

## **Transcription: Jimmy Glover**

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*Today is Wednesday morning, May 17, 2011. My name is James Crabtree and this morning I'll be interviewing Mr. Jimmy Glover. This interview is being conducted by telephone. I'm at the General Land Office building in Austin, Texas, and Mr. Glover is at his residence in Amarillo, Texas. This interview is being conducted in support of the Texas Veterans Land Board Voices of Veterans Oral History Program. Sir, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us today. This interview is being recorded for posterity so that historians and future generations can hear a little bit about what it was like for you to serve in the military. The first question, sir, I always like to ask is just tell us a little bit about your childhood and your life growing up before you went in the military.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, I was born and raised in Parmer County, Texas, at Bovina. I went to school there. Of course, I played football and did other sports and things at that school. On the mid-term of 1943, I graduated from high school and volunteered at 17 and went into the Navy.

*When you were growing up, did you live on a farm or a ranch?*

**Jimmy Glover:** We lived in town. My daddy was a blacksmith. He had farmed but he bought a blacksmith shop and did that service.

*And did you have any brothers and sisters?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I've got two brothers and three sisters and they're all passed away.

*Were they older than you?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yes, they were. I was the baby of the family.

*When the war started up, did any of your brothers go into the military?*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, just myself.

*Just yourself? So, what did your parents think when you told them that you were going to volunteer to go?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, they were hesitant, but they had to sign the papers since I was only 17. But they went ahead and let me go in.

*Now, to go back a couple of years, do you remember the day Pearl Harbor was bombed? You would have been in high school.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yes, I do. I was. It was on a Sunday. Sunday morning. There was a show that come to town, and they had a tent that they were putting up for the show. And several of the other boys worked to help them get their equipment up and ready. I went across to a service station right across the street. It was then is when I heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed.

*And what town was that that you were in?*

**Jimmy Glover:** This was in Bovina.

*Bovina. So when you heard that, even though you were still in high school, did you think at some point, or did you want at some point to go into the military yourself?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I did. I felt like that I needed to do that as soon as I was old enough to go. At that particular time, I was only 16.

*So I'm imagining then sir, that throughout the rest of the time you were in high school you followed the events of the war very closely knowing that when you got old enough you were going to go as well.*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's right. I looked at the battle scene every day and what they were doing all over the world and it just made me want to go.

*What was it that attracted you to the Navy and not the Army or the Marine Corps?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, the Navy was the only one at that time that would take me in. They would take me in.

*And the others were going to make you wait until you're 18?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Right.

*So where was it that you actually signed up? What was the closest town that you went into?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I went into it in Amarillo. There was four of us that volunteered that day and they swore us in and then we took a bus into Lubbock where we met the train going to San Diego, California.

*So the day you signed up was the day they shipped you out.*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's right.

*Had you ever been away from home at that point?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Never.

*What were your thoughts at that point? Were you excited? A little scared?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I was excited and then, you know, glad to be out into the world, you know. I was, you know, I had mixed emotions, but I was glad to be out into the world.

*And so you took the train all the way to San Diego with three other men?*

**Jimmy Glover:** With me, from Amarillo. 'Course we had a whole train load of men for San Diego on this troop train.

*Okay. And what was San Diego like when you got there?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, it was in the springtime, but it was warm, and they put us on trucks and brought us out to the base. As we passed those that was already in there, they'd holler at us, "You'll be sorry, you'll be sorry!" We just laughed.

*What was your basic training like?*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was very good. The part that I had the most trouble with was learning to swim.

*I know that's a key piece of training, even today in the Navy, is teaching swimming.*

**Jimmy Glover:** I had to learn to swim and I had to take special training because I did not know how to swim.

*I imagine that was a little bit terrifying too, when they put you in the pool and you don't know how to swim.*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's right, it was, I thought I was going to flunk out of my company and have to go through it again because of the fact that I was having trouble swimming.

*How was it that you finally learned how to swim?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I just kept working at it and listening to them tell me until I finally did it. I did it like they wanted me to and passed right on.

*I imagine that was a bit of a relief.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, that was a big relief.

*I know something else that they teach a lot in Navy basic training is fighting fires. Did you do a lot of that at that time?*

**Jimmy Glover:** What now?

*Learning how to fight fires on ships?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh yes. We learned that after we went, I went through diesel school in San Diego. And after I got out of diesel school, they assigned us to ships. And my ship was in San Francisco. So they sent me to Treasure Island.

