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Interview with  
Eugene Camp  
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Place of Interview: San Antonio, Texas  
Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello  
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Oral History Collection

Eugene Camp

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Eugene Camp for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on October 14, 1977, in San Antonio, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. Camp in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was in the United States Army and stationed at Camp Malakole during the Japanese attack there and at Pearl Harbor and the surrounding military installations on December 7, 1941.

Now Mr. Camp, to begin this interview, just very briefly give me a biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education--things of that nature. Just be very brief and general.

Mr. Camp: Okay. I was born in Fort Worth, Texas, on the 14th of July, 1920. I went to high school in Fort Worth, and I entered the California National Guard in 1940, because I was in California at that time. Hitler was running rampant over in Europe, and it seemed like the thing to do.

Marcello: How did you get to California from Fort Worth?

Camp: My mother was living out there, and I was out visiting her and got a job there and then joined the National Guard.

Marcello: Why did you decide to join the Army as opposed to one of the other branches of the service?

Camp: Well, that's a good question, particularly since I joined in San Diego, which is a Navy town, you know (chuckle). But I had had Junior ROTC in high school, and I did know a little bit about rifles and things like that, and that's why I joined, really.

Marcello: How closely were you keeping abreast with current events and world affairs at the particular time that you enlisted in the Army?

Camp: Well, for a teenager, you know, fairly well, I'd say, because I've always been rather interested in history.

Marcello: You mentioned Hitler awhile ago. Am I to assume that when you thought of the United States getting into war that your eyes were turned more toward Europe than the Far East?

Camp: Definitely, definitely. I can remember it so well to this day--a history teacher in Fort Worth pointing to the old Polish Corridor and saying, "That's where the next war's going to start, and you young men are going to be in it if you don't wake up and pay attention in class!" (laughter)

Marcello: Where did you take your basic training?

Camp: I really didn't take basic training because I joined the National Guard, and since I had this previous ROTC, I knew enough of the rudiments that . . . and in that time we really weren't that affluent as far to sending people off to basic training. The training was really within the unit.

Marcello: So after you enlisted, did you immediately go to the Hawaiian Islands?

Camp: Oh, no, no. I joined in June of 1940, and we remained in the National Guard until September of 1940. In fact, we were on maneuvers in Chehalis, Washington, up around Fort Lewis and on our way back--and this was the annual, you know, active duty training period--when they threw some newspapers aboard the train, and the headlines said, "Roosevelt Calls the National Guard and the Reserves." We read it in the newspaper, which was the first we heard that we were to be one of the regiments that was called. On September 16, 1940, was when President Roosevelt called the first National Guards and activated the reserves, and they got the draft going, I guess, in full swing. So my tenure in the National Guard as such was very brief--from June until September. Then in September, this regiment moved up north of Los Angeles to sort of a temporary encampment there at Oxnard, California, in the ball park (chuckle). Subsequently, we were moved to Hawaii actually in October, for all of this developed in a short space of time.

Marcello: What did you think about the idea of going to the Hawaiian Islands?

Camp: Well, it was interesting, of course. It was strictly the Territory of Hawaii and everything. There was some grumbling amongst the older guardsmen, because the motto . . . this was a Coast Artillery outfit. And the thing at the post office and everything was, "Defend Our Shores! Join the California Coast Artillery." Well, we had to go 2,000 miles (laughter) to defend the California shore. But it was intriguing, you know. I mean, Hawaii was certainly the land of the . . . we remembered the Dorothy Lamour movies, you know, and all this sort of thing. This was something we all looked forward to.

Marcello: Now did you go directly to Camp Malakole?

Camp: Not right directly, no. When we first got there, I was in an antiaircraft regiment . . . coast artillery regiment. They weren't really quite ready for us when we got there. We were really doubling the strength of the antiaircraft defense of the island. There was only one regiment there, and we were the second one. So temporarily we went to Fort Ruger, which was at Diamond Head, in the tent camp there and everything. In fact, we scattered out in several of the regular Army posts, and then as a regiment we moved to this Camp Malakole, which was out on Barbers Point. It was initially in tents, and most of the temporary barracks we built ourselves with the engineers'

support.

Marcello: When did you move to Camp Malakole?

Camp: We moved there sometime before Christmas in 1940.

Marcello: So you were there just a little bit less than a year before the actual attack occurred.

Camp: Yes, right. Yes.

Marcello: How big a camp was Malakole?

Camp: Malakole was strictly a one-regiment camp--just our regiment and no other. Actually, it had been a firing point. It was out on the edge of this peninsula close to a lighthouse out there. The Navy had some dive bomb targets offshore that they used to use, and the Army artillery used to come out there and fire off-shore. It was a pretty God-forsaken area out there (chuckle)--algarrobas and coral and not much else. There were no little villages close by or really any civilization..

Marcello: Describe what the camp looked like from a physical standpoint after you got there and it became pretty well established.

Camp: Well, it was not all that bad. The roads were crushed coral--somewhat like gravel--and it did cause a lot of dust, you know, when it was dry. The barracks, the ones that we built and so forth, were all of a wooden structure and unpainted. The Army had some tropical-type barracks; they had screens all the way around the barracks, and we had shutters. We had these shutters propped up practically all the time because the roofs overhung,

and with the shutters up, the rain wouldn't come in. So they were relatively cool. We built ourselves a beer garden and a PX and a theatre, open air theatre. We had a post office and officers' quarters--the colonel had a little hut all by himself--guardhouse. It was really a rather attractive little encampment with just the one regiment, so the colonel, of course, was the lord, mayor, high commissioner, and the boss of the whole works (chuckle).

Marcello: Could you identify your unit in full?

Camp: Yes. At that time I was in Battery B of the 251st Coast Artillery, Antiaircraft.

Marcello: Now how would you describe the morale of that regiment during that approximate year that you were there at Camp Malakole and before the actual attack occurred?

Camp: Well, it went up and down. When we first moved to Malakole, it wasn't too good because, actually, even the tent quarters that we had at the old permanent post were much, much better than Malakole's. For one thing, Malakole is nine miles from Pearl Harbor and even farther to Honolulu, you know, where all the action was. Other than our movie and our beer garden, there was no entertainment or anything like that at Malakole. In Ruger, where our particular battalion was before we moved out there . . . Ruger and DeRussy were the harbor defense of Honolulu Harbor, you know. It's right in town just off of

Diamond Head Drive; you could walk to the beach and all of this sort of thing. Of course, life was more leisurely in the established posts; that is, they had a tropical schedule. They worked in the early morning, you know, during the cool, and then in the afternoon it was athletics. They trained their boxing teams and their swimming teams and had fatigue and things like that. If you were lucky enough not to get on fatigue, then you just practically had the afternoon off.

So it wasn't too good when we moved to Malakole, getting back to the subject. Then, you know, the National Guard was supposed to be demobilized, you know, and it passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by only one vote. Well, of course, there was a lot of expectation up until this point that we all were going to go home.

Marcello: In October, is that right?

Camp: In October, sure (chuckle).

Marcello: The "Ohio Club--Over the Hill in October".

Camp: Yes, that was the 37th Division; that was the Ohio National Guard (chuckle). I served with them later down in the Pacific. It was a splendid outfit despite their bad reputation. You know, there was always that expectation, and then suddenly we were in. Then everybody got sort of resigned to it. We did a lot of shooting . . . a lot of practice, and we got pretty good. Finally, in one of the competitions, we beat the other

regiment--the regular Army regiment that was there. At that point, you might say, "we arrived," and they sort of accepted us in the Army.

