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Interview with
MARTIN J. RODGERS
June 22, 1988

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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(Signature)

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Oral History Collection

Martin Rodgers

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello Date: June 22, 1988

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Martin Rodgers for the University of North Texas Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on June 22, 1988, in Denton, Texas. I am interviewing Mr. Rodgers in order to get his reminiscences and experiences while he was at Pearl Harbor during the Japanese attack there on December 7, 1941. More specifically, Mr. Rodgers was at Fort Shafter as a member of Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 64th Coast Artillery Corps, which was an antiaircraft unit. He was a private at the time but was also the chief teletype operator for the 64th Coast Artillery Corps.

Mr. Rodgers, to begin this interview, just very briefly give me a biographical sketch. In

other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education--things of that nature.

Rodgers: Sure, a biographical sketch. I was born on December 8, 1922, in Brooklyn, New York. I graduated from Butler High School, Butler, New Jersey, in 1939.

On December 16, 1940, I joined the United States Army as a private. I went to Fort Slocum, a small fort out on a small island right off Mount Vernon, New York, in Westchester County, where I was processed. On February 6, 1941, I sailed on the USAT (United States Army Transport) *Republic* for the Hawaiian Islands.

Marcello: Let's just stop there a minute and let me pick up some details. You mentioned that you went into the service in 1940. How did this come about? Why did you decide to enter the service in 1940?

Rodgers: Well, actually, I wanted to go to college, but I didn't have a lot of money for college. I had always thought of being a soldier, and I had ambitions to go to West Point, and that is why I joined the Army in December, 1940. As soon as I turned eighteen, I joined the Army.

Marcello: You also mentioned that shortly after you joined, you went to Fort Slocum. What happened there?

Rodgers: That was the processing center for the overseas recruitments or enlistments which were processed for overseas bases. The Panama Canal was a big one in those days, as well as the Hawaiian Islands, the Philippines, and one or two others. Trinidad was another one, as I recall.

Marcello: We talked a little bit about this off the record, but I want to get your comments about it. At that particular time, there was no such thing as basic training as we know it today.

Rodgers: Let me correct that.

Marcello: It certainly didn't go by that name.

Rodgers: We can forget the name. In those days we called it "recruit training" in the Army. It was the equivalent to basic training today. I went through some ten weeks of recruit training, where the very first thing they did was read the Articles of War to us and remind us that we were now soldiers in the United States Army and subject to the Articles of War.

Marcello: But you normally took that recruit training at your permanent station, did you not?

Rodgers: Well, not in those days. Well, let me correct that. Yes, in those days it was our permanent station.

If you were assigned to the infantry, you went to Fort Benning, where you took your basic training or your recruit training as we called it in those days. I had enlisted in the Coast Artillery, was assigned to the 64th Coast Artillery, which was stationed at Fort Shafter, Hawaii, and took my recruit training at Fort Shafter, Hawaii.

Marcello: You mentioned that you went to Hawaii aboard the USAT *Republic*. It's kind of interesting in that we have done a series of interviews, and, in fact, are still doing them, with prisoners-of-war from World War II. One of the groups of POWs that we have been interviewing took the *Republic* from San Francisco over to Brisbane, Australia.

Rodgers: That's an interesting thought.

Marcello: Evidently, it plied those waters quite frequently, and from what I gather it was not a very fast ship.

Rodgers: No. As I recall, it traveled about twelve or thirteen knots, which is not very speedy. That's maybe fifteen or sixteen miles an hour. I do recall, if I may digress a little bit, that we left on February 6, 1941, from the Brooklyn Army Base. We went directly to Panama. It took us some six days to get to Panama. We went around Cape Hatteras

in February, and anyone who's around Cape Hatteras in February should know it was a rather rough trip around there. We sailed directly from Panama City, after going through the canal, to the Hawaiian Islands, and it was some twenty days on an absolutely smooth sheet of glass. I did not believe that the ocean could be so smooth.

There are two other interesting points, if I may add them. The old USAT *Republic* was a ship which had been captured from the German merchant marine in World War I and converted to a United States Army transport. The second interesting thing about the United States Army Transport *Republic* and its arrival in Honolulu on March 1...this is documented in *At Dawn We Slept*, and when I read the book I found it most interesting to find that a very important person who had in some ways thought about the possibilities of the attack on Hawaii by the Japanese and was concerned about the defense and the intelligence was also aboard that ship. It was mentioned that he arrived in Honolulu on March 1, 1941, and that was the only ship that came in that day.

Marcello: There's something else that I want to ask you about. When you originally signed on, did you have any choice as to where you might be sent?

Rodgers: Yes, I did. As a matter of fact, when I enlisted in the Army in Patterson, New Jersey, and when I went down to enlist, I remember I went down with my mother. I was eighteen. It was the 9th of December because the 8th of December that year in 1940 was a Sunday, and that was my birthday. On the 9th, the day after I was eighteen, we went down to the Army recruiting station, and they had some concern about my weight. I was skinny and small, but I managed to drink enough milk before to just pass the small physical they gave us. They said, "Well, we've got these things." I wanted to enlist in the engineers--I had an idea that I should go into the engineers--but they told me, "The only thing we have available right now is maybe the infantry and the coast artillery in Hawaii." I said, "Coast artillery, Hawaii! That's for me!" because my father had been in the coast artillery in World War I.

Marcello: So it was the coast artillery rather than Hawaii that determined your decision?

Rodgers: No, it was an opening in the coast artillery in Hawaii. I didn't have many choices. It was Hawaii and an opening in the coast artillery in Hawaii. In those days the Army was still rather small, although, as you recall, they had just started--I think it was in September--the Selective Service. I was not drafted. I was a Regular Army soldier as an enlisted man.

Marcello: I guess what I was saying a while ago was that it was the coast artillery rather than Honolulu which was important to you, or Hawaii that was important to you.

Rodgers: I had not thought about going to Hawaii, but after being offered the opportunity and to go in the coast artillery, which was one of only a couple of openings available at that recruiting station at the time, I said, "All right, coast artillery--Hawaii. That's where I'll go." I can't exactly tell you which had priority.

Marcello: Okay, so you arrived in Hawaii on March 1, 1941. What happened at that point?

Rodgers: We stayed on the ship overnight. I think we got in there on a Saturday night, and on Sunday they got us up bright and early and got us off the ship and

loaded us into trucks and took us right out in a truck convoy to Fort Shafter. There we were immediately moved into an isolated area up there for recruit training. Many people had been sick on the ship due to bad food, and we were separated from the rest of the...I can't think of the word I'm trying to say.

Marcello: You might have been segregated or isolated-- something like that.

Rodgers: We were segregated, isolated. You know it's the sign they put on the door when somebody has the measles.

Marcello: Quarantined!

Rodgers: Quarantined! We were quarantined because something had happened in the kitchen on the ship coming over, and everybody had a bad case of dysentery. There were some very sick people on that ship. I fortunately missed it because of the assignment I had on the ship. I didn't eat in the regular mess on the ship coming over. I ate in a steward's mess and washed dishes for them, so I was able to avoid it. But we were quarantined.

Marcello: So it was sometime around this point, then, that you began your recruit training.

Rodgers: This is where we began the recruit training. They got us in there on Sunday, and the first thing they did was issue us some clothing. Then the doctors were all there, and you had to take all these tests. They gave us little--if you'll excuse the expression--containers for feces to check to see who was sick and who wasn't sick and so forth. We started our recruit training that Sunday, and I think it was the following Monday, the next day, when they got us all together and said, "Now the first thing we are going to do is read the Articles of War to you."

I do remember the first meal I had at Fort Shafter. We were in pyramidal tents. They got us in there early in the morning, got us all bedded down. The pyramidal tents were already up there. The recruit training was being run by a cadre of noncommissioned officers from Battery I of the 64th, and Sergeant Crowe was the acting first sergeant. Then we had a number of corporals who were going to do the basic training. In those days they didn't send second lieutenants out to run basic training. They sent out a couple of good ol' noncoms who knew what they were doing, and Sergeant

Crowe was the acting first sergeant of the recruit training cadre or whatever it was. I remember the very first meal I had. They issued us mess kits, and we went down and went through the mess line. It was all open--pyramidal tents--where they cooked the food and so forth. It was chicken a la king. I never will forget it. You know, here it is, in your mess kit with the pineapple on top (chuckle). Basically, that's what it was.

Captain Tiffany, I remember, was the battery commander of Battery I. Captain Tiffany was not very tall. As a matter of fact, he wasn't quite as tall as I was. I remember having to look down a little bit. But Captain Tiffany was a soldier, and, if I could, I would like to give a little anecdote...

Marcello: Please do.

Rodgers: ...about Captain Tiffany. I think he was a West Pointer, but I'm not sure. But he was a soldier. You could shave on the crease on his trousers and use the shine on his shoes as the mirror. I do recall we were in an inspection one Saturday morning or whenever it was on the parade ground there at Fort Shafter after we had been through

several weeks of recruit training. And we had been instructed. When we came to Inspection Arms, you brought your rifle up...we had the Springfield '03's, the old '03 with the leaf sight. We'd bring it up, we'd open the bolt--it was a hand-operated bolt--look down, and pop your head back up. The reason you looked down was to make sure that there was no ammunition in the weapon. You stood there just like that. We had been instructed by the noncoms to keep your left eye on the captain's right hand, and if that hand started up, it meant that he was going to grab your rifle to take it and inspect it for cleanliness. The idea was that once you saw that hand start up, you dropped the rifle. You just let go of it and dropped your hands right to your side at attention. It was the inspecting officer's responsibility to grab the rifle. I remember this morning when Captain Tiffany was inspecting us. We had been through several weeks of training now, so we did know the manual of arms, and we knew how to salute and so forth. Captain Tiffany came down the line, and he got to me, and he did not take my rifle. He just looked at me, nodded, moved on to the next soldier. Two or three

soldiers down from me, he decided he would take the rifle for inspection. As he started up, the soldier dropped his hands, and the rifle clattered to the ground. Captain Tiffany looked down, reached down, picked the rifle up, gave it back to the man, turned to Sergeant Crowe, who was the acting first sergeant, and said, "Sergeant, you bring that rifle to me after you dismiss the men. I dropped it, and I will clean it." That was a soldier. And that was Captain Tiffany. I've always remembered that.

