

Transcription: Grand Canyon Oral History

Interviewee: Ed Shockley (ES), Greg Shockley (GS)

Interviewer: Tom Martin (TM)

Subject: Ed recounts his high school days in Paso Robles, CA, with his best friend Ed Hudson. Ed recounts watching his friend's dad, Egbert Hudson, build the ESMERALDA II, now in the historic boat collection at Grand Canyon National Park.

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TM: Today is August 27, 2018. It's Monday, and in the room, today, at the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, are Ed Shockley and Ed's son, Greg, and I'm Tom Martin. Ed had a chance to watch Ed Hudson and his son, Ed, build the ESMERALDA II in Paso Robles, California. Ed, thank you so very much for being willing to come in, and Greg, thank you for making this all happen. What year were you born, Ed?

ES: 1932.

TM: Where? Where were you born?

ES: Glendale Research Hospital.

TM: Where was that?

ES: Glendale, California.

TM: Okay, was that near Paso Robles? I'm pretty clueless.

ES: No, that's actually, it's just west of Pasadena, or west of San Marino.

TM: So just west of here?

ES: Yeah, west of here. Fifteen miles.

TM: Okay, what were your parents doing here, then?

ES: My parents, we lived in probably Montrose. My father was in construction, and he also worked for the CCC as a Reserve Army officer.

TM: This was during the Depression, then?

ES: Yes, this was during the Depression. Probably up through '35, he was doing that. My mother was a seamstress for whoever could use her expertise in sewing. In fact, that's how she paid for our cocker spaniel pet. The doctor's wife had her make her dresses.

TM: What was the name of your cocker spaniel? You were waiting for that question, weren't you?

ES: Nickie. He was lost up the San Gabriel Canyon with my dad fishing, and he got in the water and couldn't get out.

TM: Oh no, aw gosh. But your dad liked to fish?

ES: Oh, yes. He loved fly fishing.

TM: Oh my gosh, wonderful.

ES: Pardon me?

TM: That's wonderful!

ES: Yeah, and hiking. They would, in a day, they would ride the streetcar up to San Marino and get off of it at the end of the line, and go up the hill to Wilson and come out down at Montrose.

TM: So make a loop out of it?

ES: Yeah, and you look at that mountain from 20 miles away, and that's awesome.

TM: That's amazing, wow. So did your mom and dad, did they take you out as a young man, a young boy, camping and fishing?

ES: There was one camping trip that I really remember, probably was 1937. My father took us up to Lodgepole in Sequoia. He set up a tent and a campsite near the ranger station. We were all set. We had all the food we needed for a while and a larder that you would put up in a tree. My sister, who's four years older than I, and myself, and my mother were in the tent, and it was raining. The tent leaked a little bit because we didn't not touch it. You touch the inside of a tent, and it leaks, and then my sister heard a noise, and she peaked out and said, "There's a bear in our larder!"

TM: No!

ES: We had forgotten to put it up in the tree. My mother grabbed the ax and she stormed off, and she slammed the ax on the table, and the bear ran off. My mother wrote a telegram: "Tent leaks. Bear raided larder. We're wet and want to come home." My sister and I went down to the ranger's station, and he sent the telegram off. The next night, my father was up there, and we went for a walk. I remember. I was 5. He was in uniform, and I was walking right beside him, and I stayed right close to his boot.

TM: 'Cuz there were bears out there.

ES: Yeah, there were bears there. So that was the extent of family camping. Although, there was others. Building a lodge up at Lake Sequoia in summertime volunteer help. That went up through '41 probably, 1941. This beautiful lodge for the Hanford YMCA.

TM: Wow.

ES: It's all volunteer, so we lived up there for the summer.

TM: Nice. Did you like that?

ES: Yeah, but that's the way it was. You know, it wasn't long after that. The Hudsons probably came to Paso Robles probably in '42 maybe.

TM: How did you end up in Paso Robles because you're living here in Pasadena?

ES: By then we were up there. My father went up to build a gym for the Paso Robles high school. It was the last WPA project in the area.

TM: Okay, what year would've that been?

ES: Well, that would've been 1940 because that's when the Paso Robles Inn burned.

TM: Okay, so you would've been 12 in 1940.

ES: Uh, no I was 8 in 1940.

TM: No, I'm sorry, wait a minute. Yes, thank you. Did you all move up there? Your mom, and your sister, and your dad?

ES: Yeah, we all moved up there. We were there through my graduation of high school. We were there all through the war years.

TM: How did you meet, then, what we should probably call Ed Jr.?

ES: Ed Jr. Well, they bought what had been I believe the Clark Drugstore, which was next to the mercantile in Paso Robles. He was in my class, and we sort of buddied up. We were out in the country a lot just walking, hiking, shooting. We both had .22 rifles probably by the time we were 12. Before we were 12, actually. We'd just take a box of ammo in our pocket, and we'd go. But we never got in trouble with them! But we knew all the hills and valleys around Paso Robles. Ed got into photography, and somewhere along the line, he had a Leica camera, which was the epitome of cameras at the time. It's sort of funny, but we used to tease him about his Mickey Mouse camera. That was in the 40s, and Mickey Mouse was a very popular item, so it's sort of amazing to me that we used it in the same manner— well that's a Mickey Mouse thing— we used it then as we do now.