You see, when you come into a place like the Hawaiian Department where the regimental number's 251--251st--and the other regiments are the 8th, the 11th, the 16th, the 21st, the 35th, you know, all regular Army units, they looked kind of askance at a National Guard outfit. Incidentally, we were the first National Guard unit ever to go over to overseas in peacetime . . . when we went to Hawaii back in the '40's.

But by the time the war started, morale was pretty good. We had, you know, decided we were in for the duration of whatever (chuckle).

Marcello: What was the food like there at Camp Malakole?

Camp: It was pretty good. It was standard Army food; it was palatable. Really, you know, we had the unit messes, and it depended a lot on your individual mess sergeant and how well he prepared the food and what he used for supplements and so forth. It wasn't bad. No one was undernourished.

Marcello: What was your particular function within the unit?

Camp: At the time of the attack, I was a gun commander of a 3-inch antiaircraft gun.

Marcello: Which meant what, in effect?

Camp: Well, that would be the equivalent of a buck sergeant. I was

what we called an acting sergeant. I wore the sergeant stripes and had all the authority, but I was drawing a corporal's pay, because we had a sergeant that was off to school. Until he graduated, the rank wouldn't come back to the battery. A 3-inch battery has four guns, and each gun is commanded by a sergeant. Then there's a motor sergeant, a mess sergeant, a first sergeant, and a range sergeant that handled all of the equipment to determine range and altitude and those sort of things.

Marcello: Okay, let's talk a little bit about the training that the regiment underwent during that approximate year before the actual attack took place. Describe what your training was like so far as 3-inch antiaircraft battery was concerned.

Camp: Well, we did a lot of sort of dry-firing, you know, that was tedious and boring and hard to keep enthusiasm up . . . of manning the guns. Of course, you had to keep the guns clean, and they were sitting right out there on the beach with that salt air (chuckle), so that was a job just keeping them cleaned and oiled and so forth. But you go through this drill of what they call "dummy rounds". It looked like a live round. You'd throw it in the breach, and you'd throw it out, and everybody runs around and does what they're doing.

The ones that are really getting the training is this range section because they had . . . at that time, before the

days of radar . . . we barely had radar when the Pearl Harbor attack started. We had only one in the regiment for detection, and the guns weren't controlled by radar like they were later in the war. So this optical height-finder was the thing that actually measured the slant range to a target on a continuous changing basis, and this data was fed electrically into a mechanical director made by the Sperry-Rand Corporation. All this data was computed. It actually, I think, was copied from a German director. Then all the data was transmitted to the guns, again by cable, to a little pointer thing. You had an azimuth and an elevations man who sat on the side of the gun, and they matched the mechanical pointer with these electrical pointers. As they turned these wheels to match the pointers, then that in turn pointed the gun.

We had plenty of targets with the Navy's dive bombers out there that we could track, you know, back and forth. Then on big occasions, the Army Air Corps would fly targets for us, and these were on cables--a bag, you know, on the end of a cable, a long cable--and we would actually fire at them with the guns. We got to doing that quite a bit.

Then we had a lot of night practice, because the regiment was a shooter organization that had A Battery, which was a searchlight battery--a huge battery almost as big as a present-day battalion--and then B, C, and D Battery were the 3-inch gun

batteries--twelve guns; and then the 2nd Battalion had E Battery, which was a machine gun battery, antiaircraft machine guns; and F, G, and H were 37-millimeter low-flying defense-type guns, later 40-millimeter Bofors and so forth. And then there was regimental headquarters. And we had our regimental band, also.

But we trained incessantly when we weren't working. We really, I think, were as well-trained as you could be under the circumstances with, you know, losses and things.

Marcello: How often did you actually fire live ammunition?

Camp: We didn't fire very often until, surprisingly enough, not too long before Pearl Harbor. Then, I guess, starting perhaps in maybe September of '41, we got to fire quite a bit more.

Again, back to your subject about morale, morale is never higher than in an artillery outfit when they're firing, even if they're firing at targets (chuckle), you know. You can hear some of those real malcontents say, "You know, if we'd fire every day, I'd stay in the Army for the rest of my life." But we got to fire quite a bit; we did some night firing, also. So we were well-trained . . . within the limitations of our equipment.

Marcello: Well, you brought up the subject, and let's pursue it a little bit further, because it was going to be my next question. How modern was your equipment for its day and time?

Camp: Well, of course, for that day and time, it was as modern as almost anything anyone had. I guess the Germans at that time did have their 88-millimeter, for which later our 90-millimeter was modeled after. But our equipment was about as good as . . . I'd say it was certainly superior to anything the Japanese had.

The problem really was with the ammunition; and we did have the more modern ammunition. When we were doing all this firing, we got to fire up a lot of the old ammunition that was obsolete. This is what . . . you see, when you fire an anti-aircraft projectile, you've got three dimensions that you don't have when you're shooting from the ground; you've got to also stop that thing out there or have it go off when it gets into the vicinity of the airplane. At that time, of course, there were no radar fuses or anything; it was a timing device. The old ammunition had what they called a "powder train". Actually, when you fired the round, it set a little train of powder burning around the nose of the projectile, which had been cut. By cutting it, they meant they turned it to a certain setting of actually seconds and parts of seconds. Then it would go off at that time, and if everything was right and the range had been measured, it would go off when it got to the airplane.

Marcello: And this is called a powder train?

Camp: Powder train fuse, right.

Marcello: And they even had a fuse-setter on the guns, did they not?

Camp: Oh, yes, yes--fuse-setter and fuse-cutter. The fuse-setter was the man that put it into the cutter, and then the cutter hit this thing and turned it. There was also a dial on that, see, coming from the director and telling him just what to cut the fuse--how many seconds.

Well, the powder train was the old fuse; then came the mechanical time fuse, which is, you know, just like a little tiny clock in the nose of each projectile. The powder train, often due to density, humidity, and a number of improbables or imponderables, didn't always burn when it was supposed to. So sometimes when you're firing that ammunition, you get it way short and sometimes a way over; you didn't really even know where you were shooting (chuckle). But with the mechanical train, it would always go off exactly where you set it; so if your data was right, you had it. So we had begun to get the mechanical time fuses, which was a great innovation, you know, and a great improvement, let's say, in antiaircraft artillery.

Marcello: How come you didn't fire more with live ammunition? Was it an economy measure?

Camp: It was an economy measure, yes. In fact, there's an interesting little sidelight on that, if you wanted it. Many of those Coast Artillery guns--the old big Coast Artillery guns there--had not been fired since the '20's, and we're talking about 1941, '40 and '41 (chuckle). There were some batteries there

that had not a soldier in the battery who ever remembered when they fired the gun. But, of course, I'm talking about 16-inch, 8-inch, 12-inch, you know, big huge guns, and they were in the . . . really, some of them were in the better areas of town. There was one battery at Fort Ruger of 8-inch seacoast guns that was known as Duke Battery. The reason it was known as Duke Battery is because this number four gun overlooked the patio and so forth of Doris Duke Cromwell's home. You can imagine, if you fired that gun, what would happen. Well, after the war, they did fire full rounds and fired all of them to make sure they'd still fire. I guess the complaints are still coming in, because they broke windows and knocked pictures off the wall (laughter) all over the place. But it was an economy measure; ammunition was just too expensive to burn up like that.

Marcello: Now as one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as conditions between the United States and Japan continued to deteriorate, did your training routine change in any way or intensify in any way?

Camp: Yes, it did. It changed somewhat, and it did intensify.

Marcello: How did it change?