Marcello: That's very interesting. How long did recruit training last?

Rodgers: When we went through, it was approximately ten weeks. We went through eight weeks of recruit training, learning the basics of being a soldier, and then we had a week to ten days on the firing range. After we had finished everything else, we learned to fire the rifle--went out for qualification on the firing range. So it was somewhere around nine to ten weeks--somewhere in that rough period.

Marcello: During this period of time, were you given any kind of aptitude tests in order to see what you were best suited for after recruit training?

Rodgers: No. The only aptitude test I had was a basic intelligence test--I forget what they called it--when I was processed at Fort Slocum. I remember that the sergeant who interviewed me after the test said, "You had a very high mark on the test." I forget what mark I had--130+ or something, which was considered very high at the time. We did not receive any other aptitude tests.

I had learned how to type. I had acquired a little bit of typing skill. How I came to get into the teletype operation...a day or two or maybe three or four days, whenever, before they were closing up recruit camp, we were to be assigned to various units. Sergeant Crowe asked, "Would anyone like to be a teletype operator?" I'd heard about teletype, and I held up my hand, and that's how I wound up getting into teletype and communications.

Marcello: So this is, then, how you ended up in Headquarters Battery of the 3rd Battalion?

Rodgers: Well, no. Originally, I was assigned to Headquarters Battery of the 64th. At that time, as I recall, there was Headquarters Battery of the 64th Regiment, and then there were two Headquarters Batteries for the 1st Battalion and the 2nd

Battalion of the 64th. I'm a little hazy on it, but as I recall the 3rd Battalion was formed when they did some restructuring in the military out there. At the time when I first went out there, the infantry at Schofield Barracks had the Hawaiian Division. That was split into two divisions. The Hawaiian Division was what they used to call the old "square" division. It had four regiments in it. The new 24th and 25th Divisions, which were formed out of the old Hawaiian Division, were "triangular" divisions with three regiments. At the same time they were doing...and I don't remember because I was only a private, and I didn't know Army organization at the time. But I do remember there was some shuffling, and sometime around September, October, November--whenever it was--I was assigned to the Headquarters Battery of the 3rd Battalion, where I was supposed to be the teletype operator for Headquarters Battery of the 3rd Battalion within the 64th. But for some reason or another, they continued me as the teletype operator for the 64th for the simple reason they didn't have anyone else. So in essence I was transferred from Headquarters Battery to Headquarters Battery, 3rd

Battalion, but I remained as the teletype operator because there was no one else for the 64th at the time. So I continued in that position, and I was the chief teletype operator--the only teletype operator--the day the war started for the 64th Coast Artillery.

Marcello: Fort Shafter in essence was the Army's communications center in the Hawaiian Islands.

Rodgers: Fort Shafter was headquarters of the Hawaiian Department. That's where General Short was stationed. Now the Hawaiian Department was the Army command for the entire Hawaiian area. The 64th Coast Artillery, which was stationed at Fort Shafter, was a regiment as part of the defense capability over which Short controlled everything. We had infantry at Schofield Barracks. There was the 251st National Guard Antiaircraft Regiment from New York stationed out of Malakole. There were engineers and those things. But Fort Shafter had the Hawaiian Command, and stationed at Fort Shafter was the 64th Coast Artillery Regiment AA.

Marcello: Describe the nature of the training that you received there at Fort Shafter to become a teletype operator. What did the training consist of?

Rodgers: Well, I received no training at Fort Shafter to become a teletype operator. I was sent to Fort DeRussy. In those days--let me see if I can get back to it--I think, if my memory serves me right, Fort DeRussy was headquarters for the Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade, H.S.C.A.B. You might make a note of those letters, because that's what it was--H.S.C.A.B., Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade. You remember that in those days--as you know from history, generals always fight the last war--our big concern, I vaguely remember, at the time was attack from sea. We had at Fort DeRussy...and then there was Fort Ruger that had sea coast defense guns. At Fort DeRussy we had two 14-inch coast rifles, and they are still there. I saw them last October. Those two guns are still sitting there, and those two guns were sitting there somewhere back around the late 1920s or early 1930s theoretically for defense at Pearl Harbor--part of the coastal defenses for Pearl Harbor. Like the Maginot Line, we put our faith in concrete. I saw the Maginot Line just two years ago. I was in France, and I had a visit. As I viewed a couple of the Maginot Line forts with my son--I visited my

son who's in Germany, and we went over to France-- I thought of Fort DeRussy and the symbolism of how we put our faith in concrete. The Japanese outflanked us from the air. It was just that simple.

I was assigned to the command post, the headquarters, of the Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade for training as a teletype operator. That's where they trained us. They trained us one or two at a time, and I was sent down for training. I was down there two months. That's where I met...I mentioned this Weldie Dent. He was then a corporal, Weldie A. Dent, from Pennsylvania. He was then a corporal. Sergeant Griffin was also there. I forget what Griffin's first name was, but ol' Sergeant Griffin was in charge of the communications section for the Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade at Fort DeRussy. They were an operating unit, and I was sent there, and that's where I received my training. In those days we got training right on the spot. We didn't get formal training in a school.

Marcello: So it was on-the-job training.

Rodgers: It was on-the-job training, exactly.

Marcello: What were some of the specifics of that training?
What sort of things would you be doing?

Rodgers: Well, I could type, and so my job was to learn procedure. The procedure was, how do you call another station? This was a teletype network where we had eight stations--just the same as a radio network or telegraph network. There were various calls and the various symbols and procedures that you used. I can recall specifically that the call letters for Fort DeRussy were CA, which was "coast artillery." The call letters on one network for Fort Shafter--the 64th--was AA, which was "antiaircraft." At that time the AA was under the cut of the Sea Coast Artillery Command. To get Fort Shafter, if we had a specific message for Fort Shafter, we used to go AAV (V meant "from") CA--AAVCA--Fort Shafter, 64th Fort Shafter from Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade. Then there were, of course, others. You know, we would have training in time and everything else. We didn't start operating on Greenwich Time until after the war. In those days we operated on Hawaiian time.

So I learned the procedures of being a teletype operator, and there was where I was first

introduced to Morse code and started learning Morse code, so I eventually became a radio operator. Eventually, I wound up as chief of the Radio, Teletype, and Telegraph Section for the Hawaiian AA Command. I think I can take you through the process of up to the Hawaiian AA Command, where it was gradually developed from before the war to after the war.

Marcello: Why don't you go ahead and do that, and then I can ask you some specific questions about that.

Rodgers: All right. As I recall...now this, Ron, can have some errors due to forty-six or forty-seven years of memory. It was the Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade which ran all the artillery prior to the start of the war, and it ran all the artillery which was for the defense of the Hawaiian Islands. The defense of the Hawaiian Islands was basically the defense of Pearl Harbor. It included both sea coast artillery and antiaircraft artillery.

Marcello: It's a matter of record--and you mentioned *At Dawn We Slept* a while ago--that the Army's primary function on those islands was in essence to protect the Navy.

Rodgers: To protect to Pearl Harbor--the Navy, exactly! I'm a history student, myself, and having read a lot on Pearl Harbor and *At Dawn We Slept* and a number of other things, I'm firmly convinced that General Short never really understood his mission out there.

Marcello: We'll come to that later on. Continue with the formal communications structure.

Rodgers: As I recall, it started with a Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Brigade. Then somewhere in there, it became the 53rd Coast Artillery Brigade, and I don't remember what it was. I have some documentation on the 53rd. I think that came into being before the war started. Then after the war started, I do remember there was a development, then, from the 53rd into two separate commands. The H.S.C.A.C. was the Hawaiian Sea Coast Artillery Command, and that was initially stationed at Fort DeRussy and then was transferred to Fort Ruger. Then they split the coast artillery from the AA artillery, and we became the Hawaiian AA Command; and that is where I became--and I have my warrants in there which show I was promoted to sergeant and then staff sergeant--in charge of the Radio,

Teletype, and Telegraph Section for the Hawaiian AA Command, which was stationed at Fort Shafter. That transpired sometime after the war started--that division between the sea coast and the AA artillery.

Marcello: What kind of communications or messages would you be dealing with in this position after you moved to Fort Shafter and during that period, let's say, right before the Pearl Harbor attack?

Rodgers: Well, before the Pearl Harbor attack, we had a couple of formal administrative messages that we used to handle everyday--such minor things as opening the network or a formal report on no enemy activities. Then we used to just spend most of our time in drill--D-R-I-L-L--and we did this just to improve our communications abilities. We used to do that in teletype, radio, and telegraph so that we were constantly trained. Basically, we were constantly training and manning the positions. We didn't man the positions twenty-four hours a day. We used to open them up at something like, say, 7:00 or 8:00 in the morning and close them at 4:00 or 5:00 in the afternoon. That was it.

Marcello: Let me ask you this. As one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as conditions between the two countries continued to get worse, could you, as a private detect any changes in your routine?

Rodgers: A nebulous "yes." When I say a nebulous "yes," we knew there were some questions going on with Japan. We did know that. I was in Honolulu three weeks before the attack when Saburo Kurusu, the diplomat who was to join Nomura in Washington for final hopeful or hopeless discussions with our State Department and our government, came through. I remember that there were questions: you know, "What's going to happen?" Sometime around that or right after that--about three weeks before--we went on an alert.

Marcello: And what did an alert consist of?

Rodgers: Well, we had been on a couple of them before that, and I think before that the alerts were basically training exercises. But this one seemed to have a little bit more substance, and I can't tell you over this range of years why I feel it had more substance. But I recall that we felt that there was more substance to this one.

