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Interview with

Horace Chumley

April 3, 1974

Place of Interview: Decatur, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Horace Chumley for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on April 3, 1974, in Decatur, Texas. I am interviewing Mr. Chumley in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was a prisoner-of-war of the Japanese during World War II. Mr. Chumley was a member of a Texas unit known as the "Lost Battalion." This particular unit was captured virtually intact on the island of Java in the East Indies in March of 1942 and subsequently spent the duration of the war scattered in various Japanese prisoner-of-war camps throughout Asia.

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

Mr. Chumley: Well, I was born about six miles northeast of Alvord in a small community called Pella, which, of course, is no longer there, on June 18, 1916. I was raised in that community and in Alvord until I was grown, twenty-two or twenty-three years old. Of course, I had various jobs like most young guys do. Then I joined the National Guard in Decatur, and it mobilized the next week, and I went into the federal service. We spent about a year in Camp Bowie in Brownwood and on maneuvers in Louisiana and then shipped out for San Francisco. From there we went to Brisbane, Australia, and from there to the island of Java in the Netherlands East Indies.

Dr. Marcello: Going back just a minute, why did you decide to join the National Guard?

Mr. Chumley: Well, that was the thing to do then. It looked like the country was going to get in trouble, and I wanted to join and attempt to get more or less something that I wanted to do, rather than being drafted and just have to take whatever might come along. I wanted to get into something technical. I thought I wanted mechanics until I discovered radio, and I took that up instead.

Marcello: As you mentioned awhile ago, this was a headquarters company, or headquarters battery, I guess it would be called, here at Decatur.

Chumley: Right. Second Battalion, Headquarters Battery, 131st Field Artillery.

Marcello: At the time that you entered the National Guard unit, how closely were you keeping up with world events?

Chumley: Fairly close through radio. I hadn't traveled to amount to anything. I hadn't been in the public too much, so about the only communication I had was newspapers and radios.

Marcello: Well, as you mentioned, the National Guard mobilized in November of 1940, and you were sent to Camp Bowie for additional training, and eventually you went on maneuvers in Louisiana.

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: What is outstanding about your training that you received in Camp Bowie?

Chumley: I think maybe radio school. I had, I believe, six months school as I remember. They taught us a little bit of theory, but mainly it was Morse code, CW it's known as, and I had a little training on the cipher devices. I was assigned to the battalion executive as his radio operator on maneuvers.

Marcello: Who was the battalion executive?

Chumley: Colonel Rogers at that time. I was his radio operator through the Louisiana maneuvers. I guess in the Louisiana maneuvers I should have had a little bit of insight as to what might happen. I was captured by the "Red" forces while on maneuvers in Louisiana. That should have told me something.

Marcello: I gather that when the unit was in Louisiana, you were moving around quite a bit and were never in one place for very long.

Chumley: No, we had a couple of rest periods or rendezvous for three or four days at a time. We were down there for three months.

Marcello: What sort of equipment did this 131st Field Artillery have?

Chumley: Well, we had, at that time . . . it was up to date. We had so-called walkie-talkies for the battalion commander and executives and the observation post and stuff like that. Then we had bigger radios for communication to brigade and so on and so forth.

Marcello: Now while you were at Camp Bowie, the Army underwent a reorganization there when it changed from the so-called square divisions to the triangular divisions. Do you remember anything about that?

Chumley: I just remember that. I don't really remember what went on as far as organization.

Marcello: Well, it was essentially through this organizational shift that the 131st Field Artillery was more or less separated from the 36th Division, isn't that correct?

Chumley: Well, it was only one battalion. It was only the 2nd Battalion.

Marcello: The 2nd Battalion of the 131st Field Artillery?

Chumley: It was just picked right out of the whole division and headed overseas.

Marcello: Do you have any idea as to why they selected the 2nd Battalion as opposed to some other group?

Chumley: Nothing except rumors, that we supposedly shot the best score on the ranges in Louisiana and in Fort Sill, Oklahoma, of any battalion that appeared there. Now that is strictly rumor. I have no evidence that that is really true.

Marcello: At the time that all of this was taking place, were you married at this point yet?

Chumley: No, I wasn't.

Marcello: I assume then that you did not marry until after you got out of the service.

Chumley: That's true.

Marcello: I do know that during this period right before you were sent overseas, the men over a certain age had the option of getting out of this 2nd Battalion, did they not?

Chumley: Yes, there was a few that got out for various reasons.

Marcello: And then I think, essentially, their ranks were filled by draftees, were they not?

Chumley: Yes, they brought out the wartime strength, too, the draft.

Marcello: Okay, I guess it was in late November, 1941, or sometime in November of 1941, that you were on your way to San Francisco and from there to the Hawaiian Islands and ultimately, at least at that time, your final destination was the Philippine Islands. Now you did not know it was the Philippine Islands. As I recall, you were part of Operation PLUM.

Chumley: Right. Plumb to hell and gone (laughter).

Marcello: Did you have any idea at all where your ultimate destination was going to be? What sort of rumors were floating around at this time?

Chumley: Here again, it was strictly scuttlebutt that we was going to the Philippines. As I remember, we pulled out of Honolulu one Sunday morning, and the next Sunday morning Pearl Harbor was bombed.

Marcello: Incidentally, as an old country boy from Texas getting on board the USAT *Republic* and heading for the Hawaiian Islands, did you get seasick?

Chumley: No, I was very fortunate. I never did get seasick.

Marcello: You must have been one of the very few that didn't.

Chumley: I was.

Marcello: When you got to the Hawaiian Islands, did you have a chance to get off the ship and look around a little bit? I know you had a very short leave while you were there.

Chumley: Yes, I had twenty-four hours off the ship.

Marcello: You were fortunate then. Most people, I don't think, had the entire twenty-four hours, did they?

Chumley: Well, radio operators got a little bit of a break there. We got a little bit more time off because we went into town with our respective officers--the ones we were operators for.

Marcello: While you were in the town of Honolulu, did you hear any talk on the part of either the civilian or military people there about the possibility of a Japanese attack?

Chumley: None whatsoever. I didn't. Some of the rest of them might have, but they were . . . the people there were real nice to us. We had a tour of the island and went

to a luau and had a trip through the Dole pineapple processing plant there. By that time, it was time to go back to the ship.

Marcello: I assume that you also did not see any special preparations being taken for the eventuality of an attack.

Chumley: No, I didn't. If I did, I didn't pay any attention to it.

Marcello: Okay, so you got back on the Republic again, and you were out of Honolulu a couple of days, and you received word of the Japanese attack. First of all, do you remember how many days you were out of Honolulu when you heard about the attack?

Chumley: I believe seven days. I believe we sailed on one Sunday morning, and the next Sunday morning we got the word about mid-morning, as I remember.

Marcello: What was your reaction when you heard about the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor?

Chumley: Well, shock, I guess. I think we probably, most of us, more or less went into shock. That's just about all I can say about that. I think most of us did go into shock. Naturally, all of us wondered if we'd ever get back to Texas again.

Marcello: Did you think that it would be a relatively short war?

Chumley: Yes, we didn't think it would last very long. We thought we'd be home by Christmas. That was always the slogan, always the scuttlebutt, that we'd be home by Christmas.

Marcello: What was your opinion of the Japanese at that particular time? In other words, when you thought of a Japanese, what sort of a person usually entered your mind?

Chumley: Well, I really didn't have much of an opinion because I had never met a Japanese, and I'd always read about them being cooks and gardeners and what have you. So I guess that's the way I looked on them.

Marcello: One of your buddies aboard this ship was a Japanese-American by the name of Frank Fujita. Did you know him?

Chumley: Yes, I knew him.

Marcello: Did he have to take any kidding or anything of that nature as a result of this Japanese attack?

Chumley: He took a lot of kidding, but nobody seemed to resent him. In fact, he was very sharp-witted and amusing. I remember once he was up on deck. They were building .50 caliber machine gun ammunition. We had the USS

Pensacola as an escort, and it poured on the steam and left. We had rumors that there was a Jap ship up ahead, and he looked at that thing as it left and said something to the effect that he guessed they was going after some of his ancestors. And he said, "That's right, you big so-and-so," he said, "stick around till we need you and then run like hell!" He did a lot to keep the morale up.

Marcello: I've heard some of the members of the "Lost Battalion" remark that the *Republic* had passed or at least had come within view of a convoy of ships heading towards Pearl Harbor, and many of them assumed that this was the Japanese carrier force that ultimately bombed Pearl. Do you know anything about this?

Chumley: No, I don't remember that. I know that when we were at Pearl Harbor there were several Jap ships laying off shore, but they were tankers and freighters. It's possible that we could have spotted them, but I don't much think so, actually.

Marcello: Well, I don't think so either because I'm positive that that Japanese force was much, much farther north, and then eventually it turned south. These, I'm sure, were some other group of ships. Incidentally, how

safe and secure did you feel aboard that Republic? I understand it wasn't the fastest ship in the world.

Chumley: No. Rumor had it that it was nine knots, which I believe is about ten miles an hour. I didn't think too much of it, frankly.

Marcello: Ultimately, you went to Suva in the Fiji Islands, and, of course, you didn't get off the ship there, I don't think. Or most people didn't, anyhow.

Chumley: I sure did want to because I've thought, and still do, that that was the most beautiful place we'd seen on the trip. Like you say, none of us . . . very few of us, at least, got off the ship. I didn't.

Marcello: I think all you did was take on fresh water and perhaps a few other supplies there.

Chumley: Yes, fresh fruits and stuff like that.

Marcello: Okay, so you leave the Fiji Islands, and now, of course, you're on your way to Brisbane, Australia. Quite obviously, the Philippines had been invaded, and you would no longer have been of any use there, so you were being diverted to Australia, where, I think, they were trying to figure what to do with you.

Chumley: I think so.

Marcello: Describe landing at Brisbane and the reception that you got from the Australian people there.

Chumley: Well, we got the most royal reception from the Australians that I think anybody could have ever had. They treated us like royalty. We were the first contingent of American troops that they had ever seen. They quartered us on a racetrack there, Ascot Racetrack. We stayed there, I believe, about ten or twelve days. Not only the military, but the civilian population just couldn't seem to do enough for us. We couldn't buy a meal in town. We couldn't buy a drink. They just gave us the town, that's all.

Marcello: Were you one of the fortunate ones who managed to spend Christmas in the private homes of the Australians?

Chumley: Yes, and I don't even remember their names. I remember them but I don't remember their names.

Marcello: What were your experiences with mutton? I understand this is one of the first times that many of you had ever eaten mutton.

Chumley: Yes, I think we made the Australians feel real bad, which is very unfortunate, because when they heard that we were coming in they had gone all out to prepare mutton for us. We were delayed two or three hours in landing, and that mutton was cold and greasy. Probably some of us made some remarks about it that didn't set

too well. That first meal, I mostly remember the milk. I thought that was the best milk that I'd ever drank. It was good.

Marcello: What did you do during this approximately two-week period that you were in Brisbane? I'm speaking now of activity in the military sense.

Chumley: We didn't do a whole lot of anything. We helped, as I remember, a few days down around the docks transferring some cargo from one ship to another, and as I remember that's about all I did. We spent most of the time on leave, I'd say.

Marcello: What were your quarters like here at Brisbane? You mentioned that you were in the Ascot Racetrack.

Chumley: They had their Army tents set up for us on wooden frames with floors in them. We quartered that way right on the edge of the track. The horses would run every morning in workouts. They didn't have any races at that time, but they worked those horses out every morning.

Marcello: Some of the former prisoners have remarked about the fact that there were very, very few men here in Brisbane.

Chumley: That's right.

Marcello: Did you notice this, also?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: And I assume that most of those had already gone off to war.

Chumley: Yes, most of them were older fellows that had already been to war and had come back. Some of them was quite interesting to talk to. Some of them had been in Africa in the desert.

Marcello: Well, being a radio operator and consequently being a little closer to the officers, did you have access to certain information that wasn't available to the ordinary soldier in the outfit?

Chumley: Very possibly, but I don't particularly remember any of it. In fact, we didn't have much . . . I don't believe we even had radios set up while we were there.

Marcello: Very early in January you left Brisbane, and you were on your way to Java. You had lost the Republic by this time, and you were now on board the Bloemfontein, a Dutch ship that was pretty fast, was a pretty good ship.

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: Describe the trip between Brisbane and Java.

Chumley: Well, actually, I guess it was relatively uneventful, but we really enjoyed it. We had calm weather all the way, and the food was better on the Bloemfontein than it was on the Republic.

Marcello: I recall that at one point during that particular trip you did have a submarine scare. Do you remember anything about that?

Chumley: Yes, I remember that submarine scare. Some of us were sleeping on deck, and . . . by the way that *Bloemfontein* was a motor ship. It was a diesel ship, and we could hear those old diesels going, and sometime in the night we woke up suddenly and wondered what was happening. Everything was so quiet. Later we found out that it was a submarine scare. I have always heard that there were torpedoes that missed us.

Marcello: Now I've heard some of the men remark that when you left Brisbane you were once again on your way to the Philippines, but somewhere out of Brisbane you were diverted to Java this time. Do you know anything about that, or is this strictly scuttlebutt?

Chumley: Here again, it's strictly scuttlebutt. I think the first three or four days out we were supposed to be headed for the Philippines, and then we turned and went by Thursday Island and on into Java.

Marcello: About how long did this trip take between Brisbane and Java?

