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Interview with
ARTHUR MANGANELLO
October 23, 1982

Place of Interview: Arlington, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Marcello

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Approved:

Arthur Manganello
(Signature)

Date:

23 OCT 1982

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Oral History Collection

Arthur Manganello

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: Arlington, Texas

Date: October 23, 1982

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Arthur Manganello for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on October 23, 1982, in Arlington, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. Manganello in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was at Hickam Field during the Japanese attack there and at the other military installations on December 7, 1941.

Mr. Manganello, just to get us started, why don't you give me a brief biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education--things of that nature. Just be very brief and general.

Mr. Manganello: I was born in Waltham, Massachusetts on the 28th of May, 1917. I grew up in the state of Massachusetts and went off into the Army at the age of eighteen-and-a-half years or so.

Dr. Marcello: Why did you decide to join the Army?

Mr. Manganello: Well, we were living in very depressed times. Jobs were just

not possible to find. To give you an example, to have a dinner for the day, just my lunch, I would help a fellow load and deliver coal; and I'd work for six or seven hours, and all I'd get out of it was my lunch.

So when I saw a sign one day that said, "Join the Army," I said, "Well, maybe I'll go see what's going on." So I went into the post office building where the office was located, and there were three officers--one Navy, one Marine, and one Army. I went to the Navy first, and they had a delayed induction period. In other words, I would have had to wait three months to get in there. So then I went to the Marines, and they had the same kind of thing. In those days, the standing Army was less than 75,000 men, and they weren't recruiting many people because there wasn't any money, and it was hard to get anything to pay the troops. In fact, just before I got into the service, they had a period of furloughs, where they sent officers home without pay, you know (chuckle), to preserve some of the public finances. Well, I went into the Army's place, and they said, "Yes, we have an opening in the Coast Artillery," So I was enlisted at that time,

Marcello: And when was it that you entered the Army?

Manganello: On the 3rd of January, 1936.

Marcello: Had you graduated from high school?

Manganello: No, I was a dropout. I dropped out of the ninth grade and tried to work because my father was the only one working in

the family, and there was six of us there, and it was pretty difficult. As it was, I borrowed \$2 from my one brother and an overcoat from another brother when I went off into the service (laughter).

Marcello: After you enlisted where did you go?

Manganello: I went to Fort Wright, New York. It's on Fisher's Island, located in Long Island Sound, just off of New London, about fourteen miles by the water.

Marcello: How long did you spend there at Fort Wright?

Manganello: Well, I stayed at Fort Wright from January, 1936, where I took my basic training and became a Coast Artilleryman and even was able to do my training and schooling to become an expert gunner on a 6-inch sea coast artillery piece that we had in those days. We used these rifles to shoot ships down (chuckle), We were one of three forts with--what we called-- "disappearing carriage artillery." It's no longer in use. It was abolished as soon as the war began. But we fired in kind of a pattern across Long Island Sound, so for any ships entering, we had the whole sound covered. Well, I was able to pick up an expert gunner's rating, but I didn't get paid. They were supposed to pay \$5 a month for that, but Congress didn't appropriate any money. That's how poor we were (chuckle).

I stayed there from January, 1936, to August, 1937, at which time I was transferred into the Finance Department. I had taken a home-study course for six months--correspondance

course from the United States Army, financing--which was in Washington, D. C., at the time, I was lucky enough that I passed the final examination. So I was taken out of the Artillery, and I was put into Finance, I did all this because an old sergeant advised me to do it. He said, "You can stay twenty-five years in the Army, and you'll never get anything but maybe three stripes and \$67 a month." Well, I was earning \$21 a month as a private, and he said, "You'd better get into some kind of a service, like the Quartermaster or the Finance or something like that. At least you can look forward to being a master sergeant some day, and you might come out with \$105 a month or something like that." So this is why I did it.

I was transferred from there to Newport, Rhode Island. My first Army post with the Finance was at Newport, Rhode Island. That's Fort Adams, by the way, which was established for the War of 1812, and was built largely by conscripted and volunteer local citizens' labor, in order to meet the British fleet that was coming into Narragansett Bay. They were met there very amply and turned around and sent right back. I lived in a casemate, which is a room inside a wall. To show you how old that place is, it had slits in the walls. Each room had two slits--one facing the left and the other facing to the right--so that you could have cross-firing in case that anything went (chuckle) by outside. It had a great big stone wall.

That's where I received my first experience as a finance clerk. Then from there I went to Hawaii in 1939.

Marcello: Is it not true that the Finance Corps was a rather elite group in a sense?

Manganello: Yes.

Marcello: There weren't too many people in that outfit.

Manganello: We had six hundred enlisted men in the Finance Corps when I went in, , , about six hundred. I remember that figure, six hundred. We remained an Army under a hundred thousand for several years after I entered. This is all during the time that Hitler was marching across Europe. He had taken the Sudetenland, and he had cut through, , , swindled Neville Chamberlain, the prime minister of England. The French didn't know what to do. Then finally they marched into Poland, and still we were sitting over here in America; and we just thought they'd never come over here, and we'd never get into the war. Well, anyway, that's when it was (chuckle).

Marcello; You mentioned awhile ago about the fact that promotion would have been very, very slow had you remained in the Coast Artillery. Actually, I think promotion was pretty slow all around in that pre-Pearl Harbor Army, was it not?

Manganello; Yes. I wasn't speaking from the point of saying that promotions would come. I was just saying that after thirty years' service, he said you could look forward to maybe having that rank after thirty years (chuckle).

Marcello: Explain the process by which you got to Hawaii. First of all, were you simply assigned there, or did you request that duty?