Marcello: When an alert was called, how did it affect you?
What was your function? What would you be doing?

Rodgers: It really didn't change my function too much because the troops went out into the field. They got the guns out, and they went out to defensive positions around Pearl Harbor and out through there. I stayed at Fort Shafter because the headquarters and the communications center, the command post, was at Fort Shafter. So it increased the communications traffic a little bit, but it did not basically affect my position in any way because I stayed right at the post. I wasn't out with the guns at the time.

Marcello: So from what you've said, then, I'm gathering that the training routine did not change very much right up to December 7th except for an occasional alert.

Rodgers: Not basically, no. As I look back, I remember what happened, and I read *At Dawn We Slept* and other articles. General Short put us on an alert, and it was an alert against sabotage. I do remember, if I may interject this thought, before the war, when I was training as a teletype operator at Fort DeRussy, Sergeant Griffin was most adamant that we were not in any way to mention Japs or make any

remarks about Japs or Japanese or the enemy in any way in any of our communications on teletype, radio, or telegraph. We did not want to antagonize the local Japanese. I remember that was made quite clear to us.

The big fear was that the Japanese, the local Japanese, who turned out to be more loyal than most of us were, would sabotage our entire defense system out there. So during the alert there were the aircraft at Hickam Field in battery formation. Boy, parade ground formation right up and down, and all the Japs did was one swoop, and they had them all! They had them this way for protection against sabotage. They could guard a whole bunch of planes much more easily than they could planes separated individually. So the feeling was that this was to prevent sabotage. No one ever told anyone in my position that we were going to be attacked by the Japanese. It was an alert, and we had no suspicions.

Marcello: Now when was that last alert called?

Rodgers: About three weeks before Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: And how long would one of those alerts normally...let's say that one. How long would it last?

Rodgers: Well, this one was still on when we were attacked. This alert was still there.

Marcello: When one of those alerts was called, did that extend your time on station? You mentioned a moment ago...

Rodgers: As I recall, it did not. As I recall, no, it did not. I can say that definitely for one simple reason: I opened up the circuits on Sunday morning, December 7. That meant that we had no extended time because we were not open. When I got down there, the teletype machines were clattering from Headquarters, Hawaiian Command. We were the first ones to answer their call from headquarters. When I got down there, I was the first one on the set--on the teletype.

Marcello: We are going to come back and pick up on the attack in a little while, but let me ask you some other questions. As a historian I have some interest in the social life or social aspects of the Army before the Pearl Harbor attack. One of the books

that I've read--and it's one of my favorites--is
From Here to Eternity.

Rodgers: I have read the book.

Marcello: And I think it gives a pretty accurate portrayal
of what life was like in the Army prior to the war.

Rodgers: Extremely accurate! I have read the book.

Marcello: How important were sports and athletics in the life
of that pre-Pearl Harbor Army?

Rodgers: Well, we did not have organized athletics as I
recall. We did have a post baseball team, and I did
just a little bit of boxing at the time and got my
head beat in and quit (chuckle). But most of the
sports were pretty much self-organized. I played
softball out there. Certainly, I did a tremendous
amount of swimming. Fort DeRussy was right on the
beach just up from Waikiki, less than a mile from
Waikiki Beach, and it had a better beach than
Waikiki, I think (chuckle). While I was at Fort
DeRussy, I did a tremendous amount of swimming. We
used to run trucks from Shafter on Wednesday.
Wednesday afternoon in those day was an afternoon
off for the Army; Saturday afternoon was off and
then all day Sunday. They used to run trucks
Wednesday, Saturday, and Sunday down to the

beaches. You'd just jump on the truck, and off you went to the beach. Swimming was a big thing. There were no really organized sports. I remember in *From Here to Eternity*...what was his name? Robert E. Lee Pruitt. Robert E. Lee Pruitt was a boxer, or at least he had boxing talents and had problems when he told them he didn't want to be a boxer. The Army before the war was a nasty Army. I managed to get through it, and most people did.

Marcello: When you say it was a nasty Army, what do you mean?

Rodgers: You were a soldier. We were told when they read the Articles of War to us--I remember--we were told, "You *will* not write to your senator or your congressman. You are in the Army. You are not a civilian." It was a rough Army. Honolulu was, to use the vernacular, loaded with whorehouses which were patronized by the military tremendously. In those days Honolulu was ruled by the rich and inhabited by the poor. There were four or five families out there who ruled Honolulu. The Castles and Cookes and the Doles, you know, the pineapple and the sugar plantations and so forth and the old Matsun Line family were there. The old Matsun liners were the cruise ships to and from Hawaii.

It was a typical Army base. The city of Honolulu was patrolled by MPs and Shore Patrol, who were all over the place. They were there always watching to see that the military didn't get into trouble. In those days families were a limited part of the military life. You didn't have privates getting married. As a matter of fact, when I joined the Army, you couldn't get married until you were a staff sergeant; and buck sergeants, after maybe fifteen years of service, could get married. But privates, corporals, and ordinary sergeants could not get married. We were forbidden to be married. Our job was in the military. We were told, "You are professional soldiers. That's your job." It was somewhat like the Roman Legion. It wasn't until after the war came along and all of a sudden the Army was filled with people who have been called to service that now all of a sudden we had to listen to their congressman. In those days in nice places Regular Army people were not accepted.

Marcello: We were talking about sports a moment ago, and you mentioned that they were not of an organized type there at Fort Shafter. I do believe that things

were different up at Schofield Barracks, however.

I think that they were highly organized there.

Rodgers: I guess they were. Shafter was a very small post. Schofield Barracks was a big post.

Marcello: That was the largest Army post in the world, was it not?

Rodgers: At one time I think was the largest, and it's still one of the large ones. Well, they had two divisions up there. When you put two division up there, you are talking 30,000 men. At Fort Shafter you're talking about 3,000 men. As far as sports at Fort Shafter, we were pretty much left on our own. We could participate. We did have a post baseball team. I don't know if we had inter-battery competition or not. I don't remember if we did have inter-battery competition. I remember playing softball. I played a lot of softball out there, and I played some touch football. But most of it was pick-up--pick-up softball or whatever.

Marcello: What other entertainment was available to the troops on the post at Fort Shafter?

Rodgers: Well, there was the movie. We had a small post theater. I remember there was a library, but I don't think too many people used the library. But

there was a library. We didn't have any USO shows before the war. You know, that was unknown in those times. We had a swimming pool, and, as a matter of fact, I was a lifeguard at the swimming pool for a short while before the war. I filled in as a lifeguard at the swimming pool.

Marcello: Was there any sort of a beer garden or anything like that?

Rodgers: Oh, well, yes. At the Post Exchange we did have a beer garden there. As a matter of fact, the barracks for Headquarters Battery was here (gesture), and, as I remember, the Post Exchange was here (gesture), so we could practically fall out of bed and go into the beer garden and drink beer. You could drink beer in there even though you were only eighteen. The drinking age in Honolulu was twenty-one, although most GIs had few problems getting anything to drink. But we could drink beer there. We had beer and so forth.

Marcello: In the book, *From Here to Eternity*, the author points out that gambling was also a big activity on the post there at Schofield Barracks. What comments would you have about that activity relative to Fort Shafter?

Rodgers: There was always a poker game or a crap game going. There was no question about that. You could always find a blackjack game, a poker game, or a crap game. I was never much of a gambler. I'm not opposed to gambling. I played a little bit of blackjack or shot a little craps, but I never...but it did take place; I mean, that was a part of the activity in the life of the post.

Marcello: What was the official policy relative to gambling?

Rodgers: There was none that I ever knew of (chuckle). Nobody ever said, "Don't do it." There may have been an official policy, but it was not enforced.

Marcello: How often might you get into Honolulu within the course of a week?

Rodgers: Oh, once we were through recruit training, after our restrictions from recruit training and the quarantine and all that was behind us, at least once a week. There was never any problem there.

Marcello: I guess your activities in Honolulu may have been limited because of your limited funds?

Rodgers: Well, that was true. As a matter of fact, I'll tell you a little anecdote. In those days I smoked. I smoked cigarettes. I was just a kid, and I started smoking when I was about seventeen. I still smoke

cigars occasionally, but that's neither here nor there. But on payday--and for the first four months--my pay in those days was \$21 a month. After four months we went to \$30 a month. On payday we got paid once a month--in cash. I used to go down to the PX, and I would buy a carton of Bull Durham and a carton of Lucky Strikes. We would call those "tailor-mades." When I was on post, I would roll my own with Bull Durham, and I became quite adept at rolling Bull Durham cigarettes. When I went to town, I took a pack of "tailor-mades" with me. I was going to be dressed up and look like a civilized man. It was a steady habit there for a while, until I started to get more money after the war started. I got more money, and I could buy "tailor-mades" all the time and could afford them. I took a package of "tailor-mades"--Lucky Strike. I smoked Lucky Strike. Then there was Lucky Strike green. It was before Lucky Strike green went to war.

Marcello: When you went into Honolulu, what would you normally do?

Rodgers: Oh, probably go hang out at a beer garden, drink a little, walk around. I don't remember. I did not spend a great deal of time running around in

Honolulu. I will be very frank about it. I never patronized one of the whorehouses out there. Probably it wasn't so much morality as it was that I was just plain too damned scared. I was only a kid, and I stayed away from them. And I had a conscience. I happen to be Roman Catholic, and even then, while I plead no sainthood, I avoided those places. I used to go into Honolulu and drink a little with some friends, but most of the time I tried to go down to the beach. In those days I spent most of my time, when I could get off post, going down to the beach.

Marcello: I've heard a lot of the Army personnel say that they would rather go into Honolulu during the week than on a weekend because on a weekend the fleet was in and downtown was just crawling with sailors.

