N O R T H T E X A S S T A T E U N I V E R S I T Y

O R A L H I S T O R Y C O L L E C T I O N

N U M B E R 61

I n t e r v i e w w i t h

M r . R o y A l l e n

N o v e m b e r 4 , 1 9 7 0

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald Marcello

Terms of Use: Open

Approved: Roy Allen

Date: 11/4/70

Oral History Collection

Mr. Roy Allen, Jr.

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas Date: November 4, 1970

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Mr. Roy Allen for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on November 4, 1970, in Denton, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. Allen in order to get his reminiscences and impressions from his stay as a Japanese prisoner of war during the Second World War. Mr. Allen was captured by the Japanese on the Philippines. Now, Mr. Allen, first of all would you please give us a brief biographical sketch of yourself--where you were born, your education, so on and so forth.

Mr. Allen: Well, I was born in Denton County in the city of Denton on October 21, 1921. I went through grade school and through high school. I worked for approximately six months for Money's Motor Parts and went into the service when they started drafting.

Dr. Marcello: When did you go in the service?

Mr. Allen: In 1940, October of 1940.

Dr. Marcello: 1940. Why did you decide to enter the service?

Mr. Allen: As I say, they had started pretty well talking about

drafting and boys going in, so I decided I'd just go.

Marcello: And you went into the Air Corps, is that correct, the Army Air Corps.

Allen: Right. Army Air Corps. I was first in boot camp at _____ California. I stayed there eight months and then went to Luzon and Clark Field; stayed at Clark Field for a year and five months, and two weeks before the war broke out they sent me on a D.P. to Mindanao to help organize a new air base on Del Monte Plantation.

Marcello: What is a D.P.?

Allen: A Destination Point or something like this, I don't remember now exactly what it is, but it's a detached service, actually is what it is.

Marcello: I see. What was your function in the service? What was your job?

Allen: Well, I was in charge of the motor pool and G-2.

Marcello: G-2 is Intelligence? Is that correct?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: What sort of work did you do along these lines?

Allen: Security of our air base in the provost section of it, Provost Marshall section.

Marcello: I see. Now, during the period when you were in the Philippines did you suspect, or was there any evidence that the United States would be very shortly getting

into a war with Japan. Could you detect any evidence?

Allen: Definitely. Three weeks to a month before the war broke out General MacArthur at that time was field marshall in the Philippines to President Quezon.

Marcello: He was a field marshall in the Filipino Army. Isn't that correct?

Allen: Right. And President Roosevelt asked him how we were equipped and did we need anything. And they said no, we had everything we needed. Of course, after the war broke out we found out that we had anti-aircraft shells that as far as they would go was 19,000 feet. And the firepower that we had was very old. It ended up that we were shooting 1917 and 1918 ammunition in the rifles and anti-aircraft and what have you. Sometimes you'd put a rifle up with the old ammunition. It would snap, you'd wait and see if it was going to explode. If it didn't, then you threw it out or ejected it out and put another shell in.

Marcello: Why do you think Roosevelt . . . or rather, pardon me, why do you think MacArthur was so confident that he had enough armament on the island? Do you think it was just a miscalculation on his part, or did he put a lot of faith in the Filipino scouts?

Allen: Well, there's rumors and there's other rumors. I happened to be on Mindanao when the war actually broke out.

I was one that met the P.T. boat. It was the P.T. boat that they brought MacArthur and Quezon in on, and the boys had orders to keep 'em under guard. They were taken to Del Monte Plantation, their wives and themselves, and they stayed in the club and were guarded. They weren't allowed to go anywhere, do anything, and my understanding is that they were both under arrest.

Marcello: Now at what time was this?

Allen: This was right after World War II started.

Marcello: This was right after the war. Well, let's just back-track a minute. What were your initial reactions when you'd heard about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?

Allen: We laughed. Didn't think it was actually happening right at first. We kept listening, and we thought it was just some program going on. Then we found out it was for real. Everything got real serious. We immediately . . . the colonel in charge of our field told us to load our planes--they also were doing this same thing on Clark Field--to go to Formosa and bomb that evening and that night.

Marcello: What sort of planes did you have at your base?

Allen: B-18s, Martin 10s, and B-17s.

Marcello: B-18s and B-17s. I'd never heard of the B-18s.

Allen: Well, the B-18 is known as the "Flying Coffin." We had a few of the B-17s. And after we had loaded, ready to take off, we had orders from General MacArthur not to

take off.

Marcello: Why do you think those orders were sent?

Allen: That the President hadn't declared war.

Marcello: Was this on December 7, or was this on December 8?

Allen: Well, this was on December 8 to me. You know, there's a difference in our dates. And so we didn't take off, but there was two planes left on our island and some planes left from Luzon that made a reconnaissance over Formosa, and there was hundreds of Japanese planes on the ground.

Marcello: This was at Formosa. This was the report brought back from Formosa.

Allen: Right, right. If we'd had made this bomb run the Philippines wouldn't have been injured near as bad the next day.

Marcello: Evidently this is where the Japanese airplanes came from that bombed the Philippines . . .

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Isn't that correct? Most of them came from Formosa.

Allen: Formosa, correct.

Marcello: Well, how shortly after Pearl Harbor did the Japanese come? I would assume one of the first things they hit was the airbases.

Allen: The next day.

Marcello: The very next day.

Allen: Right. They hit Clark Field.

Marcello: Now Clark Field is on Luzon.

Allen: On Luzon. There's Nichols Field and Clark Field. Clark Field was at _____. Nichols Field, of course, was down in Manila. And there was boys that was firing at the Japs with .45 automatics, and the Japs flew so close that they could actually see their face, their eyes, and watch 'em laugh.

Marcello: What were you doing when the Japanese came?

Allen: Well, they didn't hit our island until a considerable bit later.

Marcello: How much later?

Allen: Approximately a month.

Marcello: How come it took them that long to hit your particular island, your particular base?

Allen: I suspect that they figured we didn't amount to much. We were a small group. We only had one battalion of scouts and a couple of battalions of constabulary, and what few American troops were there were very few--I would say less than 400, maybe 500.

Marcello: What preparations did you take to guard against the Japanese attack? Obviously you expected it sooner or later.

Allen: We put a scrimmage line on the beach. We had two PT boats that had come down from Luzon.

Marcello: Just for our purposes, what is a scrimmage line?

Allen: Well, along this beach we made entrenchments, and the constabulary were hard to hold. We had found out from Luzon right at the first of the war. So the way we did our line-up, I guess you would call it, scrimmage line, we put the Filipinos' constabulary closer to the beach, the Filipino scouts behind them, and the American troops behind them.

Marcello: Now obviously you'd done this because you thought the constabulary would be the first to run. The Filipino scouts would be second to run.

Allen: The scouts were real soldiers. The only reason the Americans were behind the scouts was because the scouts were better soldiers than the Americans as far as military goes.

Marcello: What advantages did the scouts have over the Americans?

Allen: Well, they were well-trained men. Practically all we had on Mindanao was Air Corps boys, and we definitely weren't trained. There was a few of us trained--this is true--for combat, but there was very few of 'em had ever been trained for combat. Most of our men didn't even know . . . they hadn't ever even fired a gun in the service.

Marcello: Now for the oral history record I assume that the constabulary that you talked about were about equivalent to a police force. Is that correct?

Allen: Approximately, yes. They're like our home town guard. You know, during World War I each American Legion hall had a home town guard.

Marcello: Right.

Allen: Well, this is what your constabulary consisted of in the Philippines. And they would say, "Joe, Joe, I've got to go see my wife."

Marcello: In other words, this was their way of getting off the front lines.

Allen: Right. And the scouts had orders to shoot 'em if they started to retreat.

Marcello: Now who had been responsible for training the scouts? Was this MacArthur's task or job?

Allen: I would say it was Wainwright's.

Marcello: Wainwright's?

Allen: He was a fine soldier and a fine man. That, I think, is the reason the islands lasted as long as they did. It was totally due to Wainwright.

Marcello: Now, what were you doing at the time of the initial Japanese attack? Do you recall?

Allen: Yes, sir. I was sitting on my bunk drinking a can of beer.

Marcello: And (chuckle) what did you do when you heard the planes overhead?

Allen: Well, now this is a considerable bit later on our island, remember.

Marcello: Uh-huh.

Allen: Now when they hit us, I wasn't sitting on my bunk drinking beer. We had a radio message that they were on their way, and so we were waiting for 'em. And when they hit, they didn't do but very little damage, and we got real cocky, and we thought, man, we were real soldiers. But we found out a little later that we weren't near the soldiers we wished we had've been.

Marcello: In what way?

Allen: After their first two or three attacks with dive bombers, they sent in a pay load, and they really routed us. They . . .

Marcello: In other words, they sent in heavy bombers.

Allen: Right. And the heavens opened up. And for five days straight they bombed us. They destroyed everything we had except one P-40.

Marcello: Up to this time was this the only contact you had with the Japanese, that is, through air attacks?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: In other words, they hadn't hit, let's say, from sea or from the ground yet at this time.

Allen: No. No.

Marcello: Did the base sustain very high casualties?

Allen: Very little, very little. In fact, I don't remember of any of the Americans getting killed during the bombing raids.

Marcello: What happened next? The Japanese were bombing for five

consecutive days, obviously trying to soften up the base a little bit, destroy those planes.

Allen: Destroy the planes is what they were after because we had reconnaissance. They moved in on the far end of the island down at Zamboanga and Cebu and . . . not Cebu either. It was Davao. And they stayed there for about three months before they tried to land on our end of the island, but they never did come up toward us. They stayed down at this end, and we stayed on our end.

Marcello: What do you think was the reason for this, lack of supplies or lack of intelligence?

Allen: Lack of intelligence. If they knew what we'd had, they would have come. But our one P-40 was making reconnaissance about every other day and did a little strafing. He'd hit 'em sometimes at night. And most of the flying on that P-40 was Lieutenant Brownwelle. When the war broke out and America was in it, he came to us. He was a "Flying Tiger" from China, and he brought his P-40.

Marcello: From China.

Allen: From China.

Marcello: Now what happened after the five days of constant bombing attacks?

Allen: There was a lull for approximately three weeks, and then they tried to make their first landing.

Marcello: What did you do during this lull?

Allen: The same as we'd always been doing--just waiting.

Marcello: Just waiting for them, making preparations along the beach, and so on?

Allen: Yes, everything . . .

Marcello: Can you describe the initial landing of the Japanese?

Allen: Well, they were supposed to make the landing the next morning, but they didn't make it. We had no boats that could be used at that time, or ships, but we had two boys in the ordinance that had more nerve and knowledge of fire-power than anyone else. They came in with one transport, two cruisers . . . or destroyers and docked out in the bay. And the transport got in real close. And these two boys with the help of others built a raft, put a 1,000 pound bomb on it, put the detonator in it, swam out and pushed it up close to the transport . . .

Marcello: Now these were Japanese ships.

Allen: Right. And set the time fuse, get away from it, and blew a big hole in the transport. So therefore they had to make a landing at that time in the middle of that night. And as they hit the beach, why, they were killed.

Marcello: Now . . .

Allen: The destroyers left, and in about two and a half weeks they came back.

Marcello: In other words they were beaten back in the initial landing. Is that correct?

Allen: Yes.

Marcello: They took pretty high casualties?

Allen: The whole transport.