Camp: It changed in that we started getting less and less of this fatigue, you know, of painting rocks and trimming hedges and trees and white-washing fences and things like that, and more

and more of the actual training and a lot more night training . . . a lot more night training. Up to that point, we hadn't trained much at night. They were having a series of missions in which our whole regiment was involved, the other regiment, and part of the Navy was involved, where at night they would fly planes over the island, and the searchlights, which were all around the island, you know, would pick them up, and then we'd track them and compute data on them and so forth. But it intensified.

Of course, the other thing that intensified in our area and, I guess, in all the others was the internal security-- interior guard. They just kept . . . it seemed like everytime we turned around, they doubled the guard.

Marcello: Now the Hawaiian Islands, of course, have a relatively large population of Japanese-Americans. Were these people seen as a threat in terms of sabotage or fifth columnist activity during those pre-Pearl Harbor days?

Camp: Oh, absolutely, absolutely! In fact, that was the threat as far as a corporal or sergeant could understand. The things that we were doing were protection against that. There was a large number--I don't recall the exact figure, but I remember at that time it seemed tremendous--of illegal aliens on the island, just like some of our present problems here in Texas, whose loyalty certainly was questioned. They had us so infil-

trated insofar as workers. They picked up all our garbage at every mess hall, and then everytime we went to the field, they picked up the garbage where we were out in the field. So they not only knew we were gone because we weren't at home station, but they knew where we were because somebody else was picking it up out there. So they knew all of our movements. That's a tiny island anyway, I mean, considering the number of people on it.

Marcello: So there were a great many civilian personnel possibly of Japanese ancestry who would have had access to the base in one way or another.

Camp: Oh, absolutely, although it was supposedly a closed base. We had a, you know, sentry at the gate; no one could get in unless they had a pass or something. But like I say, all these garbage collectors had a pass, and they could get in with their truck.

Marcello: Now did you have alerts and things of that nature, or maneuvers, as one gets closer and closer to December 7th?

Camp: Yes, we did. In fact, we had one in November.

Marcello: Describe what this alert or maneuver was like.

Camp: Okay. Well, in our particular instance, they followed a very set pattern, a very set sequence, because we had a battle position, a war position, to where we would go in the event of an attack on the island. So on all maneuvers we went to our

battle position. We were a mobile regiment; we had trucks; we had a motor pool that stretched from here to yon, you know, which in hindsight was rather stupid, you know, to have that kind of a unit in that position. But that's all we had, I guess. The other regiment was also mobile. So what I'm saying is that our guns were not fixed or anything; they were on four wheels. They stayed right there at Camp Malakole. But at our battle position, we were in charge, with the antiaircraft defense from the land bases, of one-half of Pearl Harbor. The other regiment--the 64th Coast Artillery--had the other half.

So when we had these maneuvers, the thing was to move through these very intricate, elaborate traffic patterns they had, because there was only one circumvential road at that time to get everybody off at the right time and so forth. The infantry would be moving out to the beach defense and so forth; we would move to our battle position. Our particular battery--Battery B--happened to be the Naval Ammunition Depot at West Loch, which is one of the three fingers of Pearl Harbor. Some of our people were on Ford Island; some were around . . . but we had one-half of the harbor.

So we would move into these positions; then they would go and draw ammunition up at the crater and bring the ammunition down--live ammunition; and we'd go through a series of these

things, which would last for anywhere from four to five days to sometimes as long as a week or ten days.

They did intensify and they got much more realistic, and we got a little less concerned with, for example, obeying the speed limit, you know, which we'd always meticulously obeyed whenever we'd run convoys at more normal speeds and things of that nature.

Marcello: Let's shift away from the alerts and the maneuvers, but we will come back to it shortly. Let's talk a little bit about your liberty routine. How did liberty work for you here at Camp Malakole? In other words, how much liberty would you have, where would you go when you had liberty, and what would you do when you were on liberty?

Camp: Well, we had overnight passes that you could get if you were, you know, in good graces and hadn't done anything wrong. If you weren't on guard or didn't have duty, you could have an overnight pass every night. Then on the weekend, you could get off . . . we worked on Saturday morning always, and they had an inspection usually on Saturday morning. After the inspection, from Saturday noon you could be off until Monday morning. You had to sign out, and this was the control factor, because only a certain percentage of the people could be signed out at any one time.

So you went in the orderly room and . . . we were well-

disciplined; all the Army was. There wasn't any cheating or sneaking out the back. Well, there was no place to sneak out to from Camp Malakole (chuckle).

But our regiment ran trucks into Honolulu; Honolulu was it, to answer your question. There was some of the people that went to some of the smaller villages--Nanakuli and Waipahu and some of the small villages around there--but there were really just wide places in the road. Waipahu, for example, was a very nice little town and mostly Portuguese fishermen. But it was awful hard for an enlisted man to break into society (chuckle) in any of those places for a good reason, you know. A lot of them had misbehaved rather badly, and I can understand why people didn't want to welcome you into their home.

So it was mostly Honolulu, and it was the bars and the Black Cat Cafe and the brothels (chuckle) and that sort of thing. But in our instance, since it was so far in, we ran trucks in to pick people up, and they took them to the Army-Navy YMCA, and then they came back. The last truck always left at midnight, and if you missed it, you were in deep trouble because there was no way to get back.

Marcello: But you could stay in Honolulu.

Camp: Yes, you could stay in overnight and come back the next morning. Like I said, if you missed a truck, then you're in for a tremendous expense to get somebody to drive you out there

or get a taxi or something of that nature. You could stay in overnight. But the general rule, like I said, the only people who stayed in overnight were the very, very small number of married personnel we had. We had very few married personnel . . . we had perhaps a lot married but very few who had their families there, other than the officers.

So the overnight staying was always on Saturday night; now many people stayed overnight on Saturday night. The Army-Navy "Y" used to set up cots in their gym down there and everything. I think they charged something like fifteen cents to sleep, and they also gave you a razor blade the next morning and a towel, and you could shower and shave and so forth. So you didn't really have to have a hotel room or something like that. But generally speaking, the overnight stays were on Saturday night.

Marcello: I would assume that a lack of money would have limited the number of times you could actually go into Honolulu and stay for an extended length of time regardless of what prices were in Honolulu.

Camp: That's right. Normally, it was about once a month (chuckle), and that was it. The rest of the time we hung around. We had athletic programs, you know--softball, boxing. Boxing was very popular at that time--these "smokers", you know, between units and so forth. I got involved in a couple of

those. I think they were always overmatched; somebody was overmatching because they like to see a lot of blood (laughter), you know, and somebody was going to get it. But the sports programs were not nearly as sophisticated as they are, you know, in the present day armed services.

Marcello: But they were very popular, were they not?

Camp: Oh, yes, very popular, very popular. Like if we had a smoker, you know, and we were fighting some other regiment--our boxing team--the whole regiment would turn up there. All the officers would be there--everybody, you know. This wasn't mandatory; it wasn't a command performance. It just . . . well, for one thing, there wasn't much else to do.

Marcello: Also I think it's probably evidence of that high morale that we talked about a little bit earlier.

Camp: Yes, that's right--unit pride. We only had radios, you know, and the local stations. Records were very popular then. The record player, of course, was fairly expensive, and most of them in the barracks were jointly owned; two or three people owned one. Then we had old 78rpms records, you know, and all the big band music of the era was very popular.

Marcello: How much money were you making at that particular time, let's say, around the time of the Pearl Harbor attack?

Camp: I was making fifty-four dollars a month.

Marcello: And when was payday?

Camp: Payday was the last day of the month, provided it didn't fall on a Sunday or something like that.