Manganello: Well, first I went off to the Finance School, which was at Baltimore, Maryland, a place known as Camp Holabird. It was the first time that the Finance School was there because it moved up from Washington, D. C. I was there for the first class. We did six months there--intensive studying of financial techniques and payroll systems and so on--and we were graduated. All the class that was graduated--some forty or fifty men--we were given the choice of three locations overseas; Puerto Rico, Panama, and Hawaii, which I think at that time were the only big overseas possessions or... well, let's just say possessions and forget it at that... that the Army was occupying or had presence in,

Given the choice...and I didn't want to chose, so I said, "I'm going to leave it up to you folks. If you want me to go, you tell me where I'm going to go. I'm kind of a fatalist like that. You tell me, and that's it." So I went back and got chosen for Hawaii, and so I was put on a boat at Newport--an overnight boat--went up the bay to Brooklyn, New York, where I was moved and transferred to a big ship, the USAT Hunter Liggett. In those days, the Army, according to the story, they had more ships than the Navy. We were all suffering from lack of preparations. In fact, when we had our maneuvers and we had

our war games, we used sticks and would say, "Bang! Bang!" We couldn't stand up and shoot, although we were well-trained in shooting; I mean, we got the actual rifle practice on the ranges. But from Brooklyn, we got on board the Hunter Liggett, and we sailed down the Atlantic to Panama and through the canal there, on through the canal, up to San Francisco to Fort McDowell--all these places are now closed and gone--and then from Fort McDowell we shipped over to Hawaii on the same transport.

Marcello: When you got to Hawaii, did you go directly to Hickam Field?

Manganello: No, I went to Fort Armstrong, which is no longer in being now, a very lovely little post. I stayed there until August, 1939, at which time I received a telegram from my sister-in-law, saying that my brother was killed. He'd had an accident, and he died, so I went and asked for an emergency leave, and they gave me ninety days. I got on a ship.,,we didn't have airplanes flying in those days. There was a China Clipper, I think, which was struggling to get started. I came back to America on the same ship I went to Hawaii on, the Hunter Liggett, and I got a train in San Francisco. They were very nice to soldiers in those days, uniformed personnel, in that if you traveled on a train, you could get a discount on your ticket, and if you were there more than one day.,,it took four days, I think, to go from the West Coast to the East Coast.,,the best portion of four days. So you would eat on the train, and they

would give you a meal ticket, and you'd get that for a discount. So I had three meals a day very nicely for not more than ninety cents or something. As long as you would travel in uniform, they would take care of that.

I went home, and I stayed my three months at home and went back to San Francisco via bus. I took a greyhound. I get on another ship there, which was sailing to Hawaii, the USAT Republic, a beautiful big ship. Now by that time, of course, the war had not yet started. It's 1940, the very tail-end of the year. In fact, I spent Christmas Eve on the Republic in Honolulu Harbor. The ships carried a big American flag painted at midships on the hull, outside, that is, on the outer part, and you could see that from far, far away on the ocean. That was on account of submarines. They looked for the middle of the ship to hit, and they'd see that big flag, and they didn't bother us, I guess (chuckle). But that's how it was. I went back to Hawaii, and it was at that time that I found I was transferred to Hickam Field. So that was 1940, about Christmastime,

Marcello: Now at this time, were you still in your first hitch in the Army? First enlistment?

Manganello: No, I was in my second, my second. In fact, to go to Hawaii, I had to take--what they called--a "short discharge," I'd only had not quite three years of my first enlistment, so I had to take that in order to have three full years of duty

in order to go to Hawaii.

Marcello: I gather, then, by this time you had more or less found a home in the Army, and you had plans to make it a career.

Manganello: Well, you could say I'd found a home in the Army, but I knew at this time that the Army seemed to be the place for me because I was kind of a hard case when it came to education. I liked the way the Army did it in those days. If they thought you could do something for them, they trained you for it, and they put you in it. They didn't ask you a lot of questions about how smart you were and so on and so on (chuckle). So that's why I had decided to stay in the service right at that point and make that my lifetime career. I did that and enjoyed every minute of it. I loved it all.

Marcello: And so when you went back to Hawaii, is it at that time that you went to Hickam?

Manganello: I went to Hickam Field. I was transferred there in December, 1940.

Marcello: Now by that time, had Hickam been pretty well built, or were they still in the process of finishing up on it?

Manganello: Well, we had a lot of temporary quarters, but they were building a brand-new, up-to-date, modern barracks. I think they learned a little lesson during the attack about that barracks. But I never lived in that barracks because I had become a staff sergeant by examination before that, and by the second or third month after the war began, I was a tech

sergeant, and very shortly thereafter, a master sergeant. So I never had to live in the barracks. But our men lived in tents, those that belonged to Finance, We had some twenty men or so like that.

Marcello: So when you went over to Hickam Field, then, you were living in one of the tents, also?

Manganello: To start with, yes, And then later on, I moved into family quarters, They had a lot of family quarters there on that station, all built and ready for expansion, I don't know where it came along, but they seemed to have a lot of quarters there, so they decided to put the noncommissioned officers of my grade and above in these quarters in order to provide, you know, occupancy and management to keep things right, and things like that. I had a beautiful set of quarters. I lived there with three other noncoms, and all of us were tech sergeants, That's the five stripes--the three up and the two down,

Marcello: So you were in the dependents' quarters more or less--the family quarters--but you were not actually married at this time.

Manganello: No, no, That was nice living.

Marcello: Describe what those quarters were like.

Manganello: Well, they were modern and had good bathrooms in them, They had two baths and three bedrooms, a nice central living room, and hot water, We had the three bedrooms, and there were two

sergeants to each one, except one bedroom was left unoccupied for storage, where we could keep our gear. We were all noncommissioned officers; therefore, they didn't want to put too many into one set of quarters. We had a nice kitchen, you know, so we did our own cooking. They even gave us our ration money (chuckle). We enjoyed it.