Marcello: Oh, I see. Of course, the transport had been torpedoed, I guess you could say, by that homemade raft.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: And I assume that destroyed a good many soldiers or killed a good many soldiers.

Allen: It killed a lot of 'em. What it didn't kill, the boys killed when they hit the beach.

Marcello: I see. Let me ask you this before we move on. Did you ever have any hope of getting off the island at this time? Had you more or less given up hope of getting off it? What do you think in a situation like that?

Allen: Well, right at the first of the war I was supposed to've left the island--myself and nineteen other boys. And then there were those three planes sent up, and that's when MacArthur was taken out. And the nineteen boys didn't get to go, including myself.

Marcello: I see. In other words, that's perhaps one of the reasons you're a little bitter against MacArthur.

Allen: Uh-huh. Very much so. But there was very few boys that was on the island of Mindanao that wasn't.

Marcello: Now getting back to the attempted Japanese landings again, when did they try for the second time? How much later?

Allen: About three weeks.

Marcello: Can you describe the second attempt?

Allen: Five transports, four destroyers, and one big cruiser.

Marcello: Could you see all these things?

Allen: Very easily.

Marcello: And I assume the destroyers and the cruisers were to soften up the beach a little bit.

Allen: And they did.

Marcello: Can you describe the bombardment?

Allen: For about nine hours, and as I said before, we had our constabulary and scouts and the Americans. And they pushed us back.

Marcello: I assume you had no armaments to counterbalance the naval fire.

Allen: Yes, we had some real cannons. They were Spanish-American cannons. That's what we used to defend the island.

Marcello: In other words obsolescent equipment is all that you had to defend the island.

Allen: Right. The Filipino scout had the Garand rifle. They were the only one that had them. We had the old Springfield bolt action.

Marcello: Now I think for our records again you might explain or we might explain that the Garand rifle was usually known as the M-1, the semiautomatic.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Is that correct?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: The Springfield was of World War I vintage, I suppose.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Bolt action.

Allen: Bolt action. Also the Enfield.

Marcello: Which is a British rifle.

Allen: Well, it's an American Army rifle, also. The Enfield in the British Army is a .303. In the American Army it's a 30.06. And the constabulary was armed with the Enfield. The scouts were armed with the M-1, and the air corps and what few soldiers were there was armed with the Springfield.

Marcello: How come they gave the scouts the more modern rifles?

Allen: They're infantry soldiers.

Marcello: I see. What were you doing during the bombardment besides trying to keep your head down?

Allen: Myself, I was attached at that time to the field artillery, and the major and I was down calling back for firepower.

Marcello: In other words you were more or less a type of spotter. Is that a good word to use?

Allen: Right. A lot of our boys were attached to the infantry, each branch of the signal corps and all. They would send anywhere from two to four of us to each unit to help the American officers with their men.

Marcello: Apparently, as you said, the Japanese were successful in

this second attempt at landing.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Can you describe what happened when they landed, or just describe the landing itself?

Allen: Well, it started just at daylight.

Marcello: This was after nine hours of bombardment.

Allen: Right. And they came ashore, and, so I say, we fired our antique pieces, which we'd done very little damage with, and they pushed us back steady for three days. And that was it.

Marcello: In other words, after three days they'd completely overrun the American positions.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Okay. What happened at this time then? What happened after they had overrun your positions, and it was apparent the situation was hopeless?

Allen: Well, we all moved back. They had a retreat, and we moved back and they said we were giving up, surrendering. We were to stack our arms.

Marcello: Now, who gave you these orders? Your American commanders?

Allen: The American commanders. And they had a place to stack arms and everything, and we were going to surrender the next morning.

Marcello: What were your thoughts at this, when you were told that you were going to surrender?

Allen: Well, the boys didn't like it too much, but that was orders.

And there were orders that if you went to the hills, you'd be court-martialed.

Marcello: What did you think of the prospect of becoming a Japanese prisoner? Apparently, most Americans were under the assumption that Japanese took no prisoners.

Allen: This is true. I, for one, said I'd never become a Japanese prisoner. I'd blow my brains out first. But that's talk of a young, eighteen-year-old boy.

Marcello: You were eighteen at this time.

Allen: Yes. I even tried it. I was going to blow my brains out. I put the gun to my head, put my finger on the trigger, and for some reason that thumb paralyzed. I couldn't do it.

Marcello: Did anybody try and stop you?

Allen: Nope, nope. And there were a lot of them that tried this, and it made you feel inadequate. It made you feel that you wasn't much of a man to be taken.

Marcello: Let me ask you this. At this particular time now what was your physical condition like?

Allen: My physical condition was perfect.

Marcello: Did you have enough food and so on?

Allen: Yes.

Marcello: How about any of the tropical diseases? Were many people afflicted with any . . . you know, like malaria?

Allen: Yes, malaria . . .malaria we did.

Marcello: Did you contract malaria yourself?

Allen: Yes. I had it . . . I believe it was . . . if I'm not mistaken, it was twenty-six times in the three and a half years I was over there . . . four years.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: A little later that day I was called to headquarters and told I was to take a D.P. to the hills.

Marcello: Now, here again what is that D.P.? Just for our record.

Allen: (Chuckle) Well, it's Detached Persons. That's what it is--Detached Persons. We went to the hills to form guerrilla warfare groups.

Marcello: Now, why did they ask your particular group to go to the hills?

Allen: Well, when I was at March, I trained for six months in the gym. It was combat training. They taught us Spanish. Two hours a day we were in Spanish classes. The rest of the day we were working in the gym. And four of us were there that had taken this training, and they picked two other boys to go with us. There was six of us.

Marcello: There were six of you that were told to head for the hills.

Allen: Right. We took our radio and supplies and went to the hills.

Marcello: What sort of supplies did you have?

Allen: Well, we had loaded real heavy with ammunition and guns and machine rifles, this type of Thompson subs.

Marcello: How about food or medicine?

Allen: We didn't have to worry about that. That had already been

taken care of. It had already been taken to the hills a month before.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: They had quite a few caches around among the mountain area.

Marcello: When you were told to go, did you already know where you were going?

Allen: Pretty well. I had gone on four or five of these details myself carrying people back into the mountains.

Marcello: Describe the terrain on Mindanao. That is, the terrain that you were about to go into, let's say, to form this guerrilla warfare.

Allen: It's very rough mountain area, very rough. We carried out supplies on what some people'd call water buffalo or carabao, and sometimes it was all they could do to go where they had to go. We . . .

Marcello: What was the climate like?

Allen: Ah, we had just regular seasons, rainy seasons and all. We had trouble keeping our firearms in working order because of . . . you'd go in and the jungle was so thick in spots that it'd be like walking into a rain cloud. It'd be wet, damp. In fact, it'd even rain in there when it wasn't raining anywheres else, or you felt this way. You'd be so wet. If you cut a trail today, go back three days from now, and it'd be grown back up again. This is what surprised so many people here in the United States. Of course, they haven't

been into this type of warfare, but those boys over in Vietnam are fighting the same thing.

Marcello: What were your initial reactions when you learned that you were being assigned to a guerrilla unit?

Allen: I was very glad because that's really what I was trained for. There was one holdback as far as I was concerned, and that was going into the Moro village.

Marcello: You might explain for our record a little bit about the Moros. I assume they were the fierce . . . I don't know if they were headhunters or not, but they were . . . they're a pretty fierce tribe in the Philippines.

Allen: Yes, yes. In their religion they believe if they kill a Christian, they go to heaven. They trust no one. They are as quiet as any animal when they're moving through the jungle. In fact, you can be standing or sitting, and they'll come up and touch you. You won't know there's anyone within a hundred miles of you. When you're in their village, you're their guest. You have nothing to worry about. The only thing that you have to worry about is not insulting them. Whatever they offer you in the way to eat, you'd eat it.

Marcello: What were some of the things they might possibly offer you?

Allen: (Chuckle) Well, they eat grasshoppers, naturally. They eat worms. They eat monkey. Of course, python is very good eating. The iguana lizard tail is very good. But their

favorite food . . . one of their favorite foods is dog. But it's the way that it's prepared is what gets you.

Marcello: How was the dog meat prepared?

Allen: Well, the way they prepare this dog is that they take a string and tie it around the penis and keep it tied and don't let it drink or eat anything for three days. Then they put rice, all he can eat and all the water he can drink, for half a day. And while this dog is eating and drinking, well, they dig a pit--it's about three foot in diameter, and three foot deep and line it with rocks and build a fire in it, and they keep putting wood on it until the hole is completely full of coals. When it's all ready and everything, they take the coals out, and kill the dog, and wrap the dog in banana leaves, then lay it down in the bottom of the pit. And then they put the coals all back in, cover it with a light layer of dirt, just sprinkle water on top, and walk off and leave it for five or six hours. And then they . . . they dig it out, and everybody sits with the dato, which is the chieftain of the tribe. This is just the men now. No women or children are allowed at these feasts. And the dato does the carving of the dog meat. He first opens the dog up and takes the bladder out, and he sprinkles it all over the meat. Then he takes the stomach out, opens the stomach, lays it to one side. Then the entrails they take out and cut in links like we would sausages. And then

they cut the meat up, and everyone starts eating. They eat the rice that the dog has eaten. They eat the intestines. It's like eating a chicken in one way: everybody has his own special part. And it takes a very short period of time where there's nothing left but bones 'cause they . . . they really enjoy a dog cooked this way.

Marcello: Did you ever taste this delicacy yourself?

Allen: Yes, sir, I did. When they put it in front of me, I ate it. As I said before, you do not insult the dato.

Marcello: What'd it taste like?

Allen: I don't remember (chuckle). The dato is complete ruler. He's their god. If a man's wife is going to have a child, he'll go to the dato and ask him which he wants--a boy or girl. If the dato says that your wife will have a boy, and she doesn't, you have violated the dato's wishes. So you will go back to your hut, wrap yourself in rattan, which is a bamboo type of material. It's cut into quarter inch strips. You will start at your ankle, wrap all the way up as far as you can on your leg or legs, then your body and your arms. You will then take up your kris, which is a long, two-handled sword that is zig-zaggey, I guess you would call it.

Marcello: That's spelled K-R-I-S, isn't it?

Allen: I believe that's right. And you'll go out into the village out into the main street, I guess you'd call it. And they have a tree stump or log sitting out there, and you sit on it.

Well, everyone in the village then will go into their huts, close their doors, and no one moves out. And as long as you sit there . . . you sit there until all your . . . their blood circulation completely just . . . well, it just runs you crazy. In turn, you will get up and run through the village and kill every living thing that you come to until you die yourself. This happens. That's one reason why there's not so many males in the . . .at that time in the Moro villages. One Moro village I went to the dato's son . . . one of his sons and his daughter . . . the son had been to America. His daughter had been to America. She had taken nurses training and was an R.N. nurse. He had become a doctor and come back to their village, filed their teeth to a point, chewed beetle nuts turning their teeth black, and went back to the ways of his own people. And I asked him . . . we had quite a few conversations at different times while I was in the village. I was there for about a week. And I asked him why that he would come to America, get this type of education, go back to his village, and go back to their ways. And he said if he pushed his learning on his tribe too fast that they would refuse him and kick him out. He said that gradually that he and his sister was going to change their ways. He said it would take two or three generations to do this. And they had planned it real well. He was going to send all of his kids to the United States to be educated. His sister was

going to send all of her children. And they wanted large families. And then they was going to try to have it to where they could send their children over for an education, and this is the reason he says it would take two or three generations to bring their tribe to be more civilized people.