TM: As a term meaning cheap or goofy?

ES: Well, yeah. We were teasing him about this beautiful camera that he had. He enjoyed photography. I think he did his own developing, so that was a thrust in his life. I don't think shooting was a thrust in his life.

TM: Did he stutter?

ES: Ed, yes. Ed did stutter.

TM: Did he stutter when he was 10 when you first knew him?

ES: Yes, he did. He stuttered. It didn't bother us. I studied some. I stuttered some. I didn't study very much. I studied. I stuttered more than I studied, I think, but less than Ed. We spent a lot of time together. They owned a home on the east side of the Salinas River, which divides Paso Robles. There was a small settlement over there where they lived. All he had to do was to get to work or to school. They would just drive downhill across the bridge, and then they'd be in town, so that was the way it was.

TM: Where did you guys live?

ES: We lived, we rented a house for a short time, and then we bought a house that was quite old in Paso Robles. I believe we bought it from the Bell family. The father, I believe, was a blacksmith, and George Bell, who we bought it from, had been born in the house. We would've bought it in '40, late '40, or '41. He was a plumber, so he probably developed the sanitation system in Paso Robles. We enjoyed the house for quite a ways.

TM: So that was in town?

ES: Yeah, it was in town.

TM: To get to the Hudson's place, you'd have to go down across the river and then up to the side?

ES: Right, probably two, three miles away. We lived on Oak Street, which was also known as Church Street, and one end of it ran dead into the high school. The other schools were all around us. One time Ed and I were horsing around in our house, and we wound up sitting on this trumpet that I had, and it bent it. Then, I couldn't play it anymore. We tried to straighten it, and it didn't work, so I wound up buying a new trumpet. That was money at the time.

TM: I was gonna say, if you didn't want to play the trumpet, it might've been an okay thing, but if you needed to play that trumpet, it was not an okay thing.

ES: Well, I enjoyed it. I wasn't gifted at it, but I did enjoy it all the way through high school. Music was big. I don't think music was big for Ed. Ed was probably more studious than I. Because I don't remember him being in band, that meant he was involved in photography, which he was a photographer for our annual. Although, I don't remember him studying photography at all in college. We went to the same college for a year, and then he transferred down to UCLA, or USC, no, UCLA, in geology, where he graduated.

TM: In geology?

ES: Yeah, and a classmate went down there with him, so the two of them graduated together. By that time, I was down, before he graduated, I was down in the Los Angeles area and talking with them, and they said, "Hey. We're going out on a field trip this next Saturday. Why don't you come with us." I'm like, "Fine!", and so we went out and did some mapping, geological mapping, in this area that had experienced some mining. That was an outdoor fun day. They were probably juniors in college at the time. On the way home, there was a bunch there, maybe ten, fifteen guys all doing more or less the same thing. We stopped at this roadhouse that would be on Highway 14. Both of them had beers. I may have had a beer or two and maybe a sandwich. Anyway, they were talking, and they were talking about what they had seen and experienced. I thought, you know, they could've, to a stranger listening to them, they might have been talking about the loveliness of a lady. These guys are crazy if they think that's so beautiful!

TM: They were so dedicated to it.

ES: Yes, they were. I always remember that conversation style that they had.

TM: Talking about slip, and angle, and hornblends, and feldspar plagioclase, whatever they do.

ES: They were sold on it.

TM: You know, Ed, what do you remember about Mr. and Mrs. Hudson?

ES: I didn't have a lot to do with Mr. Hudson. I knew he was at the drugstore, and I believe they made their drugs. They compounded their drugs, which doesn't often happen now. I remember once, Ed, my friend, and I wound up eating lunch at his home. His mother cooked abalone, and it was sliced very thin, and it'd go *table slap* on the frying pan, *table slap* one, two, three, *table slap* flip it over, one two, three, in the plate. That was the one time I really remember eating abalone.

TM: Did you like it?

ES: Yeah, it was good. They're rather hard to find, but at the time, they were a lot more visible along the California coast than they are now.

TM: Mrs. Hudson was Marian I think. Was that her name?

ES: I don't remember her name, but when I saw her in the pictures that my son brought up out of the computer, she was small, diminutive. Ed was, both Eds, were tall. We had a lot of fun together. One time while I was up there, and the ESMERALDA was in the, I'm gonna say it was just past the framing area. It had a double bottom of marine plywood so that it had a lot of strength on the bottom. It would've been probably one full inch thick on the bottom of an oak frame. The sides were half-inch thick. The boat wasn't going to land on the side. It might get deflected away and such. It had three sealed compartments. They were open on top, but water would not translate between them. If water got into them, it wouldn't go from one to the other.

