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Interview with  
Everett Stewart  
February 24, 1976

Place of Interview: Dallas, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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(Signature)

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Oral History Collection

Everett Stewart

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Dallas, Texas

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Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Colonel and Mrs. Everett Stewart for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on February 24, 1976, in Dallas, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. and Mrs. Stewart in order to get their reminiscences and experiences and impressions while they were near Wheeler Field during the Japanese attack at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

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

Col. Stewart: Okay. Well, I was born on July 18, 1915, on a farm near a little town of Talmadge, Kansas, near Abilene, Kansas. I went to grade school and high school in Talmadge, Kansas. I spent most of my early life on the farm. I went to Kansas State University from '33 to '36, and then laid out a year in Los Angeles.

I went back in '37 and '38 and was coming out of there with an infantry reserve commission. Feeling that there was a war coming along, I kind of wanted to be a . . . if we had a war, I wanted to be a fighter pilot, and I wanted to be an ace. So I ended up getting into the flying school and going on through that and got through it. So then I ended up being a fighter pilot.

Marcello: Okay, when did you enter the service?

Stewart: Well, I was actually through flying school in June of '38, but I had been in ROTC before that, since '33. I graduated from flying school in '39, and went on active duty immediately, and I stayed there for twenty-eight years.

Marcello: Where did you go to flight school?

Stewart: Randolph and Kelly Field--the only two they had at that time. Primary and basic at Randolph and advanced at Kelley.

Marcello: When did you meet the future Mrs. Stewart?

Stewart: Oh, in college about 1934, I guess, somewhere along in there.

Marcello: Were you married at the time that you went through flight school?

Stewart: No, after I graduated. We got married in June of '39.

Marcello: And did you go directly to the Hawaiian Islands?

Stewart: No. I went from flying school to Barksdale Field, in Shreveport, Louisiana. We were there about three or four months, and the entire group was transferred to Moffitt

Field, California. We were there then from about September of '39 to about, oh, what, early '40?

Mrs. Stewart: It was Thanksgiving time.

Col. Stewart: Then we were transferred to Hamilton Field, California. We were there until February, '41, at which time I was then transferred with thirty-one pilots--seventeen from Hamilton and fourteen from Selfridge Field--in P-36's to Hawaii. We flew to San Diego, were loaded on board the USS Enterprise, the carrier, and in February of '41 we flew into Wheeler Field, Hawaii.

Marcello: What did you think about the idea of having duty in the Hawaiian Islands?

Col Stewart: I thought it was beautiful out there. There was a quiet, peaceful life, and everything was kind of nice. We did all of our training and so forth. We had a nice schedule. We'd fly from seven until . . . working from seven o'clock, and then we had the afternoon off. We could play golf or . . . that was our workday.

Marcello: In other words, it was almost like a tropical schedule.

Col. Stewart: It was a paradise. It was paradise. It really was.

Marcello: Mrs. Stewart, when did you join your husband in the Hawaiian Islands?

Mrs. Stewart: Let's see. Late March.

Marcello: Of 1941?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: In other words, you were there almost . . . well, a little bit less than a year before the war actually broke out.

Col. Stewart: About nine or ten months, somewhere in there.

Marcello: At the time that you went to the Hawaiian Islands, did you give very much thought to the possibility of war with Japan?

Col. Stewart: Not at the time.

Mrs. Stewart: I did.

Col. Stewart: No, later you did.

Mrs. Stewart: No.

Col. Stewart: Almost at the end.

Mrs. Stewart: No, dear. The major that shipped my dog home said, "Things are very serious. We don't know where he's going to land. I'm going to send you to Hawaii."

Col. Stewart: Well, you were already there, and I knew it.

Marcello: I would assume that the Hawaiian Islands was much better duty than the Philippines were at that time.

Col. Stewart: Well, yes. Well, actually when we left, we didn't know for sure whether we were going to Hawaii or the Philippines. We knew we was going west--that's all.

Marcello: When you got to the Hawaiian Islands, what sort of a training routine did you begin?

Col. Stewart: Well, it was mostly normal. It was just regular fighter training routine, and some gunnery training at the outlying fields and this type of thing. It was just normal training.

We had a little dive bombing training and aerial gunnery and ground gunnery training in our P-36's originally, and then later P-40's.

Marcello: What specifically was the mission of your particular group at Wheeler Field? Was it more or less to serve as protection for the Army bases there and things of this nature?

Col. Stewart: That and the Hawaiian Islands in general, but particularly Oahu and Honolulu, yes.

Marcello: Now as I recall . . .

Col. Stewart: And Pearl Harbor and so on, yes.

Marcello: Now as I recall from what I read, the Army was more or less concerned with short-range reconnaissance and so on and so forth, and the Navy was to take care of long-range reconnaissance. . .

Col. Stewart: Basically . . .

Marcello: . . . with carrier planes and PBV's.

Col. Stewart: Basically, at that time the Air Force had some . . . well, actually it had some B-18's at Hickam Field that did a little reconnaissance, and they were to be for more or less little bombardment.

Marcello: Now as one got closer and closer to December 7, and as relations between the United States and Japan continued to deteriorate, did your training routine change in any way?

Col. Stewart: Only slightly. Mainly, our fighter training remained much the same. Our main alert-type tying was toward sabotage alert and so forth more so than attack and so on.

Marcello: This is kind of interesting, I think, and it's certainly an important part of the story. You mentioned the word "sabotage." It's true, is it not, that one of the things that the Army in particular was worried about was that relatively large Japanese population on the Hawaiian Islands.

Col. Stewart: Very definitely. Very definitely.

Marcello: What steps were taken at Wheeler Field in order to guard against sabotage?

Col. Stewart: Well, basically, just to increase the guards alert a little bit. Of course, they had all the airplanes grouped together real close so they'd be easier to take care of, and we'd had a review the morning before, on the sixth, on Saturday. So we had all the airplanes grouped together, so it'd be easier to watch them, you know, and so forth.

Marcello: In other words, this is why they were lined up into nice, neat rows.

Col. Stewart: That was one of the reasons, yes. The other was the review, and one other was the sabotage thing so you'd have more way to, you know, watch them easier.

Marcello: I've also heard it's much easier to refuel the airplanes if they're lined up in those rows like that.



Col. Stewart: Yes, and it's much easier to burn them up, too.

Marcello: (Chuckle) As you were to find out on December 7.

Col. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: Okay, you get to the Hawaiian Islands, and as a married officer you, of course, were eligible to bring your wife and establish quarters. As we mentioned at the beginning of the interview, your quarters were actually on Wheeler Field.

Col. Stewart: That's right.

Marcello: What were the quarters like for a married couple at that time? Maybe I should ask this question to Mrs. Stewart.

Col. Stewart: Well, I can give you the first part of it. They had some older quarters there for the senior officers. We were young lieutenants. We had duplexes, real nice, two bedroom, one bath duplexes with nice . . . real nice quarters-- fireplace and all whether you needed it or not.

Marcello: Did you establish the quarters until Mrs. Stewart arrived, or did you have to live in the BOQ's until she came?

Col. Stewart: Well, I lived with a classmate of mine until she got there because they were still finishing up the quarters, and just as soon as they were finished is about the time that she got there. So then we moved in.

Marcello: These were relatively new quarters, in other words.

Col. Stewart: Brand new.

Mrs. Stewart: Brand new.