Marcello: How much contact did you have with the Moros?

Allen: I was in and out of their villages until the time I was captured.

Marcello: What sort of language did they speak?

Allen: Muhammadan was their religion. Well, I was very fortunate to pick up a Filipino scout that I found in the hills that was a Moro, and he could speak the Monobul language. He could speak the Moro language; the Nigarodis, he could speak their language. He could speak all of the languages of the islands, and he was a good guide for us, he was a good man to have.

Marcello: What sort of loyalties did these Moros have or any of the other tribes? When I say what sort of loyalties I mean did they favor the Japanese or the Americans, or did they really care much at all for either?

Allen: We put price tags on the Japanese heads, I say we did. Later on I understand they did. After I had been captured, I had found out that they had put a price, and the Moros were really giving the Japanese a lot of trouble, a lot of trouble.

Marcello: Let's just backtrack a little bit. Now, you got these orders

to head for the hills and form these guerrilla units. What was to be your primary mission?

Allen: Form guerrilla warfare units.

Marcello: In other words, to destroy Japanese communications, kill Japanese soldiers, anything to harass the Japanese.

Allen: Anything to harass.

Marcello: Gather intelligence perhaps?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: You said earlier that you did have a radio. Is that correct?

Allen: Right. We were in contact with the sub.

Marcello: In other words, it was through the sub that you relayed all of your information that you were gathering while on the island.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Well, describe what happened after you got the orders and while you were on your way to the hills. Where did you go?

Allen: I pretty well covered the complete island before I was captured.

Marcello: Did you stay at one place?

Allen: Oh, no. We were pretty well constantly out in the area for anywhere from two days to a week. We'd get in close to a small town, contact someone, find out if there's any Japs. If it wasn't, we'd go into the town, try to form a different group.

Marcello: What exactly was your function in this guerrilla unit?

Allen: In what way? Now, I mean . . .

Marcello: Well, what were you doing? Did you have any . . . like I assume one man had to at least operate the radio. Somebody must've been responsible for that.

Allen: Well, I was in charge of the group.

Marcello: I see. How many were in the group by this time?

Allen: Six.

Marcello: Just still six.

Allen: We just had our six. We gave 'em a . . . a point to go to, a place to go to. We'd tell 'em where to go, where to join up, where to meet.

Marcello: When you say you told "them" you were telling the Filipinos?

Allen: The Filipinos, if we were sure of 'em. And, you know, by this time we had the scout with us.

Marcello: Where did you pick up the scout?

Allen: Picked him up on Lake Linao . . . the large lake on Mindanao, and it's an accident that we ran into him. And after we ran into him, why, he farmed, and he found out . . . he knew where from rumors where a lot of the Filipino scouts had dispersed to. And most of your scouts went to the hills. They didn't surrender. The Americans were the ones that they didn't let go.

Marcello: What were living conditions like while you were constantly on the move in the hills?

Allen: Real bad. I was very fortunate. Myself and Jack were the two that never had caught malaria up to that time. Our other four boys had had malaria previously. And while we were in the hills, they got down with malaria at times, and it made it real bad to travel and to go.

Marcello: What was your situation so far as medical supplies were concerned? Let's say quinine, which, I guess, is what is used to counteract malaria.

Allen: Right. When we left the camp, we left with 5,000 tablets. We gave a lot of these tablets away to people that had malaria. And we'd go in and find soldiers that when we run into them that had malaria we would give 'em enough to get over that particular case, and our supply dwindled real fast. In fact . . .

Marcello: What . . .

Allen: . . . right toward the end before the surrender, why, before we were caught, the quinine we used was off of bark off of trees, and we boiled it and made a sort of soup out of it, and the boys'd drink this.

Marcello: What sort of reception did you receive among the villagers?

Allen: Some good, some just sort of mediocre. The mediocre ones, they were scared. That was the reason.

Marcello: Did their attitude change any after they, perhaps, had met the Japanese? Did you find any change in attitude that way?

Allen: You mean, when I came back?

Marcello: No, I mean, suppose that you entered a village where the Japanese had already been, where the villagers had already had contact with the Japanese.

Allen: They were very scared of 'em.

Marcello: They were very scared.

Allen: Very scared because the Japs raped the girls. One particular case that I saw . . . actually saw through field glasses. We were watching a village, and these six Japs . . . we saw them into the town for the first time I guess. And they took this young girl after they'd got to town. There was a well out in the center of town, and this girl was out getting water. And they grabbed her, stretched her out, and all six of them raped her and when they got through, this one Jap stuck his bayonet and just ripped her wide open. And they were very scared of 'em. They had a right to be.

Marcello: What sort of contact did your unit have with the Japanese? Were you looking for them?

Allen: Oh, yes. We were looking for 'em. If we found small groups, we harassed 'em at a distance.

Marcello: Well, can you describe any of these contacts with the Japanese?

Allen: Well, we never attacked unless they were below us. If we could catch 'em below us we'd open fire with BAR's on 'em.

Marcello: When you say below you, you mean like when you were up on higher ground than what they were. Is that correct?

Allen: We were sitting up high, and they were low. We knew with this terrain, it would be almost impossible for 'em to get to us right quick. Why, then we'd hit 'em.

Marcello: What sort of . . .

Allen: We didn't take any chances.

Marcello: What sort of other harassment would you perform against the Japanese?

Allen: We would make booby traps all up and down the raids. We even, toward the end, got to sneaking into their camps at night and causing a lot of trouble.

Marcello: Would you care to describe any of these encounters in further detail? Are there any particular encounters that stand out in your mind?

Allen: Yeah, one especially. We did a real good job one night in Davao. And we had gone into Davao, but we had some men with us that night. We had met another group. But we went in . . . we had 100 men that night, and the Japs had over 500 barrels of gasoline.

Marcello: Now you had 100 men. Where did you come up with 100 men by this time?

Allen: As I told you a while ago, we would tell people to report to certain places.

Marcello: Oh, I see, and most of these were Filipinos.

Allen: Right. They were all Filipinos, but there was some Americans that had come in and landed from the sub. We hadn't run into

any of 'em to see 'em, to talk to 'em, but we talked back and forth on the radio. And we made this schedule to meet 'em down around Davao.

Marcello: And I assume you armed the Filipinos from those caches that you had back in the hills.

Allen: Right. That and . . . not . . . not so much that. They armed a lot of 'em, but now this group that I was with that particular night were all armed with M-1s. The sub had brought in guns and ammunition and Americans, and this whole group had automatic firepower and the latest equipment that you could get at that time. And all the drums of gasoline were destroyed, in fact, the whole thing plus thirty-eight planes.

Marcello: Could you describe anything . . . what was the attack itself like? How did you destroy the oil drums?

Allen: With TNT and dynamite, but most of it was half pound triton (?) blocks.

Marcello: Was it simply a matter of running through the camp and . . .

Allen: No. The guards were taken care of on the planes and the gasoline, and the triton blocks were all set. They had some real good demolition men. And the planes had triton blocks put in them, and then when they got ready to blow it, why, a shot was fired. And, of course, there was quite a line up of soldiers facing your Japanese camp. And so they came out of their tents . . .the Japs are sorta dumb in some ways. In others, they aren't. They had all their guns stacked in the

street swiveled together. And when they come out of their tents to get their gun, there'd be Americans just waiting there. In fact, what didn't get back into the jungle were killed. The whole camp was just wiped out.

Marcello: What were some of the other harassing measures which you took against the Japanese? You talked about booby traps a while ago. What were some of the favorite booby traps that were used?

Allen: Some of the Navy mine units . . . their demolition . . . their warheads are . . . we used those to set up booby traps that anything would . . . truck tire, anything like that, or a man step on it, it would blow. The most fun that we had, actually . . . we caught two Japs when we first went into the hills, and we carried 'em along with us, and we weren't very nice to 'em. And we had some monkeys, and every day we'd make these Japs whip these monkeys.

Marcello: Whip then?

Allen: Beat 'em. And then we'd make the Japs leave 'em, and some of us would go in and get the monkeys and pet 'em, calm 'em down, and give 'em a little food. And it got to where that those Japs'd walk up, those monkeys'd just have a fit. They'd just be trembling. And they were our watchdogs from then on. Sometimes the wind would be high. That monkey would start chattering, grab you

around the neck, and hug you real . . . just try to get as close to you as he could. Well, you knew there was a Jap in the area, or Japs, and so you'd circle out, go into the wind, find your Japs, and they'd always be there.

Marcello: Now during the times that you were not busy harassing the Japanese, how did you spend your time?

Allen: Well, we spent most of our time trying to form groups, trying to locate . . . find material for our guerrilla warfare units.

Marcello: Did you ever think much of home?

Allen: Quite a bit.

Marcello: What in particular did you think about?

Allen: How my mother and my father was. My dad wasn't in very good health when I left, and I thought about him an awful lot.

Marcello: Did you receive very much news from the outside?

Allen: I didn't receive any news until the day I was released, and then the only reason I did then is because they had notified my family that I was released, and then I got a telegram from 'em.

Marcello: Well, apparently, now you had been harassing the Japanese for how long?

Allen: Approximately six months.

Marcello: Obviously, they knew you were in the area.

Allen: They sure did.

Marcello: And they must've been looking for you.

Allen: They sure were.

Marcello: Did you have any close escapes? That is, before you actually were captured?

Allen: No, we didn't. We kept pretty well safe. I don't think we'd have ever been captured if we hadn't been turned in. Four of our boys had malaria and were down with malaria. And I was out one morning to go out and fix some quinine, and I walked out of my tent, got the fire started, and was getting my water ready to boil, and I looked up, and there was a pair of wrapped leggings. And I had a Thompson sub sitting there, and I started to reach for it. As I reached for it, I looked over, and I saw some more wrapped leggings. And I stopped and looked all around, and we were surrounded.

Marcello: When you were speaking of wrapped leggings, that is the type of footwear that some of the Japanese had around their ankles and calves. Isn't this correct?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Be similar to our canvas leggings, I suppose.

Allen: No. It's sort of wrapped like an Ace bandage.

Marcello: Right. But I mean it would serve the same purpose as the canvas leggings, I suppose, that our soldiers wore.

Allen: Yes, yes. Right. They wore a tennis shoe in the jungle with the big toe split, and the rest of it then was solid

over the other toes. But they use that toe for climbing and a lot of different things.

Marcello: Apparently, the monkeys hadn't detected these Japs.

Allen: No, they hadn't. In fact, at the time of the surrender we had lost our monkeys. We lost 'em to the Moros.

Marcello: Moros got a little hungry?

Allen: We had 'em, and they wanted to eat 'em so we let them have 'em to eat. I guess we were sorta scared of the Moros ourselves.

Marcello: You mentioned just a little while ago that had you not been turned in you probably would not have been captured. In other words, there was an imformer in the group or some of the villagers . . .

Allen: Filipino . . .

Marcello: . . . who told the Japanese.

Allen: A Filipino turned us in.

Marcello: There was a Filipino informer. How'd you find out that he was an informer?