Rodgers: Sailors (chuckle). There was some truth in that. I never thought of it that way. Some others may have, but I never thought of it that way. I got to know Honolulu very well. One of the things I became very interested in before the war...this friend Dent, Weldie Dent, that I mentioned, he and I became great high school football fans, and we used to go to the football games out there. It wasn't the

Aloha Stadium, the new one--that's new--but we used to go...I think they played out there around the University of Hawaii, somewhere out there. Weldie and I used to go out to the football games. I remember we saw St. Louis Academy play a number of games, and Herman Wehmeyer, who went to St. Mary's, was a great All-American, and he came out of St. Louis Academy. We saw him when he was playing high school football. We became interested in that and swimming, and those were the things I did.

As I said I got to know Honolulu very well. I did a little beer drinking in Honolulu and a little of other drinking. I first ate shark fin soup in Honolulu and things like that. But I never spent a great deal of time just hanging around in Honolulu.

Marcello: You mentioned something that I want to follow up on with a comment. I've also heard a lot of the Army people say that one of the things they enjoyed doing in Honolulu was getting a meal...

Rodgers: Away from the post?

Marcello: ...away from the post to more or less to break the monotony or the routine or Army chow.

Rodgers: Oh, I ate in Honolulu. I don't remember as I ever specifically went out to eat. I had not yet

acquired my gourmet taste in those days. I do recall that before the war, one of my favorite things is that I would go down to Fort DeRussy and go to the beach. My friend Weldie Dent and I would go to a little ice cream parlor on Kalakala Avenue, and we would get the biggest banana split in the world. I think it used to cost us thirty-five cents--a huge banana split. I remember the banana splits at this little ice cream parlor on Kalakala Avenue. I ate some food in Honolulu, but I will be quite frank with you--I happen to like Army chow (chuckle). Oh, there were some things I didn't like. I didn't really start to dislike Army chow until I got to New Guinea, and I had to eat dehydrated eggs and Spam and those things. But the pre-war mess and even the post-war mess in Hawaii was not too bad. Oh, we got our share of chicken a la king and things like things like that, but generally the food was fairly decent, and I never complained. I even liked SOS [shit-on-the-shingle].

Marcello: I guess since many of you were products of the Depression, that Army food would look pretty good.

Rodgers: Yes, it did. Yes, I am a product of the Depression. I was a very hungry boy when I was young, and Army food gave me a full stomach, and I say that very truthfully. I grew up in poverty in Brooklyn, New York, and in New Jersey, and it was no fun.

Marcello: Okay, I think this brings us into those days immediately prior to the attack at Pearl Harbor. We, of course, want to go into this period in as much detail as you could possibly remember.

Rodgers: Right.

Marcello: Let me ask you this, first of all. Where was Fort Shafter located relative to Honolulu and Pearl Harbor itself? In other words, how far away from that area was it?

Rodgers: I don't have a map. Okay, Fort Shafter was north by northwest of Honolulu about four miles.

Marcello: Was it an easy drive?

Rodgers: It was pretty easy. It's not like it is today, where you run right past Fort Shafter on an interstate highway. When I was out there in 1941, we didn't have interstates. But it was an easy drive, as I recall. As a matter of fact, I used to drive a bicycle down there sometimes--all the way down to Waikiki Beach. It was only about four miles

from Honolulu, perhaps a little less than that, north by northwest. Then we were just about by line of sight four miles from Pearl Harbor, which was southwest. We could see right down into Pearl from some of the hills up in the back of Fort Shafter, so that will give you a general idea of the layout.

Marcello: During those days immediately prior to the attack, did security restrictions pick up very much around the base?

Rodgers: Not a bit. Not a bit, as I recall. It was a complete surprise that Sunday morning.

Marcello: What did you do that Saturday evening of December 6, 1941?

Rodgers: I don't recall. I have no recall except that I had to be at the post that evening. What I did that evening, I don't know, because the next Sunday morning I got up bright and early.

Marcello: You mentioned that the alert was still on. In that situation did you have to remain on the post?

Rodgers: No, I had freedom. As a matter of fact, I had plans that Sunday to go down to Fort DeRussy and to Waikiki Beach. I had a nice young girlfriend down there at the time. I was a young swain, myself, in those days, and I was going to go swimming at the

beach with this young lady that day. So I remember Sunday was a planned day off for me. The command post was closed. We had no communications going or anything like that. On the Saturday before Sunday morning, and I presume that I probably--I don't recall--opened up the networks down there at the command post. The command post there was in a little ol' concrete building down across from the athletic field at Fort Shafter. I worked Saturday morning. What I did on Saturday afternoon, December 6, I don't recall. But I was bright-eyed and bushy-tailed Sunday morning.

Marcello: Okay, take me into that Sunday morning from the time you got up until all hell broke loose.

Rodgers: Okay, I recall I arose very early Sunday morning. I had the afternoon planned to go down to the beach and to go swimming with Beverly--her name was--a little girl by the name of Beverly. I remember her name.

Marcello: When you say you got up early, could you be more specific?

Rodgers: Probably about 6:00. Probably about 6:00 that morning. I can tell you what I had for breakfast that morning. We were living...Headquarters

Battery of the 3rd Battalion was up in the back of Fort Shafter on one of the hills. There were a series of hills than ran up into the mountains. There was a hill and a valley and a hill and a valley and a hill and a valley. We were up in pyramidal tents. As a new outfit in the regiment, we didn't have barracks yet. We were living in pyramidal tents. I got up early that Sunday morning. It was a *beautiful* Sunday morning. It was bright and clear. I got up about 6:00. I got dressed. I think I showered. I probably did because I always shower in the morning. In those days I don't know if I had to shave or not. I still probably had just peach fuzz. I went up to breakfast, to the mess hall. We did have a regular mess hall. For breakfast that morning, I had pancakes with honey and sausage. I remember it was honey, not maple syrup or anything like that. I had a very good breakfast, and I was looking forward to a very nice day. I walked back after breakfast to the tent, fiddled around a little bit, put my tie on, put my sun helmet on. We had the old topi-type sun helmets issued to us in those days. I had

on my nice, clean, bright "sun tans" or khakis--CKC's, as we called them in those days.

I was just starting down the hill. I was going to walk down to the post chapel to go to 8:00 mass. Incidentally, that post chapel is still standing. I saw it there last October--the little white post chapel. I heard some rumbling, some explosions.

Marcello: In the meantime, going back to that pyramidal tent again, were the other people stirring and up?

Rodgers: Most of our people were out in the field. If you will remember, they had gone on to the field. We had a couple of people there, and I don't recall whether the few people were still there or not. But they were out in the field because of the alert. They had been sent out there. I was one of the few people, as you recall, still at the base there. We had a handful there. We had maybe fifteen, twenty, twenty-five out of the battery still there, but most of them were in the field. Oh, there were a few stirring. I do remember seeing somebody or whatever.

Marcello: So you were on your way to the chapel when you heard rumbling?

Rodgers: I had just started down the hill when I heard this rumbling and an explosion. Well, interestingly enough...and I'll show you a little sketch here, and I'll describe it as I go along. Let us say that I'm south, and this is north (gesture). We're looking north here (gesture). There was a hill, and our pyramidal tents were around this hill right here (gesture). The mess hall where I had breakfast was up here (gesture). The post chapel was down around here (gesture), and I had to walk in sort of a southerly or southwesterly direction down the road and so forth to the post chapel. On this side of the hill (gesture), on the east side of the hill, they had been tunneling and doing blasting in here, right over here (gesture), and I saw that tunnel just last October when I was in Honolulu touring Fort Shafter. They had been tunneling, and I thought, "Oh, I didn't know they blasted on Sunday. I didn't know they were doing this work on Sunday." Initially, I didn't pay any attention to it.

I continued my walk after I heard this rumbling and dismissing it, and somebody said, "Hey, something is happening out there at Pearl!"

We looked out, and I remember I could see some planes in the distance there coming down; and we could see smoke coming out, rising from Pearl. Interestingly enough, I was in an AA regiment, and in our AA training sessions they used to tow targets--sleeves--from old B-18 bombers, which were the targets for the AA to fire at. We had these 3-inch antiaircraft guns which were later mounted on to tanks. I went into the armored force later, and they were mounted on tanks as what they called 76-millimeters. They were about the same size. Target ammunition had a white puff because you didn't want to blow up that little ol' B-18. It was just to see how close you got. I glanced up, and these puffs were not white puffs of smoke in the air. They were black, and that was real stuff. I knew that. Somehow I sensed that something real was happening.

We ran from this hill down through this little valley and up to the next hill where we had a better view, and that's when we first realized what was happening. Somebody said, "Those are Japanese!" Somebody had binoculars and spotted them, and that's when we first realized that those were

Japanese planes attacking Pearl Harbor. That was within ten minutes from the time that I heard the first explosions.

Marcello: What do you do at that point?

Rodgers: About that time something hit up here (gesture). Whether it was a bomb or an unexploded AA shell that came out of the sky or what, it blew up. It was some 200-300 yards up from where we were watching and trying to figure out what was going on out here. When that thing exploded, we said, "This is no place to be!" Somebody said, "Go get your guns and get to your post!" I remember that. I headed back here (gesture), and by that time the acting first sergeant of Headquarters Battery of the 3rd Battalion had arrived, and he was saying, "This is the real thing! The Japanese are attacking us! Get your guns and your ammo and get to wherever you are supposed to go! Get to your post!" It was rather interesting because prior to the war our rifles were locked up. Boy you couldn't get that rifle out of there without permission or some other thing. You couldn't get close to ammunition. All of a sudden, they were throwing ammunition out, and we were told to put on our tin helmets. In those

days we had the old World War I British helmets-- the Tommy-type tin helmet. I grabbed a load of ammunition, packed my cartridge belt with ammunition, grabbed my '03 rifle. And would you believe that I can still give you the serial number on both the rifle and the bayonet that I had? They were the first weapons issued to me, and we were told, "Memorize these things and don't forget them!" And I have never forgotten them. If you want to write them down, the rifle was 963772, and the bayonet was 031077. I grabbed my cartridge belt, filled it with ammo, wrapped it around me, put a clip of ammo into the rifle, and grabbed my tin helmet. The command post was about a mile away, a mile or a mile-and-a-quarter away, and I think I ran all the way. I didn't take a walk. I ran. We were told to get there as quickly as we could.