Marcello: Okay, describe what it looked like from a woman's viewpoint.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, there were no sidewalks in yet, and just garbage cans out in back, and no shrubbery. But they said they'd put that in--the maintenance people. Of course, anything'll grow in Hawaii. And we moved in, and we bought a card table the next day. We had four GI chairs and two Army cots, and that's how we lived until our furniture got over there.

Marcello: You mentioned GI chairs. Perhaps some future historian won't know what you're referring to. What is a GI chair?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, it's an old chair. It's not like these captain's chairs we're sitting on.

Marcello: Are they made out of metal or something like that?

Col. Stewart: No, these were wood.

Mrs. Stewart: No, wood.

Col. Stewart: They were wooden, kind of like dining table chairs.

Mrs. Stewart: We had to buy a card table to eat off of.

Marcello: Were you relatively fortunate to get quarters? In other words, was housing at a premium?

Col. Stewart: Yes. Well, at that particular time, they had just built a big bunch of new quarters, and happened to hit there right at the right time to where . . . at that particular time there were pretty ample quarters. If we'd have been there six months earlier, we'd have had to live in town somewhere.

Marcello: I know, for example, that in the case of the navy personnel that I talked to, unless they were married they could just count on living aboard ship, there was no way that they could get quarters at all.

Col. Stewart: They had some BOQ's there for the unmarried ones, the older ones, but we just happened to hit there at the time that they were just completing them.

Marcello: What was the social life like for a young couple on the Hawaiian Islands at that time?

Mrs. Stewart: Lovely!

Marcello: (Chuckle) Would you care to expand on that? In other words, what were some of the activities in which you and your husband would engage?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, we went to the Officers' Club. They had "Nineteenth Hole" on Friday night, which was informal, and then on Saturday nights they always had a dance. Drinks were fifteen cents apiece. You wore a formal on Saturday nights, but you wore cotton. We had many Japanese and Chinese seamstresses in Sahaawa, which was just off the base. We had an old store that you could go to and get yards of material for fifteen cents a yard, and silk was dirt cheap. You could just take a moment or two, and you'd take a picture of a dress that you wanted made, and they'd make it for practically nothing.

Marcello: I gather that entertaining in those pre-Pearl Harbor days could be a rather formal affair. Like you mentioned

awhile ago, long dresses and this sort of thing were very common.

Mrs. Stewart: After six o'clock, if you had more than four people in your house, you had to have a formal on.

Marcello: Was there a great deal of entertaining that took place among the various couples and so on?

Mrs. Stewart: Oh, yes, yes.

Col. Stewart: Casual entertaining.

Marcello: But it was, like you mentioned awhile ago, a tropical paradise.

Col. Stewart: Yes. On the formal thing she's talking about, like going to the boxing matches at Schofield Barracks or the movies or whatever, after six o'clock we always wore our formal or our mess dress up until the time the war started. That was Army regulation and not so much the Air Corps. We had to do that.

Mrs. Stewart: And the football games . . . you wore a formal.

Col. Stewart: Oh, yes.

Marcello: Women, also.

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: That's rather interesting. But I had heard that story from other people, too.

Mrs. Stewart: Movies.

Col. Stewart: And movies and everything. It was quite formal.

Marcello: Okay, we talked about the relatively large Japanese population on the islands, and, of course, it's quite obvious

that the two countries were more or less on a collision course. What was the scuttlebutt among the young pilots relative to the qualities of the Japanese Air Force and things of this nature?

Col. Stewart: Well, we really didn't know too much about their overall capabilities because we hadn't really been briefed on it. We figured that if we ever got into a skirmish with them that they'd probably be comparable to us, if they'd had good training, as we hoped that we had. As fighter pilots . . . you kind of look at . . . fighter pilots are fighter pilots, and from any country they're probably pretty well-prepared and pretty well-trained. Then it goes into individual ability and equipment.

Marcello: Had you discussed the Japanese aircraft at all?

Col. Stewart: Not a whole lot, no. Not really a whole lot. We knew that there was a possibility, but we didn't discuss it that much other than that we had a little recognition on them and stuff like that.

Marcello: Had you heard of the Zero, for example, prior to the war?

Col. Stewart: Oh, yes and the ME-109's in Germany and so forth. Yes, we'd heard of them, but we didn't know that much about them.

Mrs. Stewart: Can I tell him about what I said to you when you were OD that day?

Col. Stewart: Well, that's something different.

Marcello: Is this getting a little bit closer to Pearl Harbor?

Col. Stewart: Yes, this is a little different, yes.

Marcello: Okay, we'll talk about this in a little while, but I want to get some of this introductory material in, and then we'll get back and talk about that. When the young couples got together, and perhaps when they were doing this informal entertaining, did the talk of war come up very much at that particular time, or is that the kind of a subject you'd stay away from?

Col. Stewart: No, not very much. We'd basically talk about our own flying and what had gone on and so forth, and just basically social things. But, no, not so much . . . we didn't talk so much about war at all--very little as a matter of fact. Other than we all knew there was a possibility of war, particularly on the other side of the world as well as this side. We did from that standpoint--the overall thing--but we primarily were concerned with preparing ourselves, and come what may.

Marcello: Did you think that you were relatively safe in the Hawaiian Islands?

Col. Stewart: At that particular time, yes.

Marcello: In other words, was this mainly because of the tremendous distance between the Hawaiian Islands and Japan, among other things?

Col. Stewart: Well, yes. Yes, and the men, also, with the war going on in Europe having already started and so forth, most of us there, at least the ones I'd talked to, didn't feel that we were in imminent danger of attack.

Marcello: What you're saying, in effect, is that most eyes were still turned toward Europe at that particular time.

Col. Stewart: That's right. Now we knew that we had been sent to the Pacific for a reason and that there was a possibility of a war there. I've got something to say about that later, but that's . . .

Marcello: Now as one got closer and closer to Pearl Harbor, were there many alerts and things of this nature?

Col. Stewart: We had a few sort of sabotage alerts, mainly figuring, "Well, they might blow up our airplanes or so forth from within Hawaii." And as a matter of fact, on the sixth and the night of the sixth and a few nights before, we were on a sabotage alert.

Marcello: What form would these sabotage alerts take?

Col. Stewart: Increase the security around the base and to look for, you know, saboteurs coming in and things like that.

Marcello: In other words, it was nothing really that you as a pilot had to do with these sabotage alerts.

Col. Stewart: No, not particularly.

Marcello: Did your time on base increase as one got closer to Pearl Harbor?

Col. Stewart: Oh, from the standpoint of . . . a little bit of an increase of duty, but mine was only if I was the officer of the day or officer of the guard or something like that.

Marcello: This is probably a part of the record, but I want to talk about it anyhow. Describe what Wheeler Field looked like from a physical standpoint.

Col. Stewart: Well, it was a large sod field with a row of hangars on the north side and a ramp out on the north side. And then in back of that, there were barracks and mess halls and quarters and stuff like that. On in back of that were the old officers' quarters. Then beyond that, towards the east, towards Wahiawa, were the newer set of quarters like what we junior officers lived in some of the senior officers lived in.

At that particular time, there were a couple of tent cities on the hangar line where brand new squadrons formed, of which I was a member of one, and a lot of our enlisted personnel were living in the tents in between the hangars. That's where we suffered some casualties--in there.

Marcello: How far were your living quarters from the actual operational areas of the base?

