man.

PIEHLER: That must have gotten really boring, I'm sure?

O'STEEN: Well it was. It wasn't very, very much fun.

PIEHLER: Were you—I mean, a lot of people were very shocked. I mean, a lot of leaders were shocked that—you mentioned the Philadelphia Eagles; there was a high rejection rate of people who couldn't, who physically or mentally couldn't qualify.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Were you surprised at that? It sounds like the Eagles was the one of the

surprises.

O'STEEN: Yeah, well, I got used to it. I mean, usually what we would do is—our standards, the Navy standards, were a little higher than the Army, and if they couldn't pass ours we would send them over to the Army and a lot of times the Army would take them, but ah ...

PIEHLER: We always read, or a lot of people think, everyone was eager to go to war in World War II. Did you sense that, for those sent to physicals, or did you get a sense that some really preferred not to go? What ... were peoples reactions, you know, in the sort of induction stage?

O'STEEN: You mean, if they couldn't pass the physical?

PIEHLER: Yeah, I mean when people were all—was everyone disappointed or?

O'STEEN: Well, some of them were, yeah. Some of them, I think, were relieved, but yeah, there were a lot of them that really wanted to get in.

PIEHLER: There were? Yeah, they did?

O'STEEN: And, they were pretty disappointed, but I have seen a few that seemed like they were relieved if they found something or other that they couldn't take.

PIEHLER: How did you, when you were in Philadelphia, where did you live? On base, or?

O'STEEN: Well, I was on, um, what they called *per diem*. They paid us so much a day for room and board, and for a while I lived at the YMCA. And then another fella that I was working with there, he found out about a place were we could board in someone's home, and so we boarded then at this couple's home there in Philadelphia for about, I expect, it was a year or more.

PIEHLER: ... In a sense, you would go to work in the morning and take blood pressures all day and then go home and ...

O'STEEN: Then go home, just like a job.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and that was your only duty, at the time?

O'STEEN: At that time, it was.

PIEHLER: How many days a week did you do this?

O'STEEN: ... I believe we were just open for five days a week.

PIEHLER: So, you didn't do Saturday duty or Sunday duty?

O'STEEN: I know we were off on Sundays, and I think that we were on Saturday, too.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but you definitely got a day off. That you were just ...

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, yeah. It was pretty much like having a job, a civilian job.

PIEHLER: And what did you do when you weren't on duty in Philadelphia? Because, you, in the end, spent a considerable amount of time in Philadelphia.

O'STEEN: What did I do?

PIEHLER: Yeah, when you weren't on duty.

O'STEEN: When I wasn't on duty? I, oh I'd go to see the Phillies play or go to a park. You know.

PIEHLER: Did you ever go to the opera?

O'STEEN: I never did; I used to go to hear the Philadelphia Orchestra every chance I could. We could get tickets at the USO, and I did have one experience there. I went several times; I had picked up tickets, and one time this lady at the USO had asked me if I would like to be on the radio. They were looking for some serviceman to interview at the intermission of the concert, and ah she said "This is going overseas. This will go all over the world." Well, I didn't know, but I said "Okay," and so the announcer called me and we got together for lunch and we talked about what we would talk about on the radio; it was just about a five minute interview, you know. I can't remember anything about it.

PIEHLER: Did anyone hear you and then write to you?

O'STEEN: Uh, yeah, there were a few. They told me that there was somebody in Boston, I think, that had written the commander there of our recruiting station complimenting us on having somebody on the radio and that sort of thing. (Laughs)

PIEHLER: But no, no, no brothers or other relatives heard?

O'STEEN: I don't know that any of my family ever heard it.

PIEHLER: Yeah. Yeah. You didn't hear from some ...

O'STEEN: No.

PIEHLER: You didn't get a letter from someone. "Oh I heard it here in ..."

O'STEEN: No, I don't; I can't remember that, if they did or not. I don't think they did.

PIEHLER: Actually can I [ask] ... when you were in Philadelphia, how often did you make it home to Middle Tennessee?

O'STEEN: Well, not very often. I can't recall ever going home from while I was on that recruiting duty.

PIEHLER: Your ... family, how were they fairing? ... How was your mother and father fairing on the farm during the war?

O'STEEN: Well, they did they did very well until, well towards the end of the war then my mother got sick. She died shortly just shortly after I got home, but I did get back home before she died. But, I can remember going home right after boot camp, about the time I was sent off to sea duty, and then I can't remember getting home again until after the war.

PIEHLER: Until after the war? Anything else stick out about Philadelphia or the area? Did you ... ever make it up to New York, say, during your [stay]?

O'STEEN: I went up, yeah. Yeah we, a couple of fellas and I, we went up to New York I think twice while we were there just to see the big city. I know one fella who worked with us had a car, and I remember going up to Valley Forge one time, and I remember going to a concert out in Fairmont Park.

PIEHLER: So it sounds like you enjoyed the concert, the Philadelphia Symphony Orchestra, a great deal?

O'STEEN: Yeah, I used to go to that practically every time they would play.

PIEHLER: What, what about the USO dances? Did you go to any of them?

O'STEEN: I never was a dancer.

PIEHLER: Yes, that?

O'STEEN: Never cared for dancing and...

PIEHLER: Did you ever dance at all? Did you ever date at all in Philadelphia?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, I had a girlfriend there in Philadelphia for awhile, but I didn't dance. (Piehler laughs)

BROCK: While you were in Philadelphia, did you hear from your brothers Leslie and

Paul any?

O'STEEN: Uh, not directly. I would write to my mother and, of course, she would give me all the news, and my sister probably wrote me some, but uh ...

BROCK: Where you worried about your brothers during this time?

O'STEEN: Well yeah, of course I was concerned about their safety. My sister wrote me about my brother that was killed and, of course, that was awfully hard on my parents. At first they had gotten the word that he was missing, missing in action, and they were *very* concerned then and worried that he was wounded or something and was suffering, you know. But when they got word that he had been killed I think they—it, it was—they had closure on it. They felt more at peace about it.

BROCK: Was Paul buried in France or did he come back?

O'STEEN: He's still buried in France.

BROCK: Still in France?

O'STEEN: I went to his grave, ah, right after I retired. I went over to Europe and I went to his grave.

PIEHLER: Your family decided not to have his body brought home?

O'STEEN: Right. We have, in this graveyard back at home in Cedar Grove, they have a stone there.

BROCK: So, you weren't able to get home to be with your family during this troubling time at all?

O'STEEN: Nuh uh.

BROCK: So you were all alone with your sorrow.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Um, you, it sounded like, you wanted to see the world. You were tired of your duty at Philadelphia; at a certain point you were ready for change. But, but one thing, I do want to backtrack. You must remember Pearl Harbor, particularly being in the Navy. Where were you when Pearl Harbor occurred?

O'STEEN: I was working on the tenth floor of the Naval Hospital in Philadelphia. We heard about it and of course we were all around radios, and then the next day, the eighth, was when we declared war, and we were listening to Roosevelt make his speech and all

this. And about six o'clock, this fella that I'd known through boot camp and all that, we had our bunks right together and I said to him, "Well, are you ready to go eat chow?" And he said he didn't think he wanted anything; he was kind of down because of the war and all this. So, I started out to go to the mess hall, and I didn't get out the door. They—they were grabbing people and sending them down to the recruiting station, which was just swamped.

And I went down there without supper, and I worked all night. I finally got back the next morning; they brought us back out there, but I never did go back to work at the hospital.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and in fact, we should probably go back and ask you a little bit. Because after Portsmouth you ended up first working in Philadelphia Naval Station Hospital; and how long did you work in the hospital?

O'STEEN: About six months.

PIEHLER: And what were your duties then, in the hospital?

O'STEEN: Well, I worked on different wards, just taking care of the patients. We had a lot of veterans of World War I there. Of course, there were some younger people too, but most of 'em were these old timers. Just taking care of those old timers.