Chumley: As I remember, it seems to me like about twelve days.

I wouldn't be sure of that, but I believe that's what it was.

Marcello: I would assume that the ship was probably on some sort of a zig-zag course in order to avoid or evade submarines.

Chumley: Yes, not only changing directions, but changing speeds. I feel like that us going to Java was due to a mix-up in orders. In the convoy going to Brisbane, there was three or four ships of Air Corps personnel and Air Corps equipment. They stayed in Brisbane, and we went on to Java. When we got to Java, the only American troops that there was there was, I believe, five B-17's and two B-24's, and they only had flight crews. They had no ground crews. They had escaped from the Philippines.

Marcello: In other words, you're talking about the remnants or what remained of the 6th, 7th, and 19th Bomb Groups from the Philippines.

Chumley: Right. It was also a P-40 squadron in there. I don't know what their destination was.

Marcello: Well, anyhow, when you got to Java, you landed at Surabaja. What were your immediate impressions of Java when you landed there and were on your way out to the airport at Malang, which was near Singosari?

Chumley: Gosh, I don't know. I guess I was just a big old goggle-eyed country boy. This was some sort of a fairy land or fantasy land or whatever. It wasn't real.

Marcello: Were you impressed by the tremendous number of people that you saw cramped into a relatively small island?

Chumley: Yes, I sure was and I just couldn't understand that many people being on that kind of an island.

Marcello: What was the terrain like around Surabaja or in the countryside between Surabaja and Malang?

Chumley: From Surabaja into Malang was mostly mountainous as I remember, which was astounding in itself, being raised here in the flatlands of Texas. I just couldn't imagine anything like that.

Marcello: Well, we mentioned awhile ago that you received a fairly nice and cordial reception from the Australians. What sort of a reception did you receive here at Surabaja from the Dutch or from the native Javanese?

Chumley: Well, they were both real cordial. They showed us a good time the same as the Australians did. Some of us were invited into Dutch homes. We was helping unload the ship in Surabaja, and I remember in one evening we were busy until about dark, getting our trucks loaded. The officers, the Dutch officers, took us out to dinner,

in, I think, the most fancy hotel in Surabaja. I don't remember the name of it. I remember us giving the waiters a bad time. It was one of these very proper deals with a string of silverware on each side of the plate, you know. Somebody in the crowd decided we didn't need all of that, so he gathered up a knife, fork, and spoon and just bundled the rest of it up. Somebody else grabbed the linen tablecloth, and we just dumped all that excess silver in this linen tablecloth. I'm afraid we kind of shocked the Dutch, and all the waiters almost went crazy (chuckle).

Marcello: How long was it after you landed before you went out to the airport at Malang?

Chumley: Seems to me as though it was the next day. I think we went straight from the ship out there.

Marcello: Describe what Malang looked like.

Chumley: That's been a long time. I remember it . . . the barracks were either stone or brick, and they had red tile roofs. I don't believe they had any doors on them or any windows. They had lots of openings, but they had no windows as such. I believe there was shutters on it. Of course, it seemed a lot hotter there than it did here. I don't think it is quite as hot, but it seemed hotter to us.

Marcello: What did the battalion do when you got to the airport? In other words, what was your function in being there?

Chumley: Mostly ground-crewing for the Air Corps. Occasionally, some of us went on missions. When a crew member got hurt or got sick, why, we went on missions. I believe I went on three missions.

Marcello: Were these a voluntary deal?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: How come you decided to volunteer to go on one of these missions?

Chumley: Well, that was the first four-engine airplane I'd ever seen on the ground, and I think that applies for about 90 per cent of the group, and being young and foolish, we wanted to fly. We wanted to see what the rest of it looked like. Naturally, I went as a radio operator and gunner.

Marcello: Did anything out of the ordinary happen on any of the three missions that you made?

Chumley: No. The target was . . . well, twice the target was covered with clouds, and that time we didn't have all this sophistocated radar and stuff like that, so we had to jettison some bombs on our return. The third time, the navigators couldn't find the target, so we didn't do a whole lot of damage (chuckle).

Marcello: In other words, you don't have too many real exciting battle stories about your experiences on the B-17's?

Chumley: No, not in the B-17. After they started raiding us there, somebody got the bright idea to dig the trails of those French 75 rifles in and use them for antiaircraft guns. I believe we got credit for either two or three Jap bombers, but they came in normally in the same path every time, and after we hit that one flight, the next day they come in just 180 degrees from the course that they'd been coming in. Of course, we couldn't turn those French 75's and get a shot at them, so they wiped us out on them.

Marcello: Well, it was on February 5, 1942, that Malang experienced its first Japanese air raid. Describe what you were doing when that air raid occurred and what you did when those Japanese planes came in.

Chumley: I don't really remember what I was doing, but I remember getting in one of those so-called air raid shelters which was nothing but a big open pit sloping from the top down. I guess it must have been forty foot wide at the top and twenty-five foot wide at the bottom, and we didn't like that. We felt like they was just bunching us up so that they'd sure wipe us out. We just knew the first bomb was going in there. One of the lieutenants didn't like it either, so he said, "Let's get out of here a few at a

time and head for the jungles," which is what we did. We never did . . . or I never did go back in one of those air raid shelters again. I hunted my own.

Marcello: What did it feel like being under those Japanese air raids?

Chumley: I don't know. I think that was the most frightening time that I ever experienced. I personally felt like that they had me singled out. They was going to drop one right in my hip pocket.

Marcello: What did you find to be more nerve shattering, the bombers or the strafing?

Chumley: Actually, the strafing worried me more.

Marcello: Why was that?

Chumley: It laster longer for one thing.

Marcello: In other words, those bombers dropped their loads and left, but the strafers kept going back and forth until their ammunition was expended.

Chumley: And you didn't know which way they was coming from. They'd go over the horizon, and you didn't know whether they was coming back that way or some other way.

Marcello: How much damage did the Japanese do during this first air raid?

Chumley: I believe they got two of our aircraft, and outside of that they didn't do a whole lot of damage to the fields.

Marcello: How many of these air raids took place before the actual invasion itself occurred?

Chumley: I don't remember. There was at least, I believe, five or six.

Marcello: Do you ever get used to these air raids?

Chumley: No, I didn't. I was just as badly scared on the last as I was on the first one.

Marcello: After these raids had been completed--how ever many there were--what did the field at Malang look like?

Chumley: As I remember, it didn't change substantially. They hit a few buildings, but they were garages and vehicle storage buildings and stuff like that. I don't remember any of the barracks being damaged to any great extent. A little flying shrapnel, but I don't remember them being damaged too badly.

Marcello: Well, during this period--in fact, it was on February 27, 1942--what was left of the bomb groups evacuated from . . . I should say they left Malang and went to Australia.

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: What sort of a blow was that to your morale when you saw that the bombers or what was left of the airplanes were leaving and you were having to stay?

Chumley: Well, I think mostly . . . there again, I think some of us went into shock, me included. We couldn't understand, and I still don't understand. I believe they had nine aircraft by that time, and I believe they could have taken us off there.

Marcello: Was there a certain amount of resentment over the fact that those planes were leaving and you had to stay?

Chumley: Oh, you bet. There sure was as far as I was concerned, and I think most of the rest of us felt the same way.

Marcello: At the same time, however, did you feel that reinforcements were going to come and that help was on the way?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: Is this what you were told?

Chumley: That's what we were told, and we more or less believed it, or I did anyway.

Marcello: Up until this time had you had very much contact with either the Australian or the Dutch troops that were on the island?

Chumley: We did have quite a bit of contact with the Dutch and some contact with the remnants of the English. We didn't really meet too many of the Australians--I didn't--until after we got to prison camp. Incidentally, one thing . . . one incident took place there on Singosari.

We met a man wearing a Dutch uniform. He was a Dutch sergeant. We know now--I do--that he was a Mexican. He was very friendly to us and spoke perfect English. He spoke Dutch, German, and we later found out he spoke Japanese. He mixed and mingled with us there and told us where to go in town to eat and drink and what have you. I'm probably getting ahead of the story and going to foul you up.

Marcello: That's okay. Go ahead and finish it.

Chumley: We didn't see this guy . . . most of the rest of my battalion never did see him again. About two years later he turned up in our camp, in the Bicycle Camp in Batavia, as an American first lieutenant, pilot. He quartered with the officers and acted as a kind of a go-between. When we were picked up from Java, we landed in Singapore and refueled and then went to Calcutta. Well, when the plane landed in Calcutta, there was two civilians in white suits who met him as he came out of the airplane, and none of us ever seen or heard of him again. It's always been a big mystery to me. Later, after I went to New Mexico and worked through my law enforcement contacts, I got to know quite a few FBI and other government law enforcement agents. I have

asked several of them, through what description I could give them, to run a make on him, so to speak. They all came up dry. Now that is one question I'd like to have answered: who was he?

Marcello: But you have some idea that he was doing some sort of undercover for the American government.

Chumley: Yes, either that or for the Japanese, but I don't know which, frankly. I've always wondered about that.

Marcello: Consequently, on . . . well, I'm not sure exactly what the exact date is, but let's say shorly after the airplanes had evacuated Malang the Japanese invasion occurred. What did the battalion do from that point?

Chumley: We just . . . . we took to the trucks, and we stored everything except just our duffel bags there on the field and started to meet the Japs. As I remember, we went into position at one place and fired for about six hours. Then we just started running, just circling on the back roads. It wouldn't be maybe one or two or three men to a truck, but they tell me the idea was to try to make the Japs think there were a lot more of us than there was. Here again, rumors had it that we diverted enough power in there that it maybe saved Australia.

Marcello: I've seen it written, or at least I've heard it said, that the Japanese may have landed as many as 200,000

troops there on Java, thinking that they were going to be meeting a relatively large force of opposition.

Chumley: Yes, that's what I've always heard, and I've also heard that they landed one of, if not their crack, divisions there, the Cherry Tree Division. So maybe we did do a little good, I don't know.

Marcello: During this entire period when you were moving about the island, did you come under Japanese fire very often or for any extended length of time?

Chumley: Actually, that one time that we fired . . . oh, we had a few strafing runs on us by just maybe one or two planes, and we'd seen a lot of reconnaissance planes. We fired over some Australian troops that were pinned down in the river bottom, and they were eating them up with knee mortars, and we had to keep raising our fire because they had had no supporting artillery fire. They'd been chased out of the desert, jumped off at Singapore, and made it to Java. They hadn't had any supporting fire for about two years, as I understand it, and when they realized that it was "out-going mail," we had to keep raising our elevation to keep from shooting into them. They was advancing that fast.

Marcello: I gather that you moved around the island so much that you would be advancing in one direction and the Dutch

and Australians would be retreating, and then at another location they would be advancing and you would be retreating, and you kept this up for several days.

Chumley: Yes, quite a number of days, I believe. Rumor had it that we run over and killed more Limeys when they were stopped for tea then the Japs got.

Marcello: Well, finally, on March 9, 1942, the island capitulated. Now I gather that the Dutch had more or less been hoping for this all along. They apparently didn't desire to put up too much resistance.

Chumley: No, in fact they cut us off from all supplies three days before we capitulated, and we took what we needed such as gasoline and groceries and what have you at gun point. They threw down on us. Then when they gave us this rendezvous point in a racetrack again, there was ammunition and supplies stored under the grandstands. They wouldn't let us . . . they stood guard on them and wouldn't let us destroy them or blow them up because they thought the Japs would do them like the Germans did and haul them. They just more or less register them and let them go on their way. It didn't work out that way.

Marcello: In other words, the Dutch were very much interested in saving their property and thinking that perhaps life would return to what it had once been before this war got started.

Chumley: I believe that's right, yes. I don't know if they'd been made promises of that or whether that was just their way of thinking.

Marcello: Well, anyhow, like I mentioned awhile ago, the orders came down that you were to surrender on March 9. What were your feelings when you heard about the fact that you had been ordered to surrender?

Chumley: It was a pretty dark day. We had no idea what was going to happen, of course. Frankly, I figured we'd all be killed.

Marcello: Was this a standard rumor that was going around, that is, that the Japanese did not take prisoners?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: Did you ever think of possibly heading for the hills or hiding out or anything of this nature?

Chumley: Well, I thought about it, but then on the other hand, after we had started . . . before . . . when we first got to Java, all the natives were waving American flags, and they had their bicycle taxis all decorated with American flags, and about a couple of days before we was captured, they was waving Jap flags and had their taxis painted with the Japanese markings. We just didn't . . . or I didn't figure that there was much use because we knew that the natives didn't like the Dutch, and I didn't trust the natives for that reason. I thought it was better to stay in a group.

Marcello: Well, what happened from this point forward then? You mentioned that you were ordered to surrender on March 9. What happened from this point? In other words, what did the battalion do?

Chumley: We went into a rendezvous at that racetrack, and I don't remember how many days it was.

Marcello: Now was this in Batavia?

Chumley: No, it was up in a mountainous country, as I remember, in the tea plantation area. I don't remember the name of the racetrack. Some of the other boys probably will, but I don't remember the name of the racetrack. We was ordered to lay out everything just like it was an inspection. This Japanese party came in with a Japanese captain, I believe, and looked it over and then took all of our trucks out. I believe they left us there for some time, two or three days possibly, and then herded us into a camp.

Marcello: In other words, up until this point you had really not had very much contact with the Japanese themselves.

Chumley: No, none.