Marcello: Now would that have meant that you and your buddies would have had a substantial amount of money come the weekend of December 7th?

Camp: Right, yes. We would have.

Marcello: You would have still been fairly flush at that time.

Camp: Yes, that's right, yes.

Marcello: If you hadn't gotten into a card game or something of that nature.

Camp: Yes, that's right, yes. Crap games were more prevalent, at least in our regiment, than cards.

Marcello: Awhile ago we were talking about athletic competition, and previously you had also mentioned the competition among units with regard to firing efficiency and so on. This evidently was a big thing in that pre-Pearl Harbor service, also.

Camp: It was, yes. There was competition in everything, and it was always unit against unit. You know, this is your drill team against their drill team, your bugler against their bugler, and things of that nature. And it worked.

Marcello: Okay, I think this brings us up to those days immediately prior to the attack. Were you a part of that Army alert that was called off on the Friday of December 5, 1941? I know there was a rather large alert that took place over at

Schofield Barracks, and I wasn't sure if you were a part of that particular alert or not.

Camp: No, I think part of our regiment was, but I was not because of what I was doing in that week up to Saturday the 6th. This also explains why, even with this big roll of bills in my pocket, I wasn't in Honolulu on Saturday night.

I mentioned previously we had doubled the guard, and I mean that literally--that actually, if we had twelve posts, you'd have twenty-four posts. We were having a lot of trouble with the main gate guard. There was quite an access road from the main road into Camp Malakole, and that's where we had our gate guard out there. There was really no other way to get into the camp by vehicle other than down that road. The detail out there had a tent out there, and there was three sentries and a corporal of the guard who stayed out there all the time. We bought them their meals and so on and so forth.

Well, they kept . . . I guess, of course, everybody was getting a little bit jumpy and everything. They kept letting in people they shouldn't have let in or stopping people they shouldn't have stopped and everything. The colonel got so disgusted that he said, "Well, I'll fix that. So instead of having a corporal and three privates, I want a sergeant and three corporals out there, and then

we'll get this straight." So this had happened two or three weeks before.

So during the week immediately preceding the Pearl Harbor attack, from the Saturday before until the Saturday the 6th of December, I was the sergeant (chuckle) out on the main gate with my three corporals. The corporals were pulling about eight hours on and sixteen off, you know, but I really didn't have any schedule. The period that you talk about . . . the reason I say that I'm sure that our regiment was participating to some extent, although I was just on guard, I think, is that we had at that time--each man--had about eight rounds of live ammunition for their rifles . . . no, probably, ten because we had '03 rifles, and they came in clips of five. As the sergeant of the guard, I had a .45-caliber pistol, and I had one clip of ammunition.

They came out on about the . . . oh, it must have been the 2nd or 3rd and brought us just a whole boxful of ammunition, which was almost unheard of--bandoleers of rifle ammunition, a couple of boxes of pistol ammunition for me, some extra clips, you know, and all that sort of thing . . . without too much explanation. You know, "Here's some more ammunition. Take care of it," and so forth.

Marcello: There was a question that I should have asked you earlier, and maybe this is a good place to put it. A great many

people seem to feel that if an enemy were going to attack the military installations in the Hawaiian Islands, the best time to have done so would have been on a Sunday morning. Now what these people seem to feel is that Saturday nights were times of a great deal of partying and drinking and things of this nature. Consequently, personnel would be in no shape to fight on a Sunday morning. How would you answer an assertion of that nature?

Camp: I would have to agree with them. That was true particularly in our case, where you could only get to town on Saturday night really. Saturday night was the big night, and Sunday was the only day that we could sleep in where we didn't have to be up at the crack of dawn and so forth. So Saturday night was the big night, and Sunday morning would have certainly been the time of least resistance.

Marcello: Would there have been a great deal of drinking at the beer garden on the post?

Camp: No, probably less because of it being so near payday. The drinking in the beer garden at the post was inverse to how much money (chuckle) you had, because we could get these little PX books, see, that we could draw and that we paid for at payday. Like you asked me how much I made--I made fifty-four dollars a month. Well, that wasn't take-home pay (chuckle). By the time I paid for my laundry and my

haircut chit and my theatre chits and my beer chits, I probably took home thirty dollars (chuckle) or had thirty dollars in cash, as did everyone else. At the end of the month, you could drink beer on these little coupons; at the first of the month, you could go to Honolulu where all the "queens" were and drink rum and Coca-Cola (chuckle).

Marcello: Okay, so this brings us into that weekend of December 7, 1941. Why don't you pick up the story on that Saturday of December 6th, since you were still on the post at that time.

Camp: Right. Well, in addition to this doubling of the guard and increasing things of that nature, we also started pulling guard for a week. Because when you change guard everyday and people are pulling it every two or three days, well, it just got to where it messed up training, for one thing. The crews didn't know who they were going to have this day to train, and they tried to do it more, you know, by units and so forth. It'd just knock the whole unit out--a whole battery out--to put them on guard. They're on guard, and they can train next week. So guard was for one week. In our regiment, it started at noon on Saturday and ended at noon on Saturday.

So I was on guard up until noon on Saturday. I hadn't gotten a great deal of sleep due to the nature of the additional ammunition and, you know, kind of the idea that

something's in the air and also trying to do good, because I'd been threatened by the officer of the day that if we had anymore goof-ups out at that number one post (chuckle) that there was going to be real hell to pay. So I was tired; I was sleepy. Normally, I would have gone into town on Saturday night, as did many, many of my cohorts who were not on guard.

Marcello: Approximately what percentage of the base might be at town on a Saturday night, especially a Saturday night that occurred about a week after payday?

Camp: Well, if I'm not mistaken--and this I'm not real sure--I think the rule was 50 per cent. We had to have 50 per cent on base, and you had to sign out. The whole fallacy of that was that the 50 per cent was purely on numbers, you know, so you might have all your gun commanders and your entire range section gone but still have your 50 per cent, and they'd all be ammunition carriers, and you really couldn't (chuckle) fire the gun with them, you know. But it was 50 per cent, as I recall.

Marcello: Okay, continue with your story of what happened that Saturday afternoon after you got off guard duty.

Camp: After I got off from guard duty, I went on back to the post. Then we went on down to the beer garden and drank some beer. Several of my buddies said, "Come on, let's go to Honolulu

tonight," you know, and I thought it all over and decided it just wasn't worth it, that I was just really too tired to enjoy it. So I stayed on base and had dinner there; I didn't go to a movie. We just sat around listening to some records--several of us there in the barracks--and got to bed at about the regular time because we were tired.

Marcello: How safe and secure did you feel there in the Hawaiian Islands even as conditions continued to deteriorate between the United States and Japan?

Camp: Oh, I felt very safe, particularly in our position. There we were, out on the peninsula guarded twenty-four hours a day with all these guards and roving partols. In addition to the stationary posts, we had three-man patrols that went, on no regular time basis or regular route, from one post to another, back and forth. One of them was armed with a Brown-ing Automatic Rifle. We'd moved everything closer together so we could guard it better.

Actually, the idea of the Japanese attacking us from the air really never entered our mind . . . or not mine, anyway. And the Navy, of course . . . we were really a minority, particularly when the fleet came to town, and we heard all these long tales. They had good morale in the U.S. Navy then, very good morale. They kept telling us how they would blow the Japanese Navy out of the sea in a matter of the

week. I'll never forget; I heard this so many times that I believed it. A U.S. sailor told us the Japanese turrets on their ships could only be reloaded when they were directly fore and aft. So if they traversed them around to fire, then they had to traverse back to reload the gun (chuckle) and, you know, a bunch of malarky like that. So we felt very secure, or at least I did. I felt quite safe . . . much safer than if I were on the West Coast (chuckle).