PIEHLER: So, would your duties be similar to what we might consider nursing in the sense that you would bring meals, empty bedpans and that?

O'STEEN: Yeah, oh yeah. Change dressings, this sort of thing. Had one young man, they brought him in off a ship. He had meningitis, and I remember they—it was very dangerous—and they assigned me to take care of him, and I had to wear a mask and all this business, gloves and so on. But I used to have to—the doctor would want to tap his spine.

I'd get that—he was a black boy and I'd get him and I would just bend him, you know, as far as I could, and he would go in there and tap his spine. But he got [better]; he recovered, and they sent him back to his ship, but there were a few cases like that, most of it was just routine stuff.

PIEHLER: How did you like ... hospital work?

O'STEEN: I wasn't too fond of it.

PIEHLER: Did you ... how do I put this; did you volunteer for this, for hospital duty and hospital school or did the Navy decide for you?

O'STEEN: Well no, uh, it was a result of these aptitude tests.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so you—this was not what ...

O'STEEN: I wanted to go to—well, I put in to go to Guantanamo Bay, I believe it was.

PIEHLER: That's where you would have preferred to have gone?

O'STEEN: Yeah, you know they gave us "Where would you like to go?" and this sort of thing.

PIEHLER: But why, why Cuba? Why Guantanamo Bay?

O'STEEN: I don't know; it was just someplace to go (Laughs).

PIEHLER: (Laughs) And it sounds like you—did you want shipboard duty, or did you prefer to be on base?

O'STEEN: No, I wanted to go to sea.

PIEHLER: Yeah, and it sounds like the Caribbean is where you wanted to go?

O'STEEN: Well, it was warmer down there I guess. (Laughs)

PIEHLER: ... You eventually did get away from blood pressure duty and induction duty.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: ... Did you have any role in this, or was this just the Navy's doing—that you finally left Philadelphia?

O'STEEN: Well, I was transferred to this ship. They were still building it; it hadn't been commissioned yet, out on the West Coast, out in California. So, I went out there in the summer of '43, I guess it was, and it was about four months before they got the ship ready to sail. So ... they sent me to Mare Island, the naval base there and I worked in the dispensary there 'til we went aboard ship. We went—this was up on the Sacramento River, up at Antioch, California. And we were based there at the Treasure Island, San Francisco, out in the bay.

PIEHLER: And you got to see the West Coast?

O'STEEN: We were all up and down the West Coast. We went, we were attached to the Western Sea Frontier it was called, and it was guarding the West Coast. And I was on a seagoing tug, a rescue tug, and we had a lot of different things we had to do. One thing we did was towed targets for artillery practice for big ships and planes and this sort of thing. We'd get these; we'd catch that sometimes. One time, we had to go out and bury some bones at sea. They had found some—an old, I guess, an LCI they had brought back from the South Pacific; they had found some bones in it, some bodies of soldiers or marines or something. They didn't have any identification, so they put them in a bag and

we had to take it out to sea and bury it and (Laughs) it was funny, to tell about all that in there. They ah, dropped this bag over and it didn't sink!

PIEHLER: Because it hadn't been weighted?

O'STEEN: Didn't have any weight in it except the bones see. And they dropped it, and it just floated there. Somebody wanted to shoot some holes in it (Laughs), but we didn't think that was the thing to do. So, we got it back on board and cut some holes in the canvas bag and did put some weight in it that time. Pitched it over, but it wasn't much of a burial at sea; I thought they should have had a prayer or something! (Laughter)

PIEHLER: There was no ceremony you just ... ?

O'STEEN: No ceremony, just down they went.

PIEHLER: Down they went? Before, sort of going back ...you were initially sent out to Treasure Island before you got the ship. How did you like San Francisco?

O'STEEN: San Francisco is a great place for the Navy. Yeah it was, you know, it was nice.

PIEHLER: What did you like about San Francisco and how was it, say, different from Philadelphia, where you had spent quite a bit of time?

O'STEEN: Well it's ... I don't know. It was a lot newer city, for one thing. Of course, I liked the old city, but ah, it was more attractive; it was a beautiful location.

PIEHLER: And how long did you have to wait until your ship was ready?

O'STEEN: About four months.

PIEHLER: So, what did you do in those four months?

O'STEEN: Well, I worked; I was in the dispensary there at Mare Island. I ah, well actually they had me doing some kind of record keeping. I don't remember exactly what I was doing; I know I wasn't doing anything with patients; I know I was keeping a lot of records.

BROCK: I found some information on the on your rescue tug that you were on. It said it was only about 165 feet long.

O'STEEN: Mm-hmm.

BROCK: How many crewmembers did you have on there in such a little tiny space?

O'STEEN: We had about fifty.

BROCK: About fifty?

O'STEEN: Mm-hmm.

PIEHLER: So you were pretty closely ...

O'STEEN: Pardon?

PIEHLER: So you were pretty closely packed together?

O'STEEN: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

PIEHLER: And how many officers; how many chiefs and how many sailors?

O'STEEN: Well, we had, um, let's see, one, two, three—I think there were four officers, four commissioned officers. There was a warrant officer I remember on there, and there were two chiefs. There was a chief boatswain's mate and a chief machinist's mate. One to take care of the engines, the machinery, and the other for everything above deck. And I was—I was the medical officer, and ... I had made first class by then; I was first class pharmacist's mate. That's when I was transferred, as soon as I made first class pharmacist's mate. That's about June of '43, when I got this transfer. And we had about four or five First Class on there, and the rest were on down the line.

PIEHLER: And you, your mission was rescue? How many rescues did you ever do?

O'STEEN: Well we were—I remember rescuing one ship, pulling in one ship during that time, but the rest of the time we were doing all these other things.

PIEHLER: You had all these arrangements; well, you mentioned the burial.

O'STEEN: Yeah, and towing targets. We did—they sent us out one time there was, ah, what was it, something had broken up. It wasn't a ship, it was some barges or something, and this was way out somewhere, nearly out to Hawaii, and we had to go way out there and get those things together and bring them in. That took us about two weeks, a job like that. And one time we were up off Alaska, I know. It was cold as the dickens up there, and I can't remember exactly why we were up there but we were up in that area.

PIEHLER: How long would you be at sea at one time, because you weren't a very big craft?

O'STEEN: No, well, I'd say two or three weeks would be a long ...

PIEHLER: But that's still ... a real period.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: It's not a long, long period of time by Navy standards, but it's not a day or two. What was it like on board such a small craft with so many, with fifty people?

O'STEEN: Well, we were we were pretty crowded, you could say that. We had a lot of—sometimes we would be in reach of radio. We could get radio from back the coast somewhere, and we had the radio sometime. We played a lot of acey ducey. Oh, we just, there wasn't much place to exercise—you got your exercise when you were working, you know.

PIEHLER: Because it sounds like you did have a lot of events. I mean, you had the radio, but space was tight?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Did you have your own dispensary?

O'STEEN: I had—you mean mine?

PIEHLER: Yeah, when you were [on board].

O'STEEN: I had a little cabinet, about the size of that cabinet there (gestures to cabinet in the room).

PIEHLER: So—and this isn't a very big cabinet—so that was your cabinet?

O'STEEN: I had most of my medicines in there, everything I worked with in there.

PIEHLER: Were you issued any alcohol as part of the standard...

O'STEEN: I had alcohol. (Laughs) And when the, ah, let's see, I guess it was when the war ended. We got that alcohol out (Laughter) and I think we had a ball!

PIEHLER: For medicinal purposes (Laughs)!

O'STEEN: (Laughs) Yeah.

PIEHLER: So, where did you bunk aboard ship?

O'STEEN: Well, I just bunked in with the rest of the crew.

PIEHLER: So, your whole dispensary was just a cabinet.