Marcello: As a radio operator were you privy to any of the instructions that were being received by the officers from the Japanese?

Chumley: No, because the officers were all in one . . . they were all there. We had no contacts with division or anybody, so they passed their information from one officer to another. All we had was rumors.

Marcello: Now where did you go from the tea plantation?

Chumley: We went to a native labor camp in Batavia. It was called Tanjong Priok. It was on the waterfront, and I believe it was for the native dockworkers and that type of people.

Marcello: Can you describe what this place was like so far as the living quarters were concerned and things of this nature?

Chumley: Well, for the number of us there was in there, it was miserable. It was more or less open shacks with, as I remember, walls up about three or four feet, and the rest of it was open. It was just more or less shelters instead of buildings.

Marcello: What did you do while you were at Tanjong Priok?

Chumley: After awhile we went on working parties down at the docks and helping clean up. It had been hit pretty hard by the Japanese bombers. They had us down there cleaning up burned out buildings and doing salvage operations, cutting grass, and stuff like that.

Marcello: Was this fairly hard work, or were these voluntary details, or just exactly how did this take place?

Chumley: No, they would call for so many working parties. There was nothing volunteer about it. They'd call for so many working parties, and it was hard, hot, and dirty work. By that time, the food had gone down to the prison camp standards, you might say.

Marcello: What did the food consist of?

Chumley: Just as little as possible. A little bit of rice and some green vegetables such as we might think about turnip greens or something like that.

Marcello: Now how much contact did you have with the Japanese here at Tanjong Priok?

Chumley: We had some rude awakenings.

Marcello: In what way? Would you care to describe these?

Chumley: That's where the beatings started, and them teaching us Jap military discipline and stuff like that. Of course, we were scared to death of them.

Marcello: What did these Japanese soldiers look like?

Chumley: Well, I didn't think too much of the looks of them (chuckle). They were . . . all except one . . . they was . . . the commandant of the camp was a big man. He was six foot one or two and weighed at least 200 pounds or more. The rest of them were what I'd call

the coolie type. We figured they'd been in rice paddies all their life until just before the war started, and I think they were just about as scared as we was. They were as afraid of us as we were of them.

Marcello: You mentioned awhile ago that you did already begin to receive some rough treatment here at Tanjong Priok. What forms did this treatment take?

Chumley: Oh, slappings, being forced to stand at attention for long periods for some minor infraction, and that kind of stuff.

Marcello: What were some of the rules and regulations that they expected you to follow here at Tanjong Priok?

Chumley: There were so many and some of them were so stupid I can't hardly . . . can't really tell you. You just wasn't allowed to do anything except what they told you to.

Marcello: Did they make a conscious effort to try and humiliate you and things of this nature?

Chumley: Oh, you bet! That was second nature with them.

Marcello: In what way would they try to humiliate you?

Chumley: Well, in one way they cut all of our hair . . . made all of us cut our hair. You couldn't have anything that would be considered civilian in the way of clothing or utensils

or anything like that at all. It all had to be Army. In fact, I had one Australian hat. A guard came in one night and spotted it hanging on my bunk, and he made one of my friends cut it in two to keep me from wearing it--that kind of harassment. That's all it was, strictly harassment.

Marcello: Did these humiliations become more frequent when the Japanese had you around the native Javanese or anything of this nature?

Chumley: Well, we didn't have too much contact except, of course, on working parties. But an awful lot of the humiliation came while we were in camp. They would knock us around out on working parties to show the natives that they were the superior race.

Marcello: You talked about your personal belongings awhile ago. What exactly did you have and were allowed to keep when you first were captured?

Chumley: Nothing except our uniforms, our mess gear, and our blankets, and that was just about it.

Marcello: Toilet articles?

Chumley: Yes, if you had any, you kept them--razor, toothbrush, and that sort of thing.

Marcello: Did the Japanese ever make any attempt to loot you at this time? In other words, did they ever demand your watches or rings or any personal valuables that you may have had?

Chumley: Well, not me personally, but I know of a lot of the guys that they did. They seemed to be crazy about watches especially. Of course, they took all of our cameras. That was contraband. They took all of them. But they'd find a watch or a ring and . . . they usually didn't take it. They'd swap you a duck egg or something for it. I remember that was one of the first self-winding watches I ever seen. They were the Mido brand, and the islands were full of them. All of the more affluent Dutchmen wore them, you know, and we had bought some of them. Some of the guys had bought them. I remember one . . . I don't remember who it was. It was one of our bunch, and he had traded a Jap soldier one of these watches, and the Jap took it back to the barracks and left it in his locker or whatever he had, and it quit running. He came back and just beat the fool out of this old boy for trading him a watch that didn't run. It quit. Of course, it was automatic. He hung it up and didn't move it, and it quit running (chuckle).

Marcello: How long were you hare at Tanjong Priok altogether? Was it a matter of weeks?

Chumley: It could have been. It seems to me like it was a matter of a few months but . . .

Marcello: It very easily could have been because I think you were at the docks here beginning sometime around March 30, 1942, and I think it was in May that you moved into Bicycle Camp, so it could have been this particular stretch of time involved.here.

Chumley: That's possibly right.

Marcello: Generally speaking, did the physical condition of the men remain rather normal here at Tanjong Priok?

Chumley: Well, no. We started going down, and we watched them ___________, and that's where a lot of the guys started getting jungle rot and dysentery and that sort of stuff because, like I say, we wasn't acclimated to it, and the Dutch always told us that a white man couldn't live in Java more than two years without getting out after awhile. We made a bunch of liars out of them.

Marcello: What was the jungle rot that you're talking about?

Chumley: It was sores that wouldn't heal, usually on your feet and legs. They were open, running sores.

Marcello: Now are these somewhat different from the tropical ulcers that I've heard the people talk about in the jungles?

Chumley: I think it's possibly the same thing or close to it. This is just the slang term, I guess, the vernacular that we would use.

Marcello: Now at the time that you were at Tanjong Priok, had the battalion already been split up?

Chumley: No, we were all together.

Marcello: In other words, D, E, and F Batteries were there, the Headquarters Battery was there, the Service Battery was there. Everybody was still together at this point.

Chumley: Yes, we was all still together at this point. I believe it was just before we left Tanjong Priok that we picked up some partial crew of an American freighter, a ___________________ Brothers ship, that had been sank by a German raider who picked up survivors and then put in . . . the survivors were on the German raider for a time--I don't know how long--but it put into Tanjong Priok for supplies, and they gave the prisoners to the Japs. I believe that's where we picked them up.

Marcello: What did this particular outfit look like?

Chumley: Oh, it was just a bunch of civilians. They had two colored guys in the crowd, I remember, and they had a Panamanian, and they had one guy from Oklahoma, and the rest of them were just more or less typical waterfront sailors, typical merchant marines, and they sure had a come-down. The Germans had been treating them pretty good. They'd been getting black bread and potato soup, stuff like that, twice a day. They sure got the bad end of that swap (chuckle).

Marcello: Is there anything else that stands out in your mind from your stay here in Tanjong Priok that you think needs to be part of the record? Let me ask you this. Did the Japanese seem to pick on the larger men with a greater degree of regularity than they did on the smaller ones?

Chumley: Yes, they did. That was very noticeable because in . . . we pretty well caught on to that pretty soon. Most of the big men would stay as much in the background as they could. The smaller guys would do as much of the stuff with the Japs as possible.

Marcello: Okay, then in May of 1942, you moved from Tanjong Priok to the Bicycle Camp. How far was one camp from the other?

Chumley: Well, it was in the same city. I would guess it was not over ten or fifteen miles.

Marcello: At this time, did you think that the war was going to be a relatively short one?

Chumley: Yes, we still thought it was, but it kept going and kept going. We had some communications in the Bicycle Camp. Up until this time until several months after we were in the Bicycle Camp, we had never really been searched, and some of us had some portable radios and stuff like that. We got some news. At night sometimes we could get KFI in Los Angeles. We got word that there was supposed to be a shakedown in a couple of weeks before it happened. The ones of us that . . . well, everybody hid stuff. The ones of us that knew anything about radios carefully disassembled a lot of the radios and hid them in various places, hid their componant parts, and later we were able to reassemble them. By this time, it was under the penalty of getting shot. They wouldn't cut your throat because that was an honorable death. They'd shoot you. We did manage to reassemble some radios. They were simply out for months at a time. If some part burnt out, well, we made or improvised another part to get them working.

Marcello: Now this occurred in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Yes, we had . . . there was one civilian that got caught with us. He was a Sperry Instruments man on the Philippines. Well, to start with he was a one-legged guy. He had an artificial leg, and he had lost his leg in his third year in Indianapolis. They had sent him to school and made a Sperry Instruments man out of him. He was over in the Philippines when all this hit. He made it to Java and stayed with us.

Incidentally, there's another story on him, too. We built this little three-tube receiver in his leg, his artificial leg. We couldn't build a super heterodyne receiver. It was a regenerative receiver which would put out a signal of its own. It could be picked up in . . . well, if you happened to tune across into a certain frequency . . . the Japs' communication center was just outside the Bicycle Camp. In fact, one end of the antenna was in the Bicycle Camp. They had picked this little old radio up, the signals from it, several times. They would fall in there on a search of the camp and . . . well, they'd use their triangulation devices on it, you know pinpoint it. I've seen them go right to the spot where it had been. Of course,

they'd make us all fall out for inspection. This old boy'd just slip his wooden leg on, and be standing out there in line. They'd just tear the barracks up hunting that radio. Incidentally, he brought it out with him, and it's now in the Smithsonian Institute.

Marcello: Is that correct?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: Well, how long did this go on in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: All the time we was there.

Marcello: You were there for how long?

Chumley: I was there . . . well, I moved away from that camp and back to it, I believe, seven times. I don't even remember all the camps I was in.

Marcello: In other words, you were in and out of Bicycle Camp for the duration of your tenure as a prisoner-of-war.

Chumley: Yes, but I didn't stay there the whole time. I was in and out of there and was there when the war was over.

Marcello: And this particular radio that was constructed inside this man's wooden leg was strong enough that it could receive signals from relatively far away?

Chumley: KFI in Los Angeles, it was more or less fix tuned to that frequency. We would take turns. Of course, not all the guys knew this for sure. We couldn't afford

to let everybody know it, but there was at least three of us that knew it. We'd take turns listening. We learned when the news broadcast would come on. One of us would listen, and two of us would be sentries to watch for Jap guards or any other commotion that might come up.

Marcello: Exactly how did this radio operate in this man's leg? How did you put it in there, and how did you operate it?

Chumley: Well, in that particular barracks we had power. We had electric lights. We operated it off of these light circuits. We just, through various means, built it up out of these parts that we had taken out of other radios. We just built it in that leg. The leg was, I guess, a forerunner to fiberglass. It was some sort of a hollow plastic to make it lighter, you see. We had, oh, I'd say, a hole at the top five or six inches in diameter, and then it tapered down toward the bottom to about two inches down close to the ankle. You could get enough components in there and one headphone to build this little three-tube super regenerative receiver.

Marcello: And all of this gear was inside this man's wooden leg?

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: He must have been a rather gutsy person to allow you to do that.

Chumley: He sure was! He had plenty of guts.

Marcello: Do you recall his name?

Chumley: No, I can't. Right after we got back . . . oh, within six or eight months after we got back, he had a write-up in Life or Time, but I can't remember which it was. I seen the write-up and I didn't know where the radio was until about ten or twelve years ago. Someone from Santa Fe . . . in fact, the superintendent of the Game Department made a trip back to Washington and went through the museum and seen that radio and came back and told me about it. That's how I found out where it was.

Marcello: And this occurred in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: And that radio was kept operating throughout most of the war?

Chumley: What time it wasn't down for repairs. Of course, it might take us three months to make a simple little resistor or a condenser. Sometimes those would burn out, you know. But we were lucky enough that we saved the tubes. There would have been no repair for them. We couldn't have repaired them at all. We was lucky enough that we had enough tubes that we got by without losing them.

Marcello: And as you mentioned awhile ago, while you were at Tanjong Priok, you still did have radios there that the Japanese did not confiscate.

Chumley: Right. We didn't have a search for at least three months after we went in.

Marcello: In other words, when you say you had radios there, would these have been military-type radios?

Chumley: No, they were personal portables. That was when the hand-carried, battery-operated portable was first becoming practical, you know. Then a small portable would have been like maybe eighteen inches long, ten inches high, and five or six inches deep with a suitcase-type handle on it, carrying handle.

Marcello: This is an interesting story, and I'd never heard about this particular radio that had been hidden in this man's leg. Like you mentioned awhile ago, I assume that very, very few people had access or knowledge of this radio.

Chumley: There was another radio in camp for a while that was built up by a Dutchman. He had it so-called "hidden" at Bicycle Camp in the number one barracks, which had the control of all the power in camp, and it was rack-mounted like you see a lot of electrical equipment. They built that thing . . . the rack stood out, as I

remember, about four foot from the wall. You could walk around behind it. He built this thing right up in that rack amongst the rest of the electrical wiring. I've seen any number of Jap guards come in there and walk around behind that thing and look straight at that radio, didn't know what he was looking at. It was right there in the open. Anybody that knew anything at all would have probably recognized it as a radio tube sticking up there.

Marcello: What was your attitude toward these Jap guards? Was it one of disgust? Did you look upon them as being rather ignorant and stupid?