Those quarters were beautiful in that they were made of cement, and they had nice-colored paints on them, all one-story, very squat and shapely, and they had sidewalks by them. They had grass already sown, and they had a hibiscus and other flowers of that nature growing outside.

We were just across the street from Pearl Harbor. We had a cyclone fence that ran along one street there, and there was a regular-sized city street, possibly thirty feet wide, and our quarters were right there. We could see the ships right there in the harbor, probably less than a quarter-of-a-mile away from where we were. We were on a land strip, a quarter-of-a-mile from the water's edge. That's about what it was.

Marcello: Where were your quarters located relative to the Finance Office?

Manganello: We were about maybe half-a-mile away.

Marcello: The Finance Office was in the Headquarters Building?

Manganello: In the Headquarters Building, which was more or less in the central part of Hickam Field at that time, and was about

maybe,,,possibly,,,maybe seven hundred yards from the tarmac, the landing strip. There were several hangars there. We were in a very nice, modern, concrete building-- headquarters,

Marcello: Describe the nature of the work being carried on there in the Finance Office.

Manganello: Oh, yes, we handled the payrolls, that is, we computed it and paid the troops. Once a month we made up the payroll. We paid the officers; we paid the enlisted men. We also handled--what we called--"commercial accounts." Whenever the Army quartermaster bought things from local vendors, the bills would come to us, and we could check them over and audit them and then pay them off--send them checks and so on. This is the bulk of the type of work we did, outside of keeping records for income tax purposes. They began taking income tax from the troops about 1940. I remember that, yes. That was quite a year (chuckle). That's when I learned to start figuring income taxes (chuckle).

Marcello: About how many people were working in the Finance Office there?

Manganello: About twenty people.

Marcello: From what I gather, this was a highly competent group of individuals who worked in this Finance Office.

Manganello: I would say so. In looking back, I would say it was, because so many of us not only made a full career out of it. Not that

that means that we were intelligent, to stay all the time, but at least we made a choice which took some intelligence to decide: "I've got to stay where I am, or I've got to get out," something like that. Such a large percentage of us became commissioned officers. So I would consider that we were kind of a selective outfit, and I don't mean that egotistically. That's the last thing in the world you could call me, is an egotist (chuckle), I grew up the hard way, I'll tell you,

Marcello: You mentioned that you made up the payroll, which was probably your primary function. When did payday occur there at Hickam?

Maganello: The last day of every month, The last day of every month you had to be ready with the money,

Marcello: As I recall, at that time the service paid in cash, did it not?

Manganello: Oh, yes, it always paid in cash. Very rarely did it ever use checks, although officers were paid by banks if they wanted. We sent a check to the bank for officers. But everybody else took their pay in cash.

Marcello: Now were people paid there at the Finance Office, or was the money delivered to the various units, and were they paid in their units?

Manganello: We delivered the money to the various units. We used their offices. They became--what we called--"Class A" agents. They

would come to the Finance Office early on payday morning, and we had the money already put up for them. They would count it, sign receipts for it, go out and pay the payrolls, and bring us completed vouchers. Then we'd check them over and put the money away if there was any turnback money and so on. And that was the way we lived,

Marcello: In general, as we get into 1941, and maybe even approaching December, 1941, were you pretty sure you made the right decision in staying in the service?

Manganello: Oh, yes. In fact, I felt so good about it that, "You know, the best place to be when the war starts is in the service, That's the best place to be,"

Marcello: In general, as you look back upon life in that pre-Pearl Harbor Army, how would you describe the morale of the men around you, that is, the men you associated with in the Finance Office and in other places?

Manganello: In those days, we were strictly voluntary, and I think most of us were motivated, first, possibly because we needed something to earn money with; and then, second, after we really saw what it was like and saw what we were part of, I think patriotism had a lot to do with it, I sure felt good being a soldier, I know I said to myself once, "I'm going to be second best if I can't be first best, and I'll never be first best because I'll never go to West Point," That was the only way we had officers come in during peacetime in those

days. So I said, "The next best is the first three grades, and that's what I'm going to make for." And that's what I got into.

Our morale, as far as I'm concerned, at that time or after, was very good. We always had things to do, even though we didn't have much money, and we didn't have many things being done for us by the civilians. But we were allowed to go almost anyplace we wanted. You know, bus rides into Honolulu were only five cents in those days. We'd go to the beach at Waikiki and lay around. There were only two hotels in Waikiki then--the Royal Hawaiian and the Ala Moana Hotel, sitting right down there on the beach. Then we had a fine radio announcer by the name of Webley Edwards, who played the...he had a band out there called "Hawaii Calls," Oh, he was good! He had a great line of talk and patter, and I remember he started his programs with a statement which I often use even to this day, because it's so definitive and so opening: "The time has come, the walrus said, to speak of many things: of shoes and ships and sealing wax, of cabbages and kings," This is out of Alice in Wonderland, and it has a way of opening ears and eyes and preparing for something to happen. Then he'd go into his beautiful music and so on and so on. I've always like that,

Marcello: How did the liberty routine work for you there at Hickam?

Manganello: We were off nearly every night. As long as you didn't have

Work to do, you were free to go to town. We had a bus that went into town; we had taxis that weren't too expensive that could go to town. We were about twelve miles from downtown Waikiki and Honolulu, and it was easy enough to come and go. Weekends were the same. We worked every Saturday; we had inspections on Saturday morning; but on Saturday afternoons, you could take off as long as you had no work to do.

Marcello: How about the overnight liberty?