TM: Let's back up for a minute. When did you first get an inkling that there was a boat being built at the Hudson home? You must've asked your friend Ed about it: "Ed, what's going down here?" How did that all come about?

ES: I think the ESMERALDA II was the name of it. I first remember seeing it when it was at least halfway. The bottom was done. The frame was there. They were getting ready to work on the sides or the top. I'm not sure.

TM: So it was well on its way when you first were over at the house?

ES: The interesting thing about it, it had a blunt nose that was probably two feet wide. I believe it was two thicknesses of two-inch, like a 2x12, it was shaped out of. So there would've been a 4x12 up there to absorb force of a direct hit.

TM: Interesting.

ES: The bottom of the boat had to slope up quite a bit to match it, but it did. The blunt nose probably wasn't used that much, thank heavens. It would've been a real jar for a boat that heavy to ram an immovable object.

TM: I'll tell you another story later once we're done about that. So when you saw the boat, and you saw it being built with that 4x12 upfront, and the double floor on the bottom, it had bulkheads that divided it up into sections, did you get a sense that it was a frail boat or a sturdy boat? How would you classify that? What do you think? You're not a professional boat builder but as a young man.

ES: I had already built my first kayak.

TM: Really? Oh, now that's a whole 'nother story I wanna find out about.

ES: I had built it before I was 12.

TM: What kind of kayak?

ES: Well, my dad was up in the Yukon, and he wrote me a letter on birch bark. He said, "This is what the Eskimos made their kayaks out of." I thought, "No, they didn't make them out of birch bark. The Indians did." Anyway, I decided to make a kayak because there was a stream, the river, at least in the springtime. I had it completed. I had built it just like a little Guillows model airplane.

TM: So this would be like a full boat with a stick structure on the inside?

ES: It was 10 feet long, and it was probably 30 inches wide, and it had maybe 12-inch depth from the top to the bottom. I had no idea what I was doing, except an idea. I based the bottom with tempered Masonite, which is impervious to water.

TM: Yes, for a while until it gets wet.

ES: Well, it's impervious to water. You don't see it anymore. It's like Bakelite almost.

TM: Oh really? Oh my gosh.

ES: It had a blunt bow and stern. I just left a two-foot by two-foot opening in the very center of it to sit in, and you had to sit in it Indian style.

TM: So now the true Inuit kayak has a skirt that keeps water out if you happen to roll over and come back up again.

ES: Never happened on any of ours.

TM: I see.

ES: To the extent of once, I was chasing my son down the river, and I went through a column of water that came up over and fell right in on my lap straight off the mountains, and I *gasp* keep the boat downstream.

TM: Don't get any water in the boat, okay. That's usually because this would've been in 1940, wait, I'm sorry, '41, '42, '43, '44. To make sure if you're twelve-ish. It's somewhere in there.

ES: Probably '42 would be a good shot starting.

TM: That's really neat. When you saw Hudson's building a boat, were you like, "I got this down already?"

ES: I was interested in it, but it was much bigger than I would've done.

TM: Meaning you thought it was overbuilt, the ESMERALDA II?

ES: I was impressed with the thickness of the bottom. It was important that it withstand shock.

TM: So what you're saying is, it sounds like it was pretty strong?

ES: It was about as strong as you would plan to make a boat. Seeing the pictures of it when they turned it loose, it did suffer some damage, but not on the bottom. It was up on the upper sides.

TM: So did you see that film when they threw the ropes?

ES: I have seen the film, but only when I was in high school. I remember in the film, the camera pans off on the side of the river, and you see a sand spit that's pretty big, and so they pulled over on the sand spit, and before they landed, you could see some writing up on the wall. They landed the boat, and there was a narrow ledge going up to a rock platform that was probably ten, twelve feet off the water, off the high water because they only went through on high water. The camera was in front of the climber. The climber went up, and the camera cleared the deck, and here you were looking straight at a skeleton, a human skeleton, complete. They pictured that, and they pictured the writing on the wall. I don't remember who it was and the dates that they put him there. They left it there, and I understand since then it's gone to UCLA.

TM: I wonder which skeleton that was. It could've been the South Canyon skeleton, but I digress. Let me backup a minute. Did you talk with Ed Sr. at all about what he was doing? Did he say, "Hey Ed, let's just sit down I wanna tell you what we're doing back here"? Did you get a chance to help? There were like seven thousand screws in that boat.

ES: No, I didn't really talk with Ed Sr. that much. We were bodybuilding at the time, chasing each other around the hills. But I knew who he was, and he showed film at our church one time in Fellowship Hall. Ed Sr. got, because of his recording of his trips, he was inducted into the International Explorers Club. He went to one meeting of it. This must've been 1950, maybe '49-'50 school year. Hillary had just climbed Everest. Admiral Byrd was still alive. I'm not sure if he was there or not. They had just found a baby mastodon quick-frozen in the Siberian Arctic. This was a little unusual at the time. It was quick-frozen so fast, and this was related to spite Ed Sr. It was quick-frozen so fast that it had been eating in a field of clover, and there was clover in its mouth. Whatever it was, it happened extremely fast. It was identifiable as clover. They served it at the International Explorer's Club in Waldorf Astoria, New York.