O'STEEN: Yeah, it was just a cabinet and it was out in—well, I would call it the hallway now. It was just up against the wall; it was build into the side of the wall.

PIEHLER: Yeah, so you had no separate [room]?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And besides being the, sort of, Pharmacist's Mate, what other duties did you have aboard ship, or was that your only?

O'STEEN: I did stand some watches. I would stand in port. I would—I don't know regular they were, but occasionally I would stand a four-hour watch sometime during the day or night.

PIEHLER: ... What was the worst, the most serious case you dealt with aboard [ship], well, out to sea?

O'STEEN: Well, I did have one case of Appendicitis, and that was a bugaboo back then. Ah, I don't know whether you remember or not but there was a ...

PIEHLER: There were some cases of operations?

O'STEEN: Yeah, there was a Pharmacist's Mate on a submarine out in the Solomons [who] had this case and it was acute Appendicitis, and they were, I think, maybe submerged in a very dangerous situation out there, and they really had to operate on him. Well, this man had been at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital and he had worked in the surgery there and had some experience. And he got some of the officers to help him or some of the people. And they performed the appendectomy. Well, that brought out a lot of directives not to do this, do everything possible ...

PIEHLER: But do not operate?

O'STEEN: But don't operate. And that was one thing that I guess all the independent duty pharmacists' mates kind of worried about; I know I did. What would I do if this happened? Well I did have one, he got a hot appendix and we were out about two days out, and I kept him with ice bags and kept him cool until we got in, and they were waiting on the dock for us to pick him up; they had radioed in to pick him up.

PIEHLER: So they, they moved him to an operating room pretty quick?

O'STEEN: They got him to the hospital and operated on him.

PIEHLER: And he and he recovered successfully?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah.

PIEHLER: Did he come back to the ship?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: But you were very conscious, you'd better not operate?

O'STEEN: That's right. I knew I wasn't supposed to do that, and I wouldn't have known how to do it (Laughs) if I had had to!

PIEHLER: And you weren't going to learn (Laughs)!

O'STEEN: I wasn't going to learn on the job (laugh).

PIEHLER: Ohhh ...

O'STEEN: But that that was the...

PIEHLER: But that was the most serious case you had?

O'STEEN: That I'd say was the most serious case we had; I had one fella who came to us from another ship and he had something. He had a head injury on the ship and he kept getting headaches and he would come to me and about all I could do was give him aspirin, you know. And finally I sent him over to the hospital over at Treasure Island and they couldn't find anything wrong with him, so they sent him back, and this happened two or three times. I'd send him over there and they'd send him back; send him over and they'd send him back. Well, it got so bad that they finally had to take him off in a stretcher strapped down. He just got violent; and they never did send him back after that. I don't know what happened.

PIEHLER: You don't know what?

O'STEEN: I never knew what happened to him, but I knew he had serious problems.

PIEHLER: What were most of ... the cases that you'd deal with aboard ship? What would that range be?

O'STEEN: Oh, just a little aches and pains. Sometimes oh, a couple times, one fella stuck a knife in his thigh, he was cutting a line or something and he stabbed himself pretty good, and we were out at sea, so I had to sew him up. And another time ah, the cook bumped his head somewhere down in the galley; blood was spurting out of his head and we were out at sea, and I finally got that stopped and got him a couple of stitches in his scalp. Things like that. Most of it was just pretty routine.

PIEHLER: When you ... got to ports, particularly when men went on leave, would you

would you have to do short arm inspections?

O'STEEN: Um, no, I didn't.

PIEHLER: You didn't have to do that. Did anyone on the crew do them or were you too small of a vessel or too close to American waters to worry about that?

O'STEEN: No, we didn't, we didn't do that.

BROCK: You said you were out for about two to three weeks at a time on your ship, when you came back into port was it always San Francisco, I mean, Treasure Island or did you go to other ...

O'STEEN: Well that was our homeport, yeah. Sometimes we'd been into San Diego, sometime it would be up north, up around Seattle. We went into Seattle a time or two.

PIEHLER: You mentioned going to Alaska, duty off of Alaska. Did you stop in any Alaskan ports?

O'STEEN: No, we were just out there in the ocean.

PIEHLER: And then you just came back to the continental United States.

O'STEEN: Yep.

PIEHLER: And did you ever make it to Pearl Harbor? Or ...

O'STEEN: No, we got part of the way out there on some of these jobs, but no, we never did. Now, just before the war ended, they said we had gotten orders to go to Pearl Harbor, go to Hawaii—our ship had—and then the war ended and we never did go.

PIEHLER: Did you ever ... encounter any hostile vessels, any submarines?

O'STEEN: We had an alert one time. See ... back in '43, when I went out there they still had the submarine net across the Golden Gate there. They had these barrage balloons up over San Francisco because they'd had some reported submarine activity out there. We were out one time; I can't remember ... exactly how far out. I know we were out several days. We were with some other ships, and one of them reported that they had made a contact. But we didn't, we didn't have anything on our ship to fight with, well we had a three-inch gun and a couple of twenty-millimeters. There was a destroyer that dropped a few depth charges, but finally it broke of contact. I don't know what; it could have been a whale or something. (Laughs)

PIEHLER: So, that was the closest to ... hostile action you saw?

O'STEEN: Yeah, it really was. We almost got hit by one of the bombs (Laughs) on that target towing ...

PIEHLER: So, that ... (Laughs)

O'STEEN: (Laugh) There were a few hitting kinda close around the ship; got a little close for comfort.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) The crew, your fellow crewmates—where were there from? Where were they from—your officers?

O'STEEN: Oh, all over. I had ... several really good friends on there; they'd been on there a long time. One fella from Arkansas was a good friend of mine. Probably my closest friend was a gunner's mate who was originally from New York, and the only person that I still know is living who was on the ship with me lives in Wisconsin, and we exchange Christmas cards, that sort of thing.

PIEHLER: Still, to this day?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: You stayed in touch all these years?

O'STEEN: Yeah, he was just a kid; when the war was over, he was about eighteen. This was in '46, I guess, and he came through one time, going to Florida, and stopped by my house and visited with me for awhile, but I suspect—I know—these other good friends died since then. So, there's not too many of them left, I don't imagine.

PIEHLER: ... It sounds like you were a happy crew; at least, you had good experiences?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah. Yeah, we had a very congenial bunch on there.

PIEHLER: What were your officers like? Were ... there any regular Navy or were they all Navy Reserve?

O'STEEN: The first skipper we had was regular Navy; he was a full lieutenant. And then we had a reserve lieutenant, and they both pretty reasonable sort of people. Yeah, we really didn't have any dissention, that I can recall, on the ship.

BROCK: While you were on your ship, did you ever wish you were somewhere else? You know, wish you were at another base, or on another ship, or in another part of the world?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, you're always thinking that. Ah when we—you know, we never did get into any action, and you kind of feel cheated, in a way, not being able to see any

real action, but ...

BROCK: Now, your brother Leslie was stationed toward the South Pacific?

O'STEEN: He was. Yeah, he was in the Caribbean for a while on a ship, and then he was—uh, I know they were out around the Philippines. He got to see quite a bit of the world while he was in.

BROCK: But you never got a chance to meet up with him?

O'STEEN: No, no.

BROCK: No?

O'STEEN: No, I never did.

PIEHLER: How often did you write home?

O'STEEN: Oh, every couple of weeks, I guess, and I guess my mother would write about that often.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. And where were you on—you mentioned V-J Day when you broke out the medical alcohol. Where was your ship and where were you?

O'STEEN: Well, we were out—when they dropped the first atomic bomb, I know we were out ...

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO-----

PIEHLER: This continues an interview with Neal O'Steen on April second, 2002, in Knoxville, Tennessee with Kurt Piehler and ...