Marcello: At this point, that is, from the time you meet with the sergeant until the arms and ammunition are distributed, are things being done in a rather professional manner, or is there chaos at this point?

Rodgers: Confusion, confusion. Get to your post. The sergeant didn't know who anybody was or what we

were supposed to be doing. He sort of said, "You get to where you're supposed to go!" I knew where I was supposed to go, and I didn't worry about anyone else. I remember I had to come down here (gesture), and I told you the post chapel was right here (gesture). The small parade ground at Fort Shafter was right here (gesture). I remember I went right across that parade ground, and I remember seeing some planes flying overhead; but it never occurred to me that going right across the parade ground could have been dangerous. I went right across the parade ground on the double. I was running all the way, and it probably took me less than fifteen minutes from the time I took off to get to the command post. I got in there, and I remember there was a mass of confusion in this little command post. The command post was only slightly larger than this room.

Marcello: So it was perhaps--what--fifteen-by-thirty or something like that?

Rodgers: This is--what--twelve-by-twenty-five? Probably it was fifteen-by-forty-five, something like that. I remember it was a concrete block building, and it's now gone because I looked for it when I toured Fort

Shafter. It's now disappeared, but I knew where it was. There were a couple of officers there. I may have been the second or third enlisted man to arrive. As I recall we had two teletype nets, and one was clattering because we always left that one on; and the other one was turned off, and I turned it on.

I remember one of the officers said to me, "Get those things open right away!" I sat down, and I turned the teletype machine on. The other one was already going. I checked in with both headquarters. One was the command net from the Hawaiian Department, and the other was the coast artillery net. We had those two nets, and I checked right into them. I remember a major or colonel or somebody came to me and said, "Get this message out right away!" I said, "Should I put 'DRILL' on it?" He said, "Hell, no, this is the real thing!" I wasn't quite sure what he wanted me to put on it. I should have thought otherwise. I was only a kid, but I shouldn't excuse myself. He told me right away, "This is no drill!" This is the real thing!" So I remember sending that message out to Headquarters--something about the 64th Regiment

getting in line or something. I couldn't tell you the substance of the message, but that was the first official message I sent out at the start of the war.

Marcello: Do you recall anything that was in the message?

Rodgers: I don't. I don't remember what was in the message, except that I remember basically it said something to the effect that "We are getting organized," and that was all.

Marcello: In general, then, what do you do for the next couple of hours?

Rodgers: I didn't leave the command post for twenty-four hours. I know I handled an enormous amount of traffic. I finally got a relief operator in with me. I was *the* operator. We had radio and telegraph as a back-up, but our main communications was teletype; and I was the teletype operator, and I didn't leave that command post until the next morning. I was there for twenty-four hours.

Marcello: What was the general tenor or nature of the messages that you were sending or which were being received? Do you remember?

Rodgers: Trying to locate units. Where was this battery? We were trying to locate units and states of

preparedness. Nobody knew where the Japanese were. There was a total amount of confusion. I do not recall substance. So much happened it, and it was thoroughly confusing, Ron. I do recall that about twenty minutes after I got down there, all of a sudden there was a burst of machine gun fire right outside the command post, and everybody grabbed weapons and started to run. I remember Lieutenant Roedy, who was at that time the executive officer of Headquarters Battery of the 64th. He was a West Pointer, a second lieutenant at the time. I remember watching him grab his pistol and start to take off. As it turned out, it was only one of our own troops firing at a movement of some kind.

They did set up some defenses right around the command post there, and I remember they got the machine guns right around the command post because this was the headquarters for the operation. We had a sergeant there, and I remember his name. He was a "tech" sergeant. Merritt was his name, and I can point him out on those pictures I have in here. He was an expert radio operator, and I remember one of the things he did was to tune in the short-wave radio to start picking up high speed Morse code

reports from anyplace he could get them. He started to pick up a station out of San Francisco. He was sitting there copying it right off the bat as quickly as he could.

But it was a mass of confusion, Ron. After I got to the command post, I remember working for twenty-four hours right through until the next day, and I never left the command post. They brought some sandwiches in to us. But I couldn't tell you the substance of what I sent out or got back. I remember the machine would clatter, and I'd get a message, and I'd run it right up to the colonel. I remember that Colonel Wing was the commander of the 64th. I'd run it up to where his office was, you know, where his cubby hole was. I do recall that just some two months prior to that, they had been wiring a plotting board. You've seen these plotting boards which the English used during the Battle of Britain where they plot aircraft movements. I worked with a gentleman by the name of John Seitz, who was a "tech" sergeant and the wire chief for the 64th. I can show you his picture in there (gesture). And there was a man by the name of Whitehill, James Whitehill, and I remember he came

from Wisconsin. He was a corporal at the time. He and Seitz had been wiring this plotting board where they have little lights on the Hawaiian defense perimeter there to plot aircraft. I do recall that they got that into operation because we were basically modeled after the British defense system. Theoretically, we were. We hadn't gotten to that point yet, but that was what we were trying to achieve during the bombing of London. So they got that into operation and were trying to track. I don't think we ever got tracked on where the Japanese were because it all happened so fast. By the time we realized what was happening, the Japanese were already on their way back.

Marcello: What kind of rumors were going around there in the post where you were?

Rodgers: Well, we, of course, immediately went into blackout conditions, and I'll preface your answer with that. Once the sun went down it became a fearsome thing. It was very dark. There was no moon. I remember there was no moon. It must have been when the moon was old or just new. It was terribly dark. During the day it wasn't too bad, but during those first few nights, there were all sorts of rumors that the

Japanese were coming in on the south shore, or they were coming from the north. Anything that moved was a Japanese soldier. The rumors were rampant. "Are the Japanese going to invade?" It was worth your life to stir at night. Everything was blacked out, and they blacked out the trucks' headlights and had just a little blue, not the red that came later but just a little blue dot. That didn't give out much light. All it did was tell you that here's a truck coming, so get out of the way; and he didn't know where he was going, either. So the nights were tense for that first few days because we didn't know. We were thoroughly confused. If you think about it, the average soldier...and I was an average soldier. I was a kid. There were some old soldiers around, but few of them had ever been in World War I. They were all--most of them--kids like myself, maybe a little older. We had no idea; we had not been warned. We knew we were on alert against sabotage. "So what! What are the Japanese going to do? Blow up a truck?" I'm going to tell you we were frankly scared!

Marcello: You mentioned something a while ago that I would like to clarify for the reader of the transcript

that will be made into a tape. Why wasn't it safe to walk around outside at night?

Rodgers: Anything that moved could be shot at. And there were shots going around. You could hear them. Of course, the first thing, they posted guards everywhere. We had guards all around the command post. We had guards at all the gates to the post, and if somebody stirred, it was shoot first and then find out. We got ourselves organized where we stuck to walking up the main streets and feeling our way, and it was so dark that I fell into a ditch one night. I knew it was there and didn't see it. You walked up the main street, and if you heard anybody say, "Hello," you always gave warning that you were friendly, that you were an American (chuckle) soldier. So the nights for the first week were rather dangerous and very nerve-racking.

Marcello: And then did some of this ease off a little bit after that first week?

Rodgers: Oh, yes, gradually it began to ease off. Well, of course, after the first week we got the news that the Japanese fleet was returning to Japan and that an immediate attack on the islands was not likely.

Then, if you will recall reading my letter from some three weeks later, I said, "The tensions are easing." And after about the first week the tensions did start to ease considerably because then we began to get some information, and the officers who were in on the planning came around and started to reassure the enlisted men that "we don't always know what is going to happen, but they're not going to attack us tonight, and we can feel pretty sure of that." They were words to that effect. But that first week was terror.

Marcello: What did you do in the days and weeks immediately following the attack? What were you personally doing?

Rodgers: I was running the communications section down there, the teletype section, and helping fill in on the telegraph and radio.

Marcello: In the meantime, had any kind of damage to any extent been done to Fort Shafter...

Rodgers: No.

Marcello: ...during the attack?

Rodgers: Fort Shafter, as far as I know, had only that one bomb that dropped right up here (gesture), an accidental shot, and that was the only problem.

That was the only thing that happened to Fort Shafter, and all that did was blow up some dust and cactus.

Marcello: When was it that you got a chance to see what damage had been done to Pearl Harbor itself? Did you ever get down there to see what damage had been done to the fleet?

Rodgers: Oh, it was some time before I got down to Pearl Harbor. It could have been at least two months before I got out to Pearl Harbor. I did get out to Hickam about two or three weeks after. I had to go out to Hickam Field for some reason, and I could see the barracks all shot up--the concrete barracks--and I saw some of the airplanes that had been destroyed on the ground and were still there and things like that. Hickam was right next to Pearl. But as far as Pearl was concerned, I never really got a good look at Pearl and really had no interest to. I never wanted to go out there. Even when I was out in October, I saw the Arizona Memorial from the shore, and my wife said, "Do you want to go see it?" And I said, "Not at all!" I had no interest in it. Why, I don't know.

Marcello: You were mentioning the rumors a moment ago during the hours following the attack. Did you believe most of those rumors?

Rodgers: No, I don't think I believed them, but you never completely dismissed them from your mind.

Marcello: Not after what had happened.

Rodgers: No, because Pearl Harbor was an attack which wasn't supposed to happen. Nobody dreamed...well, nobody at my level dreamed that it would happen. Let's face it. Kimmel and Short didn't think it would happen, either, so how could a little ol' private know? We didn't believe the rumors after the attack, but we sure didn't dismiss them.