TM: They served up the mastodon meat?

ES: Yes. Since hearing that, I've always sort of kept an eye open for any of their menus, and they are unusual. I was surprised. I don't know if he had the ESMERALDA II in there once or twice, in the Colorado River once or twice. I thought, and I'm of the mind it's twice.

TM: Well, in 1948, they attempted an up run. I don't know if Ed Jr. talked with you about that. They went out to Lake Mead with Otis Marston and Willie Taylor, and they attempted to go up the Colorado River in 1948. They got up to river mile 220, so if roughly the math, not quite right, but 280, so they came up 60 miles. They couldn't climb 217 mile rapid. Marston tried and tried, and he was out in the middle of the river trying to power up and just couldn't climb this rapid. Did they talk about that in '48? Did Ed mention that?

ES: The thing I remember him saying, in coming down the river, and he had been all the way down, not in the ESMERALDA, but in anything that would float, they'd go down in. But the ESMERALDA, at least on one trip, they put in at Expedition Isle up on the Green River, and they'd come down, and they would go through a rapid, and they would turn around and come back up it and log it.

TM: As an up run?

ES: Yes, so that they would have a memory of it and maybe pictures of it. Then they'd go down to the next one, and they'd turn around and come back, and go down, all the way through Cataract Canyon, which of course isn't there now. It's buried. But they always tried and kept notes and pictures of how they could come back up. That was their hope, to put into Lake Mead and go all the way up.

TM: That was the plan. In 1948, they were figuring out where they were going to get gas in Moab. I was amazed.

ES: In fact, Ed Jr. and I talked about it quite a bit. I was in a used bookstore, and I was looking at the books, and here's *Brighty of the Grand Canyon*, and I laughed, and I grabbed it up. Actually, I

was really surprised that it's a 1953 book. I thought it was an old, old story. It was written about Teddy Roosevelt's time. That's what it was. That's where it was placed, but I got a kick out of that.

TM: So did you keep boating? Did you keep kayaking, then?

ES: When my son got into kayaking, in Scouts, there was a man that we enjoyed. They were close, my son and his sons were close friends and school friends. We would go places with the Scout Troop that were exciting, to say the least. Said, "They gotta have a kayak." So we built one, and then he says, "No, they all have to have one." I made a mold, ish. I was in an area that I wasn't familiar with, but I made a mold.

TM: By this time, we're talking fiberglass?

ES: Yeah. There was a man that said, "I can get you a bolt, a roll of batting, a roll of fabric, and a 55-gallon drum of resin." And boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, they were all delivered. We got the mold. It was a two piece mold. The bottom was one and the top was another. We had some colors. Each of the boys made their own kayak.

TM: What year was this?

ES: '72-3?

GS: No, it was like 1968-'69.

ES: Okay '68-'69.

GS: Might've been '68, I think, '69.

ES: Then we would bolt them together with screws and nuts on the inside, machine screws.

TM: The top and bottom halves?

ES: Yes.

TM: And then would you glass that seam then?

ES: No, we didn't even do that. We took them up to, up above this lake on a major river that comes out of the...

GS: We went to the Colorado River first.

ES: Huh?

GS: We went to the Colorado River first.

ES: Not with those.

GS: Yeah.

ES: Okay, anyway. One of the fathers got in it. The boys had to do their own work, and that was fun watching.

TM: Did they make their own paddles? How'd you get paddles?

ES: Yeah. The paddle was just a pole, an inch and a half rod of wood with a plywood paddle on each end. We took them to Colorado River. They made 13, and it cost them \$30 apiece.

TM: That's pretty good.

ES: But the only thing is, and we learned it as soon as we got in there, you have to work like the devil to go downstream because the water goes down, but the air comes up.

TM: So it was windy?

ES: The kayaks are not fastened to the water. If you wanna go downstream in a kayak, then get a sea anchor. They had to fight to go seven miles, which was our first stop, and they were exhausted by the time they got there.

TM: Let's go back now to Paso Robles and the ESMERALDA II. It was under a little shed as I recall.

ES: Next to the garage and a chicken coop coming off of his shed, coming off of it.

TM: So what's the connection with Ed Sr. and chickens?

ES: Oh, well, the economy wasn't the greatest coming out of the war. He had to develop a whole new economy. Ed Sr. had bought the Clark Drugstore, and eventually, he had the opportunity. I think there were three men involved, and they had a chicken ranch in Paso Robles that was right below Reservoir Hill. That brings up some laughs. There was also chicken ranches that he was partners with, in the Central Valley, I believe. I never saw them. The one in Paso Robles, it had a pretty good-sized chicken farm shed, right below the road that goes up to Reservoir Hill. He probably had two or three thousand chickens in there. They were a supply for a larger area. Boys will be boys. We had to get in the car, and we'd go up Reservoir Hill and go around, and there'd be the chicken shed down there. "Hey, let's throw rocks on the chicken shed." It was a metal roof. "No, no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no." So we didn't do it, but we always kidded about it. Ed would get a little upset.