*What was the name of your ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** My ship was the USS Munsee. It was a ATF ship, auxiliary tug fleet.

*Tell us a little bit, sir, about the crew aboard that ship.*

**Jimmy Glover:** We had about a hundred men. And we had firefighters and divers as well as the regular crew that was stationed on it most of the time.

*How about your ship's captain? What was he like?*

**Jimmy Glover:** He was a very good man. He came up through the ranks. He was a seaman when he started. He was a lieutenant junior grade when he took over as command of our ship.

*So he was pretty junior in rank then, to be a ship's commander.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, he was. But it was a small ship. We didn't have but somewhere around a hundred men at any one time.

*So you arrived at Treasure Island in San Francisco. This was pretty much right out of basic training and some of the other training you did?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, I trained for diesel in a diesel school. I learned how to work on diesel engines and run 'em.

*So that was kind of your specialty. That was what they had assigned you.*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's what I did during the service. I was a motor machinist's mate.

*So tell us then. You arrived at Treasure Island. How long did you spend there before you guys ship out?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I think it was about two months, something like that. But anyway, during that time, they sent us to Mare Island, and that's where we learned fire fighting.

*I know that definitely is essential.*

**Jimmy Glover:** We didn't stay there. We always come back to Treasure Island to sleep. But they sent us there to train us.

*So you lived on the ship, then, even when you were in port.*

**Jimmy Glover:** After the ship was commissioned, our ship was commissioned in December. No, it was in November. And we started living on it just as soon it was ready.

*Tell us, sir, a little bit about the living conditions on a ship. From everything I've ever seen, the quarters are pretty close. Can you talk about that a little bit?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yes, they were close. They were stacked three bunks high, and I was in that top bunk in my quarters. And they had the quarters for the men that worked in the engine room, the electricians and the motor macs. Then they had those that were the ship's hands on another part of the ship. And it was very close quarters but it was, you know, we got to where we were used to it. It didn't bother us any.

*How was your food?*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was, most of the time, it was excellent.

*That's great.*

**Jimmy Glover:** We'd run out of food when we was moving around a lot. Then we'd have to use C rations and K rations. But that was not all the time. Most of the time it was very good food.

*So when you finally sailed out and passed near the Golden Gate Bridge out in the Pacific, when was that? I'm sorry. You already said it was about two months.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, we left for Pearl Harbor on January the 1<sup>st</sup> 1944.

*New Year's Day of '44.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah.

*And did you sail out with a large convoy or was it just your ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, it was just our ship. We were towing a section of a battleship dry dock. We towed it to Honolulu.

*How long did that take you to arrive there?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Two weeks.

*Two weeks. And then, what did you think of Hawaii?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, I was, it was good to see it and I enjoyed my stay there. Had lot of fun.

*And during that time, did you know what was going on with the war where things were headed? Did you feel pretty good about the situation at that point?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, we kept up with it pretty well, especially in the Pacific. At that particular time they were, during those few months I was in Honolulu, they were taking, let's see what, the island where Bikini is. There's a group of islands there that they were, that they'd made a raid on.

*That the Marianas Islands?*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, it wasn't, they called 'em something else. But I just can't remember the name of those islands. Majuro was one of them.

*I'm drawing a blank on it as well.*

**Jimmy Glover:** I'm blank on it. Bikini and Majuro. Anyway, Majuro was one of the islands that we towed that dry dock to.

*You towed that all the way from Honolulu?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, this was a different dry dock. This was for amphibious landing ships. And we towed it to Majuro. This was the part, at this particular time, where most of the war was taking place. You know it hadn't gotten over to Japan area yet.

*When you finally got over to that part of the Pacific Theater, tell us some of your memories of that time.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, it, it was good. We had good memories. They started changing out our crews. Some of our crew went to other ships and we got new people on board ship. And they just used us at that particular time to get ready for the invasion of Peleliu.

*What was a typical day like for you aboard the ship? Was there a certain number of hours you would work?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah. A shift lasted four hours. And then you'd be off eight hours. And then you'd have to work four more hours. That's the way our shifts worked.

*So it'd be four on, eight off, four on. And so you're constantly, sometimes you'd be sleeping in the day, sometimes, I guess, you'd be sleeping at night?*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's right. And that's the reason they had two different sleeping quarters. In our sleeping quarters there was somebody asleep most all the time.

*Makes sense. And you were like that as long as you were at sea, it was always that way?*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was always that way, just every day.