Manganello: Oh, yes, we could have overnight liberty. We never had any trouble getting overnight liberty. I never had a bed check in all my time,,that is, coming in to see if I was in bed. No one ever did that. We had dignity, and we had honor. Between officers and enlisted men, we each knew our place, and it never bothered me to salute an officer in those days. It became bad later. I learned not to like it, and I began to understand why certain people thought it was ignominious; but in those days I never minded saluting officers, and I never minded saying "sir" to them, because they always treated us right. We had a good feeling between us. That deteriorated with the war.

Marcello: I guess it was pretty hard,,.I guess what I'm trying to say is, you probably wouldn't have taken overnight liberty too often, anyhow, because you really weren't making that much money.,.

Maganello: There was no place to sleep in town. There were fellows who were--what you call--"shacking up," (chuckle). This wasn't too

hard to do, you know. If you had enough money to tie you over, you could find a woman with a place to stay. But I never did such things. I never had the money, and I was always worried about it, anyway. I didn't do that (chuckle). I did, however, have a girlfriend pretty steady, and so we went to the movies and things. I finally married her (chuckle).

Marcello: One of the things that people like to imply about the service at that time in the Hawaiian Islands is that there was a lot of drinking and carousing that took place on weekends. How would you respond to an assertion of that nature?

Manganello: Yes, there was (chuckle). I never drank, I never learned to drink, and I never cared too much for it, and I never needed it in order to enjoy myself. I could scream louder than the loudest drunk you ever saw (chuckle). I don't need any help from liquor to tell me whether I'm enjoying it (chuckle).

Marcello: A good Italian boy didn't drink "dago red?"

Manganello: That's right, I didn't even touch wine. My father didn't drink it. I learned to drink some now, in later life. I like a little wine with my spaghetti occasionally, but a glass is about all I have, a small glass. I just wasn't brought up to drink, and it never pleased me beyond just a taste when I'm eating or something. I'd sit in nightclubs with other soldiers--I'd go out with them--and I'd sit and I'd drink a soft drink and dance with the women and so on and so forth. But, you know, I never hit the hard stuff.

But those around me did a lot of it, Well, of course, if you sat over there in Hawaii in those days and didn't haven enough money to go enjoy yourself, it was hard. It was lonely! So a lot of the men, consequently, would start drinking on Sunday mornings over at the PX--they had a beer garden--and they'd start drinking to have something to do, We had chaplains that tried to moderate the situation and help out, and we had service clubs that helped a lot, and we had regular dances that came along, But somehow, a lot of men,,even today you can see that people just don't amuse themselves, They don't have the ability to do that. It never bothered me, I'd just get a book and read it, I'd take a long walk or I'd go to the museum, or I'd find friends. You know, it's easy to make friends if you want to, I think.

Marcello: What kind of activities were there on the base that you could partake?

Manganello: Well, we had our noncommissioned officer's club. We used them very much,

Marcello: I assume there were the usual movies and things like that on the base, too,

Manganello: Oh, yes, there were plenty of movies, Every night there was a change in the movie. You didn't have to wait until next week to see it, Every night there was another movie, and it was very easy to go to the movies, The only thing you had to worry about was if you were on KP and had to stay

on or do something like that. Kitchen police,..we had a lot of it (chuckle),

That goes with your duty. I did kitchen police all the way from Brooklyn, New York, on that ship, to Panama, the entrance to Panama, before they realized that I was a finance man. There wasn't anyone on the ship to make payments, and nobody knew what we were supposed to,..we paid troops even on board the ship. When the sergeant major found that out, he went to the commander of the troops and said, "There's nobody around here that knows anything about it." So they checked all our records; "Yes, we've got a finance man down there." So they took me up out of that kitchen. They put me up there on deck, and I'm doing all the payrolls--typing up payrolls and getting the money ready. We were paying the troops as we go through the canal (chuckle),

Marcello: Now as one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as conditions between the United States and Japan continued to get worse,..

Maganello: Yes, yes, it was a bad year.

Marcello: ..,did you notice any change in the routine there at the Finance Office?

Maganello: Oh, yes. We began doing more business.

Marcello: Can you elaborate on that?

Maganello: In 1941, that year was getting sharper and sharper as it drew down, and more and more of us were beginning to realize that

there was something like a weight being put on us because of the changes that were occurring. First off, the Army suddenly started to shoot up high, swelling and blowing itself up with new men, and they were bringing them over from America. Pretty soon, even in the summertime, they started calling in National Guard units, and they began bringing in reservists and so on. We were getting beefed up all around. Suddenly, I heard numbers like there were 600,000 people in the Army, and the Navy had gone up--the Navy suddenly started getting ships and things--and things were getting hot in Europe. It was real bad over there, We could feel that going on along all the time.

Now between Japan and America, we didn't feel anything much of a change in there because they kept on talking back and forth. Right up to the last minute, we were misled by this thing that was going on in Japan. I don't know whether you know much about pre-war Japan, but they were pretty tough people, and they had started to build up some kind of a wartime policy on what they called the Baron Tanaka Memorial of 1912. Well, of course, they were in World War I as an ally, but they were trying to say--and it wasn't long after that--that the torpedo was a defensive weapon. They were trying to sell that policy. As they got stronger over there, we didn't realize what was, . . . that is, I didn't, because I'd never heard until after the war what was going on. When I

started piecing it together after the war began, then I realized that we'd been misled,

The day before the war, Saturday, we were on alert all day long. On alert we had to carry ammunition. I had several bandoleers of .30-caliber ammunition on me. I carried a rifle, I carried a pistol, I carried a gas mask-- all set to go. That's what we had. I was acting as first sergeant in those days for the detachment,

I had a date with this girl that I'd previously mentioned. I met her earlier than that, the previous,, maybe six or seven months earlier than that, and I had a date that Saturday night. But I had to call it off because it looked like we were going to be on alert all day. We had been on alert all Friday, all Saturday, but then at four o'clock on Saturday... now these,, what's his name? Nomura and Kurusu were in Washington. They were talking to Cordell Hull, I think it was--Secretary of State--and also to Roosevelt. Someone was trying to reach Roosevelt. We saw something in the papers about that. But they deferred their talks until Monday, and somebody called off the alert.