TM: I just learned that going through the Marston material, that Ed did very well with the chicken ranching.

ES: I imagine he did because there were, well, Tyson has done extremely well. Look at Tysons Corner. I assume it's a family.

TM: There you go. Otis Marston spent a considerable amount of time trying to figure out Ed Hudson. How would a druggist into chickens build such an incredible boat that would be the first motorboat to go through Grand Canyon? Marston was like, you know, going to the Explorer's

Club where they're going to eat some mammoth, and Hillary had just climbed Everest. Marston was like, what was it about Ed Hudson that brought him above and beyond and into the explorer's realm?

ES: The thing I remember most as a description about that activity— they were river rats. Ed had been, he may have been, a druggist out in the town right by the river on Route, not 66.

GS: Beaumont?

ES: Huh?

GS: Beaumont?

ES: No, up, up, up, if you were going to Flagstaff, you'd go right through it.

TM: Needles?

ES: Needles, yeah. I think at a point they had been in Needles and involved in a drugstore there. Before he came to Paso Robles he was down in, not in Yucaipa...

TM: But another town?

ES: Yeah.

TM: He mentioned that too, that he would set up a drugstore, get it up, get it going, and then sell it, and then set up another one, and he had done fairly well with that.

ES: Yeah, and probably in that activity, you wear yourself out to an extent, and he needed some downtime. He must've loved the water. He and a few buddies would go down the river as far as they could go. Start at Needles, say, if they started at Needles, there was a dam they had to go around to get down, so they'd go down to the dam. They'd come back. But then they'd go below Needles and go on down below the dam.

TM: He had made it all the way to Yuma from Hoover Dam before he started playing with ESMERALDA II on Lake Mead going up, and then ran up to Lees Ferry and came down. Eventually, he connected, as you say, he connected up above Moab to the Sea of Cortez. He went all the way out to the Sea of Cortez.

ES: Yeah, I don't know that the Colorado River had always made it through. There may have been dry areas, dry times when it didn't make it through. There's a story of history that a Spanish galleon came up the Sea of Cortez and up the Colorado River, and somewhere in the desert, it's there. You don't hear it a lot, but every once in a while you hear about it.

TM: Well, the Coronado Expedition had three galleons going up the Pacific coast. I assume that North America was a simple pyramid, and the land expedition was gonna go up to the top of the pyramid, and the sea expedition was gonna come along, and they would resupply where they met. Of course, it doesn't quite work that way. Alarcon came up into the Sea of Cortez and actually, they got out a boat off of their galleon, and the Native Americans helped tow that boat

up toward Yuma where they buried some supplies in the ground. The Coronado expedition, Melchior Diaz, actually was in Yuma, found this tree that said, "Dig here," and so he got some of the resupply stuff, but they missed each other by months. They never met. I wonder if that's that story.

ES: Is that tree still there? You don't know?

TM: That's a good question. I don't know. Well, so, it's interesting, you're making me think, you say, well, "Ed was a river rat."

ES: That's right.

TM: And he was. He was definitely interested, not only in oar-powered boats, but then in motor-powered boats and what a motorboat could do, and he was willing to sink a good amount of finances into this. You built your own kayak, you had to scrounge material or try to put some money into it to make it work. In '48 after that failed up run, he dropped the Gray Marine motor and swapped it out and put in a bigger one. Did you see any of that stuff happen? Did you see the completed boat head out on the trailer?

ES: He bought, I'm thinking the first engine he had in it would've been a six-cylinder Gray Marine.

TM: It was a Gray Marine, that's right. Six-cylinder was a 75 horsepower unit, and he doubled that horsepower to 120 or 125 with a bigger Gray Marine, which was also I think a straight six, a flathead six.

ES: Yeah, now which one I saw, I don't know. Although, I saw it before it had ever been in the water.

TM: Okay, so that might've been the smaller unit.

ES: Probably the smaller one.

TM: So did you see the unit out of the boat?

ES: And you know, I don't remember the size of the propeller he would've put on it.

TM: Have you been to see the boat at the South Rim of Grand Canyon?

ES: No.

TM: 'Cuz it is still there.

ES: It's still there.

TM: And you might like to go see it.

ES: I think I saw Powell's boat once, but I was quite young when I saw it.

TM: They have the Powell boats, only a piece about this big. The one and only Powell boat burned in a fire in 1931 at Lee's ferry. It was kinda silted in, water had come in and silted in around it, and the only bit that survived was this bit that was protected. But there's a story here.