Col. Stewart: Well, from the eastern end of the flight line where the airplanes were and the squadron I was operations officer in . . . I would estimate we were about two to three hundred yards from the eastern end of the flight line,



but we were about, maybe, a hundred yards north of the actual sod flying line or the airfield itself.

Marcello: Did you have a very good view of the flight line?

Col. Stewart: I could see the eastern end of the flight line, and I could see all eleven airplanes in our squadron. When I looked out there, I could see ten of them burning, including my own personal airplane. The only one that didn't burn was the one we had for spare parts. It was up on jacks. It had the prop off and the instruments out and wheels off and all this kind of stuff. I could see all of that.

Marcello: You did have a good view of Wheeler Field on the day of the attack.

Col. Stewart: Wheeler Field, yes. Then I could see the smoke from Pearl Harbor after they had hit us. Well, they hit about the same time. They hit us first to keep us on the ground, and they did a good job.

Marcello: Okay, this more or less brings us up to the days immediately prior to the attack. At this particular time, what I want you both to try to do is to recollect what you did on Saturday, December 6, 1941, from the time you got up in the morning until the time you went to bed. Colonel Stewart, we'll let you start first, and then bring Mrs. Stewart into it.

Col. Stewart: Okay, let me . . . I want to go back slightly. I can't recall the night that I was OD. I think it was . . . I

don't believe it was the sixth. No, it couldn't have been because . . .

Mrs. Stewart: No, the week before.

Col. Stewart: It was the week before or the fifth . . .

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Col. Stewart: . . . that I was OD, and we were out on the hills around the airdrome. I happened to go by and pick her up, and we went out, toured around, and we were checking the guards and so forth. That's when she made the comment that you might want to pick up.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, he was in the 6th Squadron then, and he was operations officer, I think.

Col. Stewart: No, I was in the 73rd Squadron. It didn't matter what I was in.

Mrs. Stewart: It was the week before this.

Col. Stewart: I had been in it for two months. It doesn't make any difference.

Mrs. Stewart: Anyway, he parked the car, and he went out to be OD. He was in uniform. I, naturally being a curious woman, turned around and they had the flaps up on the tents, and they were taking their showers out of buckets, you know. I thought, "Well, I'd better not look." So I turned around like this (gesture). When he came back after changing the guards, I said, "Darling, this is a very dangerous place for the troops." And he said, "Well, this is the

paradise of the Pacific." And I said, "Well, if we ever have a bombing over here, they're all going to be killed." And sure enough, I had to evacuate the dead.

Marcello: Why did you think that that was such a dangerous place for troops to be quartered?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, it was just on the hangar line, between two hangars.

Marcello: You mentioned awhile ago that you were OD. What exactly did the OD do? It sounds like . . . this is kind of an interesting job.

Col. Stewart: Actually, I was probably officer of the guard to go out and inspect the guard posts around various parts of the station and out on the outer edges and so forth, and primarily at that time it was for sabotage to . . . you know, if there's anybody moving in to try to blow up the airplanes and set them on fire and stuff like that. I was probably the officer of the guard rather than officer of the day.

Marcello: Now I would assume that Wheeler Field had no antiaircraft armament or very little of it. In other words, you depended on the fighter planes there to protect the field and the surrounding . . .

Col. Stewart: Well, yes, and then right next to us was Schofield Barracks, which was supposed to provide ground protection and so forth. Then, of course, the Navy and Marines out in the outer . . . the artillery and so forth out around the edges of the island was to provide additional protection and so forth.

Marcello: Did you ever maintain very close liason with the other services with regard to protecting the islands and so on?

Col. Stewart: Well, primarily from the standpoint of air, we used to have practice sessions with the Navy and Marine air and so forth back and forth. But other than that, no, not too much.

Marcello: In other words, would you say it was a sense of professionalism? They figured you were professional enough to do your job; you figured they were professional enough to their jobs.

Col. Stewart: Pretty much so. Even though we were part of the Army at that time, we were still Army Air Corps or Army Air Force. I don't know which. We let Schofield Barracks take care of the Army side, and even though we were under the Army, we took care of our part from the air standpoint. We were pretty much independent on that, even though we were friendly and were back and forth together all the time. But we didn't have that much in the way of joint maneuvers except in the air with the Navy and the Marines and so on.

Marcello: Okay, again, we're talking about the Saturday of December 6, 1941. So once more I'll ask you to give me your routine on that particular day from the time you got up in the morning and went to bed that night.

Col. Stewart: Well, the best I can recall it is that we had a review in the morning of the sixth. We had that out on the ramp. I don't remember the details of the review. That was another reason why the airplanes were parked nose to tail or wing tip to wing tip. It'd give us more space for maneuvering out there and also to assist in sabotage alerts rather than an attack. Then I don't really recall too much about what we did in the afternoon. I might have played golf. I don't know.

In the evening, we went over to the squadron commander's house. I think there were four couples of us. We played bridge rather than go to a club. Why, I don't know. The four couples of us played bridge until about midnight. We probably had a couple of drinks. It'd be two or three-- not too much. We went home about midnight for some reason. Usually, we were a little later than that. We went to bed, and the next thing we knew the Japs were waking us up.

Marcello: Mrs. Stewart, can you add anything to the activities of the night of Saturday, December 6?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, we went to this bridge party. I don't think they had a dance at the club. But we were invited to this private party in quarters just like ours. Everything was going fine. I didn't feel too well, so I asked "Stu" to take me home and he could come back if he wanted to. It was just a court down. We parked our car out in front. The

next morning it wouldn't start, and there was a bullet hole in it.

Marcello: Okay, so . . .

Col. Stewart: No, that's not right. I drove it to the flying line.

Marcello: . . . you did retire relatively early that night.

Col. Stewart: About midnight. Around midnight.

Marcello: Let me ask you this question. Now when you talk about Pearl Harbor, a lot of people assume that if the Japanese were going to attack, the best time that they could have possibly picked would have been on a Sunday because Saturday nights were always a time of drunken orgies and what have you in the Hawaiian Islands. Now I want you to set the record straight. In general what was it usually like on a Saturday night?

Col. Stewart: Well, usually on Saturday night . . . quite often there might be a party at the club, and they usually didn't last past--I don't remember--twelve or two. It was just like going to a party here in Dallas or in Denton or wherever. Some people might stay late and some early. As far as drunken orgies and so forth like that, I've never seen any more there than anywhere else in the world. To the best of my knowledge, on that particular night I don't know of any. Now there might have been . . . I think some of the boys were maybe still up playing poker until late in the morning, but I don't know of any party going

on at Wheeler Field. If there was, we sure missed that one. But that particular philosophy . . . yes, that would be a normal time to hit anywhere because Sunday is normally a morning that you'd kind of sleep in and take it easy and all. You don't usually have drill and exercises on Sunday morning unless you're at gunnery camp or something. So I think all of that falderal that they're talking about is just a bunch of garbage.

Marcello: Well, that's what I wanted to get in the record.

Col. Stewart: Now that's my feeling.

Marcello: That's what I wanted to get--your feeling.

Col. Stewart: That's what I know of it. A Saturday night's a Saturday night, whether you're in Dallas or Hawaii or the Philippines or where.

Marcello: Okay, this takes us into Sunday morning, and once more I'll ask you to go through your routine as it unfolded and as you remember it on the Sunday of December 7.