BROCK: Dee Brock.

PIEHLER: And you had mentioned that you were out to sea and you could hear the radio?

O'STEEN: We heard that they had dropped the bomb. And, of course, we didn't know anything about the extent of the damage or what had happened, but we were back in port after, you know, they dropped one then on Nagasaki. So, we were back in port then, and I happened to go ashore that night and that was—that was something. That place, that main street in San Francisco, was just literally *people*. They were just—you could see the top of a car, sort of like an island, out there. (Piehler Laughs) Yeah, maybe a streetcar down there; you could see it. Nothing could move, you know, it was *solid* people. And I had a girlfriend there and I went over to her house and she had a time

getting home from her work. Well, later when I was going back to the ship that night, of course, the crowd had pretty much cleared out by then, but that that street was—it was a mess, I'll tell you. They had broken windows and a lot of looting went on there, and I know when we finally got back to the ship then ... well, they just cancelled liberty because there had been so much damage done (Laughs) over there.

PIEHLER: It was somewhat dangerous at times?

O'STEEN: Yeah, so we had to stay aboard and play Acey Ducey then.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) Wow! So a lot of your navy—I mean, one of your recollections is playing a lot of cards?

O'STEEN: Well, yeah, we played cards and we played various games like that.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. And listening to radio?

O'STEEN: And listening to radio.

PIEHLER: How much reading were you able to ever do out to sea?

O'STEEN: Well, we could read. We could get books. They didn't have a library on there, but you know, you could go ashore and you might buy a Pocket book or something.

PIEHLER: How good was the food while you were at sea?

O'STEEN: Usually, it was pretty good; if you stayed out too long, it got worse. (Laughter) We had some good cooks, and they did a pretty good job.

PIEHLER: Didn't you have any ship's stewards' mates?

O'STEEN: We had two.

PIEHLER: You had two?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: How, how did they get along with the rest of the crew and *vice versa*?

O'STEEN: There was never any problem. I know, they put *me* down near where they slept, and I think they may have thought I wouldn't object, and I didn't; it didn't matter to me. They slept over here, and I slept over there. But they were—they were good fellas. We got along all right, but that, of course, was before they ended segregation.

PIEHLER: Where were the two stewardsmates from?

O'STEEN: One was from Louisiana and he was one fella I had to sew up one time. He came in and he had a *big* gash on his hand, and he had gotten it from—well, he was about half drunk when he came in; he had been on liberty and (Laughs) I think he had tried to get some cigarettes out of a machine and it didn't produce and he had banged (Laughter) and cut his hand, so I had to sew him up. And I didn't—he just stood there and I just sewed him up; he already had his anesthetic. (Laughter) What about that?

PIEHLER: And the other steward's mate?

O'STEEN: I can't remember where he was from, but this one was—he was quite a character, anyway. He was a lot of fun.

PIEHLER: After V-J Day, what did your ship do? What were you—you know?

O'STEEN: Well, uh, they decommissioned it and we—I can't remember us really doing a whole lot except decommissioning the thing after the war. I know we had to—we threw away just *scads* of stuff, actually. It was pitiful, the things that they just, just dumped, you know. I did salvage some of my property. In fact, I took some of it home because it was just—they didn't want it back, just getting rid of it. And one thing we did, I remember, right up (Sounds of helicopter flying overhead) uh, one fella, two fellas, I think, misappropriated a couple of these puddle jumpers you know, the things you ride on?

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm?

O'STEEN: Like, little motorcycles. They found them somewhere, and they brought them back on the ship, and the skipper somehow got hold of one of these Ducks, you know, these ...

PIEHLER: Oh yeah?

O'STEEN: Yeah, they'll go in water or land. He just—we had that thing aboard for, oh, a *long* time. We'd swing it up there and put it on the deck. I don't know how he got it; somebody was giving it away, I guess.

PIEHLER: So, were you just pretty much confined to port or did you have any sea duty after V-J Day?

O'STEEN: We—I can't remember. We may have gone out some, but I can't remember.

PIEHLER: When did you leave the Navy?

O'STEEN: When did I ...

PIEHLER: When did you go to the reserve status? How long did you remain after V-J Day in the Navy?

O'STEEN: When did I leave?

PIEHLER: Yeah, when did you?

O'STEEN: Well, I was in for a six-year enlistment ... they finally let me go a little early.

PIEHLER: So, you were signed up initially for six years?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: War or no war?

O'STEEN: War or no war, I was in for six years. So, a lot of these people, you know, they had a point system. Well, heck—I had more points than any of them. You know, I could have left, but I couldn't leave ... because I was regular Navy. And all these Reserves were getting out with lots fewer points than I had. Well, we decommissioned this thing then and got rid of all these things. Then, we were down to just a sort of skeleton crew there for awhile because most of the fellas had already been discharged.

PIEHLER: (Coughs) But you were still ... living aboard ship?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: But, even decommissioned?

O'STEEN: Yeah, and when we had finished whatever had to be done, we took it up into the Sacramento River up to Suisun Bay and it may still be up there, as far as I know! (Laughs) And they put them in mothballs. They had a whole—boy, it looked like a fleet up there.

PIEHLER: A mothballed fleet.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And then after you mothballed it—so, you saw the ship both being built and then being ?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Well, where did you go after it was mothballed?

O'STEEN: I was discharged; I guess they just wanted to get rid everybody then, because they let me go about not quite a month early. I went December twenty-first, I think it was.

PIEHLER: 1946?

O'STEEN: '46, yeah.

PIEHLER: So, you stayed in quite a bit after the war?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, over a year.

PIEHLER: You saw the Navy both pre-Pearl Harbor and then after V-J Day. What were the differences between the pre-Pearl Harbor Navy, in a general sense, and then the wartime Navy and then [when] almost all the Naval Reservists had gone home by ... the summer of 46?

O'STEEN: Oh yea. Yeah, I think they were probably all gone. Well, it seemed like things were a lot more lax after the war was over. Everybody was so happy, you know, that the thing's over, and it was a different atmosphere altogether.

PIEHLER: So, it remained relaxed even after the reservists got home?

O'STEEN: Yeah, it was. Before the war—before we got into the war, ... things were much tenser. You didn't know what was going to happen. And after the war was over, everybody was so relieved, it was altogether different. ... I don't know ... they pretty well decimated the fleet. They put a lot of these in mothballs, and some of the old ships they just sold or scrapped. It was just ...

PIEHLER: Well, I know the *Enterprise*, despite its fame, became scrap.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: You stayed in the Reserves?

O'STEEN: I made the mistake of (Laughs) signing up in the Reserves.

PIEHLER: Why did you sign up at the time? I mean, you say it was a mistake, but why?

O'STEEN: I don't know; they just sold me on it, I guess.

PIEHLER: Well, did they sell you on pensions or ... [were] there other things they sold you on?

O'STEEN: Well, I'm sure they used a lot of benefits like that and sold me on it.

PIEHLER: But, you were *sold*. You weren't planning on staying in the Reserves, were you?

O'STEEN: Well, if they hadn't called me back, I might have stayed. I don't know.

PIEHLER: Now, were you an Active Reserve or Inactive?

O'STEEN: I was inactive.

PIEHLER: ... So, you didn't have to do weekends.

O'STEEN: No, I was in school. See, I started at UT in the fall of '47, and they had a reserve unit—I don't know if it's still here or not—but it was down on the river. And, another fellow and I started going to that. I think they paid us twenty dollars a month or something, and you'd go to the meetings, and so on. And I took three cruises, summer cruises, while I was in school, and one was down in the Caribbean, one was to the Atlantic off the Northeast Coast there out of New York, we were on a cruiser that time. And then one time, the most interesting one was, they had an LCI, Landing Craft Infantry outfit, at this unit. And we took this trip up the Tennessee River, or down it, to Paducah, Kentucky. Two-week cruise, went through all these locks and came back. That was an interesting cruise. Then, when I got out of the navy, or got out of UT, got my degree, I started to work for the newspaper in Kingsport and had gotten married in the meantime. Then, I got these orders: Back! Back to the Navy.

