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Interview with

JESS STANBROUGH

April 15, 1985

Place of Interview: Denton, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

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Approved: Jess H. Stanbrough
(Signature)

Date: April 15, 1985

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Oral History Collection

Jess Stanbrough

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello   Date of Interview: April 15, 1985

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Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing Jess Stanbrough for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on April 15, 1985, in Denton, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. Stanbrough in order to get his reminiscences and experiences while he was a prisoner-of-war of the Japanese during World War II. More specifically, Mr. Stanbrough was a member of the 2nd Battalion, 131st Field Artillery, of the 36th Division, which was the Texas National Guard.

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

Mr. Stanbrough: I was born on May 1, 1918, and lived up until I went into the service in Wichita Falls, Texas. At that time I went to high school and also a little junior college there in Wichita Falls.

Dr. Marcello: Describe the process by which you got into the Texas National Guard. How did it come about?

Stanbrough: One of my friends told me how to make some easy money. Of course, easy money in those days was $2.00 or $3.00. But that wasn't the main thing. At that time I had an amateur radio station. I was W5GTJ. I had been interested in radio and electronics since I was fourteen or fifteen. That was a big thing--to go trade around and get transformers and things like that. Then the National Guard, in the headquarters unit, had a transmitter, and they were going to get a new one to talk to other batteries throughout North Texas. Since I could copy code, what we called GW, and operate the field transmitters, someone told one of the officers that they knew of some hotshot field amateur, so I was semi-recruited. I think, if I recall, I was about eighteen then. Sure enough, it was kind of fun to go out and operate the radios, in particular the transmitter because it was commercially built, and I couldn't have ever afforded anything like that. That's how I got in.

Marcello: Do you recall the year that you entered? You mentioned that you were about eighteen and said you were born in 1918.

Stanbrough: Let's do a little arithmetic. I'm talking about 19... oh, it must have been a little later than that because I didn't get my ham station until after that. So it was probably somewhere about 1937 or 1938. I needed the money particularly when I was going to college.

Marcello: Is it safe to say that patriotic motivation was not a part of your decision to join the Guard at that time?

Stanbrough: It never occurred to me.

Marcello: I think that's generally the case with almost everybody else that joined around that time.

Stanbrough: Well, it was comradeship, too. I think that nowadays it would be very...well, people are missing that because you wind up really in small groups of maybe a hundred people. We'd make our little camping tours up to the Wichita Mountains. We'd get up early in the morning and jump in our command cars and run around and play with radios. I just think we were kind of over-grown Boy Scouts in a way.

Marcello: So to some extent, then, the National Guard unit was kind of a social organization. It was a good chance to get together with some of your buddies and do a little training but also socialize a little bit.

Stanbrough: That's true. We also, though, were real proud of our uniforms, especially if you got them to fit. We liked that, too. You see, in those days people didn't look down on you if you were in uniform. I don't know if they do now, but they certainly did a few years ago.

We learned a lot. We had classes. We had to learn about weapons and how to take them apart and clean them. We had radio classes, and you had to learn certain procedures.

It was educational.

It was also helpful to me because when I was going to college, I needed some money on the side. I was young with no assets, but a local banker at City National Bank let me borrow some money because he thought I was highly motivated--going to school and having a job, being patriotic ...you know, the whole works.

Marcello: What was the battery designation there in Wichita Falls?

Stanbrough: Regimental headquarters.

Marcello: It was regimental headquarters. So it was not one of the firing batteries then.

Stanbrough: No. Communications primarily. That's it. Primarily, it was communications and command facilities.

Marcello: How often would that unit meet?

Stanbrough: I don't remember, but I think it was every two weeks. I don't believe it was every week because that's pretty tiresome. That would be about like joining the Rotary Club (chuckle).

Marcello: As we know, mobilization of the Texas National Guard, or federalization of the Texas National Guard, occurred on November 25, 1940. Leading up to that date, could you detect any changes in the training and so on that your particular unit underwent?

Stanbrough: I certainly did because in that summer our training was much more active. Also, our commanding officer was Captain

W.H. Rogers. I distinctly recall on a sunny day him having us at ease and telling us the situation and that we probably would be in the service in the next few months. We were alerted to it. I mean, I was certainly aware of the problems. I listened with interest to the radio broadcasts of what was going on. We had a Sergeant Davis, who checked the equipment out, and then we'd check it all back in. We were getting new equipment and so forth. I don't know if everybody felt that way, but I certainly felt we were getting in more intense training.

Marcello: What was your reaction when you did hear the official word that the Texas National Guard had been federalized?

Stanbrough: Remember that we had not ever been shot at. So I thought it was a good idea, that we'd get better training. I actually think I looked forward to it, and I think the others did, too.

Marcello: How did this disrupt your civilian life?

Stanbrough: Oh, it didn't disrupt it at all. I was at that time working in radio repair for Martin Radio. I think I had worked very hard and had gotten up to about $18 a week. So here I'm going to go into the service and make more money. By the way, I do think that happened in a lot of the fellows' cases. After two years of college, here I am, out working for $18 a week. It was hard to get jobs then. That's a high motivation, too. I think we looked forward to it.

At least I did, because at that time I also had a good rank--staff sergeant. I was such a lousy private that I got promoted. That's what the officer told me. I was only a corporal about two or three weeks. He said, "You were a poor private, but you're a good noncom." So he made me a sergeant.

Marcello: How did you receive the word that the unit had been federalized? Was it by letter, or was it simply at one of the meetings? Was it a news broadcast? How was it done?

Stanbrough: It wasn't a news broadcast. I don't remember. I vaguely remember that Captain Rogers told us that this was going to happen right away. Knowing the way things operate, it probably was a letter, but I don't know.

Marcello: What happens at that point? In other words, how are you affected as an individual once the unit was federalized? Where did you go, and what did you do at that point?

Stanbrough: In Wichita Falls, Texas, where the Wichita Theatre is, just down the street there...I forget the name of the street, but there was a large, large hardware store that was vacant. It was called Bailey-Moline. It was on the corner, a brick building, several stories. It was hardware and furniture and things like that. What we did is, we were taken out of the armory area and put in the Bailey-Moline building--right downtown in Wichita Falls--and put up cots and everything. Of course, I'm talking about only Headquarters Battery.

We had people sleep in different sections. It was just like a big, open barracks. The thing is that most of the time we spent reading books, having instruction, checking out equipment, and going on long hikes. When we first started doing these hikes, we would walk as far as Wichita Gardens and maybe around...we got to making long marches. Our feet...we had a lot of problems with them because we were not used to walking with that type of shoe that far. It was to get us into training--discipline. That's the main thing--discipline. You've got to get everyone to make right turns and everything so hopefully they'll obey the orders.

Marcello: Were you staying at Bailey-Moline on a fulltime basis? In other words, you simply didn't commute there from home. You were there fulltime.

Stanbrough: I was there. Of course, I don't know what others did. It was somewhat lenient then, so I'm certain...I wasn't married or anything like that, but if someone was married, I'm certain they would go home to their wives. I stayed there, though.

Marcello: At various times the Texas National Guard moved out of its various gathering points and went to Camp Bowie. Do you recall when your unit left Wichita Falls for Camp Bowie?

Stanbrough: Yes, I do. I recall it. We got in our trucks, and it was kind of rainy. We left in the daylight hours, and we drove down to Camp Bowie in the truck. There was no one, really, around to say goodbye.

Marcello: Do you remember approximately when that was? For instance, some units left in December, and others left in January.

Stanbrough: No, I don't. I remember it was cold, and I think we only stayed in that Bailey-Moline place probably about six weeks. I find it hard to believe that we left before Christmas, but we could have. I don't know that.

Marcello: In what condition did you find Camp Bowie when you got there?

Stanbrough: Disaster. Now, see, you've just touched a point. I think it was in January because we were getting postponed from time to time because of the construction thing. When we arrived there were these pyramidal tents and the little frame things. They weren't ready, so we...yes, I would guess it was in January now because when we got there, it was under construction. There was no really roads to run your trucks down. We were taken to our battery area, and we had to move rocks, dirt, and everything ourselves while they were making the camp,and bulldozers were moving around in all that caliche dust.

Marcello: What kind of training did the unit undergo once it got to Camp Bowie?

Stanbrough: The first portion, as I recall, was cleaning up the camp and helping make the thing livable. We had to work to make it livable. Then we also did a lot of what was called "dry firing." We'd take our weapons out and...marches. We learned to march. They were trying to toughen us up. Also, we would eventually carry packs that had more weights in them.

Marcello: By this time what was your speciality within the unit? What were you doing?

Stanbrough: I was the radio sergeant back in those days. I was more concerned about getting our radios and then getting radio operators better trained and so forth. Our field sets then consisted of a generator that someone had to sit on a seat there and turn this 600-volt generator and the transmitter. Since we were using CW, if somebody was very slow in sending, then it was hard on the guy that was cranking the generator. They always liked to send...the guys on the generators were highly motivated to learn code in order to get off of that thing. We had one fellow that liked to crank it. His name is Patterson. He's still with the "Lost Battalion."

Marcello: Did you get any different equipment after you moved to Camp Bowie, or did you simply move what you had had at Wichita Falls down to Camp Bowie?

Stanbrough: We moved equipment there, but later we did get much better sets than all that other junk. We did away with all the old loop stuff that must have been built right after World War I. We did get some nice equipment.

Marcello: I would assume that, given your position, you were in many ways privy to a lot of information that other people in the battalion didn't have?

Stanbrough: Well, if you're a member the first three grades, you have, a little better crack at it, and, also, being with the regimental headquarters, you just eavesdrop, and you hear things going on. Yes, you do.

Marcello: In the summer of 1941, the unit was sent to Louisiana, and it took part in the 3rd Army maneuvers there. What do you recall about the maneuvers in Louisiana in the summer of 1941? How did it affect your particular unit?

Stanbrough: Well, prior to going...may I just hold that one off just a moment?

Marcello: Sure.

Stanbrough: Prior to that, in the spring, I missed part of this training, and that's why I seem so vague. I was selected with another young man named Robert Fitzsimmons and another fellow named Bill Bowman...Bowman was going to be a mechanic. We were selected, and I was very glad to get that so I could go to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, because there was a communications school there. It also taught officers how to run their cannons a little better. Lieutenant Travis Smith went there, also... or did go there. Bob Fitzsimmons and I--he was a nephew of Captain Fitzsimmons--shared quarters at Fort Sill in the communications school. There we did the same thing. We started over. I could always copy code, but I had to go back and pretend that I didn't have any because they don't accept that you copy fifteen and twenty words a minute; you have to demonstrate. So I had to start the basic class and listen to what I thought were "dumb" sergeants in the Regular Army tell we "smart" ones how to do things. Then you'd pass one code table and go to the next code table, and you'd learn semaphore. You learned how to lay out wire. It was a communications school.

It was tough. They instilled discipline. One cigarette ash on the floor meant that you didn't get to have Wednesday afternoon off; you didn't get a weekend pass. One cigarette butt! The bed had to be flipped over just right. The corners had to be at forty-five-degree angles, and if they weren't, God help you because you didn't go anywhere.

I discovered a young lady down in Wichita Falls, Texas. Well, I'd known her all the time, but she got dearer all the time because I was in the Army. I would go down there, so I endeavored to keep everything neat and clean.

After that was over, then I went back down. We were getting ready to go off to the Louisiana maneuvers. In fact, I left school and came down around May 30. Also, before I went on the Louisiana maneuvers, after I got back from school, I found that my people that I was assigned to in the tents were just awful. The place was cruddy and messed up. I decided that since I had the rank, we were going to have it neat and clean like Fort Sill. I made everybody keep their beds up straight. They had to do that. I was nicknamed the "Fort Sill Kid" for a while. I had a lot of problems with some of our friends because I was turning their bunks over like they did at Fort Sill and make them remake them. I turned the matress around. Colonel Bay came by on inspection, which he rarely ever did, and he thought that was the nicest place he'd ever seen. Of course, I knew him, anyway. I'd see him occasionally.

Marcello: Who was Colonel Bay?

Stanbrough: Colonel Bay was the commanding officer of the 131st Field Artillery. And not just the headquarters--the whole works. He was a very tough gentleman, and we were scared to death of him.

Marcello: In other words, he was over Colonel Tharp?

Stanbrough: Absolutely. He's the one that selected Tharp for this mission.

Marcello: Okay, let's talk about those 3rd Army maneuvers in Louisiana. Let's deal with your particular unit.

Stanbrough: It was an interesting thing. First of all, we got to go down there, and we'd stop along the roadside. Then we discovered that we had a Blue Army and a Red Army once we were there. I loved it down there. I actually went down ...by the way, when I said awhile ago that I was in Texas, I omitted that I was born in Louisiana. I was there the first five years before we got to Texas. I just passed over it awhile ago. I actually went by the town that we'd lived in--a little place near Many, Louisiana. I had a step-grandmother down there close by.

The maneuvers were all around in those woods. What I don't like about some of those maneuvers is that you were actually sleeping on the ground, and there are snakes around. I can remember getting out of the truck, and the truck driver stepped down, and I saw him jump back up again. We killed thirteen little rattlers in an area there. Then we were supposed to keep clean by going down to one little stream there, and I'd see all the moss and roots hanging down, and I just knew there were water moccasins that were going to get you anytime. It rained a lot. We'd been on previous maneuvers down there the year before.

Marcello: It was almost like an omen of what was to come later on, I guess.

Stanbrough: I want to tell you, it just rained and rained and rained. Then it got better. It was pretty serious. I did find out that tanks were coming through on our side, so we thought we were winning the war. It was Patton. One of our people, Wilburn Rockett, actually, in fact, sassed him or said something to him about, "Why are we sticking around here so long?" This gentleman...I saw him, but I didn't realize who he was. He was covered with dust and dirt, but it was Patton. He said, "We'll be moving out." And we did. In those days, the way the airplanes would bomb you was to drop flour bags, and if you got any flour on you, the referees or the umpires would come up, and you were considered wounded or dead or something.

In my case I had a very interesting situation. I'd gotten married by that time--May 30. I stopped over in Wichita Falls, and eventually we moved and had a little place to live. Of course, I'd go out to camp. This fellow's name was Yancy--a sergeant. I don't think he went overseas with us. I think he stayed. I looked up one day, and there were two good-looking girls driving down there in Louisiana, and they came out into the middle of the camp, and, damn, if one of them wasn't Sergeant Yancy's wife and my new wife. I was fit to be tied. That was no place for them to be. They just got a bright idea to come down and see their husbands. So what do you do? Captain Fitzsimmons said that it was all right, that I could go find a place on one of those farms and stay. Of course, I had my step-grandmother who lived some fifteen miles away, so we went up there. We were commuting. We were having a home life almost, and then we'd get back at daybreak the next day and be at the games, which was hardly fair. Then when the whole group moved forward, up toward

Mansfield, instead of driving north to Grandma's house, we'd have to go south. That didn't last but about a week or so. We were not very happy about it at first--about the girls driving down there.

Now that's a tendency Texas girls had. I now live in Falmouth, Massachusetts, and I've been told by a lot of people, the old-timers up there, that when the 36th Division moved to Camp Edwards, which is at Falmouth, just on the border of the county line of Falmouth, all these Texas girls followed their husbands. I got off the subject.

Marcello: What kind of a record did the unit make for itself in Louisiana?

Stanbrough: Well, I don't know. We just did our regular thing that we did in training. We'd had a lot of training already. I remember we carried on our communications. We ran our telephone lines. Colonel Bay had a habit in coming up and saying that the battery...now remember, at regimental headquarters we had wire sergeants to take care of the trucks and the spools and the wire out there, and also we had hand reels that a man can use. He always would point. He said something like, "Sergeant, Battery D is in that direction." Then he pointed his hand, and it would sweep over a 90-degree arc. So it was somewhere in there. He didn't want you to mess around, so what we'd do, we'd start out about halfway in the middle of that arc, and then you'd send the other guys out to go find the place, and then you'd tell them where you're going to meet when we splice.

So getting back to that, we heard that we were winning the situation . It was pretty real. We were covered with dirt. We didn't have anyone shooting at us. We saw a lot of activity. So you'd ask, "What made us a little better?" We were told we were better. The word was that we were a crack unit, but I used to put "ed" on it--cracked. But I think we did our things well. We also had some very... people like Travis Smith and some of the other lieutenants really knew how to zero in because they'd gone off and were highly trained. Most Texas A&M officers that had gone through the training there were pretty good officers as far as having been in civilian life and then coming in. At least they knew how to keep you drilled and how to get you to get things done. At least that was my impression.

Marcello: I think you probably know why I asked you that question. One of the stories that I've heard repeated by several of the former POW's is that because the unit had done so well in Louisiana, it was detached from the 36th Division and eventually sent overseas. But I've never seen anything official concerning that kind of an explanation.

Stanbrough: I've never seen anything official, and I've only heard that. That was the story told us by our immediate commanders, so that's all we needed to say because it made us think we were a little better. It could have just been some random process, but I don't know. I was indeed told that we were going to a place--before we were sent overseas--that was forming new divisions, and they would not have the skill or artillery that we had, so that's why somebody had to go.

Marcello: Sometime between your return to Camp Bowie and your eventual detachment, the Army was reorganized, was it not, from the rectangular to the triangular divisions?

Stanbrough: That's correct.

Marcello: Exactly how did that affect the 131st Field Artillery?

Stanbrough: I personally didn't observe any effect at that time. I understood that the 131st Field Artillery, 2nd Battalion, would then be supporting the 142nd Regiment rather than the 141st. At that time, prior to going, I was still in regimental headquarters, so I wasn't really too aware, but I knew that they had talked about it or I had heard them talk about it. I knew that the 2nd Battalion had the Battery A, B, and C, and the 2nd Battalion had D, E, and F. That's about all I knew.

Marcello: Is it also around this time that you do get an influx of new people into the unit?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes.

Marcello: And they take some people from Batteries A, B, and C, isn't that correct, and they integrate them into D, E, and F?

Stanbrough: That I don't know. I know that regimental headquarters was not shifted over until just prior to going over. There were a lot of new people showing up--a lot of new people. Of course, there were tanks showing up, and we were very excited at seeing our very first tank because now it looked like they were getting serious. Of course, we were getting better equipment. We got rid of all those old-fashioned lace-up boot things. Colonel Bay was very insistent about our wearing our leggings and all that stuff. We mostly wore old camouflaged...they looked like overalls or coveralls or fatigues or whatever.

Marcello: Okay, you leave Camp Bowie on November 11, 1941, and your destination was PLUM. What were the rumors going around among the men relative to PLUM?

Stanbrough: Well, when they first heard about PLUM, they all got maps out, and, of course, they couldn't find a place called PLUM.

I do recall that by that time we moved...well, we'd been transferred and were getting ready to go. I actually have an experience, though, if...my radio got me into trouble and got me out of trouble. I happened to rent an apartment in town before I was selected to go over. Guess who rented the downstairs? Colonel Tharp. So I lived in the same house with him.

So Mrs. Tharp knew my new little bride, and, of course, she came up and she saw my radio station. Of course, I had it there--my ham station. By this time I had gone into high power. I bought a kit with a sixty-watt transmitter phone--CW--and I could talk to Australia. I had a nice Hallicrafter receiver. I was getting all that money from the Army, of course, that we were not accustomed to. I had a very ambitious or hard-working wife in those days, and she also knew how to work and make money.

I remember one night they came up. She had cooked dinner and invited the Tharp's up. Now, mind you, I was just a tech sergeant in those days. He looked at all that radio gear, and he asked me how far it would work. We're getting back to PLUM. I said, "Oh, it's according to what frequency you're operating on. If you get on a high frequency, on ten meters, you can talk to Australia." He asked a few more questions, and he was very interested that we could communicate as far as Australia. That had a great deal of bearing on me getting shifted from one unit to the other. He told me about this other group going on a trip and all, and it was going to be such a nice deal and all. He said I could carry my radio. And I did. I carried it all over.

See, that's why I said it got me into trouble--that radio did, because my transmitter. Tharp wanted to have an amateur link to communicate back home, I suppose. I don't know. But then when he had Arch Fitzsimmons--he was captain of headquarters--shifted over, it was a foregone conclusion that that was definitely going to happen. Fitzsimmons liked my...I was a good radio guy, and I knew I was. I had had a lot of experience. We had some very good guys. Some people were very slow and never would get any faster. It's the way you learn. Then we had another person...the reason I'm telling you about this is because when I was transferred over, I was not going to go over with a bunch of dummy radio operators. We were going to go over and be the best unit. So I pulled W.G. Reed and Kyle Thompson. They got pulled in, too. W.G. Reed was an incredible person because, while he was only about fifteen or sixteen, he was pretty big. He was always into trouble. The way I got him was that he had caused so much dissatisfaction with other people that Captain Fitzsimmons was getting ready to actually kick him out of the service because nobody could handle the kid. And he was a kid then. I didn't know his age, but I found out later that his sixteenth birthday was in prison camp. But he was incredible. From the time he started learning code, in thirty days he could copy eighteen words a minute. There's not many people I know who can do that. He loved it. He found his niche. Everything else wasn't a challenge. He told me subsequent to this that I was one of the few people that would stop and talk to him like he had any intelligence, and I was one of the few that had gone to college and that I tried to explain things to him, and he liked that. He told me that in the last couple of years.

Marcello: So now you mentioned that you...

Stanbrough: So we were boxed up to go to PLUM. I had a hint...I knew PLUM was toward the Philippines or toward Australia because of Colonel Tharp.

Marcello: But now how did this transfer take place? You seemed to imply awhile ago that you were transferred from one unit to another.

Stanbrough: Well, yes, we were. We were just told, "You are now in the 2nd Battalion." Now I was married, so I went over to see Colonel Bay about this.

Marcello: So up to that time, you were in the 1st Battalion.

Stanbrough: Regimental headquarters, with Captain Fitzsimmons. We were just transferred over the weekend. I went over to protest it, of course, or find out about it from Colonel Bay. I rarely ever saw him on business. I've only seen him twice, but that was the second time. I don't know if I should tell you exactly what he said. It won't look good in print, but you can take it out if you don't like it.

Marcello: Okay.

Stanbrough: He told me, "Sergeant, I think you're going with a good unit with a lot of good men, and it will be a big mistake if you don't go. If you insist, I will see that you stay. But the rest of this gang here is going off, and they're going to go back up to where all those Yankees are and spend a real cold winter. They're going to be with all those blacks coming in and everything. You're with a bunch of good boys." Of course, we didn't have any blacks come in. But he said, "You're going to be up there with all those Yankees." And he was right. He must have known because they later went right up there where it was cold and spent a miserable winter out there. So I saluted and thanked him, left, and went back there and got to work.