Col Stewart: Okay.

Marcello: Who was up first? Or were you all in bed when hell broke loose?

Col. Stewart: We were all in bed.

Marcello: Okay.

Col. Stewart: We and then my sister in another bedroom. We were all there together. I guess Mrs. Stewart probably woke up first. The first thing I heard was at nearly eight o'clock,

which I found out later. I heard the wind up of an airplane. I thought, "Uh, oh! The Navy's hitting us," because we used to go back and forth, you know, beating up each other's airdromes.

Marcello: In other words, you would buzz each other's fields?

Col. Stewart: Oh, yes, yes, and we might make mock attacks on each other. I thought, "Well, here comes the Navy again," and then all of a sudden I hear a big explosion. I says, "Uh, oh! We got one." I figured, "Well, one went on in somehow or another." Pretty soon there was the same thing--another explosion. I thought, "My God! We're getting a bunch of them this morning!"

Marcello: You were still in bed at this stage?

Col. Stewart: At this particular point, I was or was just getting out of bed. I don't remember. I guess after about the third one, I figured, "Well, this is too many," or something like that. She had already gotten up, I guess, or gone out to the window or something and said, "My god! There's Japanese out there!"

Marcello: Okay, pick it up from this standpoint Mrs. Stewart.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, I heard this and this colonel's wife . . . a colonel's wife in that day was very important. She said to me . . . she was fascinated with my wedding rings. And she said, "Oahu is built on a pedestal."

Col. Stewart: We're talking about the morning of the seventh.



Mrs. Stewart: Well, I have to lead up to it, okay? She said, "If we ever have an earthquake over here, we're going to just sink into the ocean." We did have an underwash.

And so when I heard the first bomb, I tried to shake "Stu" awake, and he was sound asleep. I ran out the front door. I came back in and I said, "'Stu,' there are planes all over the place!" And he said, "My god! What was that?" That's when he woke up. He ran out and he said, "It must be the Navy. Somebody has spun in." We had a big field out in front of our quarters. Then he said, "The rising sun!" I didn't know what that meant.

Marcello: In other words, by this time had both of you gone outside?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: You were both outside?

Col. Stewart: I was looking out. I don't know whether I was out in the back or looking out the back, but I could see the rising sun or see the airplanes. I knew then what it was. Then I looked out at the flight line, and I could see that they were shooting up the airplanes up and down the line. I could just see the ones in our squadron. They were burning.

Marcello: What were your emotions and your feelings when you saw that?

Col. Stewart: Oh, god! Well, I don't know. For one, I wanted to get

out there and get up at them. Then I looked and thought, "Hell, I don't have an airplane, so what can I do?" So I stayed in the quarters . . . well, I went back in the quarters, and I called the squadron commander whose house we had been at the night before. I said, "Are you still there?" He said, "Yes." I said, "What are you going to do?" And he said, "I'm going to stay right here until they quit attacking us." I said, "Good. I'm going to, too," which really was the only smart thing to do because if we'd have gone down there, we'd have probably gotten ourselves shot, and we'd have still been over there.

Mrs. Stewart: And they were strafing our quarters, too.

Marcello: Did this happen during the attack itself?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: They were strafing the quarters. Well, describe what that was like.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, there were bullets all over the place!

Col. Stewart: Along our particular set of quarters--line of quarters--they didn't actually hit our quarters, but the sidewalk and in back of it for three or four feet was pockmarked with bullet holes. Some of the BOQ's and some of the apartment quarters over there, like Lieutenant and Mrs. Dick Toole and a few others, their apartments were hit. As a matter of fact, Lucille Toole was in the bathroom, and the bullet came in there and just went all the way

around the place and fortunately didn't hit her--this type of thing. Then, of course, they were strafing the barracks and the tent area that I mentioned before where our squadron personnel were. They were strafing all up and down there as well as the flight line, the airplanes, and so on. They did do quite a bit of strafing, but our own particular quarters they actually didn't hit, but they hit right alongside of us.

Marcello: Now in the meantime were you continuing to watch the attack, or had you gone back into the quarters and dressed?

Col. Stewart: First, I went back in to get dressed and then get ready to go down, and as soon as the first wave was over, then I drove down as quickly as possible to see if we could salvage any airplanes.

Marcello: Can you recollect how long it took for that first attack to be over?

Col. Stewart: That's a good question.

Marcello: That's really putting you on the spot to ask that question.

Col. Stewart: No, that's a good question. It could have been anywhere from ten minutes to thirty minutes. It seemed like several hours, but it was probably in the nature of twenty . . . I would say probably twenty minutes plus or minus.

Marcello: But you could detect a lull in the attack.

Col. Stewart: Well, yes. I didn't go down until there was a lull in the attack on our particular place. It might have been

still going on down at Pearl Harbor with the torpedo bombers and so on. So then I got in the car and went on down.

Marcello: How did you drive down there? Was it a calm drive? Or was it a speedy drive?

Col. Stewart: No, it was kind of hurried. It was kind of hurried to get down there to . . . well, I'll give you a little example of why it was best to stay in the quarters. A former squadron commander, at that time Captain Bill Steele, and a couple of others--Major Bill Morgan, I believe, and a couple of others--had started down there during the attack. They finally decided that wasn't a very smart thing. So they ended up hiding under the church steps until the thing was over because it was just too strenuous down there.

But anyway, we went down . . . a bunch of us started to gather down there to try to see what airplanes we could salvage or if there was anything flyable or if we could get them out to the revetments and so forth on the edge of the field.

Marcello: Was everybody still acting in a professional manner at this time?

Col. Stewart: Very much so. Very much so. And there was really not too much panic there--a little bit but not too much. We said, "Well, here's what we've got left. What are

we going to do with it? What do we have left?"

Marcello: Yes, what did you have left?

Col. Stewart: Yes, that was the big question. "What do we have left?"  
If anything looked like it might be able to fly, we'd tow it out across to the revetments and so forth. Well, we were in the process of this when the second wave hit at Wheeler. I recall that down near our squadron area . . . my car was there and all. When they started coming in again, I jumped in the car. About that time the car just filled up with people, and they were standing on top of it and around. We drove up the field, and up there was a great big flat bed for some reason. I don't know why it was up there.

Marcello: Now had the second attack started by this time?

Col. Stewart: It was just starting and . . . had just started, yes, but they hadn't hit us. I was afraid they were going to hit the car. But the car was full. I don't know how many people were in it. We drove by this flat bed. I said, "Boy, this is the safest place in the world." I skidded to a stop. By the time I got stopped and was ready to get out of the car, everybody was out, and the car just sprung up. When I got ready to get under the flat bed, there wasn't any room. The thing was just packed with . . . not just people from my car, but all around. So I just went around to the opposite side from

wherever they might be coming and stayed on the outside.

I dove under and tried to get underneath bodies.

Marcello: Now did you have a good view of that second attack, also?

Col. Stewart: Pretty much so, yes.

Marcello: How did it differ from the first attack?

Col. Stewart: Well, from what I could tell, it was a little more sporadic, and it wasn't as concentrated, of course. In the first attack, the Japs would come in and make their pass, and they were going way up high because they didn't know whether we had any defenses down there or not. And after their first pass or two, they got to where they'd just barely come back up over the hangar, just make a pass as fast as they could.

Marcello: Now in the first attack, were they using dive bombers for the most part?