*Were you able to get mail aboard ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** We did. We'd usually get it from another ship. And usually it was from an oiler. We'd fill up, while we were at sea, we'd fill up with engine fuel from an oiler. And then they'd put our mail in a bag and shoot a line across from ship to ship and that bag of mail would come down that line to us.

*I imagine that was quite a morale booster to get mail.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, it was, it was good to have mail call. Sometimes it would be three months before we'd get any mail, but when we got, it was just like reading a book.

*I imagine it would take a lot of time for it to catch up to you, especially when you're out moving around. I would think it would definitely be delayed. What were some things that you'd get? Would you get letters from your parents or your siblings?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I didn't have any children and I wasn't married at the time. But I did get letters from my sisters, mostly, and my mother, and my girlfriend. I married her after I got out. I had a girlfriend. We weren't married at that time, but we married six days after I got out of the service.

*That's great. So she was able to write to you while you were . . .*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, she wrote to me every day.

*That's great. Tell us, sir, about some of the other places that you went there in the Pacific Theater.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well we, in getting ready for the Battle of Peleliu, they sent us to Majuro, not Majuro, Tulagi in Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands. We all were a crew in convoy that came from Pearl, went there and about two days later, not two days, several days later, we converged on Peleliu.

*Could you see it from your ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh yeah, we were in the thick of it.

*Describe for us, sir, a little bit of your memories of that.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, that was the first battle that I was ever in. And I was scared. And so were all my friends. We were all scared but we came through it all right.

*When you were on that ship and you were close to Peleliu and the battle was raging, what was your battle station? Did you have a . . .*

**Jimmy Glover:** Mine was in the engine room.

*Engine room, yes sir.*

**Jimmy Glover:** I'd have to take care of the engines and see that they had fuel.

*Tell us a little bit about those engines. Were they difficult to operate?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh no, they weren't really all that bad. They're kinda like the engines that's on a train. They're big long engines that got a turbine in it they're pulling, you know. It's a diesel electric ship, and they start 'em with air, and our job was to see that they had the fuel, and they had gauges on every cylinder to see that they were performing like they should. And we'd find one that wasn't performing, we'd overhaul it right there.

*How many men would be working with you on a regular shift in your section?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, in the engine room, usually there were three men. The one that's working with the engines, and then there's two that were on a steam generator, and they had a machine there that made fresh water out of salt water, and they were doing that. So usually when we were underway, there were three men in the engine room, and then they had a motor room, and there's usually two men in it.

*Being in that engine room, I imagine it was hot and loud. Is that accurate?*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was hot and loud, yeah. When we were on the equator, that engine room would get up to between 140 and 150 degrees, and we'd have to stay close to a ventilator in order to stay alive.

*I imagine. I imagine it was really difficult dealing with all that. And also, while you were in the engine room, you didn't see any natural light and I guess you probably just had some light bulbs down in there?*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's all. We just had the lighting as there wasn't any portholes or anything that we could see out of. And the way we'd listen, if we were in battle, you could tell a whole lot about where the aircraft were coming in because if we heard the three-inch 50 on the bow of the ship, the aircraft would be a long ways off. And then you hear the 40-mm go off, they were closer, and then when the 20s went off, they were on top of ya. So that's the way we could tell how close in they was.

*Tell us, sir, about some other spots after you'd gone to Peleliu and Guadalcanal. Where did your ship go from there?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, we got into the Battle of Leyte Gulf. They changed their, Admiral Halsey was our admiral that we worked with, and he was the commander of the Third Fleet. And they

chased a bunch of the Japanese to Formosa, what was then Formosa, and some of the ships there got hit, the Houston and the Canberra. They were cruisers, got hit and were dead in the water. So they sent us and the Pawnee, which was a sister ship, to get 'em. And so we had to tow them down through the Japanese navy and their planes 'til we get 'em safely out, and we got 'em out. That was a chore for us, and that was our time in Leyte Gulf.

*During all these battles that were going on when you were in the engine room, were there ever times that you would lose power and things would go dark?*

**Jimmy Glover:** We have never lost power in battle. We would always, the only time we ever lost power was when we would be in a typhoon or something like that.