We were indeed transferred. We then had to do a lot of shifting around at that time, and Sergeant Shaw became the radio...I don't know whether he was promoted to that or whether he already was, but he became the radio sergeant. Ficklin became the wire sergeant. So these are the two main things here.

Marcello: So you were transferred from...

Stanbrough: We weren't transferred. We just moved into a new bunk, as it turned out.

Marcello: I see. But you were transferred from regimental headquarters...

Stanbrough: The 2nd Battalion headquarters. That's right. It's also sort of a duplicate. Now the difference in the radio situation was that you're no longer communicating to your battalion headquarters. I did find out that we had these little field walkie-talkie things that the boys carried as forward observers and such like that. As communications chief, then, I was more concerned with that, and also with the coding of messages and the cipher devices and so forth --just communications, that's all. We were at that time just moving a hundred yards away.

Marcello: So most people did figure out pretty quickly that PLUM essentially meant that the Philippine Islands were your destination.

Stanbrough: No, I don't think we knew that. I didn't. I suspected it, but I didn't have any true knowledge of it. I was told later, though, or sometime along the line that PLUM was a place called Fort Stotsenburg. That's what the word got out--Fort Stotsenburg. Of course, who knows where Fort Stotsenburg is? I know where it is now, but I didn't then. I don't know who leaked that or where it came from or whether it was official. I just remember hearing Fort Stotsenburg. I knew I was very, very upset that I was a candidate to go off to officer's training school prior to then. I was told while in Fort Stotsenburg I'd get to go back to officer's training school. I saw right away that I didn't want to be an enlisted man the rest of my life. I felt I'd gone to college and all this and made good grades, and I was a candidate to go and was getting ready to go to officer's training school. This was going to interrupt it, and that was one of the reasons I went to see Colonel Bay. He explained to me that...I guess that's what he explained. I was told, "It's just an Army post there, and you'll be able to go to officer's training school." I think that turned out to be a lot of baloney.

Marcello: Now several occasions, of course, you have mentioned that you were married. You were obviously the exception rather than the rule so far as enlisted personnel were concerned, isn't that correct? I would asume that not too many enlisted personnel were married.

Stanbrough: Probably they were too young. See, by 1941 I was twenty-three years old. There were some, though. I remember very well--it's just photographic--I can still see it--getting on a train on November 11 and marching over there. We had to march, and it was dark. We got over there, and it was about early in the morning. There was First Sergeant Wisdom, and his wife, Violet, was there, and she had a little small baby in her arms. I've seen this girl since, and she's fully grown--a very handsome lady. But the wives came over to see us off and give us all a kiss good-bye. Some girlfriends were there, but there weren't very many.

Marcello: What kind of feelings or emotions did you have at that time relative to going overseas and leaving your wife here?

Stanbrough: Oh, we all felt that was our duty at that time. That was something that had to be done. We were all under some kind of vague impression that they couldn't keep us in more than a year (chuckle). I don't know where that came from. By the way, remember that the war hadn't started yet. We felt we would be away for a few months.

Marcello: Describe that train trip from Camp Bowie to San Francisco, which was going to be the first leg of your trip.

Stanbrough: The train trip was several days. I do remember some of the things while on the train at various places we'd go through. Sometimes the train would stop, and we'd get out and do a little marching for exercise. It was the first time I'd ever seen the Mohave Desert in my life.

We had our stuff tied on to the train--trucks and what-have-you--on flatcars. We had old 75-millimeter guns from World War I. We were supposed to pick them up. I don't recall now whether those guns...we didn't get the 105's, but there were split-trail 75-millimeters that we wound up with, which are highly accurate guns. I'm not certain whether they were tied on the flatcars or not. We did get them. I don't know whether they joined us en route or whether...but they came from San Antonio, Texas. That was what we wound up with.

Marcello: How did the men principally occupy their time during that train trip?

Stanbrough: Playing cards and laughing and looking out the windows and seeing something they'd never seen before. This is hearsay but one of the fellows said, "There's the Grand Canyon," and someone said, "What town is that?" Some people really didn't know those things. We were just being tourists.

Marcello: And this was essentially one train, correct?

Stanbrough: Yes, one train. We were all on this train.

Marcello: And how long did it take you to get to San Francisco?

Stanbrough: I think it was several days. I'm a little vague there. We certainly didn't have sleeping cars. It was either one or two nights on the train. I recall coming into San Francisco and being pushed around sidings and seeing those big warehouses there and thinking, "Well, they're going to put us in this like they did at Bailey-Moline." Not so. They eventually put us on a boat, and out we went to a place called Angel Island, which is out past Alcatraz,in the bay.

Marcello: That was basically a transit station there.

Stanbrough: Right. It was really something. We were around there for a few days. I believe we had a big Thanksgiving dinner there, too. We then ran into some Regular Army people, since it was a transit point, who liked to make jokes about us. I was in bad trouble because I had this voice that changed, and I was a high-pitched tech sergeant and twenty-three years old. This old tough Army sergeant was out there.

I do recall one fellow there was helping us off the boats. We did get liberty one day. The sergeant made a remark, "Now you can write home and tell your mom you've seen a real Army sergeant." And the next question is, "If that's true, why is it that we're going overseas and you're sitting over here just dealing with these young kids?" That was a good question.

I vaguely know that on Thanksgiving Day I had to get the details together to go down and do KP duty. We always seemed to be getting KP duty. That's how they do it. There was a huge staff doing the cooking, but somebody had to help them clean up and do the serving.

Marcello: How long were you there at Angel Island?

Stanbrough: Now that I don't know. Those numbers are in my little diary written down. I think it was probably less than a week, I would guess. But, anyway, that's what this turkey dinner was about. I'm thinking we had Thanksgiving...if we left on November 11 and we had Thanksgiving there, we had to be there several days.

Marcello: Did you ever get any liberty or leave while you were there on Angel Island?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes.

Marcello: What did you do?

Stanbrough: I went in with Sergeant Wisdom and, I think, Sergeant Cobb, who was in the motor pool, and I don't know who else. We got on a boat, and we went...I was very curious when we went by Alcatraz because I knew that there were prisoners there.

It's a funny reaction. You're on an island. They put prisoners on one island, and here's some other island, and you're prisoners, too. But we were allowed to go in and see San Frnacisco. It was really something to get on those little cars and ride up and down and have a good meal. We'd never seen anything--Texas boys--like Chinatown and walk around there. The International Settlement--we did that. It was a pretty good liberty. I don't recall how long it was. It was just in the afternoon or something. I'm glad we got to do as much as we did. Of course, you got to see the Golden Gate Bridge in the distance. That's about it. I did go to Top-of-the-Mark--you know, all the tourist things. We were real tourists in a hurry. Our eyes were wide-open. We couldn't believe anybody would walk up and down those hills they have there right in the middle of town. I guess, as far as I'm concerned, I saw my first burlesque show in the International Settlement. That's about it.

Marcello: Do you think that's the first one a lot of the Texas boys had ever seen?

Stanbrough: The first one I ever saw, and I couldn't believe they were taking their clothes off (chuckle). The first sergeant was there, and after about two of them came through--and they had a whole group that were supposed to come one after another--after about two came through, he said, "Well, it's time to go back to camp. If you've seen two, you've seen 'em all." (chuckle)

Marcello: As I recall, you didn't have too much money around that time, either.

Stanbrough: No.

Marcello: You hadn't been paid for a while.

Stanbrough: I don't know. I had money. I don't know what I was getting paid. I think I was getting about $80 a month then. Most of the boys in my situation had it allocated back to their wives because they didn't need much. You don't need much money. No, I didn't have too much money then, either. I just don't recall. I don't remember being real short.

Marcello: Okay, now you left San Francisco on November 22, 1941, and you were aboard the Republic.

Stanbrough: Now that's funny. Why would I think I had Thanksgiving dinner? Maybe I'm wrong. Maybe it was such a good dinner that I thought it was Thanksgiving.

Marcello: Maybe it was the last good meal they gave you before you left.

Stanbrough: I think they served us turkey or something, so I thought it was Thanksgiving; but I guess it wasn't because Thanksgiving should be later than that. That's right. It would be on the ship then. My memory is going.

Marcello: Describe what life was like aboard the USS Republic.

Stanbrough: Oh! Well, the first thing we did was, we went out and sailed under the good old bridge. I thought that was marvelous, to look up and see it. I saw it. Everyone was out gawking at it. We had no more than rounded that and were out at sea, and there was water that we had never seen before in our life.

This was roughly a 20,000-ton ship. Maybe they've told you, but let me give you my version. This ship was built... and I know this because I saw the plaque. It was the Kaiser Wilhelm II. It was built in the year 1904. I would guess, when it was under full steam and trying the best it could, it might do ten knots. It was a big thing, and there were several thousand people on it. I know there were at least 3,000.

We went out there, and those were the biggest ocean swells you ever saw. It was in the morning. I deliberately think that they fixed...I believe it was Friday, come to think about it, because there was fish and cabbage smells around the place, and everyone got sick, sick, sick. I didn't and there was a reason for it.

There was a real reason for it. If you were in the first three grades, you were indeed in some low...real far down in the ship in some low-class staterooms. They had old ornate mirrors and everything else. But I did have that. I remember there was probably about four people to each room, but you had a little wash basin and stuff like that. When I went back to see where the rest of the boys were, it was incredible. They were all stacked up on those racks, which had chains to support them. They looked like a parking lot nowadays. That's what it was--a place to park bodies. There were steel floors, and people were throwing up all over it. It was bad. And, I mean, this all happened within just a little while, and for the poor guys back there, it was awful. I thought it was awful because I had never seen anything like that. One person would get sick, and everybody else would get sick around there. I'm certain that you have talked to someone that had been there, and they can tell you about it. It was bad. To me it was a bad scene.

If you want me to describe a little more about that ship, we did have abandon ship drills later on in transit. We did become better sailors after a while, too.

That ship eventually got into Hawaii. Of course, it was very exciting to see all that activity.

I did find out...oh, I forgot. I was designated... I'm going to show you why we might not have been a crack unit. Someone said that we've got to have a mess officer on that ship. It went up to some colonel. I don't know... Colonel Searle or whoever it was. It came down, and it finally wound up that somebody from the 131st, 2nd Battalion --after it came through the 29th Bomb Squadron and all these different organizations--thousands of people--has got to be the mess officer. Well, I don't know who make these decisions, but somebody else made the decision that it should be someone in the headquarters. Then it comes down that somebody else makes the decision that the first sergeant has got to pick out one in headquarters, and he decided who was the lousiest ones around that had the rank. It's somebody that had to do with communications.

So ol' Jess got to be the mess guy. All I had to do was take care of the KP's and stacking those damn trays. I remember, when I was told I was going to be that, I didn't want to do it, but I didn't have any alternative. It meant that I could eat if I felt like it, but it was stand-up tables. People in long queues would come in there and get the tray, get the slop thrown at them, sit down and eat it, and go back out. There was some days after we got on there that it was chaos. It was not organized. We had to supply all the people for KP duty. I forget how many, but there must have been thirty or forty guys assigned to you, or more, from different sections. These are huge dining halls on this ship. Of course, if the guys were smart, they would try to escape mess duty. You'd have to keep them busy. "Clean off this area." It was just like a pig trough. People would get out of line...when they finished, some of them would get in line again so they'd be first in the next feeding. If they didn't have anything to do, from breakfast they'd get in line for lunch. I don't know if you've heard that one, but that's my version.

Marcello: The lines were that long that by the time one meal was finished it was time to start the next one.

Stanbrough: The lines were long, and, of course, they could talk to their buddies and shoot dice and so forth in line because there was not really any duties and such like that on the ship.

Marcello: Now I do know that when the Republic pulled into Honolulu, the men were allowed just a little bit of shore leave. Did you manage to get ashore?

Stanbrough: Yes, I did. But prior to coming in that morning, we came by Diamond Head, and I was very, very aware now that things were really picking up. Here came these airplanes flying over us, and these were slick-looking. I thought, "Boy, we really have a lot of power out here." These airplanes would fly low and right over us--just thunder over us. That was very thrilling to me.

I have it written down someplace, but I vaguely think that I got off ship on a Saturday or something like that. I had some friends from Wichita Falls, Texas, there. I did contact them. It was a working day, and I had to wait until they got off work. I went down to Waikiki Beach, and I went to the Moana Hotel and the big banyan tree that Robert Louis Stevenson got a plaque on. He used to sit there.

Then I went to another place, and they met me and took me out to dinner and then took me for a tour. Now I did notice that at the radio station--because I was interested in radio stations--they had it sandbagged and had machine gun emplacements around.

Marcello: So you did notice some evidence of a war footing there.

Stanbrough: Oh, yes, I came back later and found out what happened at Pearl Harbor, but I found it hard to believe because there was a war footing situation. They were very nervous about that, and I was told that by my friends there. After they took me out to drive me around that night, they had taken me back out to my ship to leave me. They drove the car out, and when I came back to me it gave a sense of security in a way when I could see all those ships lined up. They all were lit up. You know, they'd put the lighting on the ship. You could see them as far as you could see. Of course, it was dark, and you couldn't tell specifically what ships were there, but you could see the lights on the ships. It looked like the whole world was just filled up with Navy ships. I thought, "Boy, they really got it out here."

As I recall, I think we left the Sunday morning one week before the attack. I believe it was one week. I think it was a Sunday that we left, but I'm not certain.

Marcello: Well, according to the record, you left on November 27.

Stanbrough: I don't know if that was a Sunday or not.

Marcello: This would be just a little bit more than a week, so you're pretty correct there.

Stanbrough: Okay.

Marcello: When you leave Honolulu, you are part of a convoy, are you not?

Stanbrough: Yes, and there was a ship called the Pensacola in it.

Marcello: That was basically your escort, was it not--the Pensacola?

Stanbrough: Right. And there were some other ships mixed up. We started wallowing off someplace. I didn't know much about the other ships. I do remember one ship didn't seem to steer very well, and it followed us for a long time. It turned out later, I believe, that it was the Bloemfontein. It was an ice-breaker, and the reason it was wallowing around was apparently because it wanted to go fast. That ship was capable of cruising at eighteen knots. It could go even faster, but its cruising speed was eighteen knots with that funny bow it had. Guess who the slowest ship was? Ours! So we headed off. I've heard a lot of the boys from the "Lost Battalion"...sometimes our myths and rumors get mixed up, but I distinctly remember that I was still involved, of course, with my mess duties, and I do remember when they had the great initiation. By the way, that was the day before that we were told because we were all sore and beaten up. Some people really were. I didn't get it hard like some of the others, but I was sore the day we were told that the war had started--when it was announced. So that meant we had it the day before.

Marcello: You were talking about your initiation, and, of course, you were referring to the fact that you had...

Stanbrough: Crossed the equator.

Marcello: ...crossed the equator.

Stanbrough: The equator was the one where they beat the tar out of us. I still have that card, by the way, and I'm always going to keep it because I've always remembered that if you cross the equator you better have your card with you. I still have it. We did cross the equator. We crossed the International Date Line later.

So we headed toward...now this is what I was told. I was told that we were near the Gilberts, and the Japanese, of course, had the Gilberts. We turned from there. The word was from our officers or someone--I don't know which one--that we were probably within 200 to 250 miles of the Gilberts. I haven't looked at a map to check that, but we did indeed, when we were told of the war, change course.

Marcello: Let's back up a minute and talk about December 7, 1941. How did you get the word and what was your reaction when you heard that a state of war existed between the United States and Japan?

Stanbrough: Well, it was a sobering influence on us. But we were also very subdued because we were so sore and sobered up from that...we took a beating on that initiation. Those are brutal, and it should never have been. But getting back to December 7, we realized then that we were in some problems. Also, we probably realized that we weren't going to get turned loose in a year because a year had already elapsed. But we didn't really realize how bad it was.

Marcello: How did you get the word?

Stanbrough: It was announced over our speaker system on the ship: "Hear this! Hear this!" Somebody blows the whistle--the boatswain's whistle. They just announced that war had been declared. I don't remember whether they said, though, that Pearl Harbor had been attacked, but this was about a week, or a little more than a week, later.

Marcello: How long is the war going to last so far as the Americans are concerned?

Stanbrough: Well, we couldn't believe the Japanese would have the audacity to do such a dastardly thing because we were just going to kick the hell out of them. You know that. You could look out here and see all these ships and people and everything. We didn't really know, but we still had a tendency--Americans that have never seen action or been around things--to underestimate the enemy. We certainly underestimated them--all of us, even the officers I was around. I was around the officers more because I was the communications chief, and I'd see them--Captain Fitzsimmons occasionally and all--and I got to hear those people talk. We completely underestimated what we would run into.

Marcello: When you thought of the typical Japanese--at that time--what kind of a person did you usually conjure up in your mind?

Stanbrough: I really didn't know much about them at all. The only time I even thought I saw a Japanese was one of our fellows, a fellow named Fujita, and he was half-Japanese or something. So they had to look something like him. But we simply didn't know. And we knew that they made shoddy airplanes out of bamboo and everything.

Marcello: What kind of action did the convoy take at that point, then, once it had received word that a state of war existed? Now you mentioned that you did alter course somewhat when you got around the Gilbert Islands. What other actions did the convoy take in response to what had happened?

Stanbrough: The Pensacola, for one, seemed to be involved in a great deal more activity. Occasionally, we could see it closer by. It had little scout planes that would go out. I don't remember any other thing particularly. I really don't recall too much other than that the sea was kind of flat. It was not rough at all, and it just looked like it was flat day after day after day. I was wondering, "How could there be so much water in the world?" If you're going across the ocean at eight knots--that's about nine miles an hour--it just goes on and on and on. I couldn't tell much of a difference.

We did finally pull into the Fijis, and the Fiji constabulary came out to the dock while we were fueling up. They serenaded us. They had magnificent voices. I recall they had a lovely...their tunics were bright and shiney--ropes and brass. They had on white skirts that were jagged down on the bottom--part of their uniform. They were very big, dark men. These were a chorus. They were singing. They sang a song. That was one time.

Also, I saw the biggest shark in my life. It was a huge shark--a great white shark, right by the ship. We were realizing then that this was the biggest fish we'd ever seen in our life, and it would be real bad to fall overboard.

Coming into the Fijis, we saw several islands first, and they were really beautiful in the sunshine--just beautiful, sparkling emeralds. We would have loved to go ashore, but we didn't.

Marcello: Nobody got off the ship there at the Fijis.

Stanbrough: Not to my knowledge. No, we didn't get off. There might have been an officer to get off to make some arrangements about supplies, but we didn't get off.

Marcello: Now is it not true that some of the members of the battalion did man some of the antiaircraft weapons aboard the Republic after war had been declared? Do you recall anything about that?

Stanbrough: I was told that. That would come out of one of the firing batteries. That ship was a transport and was short-handed. I don't know if we'd have ever done any good, but I was told that. I don't know.

Marcello: Okay, so you...

Stanbrough: Well, the boys talked about it, and that's all. They said they did. Meanwhile, I was down there cleaning up the slop in the mess hall. I hated that job (chuckle).

Marcello: You've made it quite clear on several occasions that you didn't like that job (chuckle).

Stanbrough: I didn't care what was going on. I thought that was the worst thing...I just hated First Sergeant Wisdom. I thought, "If I ever get a chance to get even with that son-of-a-bitch...." I hope he gets to read this someday (chuckle). I don't really feel that way toward him, but at that time I just thought that was the worst thing he could have possibly done. Here I was, with my great education and superior intellect, down there in just a glorified KP. By the way, it came back to haunt me later on then. I'll tell you after a while.

Marcello: Okay, so you dock in Brisbane, Australia.

Stanbrough: Well, when we came into Brisbane...I'm on the subject, but you may not want to hear about this. We came in up the river there. We, of course, crowded around to see what we could see because we were happy to see land.

We also noticed that the little airplane off the Pensacola was lost. It didn't seem to have come back, so we had assumed that it had just flew on over and landed. By the way, when they landed on the Pensacola--the little seaplanes...we loved the little seaplane. It would buzz around before we got to Australia. He would come up...to recover him they put out a net, and he would just run up with the pontoons on it. It was a little plane--an observation plane. Somehow, they'd pull him in, and then reach over and grab hold of him. He'd hook something, and they'd pulled him up on board. But he disappeared. I was informed by that guy in the mess hall that...I don't know who did it but...see, we actually, in fact, had a mess officer. I was given the title, but I was just a sergeant in charge of KP's...that the Australians shot him down. I don't know if that's true or not, but he disappeared; and it doesn't land on water, so I don't know. But he disappeared just as we neared the coast of Australia.

But going up the river...we finally came in, and I can remember a sailboat flipped over out there, and we watched that. We saw the large, large jellyfish--huge thing. The river was filled up with those great, big things.

We finally arrived and docked. I think we were dragging bottom a lot of the time in that river because this ship was big. If I were to guess, it probably was thirty feet or more.

Marcello: I've heard other prisoners mention that same thing, that is, the shallow depth of the river, plus the size of the Republic. Now you get into Brisbane on December 22, 1941. What kind of reception do you get from the Australians?

Stanbrough: Well, when we first got in, we wound up at a racetrack called Ascot. That was on the edge of the town there. At Ascot there was a clubhouse. The officers took over the clubhouse. They needed a mess officer, and Sergeant Wisdom recommended me because by this time I was supposed to have experience. I hated him even more. So there I am, stuck with a few Australian cooks. I don't remember too much. They had tablecloths, silver, crystal--all this stuff--for this mess.

Of course, they had this thing called mutton over there, which had a nice smell. I didn't particularly like that. Most Texans, I don't think, are aware of what mutton's like.

The next thing I knew...of course, I still had my detail, like, trying to find out where people are because we had to go down to the docks and try to straighten things out. Equipment was being unloaded in piles, and we had a hard time finding our gear. I don't know if they ever found our real trucks or if somebody else took them. I remember there were other groups. I think the 29th Group was there. The fellows whose stuff was mixed up with us later went up and fought in New Guinea--that campaign. Some of them did or were let off at Darwin. That was a mess.

But people like W.G. Reed would disappear and go off to town, and you wouldn't know where he was. He was a hard man to catch. I'd try to cover for him. When I did capture him, though...and I did capture him finally. He came back after a few days wanting to know what in the hell was going on because he was AWOL...and I didn't want him to be turned in AWOL. I captured him and put him down on the docks guarding the equipment. He tells me that I sure did ruin some good times in the town because of that. This was after the fact.

But getting back to that place, we were in charge of a Christmas dinner. I was supposed to be in charge. I was so disgusted with the whole works that I decided that there wasn't anything they could do but shoot me or demote me, but I was through, and I was not going to be a mess sergeant anymore, or a mess officer.

Oh, the reason I got that...I forgot to tell you. Sergeant Wisdom had been a mess officer at Camp Bowie, and he was pretty heavy and fat. I guess he thought I needed to be fattened up or something. I don't know.