Marcello: Okay, so evidently, Saturday night was rather uneventful. Maybe before we get you into Sunday morning, I should ask if there was anything unusual that did happen on Saturday night. Were there the usual number of drunks coming in and so on and so forth? Maybe that's a rather leading question, and maybe I shouldn't put it that way.

Camp: No, it was about the usual, yes, the usual number that'd come in after lights out and falling over beds and . . . certainly nothing unusual. I'd say there were about the same number on pass that were on pass the first weekend in November.

Marcello: Okay, I guess that probably brings us into the Sunday morning of December 7th. Once more, I'll ask you to describe your routine in as much detail as you can remember from the time you got up until the attack actually started.

Camp: Okay. Well, actually, that's quite simple, because I didn't

get up until the attack actually started.

Marcello: You had planned to sleep in that day?

Camp: Yes, I was going to sleep in and miss breakfast, because in our mess hall, like many others, the mess sergeant always kept a pot of coffee, and you could always go over there and get a cup of coffee. The way these barracks of ours were laid out, one battery had four barracks, and three of them were just sort of a mixture of gun sections, Marine section, and so forth. But the fourth barrack was divided into three sections. In the front section, which was the small section, the first three-graders--the first sergeant, the range sergeant . . . we only had about three or four . . . they lived there, and they had a quite ample space. The center section was reserved for special duty people--cooks, truck drivers, the station wagon driver--people who had odd hours--so they wouldn't be waking up everybody else. Then the other section, the other end section, was the sergeants' quarters where all the buck sergeants lived, and that's where I lived. There were the four gun commanders, myself, the motor sergeant, and the supply sergeant who all lived in this little area. My first recollection of waking up on Sunday morning was when I heard a short burst of automatic weapons fire.

Marcello: Was it coming from your post?

Camp: It was coming from somewhere close by. Oh, yes, it was definitely rather close. You could hear some airplanes, but airplanes, particularly on Sunday morning, were very common because the Navy would often be out there bombing and everything. They used to take great delight, after they'd pull out of one of these dive bomber runs on their targets, of buzzing our barracks. So I made no connection at all with that. What I thought was that one of these posts, these roving posts that were armed with the B.A.R.--the Browning Automatic Rifle--had fired off his rifle, because this had happened more than once (chuckle) at a, you know, fleeting shadow or something else. I didn't really associate it with any attack or anything of that nature, but I was awake as were the others. There were about three or four . . . about half of us, I'd say (chuckle), were in there.

The next thing was that the screen door to this little porch came flying open, and the mess sergeant came in. Of course, the mess sergeant was up, because they served breakfast at eight o'clock. He came in; he dived under his bed and said, "For Christ's sake, you guys! Get up! The Japs are on us, and they've hit Childress!" Childress was the staff sergeant who lived in the other end of this barracks that I just described to you--Herbert J. Childress. So we

jumped up, you know, and we ran out on this little porch-- we had just a little tiny porch there--and ran out there.

Just as we ran out, this airplane was making a bank over our barracks there very, very low. It had fixed landing gear. Actually, it was the Nakajima 97--and huge, just reddest spots on the wings (chuckle) that you ever saw in your life. I remember somebody said, "Jesus Christ! That's not one of ours!" you know (laughter). He was strafing. He had a rear gunner, and they were strafing the camp. . . . primarily the motor pool where all of our vehicles were all lined up in beautiful rows and so forth.

Marcello: This was a Japanese dive bomber then, was it not?

Camp: I believe it was, yes. But he was strafing; he wasn't bombing. So I don't know . . . we ran back into our barracks, and just instinctively in all these alerts, at the end of the bed we kept a field pack. You had to have two sets of toilet articles; that had to have a set of toilet articles in it, everything ready to go; your steel helmet was on top of it, and our alert gear that we wore on maneuvers and things. You know, without anyone saying anything, everybody just started putting this on, you know, and getting ready.

Marcello: In other words, everybody is acting in a rather professional manner after having observed that Japanese plane?

Camp: That Japanese plane, yes. We knew this was no . . . and up

to this time, we hadn't received any additional instructions or anything else. But then just about this time, while we were in the process of getting dressed, we hear an ambulance coming from our little aid station there to pick up Childress, who had been at the other end of the barrack.

Then about that time, the bugler of the guard starts playing this "Call to Arms." There were two bugle calls in the Army then that the bugler of the guard would play, and any other bugler who was in the barracks at that time would grab his bugle and start playing the same thing; that was the "Call to Arms," an alert really, and the fire call if there was a fire. Well, the bugler of the guard started playing this "Call to Arms," and then some of the other buglers started picking it up. About that time our air raid siren went off, and, boy, (chuckle) you know, we knew that something was really radically wrong.

Marcello: You guys were at least in a better position in that you probably had some sort of a post to which you would proceed. You know, a lot of the Army units, like those at Schofield Barracks and so on, really had no place to go.

Camp: That's right, yes. We had a mission and a place to go, right. We had done this same thing so many times in practice that everybody knew exactly what he was supposed to do.

Marcello: Incidentally, when that Japanese plane came in so low, were

you able to distinguish the pilot and the gunner and so on and so forth?

Camp: You could see the gunner; yes, you could see him quite well.

Marcello: Describe what he looked like.

Camp: Well, he had on a helmet with goggles, because the rear cockpit was open. There was a machine gun on a swivel there, and he was firing this machine gun. You couldn't see the pilot too well; you could just see this rear gunner.

Marcello: In other words, by the time you got out there, the plane was probably coming out of its dive, was it not?

Camp: Yes. Yes, he was banking around . . . but extremely low.

Marcello: Okay, so you now have your field gear, and you know that this is the real thing. So pick up the story at that point.

Camp: All right. Okay, well, we had very, very elaborate traffic plans for both within the camp and without the camp, you know. Everyone had to hit it at H Hour plus so-and-so to get all this movement done. Well, the word was passed down that we would move by infiltration, that is, you know, everybody go when they're ready, really.

Fortunately, the driver of our prime mover was in camp, and he came up to me and said, "I'll go get the truck." I said, "Okay. Take it over to the gun." We had two corporals on the gun section then, and one of them, "Tex" Ellington,

came up. So I told "Tex," "Grab a couple men if you can find them and go over with the driver and get the gun hooked up," which they did. They pulled the gun up in front of the supply room.

In the meantime, while all of this is going on, we are being strafed repeatedly by planes . . . not a wave of planes but one dropping down every now and then and strafing us.

Marcello: Where are these planes coming from? In other words, do you feel that their primary mission had been completed somewhere else, and they were coming over Camp Malakole as an afterthought, perhaps?

Camp: Right. Right. Absolutely, yes. Because they obviously were just coming over to harass us. They weren't taking time or the concentration or the effort for anything other than to just harass us, which they were.

Marcello: They probably dropped their bombs some other place.

Camp: Oh, yes, yes. Right, yes.

Marcello: Did any of this constant strafing occur anyplace close to you?

Camp: Yes, one time it came very close. When we were loading the . . . we pulled the big antiaircraft gun behind the Big Mack truck up to the supply room. Each gun section had a box; it looked like a coffin, about the size of a coffin. In this box, we had all the tools, the cleaning rods, the

preservatives, and everything that we needed to maintain the gun. They had pulled up to the supply room to load this box aboard the prime mover and get the rest of the crew aboard.