Col. Stewart: Dive bombers and strafing both. They used them all. In the second attack . . . of course, they'd expended a lot of their ammunition and a lot of their bombs. Most of their bombs were gone. The second attack was primarily strafing and many less airplanes, really, but just kind of hazard-type thing.

Marcello: How low were they flying?

Col. Stewart: Right on the deck--as low as they could and be effective in shooting. They didn't do so much damage in the second because they'd already done enough in the first attack

that it didn't make that much difference. They might have knocked out a few, and they might have shot a few more people or something like that, but not too many.

Marcello: How long would you estimate that second attack lasted?

Col. Stewart: Probably ten minutes or fifteen minutes.

Mrs. Stewart: But I got knocked down.

Marcello: Okay, so in the meantime, he's gone out to the field. What were you doing?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, the flight surgeon . . . what was his name?

Col. Stewart: Don Flickinger.

Mrs. Stewart: Dr. Flickinger called me and said, "'Sunny,' can you be here?" In the meantime, I had put on some pink slacks and a blouse, and I ran all the way down there because I didn't have any transportation to the dispensary.

Marcello: How far was the dispensary from where you were living?

Mrs. Stewart: I would say about five blocks.

Col. Stewart: Three to five. It was in the Officers' Club.

Mrs. Stewart: No, not that one.

Col. Stewart: Oh, okay.

Mrs. Stewart: I went down to the real one. Schofield had the hospital. We didn't have anything but a dispensary. He said, "'Sunny,' can you get some transportation?" I said, "Yes, I think I can get it from Marty Tomer." He said, "Fine. Now I want you to go around the base and get some help. Go around the base and find out how many people are wounded or killed."

Marcello: Now why did he call you? Did you have some sort of special training and so on?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes, I am a dietician and I had a medical degree. I was also a double first-aider. So I went around all over, and during the second phase of the attack I got knocked out, and I got a shrapnel wound across this hand.

Marcello: Across the back of your hand?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: Was this a painful wound, a serious wound, or anything of that nature?

Mrs. Stewart: No, it just bled like, you know . . . and I went down to the dispensary and got it fixed up. Everybody was in panic at that stage. I mean, the dependents. And so I had to hear everybody's story about what had happened to them and what had happened to their quarters and what had happened to them, you know.

I went in one noncoms' quarters, and I couldn't waken anybody. I thought, "Everybody's dead in here!" because you never locked your doors in there because you had cards all over the place. I found this drunken sergeant. He was drunk as a monkey. I woke him up, and I said, "Do you realize that we are in war? That we have been attacked by the Japanese?" "Oh, we have?" I got him up, and I threw him in the shower with his pajamas on. I said, "You'd better calm down and get out of here, and report for duty!"



Marcello: Now by this time are both attacks over?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes, because I had had my hand bandaged. And that was the end of it. Thank God, it started raining!

Marcello: Now you mentioned awhile ago, that is, before we turned on the tape recorder, that at one stage one of your neighbors couldn't find their little child. I think this is kind of an interesting incident, and did it occur sometime during the two attacks here?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: You might describe that for the record. I think it's kind of an interesting story.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, Marty came over--Marty Toner--they're from Boston. She came over . . . and I had told you I had made coffee, and I don't remember making it. I don't even remember putting my socks on, frankly. She came over and says, "'Sunny,' I have lost Carolyn." Well, I thought Carolyn was dead. I said, "Just a minute, Marty. I'll help you." I went over and we looked all over that quarters. Her quarters were just like my quarters.

I finally found her in this big linen closet in the hallway wrapped in a pile of sheets--the safest place. It was in the center of the house--the safest place she could have put her. But she didn't remember putting her there. And so we got Carolyn and took her back to our quarters, and we had a cup of coffee. This is after just the first

phase. "Buzz" had left . . . her husband had left for the flight line, you know, and we had a cup of coffee.

She said, "Do you have any milk?" I said, "Yes." She didn't know whether she had any milk. She was completely insane. She was scared to death because of her two-weeks-old baby, you know. We had a cup of coffee. I said, "Now I want you to go back."

Just then the phone rang. It was Flickinger saying, "Come down immediately!" I said, "Marty, I have to leave." I didn't lock a door. I didn't do anything. That night I had a very peculiar experience.

Marcello: Incidentally, did the medical people know who among the dependents had first aid training, medical training, and things of that nature?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes. Yes, they did. It's strange the way people act in an emergency. My best girlfriend, "Gabby" . . . I went by to get her because she didn't have any children, and I didn't have any children. I went by to get her to have her help me.

Marcello: Now was this on your way down to the dispensary?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes. And she said, "No, I'm heading for the hills." It's strange, you know. And I told you about Marty throwing a cup of coffee in my face that night. That's when we evacuated the dependents.

Marcello: We'll talk about that in a minute. Let me just ask you

this before we leave your version of the story. Now after you got down to the dispensary, were the casualties beginning to come in?

Mrs. Stewart: No.

Marcello: They hadn't arrived yet.

Mrs. Stewart: No. I had to go home and get Marty's car--Marty Toner's car. We evacuated the dead, and then we evacuated the casualties.

Marcello: Okay. You evacuated the dead now. Do you want to describe exactly what took place here?

Mrs. Stewart: No.

Marcello: Okay. Let's go back to your story now Colonel Stewart. The second attack was over. There's something I want to ask you at this stage. Lieutenants Welsh and Taylor-- did you know them?

Col. Stewart: Very well.

Mrs. Stewart: Very well.

Marcello: Tell me just a little bit about them.

Col. Stewart: Well, neither one of them were in my squadron at that particular time, although Taylor later was. They were a couple of good, young, and new fighter pilots in the outfit. They were good pilots in their training and so on. They were not in my outfit. In fact, they were in a different group.

Marcello: They were flying P-40's, I believe, were they not?

Col. Stewart: That's right. Now at that time, most all of us were flying P-40's. We had a few P-36's intermingled in. But the morning of the attack, Welsh and Taylor were back at Wheeler Field, as I recall, and when it hit, they called to . . .

Marcello: Haleiwa, wasn't it?

Col. Stewart: . . . Haleiwa or whichever base they were on. I think it was Haleiwa.

Marcello: It was.

Col. Stewart: It was one of our gunnery bases out there. They called out and said to get their planes ready, that we were under attack, and they were going to take off as soon as they could. They raced out there. This was brought out very well in Tora! Tora! Tora! That part's quite true. They tore out there real fast and jumped in their airplanes and . . . they and Lou Sanders, who had the squadron at Mokuleia and three or four more got in the air that morning.

Well, anyway, Taylor and Welch fairly had them a pretty good time that morning. Then they came back into Wheeler. I don't recall whether it was in between attacks or after the second attack. I don't remember now. I believe it was Taylor that I helped get reserviced when he came back in. He had a little nick in his left arm. I jumped up on the wing. I said, "Come on, Taylor!" He says, "I'm going to stay in here because if I get out of here, you'll

take my airplane!" I said, "You're right! You're absolutely right! That's what I want!"

Marcello: In other words, the pilots that did not have any airplanes were more or less serving as ground personnel.

Col. Stewart: We were helping them out as much as we could. But since he had a little nick in his arm . . . he had a little slight bleed there. It didn't hurt him any. I was going to try to talk him into going to the dispensary and get something put on it. In the meantime, I didn't get to do it. So he went on. I wasn't going to throw him out. Besides that, he was bigger than I was.