I decided I'd had enough, and I walked out the gate, and I was going to town. I didn't care if the officers had dinner. I was through. I walked down the road, and there were nice little bungelows or houses on either side, and the Australian people said, "Hello."

There was a little gate there on the street where a man met me. He spoke to me and then wanted to talk to me a little bit. He wanted to know if I had been invited... did I have plans for Christmas dinner. I told him I didn't. He asked if I would do him the honor of having Christmas dinner with him and his family? That was very interesting because, remember, you were on the wrong side of the equator (chuckle) for Christmas. His name was C.A. Ives. I did correspond with him a little bit. He was also the manager of the local theater downtown, and I managed to get to go see some shows later.

But he had some other people there besides myself. He had someone from the Navy and others. He had his family and daughters around. We were all sitting there in a room and trying to get acquainted. It was sort of odd. Well, not odd, but we were a little shy. You've got to remember that we were only twenty years old. Some of the Navy boys must have been eighteen or nineteen. There were about three or four of us. They had some Australian girls there.

We sat down for dinner. It was very nice. I remember this because it was a different type of Christmas. They had a lot of what they called truffles and things like that, but it was a traditional dinner in a sense. Everyone had to wear a paper colorful hat, which I was not aware of. The English do that, too, still sometimes. So here we are, with those little paper hats, like a carnival almost, having Christmas dinner.

The houses, by the way, there are...remember, it is semi-tropical at Brisbane, so some houses were built up off the ground to get better ventilation. This house was, too, and it had lattice work around so it could get air underneath.

Wherever I went the Australian people were absolutely ...of course, we did not have to pay to go on the trolleys to go to town. That was free. I don't remember, when I went to the theater, whether I paid or not. Being from Texas, I was really impressed by the gorgeous marble stairways and polished brass rails going up and the poshness of this movie theater, which we had never, never seen anything like that. They had their stalls, and they had the orchestra section, which we were not familiar with. We found out it cost more to sit on the side some places than it would the other. But it was a huge theater, with an organ. As soon as the show was over, they sang "God Save the King." Everybody stands up and sings the national anthem. I was very impressed with that, too.

Marcello: I noticed a lot of the other POW's that I have interviewed have remarked that there didn't seem to be very many young men their age around Brisbane at that time.

Stanbrough: There wasn't. There were either real young ones or real old ones, and the girls were having a field day. They really were. Now I was married, though, and square. Oh, boy, I'm telling you! You know, hindsight is 20/20, but I realized that I...I'm going to say it--I screwed up--I really did--because here's really lovely, young ladies, and they were delighted.

Oh, by the way, what was so significant to me when I would talk to Ives and others--of course, they were very concerned about the Japanese--is that he was so pleased at our immediate response. The war had just started, and here it is, the 22nd--only two weeks later--and here come the Americans to win it for them. That was really something.

I did go down to the...I did several things. I watched people doing the sailing on Sunday. I went to the park. The people...it suddenly dawned on me that this was the life that I really did like because on Sundays--I was in on Sunday--it's a very, very quiet, respectable life. People are well dressed, and they're out on outings and looking at things--parks, trees. I went up into the hills.

Somebody took me up there. I think Ives did. Ives took me up to the little park where I could meet one of those little koalas. We like to call them koala bears, but that's not so. They're koalas. That's a marsupial-type of animal. But the main thing I was interested in was the kangaroo. The first one I saw, of course, I wanted to pick up his tail. Boy, I found out it was heavy and muscular. I don't know what I expected.

That was pretty good, but it didn't last very long, though. We did some work, too. It was not all visiting around. We were down trying to find our gear, and I ran into some fliers out of the Philippines. They were down there looking for...I'm talking about behind the gate there, where there were mountains of boxes. They were scrounging around trying to find stuff that they could use to carry back up to the Philippines. They were looking for ammunition. I made the statement there...I got to talking to some guy. We were in the sun there looking at all this stuff. Of course, I was scared that I wasn't going to find my radio--my ham station. I thought, "To hell with the war." (chuckle) This was my personal gear that I paid my money for. I was really exasperated, and I said, "This is no way to win a war. There is no way we can win a war when everything is all messed up like this. This is one big mess-up." This guy, who was an officer, told me, "That's not the way wars are won.

Both sides mess up. The guy who messes up the most is the one who loses." That's about it. We got our stuff eventually. We were put on another ship called the Bloemfontein.

Marcello: You were only in Australia about a week, were you not?

Stanbrough: That's about it, I guess, because on New Year's night I was on watch going through the Torres Strait, and it was a beautiful moonlit night--almost full moon--and from the ship, looking behind, you could see the moon rays hitting the water. I got off watch a little early. My watch was fouled up because it was over New Year's Eve night that I was up there. I don't remember whether...let's see...I was going in a time zone, so therefore...whether I got an extra hour or...anyway, that was on New Year's Eve that we were going through Torres Strait. So you're right. That was the 22nd. See, we had to go up inside the Barrier Reef, and that was an interesting thing to see, too. But now we were on a ship that really was getting along--the Bloemfontein.

Marcello: Are you the only unit aboard the Bloemfontein, or are there other units aboard that ship, too?

Stanbrough: The only units that were aboard that ship, to my knowledge right now, was the 2nd Battalion. The ship...I don't recall the tonnage, but it was nothing like that other one. We did wind up eventually in Java with some people from another group--casual officers. I don't believe I remember them being on board. They might have been.

Marcello: Somewhere along the line, don't you pick up some people from the 26th Brigade?

Stanbrough: That was Colonel Searle and somebody else.

Marcello: Okay. For instance, I remember the book that Ben Dunn wrote. I think that he was out of that 26th Brigade, which was from somewhere up in the Illinois area.

Stanbrough: Yes, we had some of these people. We wound up with them, and we knew there were some casual--what we called casual--officers. Whatever casual means, I don't know.

But on the Bloemfontein we did our little things. I vaguely remember...I know we put a gun aft as well as foreward. I do think that we did somehow or another get hold of a 75-millimeter or something and stick it out on the deck, thinking that we could scare off...the main thing was to scare off submarines. Not that we'd ever be able to hit one, but if they came up and saw some cannon up there, they...we didn't want them to come up and turn their little cannon loose. I don't think we ever could have...we didn't know anything about the motion of the ship, and we hadn't sighted in the guns. We probably would have shot the wrong direction.

Marcello: Were there any kind of celebrations on New Year's Eve?

Stanbrough: Well, I don't know. I was on watch back there by myself. My watch consisted of looking for submarines. Big deal, as nearsighted as I am. Anyway, I sat there. I watched.

I didn't see any submarines.

Marcello: You mention that you were nearsighted. Did you wear glasses at that time, too?

Stanbrough: Yes, I did. But you also have to keep your binoculars from sliding off your lenses.

There was some interesting happenings on there. One is that our quarters, particularly the officers' quarters, were very nice. This boat was really...like I said, it had an icebreaker bow, but it also was one of these merchant ships that could carry a few passengers. Our officers had some very nice quarters.

One of my distinct memories that I'd like to tell you about it that I had never saw...Captain Fitzsimmons caught me, and he had a funny sense of humor in a way. He said, "Sergeant there's something I want to show you. I want you to come to my quarters." Well, he showed me his quarters, and they were lovely, I thought. I don't even recall where I slept then, but I saw his quarters, and he wanted me to go in and use his toilet. I told him I had just gone. He said, "Go ahead. I want you to use it. I want you to see how it works." I said, "Captain, I've already used it. I've gone." "Well,come on in, and I'll show it to you." He pushed it. He said, "Did you ever see a toilet that would piss at you?" He pushed a button, and it had a bidet, and, of course, I didn't know what that was--from Texas. "What the hell! Why would they do that?" So you pushed this button, and out came the water. It actually, in fact, came right out and shot right back in the middle of the floor. It was 180 degrees reversed. I was really impressed with that. I had to go tell people about that.

Then I went up and got acquainted with the radio operator because I was interested in radio, and I copied code and sat around and watched. I was so envious of this fellow from Holland. He liked for me to come up. He was a formal man, but he liked me to come up, and we talked about radio, and we could listen to things and copy code and listen to the CW. He showed me all the transmitters and stuff. They looked pretty good to me. That's about all my stories. I don't remember too much on that.

We did hear as we went through the straits between Bali and Lombok that...well, I heard--I didn't see it--that somebody had shot a torpedo across our bow. Actually, that was a good place to get anybody because the Langley got it there some days later. It was one of our first aircraft carriers. It would be real hard for a submarine if it missed us and we shot at it. We were going eighteen knots, and a submarine couldn't go that fast.

I remember also seeing the beautiful island there with that gorgeous volcano, and there was the sun setting. It really was a beautiful sight. Everything was beautiful to us now. We know there's a war going on, but I didn't think anything was going to happen to us...or to me rather, anyway. Then we proceeded on down and finally came into Surabaja (Soerabaja).

Marcello: You landed at first you stopped briefly at Darwin, did you not?

Stanbrough: I'm sorry. Before we go to Bali and Lombok, we stopped at Darwin.

Marcello: And again, that was just a very, very brief stop.

STanbrough: We didn't know for sure if we were going to get off. The story goes that we did have a Dutch officer that was bringing us, and he was determined...now this is sheer rumor, that he was determined that we would get in to support Java or the Netherlands East Indies. Whether he had any influence in getting us in there or whether it was determined that we were to go in there, I don't know. He was Dutch, and if a Dutchman makes up his mind...I think the decision was probably made at Darwin that we would go on rather than unloading there. If we had unloaded, we would have wound up in the New Guinea campaign. Somebody made the decision there because it wasn't anybody else going up to Java. We saw people getting off the other ships, and we wondered what was going on. It didn't look too impressive to me. I thought it would be better if we stayed on the ship and go someplace that was better.

Marcello: I don't think anybody had very good impressions of Darwin.

Stanbrough: Oh, God, no. It was hot. In West Texas you're used to seeing things pretty poor, but Darwin looked worse.

Marcello: Now you were not part of a convoy at this time, were you? You were more or less on your own?

Stanbrough: After we left Darwin,we were on our own.

Marcello: But from Brisbane to Darwin,you were part of a convoy?

Stanbrough: I don't remember. I do remember seeing a ship sunk in the strait, with the mast out of the water and so forth, so we knew there had been a war someplace. Somebody had shot something, but this was before we got to Darwin. But why would we be unloading there if there were no other ships? No, I don't know the answer to that one.

Marcello: Okay, so you get into Surabaja on January 11, 1942. What happens at that point?

Stanbrough: When coming in we always crowded up to the bow to see what we could see. It looked like it was kind of a pretty place. As we got closer in, I saw all these natives squatting around in what we later called the "native squat." They rested themselves by squatting down and resting their elbows on their knees. They sat there, and they watched us. They seemed to be pretty nice-looking men. I remember we made the remark that the guys had nice-looing features and all, and if they looked that nice, their women must be great. It turned out that the Javanese are somewhat attractive people.

We'd heard a lot of wild stories. We thought we were far better off than those poor guys in Australia. But getting back there, there was some confusion about getting up to... we finally found out that we were going to Malang. We finally did go up there. I haven't thought about it until this moment. I'm not certain, but I thought we rode a train up there. I'm not certain.

Marcello: I think this is true from what everybody else has told me.

Stanbrough: I never even thought about it in this many years.

Marcello: I think this is the occasion. Now you actually didn't go to Malang. You went to Singosari, did you not, which was an airbase close to Malang?

Stanbrough: Yes, that's right--Camp Singosari. That's right--Camp Singosari.

Marcello: Take me through Camp Singosari. Suppose we're going in the front gate or whatever. Give me a physical description of Singosari in general, and then we'll talk about your barracks in particular.

Stanbrough: This is very vague. It was a paved road going down toward the camp, and then it had a gate to go in. Over across from the camp and all was a big field which was an airfield. I know there were Dutch-style buildings where they had the tiles and the cement floors and the red roofs and things like that. I have no real knowledge of how it was laid out right now, except I know that I was in one of the large barracks area. There was a place for the officers quarters nearby. There was also another little building where we had our cooking and mess duties. I was no longer mess sergeant. I was very happy to get out of that. Then over past that was a lot of paved area for motor vehicles and trucks and so forth. Off to the side, very nearby from it--well, our section was near the edge of it--was a tapioca field with a stream and the trees and stuff like that around. In front of our camp, we did have metal poles that supported lights.

Now this is another one of the things I want you to have for your book on POW myths. But this is a truth in my observation. There were some other people coming into camp--an English group with Bofors. Of course, we were in and out, and this was getting safer all the time with more help coming along--international and everything else.

We eventually got into some air raids. The Japanese planes would come in and strafe. The first time it was absolutely sheer terror for everyone because we realized that somebody was trying to kill us or something. Then the bombers came in later. They would drop the bombs, and then we realized something else fast--don't be around anywhere that's concrete because when a bomb hits concrete it's going to explode then, and it's going to cut everything anywhere around about a foot off the ground; but if it hits out in the tapioca fields, it was sheer, soft volcanic mud, and it just threw out a little mud. Anyway, getting back to those Bofors units, those idiots...we thought they were idots, but not at first. When they were doing their air raids, those boys were stringing telephone wires. So the communications gang--I was interested in communications --would get out there, and they'd get a ladder...they'd have a little truck parked, take the ladder off the side, park it up on the pole like, I guess, they did in England. A guy would climb up there on the ladder, and he'd tie his connections, and then he'd take it down and go to the next one. Well, when these little Zeros came over...well, I shouldn't say "little." They looked big to us then. We also made remarks about when they were strafing...see, they had cannons on them, and they'd make a noise, like, "B-L-L-L-L-I-TTT" and then "BLUB-BLUB-BLUB-BLUB-BlUB." They did the small calibers and then got the 20-millimeters going. That scared the hell out of us, having something like that around. But all the time they were strafing, these boys kept working. You couldn't have found a 2nd Battalion guy, he was down in a hole so far. We did have some guns set up out there finally, and we had some duties and all, but these guys just kept on working. So we thought they were very, very brave. We'd have been down...there was a good ditch there--a culvert--but, no, they didn't even stop. They just kept going. Later on that afternoon, they stopped. It was four o'clock--tea time. They all came down and stopped to have their damn tea. That's when I thought they were a bunch of idiots.

The other one thing was that we had hooked up my communications receiver over in the headquarters where the officers were and put a switch on it so that when there was a newscast, we could hear it over in our place. I got telephone wire...I don't know whether I got Ficklin or somebody to get the wire and run wire over, and then I hooked up speakers, and then when the newscast came on, we could listen to it. But that was decided by the officers because my receiver was in their quarters. I don't know why I didn't put it in mine. Maybe it was because I had duties and didn't want to go off and leave it--the receiver.

That's about the way life was until we watched those B-17's fly in. Of course, we heard all these wild rumors. The B-17's, the first ones there,were the earlier version and did not have the gun positions in the tail. The B-17E came in, and it did finally. The other thing was, these planes flew all the way from the United States going through Africa and everything, and some of them crashed when they were landing in Java. Can you imagine? They just tore it all to pieces right then and there. Some of our people were selected to go over, and they trained them by giving them a machine gun and seeing if they could hit the top of a coconut tree. If they did, then they got to go on the airplanes.

Marcello: Is it not also true that several of the people in the unit served as ground personnel and support units for those airplanes?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes.

Marcello: Now this was the 19th Bomb Group, I believe, was it not?

Stanbrough: Right. I actually went over on one occasion to repair some of their radio gear that wasn't working. I was at headquarters over there a couple of times just to go over and see if I could fix something because the people got out, and they didn't have all their maintenance people. We also served food--did kitchen duties--for them. We were ground support.

Marcello: Did these guys come out of the Philippines?

Stanbrough: Yes, the 19th Bomb Group came out of the Philippines.

Marcello: And were they there when you got to Singosari, or did they come in later?

Stanbrough: Some of them were already there.

Marcello: That's what I thought.

Stanbrough: Absolutely. They were there, and we immediately started supporting them. We were their support, and the other people who were not doing the supporting were...in our case we strung...I was in communications, and we were putting telephone wires out in the field positions. The gun crews--the different batteries--were digging in their 75-millimeters and putting trails in the ground a little bit so they could get better elevation. The approach from the mountains... they could only come from two directions. It became a popular sport around there, if you could, to get hold of a .50-caliber from a wrecked airplane and go make yourself a gun crew. In case the Japanese came, you could shoot at them. Another popular thing to do was to go down to a place and weld a mount on the rear of a jeep and put a .50-caliber on it.

I remember that some of those air raids we had--the first ones--frightened the hell out of us so much that if you were out doing something, it took your mind off of it. Particularly, I used to watch those planes, and I'd watch the elevation of the bombers. Of course, after we started shooting at them, the bombers would get higher. You could watch, and when you'd see the lead plane drop his bombs...in the bright sun, you'd see a little glitter, but you could watch it because they were not that high. I don't know how far up they were, but you could see them. I would kind of estimate fifteen degrees. One day I saw it at about fifteen degrees ahead of me, and I knew it was time to get in a hole because they were going to come around you then. If they were right up above you, there was no problem. It was lots better to sit out and...I was feeding ammunition. It was nicer to be doing something. I found out we couldn't hit anything. I could see those tracers going right through those planes, and the planes would keep going. I thought they were going through, but they weren't.

Marcello: You mentioned you were feeding ammunition. This was on one of those makeshift machine gun mounts that you had put up?

Stanbrough: Yes. They really chopped through a lot of ammunition in a hurry. You sat there, and the belt was fed in, and you kind of helped it out of the cases and into it. It was something to do. I was told that one of the cooks got so mad at the airplanes that he went out and threw potatoes at them, but that's a rumor.

Marcello: It sounds like another one of the myths for my article.

Stanbrough: There were a lot of myths. We had a real fine chicken dinner one day. I always believed in having some food around, and when the air raid alarm started, I stopped. We were sitting down, and everybody jumped and ran for cover. But I ran and got my ration of chicken and carried it with me, of course, and sat out there. There were a lot of myths going on out there.

There was a lot of good fortune, too. You could buy bananas for about 25¢ for the whole stalk when we first got there. Within a week the Americans had ruined it to where you couldn't even buy just one ring around there for 25¢.

There were a lot of monkeys around. I remember we went to a temple over there, and there were a bunch of monkeys around. But the natives would come up, some older man with his daughter, and try to sell her services to you. They put chalk--white stuff--on their face so it would make them look white, like, it was a big thing about being white.

Anyway, that's kind of vague about all that stuff there, but I was told we shot down one plane. I don't know for a fact that we did.

Marcello: What kind of a relationship developed between the Americans and the Dutch during this period when you first arrived at Singosari and then in the days that followed?

Stanbrough: Well, I didn't see too much of them except that I did meet a Dutchman in town, and he invited me for the weekend to visit his rubber estate. I went out with some people. His name was W.F. de Kadt. I met his wife. We went out there, and it was very nice. Wisdom was one that went along, and I believe Herschel Cobb. The first three grades in those days kind of stuck together. I never did understand why they had all those different levels, but they did in the Army. But we went out to visit, and we had nothing to do. They had a little force. He had an army uniform--Mr. de Kadt did. He had his own little group that he was training, and he wanted us to go out and watch them train and see how it was. So we had nothing to do. They were throwing hand grenades--supposed to be--so we were supposed to...gave me a hand grenade to throw. They were throwing hand grenades in cans, so we threw one. He showed us the little army, and we spent the weekend there, and it was really quite delightful. He had a Model-A Ford, too. It had a rumble seat. I really loved that.

Marcello: Were these people native Javanese that he was training, or were they Dutch, too?

Stanbrough: Native Javanese. He was Dutch. I think he had one of the larger rubber estates. I didn't meet him after the war. He'd moved back to Holland. His wife aged an awful lot. She was a beautiful, dark-headed lady. I saw her after the war, and and it looked like she had aged twice as fast as a person should.

We didn't have too much connection at all with the Dutch. He was the only one, and that was just because I met him in town. We did eventually have a little joint operation with the Dutch officers in that they were trying to learn our artillery techniques, and I happened to be out and see them. They were very slow about going about everything. We thought they were too methodical and that somebody would shoot them all to pieces before they ever got anything done. We had almost zero connections with them.

Marcello: What was there to do in Malang itself for entertainment and things of that nature? In other words, I would assume that whenever you could...

Stanbrough: Good restaurants.

Marcello: ...get any leave or liberty, you'd go into Malang.

Stanbrough: Well, I didn't get in too much. We divided into two groups. I'm talking about our headquarters battery. The first group went in and...by the way, we had the lectures by the doctors and lectures by the officers: "Don't have anything to do with those girls." They were 99.9 percent venereal. Of course, everybody knew that that's what they'd been told all the time back in the States. But, boy, the officers were correct this time. That first group that went into town--I wasn't in that group--a lot of them, within a very, very few days, were pretty...got too much drink and too many lady friends. Not all of them, but some of them, came out with some dreadful diseases. It hit so quickly. It hit so quickly that by the following weekend you never saw a better bunch of boys--the other half. They wouldn't have had anything to do with that. You couldn't have paid them.

The main thing was shopping--beautiful filligree silver, jade, beautiful wood carvings. I think everybody was out shopping--buying things. And it rained every evening--tropical-like. I remember they had little green umbrellas that were waxy that you could buy. That was about it. Of course, there were natives where you'd go, but they had something to sell. You might have seen Mexican filligree work, but it's not the same. What we did was go to restaurants, look at the sights, go to nearby temples to look at things--all the normal tourist things.

Marcello: Awhile ago, on several occasions, you talked about the first air raid and then the subsequent ones. I think I want to get this in some kind of an order here. Let's talk about the air raids. The first one occurs on February 3, 1942. Describe that as best you can remember in terms of what you were doing initially and then what you did once the planes and so on came over.

Stanbrough: Well, when we had our first air raid--of course, we had practices--the air raid sirens went off, and we all ran for our respective posts. Outside the camp there we had set up a command post, and in my portion there was a switchboard and radios. So we'd go through the little practice like you did in camp. You'd go out there and get to your post. You'd check to see if your various lines are connected to the various firing batteries and what-have-you. Then you'd go and report to your communication officer. In this case it was Fitzsimmons, and he obviously told somebody else that we were all communicating. We did that and we did it more then once we heard air raid alarms.

But this time planes decided to come over. We had a very nice, secure ditch for the stuff. I do remember hearing the planes coming over, and I looked up and saw a great, big red orange dot on the wings. My first reaction was, and I remember making this statement, "Those bamboo airplanes sure do fly good!" (chuckle) Of course, those things scared the hell out of us. But then there was a lot of shooting going on.

Marcello: Now are you kind of on the outskirts of camp?