ES: What I saw would've been in either '45 or '46 when I went on a tour of the Southwest parks after the war with the Boy Scouts, and the Grand Canyon was one of the stops. Of course, it would have Powell's information there at least.

TM: So that burnt bit of that boat was there, but they also, by that time, they had some historic boats at the South Rim. I believe they had maybe the Caltech boats from '37, or they had the USGS boats from '23.

ES: The only thing I remember was Powell's and information about Powell, and that was at the South Rim.

TM: At the South Rim, yeah.

GS: Did Ed go with you on that trip?

TM: Yeah did Ed go with you on that trip?

ES: No, no he didn't. I remember his last time that Ed Jr. went, his mother was left up on the South Rim. As I was told, she decided she felt something was wrong, and she hired a helicopter, and they went looking, and they found, and there's a picture that I've seen on the sand spit: "HELP." I think it was "help." I don't think it was "SOS." They were standing by it. They would've lifted her out and gone single-pilot down. The one helicopter crashed. I think there was a broken shoulder in that, but I'm not sure. Another helicopter came and got them out.

TM: Did Ed tell you that story, then? That would've been great to hear that.

ES: Yeah. They turned the boat loose, and as soon as they got out, they gave it to the park department because they didn't want it to go to private property, and they weren't going to be able to get it. It was salvage. Then there was a bit of a struggle because someone did find it, but it was the park department's already, and they got it. Ed and I, he tried to talk me into spending about a week or two over the edge of the cliff of the Grand Canyon and hike along it. That never developed. It would've been a tiring thing, and probably exciting, and maybe it would've been very educational in a lot of ways.

TM: What year would that have been?

ES: Probably '48-'49 school year, was a junior. I'm not sure when Ed Jr. went, I know he went in the summer of his senior year or spring-summer of senior year. Did he go in the spring-summer of our junior year, also which would've been '48-9? I'm just not sure. It never developed. It would've been an interesting thing but fraught with problems.

TM: Well, you would've been very early on and one of the very first explorers of the canyon by foot. Though you know Bass had done that, and of course the First Nations people were all over the canyon for many years before we showed up.

ES: Ed Jr., my classmate, they stopped, and they hiked up to Rainbow Bridge National Monument. He signed on the book. See, there's a picture of another man signing on the book or displaying the book, and Ed Jr. signed on in, I'm gonna say, the low 100s. Well, now, you can almost drive your car to it, it's very short, or drive your boat to it.

TM: You didn't get a chance to run Glen Canyon before the dam came in?

ES: No, but they had in there moving pictures. He had a tripod on the deck of his boat, and he had, I guess it was, a 16mm camera, and that would be a wild ride in a camera.

TM: The first GoPros.

ES: Yeah, but he had miles of film on it, including Cataract Canyon. Probably there's not a lot of film individuals of a motion picture because you're probably trying to save yourself in that instance, whereas the camera's up there bouncing along, and it might be bouncing so radically that it'd be hard to define what you're looking at.

TM: It can be problematic, yeah. Did you meet Willie Taylor at all?

ES: No, I knew the name Otis Marston. I still remember it because Ed Jr. spoke of him so much so there was a close association there. And I understood that ESMERALDA II was designed in San Francisco by a marine architect. Now, whether that was applied to Otis Marston, I don't know. I don't know what Otis Marston did aside from he was a river rat, and he took a Chris-Craft through there.

TM: It's interesting because Ed thought long and hard about how to make a boat that he thought was strong enough to go up Grand Canyon. Just years, he was thinking and thinking, and pondering and pondering, and sent his concepts to this award-winning naval architect who came up with this Higgins-type, inverted V bottom, protect the propeller with a pick scape kind of thing, which did amazingly well. Marston kind of came into that, and for the second trip just got a stock Chris-Craft off the shelf in San Francisco, and Ed didn't think it would stand a chance.

ES: A thought came to mind. I've lost it now. I met a man who came from Nebraska during the war and worked for a boat builder in Long Beach that built PT boats. There were two places they were built, and they were slightly different. Probably the hulls were virtually identical. The PT boats were made of mahogany and oak, the oak for strength and mahogany for lightness I guess. They had to frame every six inches. The ESMERALDA II did not have it that often. They were sheathed with a quarter-inch mahogany, diagonal sheeting, both sides with copper rivets at every single bearing. Then they smoothed all that out, and they were flush jointed. They smoothed all that out, painted it with glue, put linen on it, painted it with glue, and they started going the other way with quarter-inch mahogany. This is on the bottom with two more copper rivets at each bearing. And the side, he didn't tell me about the side that much, but that meant the bottom was really strong.

He said the crew would have it for a week, and get used to it, and run it in some. Then, the test pilot would get on it, and they'd take it out, and they would run the boat all day at different speeds. The test pilot pretty well knew what it was gonna do. It had to do 60 knots. A big boat,

doing 60 knots in a flying mile in Long Beach harbor. He would come in through the flying mile wide open, and as soon as he was out of it, he would pop it from full-forward into full-reverse, and the boat would just, and when the water was lapping at his feet, he would pop it into full-forward and bring it back. That's about all, but that was boatbuilding of then.