Allen: Well, that's quite a story. The officer in charge . . . Japanese officer in charge had gone to Los Angeles University and could speak better English than I can. And he came up and talked to us and told us we'd have to go into concentration at Del Monte. So we went back to Del Monte. It took us three days to get there. And we got there, saw a lot of our friends. The next morning

we were called to the office, and we went before this Jap major. And there was 60,000 pesos on his desk--10,000 pesos a head is what the Filipino got for us. And we went into his office, and then he had this Filipino brought in. And he asked . . . he says, "Are these the men now you turned in?" The Filipino said, "Yes."

Marcello: Did you know this Filipino?

Allen: No. I'd never seen him. So he told him he'd have to sign a paper for the money, and he signed it. And this Jap major just nodded his head. When he did, well, there's two sentries there that walked up--one on one side, one on the other--and took the Filipino by the arm and went right out the back door. The major turned to us and says, "Come." So we went outside. He took his samurai sword out of the holster and chopped an imaginary head two or three times. Then he bent this Filipino over . . . started to bend him over. Before he bent him over, though, he told him, he said, "If you'd be a traitor to the Americans, you'd be a traitor to us." Then he chopped his head off. And he no more had chopped his head off and he looked up and said, "Well, I'm 60,000 pesos ahead."

Marcello: (Chuckle) What was your initial reaction . . . had you ever witnessed a decapitation before?

Allen: No. Not in that way. I . . . I had seen heads roll before that but not this way. I've seen Moros chop Jap

heads off with one swing. Just wouldn't be any more than you taking a knife and chopping that cigarette in two.

Marcello: Well, what were your initial thoughts when you'd gotten captured? That is, going back to the jungle camp again, and you looked up and here you saw yourself surrounded by these Japanese soldiers.

Allen: Oh, I just thought that I'd had it. I didn't know whether I'd get back or not.

Marcello: Did you still think that perhaps the Japanese did not take any prisoners?

Allen: Well, no. I knew that they's gonna try to get information from me was first thing they's gonna try to do. I knew that it wasn't gonna be quick.

Marcello: Right after you were captured did they take you directly to the Del Monte Plantation?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: I assume that when you call this the Del Monte Plantation I assume this was owned by the same Del Monte that we're familiar with.

Allen: That's right.

Marcello: It was probably a pineapple plantation or something or . . .

Allen: Right. That's where their headquarters was in the Philippines.

Marcello: How far were you from the Del Monte Plantation when you were captured?

Allen: About three days out.

Marcello: Is there anything you would like to talk about with regard to the journey from your camp to the plantation? Is there anything that stands out in your mind? How were you treated?

Allen Real good.

Marcello: Do you think the Japanese had a good deal of respect for you and what you were doing? I mean, certainly they wanted to capture you, but . . .

Allen: The respect they had was for an American doctor.

Marcello: You had an American doctor with your group?

Allen: In the concentration camp. When the island fell, the general's son was shot, and the bullet lodged next to his brain in his skull. And this Jap doctor some way or another had found out that Dr. Davis was there. And they had gone through pre-med school together, all the way through, and he knew that he was a surgeon. And so he asked him if he would perform the operation. He performed the operation and saved the boy, and for the first eight months on the island of Mindanao the boys were treated real, real well. And they moved the commanding officer out and brought in an old salt, and then it turned to literally hell.

Marcello: Okay. Let's . . . let's just go back a little bit here. Now, you were captured, and you were sent to the Del

Monte Plantation. Describe what conditions were like at the plantation when you arrived there and what happened to you.

Allen: The camp had one wire . . . one . . . no, there's two strings of barbed wire all around the camp so you would know which and where to go. That's all it was. It wasn't a real concentration camp. Had two or three guards on the outside posted. The Jap guards would come into the camp during the day and talk to the boys, and they didn't even shake 'em down when they went in. They had a lot of trading material. They were trading with the Japs, and everything would seem like it was gonna be all right, you know.

Marcello: You think it was mainly because of this original commander that you talked about there?

Allen: Definitely. Definitely. As I say, as long as he was there, everything was all right. In fact, you could sneak out at night and slip over to the little barrio over there and see some of the girls and this type of thing. They were very, very liberal.

Marcello: I assume there weren't very many thoughts of . . . of escaping. There really was no place to go.

Allen: The men did, I think, real, real well. They followed orders to a T. They knew that they were very fortunate of having treatment that they were getting, and they had

no cause to leave with the American officers telling 'em not to. And they were getting three meals a day, not as much as they wanted to eat, but they were getting three meals a day, and so they stayed.

Marcello: What did a typical meal consist of?

Allen: Well, at that time they still had some American rations, very little of it, but just canned goods stuff, and you'd eat rice three times a day, but you got all you wanted as far as rice goes. Now when I said that they didn't get all the food that they wanted is because they didn't get steak and, you know, stuff that they had been used to.

Marcello: Surely. Surely.

Allen: Dropping down to rice three times a day is quite a drop.

Marcello: I assume you were losing weight during this period.

Allen: No. Boys were all in good shape when I got to camp. There was no weight lost until this other commander took over. And when he took over, within three days we were loaded into trucks and taken to the Davao Penal Colony.

Marcello: Okay. Well, let's just go back a little bit. I have a few more questions about the Del Monte Plantation. What sort of discipline existed among the American soldiers? In other words, were you still more or less following the orders of your officers?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Did they segregate the Filipinos from the Americans?

Allen: Yes, yes. The Americans were in their own camp, and the Filipinos were in theirs.

Marcello: Was there ever any evidence of any atrocities being committed by the Japanese against the American or the Filipinos at this time?

Allen: No.

Marcello: Now again this is while you still had that original commander.

Allen: Original commander, right.

Marcello: What was his name? Do you recall?

Allen: No, I don't.

Marcello: Are there any other Japanese that stand out in your mind at this time as individuals?

Allen: You mean in the Filipinos or in Japan or the whole thing?

Marcello: At Del Monte.

Allen: At Del Monte? No. Incidentally, this Filipino scout that I was telling you about in the hills, his name was Sergeant Dorn.

Marcello; D-O-R-N.

Allen: Right. His daddy was General Pershing's first sergeant, and he was still alive when I got to the Philippines. He lived on the island of Mindanao. The old gentleman had five wives and thirty-eight kids.

Marcello: Amazing (chuckle).

Allen: He was one-armed. He had lost his arm from a Moro during one

of the scrimmages back in the war. It had been cut off with a _____. But Sergeant Dorn is the boy that was in the hills with us, and he was a very fine, upstanding young man.

Marcello: How did conditions change at the Del Monte Plantation after there was a switch in the commandants?

Allen: There was, I would say, twenty-five guards on the outside perimeter of our camp for three days. There was a lot of yelling. And, of course, everything in our camp was shut completely down. Everything was taken away from us.

Marcello: That is after the new commander came.

Allen: Right. And as I said a while ago after three days we were put on trucks and carried down to Davao Penal Colony.

Marcello: In other words, the new commander was only there three days before you left?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: And the penal colony was a prison . . . a Filipino prison, and it was sorta the hell hole of the island. It was all swampy.

Marcello: What was the name of it again?

Allen: The Davao Penal Colony. And they had some old barracks there that we stayed in. Just right off everybody had work details.

Marcello: Now, did this new commander accompany you there, or were you still under this new commander?

Allen: Oh, yes. This new boy.

Marcello: What was his rank?

Allen: He was a colonel.

Marcello: Well, was the Army running these camps? This was the Japanese Army or Japanese Marines?

Allen: Yeah Jap Army.

Marcello: Japanese Army.

Allen: I say Army. I don't know whether you'd call it Army or Marines. I know that they had a lot of the old Marine guards on it, men that was more or less wore out and had seen their days, cripples, and this type of soldier.

Marcello: What were the barracks like at this penal colony?

Allen: Well, they had dirt floors in 'em, just long shotgun-looking buildings, and they came in and put in a board floor. It was about . . . on each side with a hallway down the center of 'em, and they were about fourteen inches off the ground. And they put straw mats down on it, and that's where we slept at night. Lot of bedbugs, ticks, lice. All the water around there was full of leeches. And if you've never gone through a span of water and then walk out with maybe anywhere from 75 to 100 leeches to you, why, you wouldn't know what it (chuckle) really was.

Marcello: How big are these leeches?

Allen: Oh, they're anywhere from a quarter of an inch long to an inch and a half, two inches long.

Marcello: What does it feel like when one of 'em grabs ahold?

Allen: Well, they stick their head in . . . they bore their head in and start sucking blood. It itches. It's not painful, but you itch, and you'll reach down to scratch, and you'll feel that thing. If you break the head off, you'll get an infection. So you have to be careful how you get 'em out.

Marcello: Did you have to burn them off?

Allen: Uh-huh. You don't ever let the fire touch 'em. You do, you'll kill 'em, and you have to break the head off. You just git it real close to 'em and get 'em warmed up, and they'll back out.

Marcello: I assume there was no chance to ever take any sort of sanitary precautions in the barracks either, was there?

Allen: No.

Marcello: I mean, even if you'd wanted to.

Allen: No. No, there was no way actually of washing clothes hardly. The way we used to clean our clothes out, we'd get around a red ant bed and take our clothes off, throw 'em in that red ant bed.

Marcello: A red ant bed.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Marcello: What would the ants do?

Allen: Go in and eat the bedbugs and lice and their eggs. Then you'd pick your clothes up and shake 'em real good and hope you had all the ants out.

Marcello: (Chuckle)

Allen: Sometimes one of 'em'd be up in the lining or, you know, someplace, and you knew it's there. He didn't let you wait very long.

Marcello: He left his calling card, huh (chuckle).

Allen: He didn't let you wait very long. And the ants there . . . the red ant there is different than our red ant. Our red ant stings you. The way they sting they bite. And when they bite, they leave a hole. It was really something.

Marcello: About how big were these red ants?

Allen: Oh, they're a half inch long, but they do have some that's a inch long over there, too.

Marcello: Now how many of you were in the penal colony? Do you know?

Allen: There were 400 and something. Then they brought in 1,000 troops--the Black Dutch, Australians, English from Borneo--and put them into our camp. And we got along better with the Japs, I believe, than we did them.

Marcello: Let me ask you this question. This is one that has come up in just about every interview. Most of the Americans who came in contact with the British, in particular, had no love for them.

Allen: That's right.

Marcello: Was this the same situation . . .

Allen: Right.

Marcello: . . .at the penal colony? Why?

Allen: Well, in the first place they are for themselves individually.

My outfit and our boys, I'll have to say that they're not like even the Army today. We took care of each other. The English people don't do this. They're all for themselves entirely. And we took care . . . well, I'll put it this way, we took care of our own, and we had very little trouble in the camp after about a month after they were there because they knew that if, I guess you'd call, they ratted to the Japs, they wouldn't live very long to make that mistake a second time.

Marcello: Apparently, they also had a lot of trouble with the English so far as sanitation was concerned.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Not that anybody was really . . . could be that particularly clean in these prison camps, but apparently the English in particular were negligent in regard to sanitary measures.

Allen: Well, right. They would go inside the barracks if you didn't watch 'em. That was one thing. Our American boys just weren't that lazy. They would get up and take care of their chores and things themselves and go where you were supposed to go. The American soldier is one in a few, but I found this even after I got into Japan. The Japanese are . . . the soldier in the field is dirty. In Japan he's a very clean person. He's ten times as clean as an Englishman.

Marcello: When you say he's ten times as clean as an Englishman, you mean as a civilian?

Allen: As a civilian or a soldier either.

Marcello: Even a Japanese soldier is usually much cleaner than an Englishman.