Stanbrough: Yes, I'm on the outskirts of camp. We had to run outside the camp. We're not inside the camp. We get outside the camp. That was selected for us, I'm sure, by the colonel or somebody else...lieutenant colonel, that is. Anyway, it was outside the camp. As soon as you get an "all-clear," you go back in the camp. We get to see where there were little shots here and there, but they really didn't do much damage. There was very little destruction. They weren't aiming at us. They were aiming over there trying to knock off airplanes, and they were pretty successful, too.

Marcello: What kind of planes participated in that first raid? Do you recall?

Stanbrough: The ones that I saw...I can't tell you about the bombers or anything, but we were told it was a Zero, and it looked like it was a Zero to me. They were Zeros.

Marcello: So in other words, on the first air raid it was mostly all strafing as opposed to any bombing as such.

Stanbrough: Right. That's correct, as far as I can remember. The bombers came later, not on that raid. One thing that I learned pretty quickly there--and I guess you've heard this before from the ex-prisoners--is that the natives had spotters on the north coast of Java, and you could hear those little drums going "CLICK-CLOP, CLICK-CLOP, CLICK-CLOP!" It was far better than waiting for that siren to go off. We got so that when we heard we knew the signal. We knew that "click-clopping" signal, and when it hit right, you better hit it because we were going to get it later. That sound was traveling as fast as the speed of sound, and even though electricity goes faster along a wire, it didn't go that fast with humans in there with it. That's about it.

Marcello: I'm assuming, then, that you were some distance from that first raid. When I say "some distance," you were not one of the targets.

Stanbrough: Oh, God, no! We weren't the targets. I don't know if we ever were the targets. Anytime we were targets or shot at or anything, it was by mistake. They did drop some bombs, finally, in the camp and knocked part of some of the buildings down, but it was not just a hell of a lot of damage.

Marcello: Like you mentioned, they were concentrating on those planes in that airfield.

Stanbrough: Right across the field from us, down the road. They were concentrating on those planes.

Marcello: How successful were they?

Stanbrough: Very. New planes would come in and get torn up as soon as we put them down. I just don't know, but that's why it became a popular sport to go get guns. You could get so many of them.

Marcello: That was a dirt field, too, was it not, or a grass field? It was not concrete, was it?

Stanbrough: Most of it that I knew was sort of grass, but I do think part of it might have been paved because they had little roads around it paved. But it wasn't one that has the different cross things in it. I had to be...I don't know. I would say, though, that since they paved the roads and everything else, why wouldn't they pave the runway?

Marcello: With what frequency would these raids occur? The first one occurred on February 3. Are they a daily occurrence? Several a week?

Stanbrough: We used to say it was ten, two, and four o'clock, but leave off the four. It got so that they would come...you'd have something happening in the morning and then have another one in the afternoon. We still had people going into town that were on duty. I was scheduled to go in one day, and a raid came, and I went out and got my uniform all dirty, and I had to go back in and change before I could go into town. After the first one or two, I don't remember too much about it, except I wasn't as frightened. That was noise. When I thought we were shooting the hell out of them one time, they were bombing all around our positions because once we got to throwing up shells from our guns, well, that's when they did come back.

Marcello: Were the fieldpieces set up like antiaircraft weapons after that first raid, or were they already in position for air raids prior to the first one?

Stanbrough: I don't know. My distinct feeling is that it was after that first one because somebody got the bright idea: "Why don't we...we don't know anything about airplanes, so why don't we get the thing that we can shoot in one direction?" By the way, we had shrapnel ammunition at that stage, not any high explosive ammunition. Shrapnel has a white burst. It was kind of a shotgun approach. I imagine, if the field artillery is going to be silly enough to shoot at airplanes, you might as well use shrapnel.

Marcello: Now did you mention awhile ago that after the initial one or two raids, the fear more or less subsides, although you still have a respect for what those planes can do to you?

Stanbrough: That's correct. And the other one is that I went in and told some of the fellows that I was certain nothing could happen because I was insured. Insurance in those days was optional. I don't know if you were aware of that, but it was. If you were insured, you were safer. I have a good myth. My myth is that I didn't like...as I mentioned earlier, I don't like to be on creek banks because I remember the Louisiana maneuvers and those moccasins; and I didn't like this place we were in where I had my field setup, so I decided to move it. I got a lot of bitching and a lot of complaining from the guys because we were going to move it, but we did indeed move it. I don't know why, but I just got the feeling I wanted to move it. I didn't like the place. We moved the thing, and we had an air raid, and would you believe one of the...I had the feeling that I wanted to move, and I didn't like that place. The guys didn't want to move, but they had to dig it because I'm in charge. There was all sorts of hell about it, but they finally dug their holes and everything. When the raid was over, we went by where we had been before, and it had gone. That place was blasted. It's a fact that I didn't have as much trouble with those guys anymore when I wanted to move.

Marcello: In the meantime, are you picking up any outside news as to how things are either progressing or regressing?

Stanbrough: We were listening to the radio, and we did hear a speech from Roosevelt, and we were real pleased that he mentioned that we had American troops fighting in Java. Of course, we thought that meant that there might be others. There's a lot of the tricks of the trade that were going on. We had a lot of the British 75-millimeters, World War I-type, that we picked up in Hawaii, and those would be carried down at nighttime and left in Surabaja and bring them back the next day--the same ones. There were so many spies around that it's obvious that if you allow me to count all the artillery pieces, I'm going to be able to tell how many people you've got out there. That sort of game was going on for a while, I was not involved with carrying the trucks down and doing any of that. The good news out of that was that they left us 10,000 rounds of HE (high explosive) ammunition, and the American 75's could use the old World War I ammunition. This is the message I'm trying to sell, and even my own son thinks I'm a hawk. I'm not a hawk. I don't like war. But I've always resented it, as a POW, that we were sent over there with no adequate things--no antitank guns, no shells, no nothing--and go out and try to fight somebody that had a well-oiled machine. I'm not a hawk in that respect, but being poorly prepared... by the way, in my position now, where I've been with the Trident program and worked in the Navy a long time, I know what it was five or six years ago. It was bad. It's a lot better now, but we still have a ways to go.

Marcello: Did you ever realize how bad the situation was regressing outside Java? When I say, "Did you know," were you picking any of this information up off your ham radio or off any of your other communicating that you were doing?

Stanbrough: Absolutely no.

Marcello: What did you expect was going to happen?

Stanbrough: Well, we were there and that the Americans would be there. We'd have another shipload of people, and we just were going to have people all over the place and give them hell. We didn't know that. We knew the Philippines...we'd heard about that. They were having problems.

We got a clue when we were inspected by General Wavell. He came in, and when he inspected the troops, I think he had to be a real fine gentleman not to shake his head when he saw what was there. He said a few words, and he did not give us a great deal of hope. He didn't say anything bad, but he wasn't optimistic about the situation. I did see him go by. He came there trying to see what we had.

Marcello: Is it safe to say that by the time that you moved out of Singosari, there had been a considerable amount of damage done either to the airfield or to the other buildings on the base itself?

Stanbrough: No, not too much. The base was hardly scratched, and the airfield wasn't messed up too much. It was completely usable.

When we finally moved out...now we knew it was getting serious because we took all our stuff and stored it in a schoolhouse--the stuff that was not essential, like, amateur radio stations and stuff like that. It was in your footlocker with your name on it and with a lock. It had all your little treasures you had purchased and that you were going to take back home, because we thought we were going to be home shortly. There was some trepidation. Anyway, we were a little worried but fatalistically so.

Marcello: On February 27, 1942, what was left of the 19th Bomb Group pulls out. What was your reaction when you found out that they were leaving and you were still staying?

Stanbrough: We figured that's what the Air Force would probably do because of the bombing and stuff. The thing that shocked me more than anything was when we had to go down and help the casual officers get on ships to leave, and the officers left their cars, and we sergeants could have them. That worried me more than anything else. But that was down at the other end of the island.

It was kind of a nice trip going down. We still were in an Alice in Wonderland world. It was just another Louisiana maneuver, it looked like for a while. I don't remember that we were concerned. Nobody was frightened of the situation. We certainly didn't realize how bad it was. We thought there were a lot of other people around to help, too, so it was just to go down there and do our thing, and we'd win.

Marcello: And you left the base the day after the Air Force had evacuated.

Stanbrough: Yes, sometime around then.

Marcello: As we mentioned earlier, you left the day after the Air Force people evacuated. Describe what happened for me at that point.

Stanbrough: We got in a convoy and left one battery, I was told, in that area, and then the rest of us proceeded toward the eastern part of the island. We stopped one night, and I believe we went through a town called Samarong. I'm not certain that was the name, but we stayed in a schoolhouse. We got to see the natives coming around and so forth. We proceeded the next day in convoy. It was my understanding that the Dutch were setting up a position on the eastern end of the island and that we were going to go down and support them with artillery. Whether that's true or not, I don't know.

Marcello: In the meantime, do you have most of your radio and communications equipment with you?

Stanbrough: The military stuff...we had all of it, yes. I was in the command car. There was a real fine transmitter setting there. I rode with Captain Fitzsimmons because he was the communications officer and I was the communications chief. It was my job to ride there. So it was a regular command car. It was a radio car with antennas and all.

Marcello: It ~~was~~ only your personal equipment you had left behind in your footlockers?

Stanbrough: Yes.

Marcello: Now what exactly is the unit doing while it's on the move?

Stanbrough: It was just a regular convoy like we do anytime. We line up and go so far, and every hour or so we'd stop and have our little "pit stop," and then we'd go on. We were getting some kind of lousy--at that time I thought it was lousy--spam sandwiches for lunch. Then we'd set up and have a regular soup and so forth. We thought that G.I. bread or the bread we had with the spam was dreadful at that time, but it wasn't.

Marcello: During this moving around, what kind of contact did you have with the Japanese? They'd landed by this time.

Stanbrough: We'd had absolutely none. I was unaware that they had landed. From one end of the island to the other, we were knowingly going down to meet some people, but I didn't know any details on it.

Marcello: So you did not know, then, the hopelessness of your situation?

Stanbrough: Absolutely not. No way. We didn't even know it when we were losing the battle (chuckle). A war is made of up of individual acts and individual pieces, and you don't see too much. It might be known, but it certainly was kept from me.

Marcello: Now some of the other units did have contact with the Japanese, but, like you say, you really didn't.

Stanbrough: No. At this stage we hadn't even gotten to the eastern end of the island. No, not the U.S. units because I was in with that group. Then later we went into a place called , which is now called Bogor, which was then called Buitenzorg, and we set up in this rubber estate out there. We had headquarters set up next to the governor's grounds there in Buitenzorg where the Allied staff, so to speak, met. I was assigned there with the command car so I could keep open communications with the rest of the battalion, which, I'd estimate, was six miles away. All I did was sit there night and day on the radio.

Marcello: Approximately how long were you there in Buitenzorg?

Stanbrough: I don't remember that. That's the most amazing thing. When I say I don't remember, I don't know whether it was three days or four days or something like that. Three or four days.

Marcello: The Japanese landed on the 28th of February, and you left Singosari around the same time or maybe a day after. The surrender took place on March 8. So we're not talking about very much time.

Stanbrough: No, we're sure not. What little I knew was going on...I heard all sorts of rumors about that our boys were going to move their guns, and then the planes would do this and do that. But I was back in the headquarters area.

Marcello: This is the point that I was alluding to a moment ago. Some of the artillery units were actually engaging the Japanese, but in your position you were back...

Stanbrough: I couldn't see it. I knew we were, though. I was quite aware of that after we got in our position down in this river area. No, I was aware of that, of course.

Marcello: And this is where you are when the capitulation occurs?

Stanbrough: No.

Marcello: You were not?

Stanbrough: No. We withdrew toward a little town and went through it. It was raining like the dickens. One night we went through a little town called Sukabumi (Soekaboemi). In Sukabumi, I guess, at three o'clock in the morning, the little Dutch ladies were out serving us cookies and hot tea in the rain. It was really impressive. If the Dutch women had been put in uniform, the Japs would have had a hell of a lot harder time.

Marcello: I've heard that story before, too.

Stanbrough: Yes, well, it's true. They were right there, and they knew the Japs were right behind us there. Kyle Thompson was mixed up in that area, too. Our main thing then was that we started withdrawing toward Bandung (Bandoeng). In Bandung, what we do is one night and the next night when the column is going through, I had gone ahead with a detail of men to post at certain road junctions to direct them where to turn. I think I mentioned to you prior to this meeting that we had dinner at the Savoy Hotel with some difficulty because we were not properly attired, but we did have a good dinner there. Then we got to our post, and then we went out to our bivouac area to wait for the next thing to happen.

While there the surrender took place. So we were not anywhere near the Japanese. The Japanese put 300 planes, supposedly, over the city, and I saw maybe half of them, anyway. There were a lot of planes. I didn't believe there were that many planes in the world. The Japs did it.

Marcello: In the meantime, what was the attitude of the native Javanese? Had it changed any, let us say, from the time that you first arrived in Java?

Stanbrough: Well, I never did see that they were overly friendly toward us--nothing overt. They seemed to be very happy when the white man was finished. I could see that. A few days after the surrender--a day or so--I could see some of that. Some natives were still friendly to you, but I think they thought all white people were Dutch people, and they were very resentful of the Dutch. The Dutch did have a habit of being pretty rough on them, even though if they were part Dutch, they were called Dutch.

Marcello: Are these the ones that are referred to as Black Dutch?

Stanbrough: Yes, that's the Black Dutch. See, if they had any white blood or Dutch blood, then it made them Black Dutch. He had a different standing in life.

When the surrender took...when we heard that we had surrendered,we were all in a state of shock.

Marcello: Describe what your feelings were.

Stanbrough: Absolute dispair and dismay and wondering how this could have happened because no one--not any--up to that moment would ever for a moment consider surrendering, being a POW, or anything like that. In our thinking that was not a good terminology. You wouldn't think about it. In my case I was just absolutely...I couldn't believe it. I was just frustrated. What do you do? We were told we were supposed to sit there, and the Japanese were going to do something and that they were having a meeting. Meanwhile, Brigadier General Blackburn, I think his name was, the Australian, his gang was rumbling by, and it looked like to me they were headed...they claimed they were going to the south coast and going home. They said, "Come on, Yanks!" They were trying to get us to go. When we heard of the surrender, some of the boys went out and gave them their guns. They were going on. It was rather contagious about going. Sometime while we were there, during the daylight hours, I saw Wilburn Rockett gathering up some things, and I said, "Now where do you think you're going?" He said, "I'm getting out of this place." He told me what he was going to do, and I said, "Well, me, too." I went over and found out that...I saw the command car, and Rogers was in it, and I asked if I could go. He said, "Yes." He gave me about two minutes to grab things, and I grabbed the essentials. I dumped out the gas mask, got hold of a can of sausages and food, and stuck it in the gas mask holder. I grabbed some ammunition, jumped into the command car, and I was ready to go off with the Australians.

Prior to that, in between the time when it was just me, we were told by Captain Fitzsimmons to destroy our cipher devices and things like that, which we did.

Marcello: How about the rest of your communications equipment? Did you destroy it, too, or were you still hanging on to it?

Stanbrough: Well, mine was my command car, and I went off with it. I was glad to get to do that. So off we went. Nevertheless, we didn't carry a lot of things with us, anyway. I had my food, and that was very important. We got in the convoy, joined the Australians, and when they stopped to have tea, we had tea with them. Then we finally got up to a point that we abandoned the vehicles and rolled them off, supposedly to destroy them. I've been told by other people that the Japanese did send people, prisoners, to go pull those vehicles out where we dumped them. I don't know about that for sure. Then we made our way over the side of the mountains and down. We were warned...I think Rogers is the one...of course, I always did what Rogers said. Everyone liked to follow him. He was a good officer. He warned us not to drink the water, so we'd just stop and get tea where the natives would be in shacks cooking it. We finally, eventually, made our way down the coast, and it was a real rough twenty-five miles to do in one day. We went down there, walked quite a way down, crossed a couple of streams that were very dangerous. I think you could have very easily lost your footing and drowned because it was a wide stream that dumped into the ocean.

We went on down from there and set up an observation point on one point there. There wasn't a spot for evacuation, and that's what we made when we got there. Prior to that we'd gone en route to an airfield because we'd found a Dutch pilot. They had the old Hudson planes--the twin-tailed. I believe it was twin-tailed. Somebody had got a sledge hammer and beat the tails off of it, however, so we decided to go look for boats. There wasn't any boats. We got down to the evacuation place, and every night we'd get up there and look around out to sea. We had flashlights. One night I thought I saw a light at sea, but it could have been a fishing boat. I don't know what it could be.

The question was, how do you get back? One day we saw a fellow riding a little donkey or pony up there. He was an Australian warrant officer. He came down and said that the Japanese were at a certain place. The Australians had set up a soup kitchen. We had up until Monday at eleven o'clock or something like that to report back there, or otherwise we would be hunted down as guerrillas. But on the other hand, if we came in, we would spend the rest of the war up on a tea plantation with all of our other friends. Now that sounded kind of strange--"with our other friends." The question was, what do you do?

Marcello: Now up until this time you had not seen a single Japanese, is that correct?

Stanbrough: No. I didn't know what they looked like. I hadn't seen one. Other people in my unit had, but I had not seen one.

Marcello: What kind of apprehension, if any, did you have about being taken as a prisoner-of-war? For instance, I assume that most of you have at least heard of the Rape of Nanking and things of that nature.

Stanbrough: Oh, we thought that was a different situation. No, we didn't know that. It sounded like a good offer--come up there to the tea plantation. First of all, we had to decide what to do. They asked me. We had about twenty of us around down there. It was, like, passing the buck. I said, "Whatever Major Rogers wants to do is what we should do." So we presented him with the problem: "What do we do? Do we stay out here, or do we go in and do that?" He said, "Well, I'll have to think about it." So he called us together the next morning and told us that he had decided that we should turn in. He thought about how much ammunition we had with us, but he said we couldn't stand up to any mortars. We could probably kill eighty or a hundred Japs, but we would all get it [be killed]. He thought that since the Americans would be back, we would probably have to be prisoners only three or four months. So on that basis we traipsed back. Sure enough, the Australians had a soup kitchen there. Sure enough, they had trucks to put us on.

That night we were going through, and it was kind of raining. We stopped at check points, and I remember pulling the canvas back and looking at a little Japanese, a little bitty fellow, there checking the driver's pass. That was the first Jap I ever saw--the first one. He took us up to the tea plantation where the tea rooms were there--the drying rooms. There was Captain Fitzsimmons. He was very gracious and didn't jump on me for disobeying him. All of my buddies were there, of course, and they wanted to know how were the girls in Australia. It was a little bit embarrassing.

Marcello: Is it safe to say that you were down at the coast looking for evacuation for five, six, seven days? That long?

Stanbrough: That's about right. Yes, it must be correct. I think it was probably ten days or so. No more than two weeks, I guess. I have my dates very firmly about the day we got down to Tanjong Priok. I know that one. In going down there was a big flap about whether we were going to have to walk down to Tanjong Priok. We were told that the

British officers objected so strenuously that the men couldn't do that that they were not going to order their men out of the hills for that. We were told that the officers were threatened to be shot, but they told them that in that case they would have to go chase their men. Our opinion is that our American officers didn't make that stand because they were under the command of the English, so the English had to make that decision. We rode a train down, by the way. We did not walk.

Marcello: You mentioned that you go back up to the tea plantation, where you rejoin the rest of the men in the unit, which means, then, that you didn't participate in that very brief stop at another racetrack, Garoet. You missed that phase of the operation then? For instance, a lot of the prisoners, once they had surrendered, were reassembled at a racetrack called Garoet.

Stanbrough: We were near Garoet, but I was not at Garoet.

Marcello: You probably missed it because you were down at the coast.

Stanbrough: That's right. I missed that. I know nothing about that.

Marcello: How long were you up at the tea plantation?

Stanbrough: I don't know. Just a few days. I can almost calculate it out because I know that the last day of March was on a train--and I remember distinctly that train ride--going down, and it was quite pleasant. It was much like a U.S. train. We did have to stop at a river where a bridge was out and walk across it and get on another train at the other side. We arrived after dark at what was called Batavia then. Now it's Jakarta. At this time I had... I don't know why I had it. I had one Godawful...I didn't take the transmitter, but I had the radio receiver out of the command car with me. Now why I'd do that, I don't know. Maybe it was my security blanket, but it was a big bulky thing. I didn't have a power supply, anyway, but I guess I thought I could do something with it.

Marcello: What kind of other personal gear do you have at this point?

Stanbrough: All my clothes. That's it. Just the very essentials. I had one barracks bag and had that radio tucked in it. I had my ditty bag and what I could carry. I had an extra pair of boots, several pairs of trousers, and the whole works.

Marcello: Plus your mess gear and things of that nature.

Stanbrough: Yes, the whole thing.

Marcello: Now up until this time, you've only seen this one Japanese sentry for a very brief moment in time. Is that correct?

Stanbrough: That's right.

Marcello: How about when you got on the train? Did you encounter any Japanese there?

Stanbrough: Well, I think there were some...they loaded some on the train. They had put up a road barrier down there at the station. There was nobody who was shoving us or pushing us around. We were still under the command of our officers.

Marcello: Okay, you go down to Batavia. You get off the train...

Stanbrough: The war started there (chuckle).

Marcello: Describe what happens.

Stanbrough: We got off the train, and it was dark. You started walking down this place, and there were some guards with you and so forth, but they weren't harassing us particularly. It was a long walk, and this stuff was heavy. It was getting heavier and heavier and heavier, and I began to wish more and more and more that I didn't have that radio. I'm not certain, but I don't have any recollection...I think that on that walk that night I abandoned that radio because it was too heavy, and I realized that I didn't have a power supply. And it was a military thing, so who needs it? It was a long walk that night.

They carried us someplace, and I see some dim lights, and they let us in. The next morning I looked out, and it was barbed wire around the place, and it had old, dilapidated buildings and everything. I said, "God, this is an April Fool's joke." It was April 1. I remember that date. There we were, in Tanjong Priok. Right across the road from us were a bunch of cute little guys call Gurkhas, and they were in camp there, too.

Marcello: Describe in more detail what Tanjong Priok was like.

Stanbrough: Tanjong Priok had a big, open field in the center of it, and if you looked at the center opposite us--call it twelve o'clock--and coming around, say, at about one or two o'clock was a guard post which led to a road heading out of the camp that passed us. We were around about what would be seven o'clock on the field of this area. There were old buildings--rundown and filthy. They had bugs and all sorts of little things, and they had a lot of these little lizards that crawl on the ceiling. It was just kind of a very worn-looking camp. Our understanding is that it was a camp that was used for laborers in the rice fields. I don't know if that was true. Also, to the left of us, which would be in part of the field, there was a big place for getting water and washing clothes and so forth. That was the first time I had seen any Indians with long hair out there washing their hair--these Indian guys. This camp...we more or less were confined to this camp.