*Tell us about those, sir.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, we were in one of the worst ones they had there, that happened in June of 1945, and we were there at Okinawa, and our ships were out there refueling and taking care of the Third Fleet, and the admiral told us to start running because of the typhoon was coming in, and we did, but we ran right into the typhoon. Had winds up to 130 miles an hour. You couldn't even see the top of the ship or the sun or anything. It was much water. That was a time that I guess I was the most afraid. I was in my bunk. I was off duty, was in my bunk, and just trying to hold on to the pipe that held our bunks up. But something told me that I'd come through all right, and I just didn't worry about it anymore. And sure enough, we did. We lost power. We lost two engines all together, and the third engine was sputtering, you know. We had taken water up the exhaust, and without two of the engines, you couldn't go into the waves. You had to sail the ship right into the waves to keep from sinking. But anyway, I believe that was the most fearsome time of my whole life in the Navy.

*Sir, in all that time, that's quite a thing to go through. How long was your ship in that storm?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, we were in there two or three days in the storm, and one of the ships out there, it was a cruiser, 210 feet I believe they said, broke off at its bow, and we towed that ship to Guam, and they decided not to take it back to the States. They'd just put another bow on after the ship got there, and so they sunk it into the breakwater that they were building around Guam harbor there.

*So when they took it from you guys, where were you placed to then? Were you put on another ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I'm sorry. Do that again.

*Sir, I guess I misunderstood. You were talking about in Guam, the vessel was so damaged.*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was a cruiser but I can't remember the name of that cruiser.

*Oh, okay, it was not your ship then.*

**Jimmy Glover:** No. My ship was all right. We just towed that 210 feet of that cruiser to Guam.

*Okay, I misunderstood.*

**Jimmy Glover:** And it tore up our planes. We had our airplanes on the carriers out there. It ruined all of 'em. They just had to shove 'em overboard, and the flight decks on those carriers were bent down. Just the force of that water was just that hard.

*Yes sir. Just tore everything up.*

**Jimmy Glover:** It did a lot more damage to our fleet than the Japanese ever did.

*It's ironic, yes sir. At that point, that was in late, you said, late '40 or early '45?*

**Jimmy Glover:** That was in June, around June the 1<sup>st</sup> of '45.

*So the war was getting close to culminating at that point.*

**Jimmy Glover:** It was, and we later, we were at that particular time fighting Okinawa.

*Tell us about your memories of Okinawa.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, we was doing that service fleet, and we never got to that point except when a ship would get hit and we'd carry 'em into port. And we did carry a ship in to port there in Okinawa. Kerama Retto was the name of the island we took the ship, and it was one of our old ports after destroyers that had been converted to carrying diesel, or not diesel but aviation fuel, and it nearly sunk on us but we managed to pump the water out of it and salvage it, and got it to Kerama Retto.

*Sir, at that point towards the end of the war, did you have a pretty good feel that we were going to defeat the Japanese?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh yeah, I felt like we were but I felt like we were gonna have to land on Japan itself. I didn't figure that, you know, they've give up this fast.

*Do you remember where you were when you heard that the atomic bomb had been dropped for the first time?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I was at sea there close to Okinawa, and when that bomb, the first one dropped, And then a few days later they dropped another one, and then they told us to go to port at Guam, and we started taking on supplies, getting ready for the invasion of Japan. And while we were there, the flags on the ships, victory flags on the ship went up, and the whistles and the bells started ringing.

*So that's how you knew . . .*

**Jimmy Glover:** That's how we knew the war was over.

*You saw the victory flags and heard the horns first.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, that was a marvelous day. And that same day, the submarines that were stationed there, they put on their going home pennants on their masts and started sailing out for the States.

*Wow, that quick.*

**Jimmy Glover:** That quick.

*Was there any sort of celebration aboard your ship?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, just crying mostly. That was our celebration. Each one of us had tears in our eyes.

*I'll bet. Did the ship's captain address the crew with that news? Did he have anything special to say?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, the captain we had in the beginning had been promoted to full captain and was sent to San Francisco, and then we had a new captain at that time that we were not really fully acquainted with.

*So he didn't make a speech or anything?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh no.

*So then at that point when the war was over and everyone is jubilant and ready to get home, how long was it before you guys started home?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, most of us, even myself, we'd been out there long enough that I got out by points. You know you got out by point system, and I could of got out then but I had to wait for transportation home, and they sent my, I rode our ship home to Mare Island. And when we came under the Golden Gate Bridge, everybody that wasn't on duty was out on deck looking at that good America up ahead of us. We were glad to get home.

*Yes sir, absolutely. Then did your family and your girlfriend, did they have any idea when you were coming back?*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, not until I reached port, and I sent them a telegram that we were back in the States and I was fixin' to get my discharge.