Allen: Right, right, that I have seen. Of course, I've never been to England, but from what I've seen of the English they're the dirtiest, filthiest people I've ever seen in my life. They're not as hard-headed as the Americans. I don't think they have as much guts as the Americans got. They seem to be weak when they're under pressure.

Marcello: Also, I've been told by several others that the attrition rate among the English was usually greater than it was among the Americans apparently because of some of the things that you've just talked about.

Allen: Well, I guess that's true, but I think the American soldier's body will withstand just a hell of a lot more than most other people's because of the way they been raised at that time. The food they had eaten all their life . . . I think our food . . . I think that physically we're just better people than the English are.

Marcello: A little while ago you talked about collaboration. Was there much evidence of collaboration in this penal colony among the Americans? Were there any American collaborators?

Allen: Yes, at first.

Marcello: What form would the collaboration take?

Allen: Oh, they'd tell on the Americans when they were stealing food

and this type of thing. As I say, the Americans more or less stuck together. If I got a chance to steal twenty-five pounds of rice out on a detail, I stole it and brought it in and put it in the kitty.

Marcello: What sort of work details did they send you on?

Allen: Well, a little bit of everything. Mostly we went to the rice fields. And in the rice fields the men cultivated the rice. They planted the rice. They pulled the plows. They didn't have carabaos there. If you didn't pull the plow fast enough, you were liable to get whopped across the back with a piece of baling wire whip . . . not baling wire, but barbed wire whip and this type of thing. Wood details . . . you had so much wood to cut, and you'd get back at a certain time. We did all of the work for our camps and for the Japs' camps, too.

Marcello: What sort of rations did you have?

Allen: We ate better, I guess you'd say, even in Davao than we did in Japan toward the end of the war. We were getting about three-quarters of a canteen cup of rice per meal and then . . . of course . . . regardless, the American is the best thief that you have ever seen.

Marcello: I was going to ask you how you went about supplementing your diet, and I assume that thievery was one of the ways it was done.

Allen: That's right. That's right.

Marcello: Would you care to describe this into any detail?

Allen: Personally, I think that that if some of us boys that was over there could teach some of these American crooks (chuckle) a pretty good lesson sometimes. They'd sit around at night. Oh, there'd be ten or fifteen. Of course, you wasn't supposed to be talking. You could whisper. And, incidentally, we were not allowed to speak English inside of our barracks or English at any time. We were supposed to speak Japanese.

Marcello: In other words that meant that you weren't supposed to speak much at all.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: I assume you didn't know too much Japanese.

Allen: You didn't, but you learned it damn fast because the day we went into the penal colony they give each one of us a number, and you had to know it the next morning at roll call. And if you come out of the barracks, you had to call your number off. And if you didn't call it off, you sure to hell wished you had've.

Marcello: What were some of the types of punishment that the Japanese used at this time in the penal colony?

Allen: Well, I've seen boys hung by their thumbs for two and three days at a time. In fact, I've seen 'em . . . their thumbs just pulled off . . . cut off where the wire was that they were strung up with. I've seen . . . a boy'd have a beard.

They'd just happen to pull his beard out just a few hairs at a time. Fingernails lost and toenails lost, crushed hands, arms, feet, legs. I think one of the worst punishments . . . I know they hung me one time by my thumbs. Before they hung me, though, they tied my feet together, and put a two-by-four under my knee and made me squat down on that two-by-four. They tied my legs this way then hung me by my thunbs. I stayed that way five days. I still have trouble with my knees.

Marcello: What did you do to deserve this particular punishment?

Allen: Well, I was very lucky. I hit a Jap.

Marcello: Why did you hit him? This was a Japanese soldier?

Allen: Yes.

Marcello: Why did you hit him?

Allen: 'Cause he hit me.

Marcello: For doing what or for not doing what?

Allen: That was it. I wasn't doing anything, and he just walked up and what he called _____. And he _____ all right. He slapped the fire out of me. I hit him before I thought. That's all. So they gave me a little treatment, and I didn't hit no more. And then they broke both my feet later on. I was in a tailor shop.

Marcello: Now this wasn't the penal colony.

Allen: Yes.

Marcello: Oh, it was still at the penal colony.

Allen: Yes. They put me in the tailor shop to run a machine and make 'em shirts. I told 'em I couldn't use a machine. They said I could. We had an Indian boy that was in charge of the Americans in the tailor shop. Of course, when they'd bring a new man in, why, he would get with 'em and try his best to show 'em everything to do. And you had to make sixteen shirts a day. They cut 'em . . . Chief cut 'em out, but you had to sew up sixteen shirts each day for the first week you were there. The next week you had to make twenty-four. The next week you had to make thirty. Then the next week you'd have to make thirty-six. And I got pretty good at it. They was making these shirts out of sugar sacks and flour sacks, and then they brought an American flag in, and they wanted us to cut this American flag up and make it part of their insignia. And they give it to me and told me to cut it. I handed it to the chief and told him I wouldn't cut it. Chief wouldn't cut it.

Marcello: You refer to this man as the chief.

Allen: This Indian boy.

Marcello: I see. Was this an American Indian or an Indian Indian?

Allen: No. No, he was an American Indian. Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He's no longer with us. He was killed before we left the plantation. He hit a Jap major, and they killed him. But we wouldn't cut the American flag up so

they broke both of our feet with rifle butts.

Marcello: Just stomped your feet with their rifle butts?

Allen: Yeah, break 'em. That was one of their favorite tricks--to hit you on the feet with a rifle butt. And some of 'em were real good at it. They could break your foot with just one lick.

Marcello: How long were you laid up as a result of this?

Allen: Well, Dr. Blinkey put my feet in splints, and I went back to work the next day. They carried me over. You worked regardless.

Marcello: How long were you in this particular penal colony all together?

Allen: I's there until thirteen months before the war was over with.

Marcello: In other words, that might be a total of what . . . maybe about . . .

Allen: About two years.

Marcello: I was going to say about two years. Did you have very much contact with the natives at this time?

Allen: We had good contact with the natives and good contact with our groups.

Marcello: You mean with the groups that were still out in the hills?

Allen: Right.

Marcello: How did you contact them?

Allen: The Filipinos would meet us, and we'd sneak out in the

brush and talk to 'em and what have you. You can't keep a bunch of Americans quiet. They're the orneriest, hard-headedest people there ever was if they set their mind to be.

Marcello: What sort of information did you pass out to these Filipinos?

Allen: We couldn't. There wasn't nothing we could pass out. There wasn't anything to pass out. But they could just tell us how things were going.

Marcello: I see. In other words, they were your source of information as to what was happening on the outside.

Allen: Get the outside word. That's right.

Marcello: Did you ever receive any mail at all while you were in this particular camp?

Allen: No, sir. My parents thought I was dead. In fact, the United States Government wanted to pay 'em my insurance. My mom said that I wasn't dead, and they wouldn't take the money.

Marcello: Now, aside from the punishments which were dished out to you personally, what was your physical condition at this time?

Allen: Well, it began to get poor.

Marcello: Losing weight?

Allen: Oh, yes.

Marcello: Were you suffering from dysentery or beriberi or pellagra,

anything like this?

Allen: The camp was full of beriberi, dysentery, yellow jaundice, dinky fever.

Marcello: Dinky fever. Okay, you've got to tell me what dinky fever is.

Allen: It's worse than malaria. Very, very, very severe headaches, very high fever, and it'll last sometimes for two weeks.

Marcello: I assume that's spelled D-I-N-K-Y.

Allen: I think.

Marcello: It's a nickname?

Allen: Well, all we . . . we knew it as . . . all I know it as is dinky fever. The only thing you could do for a man who was in that shape was just try to keep him quiet and keep compresses on him, keep him wrapped up, help chills. It's approximately the same thing as malaria only you had that severe headache.

Marcello: Are there any particular Japanese soldiers that stand out at this time? Obviously, you must've had some names for some of these guards and so on. What were some of the names you had for them?

Allen: Well, the names that I had for 'em and most of the boys had for 'em wouldn't be for publication.

Marcello: I see. (Chuckle)

Allen: I don't know if we wanted a nickname to where you could

just come right out and say it (chuckle).

Marcello: All the names were pretty bad, huh? Pretty . . . pretty vulgar.

Allen: I'm afraid they were. The situation we had there was very rough because they were always trying to make an example. And they had a rule . . . they had ten-man groups. In fact, the day this commander took over up at Del Monte he made it a rule right then with this ten-man group if one man escaped out of that group, the other nine would be killed plus ten more men out of the squad.

Marcello: Did he ever enforce this? Did he ever have the opportunity to enforce it?

Allen: Yes, he did it. There's five men escaped.

Marcello: They escaped at one time or different . . .

Allen: One time, one time. And he killed the other five boys. Then he's going to pick out fifty more. We talked the man out of killing 'em, we would try to get those five men back. And we did. We got 'em back.

Marcello: What happened to the five men that were brought back?

Allen: The Japs killed 'em. But it was better to lose that five than fifty.

Marcello: Sure.

Allen: It's hard to do. It's hard to go out and get some of your own people and bring 'em in.

Marcello: That you know are going to be executed.

Allen: That's right. Its hard to do. Everybody is supposed to trust each other. Of course, it . . . don't ever think that American people are not greedy or the American soldier when you're in this situation are not greedy, and they're going to take care of themselves first. But for some reason he's always got a little left to help somebody else.

Marcello: What sort of medical facilities did the Japanese provide at the penal colony?

Allen: None. We had a doctor, American doctor, with us--Dr. Blinkey. He was a Jewish doctor, and he had . . . the only thing he had in the way of medical supplies was the herbs and this type of thing that he knew about that we could collect around. That's what he used. He was a good doctor.

Marcello: Did the Japanese ever display the prisoners before the local population? In other words what I'm trying to get at is that in many cases, apparently, in the Philippines they would display especially the American prisoners before the local population. In other words, saying, "Well, look what we as Asiatics have done to these westerners . . . these white men." Was there ever anything of this sort to humiliate the Americans?

Allen: Not in our group, not where we were. We were away from

everybody at this penal colony. And, therefore, it didn't happen.

Marcello: Is there anything else that you would like to talk about with regard to your stay at the penal colony that we haven't covered at this time? Are there any other incidents you might like to talk about?

Allen: I've seen boys that . . . you know, an American is funny. He'll eat anything. And in the penal colony our rice . . . the rice that they issued to us was a little wormy. Didn't mind that. Those worms were just more protein. But we would have to clean these _____ out, rice storage, things like this where the sacks would break, you know. And they'd be full of rat pills. They'd go in the pot just like anything else.

Marcello: Right in with the rice and the worms, huh?

Allen: Yeah, in the rice. If you tried to pick it all out, you wouldn't have any . . . you'd never get it done.

Marcello: Right.

Allen: So they would just cook it all. And on occasions we would have extra rice that would be stolen from the Japs. But anytime we stole stuff like this and had extra, we had to cook it where they couldn't see us.

Marcello: Sure.

Allen: And in the No. 2 barracks they had taken some of the floor boards up where they sleep and had dug down--had a

. . . a pretty good hole down there--and we used to carry live coals in, and they'd cook a pot of rice in a cauldron down underneath which was . . . very, very little smoke would go up. And this No. 2 was right next to the cook shack. And, of course, the only time we cooked in the hole was when they were cooking one of the meals. And we'd always be sure even if we had to throw a little water on the fire that there's a lot of smoke coming out from the cook shack.