Marcello: What did your barracks look like on the inside--your quarters?

Stanbrough: It was just stone and kind of an old tile. It was rundown, like, it hadn't been kept up. It had a little concrete stoop out there, and there were posts holding up the porch. I was right next to Captain Zeigler's...their area was down ...they were at the end of part of this particular building. They would sit out there and often stare out at the fields because there wasn't much going on. We sent work parties out occasionally. The barracks had very poor wiring.

But there was nothing wrong with it. It would be a paradise by any later comparison. By comparison it was a very nice barracks.

Marcello: Were you sleeping on the floor?

Stanbrough: I wasn't. But I don't know what everybody else was doing.

Marcello: What did you have?

Stanbrough: I had a little bed. See, we could make beds out of blankets and bamboo and what-have-you. I know I don't know how to do that, so that means I either found one or got somebody to do it for me.

While there we were not allowed to have cooking fires at a certain time. We were not allowed to do this and that. But Zeigler came up with an idea which became very popular, and that was to make what was called an immersion heater. Somebody working out at the tire place...took working parties out. We'd come in and get a couple of tire gauges and tie them to the electric light cord and put a little salt and water in it, and you've got a resistance element. The resistance drops sharply with temperature. When it's boiling, it's almost a direct short. The next thing you know, at nighttime we had to almost stop it because at nighttime the guardhouse lights would blink because of the shorts. And the other ones would have to look around, and the other boys, as soon as they found out you could cook that way...one gang--I don't know who it was now--a few doors down had captured a duck that was stupid enough to get near the fence, and that's the way they cooked it.

We got cheese one time. I discovered another good thing. Sometimes we got stuff from warehouses that had burned--bombed and burned. If you got Eagle Brand milk that had been burned, you've got nice caramel. It was great.

Marcello: Everybody speaks fondly of Eagle Brand milk.

Stanbrough: To this day I buy it. I don't use it. I have it on a shelf at home. I just leave it there in case of an emergency (chuckle). They liked that. We discovered that the cheese had worms and was green, and we thought it was no good. Well, that's good cheese. You just cut that junk off, and it was good. The rice was sweepings and had some worms in it, but Dr. Lumpkin said, "That's just protein. Don't worry about it."

Marcello: Describe your first encounter with the rice diet. Now am I to assume that the Japanese supplied each unit with a specified amount of rice?

Stanbrough: I don't know that. It was brought in to us, and somebody else cooked it. I think it was cooked at the central cookhouse. As far as my knowledge, we were just allocated that, and it was brought to us.

Marcello: What was your reaction the first time you got a look at that rice?

Stanbrough: Well, the first thing you do is you pick out all the little worms. You try to. They looked like rice grains except for their heads. I thought they were dreadful, but it didn't taste any worse. As Lumpkin said, "Go sit in a dark corner." That's what you could do. We knew the war was on now. It was a different war. The guards were different.

Marcello: In what way?

Stanbrough: They didn't put up with any baloney at all. The troops... you could tell by the uniforms that the occupation troops had worn-out things with patches. The more worn out they are, the worse they are trying to prove themselves. They're not going to see any of the war, so they're going to take it out on individuals. They didn't do it there, though. We were just in a holding area, and life really was pretty peaceful.

Marcello: Describe what the conduct of the guards was here, if you could be more specific.

Stanbrough: Very strict but proper. I didn't see anything happening. Nothing happened to any of my boys in Tanjong Priok.

Marcello: Are the guards yelling? Screaming? Pushing? Anything of that nature?

Stanbrough: No, no. I never saw any of that. I went out on a working party once, and we had a sitdown strike, and the guards didn't know what to do about it. They had to call a noncom. Later on, you could never in God's world pull that.

Marcello: Why did you have a sitdown strike?

Stanbrough: Well, the Japanese like to come up and tell you they're bombing Washington. You've heard that? They were bombing Washington and telling us all the great news. Now these boys didn't know where the location of anything was, so they were bombing Washington. Of course, we didn't like that. Then we got to asking them when the war would be over. Now remember, we still think it's going to be over in a few months. They were trying to teach us to count--this one was. And he did. But he let us know that the war might go on to 1948, but with luck, 1944. So it turned out that he insisted that it was going to last to 1944. We found it completely unacceptable (chuckle). We were rolling these oil barrels and stacking them in these dumps, and he told us that in 1944 we'd still be pushing those barrels. It was hot out there in the sun, but not too hot. It was hot, but those boys from West Texas didn't care. So we decided, "Hell, if we're going to have to push them until 1944, you might as well shoot us now." So we were going to have a sitdown strike. To hell with them. That shows you how pampered we were. But that's a fact. Finally, somebody came over and talked to us. I was the...see, they always go over to some noncom in charge, so I told the boys that that guy didn't know anything, anyway. It wasn't going to take that long. Let's get to work. So we did. But that's a fact. We had somebody tell us it might take up to 1944--a Japanese told us.

Marcello: Were you threatened in any way if you didn't go back to work?

Stanbrough: No, not then. I'll tell you, we were in a fool's paradise.

Marcello: Were these work details voluntary, or were you assigned to these details by your officers?

Stanbrough: We were assigned a certain group of people from a certain group. The officers and the first sergeant and so forth would get the work details together. Besides that, the boys wanted to go on almost all of them because they'd get a chance to get things and food. We knew they were getting things. If you stayed in camp, you were not going to get anything. And it was a chance to get out. Some of them worked down at the tire place, Dunlop's. I don't think any of us were suffering then.

Marcello: At this stage--and this is very early during your tenure as a POW--is food already becoming the foremost thought in your mind?

Stanbrough: It was a thought but not the foremost. That didn't happen until sometime later. We didn't stay in Tanjong Priok very long, and then they moved us over to Bicycle Camp. I don't remember how we got there. I think it was a good walk.

Marcello: I don't think you were at Tanjong Priok any more than about two weeks.

Stanbrough: It was just a short while. Well, I'm not sure of that. I have it in my notes, though. Can you see?

Marcello: Yes, about a week...well, I take that back.

Stanbrough: Because it was on April 1 that we were in there, and we moved in May.

Marcello: Yes, you're right. I was looking at my notes wrong. Yes, it was all of April and into the middle of May.

Stanbrough: That's right.

Marcello: So about a month-and-a-half.

Stanbrough: That sounds about right. Then, of course, we got into Bicycle Camp, and that looked like a paradise. And it was. It was a regular, clean military camp. I couldn't see nothing wrong with that. The Japs up to that time had been very decent in that respect.

Marcello: Were there any other nationalities at Tanjong Priok besides you and the Indian troops that you mentioned earlier? Were there any British there, for instance?

Stanbrough: A lot of Australians. They were incredible. I can still remember them going on working parties, and they'd have those hats on and those black boots with steel heels and wearing short trousers, and they would be singing going off to work and coming back. You could hear them, and they were all swinging their arms and everything. That was a precision outfit. It was very striking.

Marcello: You mentioned something I want to follow through on. How about military discipline among the Americans? Was it still being maintained? In other words, were you still obeying officers and things of that nature?

Stanbrough: Absolutely.

Marcello: How about the military formalities such as saluting and things of that sort? Was that still being done at this point?

Stanbrough: No, we didn't. No, we did not.

Marcello: I knew that later on it was dropped, but I wasn't sure when that started.

Stanbrough: No, that didn't happen then. I think that the officers themselves preferred that we didn't at that time.

Marcello: Yes, I think eventually those military formalities were dropped at the request of the officers. I think they initiated it.

Stanbrough: They seemed at that time to be just sort of regular guys. We felt like they were not very good scroungers,but that was all right. No, that was their request.

Marcello: Now at this point are the officers...

Stanbrough: I don't know what happened to the rest of the boys, but there was no breakdown in discipline in my group even through 1945. I was absolutely appalled when the war was over, and I came down and saw how the officers were getting addressed and treated by enlisted men because in our group we still maintained discipline. And that's safety, also.

Marcello: That was going to be one of the keys of survival, was it not?

Stanbrough: It is because maybe the officer may not make a right decision, but you could interpret it and execute it in the right way. Another thing, if they made a decision you didn't like, we learned not to ask a question of the officer about doing something if you don't want to follow it. That's a very important lesson in life today--don't ask a question unless you're ready to abide by it.

Marcello: Now you mentioned that you were getting rice. Were the Japanese supplying any other food items here at Tanjong Priok? Any kinds of vegetables or anything thing of that sort?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes, there were some kind of old...I remember everybody was complaining when they had old rotten buffalo meat or something in the stew. But food was getting tight. People were getting hungry. That's why they had little immersion-type cookers.

It was about that time that I got acquainted with... I mentioned to you earlier about this little boy who came in there--this little sergeant named Karney--and he brought a radio and wanted me to fix it. That's how that got started.

Marcello: This is here in Tanjong Priok?

Stanbrough: Tanjong Priok.

Marcello: Describe how this takes place because this is the beginning of the famous radio, I gather.

Stanbrough: Infamous would probably be a better description. Well, Karney came...I didn't know him personally up until then, but he came in and asked...he understood that I knew something about radios, and I told him I did. He said he had one. I was surprised, but no one really searched us. We had not had any searches. The radio...he went and got it and brought it in. It wasn't running. It was a General Electric portable in a little leatherette case. It was large by our standards today, but not for then. It was a rather nice set. I had worked on sets similar to that when I had been working in a radio service shop in Wichita Falls.

Marcello: Now this is a regular radio such as a lot of homes would have had at that time?

Stanbrough: Right. It was a regular General Electric AM radio that used regular tubes in it like the one-volt series. To make it smaller these tubes would have a metal cap on the top for the grid that shortened the envelope, so that made this a little smaller. But it was a regular one. It had a wet cell battery that had to be charged. The end of the case had two little copper oxide rectifiers so that when you plugged it in, it would charge the battery, and then you could have the battery like a car battery or some similar operation. You could take it where you want to.

This set...I found out all the history of it later. I can tell you later about it. Briefly, this set had actually, in fact, been purchased from the Zale Jewelry Company by Mrs. Kelley. Sergeant Kelley's mother gave it to him. But en route overseas Karney admired the radio and bought it from Kelley. It's my understanding that he had actually paid $10 down, and the next payday or so he was going to pay him. Kelley never ever got all his money. But we also didn't get paid (chuckle).

This set, getting back to it, was a regular little radio that anybody could have at home. It might be a little heavy by our standards because it had a wet cell battery in it. It had little beads in it, so if it was charged, the little beads would be floating. There were three beads, and you could tell whether it was highly charged, medium charged, or discharged. If they're all down, well, then you're in bad shape. We still get indicators like that for checking the specific gravity of batteries.

I looked at it, and, sure enough, I plugged it in, and it didn't work.

Marcello: The barracks did have regular sockets and all this?

Stanbrough: Yes, we had light sockets. All we had to do was cut a little piece of wire. They also had a few outlets here and yonder, but we just cut in and tied into the electricity.

But the set wouldn't work. I asked him more about it, and he said, well, he'd found some loose screws in it. These, of course, are trimmers and condensers, so he'd tightened them down. But that just made it impossible to do anything.

He told me that if I were to fix the radio and give him the news, I could have the set. That wasn't what I was interested in. I was interested in getting some news. This little set...the first thing to do was to get it to work. Now this may be too technical.

Marcello: That's fine.

Stanbrough: Well, the first thing to do to get it to work is you have to get the high frequency, which is 455 kilohertz, so it was necessary to get that back in the range. Without a signal generator you have a little problem. On one of the electrical storms we had one night, I was able to...when I plugged it in...I only messed with it at night. I had the thing--the electrical chassis--out of the case, and I was able to twist...I loosened the padders up all the way up and counted the turns up and counted them down and then went back to mid-range on each one. Padders are really, in fact, little condensers, and they are stuck in those little intermediate frequency transformers. Even in a modern set from Japan today, if you look in those little square cans on top, there's a little black thing in there, and that's where the adjustment is for those. We still uese them. They were bigger a long time ago. I brought that into mid-range.

Then I was able to peak up...I heard some little noise, and I peaked it up. In those days you used a loudspeaker. You didn't have earphones. We didn't have any earphones. I could hear the noise. Then I peaked it up a little more. Then later, while I was doodling under there, I heard on the far end of the dial where it says 550 kilohertz...I heard a ship CW. Of course, you don't have a beep frequency operator, but you could hear it, though. I knew that was 500, so that means I'm low frequency. The end is haywire. So I scooted that down. Before doing that I peaked up those little padders, and that made it louder. So that meant I got them in range. Then I got the high frequency--hit that padder.

It was a pretty hot set, but there were no stations on. I knew there wouldn't be any stations on. I knew there wouldn't be any stations on AM because I'd listened on the command car before we'd gotten to prison camp. So the next step is...I don't know whether it was Kyle Thompson or who it was, but I needed an oscillator coil, and somebody found a fountain pen top. I took the little coil out and wound it several times until I got the frequency about right. I got it to oscillate and turned it on one night.

The story goes...this is one of the myths again.

I do remember...and I didn't even touch the dial, and it says KGEI at San Francisco. It just said it--right out of the speaker! Any good electronics person has got to peak it up--reach over and touch it and make it a little better. I do remember that Karney said something about...I don't think he said what they said he did, about like, "You son-of-a-bitch, you touch that, and I'll kill you!" But he said something, like, "Don't touch it!" I didn't and we heard our first news. I was dying to get the news over because then I could...the coil was just tied in and sitting out there in the wide-open spaces. I was able to get the coil tied down later and get the thing back in the case. That allows me to really peak up and fix the padders--the intermediate frequency. That allowed me to have a good station. It was about 1,200 megahertz now, so I knew it was in that band. It turned out to be pretty close to around where 1,200 would be. I was real pleased about that. So I was able to peak it up, and that's how we listened to the radio in Jave.

It came in remarkably well. The Australians had a radio in camp. We were getting some news, and the Australian news always seemed to be not as optimistic as the American news. Ours had a lot more propaganda than theirs. Theirs was quite factual from the BBC. I finally learned that the BBC was the best one to listen to. The commentator in those days that was full of hot air was--I shouldn't say hot air --over-optimism--was Mr. William Winters. We used to listen to him. It was awful nice sometimes occasionally at night to ...I remember hearing Dinah Shore singing one night on the thing.

We didn't listen to it too much, and we had people see that it was safe. The Japanese were not anywhere around or coming in there. We'd have had to turn the speaker up very loud for them to ever have gotten alerted way across the field. They left us alone then.

Marcello: Physically, if you can, describe how large this radio was. Can you more or less estimate the dimensions of it?

Stanbrough: When it was in the case,it was approximately...it was in the vicinity of about fourteen inches by ten inches by four inches.

Marcello: Relatively compact then?

Stanbrough: Well, not when you're trying to hide it. It was maybe fourteen inches. It was a large set in that respect. But that was in the case, and we left it in the case. It did make some noise sometimes when it was charging and so forth, but you could just hit the case. I would hit the case and make it quit.

Marcello: How did you hide the radio?

Stanbrough: We didn't have any problems there in that camp.

Marcello: What did you do with it, however?

Stanbrough: I think in Tanjong Priok we just left it in the bed stuff. Remember, we still had all our bags and stuff. The Japs didn't come in there and search. It was not hidden there, period. I put it away. It wasn't just left out. I said that the war started there. That was a phase of it, but we weren't searched or anything.

Marcello: Was a procedure worked out at this point yet relative to listening to the news and then spreading the information?

Stanbrough: Not really, no. Not in this camp. You're talking about Tanjong Priok?

Marcello: Yes.

Stanbrough: No.

Marcello: In other words, when you and Karney or whomever got out the radio to listen to the news or whatever, people were perhaps even gathering around and listening in groups?

Stanbrough: Yes, some. It was just the Boy Scouts and a jamboree. We didn't realize we were in trouble yet (chuckle).

Marcello: Had the Japanese specifically laid down any rules as to what you could have and what you could not have among your personal possessions?

Stanbrough: No. Actually, I think if we were caught there, we would not have...I would probably got my head knotted or something but not very much.

Marcello: Well, for one thing the news was all good so far as the Japanese were concerned, assuming that you were getting the truth over the radio.

Stanbrough: We hadn't signed any oaths or said we were going to be good or anything. We were still in a holding area, that's what it was. There were no restraints, nor did our American officers put any on us, either. In fact, they were delighted to get the news.

Marcello: I'm sure, even at this early stage of the war, that was quite a morale booster for everybody.

Stanbrough: Of course, it was. To me it was so. Now we weren't flagrant. I wasn't going to turn it around. We did say, "Well, we shouldn't let too many people know about it." They did go down and trade news somewhere. Later, we got a little...I don't think I was taking any chance by having a radio at that time.

Marcello: On May 14, 1942, you moved to Bicycle Camp, which isn't very far away. Describe the move from Tanjong Priok to Bicycle Camp, and let's kind of build the move around the radio because I'm sure that was perhaps the most important possesion you have at this stage.

Stanbrough: I believe Karney carried it because Karney was around all the time. He liked the news, and he was very supportive in telling everybody I'd done a good job. He was a sergeant, too. I shouldn't say "too," but, anyway, we were in this together. He was a fiesty little fellow. I was not too aware then that Ben Kelley was ever involved with the set until much later. I don't know exactly if I ever got the true story, but I got it from Kelley, and I know about Karney's. I got their two sides of it.

When we went to the camp, I did wind up...Bicycle Camp was a very nice camp. We were in one of the first sets of barracks. They faced at an angle toward the guardhouse. The officers...some were in one end of the building, and the sergeants, like, Lumsden and Summers and Ficklin and others...we were down at that end of the building. It was barricaded off then. When I say it was barricaded, the building was separated, rather, by a wall, and on the other side were some Dutch officers and so forth. But they had not a way of getting to us because by that time a fence had been put up where they couldn't come into our area, anyway.

Ficklin...we managed...I don't know who built this bed. Maybe Ficklin did. We did have a bamboo bed. He had the lower bunk, and I had the higher bunk. I had the radio. He was sleeping below me. At that time we still were operating the radio and being somewhat flagrant about it.

He reminded me of how I almost got us into trouble. That's another story. When he told me here yesterday what had happened, I remember now exactly what happened. I actually had gotten hold of a double plug from a light socket hanging down by the top of my bamboo bunk bed, second tier. I just could put the radio out here and plug it into the socket there and have the wire hanging down at night. Can you imagine? That's what we did.

A little guard came in there one night. Ficklin said it was a Korean guard. I remember him now. He walked all they way down to the end, making his nightly check to see how things were. He turned around, and his bayonet ...his rifle was bigger than he was. He turned around and hit our electric wire. He just went on and didn't pay any attention to it. He came down looking around, and he hit my wire overhead and turned around and hit it again going back. He didn't see it. Ficklin was upset at me about that. Of course, I was listening with earphones and didn't know what the hell was going on.

Marcello: You had earphones by this time?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes. I forgot to tell you. I realized that was going to be dangerous one of these days, so I asked people on the working parties...and I don't know whether W.G. Reed... but it could have been Reed because Reed was always very helpful. He loved to do radio things. Someone at the Dunlop Tire Company brought me a set of earphones--black ones.

Also, I thought I should have some spare tubes. I said, "If you see any tubes of certain types, please get them."

They did come in. I could have kissed the guy. I don't think it was Reed that brought these in. It could be, though. He brought in some 1N5G's--1N5G. That was the type. That's an intermediate frequency-type we used for RF, and I recognized the tube. Now 1N5G means it has one-volt filament, five elements, and G means glass. The ones I had like that were GT, meaning it was a small size. This one was a little longer. If you stuck it in the case with the back on, you'd have to cut a hole in the thing. Anyway, I had two spares. I was real pleased to have those two spares. I didn't get any others. With those spares...he asked me, "Will these do? We couldn't get the GT's." Can you imagine finding tubes in Java? Anyway, they were the right ones that worked. That's how I got earphones and spare tubes.

Marcello: Is it safe to say that almost everybody who knew about the radio was always on the lookout for spare parts for you, because it was so important to them, too?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes. Absolutely. If I needed any wire, they'd get it.

Marcello: And just for the record, I'm sure that this was gratis. In other words, you were not having to pay or trade anything to get the radio tubes and wire and so on.

Stanbrough: Absolutely not. All those boys wanted was news. The question never came up. Over in Bicycle Camp we still had a free rein more or less.

Sergeant Patterson knew shorthand, so we got the bright idea to let him take it down in shorthand occasionally, and then we'd get all the news. See, I had to sit down and write the news down. I thought it would be nice occasionally to get the full news. Patterson, of all things, worked over in the Japanese headquarters over there and had access to typewriters. On several occasions, until we put a stop to it, he would type up the news and bring it back--on the Japanese typewriters (chuckle). See, we didn't know the war was on until July 4th.

Somewhere during that stay in Bicycle Camp, another radio showed up. It was a little small Zenith, and it used a tube which is called a loctal-type. It has a multi-pin base. This set was much smaller. This was a very small, small set. So I just took it--I had the experience--and rewired it and made a short-wave out of it. I took one of the spare earphones I had and put it in that...I got a Velveeta wood cheese box, and I put the set in that with a piece of wire for an antenna wire and a headphone. It was a complete thing. I put the cord folded around in it and put some white paper over it, hoping that this set may be portable. I fixed all that up so that the boys could use it over in the other barracks where the Navy boys were and the officers down at the end of the barracks.

There are a lot of stories about who carried the radios and what they did...the confusion comes from who did what to what set. I do not know, after we left Bicycle Camp, whatever happened to the other set. I've heard people say, "Oh, we threw it in the latrine." Another one said it was lost in a bombing raid. I have no idea what happened to that set. I don't know. I do know that one of the officers had listened to it. A fellow named Chief Alderman, a chief petty officer, used it. But the guy that primarily used it over there was a fellow named Jerry Bunch. I did have it back occasionally. I didn't like it as well. I didn't have the battery. Also, it was too hot. Any electrical disturbance would make noise in it. When you run off of a car battery or a battery like this GE was... see, I call that battery a condenser. What it does, it filters out line noises, so it wasn't as noisy a set. The way you would get noise in it would be for it to come in through the antenna. I didn't like that. I had my option of which one I wanted to keep, of course. It was a hot set. When I say hot, it did pull in stations. It did a fine job. Of course, you take the dial off and all this little thing. It was in a small wooden Velveeta cheese box. If you ever find out what happened to that set, I'd like to know.

Marcello: Getting back to the distribution of the news, you mentioned that you would listen to the news, and then I'm assuming that you would dictate it to the person who could take the shorthand?

Stanbrough: No. The shorthand guy...I'd let him listen through the earphones. But we didn't do that very long. That didn't happen more than several times. From then on there still was no real great restrictions on this stuff. I would run down and tell the officers. As long as I told them the news, I could go over to the officers' quarters. Now a lot of people wanted to hear the news, and I was just the newsman.