While we were in the process of loading this, they came over and actually hit the truck. The "tarps" on the truck were all rolled very neatly and folded over, and the "tarps" were all pulled together up at the front of the truck so that the truck was all open in back. One bullet hit in this "tarp," because I remember "Tex" was in the truck. He laid down, and we all hit the ground, of course, when the plane came over.

When we got back up, I remember two things very distinctly --seeing our battery commander, Captain Clyde Randall, standing out in the middle of the street there (chuckle) with his .45-caliber shooting at this airplane (laughter)--it was a stupid gesture, you know, but he was firing back at it--and then "Tex" jumping up and sticking his finger in the hole in the "tarp" where this bullet had gone in and saying, "That was damn close!"

Marcello: Did you see a lot of people firing at these Japanese planes with small arms, such as .45-caliber automatics and things of that nature?

Camp: Right. Yes. Everybody was shooting at them. Everybody,

you know, who had ammunition and had a weapon was firing at them. In the streets there, they set up a couple of .30-caliber machine guns. I know one of our individuals there who was a good machine gunner was firing away and perhaps with some results. But this wasn't our main mission; our mission was to get out of there. So we weren't, you know, trying to set up to defend Camp Malakole; that was not the idea. The idea was to get down to West Loch. Anyway, we got the truck loaded up.

Marcello: About how much time has elapsed now?

Camp: Oh, probably twenty minutes, something like that--not long. It seemed like an eternity, but it wasn't really all that long. But we had the truck loaded. The captain was the only officer that I saw in our battery, but that's all we needed. Actually, we only had two in the battery at that time; one was away at school. So he said, "We're to move out by infiltration. You know where to go. Go on out and take the gun down there and start getting it set up." So we went out the gate, and as we went out the gate, the officer of the guard was there, who was an officer who had been in our battery previously and whom I knew. He gave us the, you know, "go get 'em" sign and said, "Get the hell out of there!" As we were going out, he yelled, "You're the first gun out!" We'd had some other trucks out, but we had

the first gun out. So we traversed this road out to the main road.

Marcello: I assume that you are going above the authorized speed limit, obviously.

Camp: Obviously, yes. I passed my old guard post out there. Miraculously, how they did it, I don't know, because this, I'm sure, could not have been more than a half-hour from the time we had heard this strafing and everything, but there was a military policeman at that intersection. He didn't come from our camp; we didn't have any MP's stationed there. There was one at every major intersection that we hit.

Now Malakole, see, is out on Barbers Point, so we come out and we hit the main road, and we're turning towards Pearl Harbor, going into Pearl Harbor. We had no traffic problem at all (chuckle), because all the other traffic is coming away from Pearl Harbor. There was a lot of traffic coming away but very, very little going in. We were strafed, I think, probably twice on the way in.

Marcello: Describe these incidents.

Camp: Well (chuckle), they were almost humorous, particularly the first time. There was a truck ahead of us, and he started slowing up. Of course, each truck had a man standing in the truck--this was standard operating procedure--that was looking for planes. They'd yell, "Plane!" and give the, you know,

two o'clock, four o'clock, or wherever direction by the clock, and then the truck would start slowing up. As you said, we were greatly exceeding the speed limit. The truck would start slowing up, and as soon as it got about slow enough that the people (chuckle) figured they wouldn't break their neck, people started jumping off the truck. Like I said, the first time, it was really comical looking at this truck ahead of us. Of course, being the sergeant, I was riding in the cab of our truck with the driver. The men had so much gear on, you know, all this stuff, that when they would hit the ground (chuckle), the gear would just almost explode. A canteen would fly over here, and something else would fly over there, and they'd get in the ditches on the side of the road. Then as soon as it'd pass, everybody'd get back in the truck and away we'd go. We weren't hit or actually anywhere close to being hit going down. Some of our trucks in the regiment were hit but not ours.

So we went on down towards the harbor, and the closer we got to the harbor, the more traffic was coming out. Then we began to see some of the smoke, you know, coming up from some of the ships that had been hit.

We went through a little town there down by the . . . close to Honolulu called the Ewa Plantation, and we'd gone through this little town many times. It was just a sleepy

little village there outside the Ewa Plantation. As I said, we had gone many, many times through that town, and the citizens never paid any attention to us, and we never paid any attention to them. But this particular morning, we went roaring through there, and I would guess we must have been going fifty or sixty miles an hour with that big gun on behind us. If anything had gotten in front of us, we'd never been able to stop that thing (chuckle). As we went through the little town, though, some of the people were out, and they were all giving us this "V" for victory sign, you know, and our boys (chuckle) were suddenly theirs. We all thought it was all kind of comical, you know; we'd been through there a million times, and they didn't know we were alive (laughter), but suddenly we're "their boys."

So we got on down to our battle position, which was at the ammunition depot, Naval Ammunition Depot, which was guarded by Marines. Each gun . . . we had positions for the guns that we'd revetted, dug, you know; we had places for ammunition, crew, shelter, and all this. We'd done all this in these maneuver periods. So we rolled our gun right on into the position. By this time, we're, of course . . . well, we're on a finger of Pearl Harbor itself, and we can see all the smoke and corruption and explosions still going on over there. But actually, we were so busy getting our

gun ready and getting the ammunition that we didn't really, you know, pay much attention. There wasn't a panorama; there was trees and things in between us; you couldn't just look right out there and see it. We were fortunate in that being at this Naval Ammunition Depot . . . in fact, it was the terminus of their little railroad that they ran down there. They had some igloos there, and they had permitted us to store our ammunition right there.

Marcello: They were called igloos?

Camp: Igloos, yes. Those were the Quonset-type huts, yes. So our ammunition, our 3-inch--our heavy ammunition--was right there, so all we had to do was just go a few blocks and pick it up and bring it back to the guns. Whereas, all of the other batteries in our regiment and all the others, most of it was stored up at this ammunition crater, and they had to send trucks up there to pick up the ammunition and bring it to the gun. We were talking later to some of the people that were involved in this, and they said it was mid-afternoon before they ever got their ammunition, because there was the damndest traffic jam (chuckle) you ever saw. Everybody was trying to get their ammunition all at once.

If I might regress just a moment about these MP's being on the crossroads, they did a magnificent job. Although, basically, we didn't like MP's, they really did a job that

day. They ran some of the civilian traffic off into the cane fields; it was interfering and getting in the way. But this huge elaborate traffic plan that we had, you know, where Unit A goes here, Unit B goes there, and all that just completely fell down (chuckle). There was no semblance of any traffic plan at all; everybody was just going where they could get.

So we got our ammunition and got our guns in place, and by this time, oh, it must be at least ten o'clock or so.

Marcello: So what do you do from that point?

Camp: Well, we start filling up the ends of the revetments for the guns. The guns had to roll in and roll out, so we had revetments, really, on two sides of it, and we had sandbags there--unfilled sandbags--to fill in the revetment. So we started further revetting that, really strengthening our position. Of course, we're on a "Red Alert," ready to go, ammunition standing by, and everything--although it's too late, because "the horse is gone." We're waiting to fire settling rounds, because these guns are extremely heavy with these outriggers that they have. No matter how firmly you seem to have them settled, you need to fire one round to really settle it into position and then re-level it.

Marcello: And these are called a settling round.

Camp: Yes. And, of course, we had to have permission to have somewhere to fire this round to have it explode, and we were waiting to do that until we thought we would be fully set.

In the meantime, though, the whole place is a beehive of activity. No one has had anything to eat, and no one has missed it, although it's mid-afternoon.