Now in our harbor, very neatly stacked, side-by-side, were destroyers and cruisers and battleships, and you could see them all along that road down there in the harbor. Neatly, side-by-side, looking just like soldiers standing at attention, so well in formation they were,

When they said that they were going to talk again Monday, it looked like everybody was going to have a little interruption, a little intermission, here. So suddenly the thing was called off, and we started unloading. One of the grippy trash we heard the next morning (chuckles), much to our embarrassment, was that in those days to replace equipment meant exactly that. You don't leave it on the dirt, and you don't leave it there. You go put it away in the supply room. There are machine gun belts and everything.,,you had to hang them up a certain way and lock them up tight. So this is what we did (laughter).

Marcello: You kind of answered one of my questions, I think. I was going to ask you if the Finance Office would take part in the alerts that were periodically called there at Hickam Field, or if perhaps the Finance Office was somewhat apart from all that sort of thing.

Manganello: No, no. No, we were a part of the defensive structure. That's the reason we'd go on alert, and we'd have to carry arms the same way. I carried mine. We were earmarked for the defense of the installation. In fact, when we got new recruits into our unit--and we had quite a few in those last months of 1941, before the war began--I had to help train them on how they were to do guard duty and things of that nature.

Marcello: When you and your buddies sat around in bull sessions and

so on, did the possibility of an attack in the Hawaiian Islands ever come up?

Manganello: No. Not to my knowledge did we ever talk about anybody ever attacking Hawaii. I know we used to,,we had lots of infantry. Man, we had infantry out the "gigi." All of a sudden, the Navy was building hard.

In August, 1941, the selectees were coming in, the so-called selectees. They got a \$10-a-month raise because they had invented that "Over-the-Hill-in-October" crap, you know, "OHIO," because they'd been in since 1940, and they were supposed to serve one year, and all of a sudden they extended. There was a lot of discontent going on here because of it, a lot of malcontents. Suddenly Congress come out and gave them a \$10 raise, but they didn't give it to the regular Army at all. I think we didn't get it until the following month because I remember us saying, "What are we going to do?" Even the CCC was getting \$30 a month, while we were getting \$21 (laughter)!

Marcello: Okay, so then probably the biggest change in your routine, as one gets closer and closer to the war, was that your workload increased tremendously,

Manganello: Oh, the work was way up because we had a lot more troops. And we were more often in uniform, even to go to town. More often, we had to carry weapons because the alerts were beginning to happen. They were being called off, called on, called off, and

so on,

Marcello: You mentioned that you would have to turn in your weapon to the supply room when you had one of these alerts. Would that include your sidearms, too?

Manganello: Yes, but that supply room was right in our own office for us. We had our own stuff right in our own office. I know I had to get back to my office to get my weapons that morning because I had them there,

Marcello: Both rifles and pistols were in the Finance Office supply room.

Manganello: Yes, because you're charged.,,if you carry it around and you lose it, you're stuck with it. Who wanted to pay that money? A pistol cost forty-five bucks, and a rifle something like \$75. Who was going to come up with that kind of dough? I was making--what--about \$55 a month, I think I was making then, Maybe it was \$60 or something like that (chuckle), So I didn't want to take any chance of losing it,

Marcello: Okay, you mentioned just a moment ago that you had this alert on Saturday, and it was called off around four o'clock.

Manganello: Around four o'clock, exactly, and I called my girl and said, "I'm coming into town after all."

Marcello: Describe what your routine was, then, that Saturday night, and then we'll move into Sunday morning,

Manganello: Well, of course, I had a quick shower and a shave, which I always did before I'd go to town (chuckle), and off I took.

We'd had a payday just several days earlier, and so I had a little "moola" in my pocket. I went up and I met my girlfriend, and we spent quite a bit of time together and went off to Waikiki and had dinner at the hotel called the Halekulani. That's the "House Without a Key". We kind of liked to go in there and sit down. The hotel is still there, and they still have that name. When I said there were two hotels on Waikiki, I should have also included the Halekulani, which is a small, pensioners-type hotel, but very high-priced. But they had good food there, and it was very reasonable, so my girl and I would go there. I should say "my wife," because I married her. She died in 1973 from cancer. In those days, we lolled around that island.

Marcello: Now was she a native of...

Manganello: No, she was an American from Denver, Colorado. She was a teacher in Christian education, and she was employed by the Central Union Church in Honolulu when I met her. We married after the war began, which was in 1942. We got married.

Marcello: So she was, in essence, then, a permanent resident in Hawaii.

Manganello: Of Hawaii, that's right.

Marcello: So what time did you get back to the base that night?

Manganello: On Saturday night, we had another couple there. My wife, at that time, lived in a boarding house, and in the boarding house there were several other women that lived there. They were all women that lived in the house at the time. She had

a roommate--and it's too bad I forgot her name; she was such a nice girl, a beautiful girl--and this girl's boyfriend was a Naval ensign, a United States Navy ensign.