BROCK: When you were attending school at UT, did your professors bestow any special attention or special privileges towards you since you were a veteran?

O'STEEN: Ah, I can't remember any.

BROCK: Did you receive any negative reactions because you were a veteran?

O'STEEN: No, no.

PIEHLER: You ah, you mentioned earlier that you would not have been able to go to college without the GI Bill. Why UT? Why did you choose UT?

O'STEEN: Why did I?

PIEHLER: Yeah, because you could have gone anywhere.

O'STEEN: Oh! Why did I come to UT?

PIEHLER: Yeah, had you tried to go to others?

O'STEEN: Well, ah I was admitted to Vanderbilt and I was—my father wanted me to go to Vanderbilt, but they had just started the journalism program here, and I wanted to take journalism.

PIEHLER: And Vanderbilt did not?

O'STEEN: Vanderbilt didn't offer journalism, and my cousin lived up here; in fact, he were in school up here too, so that also influenced me. But the journalism program was the main thing.

PIEHLER: You had mentioned earlier that you wanted to be a writer growing up.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Did you think, growing up, did you ... want to work for a newspaper, or was that something that came about later?

O'STEEN: Well, I thought—I guess I wanted to work on a newspaper mainly. Although, I only put in about seven years working on a newspaper, but most of my work in that field was done here at the university in public relations and magazine editing. I edited the *Alumnus* magazine for several years and then they, the alumni people, got me to write a history of the Alumni Association. Well, I did; I did that while I was here.

PIEHLER: ... So, you had chosen journalism—UT for journalism. What's your favorite professor?

O'STEEN: While I was here?

PIEHLER: Yeah, as a student.

O'STEEN: Well, in journalism it was W.C. Tucker who was head of the department. He was very good. Well, I had Folmsbee in History and Graf

PIEHLER: Oh yeah! (Laughs)

O'STEEN: You remember Graf?

PIEHLER: He was—he had past away before I arrived, but I have heard a number of stories about Graf.

O'STEEN: Ah, were you familiar with Folmsbee?

PIEHLER: He—I'm not familiar with him.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: What do you remember about both Folmsbee and Graf?

O'STEEN: Well, I could make A's under Folmsbee and C's under Graf's the only thing. (Laughter) Oh, Folmsbee was—he was a little small fella and older, but he was very mild and the thing I remember about Leroy: he would, while he was lecturing, he would sit up on the desk and sit sort of yoga style, sitting up there on his desk. (Laughs)

PIEHLER: And lecture that way?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: Any professor, and you don't even have to name the name, but any professor you didn't care for when you were back here?

O'STEEN: The only one that I thought should have been doing something else, and just wasn't a very good professor—I can't remember his name. I want to say he was in economics but I'm not sure of that even. But I had one professor here that I just didn't think was ...

PIEHLER: That was the only?

O'STEEN: One shouldn't have been teaching, but for the most part they were good. I even had a course under, who was it won the Nobel Prize in economics here? I don't know who that was—ah I can't think of his—Buck Buchannon, James Buchannon! Ah, I had a course under him, and he was young then, but I think he's still living. He won the ... Nobel Prize in Economics . And one interesting professor I had was, he was just a lecturer for one special course in Creative Writing, and he had been a Rhodes Scholar and was pretty good. I enjoyed him.

PIEHLER: Who was it, do you remember?

O'STEEN: His name was—he wasn't a very well known writer.

PIEHLER: It wasn't James ...

O'STEEN: He had written some novels, I think.

PIEHLER: It wasn't James Agee, was it?

O'STEEN: No.

PIEHLER: No?

O'STEEN: No, uh, Lord, I can't think of his name now.

PIEHLER: Well, maybe when you edit the transcript, I have a feeling it may ...

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: ... This was a new journalism program; how well did your education in general, and particularly the journalism major, prepare you for journalism?

O'STEEN: Well, of course, back then it was just pretty rudimentary. But I think—Tucker was a very, very good journalist, and I think just knowing him and having classes under him could help prepare ...better than anything else. They didn't have much of anything that they have now in the way of teaching journalism.

PIEHLER: My own understanding of journalism, really up until the 1960's, really, is a lot of people got there start in journalism by just, often, right out of high school, or even sometimes not even finishing high school, and working their way, sort of, as copy boys, and literally working their way up the newsroom?

O'STEEN: Yeah, when I started working for newspapers, they'd tell me that it would be better just to start out that way rather than go to college, but I think they do a much—they have more sophisticated equipment and techniques that all then we did back then. We just had a typewriter, and that was about it.

PIEHLER: That was?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: While you were at UT, did you take part in any activities? Did you play any sports, or work for the school newspaper?

O'STEEN: No. No, I was—I got involved with the Honor Society is about all, Phi Kappa Phi. Well, I was in three honor societies, I guess; Phi Kappa Phi, and there was a business administration one. See, journalism was part of the College of Business at first, and I was in the whatever—I can't remember what it was, but I was active in Phi Kappa Phi for years. When I came back to work here, I was secretary of the chapter here for several years and I wrote a history of Phi Kappa Phi while I was here. John McDow, I don't know if you remember John McDow or not, he was the ... Dean of Admissions. Anyway, he was in Phi Kappa Phi. We knew each other pretty well. He wanted me to take the job of National Historian of Phi Kappa Phi, but I found out that all they wanted was to write the history. That was the only thought that they had; (Laughs) they worked on that history. So, I wrote that for them.

PIEHLER: How ... long was the history?

O'STEEN: Pardon?

PIEHLER: How many pages was the history?

O'STEEN: I don't know, a couple hundred, I guess.

PIEHLER: Oh?

O'STEEN: It was a little book.

PIEHLER: Where did you live when you were going to the University of Tennessee?

O'STEEN: Ah, let's see. First, I was living in an old house up on the pike, I think, and then my cousin and I decided that we would buy a place. We got tired of living in these rooms and apartments. ... My cousin and his wife were living out in Southerland Village, the old Southerland Village they had out on Southerland Avenue?

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm.

O'STEEN: So, we found a farm. It had been a pretty big farm, but it was covered up—most of it was covered up with a lake down in Keller's Bend which was about fifteen miles down there, and we bought that place. It had a pretty nice house on it, and lived out there for over a year and then I graduated and they sold it then. They finally got rid of it.

PIEHLER: How were you able to buy a house? Where'd you have the money, was that?

O'STEEN: Well, I had saved some money while I was in the Navy, and I think I put up most of the down payment, and of course, then they were to ... make the payments on it until they caught up with me. 'Cause, I'd put down, I think, about four or five thousand dollars for a down payment on it.

PIEHLER: That was a lot! You had saved *a lot* of money.

O'STEEN: Yeah, I think we paid ten thousand dollars for that; eighteen acres and the house, and that was a bargain back then. *Now* it would be!

BROCK: That would be a steal. (Laughter)

O'STEEN: Yeah, back then I guess it was a pretty good price, but anyway, we stayed out there. Had a garden, planted some corn, fished.

PIEHLER: ... When you were in school, who were your friends? Did you mainly cluster around fellow former GIs or did you get to know any of the, sort of, quote-unquote traditional underclassmen?

O'STEEN: Ah, I guess most of them—there were a lot of GI's here then. I guess, most

of them that I talked with would be the GI's. There were some younger people, too. See, I was twenty-seven, twenty-eight years old. I was twenty-one when I went in the Navy and about twenty-seven when I got out. I was almost twenty-eight years old, so I was pretty mature for a student back then.