Marcello: How did your liberty routine change after the attack?

Rodgers: Oh, well, of course, immediately after there was no liberty, no passes of any kind. As I mentioned in that letter and as I recall in looking back, I had a pass some three weeks after the attack--maybe two weeks, maybe four weeks, but let's say three weeks after the attack--and I remember we had to carry arms with us. I went down to Honolulu. I went down to see my little girlfriend, Beverly, down at

the beach there where she lived with her grandparents.

Marcello: I was going to ask you if you ever saw Beverly again.

Rodgers: Oh, yes, I saw her several times after that.

Marcello: She understood why you didn't make the Sunday date?

Rodgers: I presume (laughter) she did. I'm sure she did. I did see her some two, three, or four weeks after when I went down there. But when I went down there, I went down there with a rifle on my shoulder and a cartridge belt full of ammo and a tin helmet on my head. I visited with her and her grandparents. So we were gradually extended passes. It never got back to the casual, "before the war" attitude where, if you had what they called a Class A pass, before the war you could go to Honolulu any night you wanted to. You weren't restricted. When you were off duty, that was it; you could go. Gradually, it eased off considerably. After, oh, along about March and April, why, we were pretty much back to normal. Once you were off duty, if your shift was finished, you had a fair amount of freedom because by that time they had begun to realize that the Japanese were not going to come

back and attack Pearl Harbor or invade the Hawaiian Islands. By that time, why, we were sort of getting ourselves set to fight a war.

Then it was in March, of course, when I was promoted to sergeant. I was a private the day of Pearl Harbor. Sometime--I think it was January, but I'm not quite sure--I was given a third class specialty rating. What that amounted to is that I was still a private, but it was something like \$20 more a month. And the pay was fine. Then the Hawaiian AA Command was formed. Do you remember that I distinguished that it was formed sometime after the war, January or February or whenever it was? I was down at the command post there one day, and it was in the morning. I remember it was in the morning, maybe 9:00, 10:00, whatever the time. I just happened to recall it was morning. The phone rang, and I was sitting there working the teletype or whatever I was doing--processing messages, traffic. The telephone rang, and I picked it up, and the voice on the other end said, "This is Nance. Captain Keefer wants to see you right away." I said, "All right, John, I'll be right on up." His name was Howard Keefer. I remember he was a

graduate of Georgia Tech. Before the war he had been a first lieutenant, and shortly after the war, he had been promoted to captain. John Nance was a sergeant at the time, and I can show you his picture (gesture) there. John said, "Captain Keefer wants to see you right away." I said, "Oh, all right, John, I'll be right on up." So I grabbed my rifle, and I grabbed my tin helmet. And we were also ordered to wear gas masks because they were afraid that we might be subjected to a gas attack. So I slapped the gas mask on and the tin helmet and the rifle, and I took on off. I got up to the headquarters area where Keefer was up in his little office there. He was the regimental communications officer and at that time was the acting communications officer for the Hawaiian AA Command. That was before a gentleman by the name of Major Underwood came in to become communications officer. Underwood was the communications officer, but Keefer was still acting in that capacity. So I ran up there, and I walked in. Of course, I was under arms, and I had my rifle at sling arms, and I had my tin helmet on. So I walked in, and I said, "John, I'm here. Tell the captain I'm here." "Oh, yeah."

So he called in and said, "Rodgers is here, Captain." Keefer shouted out, "Send him in." We didn't have an intercom in those days (chuckle). It was all verbal communications. You'd open the window and shout (chuckle). So I walked in snappily--I was a proud young soldier--and saluted and had my tin helmet on. I said, "Sir, Private Rodgers reports to the captain as ordered." He said, "Sit down, Sergeant." I looked and I sat down, and with that he reached across his desk and handed me a pair of buck sergeant stripes and said, "You're now Sergeant Rodgers, NCO in charge of the Communications Section." That's how I got to be a sergeant. That's when I found out I was a sergeant.

Marcello: Let me follow this up with a question. I'm sure it's safe to say that promotion moved much, much faster after Pearl Harbor than was the case in the army before Pearl Harbor.

Rodgers: Oh, yes! Oh, yes! I can best illustrate that by the example of General George Marshall, who was Chief of Staff. He was a lieutenant for seventeen years before he got to be a captain. When I first went into the Army, if you made PFC in a year-and-a-half, boy, you were making progress. Anybody that

made corporal in his first hitch was a good soldier. I was in the Army fifteen months when I became a buck sergeant--"PING," like that. I was never a corporal, never a PFC. I went from private to sergeant. A few months later, I was promoted to staff sergeant; and before I was twenty-one, I was a second lieutenant. So you can see how quickly promotions occurred. Today now, promotions are much faster. In the pre-World War II Army, you didn't get to be a sergeant until you had at least six years in the Army.

Marcello: When did you finally leave the Hawaiian Islands?

Rodgers: I left the Hawaiian Islands on January 23, 1943. I remember the date. I came back. I returned to the States to go to OCS (Officers Candidate School), Signal Corps OCS, at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey. That was a year and a month after Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: And just very briefly mention some of the other places where you then went during your military career during World War II.

Rodgers: All right, surely. When I finished OCS, I spent time at Fort Monmouth and its surroundings in various capacities. I went to a radio school. After finishing radio school, I went through a combat

training course at Fort Monmouth. Then I was sent on detached service to RCA Communications in New York for further training in radio on special teletype communications. Then I returned, and I spent three months as a platoon leader in a basic training battalion.

Shortly after that, I went back out to the Pacific--was reassigned to a signal company and went to New Guinea. We traveled across the United States on troop trains and went on the old SS *Lurline*, the old Matsun liner *Lurline*, to New Guinea. I was stationed in Hollandia. How long was I in Hollandia, New Guinea? Let's see. I was in Hollandia probably about seven or eight months.

From there I went to the Philippines, to Manila, and saw combat in northern Luzon. I saw some fighting up in Luzon when Yamashita was still running around loose up there. I got up there.

Then I was in Manila the night the war ended. I was in Manila when they dropped the atomic bomb. The night the word came through that the Japanese surrendered, I was a first lieutenant. I'd been promoted to first lieutenant in Manila. I was at a party, an officer's party, somewhere out there in

northern Manila. The word came through that the Japanese surrendered, and we were all very happy.

After one thing or another and within an hour or later, somebody paged me at the party. I had been detailed to take a communications unit to Okinawa the next day. Unfortunately, I didn't get to Okinawa for about five days. The plane I was on couldn't get off the ground. We had all sorts of engine trouble. All my troops and equipment were up in Okinawa, and one sergeant and myself were still (chuckle) sitting out there at Clark Field waiting to get these airplanes fixed. But we eventually got to Okinawa, where we set up a radio relay station to handle reports on the surrender and other things.

There is an interesting little tale I always like to tell about my short stay in Okinawa. It's after the war. It was in October. If you have gone back through history, you may recall there was a very bad typhoon that hit Okinawa in early October, I think it was. I was running a small radio relay station out there, and we were stationed with the Navy. I was actually stationed with the Navy, and I had a few Army men, and we were running our own

little separate detail out there. The Navy cut down all its transmitters. They had huge transmitters. The typhoon took the roof right off the Quonset hut, and all they did was shut down their transmitters and drape them with tarpaulins and anything they could to help keep them dry. I had two mobile vans. These were the type of vans you'd put on two-and-half-ton trucks, six-by-sixes. I had...what was it...about a two-and-a-half KW transmitter. It wasn't a very big transmitter--a little transmitter. You could run it off big...we had some...what did they call those antennas? I forget the name of them now. Oh, they were half-wave antennas. I wasn't paying much attention to that, and we had these little things there. The half-wave antennas blew with the wind and everything else.

I had about six men and myself, and I had two of these vans sitting on the ground. We were living in pyramidal tents, and the tents just disappeared. I split the men up, and I put about three in one van and three of us in the other van. I said, "We're going to stay up here for the night." We had a little PE-95 generator. I still remember some of

the jargon, some of the technological nomenclature for these things. We had a PE-95 generator, and we had that running. We had that cranked up, full of gas, and were running that. You towed it behind a two-and-a-half-ton truck on a little trailer. We had heat in the van, and we had light in the van, and we had some K-rations or whatever we had there.

All of a sudden, there was a pounding on the door. "Good Lord! Who's out in this storm?" What's going on here?" It was night, and it was black. I opened the door, and here was two of the most soggiest, wettest poor devils I've ever seen--two Navymen. How they'd ever gotten over, I don't know, but they had just come from the naval hospital. I got them in out of the storm, and I said, "Good Lord! What are you doing?" One said, "Do you have any radio communications? The hospital is flattened. We've got to get help out." They had come over looking for the naval radio station, which had been there but was completely closed down. They saw the lights through the little peephole there, and they knocked on the door. They said, "We have got to get these messages out|! The captain [or the lieutenant commander or whoever it

was] over there sent us over to find some way to get this traffic out. We're desperate! We've got people lying in mud and rain over there!" I said, "Gee, I don't know." He said, "We do have the frequencies and the call letters to the stations."

Well, by this time I had long gotten out of being a radio operator. I was a first lieutenant, so now I ran radio operations. I didn't do the radio operating myself, and I had forgotten my procedure that I had known. There had been a lot of changes in procedure. But I said, "Well, I don't know. All I've got is this little transmitter here." I said, "You know, you want me to get in touch with Manila and Guam. All I've got is this little transmitter with this antenna." I said, "I'll tune it up." He said, "Please! We've got to get help!"