People are into different things. Like, Eldridge Rayburn listened to the radio. He now lives in Lubbock. Rayburn somehow or other he got himself involved in making pineapple pies--fried pies. Can you imagine that in POW camp? He'd give me a good fried pie, so naturally I'd let him listen to the radio, listen to the music. That's exactly how the game goes of trading things. I got acquainted with Eldridge over there through his fried pies. He was a good cook.

Of course, Karney was around all the time. We were really not too careful, although by that time we were getting a little more careful because by that time the camp guards were getting a little rougher. They'd come by and search places and raise hell. I'd go over and see my friend Jerry Bunch to see how the other radio was going occasionally.

There were some incredible things those Navy boys did. One fellow had a bunk beside the wall. Of course, you built your own. He was an artist, and he had the most realistic painting of a nude woman sleeping next to him you ever saw. It really looked real. I don't know who that man was, but he was a real artist.

But getting back, I didn't want to get caught over there in that camp because if a Japanese came in to check it, it was just brutal because they did not know how to stand at attention properly. They hadn't been trained--the Navy hadn't--in my opinion. They'd come down there, and if you wiggled your eyes and got nervous or didn't stand at attention right, they'd just knock the bejesus out of you.

I was caught over there one day. Terror hit me because I said, "Now I shouldn't be over here with this gang." Here comes the guards in. I had to stand at attention. Of course, I could freeze--just take a tree and sight on it and just freeze. I don't care if they go by. Don't blink an eyelash. I went back in 1981 and stood at the same spot and looked at the same tree. It's not in as good a shape as it used to be. I was telling Jerry Bunch's daughters--he'd dead now--that that's where their father used to be. That was his area, and this is where we'd line up over here when I was stupid enough to get caught over with the Navy boys. That's not a myth. That's a fact.

But getting back to the radio thing, we did have a Fourth of July thing. You've heard about that, I'm sure.

Marcello: I want to go back and talk about these things in some sort of order, but go ahead if you have something about the radio yet that you want to mention.

Stanbrough: Well, the radio business...we just sat there, and we got a little tighter with news. We traded news to the Australians, who still had some news. We got more and more restrictive about who we were telling it to. The people in my barracks, though, all knew about it. We had all our sergeants there and then other people. The headquarters unit all knew about it. We didn't keep that from them. There was no restraint on it, really.

Marcello: You did not make any efforts to hide the radio in Bicycle Camp either?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes. I wound it up and left in in the bedding. We didn't do any big hiding there.

Marcello: But, again, even that's a rather logical spot to search if somebody would search the barracks.

Stanbrough: They never would search. They never searched us. We never did have one until later in life--what I would call an honest-to-God search. If they did, they'd have done better. But, no, it was not done.

Marcello: What other things do you need to add relative to the radio at this point in the story?

Stanbrough: Well, my opinion is that of these two sets, one of my reasons for wanting to stay with the G.E. was that the Zenith would have never survived without...I had repaired radios before, and I just didn't think it would last very long. Of course, I didn't realize we'd be in there that long. I was asked from time to time, since I listened to the news, "How long do you think we'll be here?" I'd tell them, "Oh, it looks like to me at least six months. We won't be home by Christmas." Some of the boys would not even speak to me with that much bad news. By that time I was hearing bad news. There were the Solomons and all that. Technically, I felt comfortable with that G.E. That was a better working set. As I said, it didn't have that noise and pops, and it wasn't as voltage-sensitive.

Marcello: You mentioned something a moment ago, and it reminds me of how the old Byzantine emperors would treat the messengers who brought bad news. It was almost as though you were responsible for the bad news (chuckle).

Stanbrough: (Chuckle) That's correct. That's absolutely correct. It was my fault, and I was just being a pessimist, and I was just being perverse. Of course, I was wrong by many years, but that's what it looked like to me because when you're hearing about your ships...and by that time it was already pretty well-known how bad things were at Pearl Harbor. You could tell where the fighting was going on. The Japanese were moving on down toward New Guinea, and things were not well.

As far as the radio was concealed, we just merrily kept it going, kept it concealed, until we got ready to go to Japan via Singapore.

Marcello: I guess we could say that you cncealed it, but you were not a fanatic about it.

Stanbrough: I was not a fanatic. Oh, I loved to listen to it. I was sold on it. I wanted to listen to the thing because it made me a very popular man. Isn't that interesting? Everybody likes to be popular, I guess. And I was doing a service. I liked it, and I had a good time. That's the training we had as radio amateurs, too. In case of emergency, such as during ice storms when all the lines are down, they get their ham stations on, and they give all their information. I was playing that same game.

Marcello: How many stations could you get?

Stanbrough: There was quite a number. I never did hear Tokyo Rose or anything like that because I was always listening to the American news. In fact, I only got two stations--just two. Let's say two countries. American stations and BBC. I just tuned to those. By the way, when the news was over and it didn't have any music or anything, you didn't sit around and listen to it. You just rolled it back up and put it away.

Marcello: When normally would you do the listening?

Stanbrough: At night. At night. Conditions were a little better for shortwave then, anyway.

Marcello: Would this be after lights out and so on?

Stanbrough: No. (Chuckle) That night I almost got in trouble with the Japanese who came through there, I was...no, I oftentimes listened before lights were out and rarely ever when lights were out, even in Japan proper.

Marcello: Were there ever any arguments among your buddies as to which station you should be listening to?

Stanbrough: Oh, no, I never had any problems like that. They didn't understand why I didn't want to listen to more music.

Actually, it was a nice period in life. Our food was fairly good there because the officers had brought in quite a bit of our salaries that were not paid, and we were able to buy food. Food was really reasonably good right up until the Fourth of July.

Marcello: Okay, let's talk about the food. You mentioned the fact that there were company funds available. How did that process work? Do you know?

Stanbrough: Yes, a little. The disbursing officer might have been Clark Taylor. I'm not certain.

Marcello: It was.

Stanbrough: At that time we thought it was awful poor of him not to pay us, but he was also very clever about it. If he didn't pay us before six months, when the war was over we would get our pay this way. They also realized that by having the funds, if we had a food shorage, they could spend it, and they did.

Marcello: And the Japanese did allow this, did they not?

Stanbrough: They allowed us to have a canteen because in spite of searches they knew there was money in the camp, and I am certain the merchants were paying the Japanese officer a cut. It's the only way I can understand it. You could even buy a mattress, if you needed one, for your bed. That was in the early portion there--in the first six or seven weeks.

Marcello: You were going to describe how the company's funds were used. Can you be specific?

Stanbrough: I understood they brought it in, and it was kept over in the officers' quarters by the officers, and they would send for our kitchen gang. They would buy things for them. I know that food was purchased.

Marcello: Who actually did the purchasing of the food?

Stanbrough: That I don't know, but we had it. It was not just a whole lot of food, but it was good food. It was much better than we'd had. It was a better arrangement there until the Fourth of July. I keep saying the Fourth of July because you know about that. We had a great deal of freedom, and we were reasonably left alone.

Marcello: Describe what a typical meal would be like here at Bicycle Camp.

Stanbrough: Well, we'd go line up over there and get soup that had vegetables in it, and sometimes we got bread and things like that. It was reasonalby fair. I wasn't hungry.

Marcello: When you say "soup," do you mean like a rice stew?

Stanbrough: Yes, stew. I don't think we had anything like an American-style meal, but there was just stews and bread and things like that.

Marcello: What kind of a portion of stew would you get?

Stanbrough: I got all I could eat just about. It was a good bowl full.

Marcello: Would they more or less...

Stanbrough: They had them in cans.

Marcello: ...just fill a mess kit with it?

Stanbrough: Oh, sure. Oh, yes. It might not be all right for some big fellow, but the Americans were in very, very good shape up to that point.

Marcello: What were the chances of getting seconds?

Stanbrough: I never did go back. I don't remember. I would guess that one could.

Marcello: How many meals per day would you be getting?

Stanbrough: I recall I got three.

Marcello: Would they be basically the same, or would they vary?

Stanbrough: No, they would change. There'd be a different vegetable.

When I say "soup," they had meat in them and things like that. It was quite good. Sometimes we had separate vegetables thrown in on the side. There was nothing spectacular that I could remember about it, and there was nothing so bad that I would remember about it.

Marcello: How did the quality of the rice at Bicycle Camp compare with what you were getting at Tanjong Priok?

Stanbrough: Oh, it was good rice. At Tanjong Priok that was just sweepings, and this was purchased rice coming through the officers' chain. You could look at the Australians and see that they were not faring as well. They were a rangey bunch, but when I say that, I don't believe that they... the Americans all looked pretty healthy at that stage. I thought we were getting enough to eat. I got the same as the rest of them. I didn't get any more because I was a sergeant.

We understood that the officers were eating a lot better. We heard about all the fancy food. They had a Chinese cook. We heard all this stuff, but I don't know if all that happened or not. It makes a good story.

Marcello: Again, it may be another one of those myths we need to include in that book we were talking about (chuckle).

Stanbrough: Yes. They did have a Chinese cook. There was stuff like curry to flavor it. I don't think you'd have found it... and rice. You can get a good stew together with rice, and it's pretty good.

Marcello: Did your cooks have any problems learning how to cook that rice properly in the beginning?

Stanbrough: Not to my knowledge. I don't think they did. The Navy boys, when we first wound up there, were so scrawny. They didn't go to Tanjong Priok. They had had hell. They didn't have any clothes. They were a bad-looking group. Physically, they were in bad shape.

Marcello: Let's talk a little bit about the Houston survivors. Like you mentioned, they were already at Bicycle Camp when you guys come in. Describe in more detail what they looked like.

Stanbrough: Well, I was told they were Americans off the cruiser Houston, and they just didn't have any clothes to speak of. They looked thinner and bushed and more tired. They'd seen a lot more of life than we had. They just looked bad. They looked poorly to me. Of course, they must have thought we were fat cats because we still had our clothes, and we had everything else, which we to some extent shared with them because they had to have something. They didn't have any clothes. A lot of them didn't have nothing.

Marcello: Was the sharing a voluntary thing? Was it spontaneous?

Stanbrough: I don't remember what happened. I remember I gave some to somebody, and somebody else gave something to someone else. There might have been some trading going on amongst people. I don't recall anything like an order coming out: "Thou shalt do this." I think they came out and said, "Look, if you can spare something, do it." It's pretty obvious that's a fellow American. He had nothing, so your feelings would be...and we were still carrying stuff in blankets and everything else. So why not?

Marcello: This confirms what everybody else has said, too, but it's always nice to cross-check on some of these things. Maybe we can eliminate some of the myths that way (chuckle).

Stanbrough: That's good because there were a lot of them around.

Marcello: I understand those Houston boys were rather resourceful, too, in that being aboard ship, where you have all sorts of skills that were necessary, they could make items and improvise and this sort of thing.

Stanbrough: That they could. There's one thing that I want to say that I remember. Fitzsimmons had...and I saw this, so I know it happened. He showed me an Omega wristwatch that he'd just purchased and also some stones he'd purchased.

Marcello: By stones do you mean gems?

Stanbrough: Gems. Rubies. I remember some red things. Of course, I knew nothing at that time about emeralds or gems, but he had some. You could buy diamonds. The watch still had a price tag on it. It turned out that a group of Australians had come through, and they had quite a lot of jewelry and watches. You could buy a watch for about twenty dollars if you had the money in this camp there--a brand new Omega with a tag on it. It had come out of...when the Australians were retreating down the Malay states, and they were robbing and going by and looting the jewelry states. I was told this, and I did not see this myself. I have seen some better jewelry than just little loose stones like rings and things like that...necklaces. I had no interest in those at all, but I was told that the Sultaness of Johore's crown was in that camp, and everything was for sale. But these watches were...you've probably heard this, but I saw those watches, and they still had the price tags on them in Malay dollars. I forget what price, but it was quite reasonable. Some officers had these goods. I would like for you to check that with some other people because they would know about it, particularly somebody like Heinen. It's a surprise to me that he didn't mention it. That was available.

At nighttime, if you had money, and we did, we could go shopping over in the Australian section, and they'd have their little...of course, they had their lights hanging down in their little cubicles, and you could walk down the cubicle. They'd have canned peaches and other canned goods stacked up just like you'd see in the grocery store. It had a price tag, and you'd negotiate with them. Of course, that was the good ol' days. That was the way life was.

Then we had theaters where people performed. The

Japanese would want to sit right down front. Actually, right up until we got difficult, they left us more or less alone, except they did come...but after the Fourth of July, all hell broke loose. From then on we had people like the "Brown Bomber" operating and a bunch of others.

Marcello: Let's go back and mention some of these things. You talked about the entertainment. Let me ask you a broader question. What did you do with your leisure time here in Bicycle Camp?

Stanbrough: Leisure time? Well, we were in working parties, too. We kept the place clean. We'd have our meetings, the sergeants would, and find out what Captain Fitzsimmons thought we should be doing or something. We did have to work out work details. We'd be told that tomorrow we'd have to have so many men, so we'd figure out whose turn it was and things like that.

Marcello: The nitty-gritty of the actual assigning of the individuals would be left up to the sergeants?

Stanbrough: Yes. Not the Japanese. The Japanese just said, "I want so many men," and we supplied them.

I became a chess expert--one of the best ones there after a little while--because I was enchanted with it. Somebody else, a fellow named Mason, who lives in Fort Worth, had a guitar. He would compose music. People did things like that. Some people worked arithmetic. Others sat around carving things when they weren't working. Life was not bad.

Marcello: When you say they were carving things, I would assume that you were allowed to keep small knives and so on. Cutting instruments?

Stanbrough: Oh, we had never had a big shakedown. Sure, we did. You're right. We had them.

Marcello: How about sports? Were there any kinds of sports?

Stanbrough: A lot of volleyball went on. Particularly, we'd watch the officers' side play, and we'd try to take bets on which side was going to win over there. Then the officers, of course, engaged in chess games with the Dutch, and the Dutch would always win. It was not a bad life at all.

Marcello: In other words, if you could have remained at Bicycle Camp, compared to what you would run into later on, Bicycle Camp was not too bad a place.

Stanbrough: It was not too bad a place. Even after the Fourth of July problems, it was still not too bad a place.

Marcello: You're determined to get up to the Fourth of July, and I'm not going to get there yet (laughter). I've got some other questions I want to ask you. You mentioned the plays and the stage shows awhile ago. Can you elaborate a little bit on that? What were they like?

Stanbrough: All Englishmen have some talent, either reciting or singing or putting on plays. They had a little orchestra. People had guitars around. People would get a washtub and put a stick on it and an old rope and get an old saw or something, but we had an orchestra. They'd put on these different plays. Some person would be dressed like a girl. It was musical slapsitck comedy--stuff like that. I guess it was mostly original. During the daytime spare time, some of the English established classes in mathematics and other things. There was a lot going on. They were by and large a lot more talented, but you've got to remember that we were just boys out of the Depression more or less. I think we had very little showmanship talents in our group.

Marcello: Describe what the interior of your barracks were like there at Bicycle Camp.

Stanbrough: As I recall, it was a very large, open building. You went in the end and went down toward the...as you came in the main entrance area, you could turn left and go down the corridor, which there were open cubicles to this. It had a very high ceiling with the ventilation coming through the roof. There was a large tile roof with slated teak, and the men would go up and take those little teak slats, and they used that in making their little art objects. I noticed Kyle Thompson has one here.

We would then have to walk past and out to a washroom, and there was a regular-type of Dutch Army latrine. You had a place to put your feet in a slit in the floor. You'd reach overhead and pull some water down later. But you could keep clean. You could wash. Everything was painted. It was a very nicely designed and kept camp.

Marcello: Was it simply one long barracks, or were there stalls or partitions?

Stanbrough: There was a street going down, and these barracks were perpendicular to the street. Then there would be little courtyards in between, or open places, and there'd be trees. On the far side, opposite from where you enter by the guardhouse that the Japanese used, on the far side to the right back, was a big area where they had some performances. I went to some of their performances. It was a big thing to do. You were free to roam around in that big complex as much as you wanted to.

The barracks itself...now I have seen a drawing of that barracks. Otto Schwartz sent it to me. It was a little more extensive than I thought. I gather there were several thousand prisoners there. Our cookhouse...we had to cross over the road and pass another line of barracks. It was real interesting. You could go a little way out of the way and avoid going where anyone from the guardhouse could see you--the Japs. There was always potential, if you went the short cut, that the "Brown Bomber" might decide that it was time for him to go out and bomb (laughter), so you had to make up your mind. Just about dark one time, for some reason some Jap approached me and wanted to trade for something, and he was just about as nice as he could be. Later, it dawned on me that it was the "Brown Bomber." I don't know why he was nice at that time.

As you went down the street, there were barracks this way (gesture), and they had porches open on either side. The porches were tiled affairs. I believe they were tile. Then you would go down, and there would be another one this way and another one that way and so forth.

Marcello: Now inside the barracks would there be divisions or partitions?

Stanbrough: There were partitions between...they had an open area down toward the officers' side, and then they had their partition, but there was a large, much open room larger than this room. I would guess it was maybe thirty-by-fifteen, and it was open. Then you turned down this corridor, and they were off on either side. What I'm trying to say is, people had their own separate areas, but there were no doors, and it also was not closed at the top. It was very nice living.

Marcello: Would you have to make your own beds and so on?

Stanbrough: That's right. But you got hold of bamboo, and you had blankets, and you made your own bed. I didn't make my bed. I still don't know who made my bed, but I'll find out someday.

Marcello: Did you participate in any work details while you were here at Bicycle Camp?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes. You marched a long way to go down to the docks. You walked. I went just a few times. It was nice to get out.

That was one of my times when I got mixed up with the barrel business. I was stacking barrels all this time.

You are quite aware what a Korean looks like and what a Japanese looks like. I always could spot it miles off, and when you're being assigned, you fall in line to go to different groups, and I saw that the Japanese, not the Koreans ...because the Koreans were a step worse. WHEW! I don't know if you've heard that before.

Marcello: You've more or less picked up on the next question I was going to ask. I was going to ask you whether or not you would try and pick or choose which work party you would be on according to the guard that was going to be in charge. I think in part you've answered that question.

Stanbrough: Once you're out there, you see who's there, and if you recognize a bad one and you've got some green horns who don't know the difference, then you see that you're over there. Some Japanese were bad, but the Koreans were particularly bad.

Marcello: Describe, first of all, how the Japanese treated the Koreans.

Stanbrough: I didn't really know there. We'll have to get along until later. Later they treated them...I found out later that they treated them as greatly inferior people. As far as I'm concerned, they were. It took years after the war was over for me to even consider that we were friendly toward the Koreans. But the Koreans were--I consider--very brutal.

Even though they weren't brutal to us then, I just thought they were. We called them "bashings" then. That's all they did. They were rough, but they didn't kill anybody. They didn't break any bones.

Marcello: Compare the conduct of the Japanese guards with that of the Korean guards.

Stanbrough: The Japanese were a little more lackadaisical, sort of bored, with this duty or something. But the Koreans were always, it seemed to me, trying to prove that they were really working. Like I say, this was that first summer. Things were different, I guess.

Marcello: Did you notice that physical punishment was a way of life in the Japanese Army?

Stanbrough: Not particularly at that time. I did later, but not then. But it is. It certainly is. A corporal can slap for a reprimand a private any time he wants to--give him a good rap on the face. That was a way of life.

Marcello: What would be the typical punishment dealt out by the Korean guards?

Stanbrough: Well, we didn't really have any punishment except for several work parties where somebody did something wrong, and they slapped them around pretty severely. But they didn't break anything. There was not too much brutal treatment early.

Marcello: How about the use of gun butts--things of that nature?

Stanbrough: I saw that on several occasions but not too much in Bicycle Camp.

Marcello: Let me ask you this, and I should have asked you this when we first got you to Bicycle Camp or maybe when you were first captured. Were you ever processed in any way?

Stanbrough: No. No, never.

Marcello: In other words, you were given no ID number? No sort of identification or anything of that nature?

Stanbrough: I wasn't processed by anybody up until maybe at Singapore, and then I wasn't even processed. I never even got a number. We were not processed.

Marcello: So at this stage, all that occurred was that maybe your officers had given the Japanese a list of the men or something of that nature, and that was about it.

Stanbrough: That was about it.

Marcello: And they would have a roll call, I'm sure, everyday, and if the numbers jived, that's all they were worried about.

Stanbrough: That's all there was to it. We did have roll call. We did get out and count off but not for the Japanese in particular. I'm not certain but what maybe our officers had to go over and report and tell them how many people there were. I don't know. We were just kind of in a dream world. Anyway, we were very naive.

Marcello: Okay, now this brings us up to July 4th. I'll let you talk about events as they unfolded on that day, as best you can remember them.

Stanbrough: I knew there were some problems going on because they carted our officers off someplace. They came back, and the officers were muttering about having to sign something. I don't know what happened there, but that's an officer's story. Let me tell you what I saw. Captain Zeigler called his senior sergeants up and told them that the Japanese had insisted that we sign an oath of absolute obedience to the Imperial Japanese Army. He said that they resisted this, but we would have to sign. At the first signing of the oath, we modified it except where it was contrary to our oath of allegiance to our own country or something like that. I think our commandant--Japanese commandant--was very pleased because he probably got our group to sign quicker than anyone, but he found out later that he'd been taken.

When it got down to be very serious, Fitzsimmons called ...had Wisdom. I remember Wisdom being there, and I was there. So were the other sergeants. He said that we had to sign that. There was no more of this modifying. He took complete responsibility. It was under duress, and he thereby ordered us to sign that. It was a direct order, and we were to go tell the men that it was his order and his responsibility that we must sign that. Therefore, he had us out and had us to sign first. So we signed these little things.

We went down...some of the boys didn't want to do it because they thought, "Well, those yellow-bellied...." and all this sort of stuff. You know there was lots of muttering, but we convinced them that he took full responsibility and also that it was an absolute must. Therefore, we signed. But some of the other people didn't sign--in our particular group--and all hell broke loose around there. We lost our privileges for the camp--canteens. We lost a lot of things. It got so that life was a lot tougher around there after that.

Marcello: So not everybody did actually sign this oath?

Stanbrough: They all eventually signed, except it came down to the hard-core Australians. There were a bunch...you can always be sure that some Australians will go out of their way to aggravate the Japanese, and they did it until the last day of the war. A bunch of Australians decided they wouldn't sign it. Of course, they had their officers telling them, too. What they did was, they got them out in front of the guardhouse, and they tied their hands behind their feet, and they put a bamboo pole under their legs, and I think they shaved some of their heads or cut their hair off real short. They left them out there in the sun to bake, and then they'd come out periodically from the guardhouse and get a bamboo pole and bap them around a little bit. The next day most of them signed. They finally all did. They went through that ordeal.