And it's funny that that night, the four of us were together, For some reason we came home by ten o'clock, Whenever we had a date, we'd get home by ten o'clock, and I would usually sit on the steps outside, and that Hawaiian night was just beautiful, of course, fragrant with flowers and so easy to be romantic. In those days, I was a young fellow, you know, and I had a lot of the old push in me, I could talk myself blind (chuckle). But we'd sit there sometimes almost all night just talking about the future and what we ought to do with our marriage and so on,

That night we got home at ten o'clock, and who should show up but her roommate, who lived in the next room, and the roommate's Navy boyfriend. So the four of us sat there for possibly four or five or six hours or more, just the four of us sitting out in the moonlight. I'm pretty sure there was a moon that night, and we were sitting out there talking. I don't know.,,there were so many things to talk about. He was killed the next day, I forget the name of his ship, but he got killed the next day, The next day, I managed to get back to see my girl because I rode shotgun with my commanding officer, Captain Miles, at the time, He was trying to get his wife off the post into Manoa Valley, where many dependents were being evacuated

from the post. So I'm riding shotgun and going up there, and I managed to get a few minutes to see my girl. I even called her on the telephone right after the attack was over. I managed to get a call through. That's when she told me that he'd been killed.

Marcello: So what time did you get back to the base, then?

Manganello: I didn't get back to the base until five o'clock in the morning. I went to bed and then was awakened at ten minutes to eight.

Marcello: Describe how you were awakened and what happened.

Manganello: Well, there were great explosions outside--noise, roaring engines of airplanes. I was kind of used to the engines because the Navy would often on Sunday morning do that out there. They'd have their runs, fly-overs and things like that, and I woke up, and I laid there in the bed for a second, hearing the noise, and I said, "Damn it! They're at it again! Why don't they stop all that noise this early on Sunday morning!"

Then my roommate from the next room came in, and he said "Maggie," "The Japanese are here!" I said, "George, what are you talking about?" He said, "Yeah, the Japanese are dropping bombs all over, and the place is on fire!" So I got out of bed, and I looked out the window, and, sure enough, I see those Japanese planes. You could almost touch them, they're so low. Some were showing their insigna on them. I said, "George, hit the ground! Don't stand there!" Because those planes

were flying right close to where we were living. We lay down,,lay on that floor probably, I'd say, fifteen minutes before all the exploding and the machine guns bullets hitting the sidewalk in front of the house stopped. Our roof was all beat up with bullets because after they dropped their bombs,,and they were pretty wise. See, they brought in torpedoes--something unheard of, I understand, at that time, for airplanes to do. They had big torpedoes strapped to their bellies. I think this is when they regretted they had that central barracks up there with thousands of men in it because those bastards came down with their torpedoes--900-pound jobs slung under their bellies--and they flipped those off and let them run. You could see those torpedos go right into the wings of the barracks. See, the barracks were built with wings, and they went right in there. In fact, one of them had such a hole blown in the wall that we drove a "deuce-and-a-half" into there. Our detail late that day was to clean out those kitchens and get whatever food we could, and we drove a truck right into the kitchen (chuckle). Well, anyway, that's how it all began.

Marcello: So they were more or less dive-bombing, then, in a sense, I guess,

Manganello: Well, they were dive-bombing first, and those with torpedoes would drive in, and when they'd reach about a hundred feet--of course, you could see that big thing stuck on them--they'd let

go, and you'd see that thing whistle its way right into the ground. WHAM! It hit something (chuckle). What a time!

Marcello: Now were you observing all this from your quarters?

Manganello: No, I had to get outside. By now, the other two sergeants came in, and we were all on the floor. We're talking about what we're going to do. Well, I'm the acting first sergeant, and I said, "Well, we have to up to the office, and we have to find out what the hell's happened to our boys." We got them in goddamn tents up there. They're not in the barracks. We don't know yet that the barracks have been hit, and that it's being hit constantly. I said, "We've got to get up there and see what the hell's going on." You know, all the weapons are up there, and these bastards are liable to use gas on us, and our masks are hanging in the sink,

So we began deciding how to go now. We had one sergeant who was an Air Force type in our quarters there, and he had a car. He said, "Well, we'll have to drive up in my car." All right, we got up we dressed up quickly, and we came outside the hut, and that's when it started flaring off again. We saw all the ships burning right across the street from us. We saw those two cruisers that were trying to escape this thing, and, my God, those ships had to make a bend in that harbor. When they came out of the channel from the harbor, they had to make a sharp left bend in order to get out to the open sea. Well, every ship was scrambling for that ocean. You've got to

get out of there; that's the only way you can take care of itself, They're all lashed together, side-by-side in there. It's tremendous, the burning that's going on. I looked at the field, and it's on fire. I can see airplanes on the field just burning up all the time out there, and here's these two cruisers trying to get around that turn, and they're heeling over so sharp that the water is shifting over their gunwales, right over their deck rails, Planes are diving for it, There must have been, I'd say, a dozen planes, anyway, in this formation coming down on them, and then all of a sudden these two boats,..they got away, you know, but all of a sudden those two boats let go with a salvo of those 5-inch antiaircraft guns, and, boy, the whole world began to shake under our feet. All of a sudden, that sky started to look like a checkerboard of yellow explosions--big, high explosives up there, the yellow smoke. My God, those ships kept going, and suddenly there was no more airplanes there, I think they must have knocked out about a dozen at that time,

But we didn't waste any time because some of the planes had shot in front of us there, We got in John's car, and we took off for the office,

Marcello: Describe the trip from your quarters to the office,

Manganello: Oh, gee, the place was on fire! All along the way there was cars,..parking lots,..automobiles were just ashes, They were burning so,..and the bodies were under the cars because people jumped

under their cars.

It was only a half-mile or so, and our building was intact. Headquarters had not been touched because apparently they had thought the Post Exchange was headquarters because that Post Exchange was a stucco-style thing built in Spanish architecture, and it looked nice. It rambled all around-- beautiful-shaped shingle roof and all that--and I guess they thought that was headquarters because it was about the prettiest building around. Two of our men were shot there, which I didn't know until later.