Chumley: Definitely. We didn't think they knew anything at all. Some of the childish pranks they'd pull, and I can't remember any specific ones, really, but they acted about like five year olds. They could be vicious, too.

Marcello: I assume we're talking about a guard who, perhaps, had been conscripted out of a peasant society and . . . I'm sure he was ill-educated, to say the least.

Chumley: Yes, all he knew was what the Army had told him, you know. Really, I don't think there is any Western mind, even these smart men, that really understand the Oriental mind.

Marcello: We're talking about a soldier who was used to brutality as a way of life in the Japanese Army. In other words,

physical punishment was standard operating procedure in their army.

Chumley: Right. They slapped them around. The Pfc would slap around the buck private, and the corporal would slap the Pfc and right on up the line. This is right.

Marcello: Describe what the Bicycle Camp looked like from a physical standpoint when you arrived there in May, 1942.

Chumley: Well, Bicycle Camp was a real nice place. As far as buildings and scenery went, it was a Dutch army camp for bicycle troops. I guess they would be similar to our infantry, except they rode bicycles instead of walking. It had permanent barracks. I don't remember how many barracks there was, but it did have permanent barracks. It was largely shaded by banyan trees. Some of them cover maybe a half-acre and be at least 100 foot high. Under different circumstances, it would have been a nice place to stay. It was right on the edge of Batavia.

Marcello: What were the bathing and sanitary facilities like here at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Well, other than overcrowding, it was the best camp we were ever in for sanitary facilities. We had flush toilets of the Dutch variety, you know. We had several bathhouses, but it was intended for like 400 or so, and

there was 3,000 of us in there. If it hadn't been overcrowded, it would have been adequate.

Marcello: Now by this time you were in a camp with Dutch and Austrailian prisoners-or-war, also.

Chumley: Yes, and the English, Welsh, Scotch. We sampled everything, I guess.

Marcello: What sort of treatment did you receive from the Japanese here?

Chumley: Well, about the usual. We was very closely regimented, guarded, and they demanded so many bodies every morning for working parties. There was always working parties going out. Some went to truck parks, and some went to road projects. Every once in a while a party went out to Japanese barracks there to do KP and grass cutting and all that kind of stuff, usual stuff that goes on around an army camp.

Marcello: Did these work details occur with any degree of frequency, or did you have a lot of spare time here at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: They were pretty frequent. They were everyday. We also had a permanent camp detail which I was on most of the time. I've gone on some working parties, but I mostly stayed in camp.

I worked in a blacksmith shop, a tin shop. We had some pretty well-educated and some very technical

men in that shop that were in the camp. We had . . . I remember one mining engineer, a Dutchman. We had several Australian blacksmiths. Before the war was over, we had a shop there that was real unique. We made everything from lead pencils to false teeth to eyeglasses, piston rings, and cooking utensils out of scrap. The Japs dumped several carloads of scrap in one corner of the camp, and they would allow us to use that.

We had one . . . I think the biggest accomplishment there . . . this Dutch mining engineer, through the years with our help, put together a metal lathe. The only thing that didn't come out of the junk pile was a two-horse electric motor, and we stole that out on a working party and disassembled it and carried it in our lunch pails. Before the war was over, he could cut threads with that thing from sixteen threads per inch down to sixty-four threads per inch, cut them right or lefthanded. He could turn out stuff like valves for engines, piston rings.

Then we had another Dutchman in there who was an amateur lens grinder. After we got this lathe going we . . . through his help and his diagrams and what have you, we constructed a lens grinding machine. So that's how we got the eyeglasses. We molded false teeth, molded dentures, out of aluminum.

Marcello: How did you make your mold for the false teeth?

Chumley: Out of mud, usually, and then . . . we made files in there and made knives. The Australians, being good blacksmiths, they would forge this stuff, see, and then it would be machined on that lathe and by hand.

Marcello: Who supervised this blacksmith shop?

Chumley: Well, it was our officers mainly. Of course, the Japs would wander in and out of there to kind of keep an eye on things, you know, seeing that you didn't make too many weapons, that kind of stuff. Of course, by that time, we knew that there was no hope of escape because the Japs had put a price on our heads, and we were marked by having our heads clipped. The natives were hostile. Well, even if they hadn't been hostile, they were used to working for like two or three cents a day, and the price on an enlisted man was ten dollars, I believe. A noncom was fifteen, an officer was twenty-five, so there just wasn't any chance of getting away. We just had to ride it out.

Marcello: Were there any types of weapons made in this blacksmith shop?

Chumley: Oh, yes. Knives and stuff like that. I made a razor, a straight razor, and brought it back with me. What they

didn't know was that me and an Australian had two .45 automatics and a hundred rounds of ammunition buried under the blacksmith's anvil and kept them there until after the war.

Marcello: Did you ever think about what would happen if you got caught with something of that nature?

Chumley: Oh, I knew darn well! I knew what would happen!

Marcello: Why did you do it then?

Chumley: I think defiance. I think that one of the main things for survival was defiance.

Marcello: In other words, simply to show that you were perhaps a little smarter than what they were and that you knew something that they didn't know.

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: Where did you get the .45 and the ammunition?

Chumley: They were carried into the camp before the search took place, and we was lucky enough to keep them hid out. Like I say, I've been moved away from that gun and back to it at least five or six times.

Marcello: In other words, everytime you left Bicycle Camp and returned, you ended up in the blacksmith shop usually?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: How did you get in the blacksmith shop to begin with?

Chumley: I got in there . . . I had . . . in my high school days I had worked a couple of summers up at Wichita Falls helping a blacksmith in a blacksmith shop. I got in there through the Australians that way.

Marcello: What were some of the other unique items that were manufactured in this blacksmith shop?

Chumley: Probably one of the most unique was a set of doctor's surgical tools. This doctor would draw sketches. We had a so-called hospital. There was one barracks set aside for a hospital, you know, and we had . . . we made these for a Welsh doctor. I do remember his name. It was Kenmonth. He would draw us a sketch as near to scale as he could, and we'd forge this stuff in the blacksmith's . . . make a rough forging of it in the furnace and then work it down by hand.

Marcello: Did you make most of your molds out of the mud that you talked about earlier?

Chumley: Well, those surgical instruments, we didn't mold any of them. We just forged them and shaped them by hand. The only way we could temper them was by what you call case hardening. Which after you use 1/64th of an inch, say, of the cutting edge, why, it's no good then. It won't hold an edge. But we had no other way of tempering it.

Marcello: How long would it take you to make a set of surgical instruments?

Chumley: Oh, it probably took us a least a year and a half to complete that set.

Marcello: And how many instruments are we talking about altogether?

Chumley: As I remember, about twelve. There were some scalpels, and . . . I think they call them sutures. They're like scissors, and they will clamp and hold an artery and what have you . . . and rib nippers, oversized diagonal pliers is about what they amounted to. I'll bet that if that guy's still alive and still in practice, he has that set of tools framed in his office.

Marcello: You mentioned that it took you well over a year to make these things. I would assume that time was not a significant factor. You had plenty of time. Did you make anything in this blacksmith shop for the Japanese?

Chumley: That is how we got the scrap in there. This engineer agreed to make some engine parts for them, and that's how we got the scrap pile in there and got this blacksmith shop to build up like it did.

Marcello: Oh, that's true. You mentioned awhile ago that you were making piston rings and things of this nature, and obviously that wasn't for the prisoners.

Chumley: No, that was for the Japs (chuckle). We made, like I said, valves and piston rings and stuff like that.

Marcello: Generally speaking, I would assume that the Japanese left you alone or pretty much to yourselves while you were working in the blacksmith shop.

Chumley: Yes, they didn't bother us too much. They would come and ask a lot of silly questions, you know, and maybe march us off with something we were working on down to the sergeant who spoke a little English. All of us learned to speak a little Malay because Malay is so much easier to learn than either Japanese or English. We all learned Malay and communicated mostly in Malay. If the guard was liable to come in and you'd be working on something and you couldn't explain it to him what it was, he'd make you bring it and go down to the sergeant, and you'd have to explain it to the Jap sergeant. You'd have to explain it to him what it was and why you was making it.

Marcello: Did you ever have occasion to fraternize very much with the Japanese soldiers or they with you?

Chumley: No.

Marcello: In other words, you tried to avoid them as much as you possibly could.

Chumley: Like the plague!

Marcello: If you stayed away from them, that meant you weren't liable to get a beating or something of this nature.

Chumley: And you never knew what might touch them off, or what might make them beat you. They might have had a bad night before, or the sergeant might have beat them that morning. The less contact you could have with them, the better off you were.

Marcello: Do you think that a great deal of the physical punishment that you received was due to communication difficulties? They couldn't make you understand what they wanted done, and you couldn't make them understand and things of this nature?

Chumley: Well, I think that is part of it. I'm reasonably certain that that's part of it, but I think the main thing was that they were trying to prove themselves a superior race. They was top dog then, and you was less than a peon. I think that they were always trying to prove themselves a superior race. At one time at Bicycle Camp there, they decided they'd have some games. It was a sort of a track meet--fifty-yard dash, hundred-yard dash, and that kind of stuff. At first, some of our guys jumped out there and outrun them. The next time they run, they made them carry twenty-five pounds on their back. If they outrun

them again, they'd put fifty pounds on them and probably give them a walloping.

Marcello: You mentioned these games that took place at this one time here. What did you do for entertainment and recreation here in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: We didn't have, you might say, any recreation. When you've got a chance to sit down or lay down, why, you usually talk to a small group. This is another thing. If there's more than three or four people in one group and the guard comes in, he's liable to wallop the whole bunch of you. So, you stayed in small groups.

Marcello: What did you usually talk about?

Chumley: Food.

Marcello: I assume that this was the topic of conversation that was on everybody's mind.

Chumley: Yes. It gets in pretty bad shape when a bunch of nineteen to twenty-five year old guys get together, and there never be a woman mentioned. It's always food. If there was a woman mentioned, it was usually because of something that she had cooked.

Marcello: I know that a great many of the prisoners had a particular type of food that they thought about more than any other. Did you have a particular favorite?

Chumley: No, not really, just food. Meat mostly. I've always been a big meat eater.

Marcello: Did you sit around and dream up recipes and things of this nature?

Chumley: Oh, you bet! We had one Canadian that said when he got out the first thing he was going to do was rent a four-room apartment. He was going to get in the kitchen and have them start carrying groceries in at the front door and stack that apartment full from the kitchen door to the front door, and he was going to eat his way out.

Marcello: I've heard some of the prisoners even remark that their imagination got so vivid that they could actually smell a particular type food cooking somewhere in the camp. Did you ever experience this sort of thing?

Chumley: Yes, when a man gets in that shape, he pretty well reverts back to an animal. You develop senses that you don't ordinarily think about.

Marcello: What were the typical rations like that you received here in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: The workingman . . . the normal rations for them was 150 grams of dry rice and then whatever little bit of greens or stuff like that that the Japs would bring in. At one time there was around 3,000 men in that camp, and

they would bring the day's rations other than the rice--the greens, and sometimes, very seldom, maybe a small piece of meat. They would bring that in in one load on about a 1928 Chevrolet truck. That was a day's rations for almost 3,000 men.

Marcello: So what you're trying to tell me, then, was that each man did not get very much to eat.

Chumley: That's right.

Marcello: Did it take you awhile to get used to cooking and eating that rice?

Chumley: Yes, it did. In this camp . . . well, in most camps they had a central cook house, as they called it. It would all be cooked there and brought out to the different barracks . . . measured out very carefully and brought out to the different barracks.

Marcello: What sort of quality rice were you eating here in Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: It was what they'd call a dirty rice. It was a brown rice, brown or red. It usually had plenty of weevils in it. That was meat that we got. It had husk in it. I guess it was just the lowest grade of rice that they'd bother to harvest.

Marcello: I would assume that in the beginning you tried to get those weevils out, but after awhile it didn't make any difference.

Chumley: No, it didn't make any difference, and the ones that couldn't eat it or wouldn't eat it was the ones that we left over there.

Marcello: In other words, you had to make a determined effort to eat that food.

Chumley: Right, you sure did. And you never did get used to it, either. I never did learn to like it.

Marcello: How did you manage to supplement your diet while you were in Bicycle Camp? Now again, I want to keep in mind that you were in Bicycle Camp off and on for the duration of the war, for about three and a half years actually.

Chumley: Yes. There would be periods that the Japs would let some stuff come in. The workingmen . . . the working parties, they paid us ten cents a day if we worked fourteen hours. They would occassionally let the natives bring in some stuff, but a duck egg got up as high as four guilders, four dollars. We was making ten cents a day, so it took a few days to buy even a duck egg. There was some Dutch and half-castes on the outside that would slip the working parties . . . they'd leave stuff for the parties to find, you know. It was pretty hard to get it back into camp. Most of it that was gotten out there had to be eaten out there. There was a little creek that run through this

Bicycle Camp, and we got quite a lot of messages in through that creek in eggshells.

Marcello: How did that work?

Chumley: The people on the outside . . . see, there was still Dutch in there that had family and relatives right outside the camp, and they would somehow or another cut an egg and cut the shell and put notes in that and seal it back up and float it in through this creek. There was always somebody that . . . through the grapevine . . . they'd more or less set a time, you know. They'd get messages in that way.

Marcello: I've heard it said that the Dutch women were particularly brave and didn't take too much guff off the Japanese on the outside.