TM: So they dropped the ESMERALDA into Morro Bay?

ES: I understand that, but I didn't know at the time, I don't think.

TM: So you didn't see that? You weren't there?

ES: No, I wasn't there.

TM: After the 1949 down run, did Ed Jr. talk with you about it? Was he happy? Did he talk about the adventure at all?

ES: Oh yeah. Basically, you hang on for all your life.

TM: Is that what he said?

ES: Probably. Ed wasn't verbose. He wasn't a real super talkative guy. A lot of their motion pictures relayed a lot of the story. He was a school kid at the time, and I was too. We were more interested in what we were doing at the time, but it was a great adventure for him. Especially with his father. I liked that picture that Gregory pulled up off the computer. I hadn't seen it, but I recognized which one was Ed and which one was Ed Jr.

TM: Did Ed Jr. whistle a lot?

ES: I don't think so. Not that I remember.

TM: Okay. There's just a funny story in here that Ed Jr. whistled the same tune over and over and over again. Willie Taylor was going nuts. Sanity was restored when Willie took Ed aside and taught him a new tune.

ES: Okay, I would fully accept that. It might be just something I don't remember particularly about him, but whistling, you won't stutter.

TM: That's a very fascinating point, *The King's Speech*.

ES: It causes you a constancy of thought.

TM: Yes, very neat. So did you stay friends with Ed, then, as you guys went through college and then on into life?

ES: Well, we were in the National Guard together also, but when he transferred to...

TM: Hang on a second.

GS: Ask him about that.

TM: All right, I'm asking you about that.

GS: When did you join?

ES: I joined October 19th, 1949. We were a tank company. We had the old Sherman Tanks of World War II.

TM: So you and Ed together went in? 'Cuz he was in ROTC wasn't he? In college?

ES: No. Well, he could've been, but we never spoke of that. He might've gone to ROTC when he went to UCLA rather than the National Guard. He went in the army after graduation. Ed was in the army, working for the Air Force, I think I have this straight, on a Navy base, in Iceland, doing mapping. I may have the last— he was in the army, but all three services were involved.

TM: Wow. But there's a story here.

GS: High school.

ES: Well, we used to take the tanks down to the river 'cuz the river was dry. We would just practice driving, and then we'd come back up, and clean 'em up, and service 'em.

TM: This was in the winter of 1949, spring of 1950?

ES: Yeah, during the year when we weren't at camp. But at camp, if we were out driving, we all had to learn how to drive 'em and shoot 'em. Someone would say, "Oh! There goes a jackrabbit!", and we would chase jackrabbits.

TM: In a tank.

ES: In a tank, and they would do very well.

TM: 'Cuz they can weave and dodge.

ES: They zigzag so they can see, but they zigzag in a straight line, and when they're exhausted, they get in a bush. When you're 10 feet from a bush, they go that way, and then you have to gear the thing down and turn around and take off chasing them again. It was a real exercise in driving and visual accumulation.

TM: What a great idea, go get rabbits.

ES: It was fun. The thing was, the high school kids at that time were all into automotive. The M4 tank had a Ford V8 in it that was dual overhead cam, dual ignition, dual exhaust. The original was designed to be a bomber, which didn't work, so they cut it down to 8, but it was all gear driven, and dual ignition. If you found one today and could get electric power to it, it would start.

TM: Well, that's what the ESMERALDA with the Gray Marine up at the South Rim of Grand Canyon. With a little bit of gasoline, turn it over, and it would fire up.

ES: It wasn't structural damage that lost the ESMERALDA. It was seal wear on the driveshaft. They could not correct it.

TM: There's a great recounting of the events here, which is pretty neat about how it broke and how it was fixed. Frank Wright came along on the next trip, and they found the boat up high and dry. The river had dropped. The boat was dry, docked up on some rocks. They started it right up, and it ran, rough, but it ran, and they turned it off, and they drug it down to the river. It wasn't running real good. Frank was like, "Well, if we can't fix it tonight, we're just gonna leave it." They ended up pulling off the head. They just unbolted it and lifted it off. That's where he saw that one of the head gaskets gets pretty thin between the cylinders, and that had blown off there. He cut some gasket material and set it in there, keyed it in, and it ran great. That's how they got it out. It's an interesting story.

ES: I was left with the impression that the seal would not stop the water from coming into the engine compartment.

TM: Well, they had, at times, trouble with that, but they figured it out. So they tightened it up and got it so it wasn't leaking.

ES: I haven't read this yet.

TM: Yeah, no, they got that figured out, so that was pretty good. It's interesting.

ES: I would think they had extra driveshafts with them.

TM: I believe that they did. I know they had various extra parts, but this was a little above and beyond their ability.

ES: I'll find out.

TM: Ed got married and had a son.