But we reached our office, and we got inside the building, and we were about the first ones to get in the building at that time, except that by now two artillerymen and a second lieutenant from Fort Kamehameha were coming up carrying machine guns. Each boy was carrying a .50-caliber in his arm, and the lieutenant was holding a couple of the stretchers that hold up the guns. He's kicking these guys: "Move it along! Get up there!" They've got ammunition hanging all over them, and they get up on the roof. All those weapons up there yesterday.,,every goddamn one was taken down and put away over at Fort Kamehameha, and here they're coming back, and the bastards are bombing them! They realized their mistake, and they start coming for our building. These two boys and that lieutenant, they just made it up there, and they got one gun loaded, and a plane started diving for us. The commanding officer...

and I was so impressed with this guy's nerve, Man, he was cool! He smoked his goddamn pipe, and he was a colonel. He would say, "Now, boys, get inside. They're coming." And we'd go inside, but he'd stay there. The next time we'd come out, he'd say, "I want to see those son-of-a-bitches gone from my post! I'm going to get every damn one of them!"

Those two guys set their machine guns up there, One got his loaded, so he began shooting at that Jap plane. The other guy would just wave at them, We talked to this fellow later, and he said, "You know, all I could do was just wave that damn thing at that airplane because he just kept coming just right at us." Apparently, it scared the guy off because he didn't drop. He went on overhead, and then he realized he was fooled, so he turned around and came right back into that murderous fire--two .50-calibers coming at him--and then he dropped his first bombs. He was carrying 500-pounders at that time. We hit the floor. This went on for about ten or fifteen minutes. I think this was the second wave of aircraft.

When that was over, then we'd go outside again, and the commanding officer would say, "All right, come on out, boys," Then it was quite until the next batch came in." This is the way it went until, I'd say, about nine-thirty in the morning, possibly before. Things seemed to quiet down, and then the smoke was all over the field. Gee, it was terrible.

Marcello: Now have you been armed by this time?

Manganello: Yes, yes, I finally got into the safe, I know that several times I ran away from opening it because the airplane was coming right down by my window (chuckle), and I'd dive out in the hallway again. But I finally got the safe open, got the equipment out, and I began handing it out,

Now I'm worried where my men are, It's Sunday morning, and I know that we were working on Sundays as well in those days. I know that my men were very lazy about getting up out of bed, and I know that they wouldn't go to breakfast, and I think that saved them, that they didn't go to breakfast. They went over to the PX to have their breakfast, you know, doughnuts and coffee and things like that. Some of them started coming in, and I said, "Where in the hell have you guys been?" And one of them says, "I was really praying," He says, "When they came at us, we were standing in line over there," He says, "Before I knew it, I'm on my goddamn knees in the ladies room, and I'm hugging the sink. They're dropping them all around, and they're shooting and strafing up and down!" He said, "I'm just praying like hell." Two of our men had been hit there, Gross and Wingrove. They didn't show up until later, The way Wingrove said it to me later, he said, "Gross and I came up, but we didn't know whether to come in that building or not, We didn't know what the hell was in it because it was so much smoke all around the place," He said, "But then I heard you talking, and I said to Gross, 'That's Sergeant 'Maggie,' so it's

okay in there," So they came on in (chuckle).

During one of these attacks, there was a young fellow that got under the same table I did because by now the plaster was beginning to fall out of the thing, and we were really getting shaken up. You know, with a bomb going off, the concussion is so strong that it just jams your teeth together and your ears down like that (gesture). You can feel that pressure; it's like it's squashing you. This kid and I were under that table, and that boy said, "Sergeant, would you mind if I held your hand?" I said, "No, not at all, kid. Just give it to me." And I held it, and I said, "Don't worry about it, America was born with those pioneers and those farmers with their pitchforks and their sickles, and we'd do it again. If those bastards up there in that airplane only knew what you had for dinner today, they wouldn't bomb us; they'd come down and help us eat it!" (chuckle) Well, that's how we got through that first morning.

Marcello: What did you do the rest of the morning then? You mentioned that the attack was over by nine-thirty.

Manganello: Well, by that time, Wingrove and Gross,, I was trying to dress their wounds. We had equipment from 1918. That's how poor we were in those days, you know, I was trying to open first-aid packets, and I opened one after the other, reached in to get these bandages out of there, and it would turn to powder in my hand--they were so damned old. I must

have opened half a dozen or eight of those things before I finally got the bandages and found,,I think Wingrove was shot in the leg, and Gross was shot in the shoulder or vice versa, whatever it was. Before we could finish dressing their wounds, I believe I had them littered all around me, empty cans with powdered bandages (chuckle),

Marcello: They evidently were not wounded too severely,

Manganello: Apparently not, no. I didn't think they were. One guy was shot, I think, over here, in the calf, and the other fellow was over here, in the shoulder. They were talking, and I clinched them as best I could. Then we sent them over to the hospital. We had a hospital over there, an infirmary,

By now in comes a captain. By now he's told us to pick up the Finance men. He said, "We're not going to do finance work today. Take them over to the kitchen and salvage whatever you can over there. I think it was about seven or eight of us that went over with the captain. He had a truck outside, and we went over into the kitchen and drove the truck right into the kitchen, where I think someone told us twenty-seven people died in that place. You wouldn't believe it, but we found eggs intact in there. Everything smashed on the floor,, iceboxes,,one guy was dead in the icebox. He'd gone into the icebox and closed the damned door, and that concussion just smashed in there, and, boy, he was dead when we opened that door. There were places where we found the eggs stashed around little,,.

they had little stone walls in there, as I remember, in that kitchen. It was a modern barracks, and it had stacks around, so that if the blast sometimes wasn't direct...and if there were eggs there, we grabbed all those and loaded them on the truck and took them to a central place where they had rations there.