BROCK: You had said on your survey sheet that you took some annual cruises while you were going to UT. One of your cruises took you to Cuba and Haiti; were you excited about finally getting to go to Cuba?

O'STEEN: (Laughs) Yeah, well, yeah. We went to Guantanamo Bay; that's where I put in for.

BROCK: Was it what you expected?

O'STEEN: I guess (Laughs).

BROCK: And then you took another cruise towards New York City and Norfolk; did you find a big change between Norfolk when you saw it then as when you were there earlier?

O'STEEN: Ah yeah, there were fewer white hats out in the streets. Of course, now, after the Korean episode we lived in Norfolk. I worked on the paper there. I worked on the newspaper there for uh, two years I believe. And we really liked living in Norfolk, and of course, when I was there in the Navy, I just really didn't see that much of it, except right downtown where all the sailors were.

BROCK: When you first heard about the Korean War starting to take place, what were your first reactions?

O'STEEN: Well, I really didn't think too much about it. You know, I knew I was in the Reserves and I guess I was aware that there was a possibility that I *might* have to go back, but I didn't worry about it.

BROCK: How did your wife feel when she found out that you were going to Korea?

O'STEEN: She didn't like it a bit (Laughter). She wrote a letter to somebody in Washington, but it didn't do any good. I've forgotten now who it was.

PIEHLER: ... You mentioned you were in college at twenty-eight, started college at twenty-eight, and so by the time of the Korean War you were in your thirties? I mean ...

O'STEEN: Right. Yeah, I was, let's see I went in '50, so I was I was ... thirty-one, I guess.

PIEHLER: And ... when you got called up for Korea, had you already started your job at

Kingsport?

O'STEEN: Pardon?

PIEHLER: Had you already started your job?

O'STEEN: Yeah, I worked there about four months, and I was called up in October of '50.

PIEHLER: Backing up, how did you how did you get the job at Kingsport, for the Kingsport paper?

O'STEEN: I just wrote a letter. I wrote two or three letters, you know, giving my resume and—which wasn't much back then except I had been in the Navy. And I got a response from all of 'em. Let's see, one in South Carolina—Charleston, South Carolina—and another place, I've forgotten now. I might have sent one to Norfolk then too, I'm not sure. But anyway, I got this job in Kingsport. They called me and asked me to come up for an interview, and then my wife got a job, too, since she had a journalism degree. So, we were both working.

PIEHLER: You were both working for the paper?

O'STEEN: For the paper, and they held my job. I got to go back, but they wouldn't give my wife her job back, because they said that it might happen again.

PIEHLER: So what was your first beat at Kingsport; what did you cover? What did your wife cover?

O'STEEN: She was the Society Editor and I was the police reporter.

PIEHLER: So, you started out—I've been told it's very traditional for a lot of reporters to start off with the police beat.

O'STEEN: Yeah, that's usually what they get.

PIEHLER: ... Anything stick out in your first few months as a reporter?

O'STEEN: Well, we had a bunch of—several holdups, I remember. I remember going out one time, a boy drowned in the river. A couple of drownings, I remember, I covered. And then ... I would have to cover the City Court. I guess I had, I don't whether I covered them at the same time or not. I remember covering the city court and then I'd have to go up to Blountville which was the county seat and cover the courts up there; the Circuit Court, the Criminal Court, and I enjoyed that. I think I enjoyed covering the courts more than the ...

PIEHLER: More than the police beat?

O'STEEN: More than the police beat, yeah.

PIEHLER: And how did your wife like the society beat?

O'STEEN: I think she enjoyed it, enjoyed it. But that didn't last long; it was just from June till October and then it was all over.

PIEHLER: And you did shore duty ... during the Korean War. Where were you sent?

O'STEEN: Ah, there at Norfolk, the Norfolk Naval Air Station.

PIEHLER: And your wife followed you?

O'STEEN: Yeah, as soon as I found out that I was going to be stationed there I called her and told her to tell them that she was leaving town and to store our furniture and to come on up there.

PIEHLER: Where did you live in Norfolk, the two of you?

O'STEEN: I found a (Laughs)—oh boy! I had gone out and found an apartment before she got there—this is another story—and I thought it was all right. (Laughter) Well, we had *rats*. I went down to meet her at the, uh—I had my car. I took our car up there, and I went down to the train station to meet her when she came in. Well, I had bought some food. I left the food in the kitchen, on the table, and we got back and she was looking at things, and she picked up this loaf of bread and there was nothing there but the cover. There was a hole about that big in the corner where the rats had gotten in there. Now, she's deathly afraid of rats or mice or anything like that! (Laughs) And we stayed there about a month, (Laughs), and then we got another place. We just found a couple of small apartments to live in. She ... got a job working at—well it's the, what is it, the Virginia Commonwealth now. No, what is that one at Norfolk? At that time it was a division of William and Mary. Now what is that?

PIEHLER: It was a school?

O'STEEN: They have a good basketball team.

PIEHLER: Virginia Tech?

O'STEEN: No, not Virginia Tech. Ah, I've forgotten what they called it. Anyway she worked in the office there, while I was at the Dispensary.

PIEHLER: So you went back ... to the Dispensary?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And what was your duty?

O'STEEN: Well, the main thing I remember about that was the changes that had occurred since I was in the Navy before; the medicines, new medicines, new treatments, all this.

PIEHLER: So, what had changed? It hadn't been that long a number of years. What had changed so much in both the Navy and medicine?

O'STEEN: It was amazing to me; I wasn't sure, but in that four years a lot of things had changed. A lot of new treatments and medicines and so forth, and new procedures. They just did things a little differently.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. Anything specifically in terms of new procedures? I guess, one thing was, how common was penicillin in World War II?

O'STEEN: Well yeah. We didn't—penicillin was just coming in, I think, at the end of the war.

PIEHLER: You didn't have any in your dispensary, did you?

O'STEEN: Oh, no.

PIEHLER: No, that was after you ...

O'STEEN: No, while I was on recruiting duty I got pneumonia. I came down with pneumonia; I probably picked it up from somebody coming through. I don't know exactly where I got it. But they treated it with sulfa nolimide, sulfa thiozole and so forth back then. And ah, I ended up in the naval hospital as a patient, and I was there a month, and they were treating me with the sulfa drugs and they weren't doing a whole lot of good, I don't think. But it took me about a month to get over it, to throw that off, and I lost about forty pounds. I came out of there and I was *skinny*, and I stayed skinny 'til after I married. When I married, I weighed three pounds more than my wife did.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) And that, that weight loss was from the pneumonia, and you never put the weight back on?

O'STEEN: Just never did put it back on.

BROCK: So, when you were called up for active duty for the Korean War, you didn't actually go to Korea, you stayed stateside?

O'STEEN: No, I was at Norfolk all that time.

PIEHLER: You, you also mentioned that the Navy had changed a lot ... in the four years. What had changed about the Navy? Anything that sticks out?

O'STEEN: Well, I didn't notice too much except in ... the medical end of it. Uh, I'm sure there had been a lot of changes made. I know they had the—after World War II they had cut the Navy so much, I'm sure they had built back up. Had to do a lot of building up again, but since I wasn't on a ship I didn't notice too much, you know, change, other than in the medical profession.

PIEHLER: That was where you really noticed the changes?

O'STEEN: Yeah, yeah.

PIEHLER: What were ... your duties in the dispensary, specifically?

O'STEEN: I, ah, that is all very vague in my memory.

PIEHLER: Did you see people—because you mentioned at one point that you were in the dispensary and you just did paperwork?

O'STEEN: Uh, I can remember—I'm trying to visualize some of it, but see, we didn't admit patients there. We just saw them when they came in with an ailment of some kind, which were usually pretty minor. If anybody was really sick, you'd send them to the hospital.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm?

O'STEEN: But I can just remember treating minor cuts, bruises, things like that.