We finally got permission--got alerted--that we were going to fire our settling rounds. So we get all set, and then we have to stand by and wait, because there's some obstruction or something, some reason we can't fire. I'm going into a little more detail on this, because it has a certain aspect. The gun commander at that time wore a head and chest set; it was a telephone, you know, with an earphone and then a speaker up in front of your mouth. You got your direction from the gun officer who told you when to fire and when to cease fire and everything, which you passed on to the gun crew. So we were all loaded and ready to fire this settling round, and then time went on and time went on.

I was wandering around talking to some of the crew and everything, and all of the sudden over the phone the command comes, "Fire!" So like, you know, I'm supposed to, I immediately sound out, "Fire!" and the gunner pulls the lanyard and fires the gun. Well, the 3-inch antiaircraft gun has what they call a semi-automatic breech. You load

it manually, but when it fires, it comes back and it throws out the shell--that big brass shell--out automatically. I was standing almost directly behind the guns (chuckle) when they fired. The shell came back, hit this head and chest set--the mouthpiece--drove it into my mouth, and broke this tooth off (laughter), which was a rather stupid thing to do, you know.

Marcello: So you became one of the first casualties in your battery.

Camp: Yes . . . well, not the first. Childress was the first. But it felt like it had broken off every tooth in my head, you know, because it just pulverized that tooth. But it wasn't all that bad; it just broke half of it off.

Marcello: Did it put you out of commission?

Camp: Oh, no. No, I just spit it out (chuckle) and went right on. In fact, there were several days or weeks, I guess, before I was able to make an appointment and get it ground off or smoothed off.

We fired out settling rounds, and then we were, you know, pretty well set. We continued to improve our positions and so forth. In the meantime, we had several alerts, you know, and everytime anything would happen, we could hear and to some extent see some of the activity going on in the harbor. We were fully aware of what was going on.

Marcello: Approximately how far were you from the ships at Pearl Harbor?

Camp: Gee, I guess West Loch must be . . . well, not more than a mile or a mile and a half, and that's across water, of course.

Marcello: Did you have an unobstructed view of the ships?

Camp: Some of them, yes.

Marcello: What sort of a day was it in terms of climate?

Camp: I'm not sure. It must have been warm, because they always are.

Marcello: Was it clear, hazy, or how would you describe it?

Camp: Clear . . . yes, clear.

Marcello: A good day for an attack?

Camp: Excellent day for an attack. I'm sure it was clear, because I remember when we fired our settling rounds that the sky was just absolutely blue . . . there wasn't anything . . .

Marcello: Are these settling rounds live ammunition?

Camp: Oh, yes, right. They're a regular round that you actually pick some point out there where you try to explode them. You have to get clearance, see, for that area so that there will be no airplanes there. This was no problem with us, because we didn't have the airplanes (laughter).

Marcello: Anything up there would have been Japanese planes.

Camp: Anything out there would have been somebody else, yes.

Marcello: Okay, now in between all these alerts and so on, what's the crew doing? What are you talking about? What thoughts are

going through your mind?

Camp: Well, for one thing, we're just having a hard time realizing that this is really happening, you know, that this is really us and that those really are Japs. It was almost beyond your comprehension to believe that this was really happening and that you were a part of it. I don't think any of us had any great thoughts, you know, that this is the "Day of Infamy," and I'm in the middle of it (chuckle) or anything like that. Actually, we were working very, very hard, you know, doing hard physical labor. But there was no griping, no complaining about anything.

Marcello: Is there very much talking among yourselves and speculating and things of that nature?

Camp: Oh, yes. Yes, quite a bit. You know, "What's going to happen to this," and we were worried. Because as I say, we didn't have an unobstructed view, but by moving around we could see enough of the harbor to see that it looked like most of the Pacific Fleet was on the bottom and wondering, you know, about what would happen. I guess the biggest speculation was that we were sure that they would now come in and invade. We weren't really worried so much about our gun, because it was protected as well as it could be. We even had camouflage nets that had previously been prepared that we had over them that opened--you know, sprang open--so the gun could come up

through it and all that sort of stuff. We were in a little algarroba or kiawe grove there; it's very similar to our Texas mesquite. I think it's the same thing (laughter). They had one that they called algarroba, and the two to me seemed almost identical. It's a little stunted tree that grows out of the coral.

But we were really concerned about, you know, the internal security. This whole ammunition depot that the Navy operated naturally was guarded by Marine detachment--a very, very small Marine detachment. We were inside their cyclone fence, and I'm speaking only of my battery, because our other batteries were scattered out, as I said, around the harbor. So we had more security than anyone else, because we were behind this cyclone fence and had the Marines there. But the Marine garrison was extremely small. We were thinking in terms of that, you know, and "Where will they land?" you know, and hoping that the infantry, the Hawaiian Division, was out on the beaches, because they actually had positions out by Malakole and all along the beaches there.

We still hadn't had anything to eat, and then no one was complaining of "Where is the grub? Where is the chow?" or anything. The afternoon, see, passed very, very quickly. There was a tremendous amount of activity in the harbor. We could hear, you know, tugs, and you could see the crews

already out with torches, you know, cutting the sides of the ships; you could see that . . . see the torches and so forth. And there was just an awful lot of noise and things of that nature.

Well, shortly after dark, the Marines came over . . . I'm sure that they didn't have an officer in command; the sergeant probably commanded the whole detachment. He talked to the captain and said that he didn't feel that he had enough men to adequately guard the perimeter and wanted us to augment the guard. Also, there was a water tower at this place, and he wanted to put a guard up on the water tower, both for the perimeter thing and also for antiaircraft purposes, which the captain, of course, readily agreed. So we put a man up on the tower with a Browning Automatic Rifle. Then we augmented their guard around the fence with two little detachments. I had one of them, and one of our other sergeants had the other.

So the Marines led us out to show us, you know, where they were going to put us along there. At this time, we were loaded down with ammunition. Just before we moved out, we got something to eat. It was pitch-black dark; of course, everything was complete blackout--no smoking, no lights, no anything. I remember eating it, but I don't remember what it was (laughter). Even the next day, I

didn't remember what it was (laughter).

We went on out on this perimeter, and we were right next to a cane field. I had about seven or eight men spaced out about twenty feet apart or so, maybe a little farther. All night long, we could hear . . . it sounded really like a battle going on. Over here you'd hear a burst of automatic weapons fire; you'd hear rifle fire going off over here; you'd hear grenades going off over there, you know, just all over the area. I suspect that there was some old scores settled that night (chuckle) that perhaps didn't enter into the basic hostilities.

But several of our men thought they saw shadows moving in this cane field and opened fire on them, you know. Of course, in the cold gray light of dawn, there was nothing there. There were several rumors during the night of invasion forces landing here and landing there. These things get out, you know, communication-wise, even though we didn't have all these elaborate radios and everything. But it got around. Everybody had heard the rumor that there was an invasion here and an invasion there.

Marcello: And I bet you believed all this.

Camp: (Chuckle) Oh, every one. We believed every one of them. Well, the next morning . . . incidentally, we had no relief; this wasn't eight hours on and twenty-four off; we were there

all night long and with no coffee or anything, no smoking, no nothing.

So finally, the next morning they got a little better organized and decided that they still needed more posts and everything, but they came down and pulled us off. Like I say, we'd had only that one little bite to eat the night before--nothing else all day--and by this time it was mid-morning; it must have been at least ten o'clock or so. As we were leaving, the Marines said, "Stop at our mess hall, and we'll feed your men some breakfast," because I think their outfits already had breakfast and so forth.