Marcello: Did you have to prepare your own meals?

Allen: Yes. We had our own cooks and all. We sure did. And there was Japanese guards who stood right over the cooks the whole time they're cooking and there were Jap guards when everybody ate. They'd go through the line. That's one thing that they were sure of, that everybody was getting their equal share. Then if they'd catch a cook getting a little rice to eat, he's had it. So he'd take a whipping that wouldn't quit. I've seen men whipped with barbed wire. I've seen 'em whipped with big leather straps. I've seen 'em hit with sticks up to the size of a two inch piece of fire wood. I've seen boys' heads broken open with a stick like that. The Japs are some of the cruelest that I've ever known.

Every once in a while there would be a Jap guard disappear. And I mean when I say disappear, he'd totally

disappear. And, of course, the Japs would get to wondering, and this went on for over a year. And finally they realized that the prisoners were the only ones close enough to do anything like this, but they couldn't figure out what we's doing with 'em. And actually what was happening to 'em was that they were being killed and thrown down under our latrine. Then when we got ready to move the latrine, why, it would be covered, see. Jap would be right there and watch 'em move the latrine and watch 'em cover that Jap right up. He'd be weighted and dropped down in there. They lost quite a few Japs that way. If a guard got too unruly, why, he was taken care of. Any time an American lost his life from a Jap, and if that Jap stayed around there very long, he'd go to the bottom of this pit. But, as I say, we took care of our own. And I'm sorry to say some of the Americans was taken care of, same way with the English and the Dutch.

There was a lot of information to've been had, but they didn't get none. That's why I can't understand about this business during the courtroom or I . . . and I still can't. I've thought about it and thought about it and thought about it. I don't know whether it's the way our men are trained today or back then or what. They say it's brainwashed. I know there is no one . . . to my opinion there is no one who can brainwash you. I've

had 'em question me, seen a lot of other boys questioned. We had one theory. And the same way with when they put you in the little hot house that they had. You get to thinking about something, and you continue to think about that, I don't care what kind of questions they give you, your mind can't go in two lines of thought at the same time. And if you concentrate hard enough on one subject, there's no room for any other subject.

Marcello: You talked about this little hot house. What was it?

Allen: Oh, it was just some sheet metal thrown together, and they'd stick you in it.

Marcello: In other words, the sheet metal would absorb the heat, I gather.

Allen: Yeah. It'd get about 170, 180 degrees in there it felt like.

Marcello: About how big was it?

Allen: Oh, it was three foot square and four foot high.

Marcello: In other words, you couldn't stand up in it.

Allen: No.

Marcello: Was this another favorite form of punishment that they used?

Allen: Yes, yes.

Marcello: What did you have to do in order to be put in the hot house?

Allen: Depends on what the Jap thought, and that's just about the

way it went. You'd get put into it today for one thing and tomorrow for something else. You may do the same thing next time, and they'd punish you some other way. It's just whatever hit their mind . . . it seemed to me, whatever hit their mind right at the time, that's what they did to you.

Marcello: Did you ever get the feeling that they may've been just a little bit afraid or just a little bit scared of Americans? Some prisoners have indicated that they felt in many instances that perhaps the Japanese were just a little afraid or scared of Americans.

Allen: No. I don't think actually they were. Now the younger boys were, yes, the young guards, the Korean guards that they brought in and put over us were, but the old salts weren't.

Marcello: They used Korean guards for . . .

Allen: A lot of it, a lot of it.

Marcello: . . . guard duty occasionally.

Allen: Right. Now they are cruel little devils. They were very, very cruel. Down in Texas here, when our children were small especially back in my days when I was young, parents gave you a cap pistol and a Daisy air rifle, and, boy, you play cowboy all your life. Well, in Japan they do it with samurai swords, and they're always chopping off imaginary heads. And their judo and jujitsu and karate

they're taught at a very young age. The only thing of it is they've always got an opponent. Well, when they got us in a concentration camp, they had the gun, and they had the buddy standing beside 'em with a gun, they had never really got to practice a lot of this stuff on somebody that wouldn't hit 'em back. And so they done their practicing on us.

Marcello: On the prisoners.

Allen: We did, however, toward the end there they let us go back at 'em. In other words, if they'd contest . . . the Japs wanted to contest the Americans, and . . . I think at that time I weighed about 125 pounds, something like that.

Marcello: In other words, you were almost down to the size of a Japanese soldier perhaps.

Allen: More or less, yeah.

Marcello: Are those . . .

Allen: You ought to've some of their Japanese soldiers that weighed 230, 260 pounds.

Marcello: Apparently, the Japanese Marines were relatively . . .

Allen: Big boys.

Marcello: . . . big boys.

Allen: You bet, and they're strong as a bull.

Marcello: Now let me ask you this. We talked about some of the cruel Japanese soldiers and so on. Were there ever any friendly ones?

Allen: No, not in the Philippines there wasn't, not with this group around this commanding officer. He was surrounded with just a bunch of sadists, and that's just all there is to it.

Marcello: And I assume that every time he was around they had to impress him that they were doing their job . . .

Allen: That's true.

Marcello: . . . and they would do so by taking it out on the prisoners.

Allen: To show you what type of people they are at that time . . . I'm sure that they're better educated now than they were then. They had very few truck drivers, and very few of 'em knew anything about driving an automobile or a truck. On the way down to the Davao Penal Colony this truck stopped right in front of us. And this little Jap soldier jumped out--see, he was a sergeant--and he took a samurai sword, and he beat that truck on the fenders, over the hood. Now he didn't hit it with the cutting blade to cut the truck up. He hit it with the flat of the blade, and he just beat the devil out of that engine part where the hood was trying to punish it because it died. I saw a Jap lieutenant who happened to be in the tailor shop one day when one of the machines went off. He didn't hit it with the side of his sword. He cut that machine all to pieces.

Marcello: And apparently those samurai swords were so sharp and so tough that they could go right through some types of metal.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Is this correct?

Allen: Right. They can cut the American 30.06 barrel off just with one lick.

Marcello: While we're on this subject, something else also came to mind. Did the Americans ever do anything to sabotage the work of the Japanese in this penal colony? In other words, was there any way that you could get back at them?

Allen: Not in this penal colony. There wasn't anything that we could destroy. If we destroyed anything, we's destroying part of what we were going to eat, too.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: You didn't have a chance to destroy stuff there. One guard was responsible for ten men. And working the rice paddy or wood cutting detail . . .

Marcello: Right. There wasn't too much you could do.

Allen: There's just wasn't anything . . . now it was different when we got to Japan.

Marcello: Well, what was . . .

Allen: That's another story, you know.

Marcello: I see. Right. Okay, now, where did you move from the penal colony?

Allen: Before you start . . .

Marcello: Sure, go right ahead.

Allen: . . . let me go on. There is one, I think, that is still

to the day that it was hilarious. This Jap major had a beard, and a couple of our boys had beards. And they had some lice, crabs. And those two boys . . . this Jap major was asleep, and they'd set there and pick crabs and lice out of their beards and drop them into the Jap's beard.

Marcello: Well, how did they get into the major's quarters?

Allen: Well, it wasn't. We were out in the rice field, and this Jap major was under the shade there. And as these boys would pass, they'd drop . . . come up close enough to where they could walk over and turn loose a crab or a louse and let it drop into that major's hair and whiskers. He had his hat off, you know. And they did that for about an hour. And I've often wondered . . . we watched that major to see if he's going to scratch that beard, and he scratched it. We don't know whether it was the lice and crabs that was making him scratch or not, but that was one of the funny things to me that happened.

Marcello: Yeah. Are there any other funny incidents that stand out at the penal colony? I mean, we've talked about the bad things. Maybe we can talk about some of the good things.

Allen: Yeah, yeah, there was one real funny incident. We had electricians that the Japs would have do different things. This truck pulled up and stopped, and this electrician was on a pole. And the lines weren't over ten foot off the ground, and he's right in the middle, more or less,

of the two poles right underneath the electrical line. And he had a whole truckful of soldiers, and they had metal beds and metal seats and everything. So this boy on that pole thought, well, how funny it'd be if the electric line were to drop across that truck. And that idiot cut the wire and let it go. Now you talk about a bunch of Japs that was doing some dancing. Now they were doing some dancing. It wasn't strong enough to kill 'em. It was just strong enough that they couldn't get loose from it, and they sat there squalling and hollering.

Marcello: Kind of like a Cattle prod, I suppose.

Allen: Yeah. And that's just one of the incidents that happened. If the boys got a chance in any way, shape, form, or fashion . . . I know some of the boys were putting out poison in a garden, and this Jap guard . . . it was a poison that wouldn't've actually killed a human being, but, boy, it made you sick. And the reason I know it makes you sick is because one of our boys--as I say, they'll eat anything--had tasted it. We didn't know what it was. We knew he was putting it on the garden. And he, some way or another, tasted it, and it tasted sort of like peanut butter to him. So he sprinkled some on his own food. And, of course, he darn near died. It was all that we could do to save his life. So he thought it'd be real funny about putting this in the Japanese

food. And he watched his chance. He carried a little ole bottle of that stuff for almost eight months. Different times they'd take boys over to work around the Japanese kitchen--wood detail, cutting wood, and what have you. And he carried some of that stuff over, and he poured it in their food. Well, he should've known better because anybody with any intelligence would know that that stuff wasn't going to just jump into that food. Anyway, it took 'em about three days before they realized what had happened. And the boys that were on that detail that day--you talk about getting a whipping. Now they really got it. And all those boys on that detail carry . . . if they're alive today is carrying marks from the whipping that they got for it. It's a wonder they hadn't shot all of 'em. But they'd try anything once.

Marcello: What did you use to supplement your diet other than stealing? I suppose any dog or cat that happened to stray into camp wasn't very safe.

Allen: Mouse, rat, snake, anything that would move or would crawl. I've eaten every type of conceivable animal, reptile, rodent. You name it, and I've pretty well devoured it.

Marcello: Anything that came through the camp, I suppose, didn't come out alive.

Allen: That's right. I will say this. There was one little puppy dog got it there that . . . he was real sickly.

And it seemed like everybody felt sorry for that little rascal, and he lived through it. And how he did, I don't know. But nobody . . . he looked so bad. He'd been . . . you could tell somebody--and I imagine it was one of them Japs--that had . . . well, the ears had been chopped off close to the head. The tail had been cut off. There was little buttonholes cut all in his skin. And you know that they . . . somebody had just made it suffer. And no one would kill it and eat it, and he got just as fat as a butterball. Slick, his little ole coat was just as slick as slick could be. He's about the size of a rat terrier. But he lived through it. In fact, he was carried to Japan.

Marcello: Where did you go from the penal colony?

Allen: When I left the penal colony by boat . . . or rather by truck down to dock, and then I went into first Tokyo and then to Yokkaichi.

Marcello: You went from the penal colony, in other words, to Japan.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Do you have any idea when this was about?

Allen: I don't remember the date.

Marcello: What year . . . do you remember the year?

Allen: It's the last year of the war. That's all I can remember.

Marcello: Either'd be 1944 or sometime in 1944 . . .

Allen: It's the latter part of '43 or early part . . . or early part of '44.

Marcello: And you went first of all to Tokyo.

Allen: Yeah.

Marcello: What was the trip like from the Philippines to Tokyo?