PIEHLER: ... You mentioned your wife wasn't too thrilled with your first apartment in Norfolk, but how did you and your wife like Norfolk?

O'STEEN: Oh, we liked it. We got so we liked Norfolk pretty well. And later when I went back to work on the newspaper, we liked it even better then.

PIEHLER: Now you went to, after you got discharged from the Navy a second time, did you stay reserve status?

O'STEEN: Did I what?

PIEHLER: After you left the Navy, after ... your stint during the Korean War did you stay? You stayed a Naval Reservist, or?

O'STEEN: After the Korean War? No.

PIEHLER: You decided not to?

O'STEEN: Oh no. No, you see ... when they called me up, I was in for four years, and my enlistment would end in December, and they called me in October and I told 'em, "I got two months!" and they said, "don't worry about it." They froze me.

PIEHLER: So you should have—you almost totally missed Korea. They had two more months to call you up?

O'STEEN: Well, if I had gotten out when my enlistment expired, but they froze me for a year!

PIEHLER: Ah.

O'STEEN: I had to stay another year.

PIEHLER: So that's why you stayed for twelve months,

O'STEEN: Yeah?

PIEHLER: December of '51.

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: So you elected not to join up for another hitch in the Reserves after?

O'STEEN: Well, they tried to get me; they said I could get a commission, you know, if I would stay in. But I said good-bye.

PIEHLER: (Laughs) You didn't?

O'STEEN: I wasn't interested.

PIEHLER: And after, after you left the Navy a second time ... did you go back to Kingsport or?

O'STEEN: Yeah, went back to Kingsport; worked there till—that was in '51—worked there till '55, and then I worked for two years in Norfolk. I came back to Norfolk and worked.

PIEHLER: And when you went back to Kingsport, you'd mentioned earlier that your wife wasn't retired. She instead worked for the ?

O'STEEN: She worked for the library, and well, at first she worked for—well, the owner

of the paper also had a real estate business there, and for awhile she worked as a secretary in that business. They said that “you can work here, you know, instead of going back to the paper.” So, she worked there for a few months and then she got this job at the library, which she liked much better. She liked working in the library. Then I, ah, I guess it was because we were—I hadn’t been given many raises. I think it was money; I was making seventy five dollars a week there I guess, and I thought maybe I could get more money so I sent a letter to the paper in Norfolk, and I sent one to, I believe, the *Miami Herald*. Two or three papers, just looking to see if there was any job available, and I got a call from Norfolk and I went up there and interviewed and got the job. I worked there two years and then they called me from UT. Wanted to know if I wanted to come back here and work.

PIEHLER: So you got the call from UT; you weren’t looking to come back to UT?

O’STEEN: Well, my wife wanted to come back more than I did, really.

PIEHLER: She, she wanted to come back?

O’STEEN: She wanted to come back to Knoxville; this was her home, and we had our first child then, he was little, just about a year old. So, although I came back for a little less money than I was making, I thought maybe it would be a good step. And I did; I think maybe it was the right step.

PIEHLER: Cause you would spend the rest of your career at the university.

O’STEEN: Yeah, I stayed here then until I retired.

PIEHLER: When you returned to Kingsport what, what did you cover? Did you continue the police and courts, or did you move to another?

O’STEEN: When I came back?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O’STEEN: They made me Managing Editor.

PIEHLER: And how big was the paper?

O’STEEN: Oh about 50,000 circulation.

PIEHLER: How many reporters?

O’STEEN: Hmm?

PIEHLER: How many reporters were there?

O'STEEN: Oh, eight or ten. Something like that I guess. So, I was on the desk the rest of the time I was there.

PIEHLER: And when you went to Norfolk did you, were you?

O'STEEN: When I went to Norfolk I, for a little while I guess I was what you would call a general assignment reporter. They sent me out on different things. Then they put me on a desk and I ... was assistant state editor for awhile and then I was assistant ...

-----END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE-----

PIEHLER: You would spend the rest of your career at UT. What was your first position at the University of Tennessee?

O'STEEN: Ah, I was editor of the news bureau when I came back. That's what they hired me to do.

PIEHLER: And, and how long were you at the news bureau?

O'STEEN: Well, not, let me see, I came in '57 and I guess it was '64 they made me publications editor. I was also assistant director of public relations for several years, and when Julian Harris, who was the Director of Public Relations, retired, then I was acting director for a year 'til we found a replacement. And then he got sick and I was acting director again for a while 'til we found another. But my main job, I guess, from '64 on was editing publications, the magazine, *Torch Bearer*; we started that. There were two or three other publications we put out periodically that I ...

PIEHLER: Would you write stories and edit?

O'STEEN: I did it all.

PIEHLER: You did it all? So you would start *Torch Bearer*; when did you start that? Do you remember?

O'STEEN: The *Torch Bearer*?

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: It was about '64 or five, somewhere along in there.

PIEHLER: And the magazine was already existing, but you ...

O'STEEN: Yeah. Yeah, it had been in existence since 1917; I think they started then, but I was editor then for about twenty-some years. Then when I left Diane Ballard, who

is still here, took it over.

PIEHLER: You would see a number of presidents; that's a good place to start? What do you remember about the different university presidents and who was the first president you worked with?

O'STEEN: Well, Brehm was president when I first came here, Dr. Brehm. Then of course Andy Holt was here.

PIEHLER: I've heard of Dr. Brehm. He was from agriculture?

O'STEEN: Holt?

PIEHLER: No, Brehm.

O'STEEN: Brehm; Brehm was agriculture.

PIEHLER: I'm told he had a lot of faith in the importance of the chicken?

O'STEEN: The what?

PIEHLER: The chicken—that was, to him, what the future held for the university. (Laughter) Was that an accurate characterization? Some former faculty said ...

O'STEEN: I don't know, of course, I didn't see that much of Brehm; I was just getting started. Let's see, Holt came here in '59, I believe. I had been here about two years when Holt came. I knew Andy Holt a lot better than I knew Brehm. Of course, I knew Ed Boling, and I think Alexander came after I left.

PIEHLER: But what, I've heard all kinds of things, mostly positive, about Andy Holt. What do you remember, working with him?

O'STEEN: Well, I remember writing a lot of letters for him (Laughter). No, he was easy to work with. I mean, he was just like we are sitting here talking, you know? He was a very congenial kind of guy. But I did; I wrote a lot of letters for the president while I was here. I wrote for Holt, and I wrote for Ed Boling.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. And what kind of, what types of letters would they tell you to write?

O'STEEN: Well, they would get letters in; then I would take those letters and frame a response, answer their questions, and maybe I would have to do some research in order to even write the letter, but that was part of my job for several years. And I even wrote a few speeches for Andy, but mostly for Ed. Andy, he didn't really need a written speech. He might—he would come in sometime and tell me he would need some background on

some subject, whatever he was going to talk on, you know. And he would want us to give him some ...

PIEHLER: Talking points?

O'STEEN: Not write a speech, but to give him some notes...

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: To use, you know. He didn't—he never did use a written speech.

PIEHLER: I heard from a retired faculty member, when UT finally integrated, he told me the story which I wondered if it was apocryphal. He said Andy, Andy and his wife, they had the reporters from town come over to his house and then they just started giving them liquor, and salted some ham to eat and then they drank more and Mrs. Holt kept saying Andy will be here any minute. And by the time Andy came they drank some more and then towards the end of the evening, it was getting late, he said, "Oh, by the way, we've integrated the University of Tennessee." Is there any truth to that?

O'STEEN: (Laughs) There could be. I don't know.

PIEHLER: You weren't present?

O'STEEN: No, no I wasn't there. I don't know.

PIEHLER: Yeah. This is a faculty member who arrived in '62. He's retired to Charleston, and I wondered whether that was an apocryphal story or what element of truth ...

O'STEEN: Well, that sounds like something Andy might do.