Marcello: Was each person signing an individual card?

Stanbrough: No. We signed a sheet of paper like that (gesture).

Marcello: In other words, the statement was more or less at the top of the paper, and everybody signed it.

Stanbrough: That's right.

Marcello: And basically, in addition to pledging allegiance, you were also pledging not to secape. Wasn't that true?

Stanbrough: Oh, I want to touch on that. Since you had now sworn absolute obedience to the Imperial Japanese Army, you've sworn that you're going to follow all of their orders. Now they can post all the orders they want. And that's what that was--about escaping and about this and about something else. Then it was very interesting to confront prisoners later on, even in Japan, that you've signed the oath, see, and you have violated your oath. That's what happened.

And that's all I saw of it. We signed it. But then your privileges were vastly restricted, and as I recall, I think the food situation got a lot worse because we didn't have the canteen supplies coming in now. So things really got bad and started going downhill then.

Marcello: Plus, I guess sooner or later those company funds were going to give out, anyhow, weren't they?

Stanbrough: I don't know about that. I think they got to the point where they couldn't use it. They couldn't expend them.

Marcello: Did you ever hear that during this whole business, the officers were threatened?

Stanbrough: Oh, yes. Prior to Fitzsimmons calling me in, or calling our group in, they were threatened. At least he said so. He said, "We've been down there, and this is very serious. This is no joke." He was very determined that it was his responsibility: "I order you to sign it." If somebody had had the courage to do that in Singapore, there would have been a lot more English people alive that died out there in that apron.

Marcello: You mentioned the "Brown Bomber" awhile ago. I'm sure that all the Japanese guards or Korean guards had nicknames.

Stanbrough: That's right. They all did. I'm certain that some of the other boys that remember Bicycle Camp...of course, they've seen much worse, but the "Brown Bomber" was our first infamous one (chuckle).

Marcello: Describe what the "Brown Bomber" was like.

Stanbrough: He was just a high tempered little Japanese, not too big. He just seemed like he liked to beat up on people. He'd go pick out somebody, and usually the taller you were the worse you'd get it. That was just his way of life--to go and get his kicks by beating up on someone. He never did really break any bones or anything like that. He was just slapping and hitting you with a rifle and shouting at you and scaring the hell out of you. But that was the "Brown Bomber."

Marcello: How could you distinguish the Japanese from the Koreans, and I don't mean that as a racist remark. I don't want to imply that they all looked alike, but did they have a different kind of uniform or so on?

Stanbrough: No, I think they looked different to me. They still do to this day. They just look different. To me they have more mongoloid, brutal features, I would call it.

Marcello: The Koreans?

Stanbrough: Yes. Some Japanese have little red lips. You'd think they had lipstick on. Some have light skin. I really cannot describe...but I'm sure that most prisoners have no problems telling the difference.

Marcello: What threats did the Japanese make if somebody tried to escape and were caught?

Stanbrough: I don't know of that happening in Bicycle Camp. In fact, it was never...I just can't answer that because I don't know. We only had one fellow, much later in the war, who tried to secape. I know what happened to him, but we can get that some other time. But not there. We didn't have any of that problem there.

Marcello: When you sat around in your bull sessions and just shot the breeze, what did you talk about?

Stanbrough: Mostly about, in my case, when the war was going to get over and so forth. It was only months later that the boys got to talking about maybe girls and the affairs that they'd had and so forth like that.

Marcello: How about food?

Stanbrough: Yes, they'd talk about food. Food was always a prime topic. You can believe that. That was a prime topic. But it wasn't too bad in Java. In retrospect that wasn't bad at all, period. Nor was it bad during the little short time of mine in Singapore. I didn't have much trouble.

Marcello: Describe the process by which you left Bicycle Camp. How did that all come about?

Stanbrough: One day prior to leaving--we didn't know there was going to be any leaving--Sergeant Patterson came over, and he had a list of people with our names on it. He was one of our group in the headquarters unit there, and he wanted to know about our training and occupation and so forth. Well, I'd been a radio repairman and had gone to college and studied engineering for two years at that time, so that's what I told him. And that's all. Then he went around and asked everybody else. There were a lot of comments about why did they want to know. He said he didn't know. We said, "Oh, they're up to something. They're going to make us work or do something to help the war effort." By the way, people were very patriotic and did not want to help the war effort for the Japanese. I know a lot of people put down "student" and "farmer." I don't think there were too many students in that group unless it was still high school. I don't know.

Then one day we were called down in front. Certain men were called to show up in front of the officers' quarters of the Japanese, and he came out and made us a little speech about how lucky and fortunate we were. We had been selected to go to Japan and how great it was to go to Japan.

Marcello: What was your reaction?

Stanbrough: "Oh, listen to that 'BS' he's putting out!" Then he says that the ship would be very crowded so take only a toothbrush. Well, he was right about that. He also said that in Japan it would be a much better climate. We were the fortunate, chosen ones. He said, "Since there's not much room, if you have souvenirs such as souvenir pistols or things like that, you should leave them here with me." He said that--souvenir pistols. He was meaning guns or anything like...he knew they were in the camp. But he was telling us. There weren't too many of us, either. Right now I don't know the number, but I would guess thirty people...twenty-five or thirty-five...somewhere in there. We were selected to go to Japan. Big deal. Captain Zeigler was in that group...Lieutenant Smith and some of the others. So nothing to do.

We got all prepared, and they took us out of camp first. Karney was there. He was in the list to go, and he actually carried the radio completely intact, even though the officer said we were going to be crowded. In those days we were so dumb we didn't even take it apart. He carried all of it. I think I carried some tubes. We took it, and off we marched to the ship. When they put us on that ship...and I believe it was the Dai Nichi Maru.

Marcello: And this was about October 10, 1942.

Stanbrough: Somewhere in October, yes. We went on that ship, and I'm telling you, it was so crowded. I thought it was just temporarily that we would be there, but, no, that was it. I don't know how you were going to sleep because there was no room to sleep. You had to sleep on people. Karney shoved off and came back a little while later and asked me, "You know, I've got us a good place to sleep." And he did. He got acquainted with some Japanese soldiers in another compartment, and would you believe that little rascal managed it so that we could sleep under those Japanese noncoms' beds. They had their mats with them and everything, and, of course, he still had his radio with him. So that's how we got to Singapore on that boat. We slept there, and it was crowded. I remember going off of Bangka Island.

When we got to the Singapore harbor, we could see that there were other ships. A fellow and I saw a Swedish ship, and we thought it would be kind of nice to jump off and swim over there, but I can't swim very far. So that's how that happened.

Marcello: Let's back up and talk a little bit more about the trip on the Dai Nichi Maru. What was the temperature like down in that hold?

Stanbrough: Hot! Hot, hot! I thought it was very hot.

Marcello: I guess with all those sweaty bodies, it must have stunk to high heaven.

Stanbrough: Well, yes. Well, we didn't stay or sleep there. I moved up. It was still very hot.

Marcello: What gear did you, in fact, take with you?

Stanbrough: I took most everything I had. I took my clothes and whatever I could carry in my barracks bag.

Marcello: So you did have more than a toothbrush.

Stanbrough: You bet. But I didn't have any radio things or something. Karney took that. No one else carried...and at this stage I do not know what happened to the Zenith or who had it.

But in Singapore...of course, we landed. They put us on trucks. The trucks took us out to Changi. They lined us up in front of the Changi Prison where the Japanese officer made a speech about welcoming us to Changi Prison. It was interpreted. The interpretor said, "I hope you die." Nevertheless, it was enough to intimidate one. Also, he jumped up in a truck full of Australians and was beating on a poor guy to get out of the truck, and the guy was dead. He had died by the time he got there. Maybe he had a heart attack or something.

I don't know. Then they took us to very decent quarters again out there after they did all the counting. So we were there for a while. I didn't know how long. Then I was surprised. While we were there, the other gang had come up.

Marcello: This is E Battery?

Stanbrough: No, the other guys that we'd left. We thought we'd left our group and that we were off by ourselves, but there they were there, too.

Marcello: Is this the Fitzsimmons bunch? Weren't they the first ones to leave? Would that have been this bunch?

Stanbrough: It must be. When I got there, I was with Zeigler. When I got there, well, there they were. I don't know whether they came on the same ship and were down at the other end or not. I was on the Dai Nichi Maru, but I never did see them on the ship.

Marcello: I know that E Battery had passed through Singapore, also, through Changi.

Stanbrough: Well, I'll be doggone. Let me back up. I do remember very much that I heard an ungodly noise one night, and it was some Highlander Scot playing bagpipes. The food, I was told, was quite hard to get. There had been a Knights of St. John Red Cross distribution, but the British said was for British people only.

I did manage to get some of them because a young boy showed up named Bill Doidge. He was from Brighton, England. In fact, I saw him after the war. He was nineteen years old. He asked permission to sleep over in our quarters with us--we sergeant-types. We asked him why, and he said, well, he would clean the place up and get food for us because he heard we had money. I thought there was nothing wrong with it, and Sergeant Fair thought there was nothing wrong with it. He was very good. He was a complete scrounger. He'd go out and come back with pineapples, peanuts, or something, and he would work at it. He was a good boy. We separated after I left there, of course. I didn't know what had happened to him, but he did survive the war.

Then Zeigler told me that we had to get rid of the radio, that it was endangering the men. I was almost in tears, but he insisted that for the safety of the men, we had to get rid of it. It wasn't worth the risk and those things. I usually am a man of my word, but I agreed and we didn't. At that time, I guess not to hide it from the Japanese so much as from Zeigler, we split it up.

Marcello: Incidentally, going back to Bicycle Camp again and the July 4th incident, you mentioned, of course, that things had gotten worse after that incident. How did that affect the radio?

Stanbrough: Not at all. None.

Marcello: My question then is, what made Zeigler suddenly say that the radio had to be destroyed or gotten rid of?

Stanbrough: I don't know. I didn't understand it at all. I thought he was being rather weak-kneed about it. I thought that at that stage, I would just get in severe trouble. But I wasn't aware, never had been, that it would be...I'm not that brave, no, but I wasn't aware that it might endanger the other people. He was looking at it from that standpoint.

The next thing was, they took us off on the *Taifoku Maru*. Off we go. This ship could do six knots. It was an old British coal collier. It was not in good shape. It had to go up and get some engine work done in Saigon. I remember going up the river there and seeing all those funny little houses built up on reeds and so forth, going up to Saigon. I thought this was a strange world.

Marcello: In the meantime you were only in Singapore for about two weeks. What did you do during that two-week period?

Stanbrough: Nothing.

Marcello: Except maybe get angry at the British and begin to form a bad attitude toward them.

Stanbrough: No, I didn't do that at all. I didn't have any other association with the British then at all. I really did nothing. We did just nothing.

The ship was incredibly crowded. We were short of water. There was a tank on one side that had water that was good to drink. They turned it on certain hours a day, and we could get in line and get it. We were put down in the bottom hold by the British officers. That's where I got the bad opinion of the British then because they put we Americans in the bottom hold, and then they would close that hold up to the above hold and just leave a small air space so the boys would have a place to sleep. And then there was another hold, so we were going down several layers. It was just incredibly bad down below. It really was.

Periodically, the Japs would allow people up on the deck to sun, and they would turn water hoses on so you could wash up. Drinking water was a problem. A lot of people didn't like the food. I ate it because it had water in it --ricey kind of stuff.

This is not a myth. One day I got so angry at myself. You've got to go up to the benjo, which is an outhouse affair, and I had been there before. There were those nice steam winches that they use for cargo handling and everything, and they were going "pssssht." It suddenly dawned on me. You have to have drain cocks for steam winches to get the distilled water out of there when they fill up. I didn't tell anybody, of course. I slipped up and got me a couple of canteens, and that night I went up there, and I found a drain cock and got me some water. It was pretty good.

I traded a canteen of water off later for a full, large-sized can of tuna to one of our Houston boys, named Bolt. Bolt was always getting into trouble. Bolt had figured out from the ship's instructions where the storeroom was and with another guy had gotten hold of a rope. Being the skinny-type, he lowered himself down inside there, tied on a case of food, got the guy up there to pull him back up, and they got themselves a case of tuna--stolen. Then they climbed back up. He was always into everything.

On the way up to Japan, though, finally it got very cold, and we were very glad we were down low. It got cold, and then we were down low. Then that's when the English officer wanted to have the Americans move up topside. He said we had been wanting to move up to the top, so now we could move up top. But we didn't. He was threatened by some of the Houston boys that they would throw him overboard. He complained to Zeigler, and Zeigler said that he would assist them. That was about it.

He complained to the Japanese on the ship about having no medicine. We had a lot of sick people. I would estimate that one out of four died en route to Japan. We had a board there--a real wide one--and they had some burlap bags; and the ship was loaded with bauxite, and we used that for weight. We'd say a little thing out of a prayer book--somebody would--and then they'd slide off and fall in.

Now a good place to sleep...Wilburn Rockett liked to sleep on that board because it was flat and a good place, not crowded. He managed to slip up there and sleep on that board because it was about the only place that you could. Then he stopped because he had this nightmare one night, and the nightmare was that they were dumping him overboard, and he was still alive. That's his story.

Anyway, we stayed on that ship all the way up. By the way, another fellow was Kelley, who was with us. Kelley, "Cotton" Bryant, a fellow named Hovis, Wilburn Rockett--that was all of my group. Then we finally got to Japan.

Marcello: So you were actually on the move from...

Stanbrough: Almost a month.

Marcello: ...October 27, which is when you left Singapore, until about November 25, when you arrived in Moji Bay.

Stanbrough: Right. Thanksgiving must have been a little early then because my Thanksgiving was that can of tuna. I remember having that, and I was thankful to have it. We got into Moji Bay. That's right.

Marcello: Evidently, you stopped briefly in Formosa at one time.

Stanbrough: Takao. It's on the southern side, and it's a harbor. Going in there, I did see a U.S. airplane wing with a big star, and in those days with a red dot in it, sticking out of the water. Also, over to the left, I could see a great, big oil thing of Texaco. It was an oil refinery and stuff there. That was the first time I saw women loading grain and stuff on the ship, and those were big sacks. They would have to carry them aboard and then dump them and go back and do it some more.

Marcello: What kind of shape were you in by the time you landed in Japan?

Stanbrough: Physically? Pretty good. Most of us were. The Japanese did do some kind of checking to see if we had dysentery or something before we left. That was the first time there was an inspection.

There's one thing we did. We had our shots when we got in the service; we had our shots when we got to go to PLUM; we had our shots by our doctor when the Japs landed; and damned if we didn't have shots again. We were so shot up that I don't think bugs could bite us for a long time. As a matter of fact, that is why the Americans survived more than the others. The food was part of it, but the other was that we had cholera shots up until the time that we got into camp. Cholera doesn't last that long anyway, does it? Of course, we bitterly complained, "We've already had that. Why do it again?" But nevertheless, we had it.

Marcello: So even the Japs were giving you all...

Stanbrough: No, I didn't get those shots from the Japs. They were giving us some sort of checking over. They were not going to let us take physical diseases into Japan proper. They used to forbid that, and the Japanese were frightened that they couldn't go back to Japan if they had V.D. and that sort of thing. So they weren't going to let us go there with bad diseases. No, I was in reasonably good shape. I was down some pounds, but in those days I didn't weigh but about 165 pounds; and I now weighed 145 pounds, so it wasn't that bad...145 or 150 pounds.

Well, we got to Moji, and the next thing is that we got unloaded. As far as I'm concerned, Groups A, B, and C got off. Our Group C was the last one to get off, and it was dark and started sleeting. We got out there, and we were being inspected this time for the first time--just checking things.

Karney still had the box with the chassis in it, but he didn't have the tubes. Biggs had the battery. Lieutenant Smith, I think, had the earphones. Even though it was done when they searched this line, it wasn't much of a search. I found out what they were searching for. They were searching for tobacco--cigars, cigarettes, and so forth. They weren't looking for radios or anything like that.

Marcello: Is it true that the Japanese...here again, I've heard this many times. Is it true that the Japanese had a one-track mind when they were on one of these searches?

Stanbrough: I will have to tell you about that one. That's the absolute truth. On another occasion and place, somebody had stolen some rice. They were looking for rice, and they went right over contraband and stuff that they...my God! I thought I was about to get my radio found. They wouldn't have picked me up, anyway. That was in Japan proper. That's right. They were one-track on this thing. They were told to find some rice, and that's it.

Marcello: Now you get off the ship here in Shimonoseki.

Stanbrough: We spent the night in someplace. I don't know where it was.

Marcello: But my point is, I assume that you have not received any kind of winter clothing or gear yet at this point?

Stanbrough: Not up to that point. But at that point, there were a few winter overcoats thrown around by that time. They were old worn-out ones and so forth. I didn't get one, and I don't think there were very many people who did.

We were put on a train, and we went the whole length of Japan, almost, in my group because we started there and went...had these little ...

Marcello: Before the tape ran out, and before I was unable to catch it, you were talking about being given these small boxes of food. Pick that up again.

Stanbrough: Okay. On the train they issued us small, wooden boxes that had rice and a little pickled radish and maybe a little piece of dried fish in it; and they had little chopsticks in it. Well, that's exactly what they sell to train passengers.

We sat over there on regular seats just like all the other passengers. You slept there, too. They took us to...it was several days. You'd go through the countryside, and I could see the fields and the people out working in them and everything. It was really kind of pleasant.

Marcello: This is an interesting point that you bring up because later on, after the bombing started and they were transporting prisoners around, they didn't want the prisoners to look outside and see what kind of damage had been done.

Stanbrough: Well, we were going like regular train passengers and had regular food.

Marcello: By this time were you forming any kind of ideas about being in Japan? When I asked you the question earlier, that is, when you were back in Bicycle Camp, you mentioned that you really thought the guy was bluffing, that you weren't going to Japan.

Stanbrough: We didn't know. By this time I knew it was bad news, considering the way we were treated on the ship. When I got up there...there's another thing. Going down the track there one day, I saw something I'd never seen before. There was a woman who had stopped at one of the urinals--one of those kind of things--and she just pushed it down and stood up and kind of leaned over it like a cow would or something and did the job beside the track. Well, all the boys had never seen anything like that. They thought that was a strange world.

But I did notice it was kind of pretty--the countryside. So we traveled all the way up, and we went to Morioka, and then we went around to Kamaishi. Kamaishi's one of the largest smeltering plants in Japan. From there they routed us up to a little place called Ohasi. There we got off one night in the icy cold, and we didn't know where we were going.

They marched us up the road--up a hill--and up to some stairs and up to a building, and we went in, and we were assigned to the second floor. We had a bunch of the black Dutch with us. I guess we had less than 200 people total. I don't know where those black Dutch came from. They were just diverted in there. It was all planned, though. It was all planned. We went in this building, and it was brand-new--absolutely new. We were going up to a brand-new place. Nobody had ever slept on their beds or anything --tatami (mats). They had those brand-new blankets or comforter sort of things. There were eight men to a room--four on either side. It had a sliding door, and there was a shelf back up there. On the back of each shelf, there was stacked Japanese army underwear, Japanese overcoat, a set of dishes, and some trousers and things.

Marcello: So this is where you get your first winter issue.

Stanbrough: It was issued. We walked in there, and there it was. There were the coats and everything. Well, we thought we were in paradise. We looked around and thought, "What in the heck's going on here?" This belonged to a Japanese steel company, and they constructed it for their laborers; and we were to be hired and paid for our labor. They were were to pay one yen fifty a day to the government, I discovered later. That's what they charged.

Marcello: What did you receive? How much?

Stanbrough: Oh, I was a ranking sergeant. I got thirty sen a day, and the others go eleven. That's how it turned out later. The interpreter later told us what was happening--the company interpreter. We were very pleased at our great change in life. You know, it was a brand-new building. We thought it was marvelous.

Marcello: What kind of heating was there in this barracks?

Stanbrough: They had stoves--just a pot stove. That was the first night. The next morning they came and ordered us all to get our things and to leave, that we were moving on. Well, we were just about heartbroken almost. At least I was. Then the question is...I'm getting nervous about the radio. I had the radio now.

Marcello: It's completely assembled again.

Stanbrough: Almost. I'd gotten hold of it and started putting it together, but I didn't have the battery. I got the case from...and Karney was in the room, too. So I was a little worried about it. I was looking out the window, and it was a cold, gray day. They were rushing all the bottom floor men out, and I saw something, and I told Lieutenant Smith. I asked him. I caught him there because I had to make the decision, and I was getting nervous about the set because we had never yet had a real good search, you know, or what I'd call an honest-to-God search. I looked out the window, and some of those prisoners had those overcoats on and some didn't. That clued me that something was wrong, and I decided that we were going out to be searched.

They marched us down the road, and when they marched us down the road,the set was rolled up in a blanket. We went down toward the rail station, and I said, "Oh, my goodness! They are going to put us on a train. I'm going to lose my radio." They took us up to the school ground and had a big search. They took everything--our ornaments and everything. The funniest thing about it was that they took some of my spare trousers off me. I was allowed to have what I had on. They were supposedly going to put it in a storeroom. I eventually got everything back through the sergeant that was in charge of the storeroom.

Sure enough, they searched us. Right in the middle of that thing Biggs, out of Lubbock, said to me, "Jess, what did you do with your radio?" I said, "It's back in the room. Why?" He said, "I've got the battery with me." I said, "Oh, my God! Where?" He said, "It's in those flight boots." We had already been told that we could choose one pair of shoes, so I said, "You're going to choose those flight boots." Sure enough, they came by. He stood right there on the cold, frozen ground and took his shoes off. They took his shoes. They wrote down on a sheet of paper that they got his shoes. Then he picked up his stuff and got the battery back. After that we went back to the same camp, and we stayed there until the next camp was constructed, which was then in 1943 before we moved in. The camp was down about two miles in the valley.

Marcello: So how long were you at Ohasi?

Stanbrough: In Ohasi Proper we were there until...let's see. We were working in the spring. We moved out of Ohasi, but it was still called Ohasi where we moved. We just moved several miles down the valley to a new barracks that had been built for us. It was a real camp. It was still new buildings.

Marcello: About how many people were in this camp?

Stanbrough: Two hundred, maximum.

Marcello: And that's a combination of all nationalities.

Stanbrough: Yes.

Marcello: Are most of the Americans that left with you in Bicycle Camp still with you here?

Stanbrough: Yes, that's right.

Marcello: I assume that you guys were more or less sticking together and staying together.

Stanbrough: Well, they're scattered. That's a different crowd because they're made up of people off the Houston and other units. We didn't have a distinct unit. Of course, I know some of the people like "Pop" Early, "Red" Reynolds, and all that gang. That's where I got acquainted with those boys.