Allen: It took 128 days.

Marcello: One hundred and twenty-eight days to go from the Philippines to Tokyo?

Allen: That's right.

Marcello: . . . obviously something happened . . . in between there.

Allen: Well, we ran with our lights on every night.

Marcello: With the lights on.

Allen: Right. A lot of your prisoner ships were sunk by the Americans. It had a skeleton crew on it. All that time we were allowed above decks one time.

Marcello: I was going to ask you what conditions were like aboard that ship.

Allen: Well, it was so crowded in the hold that half would stand and half would lay down or squat down. And it stunk to high heaven. As I say, we were put down in that hold, a cover was put over it, and we stayed there. And we come up above one time, and that's when we . . .

Marcello: One time in a hundred and some odd days?

Allen: One hundred and twenty-eight days.

Marcello: You only were up on board deck once.

Allen: One time, and we was in the China Sea with a dead motor. We'd been sitting there for about two days. And we come up above. They wanted us to go for a swim. That's what they

told us. "We're going to let you go for a swim." And we got up on top--I was one of the first up--lined the deck rail and looked down, and there was a manta ray that was damn near as big as that boat. And you couldn't tell how far down he was, but they made us jump over.

Marcello: They made you jump over the side.

Allen: Yeah. Whether you swam or not, everybody had to go in. And, of course, knowing that that manta ray was down there, you didn't dive very deep. And that thing never did move. All of us . . . there's over 1,000 down there in that hold, and with all those people jumping in, kicking around, coming back aboard ship, he never did move.

Marcello: What'd they make you go overboard for? Was this kind of like a form of entertainment for them or something . . .

Allen: I think it was.

Marcello: . . . to see what the manta ray would do?

Allen: I think that's what the whole thing was, the only reason we got to go in then. But I was very thankful that we did get to go in because I was sure stinking.

Marcello: I'll bet you were. I bet everybody was. What sort of attrition rate did this take among the prisoners being down in this hold for a hundred and some odd days?

Allen: Well, that's where we lost an awful lot . . . an awful lot of your English and your Dutch.

Marcello: What did they do with the dead prisoners?

Allen: Pitched 'em overboard. We'd holler. Sometimes they'd take 'em out of there immediately, and sometimes they'd let 'em stay in there for five, six, seven days. And the stench, boy, I'm telling you it . . . well, it got so bad and for so long there that after you . . . a certain period of time you couldn't smell it yourself.

Marcello: Were you still on a rice diet at this time?

Allen: Yes. Buckets of rice . . . five gallon buckets of rice were handed down each day.

Marcello: What sort of latrine facilities were available?

Allen: None.

Marcello: And I assume with all the dysentery and . . .

Allen: Right.

Marcello: . . . so on and so forth . . .

Allen: Right.

Marcello: . . . that this even increased the stench.

Allen: It was just like a bunch of hogs or cattle being shipped in a truck.

Marcello: How about your own physical condition? What was it like while you were aboard the ship?

Allen: My what?

Marcello: What was your own physical condition like aboard the ship?

Allen: It was fair. When I got into Yokkaichi and they weighed me in, at that time I think I weighed 105 pounds when I first got to the camp. When I left that camp, I weighed 93.

Marcello: Now, what was the name of this camp?

Allen: Yokkaichi.

Marcello: Do you want to spell it?

Allen: No. (Chuckle)

Marcello: (Chuckle) Getting back to this ship again. Did they take off the hatches at all? Now, you said you were down in the hold.

Allen: That's right.

Marcello: I assume . . . did they ever take off the hatches, you know, so that you could at least see the daylight or the sun could shine down on you.

Allen: The hatch consisted of wire. The sun shined down in there every day.

Marcello: I see. I see. Well, why did it take you so long to get from the Philippines to Japan?

Allen: Now that I can't answer.

Marcello: You have no idea.

Allen: No idea.

Marcello: Apparently you did have some mechanical difficulties.

Allen: Yes, yes. But even though when we were . . . before the mechanical difficulties they moved very, very slow. They had to. As I say, we weren't allowed above deck. When we did that day that we did come up, there was only eight soldiers that we saw. We saw eight soldiers was all.

Marcello: That's right. You said that the ship did only have a

very . . . had a skeleton crew, not very many men to handle the ship, I suppose.

Allen: Yeah. And four of those were set up with machine guns when we came up . . . came up on top.

Marcello: Did you ever have any close calls with American pilots or American airplanes?

Allen: No, we sure didn't.

Marcello: I would assume that's one time you might've been taking up for the bad guys.

Allen: (Chuckle) There was a constant tap on our . . . the sides of our . . . of our ship. It's one of those inland boats that we went over in. We had quite a few signal corps men on there, and there was a constant tap that was "prisoner of war ship."

Marcello: When you say there was a constant tap, I don't quite understand what you mean.

Allen: Well, the men sat there with a . . . if they had a piece of metal, they'd take time about tapping it out in Morse code on the side of the ship.

Marcello: On the side of the ship. Who were they hoping would pick it up?

Allen: Well, the Americans!

Marcello: Well, how could the Americans pick it up? That's what I don't understand.

Allen: A sub could pick it up.

Marcello: The sound would travel under the water.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: Right, I see. I see.

Allen: They did it for a twofold purpose: hoping they wouldn't torpedo us; if they did hear us, they'd try to rescue us.

Marcello: Right.

Allen: But that was quite a trip. And then when we hit Yokkaichi, we went into some clean new barracks that they had built for us. Then they started pulling ten, twelve, or fifteen men out on details and moving them out to the little towns around. I was very fortunate--myself and eight other boys. We were on a mechanic detail working these big motors over in the factory, and we drew Katakawa. He was an old merchant marine, had been to the States a lot, and I still think he was pro-American.

Marcello: You mean, he was your boss in this factory.

Allen: He was our civilian boss. He'd come to camp and get us and then take us to camp. And along toward the last he would go out in the factory back away where no one ever went and break a machine down, throw a wrench in it or something like that. Then we'd go repair it.

Marcello: Apparently, conditions did improve quite a bit while you were in Japan.

Allen: Oh, it did. For us it did. And he'd bring extra food to us. He'd bring a little extra food each day. One

man would get it, and then the next day the next man would get it.

Marcello: Were you getting mainly rice, maybe a little bit of fish?

Allen: Rice and got some fish heads and occasionally a ripe tomato, and he really took care of us.

Marcello: Did you have much contact with any other Japanese civilians?

Allen: None whatever.

Marcello: How about the other factory workers?

Allen: None whatever.

Marcello: What was the danger of an air attack at this time?

Allen: Oh, we was having 'em definitely.

Marcello: In the factory? Like I say, I'm sure by this time . . .

Allen: We had planes fly over, American planes. Of course, any time American planes flew over, they'd bring you into camp. And our signal corps boys again would . . . we had a place in the roof that you could get up to, and they would take mirrors and signal to 'em. And that way they knew right where that prisoner of war camp was.

Marcello: Were there any soldiers guarding you in this factory?

Allen: Yes, there were soldiers. And all your civilian guards carried a wooden sword, the samurai sword just made out of wood, and that's what they used to correct you.

Marcello: Was there ever very much beating and so on?

Allen: Quite a bit.

Marcello: In Japan, also, there was quite a bit.

Allen: Yes, even with their own people.

Marcello: That is in the factory.

Allen: In the factory. There was a young girl, pregnant--I'd say she was eight months pregnant--working on one of the machines. And she did something wrong to lock it up, and her boss beat her with one of these wood swords until she miscarried. And there wasn't a one that stopped to help that girl. She cleaned herself up and went back to work. And that's how the people are.

Marcello: What sort of motors were these that you were working over?

Allen: Big dynamo . . . they were big dynamos, and it was more or less of a foundry type unit. Most of it I didn't get to go through because Katakawa would keep us on the outside. I say the outside, the . . . where the machinery was that there wasn't people. One time . . . no, it wasn't one time . . . more than once . . . but I'll put it this way, very few times that we ever went into the main factory. And this incident with this girl was one of those times that . . . and it . . . there wasn't nowhere a dozen people in this particular section of the factory we were in that we were working in then. And we'd go in the morning and come back in the evening. And while I was there they had one real earthquake. And Katakawa, his grandson was sixteen years old, and he was just like a little dwarf, little ole bitty thing. Well, when this earthquake happened, the ground just opened up and

water squirted way up in there. And everything, of course, was shaking. And this little Jap, Kaniti, grabbed my hand and said, "Follow me," and I followed him. He carried me to the railroad track and motioned for me to lay down on the track. Well, I laid down on that track. If you take a lariat rope and stretched it out and then just flipped it, you know how it'll wave?

Marcello: Yes.

Allen: That's the way that track was doing. And when I got off that track, I was black and blue all over. But wherever it opened through there, why, you wouldn't fall down into the holes. And after that air raid was over with . . .

Marcello: You mean, after the earthquake was over?

Allen: . . .earthquake, yeah, was over with, where the foxholes that they had dug and things like this people ran out and got into, you might see an arm sticking up or a leg sticking up or a head sticking up and the rest of their body'd be buried. It was a rough one. Two days after that the Americans bombed it for the first time, and they bombed it with phosphorous bombs.

Marcello: Which burn . . .

Allen: Which burn.

Marcello: . . . and keep burning.

Allen: That's right. They didn't do too good of a job. They missed the important parts of it. And I guess it was the next day they sent a reconnaissance ship over, and one of the boys got

up and told 'em what they'd done wrong by signaling to 'em. And four nights later, I think it was, something like this, they came back, and they done a darned good job of it then.

Marcello: Did they destroy the factory?

Allen: Yeah, they destroyed it. Then they moved us . . .

Marcello: Well, before you go on there let me ask you this. As the air raids increased, what about the attitude of the Japanese civilians and the soldiers? In other words, obviously, they must've been losing wives, children, relatives in these raids. Did their attitude toward the Americans harden even further?

Allen: Yes, they sure did, sure did.

Marcello: In other words, the beatings and so on would increase.

Allen: They increased. You was just darn careful that you didn't get caught doing something you wasn't supposed to do. And when you were caught, well, you were in for it. But you know after you take enough beatings, why, you get to where you just get the idea, "Well, to hell with it. If they catch me, all right, and if they don't, all right."

Marcello: You just kind of shrug it off.

Allen: Yeah.

Marcello: That's what you'd have to do, I suppose.

Allen: You harden to it. You harden to it.

Marcello: I'm sure you do. How long were you at this particular place, approximately?

Allen: About nine months.

Marcello: About nine months. In other words, the war was coming to a

close then by this time.

Allen: Coming to a close.

Marcello: It was fast coming to a close.

Allen: Right.

Marcello: So where did you go . . . is there anything else that you would like to mention about your stay here? Obviously your physical condition was improving.

Allen: Well . . .

Marcello: As much as could be expected under the circumstances.

Allen: Well, no because there in this camp I weighed 93 pounds. So it wasn't getting much better.

Marcello: Had all of your other injuries healed by this time? Your feet?

Allen: Yes.

Marcello: Your thumbs and so on?

Allen: There's not much more on that, I don't guess, except that I'll have to say again that Katakawa . . . if it had't been for Katakawa we would have never made it. I know I wouldn't have.

Marcello: That is, as far as the food he provided for you and the way he looked out for you . . .

Allen: That's right.

Marcello: . . .and so on.