So I'll never forget. We stopped at this Marine mess hall, and they only had one cook in there . . . and what a magnificent cook. He had taken (chuckle) these loaves of GI bread and sliced them longways (chuckle) like this (gestures) and made real Texas-size toast out of it, you know, huge things . . . and fried eggs. He put two, three, four eggs--however many you wanted--on this great big piece of toast and give us hot coffee. It tasted magnificent (chuckle); it was really great! Then we went on back to the battery and started more preparations.

Then sometime, I guess, perhaps around noon, we received some survivors from the minesweeper Oglala. I think there were . . . you probably interviewed some. There were a lot

of Navy people that fell into this category. The Oglala was sunk, and most everything they had was down at the bottom. Some of these people had trouble even proving they were even in the Navy. They were just in their skivvy shorts or something when they dived overboard, and others were on leave and so forth, pass.

Marcello: How did you get these people from the Oglala?

Camp: The Navy brought them over. A Naval chief petty officer brought them over. I assume there was some sort of a system--some great hand that derived this--but they must have brought about twenty of them over. None of them really had adequate clothing or anything, so we went into our barracks bags, you know, and got out our extra set of fatigues and gave them to them, and shoes and leggings and so forth. We completely assimilated them (chuckle); you couldn't even tell they were the Navy. They were great hands, and they were incensed. They were much more incensed than we were. Of course, they had lost their home; they had lost much more of their friends than we had and everything. One that was working with my section was a gunner's mate--a Navy gunner's mate. He probably forgot more about gunnery than I ever knew. But he was willing to fill sandbags or do whatever. We had them for several days until things got a little bit better organized.

Marcello: Were they covered with oil and so on and so forth when they came over?

Camp: Some of them were, yes. But none of them seemed to be frightened or scared; they were angry. Universally, they were all angry, but they weren't afraid.

Also, when we were on guard that night--again regressing--we heard one of the ships moving out. Of course, we were all grateful that we had one that could still move (chuckle), you know, but we were so close there and then coming over the water you could hear the commands, you know, going over their loudspeaker system just as clear as a bell; we could hear everything they were saying, you know, "Cast off," this, that, and the other and so forth.

Marcello: You did know it was an American ship despite all the rumors.

Camp: (Chuckle) Right. That, I guess, was pretty much the day of the attack.

Marcello: How long did you stay out at that particular gun emplacement altogether there at West Loch?

Camp: We stayed there probably another two or three weeks. In fact, then as soon as things began to calm down a little bit at all, we began preparation of another position--everybody did. They knew that reconnaissance planes had flown over the next day or sometime, you know, which later history proved they did, you know, to take pictures to assess the

damage. They figured that despite our camouflage, they had spotted all of our positions, so we immediately had to take another position. Actually, from December 7th of '41 until May of '42 when we left Hawaii to go south to the South Pacific, we had three different positions--that position and two others that we prepared and moved into. We just kept moving around to change our position.

Marcello: Incidentally, during that night of December 7th, did you witness the fireworks that occurred when the planes off the Enterprise came in?

Camp: No, no.

Marcello: I thought maybe you would have observed virtually gun in the harbor, so to speak, opening up on those unfortunate planes off the Enterprise when they came in.

Camp: Oh, yes, yes, yes. Sure, yes. Right. In fact, we were probably . . . although I was out on this perimeter fence, we were probably guilty of some of that with our small arms. We didn't fire our main armament; we never got to fire that until much, much later in the war--our 3-inch gun. Our automatic weapons battalion, which was over on Ford Island, some of them up on the hangar buildings were still there. They participated in that little episode.

Marcello: I've heard it said that had it not been so tragic, that it was actually a beautiful sight with all those tracers and

so on filling the sky at night and so on.

Camp: Yes, that's true. One PBY came in real low over our position that night, and he was so low that it would have been almost impossible to hit him. They used to land right out there in West Loch and made a terrible racket when they came in and took off. We probably would have fired at him if he hadn't have been so low that he was actually on us before anybody really saw him, and then you could tell right away it was a PBY.

Marcello: Well, Mr. Camp, is there anything else relative to the Pearl Harbor attack that we need to talk about? I have plenty of tape, and if you feel there's anything we've missed, please feel free to continue.

Camp: Gee, I can't think of much. I do remember that later on . . . you mentioned the Enterprise planes. Several days later . . . during for the next few days, we saw no U.S. planes. There was no planes at all in the air. But when one of the carrier task forces did get back close enough, they did launch their planes in daylight this time, and everybody knew (chuckle) they were coming. And they flew over the island. I can remember everybody was out of their foxhole and out of their things cheering and yelling and hollering, you know, "Those are ours!" and "There we are!" We did see the battleship that they ran aground, you know, the one . . .

Marcello: The Nevada?

Camp: Yes. They run it up in the cane field. We could see that quite clearly from our position.

Marcello: Could you describe the Nevada running aground, or were you too far away to really go into any detail on that subject?

Camp: We were really too far away, I guess. What we heard mainly was hearsay, you know, about things. But you could see it quite clearly from our position, because there it was (gesture) and here was the cane (chuckle), you know, the sugar cane growing right up next to the hull.

Of course, the smoke and the stench and the burning oil were just terrible around there for quite awhile. They had dropped some bombs at West Loch prior to our getting there. Of course, it was all over by the time we got there. One of them obviously was intended for a ship, an armor-piercing bomb, that had gone through a reinforced concrete pier. They used this pier to . . . the little train came down with the ammunition, and then they had . . . it was rather primitive but some forms of material-handling equipment would off-load it there and then on this pier and then onto the barges that took it out to the ships. This was a rather substantial pier, and this bomb had hit the pier; but being armor-piercing, it had completely through and just made a hole so big (gesture). Then it exploded out under the pier in the water where it

really didn't do any damage at all.

Marcello: As a last question, what was the morale like in the immediate aftermath of the attack?

Camp: Oh, the morale was absolutely fantastic. Even among those malingerers and so forth, why, morale was high; spirits were high and the thinking was, you know, "We're going to go get them!"

Marcello: In other words, there was no attitude of defeatism or anything of that sort?

Camp: Oh, no. Not at all. I might tell you one other little anecdote that comes to mind. I had a member of my gun section by the name of John Salamone; he was from up-state New York somewhere. John had been trying to date a certain young lady for a number of weeks there and had been able to take her to a picture show a time or two or something like that. But on Saturday night, December the 6th, he finally "made it," (chuckle) and he was not with us, you know, when the attack came.

Then the rest of this is what John tells us, but he says the next morning that he's up in this hotel room, and he hears this banging going on outside, you know, but he doesn't pay any attention to it. Of course, it was a cardinal sin if you ever . . . if you were fortunate enough to date some young lady, you never told her that you were

a serviceman, you know. That was the kiss of death. So he had told this young lady that he worked for the government, which was true. (Chuckle) Anyway, she walked to the window and looked out and, I guess, observed what was going on, and she turned around and asked him, "Aren't you a soldier?" And he said, "Yes, that's true; I'm a soldier." She said, "Well, you better get out of here, because I think there's a war going on!"

John arrived sometime the afternoon of the 7th. Of course, he didn't have a chance to go to Malakole to pick his things up. By taxis and hitchhiking, he'd gotten to the battle position. He knew where we were, and he arrived in, you know, the high-waisted trousers of the day (chuckle), the zoot-suit-type trousers and everything (laughter)--all dolled up.

Marcello: Well, I suppose that's a pretty good place to end this interview, Mr. Camp. I want to thank you very much for having taken time to talk with me. You've said a lot of very interesting and important things, and I think that scholars are going to find this material quite useful when they are able to use it to write about Pearl Harbor.