He got two that morning, and George Welch got four. A couple of the other people got one apiece, and then Sterling got shot down somehow or another. I don't know whether Sterling was flying a P-36 or a P-40.

Mrs. Stewart: Some of the GI's there shot them down through the barracks.

Marcello: Did you actually see any of the resistance being put up by the ground personnel there on Wheeler Field? I understand they were firing with anything that was available.

Col. Stewart: Well, okay, after the attack . . . well, when the first attack was going on, basically we didn't have any rifles or guns or anything at Wheeler. So somebody went up to Schofield Barracks to get some rifles and so forth and whatever they could get. They were told up there . . . I am told they were told that "We can't give you any guns

because we don't have any official declaration of war.

We can't give you any guns," and so forth.

Marcello: In the meantime, Schofield's burning as well as Wheeler Field.

Col. Stewart: Well, not so much as Wheeler Field--a little bit but not as much. But somehow or another, there were some guns around. I remember on the second attack--he might have been doing it on the first attack--but on the second attack there was one of our sergeants on the squadron I was in--Sergeant Hammer.

Marcello: This is still out at the flat bed?

Col. Stewart: This was out near there--out near the flight line. He had either a little depression he was in, or he dug him a little one or something. Anyway, he was lying in this place with this rifle and shooting at them as they were going by in this second wave.

Marcello: In other words, he was more or less lying on his back.

Col. Stewart: He was shooting at them, and he said, "I'll get you, you son-of-a-bitch! I'm going to get you!" And he was just shooting like hell. Somebody said they thought he shot one down. Now whether he did or not, I don't know. But this was the main kind of resistance we had there.

Marcello: In other words, it was more or less a sense of frustration. Under normal circumstances, one would have realized that a rifle wouldn't have been very effective against airplanes, but at least they were doing something.

Col. Stewart: It can be, and I think a rifle probably . . . well, a rifle or a machine gun probably brought down in Germany one of our leading aces. So a rifle can be very effective against an airplane, but it's awful lucky.

Marcello: Well, this is what I . . .

Col. Stewart: But anyway, he was shooting at them, and somebody said they thought he hit one and might have brought one down, but nobody knows for sure.

Marcello: Well, after the attack was over, what did you do then?

Col. Stewart: We continued on trying to salvage what airplanes we could and see what we had and dragging them out and trying to clear the flight line and all sorts of things like that and just, you know, whatever needed to be done--clear up the debris, check on the wounded. Of course, we went down to check on our squadron personnel who were pretty well shot up in tents down there.

Marcello: What sort of a scene did you see when you went down there? Describe it.

Col. Stewart: Well, there were a few people laying around dead in the tents and around in the area. But a good many of them had kind of been taken out. By the time we got down there, the medical people had been down and kind of cleared those out, taking care of the wounded and getting them out of there. Of course, they tried to get the wounded out first. But there were mainly just riddled tents and so

forth, and then, of course, they bombed out some of the hangars. The maintenance hangars were bombed out. We had a few airplanes in there, and some of those were bombed out. Two or three of the hangars were bombed and pretty well riddled. And, of course, there were burned airplanes up and down the flight line.

Marcello: What sort of a feeling, or what sort of emotions, did you have when you saw this scene that was before you?

Col. Stewart: Well, I guess it was probably, "Well, it looks like we've had it for now, and what can we salvage and what can we do?" It's just a fact of life. You've got to accept it. "Well, they got us." I suppose there was a little panic down on the line, but nothing real great because we weren't all right there in the midst of it at the time. Basically, it was, "Well, gosh. Here's what we've left. What can we do about it?"

Marcello: What sort of an appetite did you have while this whole thing was going on? Several hours had elapsed by this time.

Col. Stewart: I really didn't eat anything until the next morning, and I had a candy bar somewhere.

Mrs. Stewart: Candy and a can of beer.

Col. Stewart: A can of beer--that was the next morning. We'll go into that later.

Marcello: Okay, so in the meantime, what were you doing, Mrs. Stewart?



You mentioned that you had been working at the dispensary when the wounded and so on were coming in.

Mrs. Stewart: I was taking care of the wounded and evacuating the dependents. We didn't have any bombing shelters, and we had to get those people off the base. So when I got a break, Mary Flickinger, the flight surgeon's wife, and I . . . and we took turns. I was driving Marty Toner's station wagon. I don't know how she ever lived through the attack because it was riddled by bullets. She was on her way home from Mass. She's the one that thought she had lost her baby.

During the attack--the second phase--I saw a friend of mine, Mary Sawyer. She was carrying her newborn baby from Schofield Barracks down to her quarters. I picked her up and took her home. I said, "Now you stay in there, and I'll come and get you this evening." Then I'd go back and we'd change. Mary was driving her car, and . . . somebody had to be on duty, you know. I told you we had a dentist for a doctor (chuckle), but it was better than nothing. Of course, Mary and I both were trained in bandaging and everything like that, but try to bandage bayonet wound right to the thigh.

Marcello: Now this was a case where this military personnel had obviously accidentally stabbed himself?

Mrs. Stewart: No, he just got so scared he stabbed right through his thigh.

Marcello: Well, he accidentally stabbed himself, though. It was an accident.

Mrs. Stewart: I don't think so. I think he did it on purpose.

Marcello: Okay, so when did the evacuation take place?

Mrs. Stewart: That night, after dark.

Marcello: Describe how it took place and what happened.

Mrs. Stewart: Well, we got a bunch of people with cars that were still running, and we . . . Doctor Flickinger came down, and he sent us off to Wahiawa, and we just put them anyplace we could--up in the hills . . .

Marcello: In other words, you were just trying to get them away from the military installations.

Mrs. Stewart: Yes. They even strafed Wahiawa. There were a lot of Japanese living over there.

Marcello: Now by evening had the panic subsided among the dependents?

Mrs. Stewart: Oh, yes. We had blacked-out flashlights, and we drove without lights. We'd take a load and take them here and their children and everything . . . mostly wives and everything. I had my sister-in-law with me. She would take over. She wasn't a trained first-aider, but I would have her fill in if Mary and I couldn't be there. The next day I had to get "Stu's" uniforms.

Marcello: In the meantime, did you get very much sleep that night?

Mrs. Stewart: I didn't get any sleep until the next Friday night. It was two o'clock in the morning when they woke me up.

Marcello: In other words, this is almost a week later?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes. Well, Sunday to Friday. And I went over the next day. I got a GI. I don't know what else you would call them--enlisted man. I got him to go with me. And we had gas masks and a revolver. We go over to Wahiawa, which is right next to the base, to our Japanese laundry. He went around one side of the house when I was out in back. We burst in the door. "We're loyal Americans! We're loyal Americans!" They were scared to death--the poor things. And I said, "I want Lieutenant Stewart's uniforms." So I got them, and now he had clean uniforms, you know, because after all of that mud after that rain . . . but thank God we had rain.

Marcello: In other words, it had rained that evening.

Mrs. Stewart: Yes, it started about the middle of the afternoon.

Marcello: Incidentally, was there very many trigger-happy servicemen around that night?

Mrs. Stewart: Yes, quite a few.

Marcello: Can you describe any of the incidents along these lines?