Chumley: Boy, that's right! If them Dutch men would have fought like the Dutch women, we'd never lost that damned island. That's the truth (chuckle)!

Marcello: Can you think of any particular incident that you saw that indicates the bravery or the brashness of the Dutch women?

Chumley: Yes, I've seen quite a few times when we'd be out on a working party, and these Dutch gals would ride by on

bicycles past the working party, or meet them, and they would holler something to us. The Japs were liable to kick them off their bicycle or turn their bicycle over. One little girl, especially, singled out one sailor off the Houston. His name was Crispi. He was from back on the eastern seaboard somewhere, and, boy, she stayed with him, and she'd get an awful lot of stuff to him! Well, not an awful lot. It was by our standards, but now it wouldn't have been. She had taken some pretty severe beatings.

Marcello: You mentioned the USS Houston just a moment ago. Now those people were already in Bicycle Camp when the 2nd Battalion arrived there. What was the condition of those guys when you went into Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Some of them was in pretty sad shape. Some of them had been wounded, and some of them had been in the water as high as thirty-six hours with maybe just a pillar or a piece of wreckage to hold them up. Some of them was burned both by sun and by oil. They was in pretty sad shape.

Marcello: How did the members of the "Lost Battalion" try to help these individuals?

Chumley: Just any way we could because they came in there with absolutely nothing. We still had at least a big part

of our clothes and blankets and stuff like that and mess gear, and, of course, we divided with them.

Marcello: I think that this is something that needs to be a part of the record because from all of the interviews that I have done I have more or less concluded that this was typical of the American attitude throughout this entire period. In other words, the Americans always seemed to be perhaps more ready to share with their buddies than, let's say, some of the other nationalities.

Chumley: Yes, the Americans and the Australians were about the same, I would say. As far as the rest of them, it was pretty gruesome.

Marcello: What was your opinion of the British prisoners?

Chumley: Well, it got to be almost the same as my opinion of the Japs, frankly. I had absolutely no use for them.

Marcello: Why was this?

Chumley: Oh, various things. Just an accumulation of things. They, again, more or less considered themselves a superior race, and America was their colony yet. It just didn't set too well.

Marcello: I gather that from a sanitary standpoint there was trouble with the British, also.

Chumley: Oh, yes, we never had any lice in camp until we got the first bunch of Limeys in there. They wouldn't try to keep clean, and like I said, the facilities in the Bicycle Camp were better than any . . . probably any camp that the Japs had because there was always running water. You could keep reasonably clean.

Marcello: Did relations between the Americans and the British ever reach the point where there was open fighting or anything of this nature?

Chumley: Oh, yes, it reached that point two hours after we met the first bunch, before we was captured. We met the first bunch at Singosari. It wasn't two hours till there was a fight started.

Marcello: Why was it that such a good relationship existed between the Americans and the Australians?

Chumley: I think they were so much alike. I've always thought that Australians, the ones that I've met, were more like a bunch of wild Texas cowhands than anything else, and they didn't think any more of the Limeys than we did, really.

Marcello: Getting back to food once again, during your tenure at Bicycle Camp, did you ever resort to eating cats, dogs, or any other exotic foods of that nature?

Chumley: Oh, yes. Cat was known as "Java rabbit."

Marcello: And I assume that if a cat or a dog strayed into camp, therefore, it didn't make it from one end of the camp to the other.

Chumley: No, it didn't make it out. In fact, my Christmas dinner of 1943 consisted of an eight-month-old bulldog and two pounds of sweet potatoes. Me and two Australians cooked him over the blacksmith forge, roasted the potatoes, and that was Christmas dinner.

Marcello: What did this dog taste like?

Chumley: Oh, it doesn't have, as I remember, no particular taste. Now cat to me tastes more like fresh pork. Frankly, it's just a matter of what you've been used to. The Swiss treasure horse meat. They eat horse steaks, and we wouldn't eat them. Frankly, I think right now that I could eat a nice young cat, be it fried up right. Another thing, out on working parties occasionally the parties would run into a python. That is one thing they was allowed to bring into camp. They'd let ten men go after him barehanded. If they could capture him and bring him into camp alive, they could do that. What they'd do, ten men would each get a steak off of him, and the rest of it was given to the hospital.

Marcello: In other words, they had to bring this python into camp alive, and the Japanese would shoot it?

Chumley: No, we'd kill it after we got into camp. Another thing we used to do, there was an awful lot of the guys that was going blind, and each one of us would chip in out of each payday . . . we got paid every ten days, and each one of us would chip in a day's work to buy eggs for the guys that was going blind.

Marcello: In other words, they were going blind because of some dietary deficiency.

Chumley: Yes, malnutrition. Of course, I don't understand any of that, but the reason they was going blind was due to their diet.

Marcello: Well, again, I think this is very interesting because it does show how one did try and look out for somebody else who was perhaps in worse shape.

Chumley: Yes, you had to do that.

Marcello: Now when the "Lost Battalion" initially went into Bicycle Camp, company funds were used to purchase food on the outside. The Japanese allowed this to be done.

Chumley: Yes, for a very short time, and then they clamped down on everything.

Marcello: I've heard it said by some of the prisoners that they suspected that your officers were perhaps getting a little more to eat as a result of having this company money than did the enlisted men. Did you find this to be true? Do you know anything about this?

Chumley: Oh, yes, that was always more or less a sore spot! Whether it was really true, I don't know. Of course, self-preservation, after all, is the main thing. I think they probably did get a little better than we did.

Marcello: Speaking of the officers, I'm sure that they did not have to go on the work details or at least did not have to work as such here at Bicycle Camp. Did this cause any amount of resentment?

Chumley: Maybe in some cases, but I don't think it was any big thing, or it wasn't with me.

Marcello: Generally speaking, I gather that they did accompany the enlisted men on the working parties, and they did more or less act as supervisors, did they not?

Chumley: Yes. Each working party had to have an officer and a noncom with it.

Marcello: I should have mentioned this earlier, but I know that when you first entered Bicycle Camp the Japanese demanded that each of the prisoners sign a sworn

statement that he would not escape or attempt to escape. Do you remember that particular incident?

Chumley: You bet I do. It was also a pledge of allegiance to Dai Nippon Nagun, which was their creed, I guess you'd say. Yes, we all held out on that, and some of the officers took some pretty severe punishment over that.

Marcello: Can you recall any of the specific details of that agreement and the reaction of the Americans to it?

Chumley: Well, of course, the reaction was immediate resistance, and I don't remember a whole lot about what it said. The main thing I remember, the signature, so to speak, was Dai Nippon Nagun. We had to sign it and then there the officers got in trouble again because at the head of the list . . . at the head of the places where you sign, they wrote in the words "under duress," and that brought them under fire again. Some of those officers got some pretty rough treatment. The Japs made sure we could hear it, too.

Marcello: You mentioned that you were in and out of this Bicycle Camp off and on during your time as a prisoner-of-war. For how long a stretch would you usually be gone from Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: It would vary. I've been gone as little as two or three weeks up to several months. Here again the dates and times

are hazy. Like we said awhile ago, after a while time just doesn't mean a whole lot.

Marcello: Where were some of the places that you went on these various details? In other words, what were some that perhaps stand out in your mind?

Chumley: One place was a truck park, a vehicle park. We had to service vehicles--wash them and grease them and that kind of stuff. Of course, a lot of the trucks had wooden sideboards or beds. Some of us would have to repair those. We had no lumber. We just had to hew it out of whatever sort of wood we could get hold of. Another place they had a work crew that built a road back into a kind of a little . . . oh, a little opening in the jungle where they had a fuel dump. That was a several months' project, but I didn't go on very many of those because, like I said, I always managed to stay in the blacksmith shop.

Marcello: Were most of these projects outside Bicycle Camp fairly close to the camp itself?

Chumley: Yes, I'd say within a radius of ten or fifteen miles at the most. As far as work details, we didn't have it near as rough as the guys that went on to Burma, Thailand, up in there.

Marcello: This brings up a question that I think needs to be in the record. In early October of 1942, the bulk of the "Lost Battalion" was pulled out of Bicycle Camp and was sent first of all to Changi Prison Camp near Singapore, and, of course, eventually up into the jungle. How was it that you were selected to remain behind while the rest of the unit moved on, or most of the rest of the unit moved on?

Chumley: Well, at that time there was quite a number of us left there. I don't remember how many, but at that time they were pretty liberal. They didn't want any cripples in the bunch. I had this jungle rot on my feet, and I was also having stomach trouble at that time, so they called me out and left me amongst a bunch of others. We always said it was the sick, lame, and lazy that stayed there, you know (chuckle).

Marcello: How many members of the "Lost Battalion" remained behind?

Chumley: Well, on that first shipment I'd say there was probably fifty or seventy-five, and there was two or three later shipments that didn't make it. They got torpedoed.

Marcello: Well, finally then, how many of you from the "Lost Battalion" remained behind there at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Eight of us. When the war was over there was eight of us left.

Marcello: Was this kind of disconcerting to you when everybody else was moving out and you were remaining there?

Chumley: Oh, yes! Naturally, you wanted to go. Your buddies were going, and it was as close as a family could be, actually.

Marcello: In other words, there was a certain amount of security in numbers perhaps.

Chumley: Oh, yes, sure.

Marcello: Of the eight Americans who remained behind did they all work in the blacksmith, also?

Chumley: No, they worked in various things. A couple of them worked in the Jap kitchen for a long time. There was one American doctor and a pharmacist's mate--they was both off the Houston--and they managed to stay in camp at the hospital most of the time.

Marcello: Were there any Americans working in the blacksmith shop with you?

Chumley: Part of the time there would be. We called it the blacksmith shop, but it was a carpenter shop and all those other things I've told you. For a while there

was a few Americans working in there as carpenters, but I was the one that stayed in there the most.

Marcello: I would gather that most of the men who worked in this particular shop did strike up a fairly close friendship.

Chumley: Oh, yes. After most of the Americans left, my two best friends, or three best friends, was Australians, and we was together and so on. In fact, one of these Australians, the Australian that had the .45 and mine . . . we buckled them on the next day after we heard the war was over and went to town.

Marcello: We'll probably talk about that a little later on. I would assume that as time went on in the prison camp, small cliques kind of formed where maybe two or three or four men got together and more or less looked out for one another's interests and shared food and that sort of thing.

Chumley: They pooled everything they had. Yes, this is very true.

Marcello: What sort of nicknames did you have for these Japanese guards that you came in contact with?

Chumley: Oh, a lot of them was a nickname for some characteristic that they had. Like I remember one that would never pick

his feet up. You could hear him coming. He was always dragging him feet, you know. So naturally, he was "Dragon Foot." Actually, he's the only one that I remember a specific nickname.

Marcello: Did you ever see any acts of compassion on the part of these Japanese guards, or did they try to take an impersonal attitude toward the prisoners and look upon their guard duty as simply another job?

Chumley: No, I don't think that that was ever true. Their attitude was more one of arrogance and sadism and what have you. I've seen possibly one act of compassion. We were up for an inspection. We had a head count every so often, and one of the men had a Masonic ring on, and this Jap sergeant that was doing the inspection noticed it, and he picked that man's hand up and looked at that ring and said, "I'd advise you to get rid of that. Some people might not understand." That's the nearest thing I ever seen to anything like that.

On one work detail I went on, they made a propaganda movie. They'd taken, I think, about three months, and I was on that detail. The cameraman had spent fifteen years with MGM in Hollywood.

Marcello: Was he more or less compassionate or sympathetic toward the prisoners?

Chumley: No, in fact, he was one of the more dangerous ones because he had been over here long enough to have picked up some of our ways and be able to understand it, and he spoke perfect American, not English but American, like we speak. He was more dangerous than any of the rest of them.

Marcello: Did you actually play a part or a role in the making of this propaganda film?

Chumley: Yes, we all had a role in it. It was showing the good life under Dai Nippon Nagun. I remember one scene because it took us about a week to make it. It was the birthday party of our second and third anniversary with Dai Nippon Nagun, and the birthday cake was made out of cement and whitewash (chuckle).

Marcello: Is that right (chuckle)? I was going to ask you if you received any better treatment while you were making this propaganda file.

Chumley: No, it was just like another working party. They'd lay this big table of food out, and we'd have to sit there and . . . of course, we got a few bites in, but they didn't stay on us long enough for us to get very much, and then they'd take it away.

Marcello: I'm sure that must have been pure torture to see all of that food there and not be able to eat it.

Chumley: You better believe it!

Marcello: During your tenure here at Bicycle Camp how many Red Cross parcels did you receive?

Chumley: Two partial shipments.

Marcello: Could you describe what they were like and what they meant to you?

Chumley: Well, they meant a whole lot to us. It was . . . well, anything that you got was a delicacy. We got a couple of packages of cigarettes. Each one of the Americans got a suit of khakis, and it had some Australian canned butter in it. As I remember, there was a little can of cheese. But we had to divide it with the whole camp. They just sent one parcel in for each one of us. We had to divide it with the Dutch and the English and the Australians and the whole works. What really teed us off was that the Dutch put their goodies back like that canned butter and stuff like that. They put it back until after we had already eaten all of ours, and then they sold it to us. I remember one time giving fourteen dollars for a can of spam that a Dutchman had hid back for several months. That's 140 days work.

Marcello: Which, again, indicates the value that was placed on food.

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: You were willing to use the funds accumulated from 140 days of work in order to purchase a can of spam.