Allen: That's right. They moved us about 50 miles from there to another factory, and Katakawa was still my boss.

Marcello: He went along with you.

Allen: And he moved his family and all. And same type of factory, and it started all over again--him coming and getting us in the morning and taking us back in the evening. And the bombing raids got worse and worse, and he'd tell us about it, "The Americans are bombing, bombing, bombing." And the day that they dropped the atomic bomb they carried us right straight in.

Marcello: Into Hiroshima?

Allen: Yeah. They carried us right straight into camp that same day. And he found out that they had dropped the A-bomb.

Marcello: Was your camp that close to Hiroshima?

Allen: It was about seventy-five, eighty miles, something like that. And he told us that there was a bomb had killed everybody in Hiroshima, burned everything up. And the next morning he came and got us. He had broke a machine down and told us that the Japs were settling for peace or asking for peace. And the next day then . . . yeah, the next day the Japs surrendered, and we were out on detail, but he had to confer back and forth. He'd go back and forth, either that or send his grandson, that is, back and forth and keep up to date on things. And then he told us that there was peace. The war was over. So we went back to camp, and we told our officer, our colonel about it. He said, "Okay." Well, the next morning we took our camp over.

Marcello: How did this procedure take place? Did the Japanese come

in and tell you that the war was over and that they were now in your hands or . . .

Allen: They didn't get a chance. They didn't get a chance. We knew it was over, and we knew that they had lost. The next morning at roll call when they started calling the numbers, when they called out 100, well, then everybody moved. And we took our camp over. Took their firearms away from 'em.

Marcello: There was no resistance from the Japanese at all.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Marcello: What was this last camp like? You apparently weren't in this last camp too long.

Allen: No. Less than three months.

Marcello: Less than three months.

Allen: Well, I say . . . well, around three months. I'll put it that way. Now a lot of this stuff I don't remember completely, you know.

Marcello: Sure.

Allen: And I can't . . .

Marcello: What were your first feelings . . . your first emotions when you heard about the surrender?

Allen: Oh, we felt that . . . I think every man there knew because of the information that was given, you know at the time, we knew it was just going to be a matter of days or months. Of course, we were all happy. Some of 'em cried; some of 'em laughed; some of 'em yelled and shouted. One boy just

went completely off his rocker. And when he got hold of this Jap's gun, he started shooting Japs and Americans. And when his five shots were gone, they got hold of him and got the gun away from him. By that time he'd killed three Japs and two Americans. I guess there was every type of action that could possibly be was in that camp that day. Bunch of us were worried about our buddies that had been taken out in these ten-men details and this type of thing. And we found out where they were that afternoon. They wasn't too far away, and we got some of these Japs that knew where to go--they were Jap soldiers--and made 'em take us to these places. One place where fifteen boys . . . they had run 'em down in a trench and poured gasoline on 'em, burned 'em.

Marcello: In other words, you were trying to seek out some of these work details that had been taken out.

Allen: Uh-huh.

Marcello: And this was one of the ways the Japanese retaliated . . .

Allen: Right.

Marcello: . . . before the surrender.

Allen: And it just so happened those guards were all still there, and they got the same treatment.

Marcello: You threw them in, poured gasoline on them.

Allen: I'll just say that they got the same treatment.

Marcello: I was going to ask you if all this time you had been

compiling any scores that you were going to settle after the war . . . after it was all over against individual Japanese or guards. Of course, I guess that would've been the case probably more so back in the Philippines where the treatment was obviously quite a bit rougher.

Allen: No, I never thought about it to be honest with you. About all I could think of was getting back home to my loved ones and going out and eating all I could eat.

Marcello: That brings up another very interesting question. What thing was perhaps on your mind the very most the whole . . . what did you think about more than anything else?

Allen: Oh, I think I thought about my family more than anything else. I really did and what I was going to do when I came back. And I had fully made up my mind . . .

Marcello: Had a lot of back pay coming, I'll bet.

Allen: Yes, yes, sure did. I had fully made up my mind that when I came back to the United States that there wasn't going to be a soul on earth tell me that I <u>had</u> to do anything for the rest of my life, and I would never go hungry again. I had some rules and regulations that I was going to keep after I came back, and some of 'em I have kept. Most of 'em have gone by the side like most New Year's resolutions would go. Always on August 10 I always have rice.

Marcello: Why on August 10?

Allen: That was the day that we took over our camp.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: And I try to see some of the boys once a year. We had 320 men in my organization, and there's seven of us left.

Marcello: When you say your organization, you mean in your group that was on Mindanao?

Allen: Well, that was in the islands.

Marcello: I see.

Allen: See, I was in the 7th Materiel, 19th Heavy Bombardment, and we went over with 320 men, and there wasn't but seven of us left out of that. So we try to see each other once a year or every two years at the most. And we have one fellow. He calls himself Jack the Mormon. He lives at Salt Lake. Every year he goes by and sees everybody, regardless of where they're at. And if he finds out you're going to vacation somewhere, why, he'll try to beat you there. And he always carries a movie camera, and every time he gets with a group with the boys or one of the boys and his family, he's constantly taking movies. And then when he comes to my house, he shows 'em, and he takes movies around here. Then he'll go to the next one and do the same thing. So this way we pretty well keep in touch with each other through Montgomery.

Marcello: What were the first reactions that you had when you saw American troops again? That is, your liberators, I suppose you might call them.

Allen: Well . . .

Marcello: Where the hell you been so long or (chuckle) . . .

Allen: No. The first American people we saw . . . they took us every place on train and carried us into Tokyo. Not the Americans, the Japs. And carried us into Tokyo, and when we got off of the train, lo and behold we were down at the docks, and the American Red Cross ship, the _____, was there. And they had a big barge looking ship there. That's what we went aboard. And we were all, of course, asking where the hell the food was. They said, "Well, it can come later." It would come later. And you stripped down to your birthday suit, walked through a door, and all of 'em that could get into that room and then they closed the door. And they turned on DDT sprays, delouse 'em, and what have you. Then they went from that into another shower room 'cause, boy, you were burning up. And there was soap and showers in there.

Marcello: How long had it been since you had a good shower and soap bath?

Allen: Over three years. And they issued us clothes. Size didn't mean a thing. They'd look at you and try to guess at your size and pitch it out to you. And some of us . . . well, it's like a comedy picture show. That's just the way we looked. We didn't care, though. We were in clean duds. And then we went aboard the hospital ship to the galley, big double doors.

And you would run in there and the first thing you saw was this chocolate milk. And that glass tank must've been a thousand gallons. And you sat there or stood there and drank all the milk you wanted, and they wasn't pushing you. If you wanted to drink just one glass and go on, that's all right. If you wanted to drink fifty, if you could've held 'em, that's fine. Of course, they had a purpose for this to keep you from overeating 'cause they knew you were going to get sick. But the chocolate milk . . . everybody, of course . . . they had these spigots all around this thing. Oh, I'd say they were every foot. I mean, that milk'd come out in a hurry to your glass. Well, to get all the way around this thing . . . as much as I can remember, that thing looked . . . I know it was enormous. It must've been ten foot through it because I know that you could drink . . . if you'd been a fast drinker, you could probably drink ten glasses by the time you got around where you had to go through the line . . . the other line. And they had every type of meat, just about anything a man could've possibly wanted on the tables.

Marcello: What food did you crave the most?

Allen: I think fruit. But I left out a little something there. Before we left our camp we had . . . the day we took it over there was a reconnaissance plane came over, and they told 'em we had taken the camp over. And the next morning there was

five big transports came over and opened their bottoms up and dropped supplies that wouldn't quit. And, of course, we went out and got 'em and brought 'em in, and it was enough to have fed and clothed fifty times as many as was there. And there was even a fifth of Black and White scotch 'cause I got it, I picked it up. We figured somebody had stuck it in one of the boxes.

Marcello: Something I just wondered about. Do you think you could still make a shirt today if you had to?

Allen: Yeah. In fact, if there's any sewing around the house, I do it (chuckle), packing clothes, things like that. I still do it. And we stayed there three days before they put us on the train to take us in. So the boys that had been on my detail and myself, we got a little cart, two wheeled cart, and a steer--they pull 'em, a little ox--and we filled that cart with cigarettes, chocolate, chewing gum, fruits, peaches, pineapples, and all that kind of stuff and carried it over to Katakawa's house. I told him we were giving him this for being so kind to us, and he started refusing it. He said no, he did not want it. And I asked him why. And he was scared of the American "Kempe"--that's our military police. He said they would see this, and they would kill him if they did. I said, "No. We'll . . . listen, I'll put my name on it that I gave it to you. And all the boys'll put their names on it that we've given it to you." Well, he thought

about that, and that was all right. So he proceeded to have a party. They brought in geisha girls. They danced for us and fed us saki, hot or cold, and, of course, they jabbered. At that time I could more or less talk and understand Japanese. And Katakawa incidentally had three wives, and he brought in young ladies, and we would go out and check some of these camps, and then we'd come back in, and we would stay at his house. We didn't even go back to camp.

Marcello: When you say you were checking these camps, that is to make sure the Japanese hadn't done anything to some of these other crews?

Allen: Until they all got in. Those that didn't come in we'd check the camps. And when we left, he was a very happy Japanese. And I got letters from him once a year, and he's a very wealthy Japanese right now. He'd taken all that stuff and got into the black market with it. And he's doing real well, real, real well.

Marcello: Is there anything else you would like to put in the record? I can't think of any more questions offhand. I'm sure that after I leave, you'll probably think of something that I could've asked you.

Allen: I understand that Japan is entirely different now and that the islands are entirely different. I'll tell you a good one. On Mindanao before the surrender they were supposedly burning all the American currency, the Army pay master. Well, over a

million dollars of that ended up on the poker table that night.

Marcello: This was at your camp?

Allen: Uh-huh. That's before the surrender and on Del Monte Plantation, and over a million bucks of it ended up on the poker table that night. And for some reason or another it ended up to where I had a little of it. Anyway, there was $1 million put into footlockers. Cosmoline was put all over those footlockers, wrapped in tarps with Cosmoline stuck all around 'em and put in a big trench--one of the trenches--and covered up, brushed and fixed to where it looked like nothing had ever been there. Well, there's four men knew where that money was.

Marcello: Were you one of them?

Allen: I was one of 'em. And that was one of the first things I did when I got back to Clark Field. See, when I came in from Japan on the _____, I went around to Tokyo on it, and then I flew into Okinawa. Went from Okinawa to Luzon and Clark Field. And stayed there nineteen days. Well, I went to Mindanao the third day I was there. I got a flight down to . . . myself and one of the other boys. And we went up through the plantation, went to where this money was buried. There was just one hell of a big hole there to look at. And we got to looking around, and every . . . even the area where the slip trenches had been dug up. They

must have dug up every piece of ground around there. Anywhere that had been disturbed at one time or another had been dug up. They never did even close it back up. They just left it open, you know.

Marcello: When you say "they," you think it was the Japanese that did this . . .

Allen: Oh, no.

Marcello: . . . or the Americans that had been there? The Filipinos?

Allen: Filipinos, Filipinos; after surrendering and all I imagine they went in and cleaned up, you know. Some ole Filipino's damn well off, I'll tell you.

Marcello: (Chuckle) So you never did get your one quarter share, or whatever it was.

Allen: I didn't get anything out of it. I don't know how I would've got it back, but that's neither here nor there.