Mrs. Stewart: Well, it was from Schofield Barracks. They moved in on us, and they got trigger-happy. We kept hearing these shots, you know. That was the night of December 7, and they just got trigger-happy. But you couldn't do anything about it--just let them fire. They were wasting ammunition. There was nothing to fire at that night.

Marcello: Colonel Stewart, can you pick up on the trigger-happy servicemen that night?

Col. Stewart: Yes, but from a different aspect. Late that afternoon, the pilots in our squadron were sent out to Haleiwa to serve as a shift and a relief for the pilots out there. We got out there. Of course, somebody out there had maybe had a little panic or something. I don't know what. They didn't have any tents left out there, or there wasn't any tents for us. They didn't put any up for us. Most of we pilots and a few of their pilots ended up sleeping under a tarpaulin out on the ground, more or less. Well, I guess we threw some bedding . . . mattresses down.

That's when it really started raining--that night. It rained all night that night. I don't remember it raining in the afternoon out there. So we got out there late in the afternoon, and we were all trying to sleep underneath this tarpaulin over there. Well, I remember "Skeets" Gallagher was on one side, and I was on the other with a bunch of bodies in between. It was raining. I'd pull on the tarp and pull it off of him and get him wet, and vice versa--he'd pull it off of me and get me wet (chuckle). Anyway, this went on all night long.

But we didn't have anything to . . . we didn't get around to eating anything that evening. I don't know if

it was that evening or the next morning that we had a candy bar and a bottle of beer, and that was mainly what we got around to (chuckle).

Marcello: I'm sure that the base must have been one big rumor mill in the aftermath of the attack.

Col. Stewart: Yes. Well, it probably was, yes. Well, it was. Out there, all night long . . . the Army had finally gotten moved out of Schofield and gotten out on the north beaches anyway. I don't know what they did on the south beaches. All through Haleiwa and up through that area and up in the hills they were shooting all night long. Somebody would hear something, and they'd start shooting, and it'd be "pop, pop, pop," all over the place. They were shooting all night long. I suppose they were thinking some Japs were coming in or something. But hell, they didn't get out there until just before dark and some of them after dark, and they were still trying to get in places after dark at supposedly pre-set places. They were firing all night long.

Well, then along about . . . well, sometime before daylight--still raining--they got six of us up that were scheduled to take the next shift flying and got us up. We got in the airplane. As we were sitting there waiting to take off or were scheduled to take off . . . and it was a short field anyway. It was almost always too short for

any experienced pilot, and we had a couple of inexperienced pilots with us. Well, all of a sudden they said, "Take off! The Japs are coming in!" So we took off. I was leading the second element. Well, the wing man on the first element nosed up in the sand, and that shortened the field a ways. We had to taxi around him. Here it was pitch dark--no lights, no nothing--with a slight bit of daylight just getting ready to come over the top.

So we took off on that dark field. All we could do was just gun it as hard as we could, and when we got a little flying speed, just pull it up and go over the trees. We all skimmed over the trees, and five of us left flying. So we went up on our patrol and wandered around and around and around up over the island. We got down over Pearl Harbor, but we were up above the clouds then. We got up there and all Pearl Harbor let loose shooting at us. They thought we was Japs.

Marcello: They were shooting at your group.

Col. Stewart: Oh, the prettiest fireworks I've ever seen in my life!

Marcello: Well, describe what this incident was like.

Col. Stewart: Well, we were just cruising around. We weren't too well controlled as to exactly where we were because we couldn't see anything up there. All of a sudden we get down right over towards Pearl Harbor, and all the ships that were left let loose, and it was just like fireworks coming

up through the clouds. Of course, we got the hell out of there real quick. We cruised around some other places.

There was an observation airplane up there from Wheeler. It was cruising around at the same time. By this time there was beginning to be a little bit of light. It started shooting at us, so we got the hell out of the way from there, and we called them and told them to quit it. We called control and finally got that squared away.

Anyway, we cruised around and around and around--still up above the clouds--for quite a long while. The wind was such that it blew us out to the southwest considerably, and we ended up way out over the water. Well, control and radar and so forth is supposed to kind of keep tabs on us, but they lost us off the radar. Then control was starting to lose us. We wanted a vector home. Of course, they asked us where were we. Fine question. Well, they couldn't pick us up.

Well, it just so happened that about a week or ten days before that I'd had something similar to happen to me, and I'd had to kind of make a guess. I got drifted out to sea like that, except the weather wasn't quite so bad. I had to come in at about forty-five degrees to get back in.

Well, they told us to fly due east, and we couldn't

see anything. We were talking back and forth--the squadron commander and myself--as to what to do and which way to go and so forth. They said, "Well, fly east." So we flew a little bit, and we couldn't see anything. I said, "Johnny, I had thus and so happen last week. I suggest we fly forty-five degrees because I think I know what the general winds were." So we finally decided, well, maybe that would be safer. We flew forty-five degrees, and it brought us right back into Ewa fortunately. We figured it out later that with the visibility the way it was, if we'd have flown due east we could have gone between the two islands and never seen either one of them. In fact, we'd have still been out there floating around. Anyway, that worked out.

Well, in the meantime, Floyd Cooley was in a P-36. It had the auxiliary tank shot out of it somehow or another, but the rest of it was okay. So he didn't have any gas in that. Well, with all milling around out here over the ocean and not knowing where in the hell we were, Floyd starts calling, "Hey, I'm getting awful low on gas--way low! We'd better find something!" In the meantime we'd spotted a PBV. Somehow we'd gotten contact with him and had gotten him to follow along behind our course. Of course, we were going a little faster than he was, but we'd throttle back pretty well. But we wanted him to keep on that course. In case Floyd had to ditch it, well, he could pick him up.



Marcello: You know, the Navy always said you guys couldn't find your way around once you got out over the open seas (chuckle).

Col. Stewart: Well, this is true, but I've got some other stories on that, too. But anyway, we headed on back in, and we landed with . . . of course, the Marines were about ready to shoot us out of the sky. They didn't know whether we were Japs or what we were initially. Anyway, we got on the ground there, and Floyd taxied in.

Marcello: Now this is at Ewa?

Col. Stewart: Yes. The Marine base at that time out there. Well, he landed, and he didn't have more than one to three gallons of gas left in his damn airplane. So anyway, we got in. We got serviced and finally got back over to . . . actually, we ended up going to Wheeler and then back over to Haleiwa, where we started from, and took the airplanes home.

Marcello: Let me go back, and I have a couple of other questions I should have asked earlier but I didn't. During the attack, did any of the incoming B-17's try to land at Wheeler Field?

Col. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: Do you recall this particular incident, and were you an eyewitness to it?

Col. Stewart: Yes. Now I saw the B-17 land even though I was busy doing other things. I don't remember what now. I saw the B-17 land. It pulled up towards one of the hangars

down there and the ramp out in front of the hangar. I don't remember whether more than one landed there or not. But one of our commanders there, Bill Morgan . . . he was a major at the time. I don't know if he was squadron or group commander at the time. I think he had the 15th Group. I guess he'd flown B-17's or something as well as fighters back in the States before he got out there. Well, he scurried around and got that thing refueled somehow another . . . or maybe it had enough fuel. I don't know. I doubt if it did. He got himself a little crew together, and he took out to the northwest somewhere trying to find the fleet so he could spot it and then direct whatever bombers they could get together to go out and maybe make an attack on it.

Marcello: Those bombers had come in completely unarmed, had they not?