Chumley: Right.

Marcello: I know that in most of the camps where the Americans were located--and I'm sure this held true for the other nationalities, also--a thriving black market usually got started.

Chumley: Oh, you bet!

Marcello: Can you describe what the black market was like here? Describe how it worked.

Chumley: Well, like I said, sometimes you could get stuff in from the inside through the black market, or very occasionally the Japs would let a little stuff come in. One of the big things was tobacco. These black marketeers would get it and roll it into cigarettes, and, oh, it would cost you about a penny apiece for cigarettes, sometimes more just depending on the supply on hand, you know. It was native tobacco, and they'd roll it in any kind of paper that they could lay their hands on. As far as food, I don't seem to remember too much black market food getting in. Occasionally, there was some fruit.

Marcello: What role would the Japanese soldier play in this black market?

Chumley: I don't know. I never could prove it, of course, but I suspected that there was a few of them that was in on it. However, I think that most of them were so much more afraid of their officers than we were that it scared the most of them off. Of course, occasionally there'd be a sharp one in the crowd.

Marcello: Was it true that as time went on in Bicycle camp that a type of game more or less became standard procedure, whereby you did everything possible to try and put something over on the Japanese?

Chumley: Oh, I think that started from the first day. I think that was with us all along. For instance, I carried a pocketknife with a four-inch blade in it and a razor . . . well, after I got this razor made, I carried it all the time, and I carried it through searches. This hat that I was telling you about earlier that the Jap guards made somebody cut in two . . . it was . . . if you know what the Australian army hat looks like. It had the brim pushed in and rolled cowboy fashion, you know. I always carried just any kind of junk that I could get in my pockets when I had a pocket. When I didn't, I carried it in a bag. We would go through a search. Well, I'd

take all this junk, matches, marbles, chalk, so to speak, and put it in this hat. I'd put that knife in one hand and the razor in the other and then roll them under that brim. I never had that hat picked up out of my hands. He would stand there and paw through it and ask questions about it, but he never picked that hat up out of my hand. If he had, I'd have been standing there with a knife in one hand and a razor in the other hand.

Marcello: You mentioned the straight razor that you had made awhile ago and which you continually kept on your person, and it was something that the Japanese never found. You might describe how you made that straight razor and where you got the material because I think it is illustrative of the old saying that "necessity is the mother of invention."

Chumley: Well, while working in the blacksmith shop, as I told you, we had access to this junk, and I forged in rough form that razor out of a piece of Ford spring, and then hand ground it over the years. It's hollow ground just as any other straight razor is. Here again, I only had . . . I could only case harden it as far as tempering goes, and it worked real good for several months until the case hardening was worn off through sharpening. Then it has been case hardened once or twice since then. It made it smaller than

the normal straight razor. The blade in it is the same length as the double-edge Gillette, and open over all it measures roughly six inches, and closed it's slightly over three inches, probably four or four and a quarter inches.

Marcello: Well, it's exactly a facsimile of a regular manufactured straight razor. How did you make the case and put the whole thing together? When I say make the case, I mean make the handle.

Chumley: Well, the handle was just whittled out with a pocketknife, and the finish on the handle was made by rubbing it over a piece of cement, using cement as a sand paper or finishing agent. Through many nights of work to make the hollow ground part of it, to get it in it's final shape . . I don't know how many nights I worked on that thing. I can't even remember how many months it'd take me to complete it.

Marcello: Again, we're talking about a project that consumed a great deal of time. It wasn't something that was made in a couple of weeks.

Chumley: No.

Marcello: Where did you get the wood to make the handle?

Chumley: The barracks that we were in, all of the wood in them was teakwood, and it was a very old camp. The piece of wood

that I made the handles out of came from a beam or part of a beam in the barracks. The Dutch who were there tell us that that camp was at least 100 years old, so that teak was pretty well-seasoned.

Marcello: I would assume that in a camp this size you found individuals who had all sorts of skills.

Chumley: Right. We had an amateur lens grinder. We had machinists, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, and we had the ship's carpenter from the Houston in there. These other people were all different nationalities, the Dutch, the half-castes, Australians. We had one Welshman in there. His speciality . . . he was a locksmith. Of course, we didn't have much use for his talents. Big game hunters. I think we had every big game hunter in the East Indies in there with us. Of course, there were a few doctors, male nurses. I guess just about every skill at one time or another was represented in that camp.

Marcello: You mentioned awhile ago the objects and various gadgets that you had accumulated and which you presented to the Japanese for inspection from time to time. Is it true that every prisoner became a scavenger, and any item or any piece of material would be picked up and hoarded or saved because at some future date it might prove valuable to you?

Chumley: Right, and this even carries over into today.

Marcello: In other words, you still hoard things today yet?

Chumley: Right. Much to my wife's displeasure.

Marcello: What were some of the things that you accumulated while you were a prisoner-of-war?

Chumley: Well, this razor and a native cigarette lighter and my mess kit. I kept my original issued mess kit all the way through, and it is engraved with some, I think, excellent art work. It was engraved by a Tasmanian who was later sank. He got torpedoed on one of the late shipments.

Marcello: You mentioned that you had chalk awhile ago and pieces of glass or things of this nature, also?

Chumley: Well, that was more or less a figure of speech. I didn't have any chalk, but I did have some pieces of glass, nails, maybe a link or two of chain--just anything that you could pick up.

Marcello: While you were on work details, or even during your work here in the blacksmith shop, what opportunities did you have to sabotage any of the Japanese work?

Chumley: Well, none in the workshop. The only opportunity we had of doing sabotage there . . . and we couldn't afford to do too much of it there because we'd be . . . like failure to temper these parts that we were making, and

we couldn't do too much of that for fear that the blacksmith shop would be taken away from us. We could make stuff like . . . I told you awhile ago, like dentures and eyeglasses, and even made some artificial legs and stuff like that. We couldn't really afford to do too much for fear of losing this blacksmith shop.

Marcello: What were the medical facilities like here at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Well, as we know medical facilities, they were nonexistent. All it was was just one barracks set aside for the dysentery patients and the consumptive patients and others that were mor or less expected to die in the very near future.

Marcello: What sorts of medicines were available to the medical personnel located here?

Chumley: The only medical supplies that was available really was when the Japs let a very, very little bit of stuff come in. They did get . . . when we got the Red Cross shipments, there was some medical supplies along with them, but they didn't go very far.

Marcello: What was the general state of your health during your time as a prisoner?

Chumley: Well, I had just about everything in the book. One time I was away from the Bicycle Camp . . . I had malaria

regularly. One time when I was away from the Bicycle Camp in another camp, I took the dengue fever, and they didn't expect me to live. In fact, a couple of my Australian buddies made my casket and put it under my bed. I come out of a coma and found that casket and got up and got out of there.

Marcello: What was this dengue fever like?

Chumley: It's caused by a bite or a sting of a tsetse fly. I guess in one way it was a good thing because dengue, according to what I have heard, is more or less an immunization to certain types of malaria, and I was lucky enough to have that type that it fights. So I pretty well got rid of the malaria.

Marcello: Was this the worst period that you had as a prisoner from a medical standpoint?

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: How long did this last?

Chumley: Well, here again, I don't remember, but seems like I was in the hospital, oh, maybe three weeks or something like that.

Marcello: And while you were in the hospital, I assume that there was very little that they could do for you.

Chumley: That's right. They did get some quinine. Of course, the island of Java at that time . . . or that group of

islands, I believe, produced about 94 per cent of the world's quinine. That we did get occasionally.

Marcello: How much did you weigh when you entered the service, and how much did you weigh when you got out?

Chumley: Well, I weighed about 145 when I entered, and I weighed about 125 when I got out, but I was in prison camp for almost two months . . . I got out--I believe it was September 16, after the war was over--and we had been on good food since two days after the war was over. I got down to weighing eighty-seven pounds. I think in some of my scrapbooks I have a sort of a letter of commendation, you might say, from a Dutch officer for whom I worked in the blacksmith shop, and they put my weight at that time at eighty-seven pounds.

Marcello: Well, this is what I wanted to ask awhile ago when I said when you got out. I meant what was your lowest weight when you were a prisoner-of-war.

Chumley: As far as I can tell, about eighty-seven pounds, and I'm six foot tall.

Marcello: As the course of the war appeared to be turning against the Japanese, what effect did this have upon their treatment of the prisoners?

Chumley: I couldn't tell that it had any great effect on them until after the war was actually over or after they actually surrendered. This to us . . . we had in a way always dreaded this because we figured that when the war started turning, and especially if they had to surrender or if anybody started in there to take us back, that they'd probably just line us all up and shoot us. We really expected that.

Marcello: What sort of contingency plans did you think about in order to prepare for that eventuality? In other words, were you hoarding weapons and things of this nature? Well, you mentioned that you had the .45's and that sort of thing?

Chumley: We could have put up a little battle. It wouldn't have been all one way. We'd have put up a little battle had we had enough warning, and through this radio--it _was_ working at the time--we would have had time to alarm the camp, and the Japs might have found it a little rough. We'd have given an account of ourselves.

Marcello: Is it safe to say that you were not the only prisoner that was hoarding a weapon or some sort of a weapon?

Chumley: I would imagine that every man in there had some sort of a defensive weapon or weapons.

Marcello: Were these brought out in the open at the end of the war?

Chumley: Oh, yes!

Marcello: What were some of the things that you saw?

Chumley: Well, of course, it was mostly in the form of knives and clubs and that sort of thing . . . baseball bat clubs, you know, and a few crude . . . oh, like javelins. Of course, the natives over there were proficient in the use of a blowgun. There was quite a lot of them around--just a piece of bamboo. I don't know that they had any of the poison darts. I know they had darts, and they had attempted to make this poison. Now whether they did, I don't really know, but there was an awful lot of them around, which, due to the cover in this camp, could have accounted for quite a number of Japs before they knew what was happening. As far as taking the camp, I don't believe there was ever a time that we couldn't have taken the camp or taken the garrison at the camp, but we was 3,000 miles from the nearest ally, and 2,800 miles of that was water, and you just really didn't have much of a chance. As far as taking the camp, I think we could have taken it at any time.

Marcello: How many Japanese were in this camp?

Chumley: Oh, possibly . . . just the guards now, twenty, thirty total.

Marcello: I would gather that as time goes on the Japanese that were in these camps were certainly rear echelon troops for the most part.

Chumley; Yes.

Marcello: And would it be safe to say that they weren't exactly the best soldiers the Japanese had?

Chumley: Oh, I'm sure of that! I'm sure that they were the lowest of the recruits or draftees or whatever.

Marcello: These could have very easily been the "eight balls," too.

Chumley: Yes, they could have been.

Marcello: In other words, the good Japanese soldiers were probably out on the front lines someplace.

Chumley: Either that or they were in higher echelons somewhere.

Marcello: How much did you dread the fear of having to go back to Japan?

Chumley: Well, we tried not to think about that, or at least I did. I figured that would be complete suicide, or sure suicide at least, to be taken back there because of what we had seen of the Japs, and as it turned out, the guys that I've talked to that were taken back to the home islands had it better than anybody else.

Marcello: But that may have been different in the later stages of the war, however, when the American submarines were taking their toll.

Chumley: Yes, and they sure had a net around that whole outfit because occasionally the Japs would put out a little propaganda paper. I remember in one where they was bragging about getting a fifty-ton __________, which is a native sailboat, through loaded with coconuts. We had one little Jap guard in there that could speak a few words of English. He'd come in lots of mornings with a big grin on his face and said, "Nippon boom boom Chicago last night. Finished. No more. Nippon boom boom San Francisco. Finished. No more." One guy said, "Boom boom Decatur?" He said, "Yes, yes, boom boom Decatur. Finish."

Marcello: And, again, you were able to keep up with the course of the war throughout this whole period through your radio.

Chumley: More or less. Like I told you, sometimes it would be inoperative for a period of time while we managed to make a resistor or some other component. That was made in the blacksmith shop, too. A resistor is made from carbon, and we made lead pencils, so a certain length and a certain thickness of pencil lead would be made into a resistor just by cut-and-try method. We had no test equipment or anything to measure it with. We'd just keep working with it until the set squawked again. In the Red Cross Shipment the cigarette packages . . . the foil out of them was carefully saved. A condenser or capacitor is made by rolling a metal foil backed with some sort of a

electrolytic-like paper or something. It would be rolled into a tube and then the ________________ out.

Marcello: Did you witness any Allied bombing at all while you were at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Yes, we got . . . in the later stages there was . . . we found out later an Australian squadron of B-29's and B-25's hit several times. They apparently knew where we were. They had some pretty good information because there was only two bombs that fell in our camp. One fell on the Jap guardhouse, and the other on the Jap latrine in the corner of the camp.

Marcello: What did this do for your morale?

Chumley: That was probably one of the greatest morale boosters there was, and there was one squadron of . . . I believe it was P-38's. They were a twin-engine, twin-boomed airplane, a night fighter, I think, originally. After the second time they come over, they got everything the Japs could get in the air. They slow-rolled the length of the runway at about 100 feet, just fell in line one right after the other and slow-rolled the length of the runway.

Marcello: Was there a runway there at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Well, not right at Bicycle Camp, but the town of Batavia was up in the 100,000 plus class, so they had a civilian airport there.

Marcello: I see. What was the reaction of the Japanese when these Allied air raids took place?

Chumley: They was more scared than we was. They hid just like we did.