ES: Oh, wow, yes. Ed passed away. I had never met Ed in his post-education years.

TM: So you guys didn't visit again after college?

ES: I'm trying to think. I probably saw him at one of our class reunions, but that's for a very short time. I knew he was living up the 5 freeway...

TM: Yeah, up there.

GS: Valencia?

ES: Pardon me?

GS: Was it Valencia?

ES: Well, Valencia area. I got word that he died, and there was a ceremony at the cemetery for him, and that was the first time I met his son. His son was A&E for American Airlines in Germany, so he ran a small station there and probably called in whatever he needed to get the planes back in the air. He did the service for his father. It was absolutely magnificent. I became a Christian in midlife, and this boy, this young man, actually he had mature daughters with him that were magnificent ladies. I don't remember his name, but he did the service, and he offered the gospel to those that heard. I said, now that is rare, and I told him so. It was beautiful. Ed had a nice home that there was a reception at afterwards, so I was able to talk a little with him. That was great for me because all my high school years, I knew something of it but nothing of it. It was much, much later that I came to that knowledge of Christ and Him in my life.

TM: Ed was very helpful when he knew we were getting interested in this story to look over the material that we had written about those river trips, 1949 and 1950. He said, "You've kind of left out Willie Taylor, and you need to go back and rethink this." I said, "Well, we're going to be at the Huntington. I'm doing this research and I'd love to come visit." We went up, and he showed us films and basically talked to me about Willie and how amazing he was. I had not understood, Willie Taylor was one of the people on those river trips in 1949 and 1950. It was very helpful to me, very magnanimous, very generous, just taught me quite a bit.

ES: And you were talking with?

TM: With Ed Jr.

ES: Oh you were talking with Ed Jr. a few years ago?

TM: We actually went to the house and visited with him, and I called him on the phone a number of times and emailed a little bit back and forth, and then he passed away and I'm like, "Wait!"

ES: Stop, stop, stop! Back up the clock!

TM: Then, his son got in touch out of the blue, and we shared a little bit back and forth, so it was very nice. Very wonderful man.

ES: I don't know where Ed's wife came from. I never met her.

TM: I never met her, and I believe she had passed away by the time, or that they had been separated. I'm not sure. By the time we went and visited at the house.

ES: I'm not gonna guess at what happened.

TM: Yeah, not sure. But just a wonderful man and just made me think about his father. Marston has this saying: "I can't understand how a druggist from Paso Robles into chickens can put this boat together and go down through Grand Canyon."

ES: Well, my father was in construction, and he tried contracting, and it wasn't a big enough area. That's why he built a Japanese internment camp up in Tule Lake. Then he went up to White Horse for the three-inch oil line.

TM: So traveling then for construction?

ES: He was up there for about a year, I guess. Then he went out to Attu for an Air Force base, Navy Air Forces, joint. He says the only place in the world that he knew that you could spit at the ground and get it back in your face. They needed it. After we got it back from the Japs, we used it extensively for interdiction in Japan. In fact, one of the brother-in-laws, my wife's brother-in-law, I call him brother-in-law, he flew Navy bombers from there in the summertime. In the winter, they were at Puget Sound, the Naval base there. In the summer, they'd go out to Attu, and they would fly one plane at a time to the north island of Japan and drop and bomb an Air Force base that was there. Of the planes they sent, one plane out and back all by himself, they lost 80 percent of the squadron. They were flying radio silent, so no communication. He was an engineer from UCLA and geologist also, so he knew surveying, and he knew celestial surveying even though he had a navigator with him. He could visually check.

TM: Yeah, look at the stars and figure out his direction.

ES: It was exciting times growing up in those years.

TM: Is there anything else that you would like to mention about Ed that I haven't captured?

ES: I believe he probably enjoyed his work. I think most of his work was local. I'm not sure what exactly it was. It was in the geology field. The main geology here would be oil. His buddy that was down there, a classmate at the same time, and my classmate also, he wound up operating a gold mine in New Guinea, but they're both gone. I think Ed was satisfied with what he was doing.

TM: When we visited with him he seemed quite content and very helpful.

ES: I have a picture of me that he took in high school, and it is a good study. Let me put it that way, and I looked at it, and I said, "I'm looking out there. Way, way, way out there." It's taken in a setting where you can do that. I was trying to see something far ahead. I think I found it. It was a good study that he caught. He did a lot of the photo work in our album, in our yearbook album. Well, he didn't take all the little pictures.

TM: No, but taking pictures of other stuff.

ES: Yeah, he did the advertising pictures, that's part of what we did, and other things and pictures of the school and other activities. He enjoyed photography a lot, and he developed them himself. I imagine he had an enlarger. I don't know that he carried that, I'm sure he did, carried that passion on through life, but I don't know.

TM: Yeah, I don't know either. Well, Ed Shockley and Greg, thank you so very much for a wonderful oral history here. This is the 27th of August, 2018. My name is Tom Martin and that will conclude this Grand Canyon oral history.