Col. Stewart: To the best of my knowledge, they were unarmed.

Marcello: That's what I meant, completely unarmed.

Col. Stewart: Yes. Well, an interesting little thing . . . we can digress a little bit now to their arrival, since you brought it up. If you will recall back, we had a radar practice thing going on out there. There was a radar out on one of the western mountains. A young soldier or airman or whatever by the name of Lockard and another guy or two were out at the radar site. Kermit Tyler, a lieutenant, was down at our control post. They were

all supposed to go off duty at seven o'clock in the morning.

Marcello: Now Tyler was at Shafter?

Col. Stewart: They were at Shafter at that time. That's right. Tyler had gone over to Hawaii in the same flight I did--off the same carrier and so forth. We had both gone out of Hamilton Field, California. He happened to be the practice control man at that particular time.

Marcello: Did you know Tyler personally?

Col. Stewart: Very close personally. I had known him for a couple of years. So he was on duty, but he was getting ready to leave there. He was supposed to have gotten off, but he was sticking around and fiddling around while the guys were sending in reports. They were getting ready to close up when this Lockard reported this flight from the northwest. Well, Tyler thought about it a little bit--now this was his personal account to me later on of what happened--so he called the Navy and said, "Hey, we've got a bunch of airplanes out here somewhere," and so forth. He told me that the Navy told him, "Well, don't worry about those. We've got a flight of B-17's coming in from the States, and they're lost. It's got to be them coming in from the northwest." Well, we found out it happened to be the Japs coming in. And the Navy told him to forget it.

Marcello: In other words, after Lockard had . . .

Col. Stewart: Told Tyler . . .

Marcello: . . . told Tyler, Tyler then got in touch with Naval authorities?

Col. Stewart: The Navy was in charge of that particular phase of the whole thing out there. Tyler told me that whoever was on duty down there said, "Well, forget that. That's the B-17's. They've gotten lost." The timing was perfect. I see the logic for the Navy to assume that that was the B-17's. This is about the time that they were supposed to be somewhere in the area. Nobody knew exactly, I guess. They said, "Well, they've gotten lost. They've overshoot, and they're coming back in, so forget them."

Marcello: Was Tyler ever made any sort of a scapegoat as a result of that affair?

Col. Stewart: Well, very definitely, very definitely. He was senior to me at the time, and he retired several years ago as lieutenant-colonel. So, yes, he was definitely made a scapegoat alright. That was brought out in Tora! Tora! Tora!

But anyway, the B-17's were coming in from the east about the same time the Japs hit, and they scattered the B-17's all over. One crash-landed at Kahuku Point on the golf course out there, and they crash-landed around the

island at various places--Bellows Field and some of the other fields.

Marcello: Well, the one that landed at Wheeler Field, was it being hotly pursued by these Japanese planes as it was coming in?

Col. Stewart: I don't know. I think it was, but I don't think it was damaged to amount to anything. A great many of them were pursued, and some of them were shot up or shot down or scared the hell out of or something. They got on the ground in various stages. Some crash-landed and some not. The one that I recall most there at Wheeler. . . now there might have been a couple of others that came in that taxied off the edge or something like that, or might have been shot up a little bit. I don't recall. This one was apparently okay because Bill Morgan got in it as soon as he could get it ready and took out to try to find the Japanese fleet, which, of course, he did not find.

Marcello: In other words, Morgan replaced the crew that was flying in from the West Coast.

Col. Stewart: Yes.

Marcello: You brought up the subject awhile ago, and I'll ask you to pursue it, that is, if you know anything about it. We mentioned the portable radar stations. Did you know very much about radar at that time? You personally?

Col. Stewart: No, not a lot. No, I really didn't at that time. I didn't know much about it until later, and then I worked with the Navy when I was down at Fort Shafter later on. The Navy sort of was the head people in radar at that particular time except for the station that . . . well, I guess they were more or less in charge of it. We were setting up our own at that time. I studied radar a little bit with them . . . well, I went down and became a controller for awhile when I had a sprained ankle, and as a result of that particular thing and what I learned from the Navy on that, I ended up as being the head of the radar unit at Midway, training our controllers and our operators and so forth on Midway. We replaced the Navy personnel out there. We used crew chiefs and armament people and so forth for radar operators out there, and our flight leaders and so forth as our controllers and that type thing. But I trained those out there as a result of what happened there.

Marcello: I'm going to ask you a little memory tester now. Either one of you can answer this. What was the weather like on that particular day?

Col. Stewart: Beautiful that morning. Absolutely beautiful.

Marcello: As a pilot, would you say that the weather was ideal for an attack?

Col. Stewart: Well, yes. I guess there was a few scattered clouds,

as there usually is around Hawaii. But it was beautiful that morning--beautiful. It would have been ideal for an attack.

Marcello: Incidentally, how many planes were left at Wheeler Field that were able to get into the air as a result of the attack?

Mr. Stewart: I don't know. I don't recall us getting any, actually, off the field at Wheeler during the attack because it was the center of the attack. And the ones that got off were out on the outlying fields, like Bellows, Wheeler, and so forth. For example, you might recall on the seventh of December out here at Richardson I was talking with . . . whose the president of our . . .

Marcello: Phil Willis.

Col. Stewart: Yes, Willis had an article in the paper about him being on the wing of an airplane, and the man was shot trying to get in the airplane. Well, I mentioned that to him, and I says, "Oh, you were on the wing when George Whiteman was hit and shot and knocked off the airplane." He said, "In all this time, I've been trying to find out who that pilot was, and how this particular morning you come up and say it was George Whiteman." He never knew until then. Whiteman Air Force Base in Sedalia, Missouri, is named after him.

Marcello: What were some of the rumors that you heard in the aftermath of the attack? Did you hear the rumors that the Japanese were landing and things of this nature?

Col. Stewart: Yes. Well, from that standpoint there was a bit of panic--more in general than there was right at our particular base because our panic was about over because we could see what had happened there. Yes, there were all kinds of rumors that the Japs were going to be landing and . . . well, this was going on all during the day really that . . . well, they were landing and getting ready to land and so on. And then all night long, "Well, they're going to be landing in the morning," and I guess that's one reason why we were out on patrol. One reason was just in case they ever came back and the other, two, in case of a landing. We heard all kinds of rumors like that, and nobody knew what the hell was going on--when or why or how. We had a lot of rumors like that all day and all night.

Marcello: As a closing question, let me ask this. How do you explain success of the Japanese?

Col. Stewart: Surprise. There was a lot of things that went into that. The main element was surprise. But they had exceptionally fine preparation for carrying this out. They had it planned right down to the "T." Having talked to some of the Japanese aces later--well, two or three years ago--one or two of whom were on the raid,



and read a lot about what some of the others had said, it was planned perfectly right down to the last detail. They did not expect to get away with such light casualties as they had according to their excerpts of it. I am sure that if they'd have thought they'd had that element of surprise and that little resistance, they would have had with them a landing party because they could have walked across the island on the first day.

There's one other thing. I think that might have been one of the best things that Roosevelt ever did for this country, was to allow us to be attacked out there, and probably the last good thing he ever did. Now you can cut that out if you want to (chuckle). That's my personal feeling.

Marcello: Well, Colonel and Mrs. Stewart, I want to thank you very much for giving us your experiences and reminiscences from that particular day. You've said a lot of very interesting and, I think, very important things that will be appreciated some day by scholars.