Marcello: After the raids were over did the treatment become worse at the hands of the Japanese, or did they perhaps seem to show a little bit of humility?

Chumley: I wouldn't exactly say humility, but they did kind of slack up on us. Of course, they was real upset and nervous, and this probably caused some extra beatings, slapping around.

Marcello: After awhile, do you get used to these beatings and slappings?

Chumley: Well, no, you never get used to them. You get to the point where you more or less expect and accept it, but you don't ever get used to it.

Marcello: Okay, I think we're almost at the point now where we can describe the last days of the war and lead up to your liberation. Before I ask that question, talk about some of the funny things that happened while you were a prisoner-of-war. What are some of the funny things that really stand out in your mind?

Chumley: Well, one story . . . me and these two Australian buddies of mine had a hole in the fence. Right next

door, there was a Jap warehouse loaded with foodstuff. We'd slip out there at night and bring in stuff like fresh pineapple and salt fish and what have you. One time we got caught coming back through the fence. I had an old salt fish that would weigh about two pounds, and these Australians both had an armload of fresh pineapples. They worked us over pretty good and took us down to the guardhouse, and they knocked some of my teeth out in the fray and cracked my jaw. They made us stand at attention in front of the guardhouse for twenty-four hours. Each one of us had to hold in his mouth what we was caught coming through the fence with. I sure did need a drink of water before that was over with, with that old salt fish jammed in my mouth.

Marcello: Did this cure you from going under the fence, or were you at it again later on?

Chumley: We didn't have much of a chance later on. They put a double guard on that fence, and it was too risky from then on.

Marcello: I bet those guys that had hold of those pineapples in their mouth had a hard time, too.

Chumley: Yes, and they jammed the stem in with the foilage on it. They jammed that in their mouth. And you know an old pineapple will weigh three or four pounds.

There is another story that I didn't actually see happen, but I think it's one of the funniest things that happened. They had this crew of Australians cooking for a small detachment of Jap soldiers there. The mess sergeant, so to speak, he could speak some English . . . book English. This little cook was one of the coolie-type that we talked about, and he wanted very much to impress the sergeant. He begged these Australians to teach him English, so he could speak to the sergeant in English when he made his rounds in the morning. They coached him for months. Every few days he'd say, "Can I speak to the sergeant today?" "No, you're not quite ready." And they'd drill him again. So one morning they told him, "Yep, you're ready. You can speak to the sergeant in English this morning." The sergeant stepped into the door and he screamed, "Attention!" The Jap came to strict attention and said, "Good morning, you bastard. Your mother had syphilis." Of course, naturally, the sergeant worked him over. He worked the Australians over (chuckle), but they about half-way thought it was worth it.

Marcello: I would assume that you would have to engage in some of this prison humor in order to keep your sanity.

Chumley: I think so. I think between that and staying mad all the time was what got . . . I'm sure it was what got me through.

Marcello: When you say "staying mad all the time," what do you mean?

Chumley: Mad at about everything. Especially the Japs. A lot of things you hear, you take to heart, you know, and it makes you just fighting mad. I guess it'd get your adrenalin pumping and gets you going.

Marcello: How were you living at this time? From day to day? From week to week? From month to month?

Chumley: You might say hour to hour.

Marcello: Okay, let's talk then about the last few days before you were liberated. Describe what happened--how you found out about the end of the war, how the Japanese reacted, and things of this nature.

Chumley: Well, I heard it on the radio the night that it happened. It was night over there. We had had one false broadcast once before, and I think it's been recorded that some radio operator on a ship somewhere was playing with a radio and sent out the message that the war was over, that the Japs had surrendered. Of course, we couldn't afford to say anything. About three days later, everybody

knew the war was over was when the Japs drove into camp with a truckload of beef, and then right away we started getting good rations, full rations.

In one camp that I was in . . . this is going back to something that I'd like to get in. We had at least six professional big game hunters in that camp. It was kind of in a small place, kind of out in the jungle. There was all sorts of game just outside the fence, and the Japs wouldn't let these guys trap it or get it in any way for us to eat. They didn't want us to have anything. They didn't want us to get in any kind of condition. We could have lived well there.

That was one camp where they let us plant a garden, and they let us plant what would be sweet potatoes there. When it come time to harvest them, they took the potatoes and give us the tops.

They were great on flowers. If you could get any kind of flower seeds, you could plant flowers. They liked flowers. One Dutchman there in Bicycle Camp had a flower bed, and I don't know where he got it, but he had about a dozen stalks of okra in it. He was growing it for the blooms, you know. I think I was the only one in camp that knew what it was. As fast as those pods was getting to

eating size, I'd slip around at night and cut them off, and we'd boil them over the blacksmith forge. Liked to worry him to death. Somebody was stealing his seed pods. He didn't know it was good to eat.

Marcello: Well, how did the Japanese make the announcement to you that the war was over?

Chumley: They called the officers in and told them. Well, they didn't really tell us until . . . see, that part of it fell to the English to take the surrender on . . . we'll say from Singapore and on down. They sailed in in one light cruiser and accepted the surrender and sailed out again. That is when they told our officers for sure. Then our officers lined us up and told us that heretofore it had been our duty to try to escape, but now it was our duty to stay in camp until somebody came after us. We'd be court-martialed if we tried to escape now and all this. They knew I was going to town and . . . I took one officer to town with me. He found out I had this gun and was going to town. He called me in and asked me if I had a gun. I told him yes. He said, "Give it to me." I told him no soap.

Marcello: Was this an American or a British officer?

Chumley: An American officer, and he kind of grinned and said, "Well, I didn't really expect to get it." Then he wanted

to go to town with me that night.

Marcello: In other words, after you had been lined up and had been told that the war was over and that the Japanese had surrendered, you then began to test your freedom by going into town and things of this nature.

Chumley: Yes.

Marcello: What did you usually do when you went to town?

Chumley: Hunt something to eat (chuckle), something to drink. There were a few of the Chinese still there that was real friendly to us, and, of course, the Dutch women. One of the first things that we did . . . me and this Australian picked up two more Australians and went to a truck park and picked out four of the best trucks we could find and went out in the farming district. Well, first we went to a Jap warehouse. Through the working parties we got to know where there was quite a lot of stuff. We went to this Jap warehouse and in Hollywood fashion shot the lock off of it and went in and loaded it with clothing and shoes and went out in the farming districts and traded a truckload of clothes for a truckload of vegetables and took them back into the women's camp. We got to do that a couple of times. Them women was about as hungry as we were. See, they interned a lot of Dutch women and some of the half-caste women.

Marcello: Were they in a camp close to Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: Yes, it wasn't too far away, couple of miles as I remember. It was, as I remember, a convent-type of thing.

Marcello: Did you ever have any thoughts of taking revenge against any of the Japanese soldiers?

Chumley: Oh, you bet! There was one sergeant especially that . . . you see, we didn't know when they was coming after us. We had no way of knowing. The Limeys had the ranking officers on us, and they dropped some sort of an advance crew, parachuted them in there just a few days after the surrender was signed, and they set up headquarters in the best hotel in town. They only worked one hour a day. They'd only work their station in New Delhi, India, and they wouldn't even send out our name and numbers. Sometime later there was a UP man who parachuted in there, and we got to him first. That was like, say, this afternoon . . . well, he got his radio set up and contacted his headquarters somewhere, and two days later there was two C-54's sitting on the runway to take us off. Right after he sent that out, the next day this Australian squadron of B-25's came over, and we rigged up a light to where we could send a crude form of Morse code and got the word to them. They was

coming in at treetop level, just peeling off and looking the camp over, you know. We got the word to them that there was some Australian airmen in there. About an hour before we took off, they landed some B-25's there to take the Australians out, and the Limeys stayed in that camp. I stayed in Calcutta for three weeks. I stayed in New York City for three weeks in the hospital and was already home on furlough, and I heard from over there that the Limeys were still in that camp, still under the Jap guards.

Marcello: In other words, at the time of the surrender the Japanese were instructed to keep their arms and more or less try and maintain order in the camp until help came.

Chumley: And they were supposedly protecting us then from the natives.

Marcello: Are you implying that with the end of the war, the natives were looking forward to gaining their independence from the Dutch and that they weren't about to go back with the Dutch again?

Chumley: Of course, the Japs had promised them everything in the world, see, and they did leave them out. There was, I think, something like 80,000,000 of them on that island. They let them stay out to do their work for them--raise their crops and what have you. Of course, the Japs had

promised them independence, and, of course, they were hostile to us and the Dutch.

Marcello: Did you see any evidence of this hostility when you went into town to test your newly won freedom?

Chumley: Not really because there wasn't too many others out, and us being armed . . . and another thing, we had before this . . . this guy that they'd made president of Java or whatever they call him . . . that Sukarno had been in our camp at one time as a prisoner. Then there was some, I think probably, Philippine scouts in there. I was at the house one night, and I noticed two of them standing out at the gate. I went out and asked them what they was doing, and they said they was guarding me. I told them, "Well, just get lost." I was doing alright. They wouldn't do it. They stayed there until I left, and I suppose they tailed me and kept me under surveillance, but I never seen them any more. They left and went back to camp.

Marcello: As you look back upon your experiences as a prisoner-of-war, what do you think it was that pulled you through more than anything else?

Chumley: I think just the determination to outlast them, and like I say, stayed all worked up all the time and eat any and everything I could get hold of that was edible.

Marcello: How great was the death rate here at Bicycle Camp?

Chumley: The Americans and Australians got by much better than anybody else. I think the final figure was about 32 or 33 per cent for us, but for the Dutchmen and the other nationalities I don't know what the figure was, but I know it was bound to have been much higher.

Marcello: And I assume that you believe that personal hygiene and this sort of thing had a lot to do with it.

Chumley: Well, not only that. I believe that the way we was raised--the food that we had and the medical aid that we had when we were growing up--I think had an awful lot to do with it. The Dutch that were over there were more or less what we think of as the filthy rich. They were the upper class. An awful lot of them were born and raised there and had always had a soft life. I think that really showed up.

Marcello: After you got back to this country, did you have very much trouble readjusting to civilian life?

Chumley: No, I don't think I did. I was like a kid with the greatest Christmas that you could imagine. I didn't slow down for about six months or a year.

Marcello: How much mail did you send and receive while you were a prisoner-of-war?

Chumley: I sent a few of those cards, and I got four letters and a couple of telegrams. That's all that I had during that time.

Marcello: I'm sure this mail was a real morale booster though.

Chumley: Yes, and there again, unknowingly the Japs created hours and hours of diversion for us because they had censored the letters. Instead of marking stuff, they would cut stuff out, cut sentences or parts of sentences out. We spent a bunch of hours imitating this person's handwriting, and from other parts of the letter we tried to piece out what they had been trying to tell us. Sometimes it would be a name or a phrase, maybe a whole sentence.

Marcello: Now these letters usually came in through the Red Cross?

Chumley: Yes, through Geneva. They were sent from this area, and some of them had gone to Geneva, and apparently some of them had gone to Japan. They had Japanese markings on them. Then in pencil on one envelope there was the word "Java." I don't remember how long it took them to get there.

Marcello: Has time more or less healed the wounds? In other words, at the time you got out of prison camp, what was your attitude toward the Japanese and how, if any, has that attitude changed in later years?

Chumley: Well, I guess it's probably mellowed, but I still don't trust them. I still have absolutely no use for them in any way, and I'd hate to have to fight them again. We mentioned earlier that man would . . . in a situation like that the animal part of him would come to the front. For the first year or two I was out, even after I got home, I could be in a place like a cafe or a nightclub, and I don't know how I would know, but I would know without looking if a Jap came in the crowded nightclub or restaurant or what have you.

A P P E N D I X

We prisoners are permitted to write home by the generous Government of Nippon.
I am now in a Japanese Prisoner of War Camp, in Java.
My health is excellent.

I hope you enjoyed Christmas as much as Idid..

Love.

Horace.

February 27,1943
124 N.2nd Street
Oberlin,Pa.

Mr.Jim Churnigy.(?)
Route #1
Alvord,Texas.

Dear Sir:-

This evening at 7:20 P.M. (East.War Time) I heard the "War Prisoner Program" from Tkio,Japan on the Short wave band of my radio. (Station JLG4 Tokio on 15,105 K.C.)
A message from Captain(?)Howard Everett Churnley (?)was read in English by the Japanese announcer:-

(the radio was so noisey that it was impossible to hear the name clearly,altho the address was very clear.)

The Message read:--"Hello Dad, I hope this message finds you well. I am O.K. so don't worry about me. Your son, Howard (?)

* * * * * * * *

I regret that the first part of the information in regards to the prisoner and the "next of kin" was not understandable due to [illegible], however someone,a prisoner of the Japanese,was sending a message to his "Dad" on Route #1 in Alvord,Texas.

I hope you are the correct party concerned with this message. However,if you know of any other person on Route#1 who has a boy who is a prisoner of the Japs,kindly contact him with this message.

Respectfully yours,

Irwin P. Bender

Irwin P. Bender
124 N.2nd Street,
Oberlin,Pa.

(They gave his age at 26 years)

Dayton, Ohio 7-26-43
6:30 P.M. E.S.T.

Dear friends:

A few minutes ago I picked up a short wave radio message from Tokyo, Japan — addressed to you — permitted to be sent by missing soldier, Forrest Chenley, age 26. — U.S. Army, who is a prisoner of the Japs — a brief message as follows: "Am allowed to write you message in limited space, so will just say hello and all my love. — Yours, Forrest."