*I bet they were excited.*

**Jimmy Glover:** And just a few days later, why they sent me to San Pedro, California, and I got my discharge there. And then they sent me home, and at every stop that train would make, I'd send another telegram, I'm coming home.

*Letting them know where you were along the way.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Uh huh, and my wife and her dad were there at Clovis on the dock when the train stopped, and then a jillion sailors, they said, got off.

*So they met you in New Mexico.*

**Jimmy Glover:** It made it kind of hard for them to, because we hadn't seen each other in three years, but there she was.

*That's great.*

**Jimmy Glover:** And we were married just seven days later.

*So they kind of met you a little bit, from Amarillo. You said they came to Clovis, New Mexico?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I came through Albuquerque, uh huh. I was coming from the west coast.

*But where did they meet you? Was it at the train station in Amarillo?*

**Jimmy Glover:** At Clovis.

*In Clovis, New Mexico?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Uh huh.

*Okay, so they, but they weren't from Clovis, were they?*

**Jimmy Glover:** My wife and dad lived in Clovis at that time.

*Oh, okay. I was under the impression they were from Amarillo and they had driven a long distance.*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, they never did live in Amarillo. They lived in Bovina, that's where I met her.

*Yes sir. I imagine that was a day you'll never forget.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, it was. It was a day I'll never forget, never forgotten it.

*Yes sir. Do you remember what your parents did when they saw you?*

**Jimmy Glover:** My mother shouted, hung on to me, and she said, "I knew you had been in war." But she says, "I've been a-praying for ya."

*That's great. And so you got married, you said, six days later?*

**Jimmy Glover:** On the 12<sup>th</sup>.

*On the 12<sup>th</sup>, that's great. And where did you have the wedding?*

**Jimmy Glover:** We had the wedding at Clovis and, let's see, the church was Central Baptist Church.

*And your wife had already started, I guess, kind of planning a bit?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, yeah.

*Getting a dress and . . .*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah. I sent her diamonds from Hilo, Hawaii.

*Oh, wow.*

**Jimmy Glover:** So we were engaged.

*That is excellent. It made the homecoming all the better.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Oh, it made a lot of difference. Oh, it was good to get back.

*Did you ever keep in touch with any of the men you served with in the Navy.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Uh huh, I have. The last one that I've, a guy by the name of Harris, and he lived in New Jersey. That's the last one that I have, about three years ago, and it's about the time we got started reminiscing about our time in there. He died of cancer. So I didn't get to know him long.

*Did you track him down through a . . . ?*

**Jimmy Glover:** Through my, my boy did, through a . . .

*That's great. So they were able to track him down.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Yeah, they were able to track him down for me.

*That's great. Well, sir, I tell you I really appreciate you sharing these stories with us. It means a lot for our program that people can listen to these interviews and hear about the things that people have done to protect this nation. And we have archives here at the Land Office that go back to the 1600s, Spanish land grants. We have the land grant that David Crockett's widow received after he was killed at the Alamo, and we have the original register that Stephen F. Austin kept in his own hand of the settlers. And we plan on adding all these interviews into that archive so that they can be there hundreds of years from now as well. With that in mind, is there anything that you'd want to say to somebody listening to this interview potentially 100 years from now?*

**Jimmy Glover:** I would like for them to know that if they know the Lord, he'll bring you through. The Lord did bring us through.

*I imagine then that you were praying every day when you were on that ship in that war.*

**Jimmy Glover:** I was. I prayed every day.

*That's great. Did your ship have a chaplain?*

**Jimmy Glover:** No, we didn't. The only time we got to go to services is if we were tied up by another ship that had a chaplain on it, and I went to several other ships for their services.

*That's great. Well, sir, again, I really do appreciate your time. But most of all, everybody here at the Land Office appreciates your service to our nation, and this interview is just one small way of saying thank you for that service. In about a week or so we're going to send you copies of this interview on CDs that you can give to your friends and family, and then we'll also have a nice letter and certificate from Commissioner Patterson that he wants to send you.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Well, thank you.

*Yes sir. Thank you very much, and, of course, you've got my number too so if you need to get a hold of me for any reason, please feel free to call.*

**Jimmy Glover:** All rightee.

*All right sir, thank you very much.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Thank you very much.

*Yes sir, have a good day.*

**Jimmy Glover:** You too.

*Take care. Bye bye.*

**Jimmy Glover:** Bye bye.