After that we were sent into the algarroba to look for invaders, and we spent three days there and didn't find any, but we got hungry as hell. All we ever had was a can of tomatoes and some black coffee for three days. Oh, how nice it was to find those women--volunteer ladies--at the hospital when we came out of there. They had this big buffet line. They had these ladies from town serving us mashed potatoes and...in those days you didn't have all this ersatz substitute stuff. They were real potatoes and real chicken (chuckle)--everything right there! Man, that was good (chuckle)!

Marcello: Well, now what did you do that evening of December 7?

Manganello: We were out in the bush for the next three days.

Marcello: And as you mentioned, you were fully expecting an invasion?

Manganello: At this time we thought there'd be an invasion because we kept hearing reports, and, of course, that Tokyo Rose was on the radio all night.

You know, one of the heartbreaking things that happened that evening...all day long, they couldn't get an airplane off our field because they were all knocked out, and we had

men desperately trying to put them together. They finally got one put together. It was an A-20, a medium bomber, called an A-20. They finally got it together about nine o'clock that night. Now in the nighttime in Honolulu, in Hickam Field and Pearl Harbor at that time, a lot of clouds pile up in the sky over there for some strange reason. Maybe it's a little cooler up there.

This airplane was finally put together, and it took off. It went wobbling into the air, and we heard that engine, and we says, "Finally, we got one off. Now maybe he can find out what the hell's going on, where these guys are coming from out there, and whether there's any more that might come back." He no sooner got airborne to maybe three hundred feet,,he let it go over the harbor because our field ran toward the harbor, and then as he was climbing over that harbor, he got shot down. Every damn gun in the place went off. Our night sky looked like fireworks at Coney Island. Jeez, it was loaded with tracer bullets, and down he came, He jumped out and made it in his parachute. He got out... it was a real heartbreak to learn that had happened. We felt pretty bad then. We had no airplanes.

Marcello: Did you actually see this occur?

Manganello: Yes, yes. We watched it take off.

Marcello: I assume there were a lot of trigger-happy people around that night.

- Manganello: Oh, yes, everybody was hot on the trigger,
- Marcello: When you got out in the bush, what did you do out there?
- Manganello: Well, we built a defense. First, we put up a little ramp, a little parapet, there of sandbags and so on. We dug the soil up, and we established a kind of command area and then several outposts for sentinels. Even though we were sergeants, we all did this work, and we all took turns on watch. We sat in there, and if you would get any sleep, you got sleep right in there. Just little cat naps is all we had. And there were rumors and scares all night long that there was somebody in the bush, and we'd go out looking, but we never found them--never found a one (chuckle).
- Marcello: And you mentioned that you stayed out there for three days?
- Manganello: Three days, three days. On the third day, they called us out because they were sure nobody had come ashore. They found those two-man subs over at various parts of the island, but no one had landed. We've always argued about what would have happened had they landed. I said, "Well, we'd have had one grand fight if they had because we had plenty of infantrymen, no question about it. Our airplanes were shot all to pieces, and we didn't have many, but if they come on land, we had lots of men on the land (chuckle).
- Marcello: When was the first time you got a chance to see the extent of the damage that had been done there at Hickam Field?
- Manganello: Right after we came back from the woods. Then we could walk

up and down and see it all smashed to pieces,

Marcello: Describe what you saw,

Manganello: Well, there were hangars without roofs on them, where the bombs had probably hit them. And that barracks was really broken in half a dozen or eight different places with big holes, jagged, broken right through that reinforced concrete. That was one of the worst things to look at. Our cantonments, however, were unharmed. All they were were a wooden structure with a canvas top over it--it's a canvas tent held up by a wooden structure instead of just a center pole, you know. We had four men to each one of these little cantonments. They were unscathed. They just happened to get...automobiles parked beside them were ashes, all burned up.

Marcello: What were your emotions when you saw this scene of destruction?

Manganello: I felt pretty damned sore. I really felt mad. I remember a couple of times running...although they turned out to be false alarms...false alerts...running with my commanding officer. I'm saying, "You know, Captain, I'm just goddamn tired of running away. I think I better start running toward those sons-of-bitches! I'm getting a little tired of this shit!" And he said, "We're going to get them! One of these goddamn days, we're going to get them!" Well, come Midway in 1942, our boys sure gave them their comeupance, I'll tell you.

Marcello: When did you finally leave the Hawaiian Islands?

Manganello: I didn't leave until 1943, September.

Marcello: And then where did you go from there?

Manganello: Oh, I came back to America, to the States,

Marcello: And what was the purpose in being sent back here?

Manganello: Well, I had accumulated,,.they had a point system in those days, that if you'd been overseas for a certain length of time, you had to come back, On my point system, I had enough points to come back to America, back to the mainland, anyway. So I came back and stayed in America ever since then.

Marcello: After you came back from being out in the field for those three days, did you then begin to reassume your duties in the Finance Office?

Manganello: Yes, the regular administrative duties, We had to go back to work and start paying again,

Marcello: It's interesting, I think, because when we think of the country being in war, we think of everybody getting into action and so on, but this sort of thing must still continue to take place,

Maganello: Only a small percent get into the action. The rest of us have to stay back and support them. One of the big things of the Finance was to pay the troops no matter what's going on, because if a man gets paid on time, he feels right (chuckle).

Marcello: Well, that's probably a pretty good place to end this interview, Mr, Manganello. I want to thank you very much for having spoken with me. You've said a lot of very interesting and important things, and I'm sure that,,.

Manganello: I'm glad I didn't get emotional, I used to start to cry,
but I don't anymore, I guess (chuckle).

Marcello: I'm sure that the researchers and scholars will appreciate
what you have said.