You may receive cards from other listeners as they are also doing this patriotic service (free) which I originated several months ago. Have relayed more than 250 messages to home folks all over the U.S. and received many thank-you letters. —

Would so much like to hear from you — also any newspaper clippings if articles are printed, for my scrap book. — Thanks. — Sincerely yours,

C. E. Alderman

434 Grand Ave Dayton, Ohio

WRITES FROM A JAPANESE PRISON CAMP

Several weeks ago the News printed a letter to Mr. Jim Chumley from his son, Horace, who is in a Japanese prison camp in Java. This week the editor of the News received a letter from the War Department that was broadcast by short wave from Batavia from Horace as follows:

"Guy M. Crews, Alvord, Texas. Dear Mr. Crews: I am sending this letter to you so that all my friends at home may know that I am still alive and well. I have been a Prisoner of War since March 8, 1942, and during this time I have had no word from home. I live in a camp with a few other Americans and some others. We work every day when we are physically fit, at road building, stevedoring, gardening and many other jobs.

"I am now regularly employed in a garden, for which I am paid. With our pay we buy soap at 18c a bar, cigarettes at 22c for 20, sugar at 10c a pound, eggs at 5c apiece.

"The state of health is relatively good. We occasionally have some cases of Malaria, Pellagra, Dysentery, and Beri Beri, but nothing too excessive. We have our own doctors and medical orderlies and they are kept busy.

"Some of the articles of the Geneva Convention are observed, but being from Missouri you know what conventions mean to me. Camp life is not too bad. The Japanese leave us to ourselves so it is very quiet here. Sometimes it makes me think of February in New Orleans, except there is barbed wire here. If you see my friend Joseph Gibbs, who went to Annapolis, or Bob Sweeney, tell them I am O. K. The camp is run by our own officers and under the supervision of the Japanese.

"Well, this is all I have. Don't forget to tell everything to Joe and Bob. Write soon. Yours sincerely—Horace." (6-17-'43).

Pvt. Weldon O. Western, who is the son of Mr. and Mrs. L. A. Western of Alvord and a member of the 131st Field Artillery, a part of Texas' Lost Battalion, has not been heard from since Feb. 2, 1942. He was then in Java. The War Department lists him as missing in action since the fall of Java. All of his many relatives and friends are patiently waiting for a hearing from him.

Japanese Prisoners Die

More than 300 U. S. war casualties are the result of unhealthful conditions in Japanese prison camps, according to messages received through the International Red Cross from Japan. Disease is stated in each case as the cause of death.

Shults and Chumley are Reported Jap Prisoners

ALVORD SOLDIER WRITES HOME FROM JAPANESE PRISON CAMP

Mr. Jim Chumley received the following letter the past week from the War Department in regard to his son, Pvt. Horace Chumley, who is a prisoner of the Japanese:

Mr. Jim Chumley, Route 1, Alvord, Texas. Dear Mr. Chumley: The Provost Marshal General directs me to transmit to you the following message from Horace E. Chumley, Private U. S. Army, which was broadcast by short wave radio from Japan and intercepted on May 12, 1943:

"Hello Dad. I have been given another chance to write you a letter. I have written you several, but I don't believe you received any of them, otherwise I would have had letters from you. I believe that you will get this one as it is to be read over the air. I am in a concentration camp with Dutch, English and Australian troops. The camp is comfortable. We also have good bathing and sewage facilities which enable us to keep ourselves and the camp clean.

As for work, we have a wide variety of jobs in the camp. We have a rope and twine factory and the outside working parties that are taken from camp each morning and returned in the evening do many different things. For example, grass cutting in some of the many parks here or perhaps doing work around the barracks. Sometimes one works on the work benches around camp. For this work we are paid. It is not much but it is enough to buy books and some of the things we need most. The food is pretty good here with the exception of a shortage of bread and coffee. We have tea instead. We can obtain this any time of the day. However as you know I don't care for it. Well so much for that and now I would like to hear from home. I haven't had a letter since I left but I believe you will be able to answer this one. When you do write kindly include all the news. I am in good health but very homesick. I hope to be cured of that soon by coming home Your son, Horace E. Chumley."

The War Department is unable to verify this message. You may communicate with Private Chumley by following the inclosed directions on the circular for sending ordinary mail. If further information in regard to Horace E. Chumley you will be advised at once.—Sincerely yours, Howard Bresee, Colonel CMP Chief, Information Bureau.

* * *

Horace Chumley was a member of the 131st Field Artillery and the last direct letter from him received by his father was dated Feb 2, 1942. Later the War Department notified Mr. Chumley that his son was captured in Java by the Japanese Feb. 24, 1942. In February of this year parties in California notified Mr. Chumley of a message they had picked up over short wave radio from Tokio that Horace was a prisoner in a concentration camp. Mr. Chumley has written his son over a hundred letters, but evidently he has never received them. Friends throughout this community no doubt will be glad to know Horace is still alive and in

---

Japanese broadcasts this week have notified parents of two members of the Lost Battalion that their sons are prisoners and the messages from the men tell of good health.

Mrs. Connie Shults, mother of Pfc. Lucian D. Shults of the 131st Headquarters Bat. received her first letter from another mother whose son is in the Lost Battalion from Abilene, Saturday morning and from the message. "I weigh around 135 pounds," indicates that he is in average health Mrs. Shults received her last letter from Shults on April 23, 1942.

She has received 28 letters and cards and one record.

Horace Emmett Chumley

Jim Chumley of Route 1, Alvord, also received letters from the Japanees broadcasts and is sure of his son's safety as he added he had as "quart" laid back for his father when he returned. Chumley said this was a joke he and his son, Pfc., Horace E. Chumley had used since he joined the army.

Chumley had received about 28 letters from listening posts over the country and a record of the broadcast.

TOKIO BROADCASTS

The messages from the Japanese are broadcast over Station JLG, each evening at 6:15 p.m. Central War Time. The broadcast is delivered over a frequency of 15.105 megacycles. The messages from the prisoners are read by an announcer.

Alvord, Texas
July 18, 1943

Dearest Horace,

I read the letter you wrote to all your friends, and thought I would write you. We are all O. K. Dannie is going to school this year. I hope he will like it O. K.

Joyce & Delss has a little girl almost 11 mo. old. We all think a lot of her. Sibyl finally got married. Her husband is in the Army Air corps and boy is he a good looking. Thelma is working at Dallas now. She was down a Sunday or two ago.

Daddy saw your dad this morning, he is doing just fine. mother and dad [illegible] "hello" and hope you are well. I'll close now hoping to hear soon. Love, Lene Mc. [illegible]

Route #1

Alvord, Texas
August 6, 1943

Dearest Horace,

I have waited pretty long about writing this week, but I finally got around to it.

Lujie, Delos, and Sharon Joyce came the other night. Little Sharon will be a year old the 22nd of this month. I think I'll get her something for her birthday. They may come back over Sun. as Ruth & John are planning on coming down and spend the day.

I think mama is going home [illegible] is going to visit his children so just Daddy, Dannie, & I will be by our lonesome. Guess we'll get along O.K.

We got a letter from Sibyl the other day she was going where her husband is and stay. Thelma will be coming home pretty soon for her vacation. I think the Johnsons are back in this country now. I hope so anyway. Oh I really did miss Jackie & Rep. Well I have to close and go help daddy milk. He still can't do anything by himself. Ha.

Love,
Gene McWhorter

I hope you're well. We all are.

went to Boure monday and
tired when we got home.
and Delis was there. Their
girl, Sharon, was also there and
held her most of the time. She is
sweetest little thing. The 22nd of this
she'll be a year old, but she
[illegible] yet. Joyce won't let her
[illegible] her to she is rather
for her little legs.

Thelma will be home soon for
her vacation and boy will I be
glad. I won't get to be with her much
for I'll be in school most of the
time, then she is going to stay with
Joyce some. She used to write very often
but [illegible] ever hear from her
anymore. I don't guess she has time
to write.

Ruth and John came last Sunday.
They said [illegible] had a Single
and was preaching. I bet he would be
real interesting to listen to. ha. He is
in California. Didn't I tell you Johnson had
moved back from Calif. Well they haven't
that was just a mistake. Bob Lynch [illegible]
Joyce [illegible] thought it was Rep. I think he
should be ashamed not even knowing his
own sister. I hope you get this letter soon.
Love
Gene

To: 20,813,698 H.E. Chumley *May 1945*
131st. Field Artillery

Since June 1944, a period of *11* months you have been employed as <u>Tin Smith</u> in the workshops of No. 1 P.O.W. Camp, Batavia, Java and have therefore come under my direct control during working hours.

With the limited appliances and materials available your work has been all that could be desired, and you showed considerable adaptability under difficult circumstances.

Further, your co-operation and willingness greatly assisted an administration which had to control upwards of one hundred (100) men of six different nationalities, and herein appreciation and gratitude are expressed for this willing co-operation.

[signature] Capt.,
Workshops Inspecting Officer,
Royal Dutch Artillery.

Forwarded:

WINFRED H. GALLIENNE,
1st Lieut., U.S.A.,
Commanding.

SGT. HORACE CHUMLEY IS HOME ON FURLOUGH

Sgt. Horace E. Chumley came in this week on a 90-day furlough. As most of our readers know, Sgt. Chumley was captured by the Japs on Java and was only recently liberated. He looks fine and his many friends are glad to have him back home again. At the end of the furlough he will report to Ashburn General Hospital at McKinney for a checkup.

evening to do a months rehabilitation course and have an operation on the hand. I had two operations on it in Singapore and got the shrapnell out. which improved it but only slightly.

I think I gave you my address as Western Australia but since I have been back I went mad and got married and am now living in Sydney or rather just out of Sydney at Coogee. which is a beach resort.

I have some snapshots ~~taken~~ of the bride and myself taken at the reception. so if this letter reaches you and you are interested I'll send one later. I'm not so sure of your address but heres hoping you get it.

If you see any of the old crowd remember me to them and I hope things are going as well with you as they with me at present.

Well Horace theres not much more to say except that I hope this note reaches you as it leaves me — in the pink and fighting fit (I wish now).

I remain

Yours Sincerely

Thomas ("Charlie") Tehan.

PS I had a new uniform tailored three weeks ago and can't get into it now.

P.S. Did you ever have to use your knife?

No 2 Kelvin Court
144 Brook Street
Coogee, Sydney
New South Wales
Australia
Nov 9th 1945

ear Horace,

I just thought I'd scribble a few lines and
e if you were still alive and kicking and enquire if you
ave reached the 200 lb mark yet. Have you?
fter I saw you last in Batavia as you know I went to
ingapore. Where they had us camped in some horse stables
 the docks. Our work was cleaning up the dock area
oving heavy machinery etc. The food of course was
acticklly nill as usual. Until 120 B.29's came over
nd dropped incendiary bombs which flattened all the
arehouses which were stacked with rubber. Quite a
laze I can tell you. Singapore was black with smoke
 a week after. Fortunately all us prisoners were
 fragile air raid shelters and again fortunately they
re only incendiarys. The best part of it was that in
me of the sleeping sheds the Japs had foodstuffs stored
 leave it to your imagination what the boys did
ith it when they had the chance.
fter about the fourth month on the docks I went to
e far famed Changi penitentiary hospital weighing 98 lbs
uite a drop eh?
ve been home about six weeks now. I've just finished
8 days leave now and I go to Melbourne tomorrow

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

1204

SYMBOLS

DL=Day Letter
NL=Night Letter
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

D FA 15 TOUR

"H" Mitchel Field, N.Y., 916am 10/8/45

Jim Chumley,
Alvord, Texas

Arrived safely New Cantonment Hospotal Mitchel Field. Transfer nearer home probably soon. Will write. Love.

Horace Chumley

1052am

New Cantonment ~~THE COMPANY WILL~~ APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

CLASS OF SERVICE

This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

1201

1025A.

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

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N13 11 3 EXTRA RELAY=ALVORD TEX VIA MITCHEL FIELD NY OCT

HORACE CHUMLEY 11

=HALLOREN GENERAL HOSPITAL STATEN ISLAND NY=

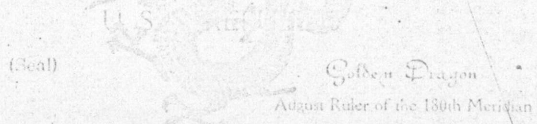
=RECEIVED MESSAGE SO HAPPY AM OK AWAITING LETTER=
JIM CHUMLEY.

Imperial Domain of Golden Dragon

This is to certify that

Chumley, Horace E. Pvt. 131 F.A.

was duly inducted into the SILENT MYSTERIES OF THE FAR EAST, having crossed the [illegible] Meridian 05:20 Saturday, December 13, 1941, on board [illegible]



U. S. [illegible]

(Seal)

Golden Dragon
August Ruler of the 180th Meridian

Domain of Neptunus Rex

This is to Certify Th[illegible]

Pvt. HORACE E. CHUMLEY.................. U. S. Army

was duly initiated into the Solemn Mysteries of the ANCIENT ORDER OF THE DEEP, having crossed the Equator on board the

U. S. [illegible] REPUBLIC

on the [illegible] 1941 A. D.

Davy [illegible]
His Majest[illegible]

Neptunus Rex
Ruler of the Raging Main