PIEHLER: So, he had very good relations with the press, I guess?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, yeah. He was a natural.

PIEHLER: I was, I was told by someone else, who I think it was a student when he was president, I think she worked as a student assistant in the president's office and she went up to type—I've been told ... when he flew, he would often sit next to people and then dash off a letter to them when he came back to the campus. Do you remember?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, I'm sure he would do that.

PIEHLER: Yeah.

O'STEEN: Yeah. Yeah, I was only on a plane one time with Andy. We went to Martin,

I guess, or something. We flew somewhere out there, and he was on the plane with us. He was just—he was very folksy, you know? He was delightful just to be around.

PIEHLER: How would you compare his style to Ed Boling's? 'Cause that would be the next president.

O'STEEN: Well, Ed ... didn't have the personality that Andy had, and he wasn't the speaker that Andy was. Andy was, ah, he was like an old—he was very countrified. Did you did you ever know him?

PIEHLER: No, I never knew him.

O'STEEN: Very down to earth ... he was full of jokes, you know. He could—it was very entertaining; you wouldn't go to sleep listening to one of his speeches.

PIEHLER: ... You were at the University of Tennessee in the late 60's and early 70's particularly when there was a lot of protesting against the Vietnam War. How did you try to handle that as from the public relations (Laughter) angle or any stories along those lines?

O'STEEN: It got kind of rough sometimes. Well, of course, if we had any kind of a disturbance the papers would be on it, you know.

PIEHLER: ... It's almost like you were saying you had to fall behind the papers to find out?

O'STEEN: Yeah. I remember the night that Nixon spoke here; you probably heard about that.

PIEHLER: I heard it was a pretty raucous affair.

O'STEEN: Yeah. Yeah that that was. Well, I was at that, in the stadium when they did that. Yeah, that got pretty rough. It, public relations after something like that, you just had to try to get out positive things about the university to counteract a lot of this feeling about it. It was pretty rough back during those times.

PIEHLER: What initiatives are you proudest of when you were working for UT?

O'STEEN: What?

PIEHLER: What initiatives are you proudest of, because you started, for example, the *Torch Bearer* and it still exists and you edited the magazine for twenty years?

O'STEEN: Well, I think I enjoyed working on the magazine probably better than anything.

PIEHLER: That was the most ...

O'STEEN: Yeah, that was the most satisfying thing I did.

PIEHLER: Yeah?

O'STEEN: Since I retired, I have continued to write articles for the magazine occasionally. I just like that sort of work.

PIEHLER: Mm-hmm. What led you to retire when you did?

O'STEEN: Well, you know, there were a lot of changes going on then. Ah, we were getting computers, for one thing, and at that stage I just didn't feel like learning the computer. I still don't have a computer; I still do all my typing.

PIEHLER: You still write ...

O'STEEN: ...on the typewriter. And you'll see in that, that's just typewritten stuff.

PIEHLER: So, you're really of the old journalistic school.

O'STEEN: Yeah. (Laughs) No, I've never gotten into computers. That's one thing, and—I don't know, I was sixty six. It was time to retire. I don't regret it.

PIEHLER: So, you've enjoyed retirement?

O'STEEN: Oh yeah, I've really enjoyed retirement. I've done a lot of traveling.

PIEHLER: Well, you mentioned going to France in part to see your brother's grave?

O'STEEN: Yeah. I went ...

PIEHLER: Was that your first trip to Europe?

O'STEEN: That was my first trip to Europe. My wife and I went in the fall of '85. I retired the first of September and I think it was October when we took off to Europe. We spent a month over there. I've been back several times.

PIEHLER: And you've continued to write in retirement?

O'STEEN: Yeah, yeah. I've written; I don't know how many articles I've had in the alumni magazine. I've written about several of these trips I've taken, and I think I've been to about forty countries now and ah ...

PIEHLER: So you've—that's a lot of countries.

O'STEEN: Yeah, last summer we went to—I went to England, France, Switzerland, Italy. I'd never been to Italy; that's one reason I went. I think I've been to all the European countries except what was Yugoslavia. I've never been down there.

PIEHLER: Did you make it to Russia?

O'STEEN: I made it to Russia, Moscow, St. Petersburg. Finland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, all over Spain; we went down into Africa a couple of times. Into Israel, and Egypt, and a few places in South America. But I have always liked to travel.

PIEHLER: And you have two children. Neither one would have served in the military?

O'STEEN: No, no. The, the son is—he's 45 now, and my daughter is 43.

BROCK: Did you encourage your children not to join the military, or did the subject ever come up?

O'STEEN: No, the subject never really came up. Of course, they stopped the draft before my son was old enough to be drafted, and you know, I wouldn't have advised them to go in unless, you know, they just had a burning desire to go in.

PIEHLER: How much did you tell your kids about—you've done this memoir not for us but for your grandchildren, I take it. Ah, how much how much do you tell people about your wartime experiences, particularly your children growing up?

O'STEEN: Oh, I would tell them some things. Usually when they would ask me. I guess I didn't volunteer a whole lot, but they'd asked me.

PIEHLER: You were raised in Middle Tennessee, but you spent your career in East Tennessee. Any thoughts on the differences between Middle Tennessee and East Tennessee, then and now. Because I'm a relative newcomer to the state, so I've often been struck by the divisions of the state.

O'STEEN: Well, I don't think I would want to go back to Middle Tennessee to live. I really like this part of the country, over here.

PIEHLER: Why do you like it so much?

O'STEEN: I don't know, the mountains, the hills. It's a little bit cooler. We used to get a lot of storms in middle Tennessee. Ah I remember—I think the first thing I can remember, I was about three years old when a tornado came through and took our barn and part of our house. So you know, that made an impression on me I'm sure. And ah...

PIEHLER: So you've liked the climate in East Tennessee?

O'STEEN: I've liked the climate better, yeah, and ah its been home for a long time now.

BROCK: Can I go back for a moment to the Korean War? What was your opinion of MacArthur during this time, General MacArthur?

O'STEEN: MacArthur?

BROCK: There was a lot of controversy over him.

O'STEEN: Yeah, well, he was never one of my favorite people. I, ah, I thought he was to autocratic. I didn't care much for him. I'm sure he was a great general.

BROCK: How did you feel about Eisenhower?

O'STEEN: Well, I didn't vote for him. Ah, I liked him better than MacArthur.

PIEHLER: So, you voted for Stevenson in '52?

O'STEEN: Yeah. The last Republican I voted for, for president, was Nixon. That was a mistake.

PIEHLER: Nixon in '68. Was that Nixon in '68 or '72?

O'STEEN: It was when he ran against Kennedy.

PIEHLER: Oh, that far back?

O'STEEN: That far back.

PIEHLER: Okay. Not the '68 or '72.

O'STEEN: No, no. I voted for him, I guess, because Kennedy was a Catholic. That's the only reason.

PIEHLER: Really?

O'STEEN: I'd vote for Kennedy now.

PIEHLER: Yeah, but that really did enter into your decision making?

O'STEEN: Yeah, I think it did.

PIEHLER: Was there anything we forgot to ask you?

O'STEEN: Ah, I don't know you (Laughs) asked a lot! I can't think of anything.

PIEHLER: Well we'd love to have Part One of your memoir, because it says it was in two parts. So, we'd love...

O'STEEN: That's my picture there...

PIEHLER: You're on the left?

O'STEEN: Yeah.

PIEHLER: And the two people standing next to you, who are they. Do you remember their names and who they were?

O'STEEN: His name was Patronis, I think. He was of Italian descent. I can't remember this chief's name; he was the chief water tender. He was. I was still first class there. That was our—that was our seagoing tug.

PIEHLER: Well, I want to, I want to thank you very much for coming in today and giving us an interview.

O'STEEN: I've enjoyed it. I want to thank you for inviting me.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----