So I had a sergeant there, and I remember his name was Julius Sainz, and he came from Staten Island, New York. I said, "Julie, let's you and I crank this thing up. Is our whip antenna up?" He said, "Yeah, it's up." I said, "Let's you and I crank this thing up." As it turned out, it was myself, and I think there were five or maybe six--

but I think there were just five--enlisted men with me. That was my detail, and I was the only one in the bunch that knew Morse code. This was a CW network, continuous wave Morse code network. I said, "Let's crank this thing up and get it on its frequency, and let's see what happens." I said, "Let's see if I can get the radioman who's there." So we turned on the transmitter and let it warm up until it was stable, got it tuned into the right frequency. I turned on the receiver and put on the earphones on so that I could hear what was going on. I fiddled a little bit until I picked up the signal where it should be. As soon as I picked up the signal where it should be, I started hitting the key [makes loud thumping sound]. I had a little hand key. I didn't have a button. I had a little hand key, so I started hitting it and trying to break in.

All of sudden it stops. It said something like, "Go ahead," or whatever the signal was for "go ahead" there. I broke in, and I said...and I remember tapping it out in clear because I had forgotten my procedure: "This is Okinawa." And I was a good Morse code operator. I knew my Morse

code very well, and I could just sit there and tap and talk to them without ever having to write it down. "We are in a typhoon. We need help. Who are you?" "This is Manila." I got a leg through to Manila, nine hundred miles away! I got a leg through to Guam, about a thousand miles away!

All night long...we rigged up a funny network. We could only communicate...I forget what the reason why, but we could only communicate by phone one way from the naval hospital to me. We rigged it up via messenger. The naval hospital would call me one way on the phone, and I'd write down the message, and they would not know that I got it until they would hear me on the key. They had a radio over there, and they would hear me on the key sending it out. We ran that operation all through the night, and I got out the first messages for help for Okinawa after that typhoon. It was one of the proudest moments I've ever spent in the military. About, oh, 7:00 or 8:00 the next morning, the Navy sent over two radio operators and said, "Here, we'll take over. You go to bed." But it was one of the proudest moments I've ever had.

Marcello: When did you get out of the service?

Rodgers: I got out of the service...I got home, actually, two days before Thanksgiving. I wanted to get home. I had a ton of points. If you remember, it was on the point system. This was after the typhoon, and I ran back to the "Old Man" back there, and I said, "Colonel, I've had enough of this Army. I want to go home. I've got enough points." He laughed and said, "Nobody's going home." He said, "We're all going to wind up in Japan." I said, "Do you mind if I run around and see what I can do?" He said, "Have fun!" I ran around, and I found out how to get my orders. Boy, about four days later, I had orders. Then the "Old Man" called me in and said, "How'd you do that? I want to know, too."

I sailed from Okinawa at the end of October. We got to San Francisco. They put us on the train to Fort Dix, New Jersey. I was processed through at Fort Dix, New Jersey, and I was home two days before Thanksgiving with my mother and father and my sisters and my brother.

Marcello: And this was 1945?

Rodgers: This was 1945. I was officially discharged in January because I had terminal leave. But I got home actually two days before Thanksgiving in 1945.

Marcello: Well, Mr. Rodgers, I think that's a pretty good place to end this interview. I want to thank you very much for having taken time to talk with me. You've said a lot of interesting and important things, and I'm sure that researchers and scholars will find your comments most valuable.

Rodgers: Well, you flatter me very much, Dr. Marcello. You flatter me very much, and it's been my pleasure to come. If I've added a little bit to the documentation of history, I'm very happy to have done so. Thank you.

[End of interview]

A P P E N D I X

12001689

Fort Shafter, Hawaii

Dec. 31, 1941



FORT SHAFTER, HAWAII

Dear Mom,

Now that the first wave of excitement has passed things have settled themselves into a more or less orderly routine. Of course we are keeping a constant watch, but the tension has let up and we go about our business in a quiet and reserved manner. We have more time in which to do things and small percentages of us are allowed short passes into Honolulu.

I was very glad to get your letter a few days ago. I guess by now you have my first letter telling you I was alright, so there is no sense in repeating it. Whatever should come though, don't worry about me. I shall get through somehow.

I was not surprised to learn that Dad had tried for reenlistment. Rather I expected it. Still though, I hope he doesn't get in. He has enough to do watching out for you and the rest of the family without leaving just to fight another war. I admire his spirit but not his sense.

Christmas was very dead here. It just seemed like another day except for the fact that we had a very good dinner. I did manage to get to church and shall

try to go tomorrow
any mail that you send to me
address it and have a front. We are
not permitted to use any other
address. That is my serial number and
just in case it isn't legible I shall
repeat it: 12009689

I received a letter from Mrs. Moser
just before Christmas. She wished
me plenty of luck and in sending
me a box of "goodies" as she termed
it. They have all promised to write
me and she says that Mr. Moser
speaks of me as his son. Chuck has
been around telling everyone all about
me and wants me to write to some
of his girls. That is a tough job, I'm
lucky I get time to write to people
I know without writing to strangers.

There's also wrote and I think
she has fallen for my poor girl. She
was very worried and insisted that I
write her a week at least. You
should have seen the nice card
she sent me for my birthday.

Well, I shall love her and
write her some more in a little
of thanks for the chipping about Ruth
waiting anxiously for a letter with
love to all, I remain

your loving son
B. Ud.

~~XXXXX~~

P.S. I hope I get a chance to go to
the Philippines.

I N T R O D U C T I O N

I am taking this opportunity to put into writing my thoughts and actions during my service in World War II. In the future it shall bring back pleasant memories to me and I hope that my children should I ever have any might also gain some enjoyment out of reading it. This on-the-spot record of my experiences will be far more accurate than my memory will be ten, fifteen and twenty years from now.

Anyone reading this must be broadminded enough to understand a soldier's point of view. If I offend anyone by expressing myself as I shall, I care not. Anyone is welcome to read this that wishes to do so. I feel that by doing this, no one can accuse me of talking behind his or her back. If the grammar disturbs you, I say so what. If you don't like the language I use, I say again so what. It is none of your business anyway how I express myself. The obscene language that appears is I feel absolutely necessary to make this diary authentic and true, from my point of view.

I shall try my level best to keep out or if it be necessary to put it in, I shall do so in a manner that will not reveal any military secrets or other secret data pertaining to the Military forces.

If in writing this I compliment anyone, it is my true feeling about that person. Whether or not he deserves the compliment, I don't know, but this is my story: therefore I should be free to say what I wish, or feel. I shall thank no one for their cooperation in helping me write this, because no one shall do it.

THE AUTHOR

Martin J. Rodgers Jr.
MARTIN J. RODGERS JR.
Sergeant, Army of the United States

MY WARTIME EXPERIENCES

A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION SO FAR:

December 7th this whole damned thing started, when those yellow bastards known as the Japanese sailed in out of a clear blue sky just before 8:00 AM with their load of death, bent upon destruction. Nonchalantly preparing for church in my tent, I heard the first rumble of exploding bombs off in the distance. Accustomed to hearing a lot blasting in the vicinity, I paid no more attention to it than the man in the moon. It took only a few minutes however to realize what was actually going on out there. Sizing up the situation at a glance, I took off for the nearest hill in order that I might get a better view of things. When I got there, any doubt that I might have had before that was cleared up in a hurry. Those sons-of-bitches were raising hell around Hickam Field and Pearl Harbor. Then when the stray bomb hit on the hill just a few hundred feet up, I knew that that hill was not the safest place to be at the moment. Returning to the camp area, I drew my ammunition, got my rifle, gas mask and tin helmet and immediately proceeded for the Command Post. I was one of the first men there, and how those damn teletype machines were going. I speak for everyone in the outfit when I say that within the next few days, we did more work than we had ever done in a whole month before. Things were in a hell of a mess and the way rumors flew about didn't help the situation any either. Blackout regulations were immediately imposed and the sale of alcoholic beverages were prohibited. Although no one liked the blackout, we realized that it had to be so and took it from a philosophical point of view. As for prohibition no one liked that in the least, and to this day the only reason given was that it was for the general welfare. We all have our doubts about that. Sleep seemed to be a thing of the past for the first week of the war, and you grabbed anything that looked like food in the near vicinity and let it go at that. At all times we were told to be armed. Can you imagine taking a shit with your gas mask, tin helmet, a cartridge belt loaded with ammunition, and a rifle slung over your shoulder. Believe it or not, that is just what we were doing.

After the first week the confusion settled down into an orderly routine. We were now ready for them should they come back, and a lot of us nurtured secret hopes that they would. Even to this day, that holds true. Working reliefs were adopted; we moved from the Jeep Camp into the unfinished concrete barracks; began saluting officers again and in general realized that we had a war on our hands and did our best to do our duty the best we could. Rumors still ran rampant, (they still are, but in a lesser degree), but we began to take them with the proverbial grain of salt. Things moved swiftly for us. The bowling alleys were converted into sleeping quarters for men working the graveyard shift. Coffee and sandwiches were supplied to the men on duty during the night, and things took on a brighter aspect. Events continued in this general trend with only minor changes affecting me for the next month and a half. All this time I was on detached service with the 53rd Brigade. Finally on February 6th, the thing that I had been sweating for so long, and which had been refused me time and again, came through. I was transferred in grade of Private to the 53rd Brigade from Headquarters Battery, 3rd Battalion, 64th Coast Artillery. Now I knew that if I kept my nose clean, I would be able to advance. As things in the future proved, I was right. On February 12th I was rated a Specialist 3rd Class although I did not know about it until nearly a week later. This made me very happy, and I began to take more heart in my work. About this time I turned in my World War I vintage rifle Model 1903, (a Springfield to a civilian), for the new type Garand. A few days later on the rifle range, I found out that although it had a lot more fire power, I could shoot a lot better with a Springfield. It was a good rifle however, even if it did cause me to get a week's restriction for not having it clean. Ah me, those damned unexpected

inspections by the Captain always came when I had to have a dirty rifle. Why, oh why didn't he do his inspecting the day I cleaned it. I guess if I had cleaned it every day in the week and twice on Sundays, he never would have held an inspection.

Around the middle of March, (I forget the exact date), the Hawaiian Antiaircraft Command was activated. Although I was left in the 53rd Brigade, I knew that the new outfit would be in need of radio and teletype operators, so I stood by waiting for results. They weren't long in coming. On the 26th of March, I was transferred into the Signal Corps and assigned to the HAAC for duty, along with two other teletype operators, the whole radio section and the wire section. Two days later to my surprise and delight I was promoted to Sergeant. Since my enlistment in the Army, I had always wondered what it would be like to be a non-commissioned officer and now I was one. It still felt the same, but I knew that the bulge in my wallet on payday would feel a lot different. I hope you will pardon my forgetting, but around the end of February, an order came forth from the office of the Military Governor, permitting the sale of beer and liquor. What a break for us, and although some of the fellows didn't know when they had had enough, most of the fellows were to glad to get it back to screw things up by getting cocked and having it taken away again. We showed them that we could handle the situation okay. I still have trouble in getting a drink in someplaces in town because of my youthful appearance, but that is beside the point. I was getting about one pass a week, and usually went down to Waikiki to see Beverly or Dent. Incidentally he made Staff Sergeant just after the war began. I was very glad to see him get it, because he knows his stuff and is a hell of a fine fellow after you get to know him. About this time I took up bowling to help pass the time and found that I liked it very much. I rapidly improved and spent a good part of my time bowling. I won many a coke from Mac. The only dark spot in my life was my awful luck with the cards. It is a good thing that I have enough sense to send most of my money home on payday before I get mixed up in those damn games. To this day my luck hasn't changed, but I hope and pray that it will. Easter Sunday I went to Confession and Holy Communion. This made me feel very good, although Easter Monday, I guess I was just as bad as before. The conversation especially tends to lower a fellows morals in the Army. Women are the chief topic of conversation in every discussion, and although one does enhance his vocabulary quite a bit, it is not the type of language that one would expect to hear at a social gathering or at home. I take pride in the fact though, that when I step outside of the Post Gate and mingle in a bit with the civilians, I have no trouble at all in controlling myself. I wish to hell that I would get some mail though. I do enough writing for two people, but don't get any replys to my letters. Those God-damned Japs sure made the mail situation a most unpleasant one. Any day now we should move up to the tunnel. They have been telling us that for the past four months, but I am almost positive that the move is just around the corner now. At least I hope so. Well, I seemed to have exhausted the supply of material up to the present. There are a million more minor details that I could put in, but I think it best to let the dead sleep. Should I at any time think of anything more important in this period I shall add to it on additional blanks of paper provided for the purpose. Oh yes, one more thing, I am playing ball on the Battery Softball team in the outfield. We have won both games to date. One by forfeit and the other by a score of six to three. Hurray for our side.

THURSDAY, APRIL 23, 1942.-What a day this has been. Up at six this morning. Rather, I should say before six, as I came on duty at six. The weather was fine. Worked most of the morning in the radio room on my teletypes and gave Washburn a little help on the telegraph and radio. He is still new at it, but I think that he'll make a pretty good operator after he gets the swing of things. For a change yesterday's traffic was in very good order, so that helped to improve my state of mind quite a little. I am still sore though over this time situation. Half the time we have to use Hawaiian War Time and the other half Greenwich Civil Time. After my boys get the hang of it though I guess they will be okay. They're a pretty good bunch. Batted the breeze a bit with Lt. Keefer and Nance before going up to chow. Tried to get a pass to go to town and go swimming with Dent, but couldn't so will go another time. After chow I laid on my bunk for an hour reading cock stories. These filthy bastards around here can sure get some good ones. Before I forget it, that eight-ball operator up at VO got me mad as hell. He is just a wise guy, and if he keeps it up, I'll turn him in yet. About two o'clock I went swimming over to the pool for a couple of hours. Got some exercise and a little sun. At supper Mac tells me that he has a cold. Damn fool; lays out in that broiling sun, gets sunburned as hell and then catches a chill. Well he can't say I didn't warn him. Then he get's marked quarters and I have to tear down here at six to take his shift for him, being the chief operator. Missed a good show at the G.I. theatre too. Relieved Colvin on telegraph so that he could go to the show. Williams got drunk in town today, so Colvin has to take his shift. Decide that I will take Tony's shift from midnight on so that I can go to town tomorrow when he will take my shift if Mac is still in quarters. We drew those damned pisspots, (the new style tine helmet), today. They might give more protection, but they sure look like hell. Copied WGG in Frisco tonight for a couple of hours just to stay in practice. How that code does get a guy. Later, while Colvin was still at the show, I discussed somebody's poor little "wabbit" with him over the telegraph for a while. The dit-happy lug. All in all a pretty good day, so cul.

FRIDAY: APRIL 24, 1942:-Oh, what a day. Continued working right on through the whole night till six o'clock this morning. Or rather, I passed the time until then. Got in my S-2 and 3's by three o'clock and then waited for something to happen. It didn't. That was the last traffic for the night. Mike Mistysin was painfully pecking away on his machine in an effort to get some of those filthy stories copied for himself. Having nothing else to do, I offered me services and he gladly ~~xxx~~ accepted them, so I pounded out two of them for him. He gave me a copy of each one, but what do I want with them.. I'll probably either lose them or give them to some one. At four o'clock, woke Williams up and chased him up to bed telling him that I would watch his telegraph for him. Good thing nothing came over because I fell asleep about five. Six fifteen Johnny wakes me up, so I leave him to his misery and go up to eat chow and get some sleep for myself. Got my end of the barracks cleaned up and then asked Fellows for a pass as it looked like a very nice day. Went to bed at seven thirty intending to get up at eleven thirty, eat and then go to town. Got up all right, but the weather didn't look to promising so postponed my trip to town for another day. Just as well I did. It rained like hell this afternoon. Went down to the C.P. at one thirty and found the oscillator out of order. Tried to fix it, but didn't have the time so called up the radio station and had Wehrwhan come down and fix it for Washburn. Went to the show with Mike and saw Melody Lane with the Merry Macs and Leon Errol. Didn't care for it too much, but it passed away a couple of hours. Came back from the show and found my laundry back. Hit the jackpot when I got back two extra pair of socks. Usually lose something. I am pretty well fixed for socks and underwear now. Wish I had more uniforms though. Mac was released from quarters today so he went to work at twelve. He's a good operator, but just doesn't give a damn. Typical draftee. All of them want to get home. After supper I fooled around, batted the breeze a bit and went to bed around eight thirty. Chiselled a coke out of Mac before going though. Laid in bed for a few minutes talking to Mac and then fell asleep. I was very tired from no sleep the day before. Another pretty good day so with 88's to all of you until tomorrow adios.

SATURDAY: APRIL 25, 1942:-Hello again, I'm back with you once more. I must say that this was a pretty good day for your's truly. Got up this morning at seven forty five, jumped into my clothes, grabbed my mess gear and a towel and took off for the latrine. Took a cat-lick and a promise and dashed for the messhall. Got there just in time to get what was left. Nursed a cup of coffee for nearly half an hour with mike and a cigarette and then went back to the barracks. Changed linen, (Mac's also) and then swept and mopped under my bed. Gave Smitty hell for leaving a mop laying around. He blew his top, but he always raises hell with a private for doing the same so what do I care what he thought. Spoke to Fellows about a pass again today and got little satisfaction at the time. Went down to the C.P. and straightened up the files from the two previous days. They were mixed up a bit, but it didn't take long to get them straight. Wasn't missing a single one either. Tried several people for some money, but no one had any. Went back up to the barracks and shot the shit with Smitty for a while. Saw R.T. coming out of the tailor shop and hit him up for five bucks and got it. There's a pretty good guy for you. Know's his radio plenty and has a likeable personality. At least everyone likes him. Showered and shaved, hoping that I could get a pass. Went and ate chow, came back and dot the pass okay. Changed my uniform and waited for Mike and Bernie. Wore a necktie just to see what it would feel like. Also borrowed Colvin's tin helmet so that I wouldn't have to carry that awful looking one of mine around town. He hasn't been issued one of the new ones as yet. Went to town and ended up in a Jewish organization with the other two. They are both Jews, but nevertheless, damn nice guys. Mike sure has a sweet

looking wife. He sure does miss her too and his little girl. Don't blame him though. I guess I would too. Met a couple of girls and had a few dances. Boy am I rusty. Played a game of chess with Mike and beat him, just to even up the two games of Ping-Pong that he beat me. Had some punch and chocolate cake which was pretty good. Homemade cake. The punch wasn't spiked though, so I only drank two glasses of it. Left about four o'clock to get something to drink.. We couldn't find a bar open so went and bought some Mother's Day cards. Then we went and ate a fine T-bone steak and French fries for only seventy five cents. Got back to the Fort about twenty after five. Had a cup of coffee before going to work. Came down here to work at six. Copied WGG for an hour or so. Traffic was light. Got a coded message and helped Captain Gay and Lt. Floweres decode it. Then had to write out the acknowledgement for the Capt. I think we should change jobs. Practice typing for about half an hour and then wrote this up. Cleaned up mess around machines, swept out room and took off for bed when Johnny relieved me. A fine day although the heat was something awful. BCNU 2morrow.

A D D I T I O N S

1. Sometime around the end of March I turned in my Garand Rifle for a .45 Automatic. This will be very good for carrying around, but if those Japs come back, I'll wish I had my Garand back again.

2. Although I never expected it, it seems that Dent knows more about Beverly than I do. He says that he sees her around once in a while, but the way he talks, I think it is more than once in a while. My best friend at that. Oh well, I really never did take a glowing interest in her, and should he win her it won't bother me in the least. There are more fish in the brook I say and no woman ever affected me so much that I couldn't stand to be without her. Love 'em and leave 'em is the best policy I say. She is a sweet kid though, and very good looking if I do say so myself. One of these days I shall get an all day pass and show her the time of her life. Not just an afternoon on the beach with her, but dinner, dancing and everything else that goes with a good time.

3.