We got the radio working, and later we heard about the Coral Sea business and where things were going very well. I had to go tell Zeigler that we still had the radio, and he was delighted. He said, "I'm so glad. I didn't know you were bringing it up here." From then on we had cooperation.

Then when we finally moved, we had to work on a rock wall at that camp down there. At that time I didn't smoke, but people like Kelly and "Cotton" Bryant and Jack Karney and others did. Those three guys would give me three cigarettes to carry for them. I'd carry cigarettes. In the mornings, when we had a little short break, they would each smoke one cigarette. They'd puff it--the three of them. One, two, three; one, two, three; one, two, three. Then at lunchtime, I'd give them number two. One, two, three; one, two, three. Then they'd have the other one.

We actually had some people die of pneumonia. I don't really know who they are. They weren't out of my immediate group.

Marcello: What kind of work were you doing here at Ohasi?

Stanbrough: It was dreadful then. We would set out to chip ice off the railroad for the ore cars. It was cold. It was brutally cold for us. A lot of them just had khaki trousers on. Your feet would get so dreadfully cold. That's what we were doing. They put a few in the mines, but originally we just worked on the railroad as road gangs.

Marcello: When would a typical workday begin?

Stanbrough: I guess they'd wake us up about 6:30 in the morning and have roll call or something like that.

Marcello: The Japanese would wake you up?

Stanbrough: They'd come in and say, "*Tenko!*" That means roll call. We knew what time they'd be there.

That was kind of a pleasant life, too, at that camp. I wasn't aware in that first camp of how pleasant it was. You had your own rooms. The company later decided that it needed that place, so they had just put us in there temporarily until the other camp was built.

Marcello: You go to Ohasi, and you're put in this one barrack that's pretty nice.

Stanbrough: Very nice.

Marcello: But you're not there for too long.

Stanbrough: Oh, December, January, February...six months maybe.

Marcello: But it's at that time that you are working...

Stanbrough: Oh, let me back up. Right in the middle of that horrible work that I didn't like--everything's horrible if you're working--they came up one day and said that the electric company would be willing to take on twelve men and that they would have a "test-o" to see who would like to do that and who had experience. Well, we had a lot of people who'd like to get out of the ice farm out there, so I went down there. Sure enough, they gave us a test, and they were very simple tests. They were doing an Ohm's law problem, a simple Ohm's law problem, and hooking a transformer to delta and "y." Then they needed people to rewind the coils in motors and redo armatures of big motors in the separation mill. We were in an iron ore place, and there was a big iron mine there. The separation mill had to treat the ore --crush it, break it up, wash it--and then they would dump it through chutes in these ore cars. That's why ice would be there. The motors would go bad, too, so they had to have an electric plant to keep the motors repaired. That's what they really needed. But they also had the telephone switchboard on the top floor of the place. I was hired on as a telephone person.

Later, that group grew from twelve prisoners up to forty-two people. I was the ranking noncom on that trip, so I was their--what they called--hancho after it got bigger, six months later. Of course, it was a good job, and people wanted to get on it. We tried to get on it all we could because it gave them some protection. Some of the work was hard, but during the workdays you actually worked for a member of the Japanese steel company. After being there three years, the civilians considered us as though we were one of theirs. From then on we got very good treatment at work.

I worked every day because there's no way in this God's world I wanted to stay out in that camp because the longer the war went on, the stricter were the rules of the camp. When I say strict, it was according to who was in charge. We had a fellow name Nakanumi, a captain. He had a good-looking wife, and they'd come there. But he was not a good guy. He was a product of the Methodist missionary school, but he must not have learned much. Anyway, we got another fellow that came in there, and he was a product of the Catholics. He was a real good man, and I was really impressed about that. Later, after the war, I came back and said, "I know the Catholics are doing a hell of a lot better job than you Methodists are."

Anyway, we got the radio set down there, and the rest of it is just keeping it maintenanced, and living day to day, and getting news. Towards the time of the Saipan invasion, they had these posters out, and, of course, the people growled at you a little bit. We also had the Japanese 63rd Brigade there. Part of it came in our place as guards. They went up to the Aleutian Islands, and they got slaughtered and ran and jumped off the cliff, and we were delighted. We heard about it on the radio. I couldn't believe it. But we heard good things like that. Toward the latter stages of the war, when they had the big fire bomb raids, they probably killed a lot more people than any atomic bomb. We were 300 miles north, and the sun was obliterated by the smoke of the fire bomb raids.

Marcello: That's an interesting point. I'd never heard that before.

Stanbrough: You could smell that pine smell of the burning of Tokyo. And you don't see anybody saying it, but the fire bomb raids were dreadful. It became an inferno, a storm. Some prisoners --I hope you get to run into one--were actually there. The wind was blowing away from the camp and came up to a couple of hundred yards of it. But I've actually had eye-witness reports from one of our guards that went down there. Not only couldn't he find his family, he couldn't even find the district. It was gone--all burned up.

Marcello: But you could actually see evidence of those fire bomb raids 300 miles north.

Stanbrough: It was 300-and-some-odd miles north, and it came in, and you could smell it. It smelled like a fireplace burning pine wood, and it just darkened...the sun became a dark orange, like it does when you look at it through a smoked glass filter. They thought it was an omen. Of course, we heard planes going overhead at night toward the end of the war.

There's one story that I've got to straighten out. It's myth. The Japanese officer ran around on a motorcycle with a short-wave radio stuck under his seat. On one occasion the fellow who operated that motorcycle...and he operated for the Japanese. He was the official driver, Douglas Fyvie from Scotland, and I got him to take that battery out of the set and bring it to us so we could refurbish it, which we did where I worked. I got one of the Australians in there that was skilled at doing that to fix it. Then Douglas brought it back into camp--smuggled it back in. That's the only time--the only time--it was ever in there. The set was concealed in the corner of the attic of the building on the second tier. You pushed the board up, a little pine board, put in in, pulled the board back. A nail had been made in there, so you turned it sideways and locked it. Back of the beds, on either side of mine, there was two nails, and we had the wash rags on them, and both of those was wired back into the electricity, and they were hot. When we charged the battery, I just had to clip on to where the wash rags were. Anybody that ever touched them got shocked. We were searched several times, but it was so difficult to find anything because of the structure of the building. It came down to the corner, and we were at the end. People couldn't get in there. Everytime the building was ever thoroughly searched, they found belt buckles and stuff concealed; they found binoculars; they found light meters for cameras. Three years later, they were still finding things, but they never did find that radio.

Marcello: Let me go back and ask you some general questions.

Stanbrough: Sure.

Marcello: You only were working on that ice-clearing detail for a limited amount of time.

Stanbrough: Just several weeks for me.

Marcello: And it was simply a matter of chipping ice with some sort of a bar or something?

Stanbrough: Yes. They gave us pickaxes. They had women down there doing the same thing--Korean women. Oh, a big Korean camp later was moved in where we were.

Marcello: Then from there you moved into this second camp, which was still around Ohasi, and at this point you get this job in the power plant.

Stanbrough: No. I got that job in the power plant within, oh, six weeks after we got there.

Marcello: Okay. But you go from the ice-breaking detail to the power plant.

Stanbrough: Yes, and then I was there for several years, and it was marvelous.

Marcello: Of course, being in the power plant, you were probably in a position where you probably could hide the radio a little

Stanbrough: No, no, no. The power plant was where I worked. That was two miles from where the barracks were.

Marcello: You still kept the radio back in the barracks.

Stanbrough: Absolutely. We were searched coming in to the camp every night, and you were patted down all the way. You couldn't have brought it in. The only time you could bring things in...you had to be good. I did smuggle in a quart of sake once, and it took me a little thinking of how to get it in.

Marcello: When you used the radio back in the barracks, was the same procedure followed? In other words, would you listen to the radio at night and then the news would be distributed by word-of-mounth?

Stanbrough: That's correct,and only to the Americans and the New Zealanders, the Australians.

Marcello: Why did you do it that way?

Stanbrough: We didn't trust the other people. We didn't know them very well. We were particularly worried about...half the barracks was made up of the black Dutch, and we knew that we couldn't do that. We couldn't understand why they made them prisoners because they were very sympathetic. So you couldn't do that. The other group was the English, with whom we were not overly enchanted. It was nothing against the English race, just individuals perhaps. But the Australians and the New Zealanders threw in with us. We were called the American group. We were in a certain section. The building had some little partitions. It goes way down, and then they'd have a little wall, but you could still see through the center. So they were in one portion. Opposite my tier, across from me--because there were two levels with a little ladder to get up there--would be Sergeant Kelley over there and a few of the guys. Then there was some below. Kalinowski is one I just now thought of, and Miles. Zerbis was down below. Right immediately below me was the officers. In other words, underneath where I was sleeping was Captain Zeigler, and I could lean over and look at him. Next to him was Lieutenant Smith for a while. Smith had to later leave. That was the physical arrangement of the camp.

Marcello: So the officers were not separated from the enlisted men.

Stanbrough: No.

Marcello: But all of the Americans were still more or less together.

Stanbrough: We were together, and there was, like, thirty people.

Marcello: You're listening to the news on the radio, and things are beginning to get better, and you know they're beginning to get better. Are you getting a little antsy?

Stanbrough: Yes, a little. But I was beginning to wonder why...it was very discouraging to hear every now and then that it was decided to make more war effort over in Europe and knowing that we were secondary. We didn't like that. I heard it. I liked to listen to the BBC a great deal. After I got the set to working on an extra RF stage--I mean, by a coil and tuning it--and after I put a clothesline inside for my antenna, it's surprising how loud those signals came in from the BBC. I guess they were coming in over the Artic, and it was just unbelievable, how strong they were. There was no problem tuning them in.

The news was disseminated by mouth--very strictly controlled. You had to be in the group. I guess Douglas Fyvie must be the only one from the United Kingdom that knew we had a radio. Can you imagine? He wouldn't tell even his own buddies. You just don't do things like that. He was quite a character, and he was very helpful. Jerry Bunch was still with us; he didn't have the radio at all. They were still concerned at this stage of the game about what would happen.

When we got the news, and particularly when it was getting better, you could hardly restrain yourself. It was really something when our sister camp--there was another one down at Kamaishi--just toward the end of the war was the first target for the American naval task force. The South Dakota came in and pounded there for two hours. Every eleven seconds it let loose with those big shells. The destroyers were shelling, and then, of course, there were airplanes. It was something--to see those planes--after this many years coming up there. I saw some of them, and that was really marvelous, big thrill.

Marcello: I'm sure they did wonders for your morale.

Stanbrough: Oh, we didn't care if we got hit. We saw the Japanese after that raid digging holes in the cliffs there and going back in there. We thought, "If they get a blast in front, they're all gone." We didn't tell them they were making a mistake. In turn we were told, after the first raid, that they were having gunnery practice down in Kamaishi. Well, they really were, but it was not what they said it was.

I could hear the Japanese later complaining: "Where were our planes?" I'm talking about at work. I could hear the workers come around. They would have a cup of tea in the morning, and they would complain about "Where were our planes?" "Well, we didn't see any. All we saw was the Americans." They were always talking about the B-29's. I never could understand why the Japanese would give us orders and tell us what to do in Japanese and then turn right around and speak about the news and think we would be so stupid as to not understand it.

Now I was the interpreter for that whole group, and I probably knew more...I've had some French and four years of Latin. It turns out that their sentence structure, as you probably know, is very simple in a way. There is no singular or plural case and no gender. The verb goes last in the sentence, and the subject comes first. There's just a couple of endings, and you can at least carry on a conversation. I had probably about a 500-word vocabulary. It turns out that the ordinary natives up there, I'm told, probably use no more than 300 words a day. I didn't learn good Japanese, though.

Marcello: Let's talk about both your guards and your supervisors.

Stanbrough: Okay.

Marcello: I am assuming that when you were in camp, you were under the jurisdiction or supervision of military people.

Stanbrough: Correct. In fact, they picked us up at work and marched us back. That's why I worked every day. I even got an award as a joto shugyo-to--good worker--because I'd want to get out of that camp. You had a hard core. You had a commanding officer, and you have a discipline sergeant, and you have a medical sergeant and some other helpers. Then you have some people that may be an amputee or something, and he's in the home guard or something, and he may be helping. Then every thirty days we'd get a new set of regular army people sent in there. That's one of the problems we had because they always wanted to fight the war; they were new. Then the thirty days went by. When the boys got through doing the black market and working with the ore, they were pretty worthless, so they'd have to switch them out every thirty days. I'm being facetious. There's always something going on--trading back and forth--so every thirty days the army guards changed.

Now our medical sergeant was a very, very good man, and he worked hard for us. We didn't lose but one man in our camp after he got in the black market for us. He took money from our officers and would go over Morioka and go in and see his friend and buy sulfa drugs. His name was Neko, meaning "cat." No one had any animosity toward him. He was a very fair person--doing his job. To my knowledge he only struck one person, and that was a fellow named Bolt. Bolt could tell you more about that; I wish he were here. To get off a working detail, you had to have a fever. He didn't want to work, so he showed up for sick call one morning. He got his thermometer out of his mouth when Neko wasn't watching, rubbed it vigorously, and put it back in his mouth. God, the thing almost shot clear to the top. Neko knew then what had happened and that Bolt wasn't sick. POW! He slapped him once. But that was the only time. He was a good guy.

Marcello: In other words, even in this camp, you more or less wanted to stay away from the guards.

Stanbrough: They were strict. We had guys come in there, and they'd say you had to have a cap on outside. Oh, yes! You had to have a cap on. If you were outside the building, you had to have a cap on, or you were going to really get it because they could see you from the guardhouse.

Marcello: Well, you were implying awhile ago that you wanted to get out of camp.

Stanbrough: I wanted to get out of camp and get to work. I wanted to go to my working place because, see, I was working for Mr. Kato at the electric plant, and he liked what we were doing. We made him a hot water heater; we built him a thing for train crossing; I fixed his radios. Then I had to go back to camp. I loved being at work every day. That work I did was not hard. It was challenging. I even got hold of a J.K. Henney's Radio Engineering Handbook, which was a Godsend. I got it through the black market, through the camp interpreter. He went to Tokyo and asked me if he could get me anything. I said, "I'd like to have an engineering handbook." He said, "I'll get you one." He said, "It'll cost you 11 yen." So I came up with 11 yen, and that was about three dollars in those days. Boy, the war was over for me after that.

We had a Dutchman across the way. I don't remember his name, but he was very, very bright. He was writing a book on calculus. He was very smart.

Marcello: Now once you get on the job, are you under the supervision of civilian bosses?

Stanbrough: Correct, except I didn't really have any. It was so bad there for them that after I'd been there a long time, one helper got mad at one of our guys and was shouting and slapping him. I grabbed him and dragged him up to Kato and got Kato out there. Kato was up at the main office. I started dragging him. So we went up there, and I was very formal. I bowed to him, and I told him what the problem was, that the prisoners were having all these problems with this man and what he was doing. Kato's face just turned like an ice bucket. He thanked me very much and told me I was dismissed. A few moments later all hell broke loose in there. I heard him, and he slapped the living devil out of that guy: BANG! BANG! BANG! BANG! He made him stand at attention, too. I know that's what he did.

That was part of the situation. I was valuable to him. He liked those cigarettes. He smoked. Poor little man, he'd go around and pick up hot copper, and meanwhile, back over there, the prisoners were cutting big chunks of copper and sawing them down the middle and making slots and then getting a hacksaw and cutting it and making knives out of copper...knives and engravings. Poor old Kato was trying to help with the war effort by picking up copper pieces out in the yard. It was incredible.

This is a true story here. This is no myth. The war effort was going on, and it was hard to get shoes. We had to carry the ore down on those great, big rubber belts with different cords in between. Somebody got the bright idea that that would make a real, good shoe sole--real thick. Well, of course, it would be, and, of course, we got hold of something to do it. So the next thing we made a sole for ourselves, and those workers in the shop thought it was a very, very good idea. A little later the whole damn mill shut down. It had spread around town, and somebody else got in and they got a chunk right out of the main belt. Can you imagine? That happened. All sorts of strange things like that happened then.

I got in the black market by selling light bulbs and things like that.

Marcello: Describe how the black market worked.

Stanbrough: Well, in my case I had a key to the storeroom because I was trusted. I was the hancho of the group, and people would need to get things out of the storeroom--cotton-wrapped wire and so forth. It turned out that Japanese houses could not have light bulbs over fifty watts. They were allowed one light bulb per socket per year, and Japanese light bulbs in those days were not high quality. So I remember one day that one of the workers there asked me if I could get a light bulb out of the storeroom. I told him that I really couldn't do that because I'd get into trouble. He said that he sure needed one because his wife was very sick and needed one. So I said, "Well, I'll see what I can do." I knew him, so I got one for him, and he was very gracious about it.

He thanked me profusely. The next day he brought me two rice balls that this family had fixed for me. They were very, very good. Then it dawned on me: "Wait a minute! Those light bulbs are valuable around here." I had found out from him that they could only have one light bulb per socket. So I thought, "Why don't we get those out of the *benjo*?" "Well, no, you cannot do that because they're over a hundred watts, and the police would get you. They could come down and see that your house was too bright." So someone would come up to the window where I worked, and they'd start off and ask in Japanese for a light bulb. Of course, you always said no, that you couldn't do a thing like that. But you'd ask them, "Well, are you friends of So-and-so?" They'd tell you they were friends of So-and-so, and then you'd find out if they were, indeed, friends of So-and-so. The next step is: "Well, what do you trade?" Well, one day I got a quart of *sake* out of the deal. Usually, it was food and that sort of thing.

Other people were trading stuff around. I traded a watch off to Wilburn Rockett for a real nice leather jacket which he in turn traded with some other Japanese. Those trades were going everywhere.

Marcello: You mentioned earlier that the guards in the camp would be involved in this black market activity.

Stanbrough: Well, when I said real black market, I meant that they would trade things. The prisoners were getting paid--not very much--but, nevertheless, we could buy black tea. The Japanese did not care very much about black tea; they liked green tea. The black tea market was cut off, so we could use our money to buy that.

The other thing is that the prisoners made things, and those entered the black market. It was not a flourishing thing, but it was enough that in case of a real search coming on, some of those guards...usually, the camp guards were involved. There was one that we called "Wingy" because he lost part of his arm in Manchuria. He would come over and alert you because he didn't want you to get caught because you might tell where you'd done it.

Marcello: So in other words, once you got involved with one of the Japanese guards, then you kind of almost had him in the palm of your hand to some extent.

Stanbrough: That's right. He was going to look after you. When the Kempei Tai came in, we were alerted to that, and that was supposed to be a surprise raid. We knew about it. That was very important.

Marcello: How much fear did you have of the Kempei Tai?

Stanbrough: A hundred percent. I didn't know much about it, but the Japanese were frightened; and I felt that if the Japanese were frightened of it, I should be, too.

Marcello: Did you ever see any of them in operation?

Stanbrough: No. They sent us out of camp, and they searched things. I never saw anybody. Most of the searches were done when I was away. I didn't see anything. I saw nothing that they did.

Marcello: But you'd heard enough about them that you had a respect and fear for them.

Stanbrough: That's correct. It was rumor, but we decided that it was correct because the Japanese guards were scared to death of them.

Marcello: Generally speaking, then, you seemed to have been treated pretty well by the civilians under whom you worked.

Stanbrough: Absolutely. Now this is not true of some of our other groups that worked up at the mines. They were put under young boys, and they had to work very hard. I know these people; they were out there with us. Some of the boys that worked in the mine, some of the Australians, got the hell beat out of them--beat up with sticks and so forth like that.

Mr. Kato protected us. That was the main thing. One Japanese man did this. He protected us. If we did our work, he did all he could to make life reasonable for us. Now he had more talented people--that's true.

By the way, Zeigler was up there quite a bit. Zeigler and Bunch and I shared one room. Zeigler, of course, did a lot of preaching to me about going back to school. He had graduated as an electrical engineer and was very bright. He was a thorough man, and he could do things. He didn't work all the time. He was kind of sickly, but he kept pushing it.

Some of the other people had different experiences. Now Kelley worked in another place. I know another fellow that worked at welding and carrying tanks around. He was treated reasonably well, except it was very hard labor because you had to carry all those big, heavy tanks. Then in our place, too, if the work got slack, when you needed a telephone pole moved down the valley two miles, you just got a bunch of prisoners out of the gang or workshop and put them on the thing. I had to help out only one time, though. I could always find something that was more valuable to do, like, fix a telephone or something.

Marcello: What kind of food would you be receiving here?

Stanbrough The food was a mixture, and it was clean. It was one-third rice, one-third maize, and one-third barley. Now that's pretty hard on your stomach--the maize is. Then we would have a very thin soup made of what we called miso paste--that's a residue from soybeans--and maybe a little radish floating around in it. It got pretty skimpy. They'd level the bowl. We had just a regular Japanese bowl, and they would take a paddle and level it clear across the top. But we did get that three times a day.

Marcello: You got the same thing three times a day?

Stanbrough: We have soup in the morning, soup at night--and usually the soup at night was a little better--and then we'd have a ration for lunch. You'd have your own little mess kit to carry. I had an aluminum mess kit. Then you had to supply your own container. They never did issue anything to carry your food around in.

Marcello: What kind of a lunch did they give you?

Stanbrough: It was made up of the same mixture. For a while, we were on one-third rice and two-thirds barley. Then one time they put soybeans in. But getting back to the basic lunch, if you're lucky, it would be half-rice and half-barley mixed. A bowl of that was stuck in there, and then they'd bring out little fish occasionally, and you'd get half of one. Somebody got the head, and somebody got the tail. Then they'd give you maybe on some days a little radish with it.

I think our _bento_, as we called it, was a little better because the civilians saw it. We worked for the civilians, and the company paid for that food. If we had been given the food that the Japanese steel company provided, we would have been a lot fatter. That lousy Japanese captain we had most of the time, he was allowed a certain amount of freedom there, and they traded off stuff for _sake_ and had big _sake_ parties. The Japanese used our food for this. I know they did that.

Marcello: I'm sure the Japanese were not assigning the cream of the crop in their army to guard POW's in Japan.

Stanbrough: No. They did it with a minimum of force, though, in a way because we weren't going anywhere there. It was so obvious, so they brought in a minimal amount of guards. Incidentally, the guards didn't care; they were just there. Any one of us could have gotten out of the camp anytime we wanted to up in Japan. In fact, this fellow Bolt did. Now I don't know how he did this, but he got acquainted with some little girl down in the village. I guess they would have executed her, chopped her head off. But he would go down there on rare occasions and "take care" of her, and she gave him a chicken. He got caught cooking it in the bathhouse. We had actually a Japanese style bathhouse built on our property. This was all new building. We have photographs of them and everything.

It was cold, and we were thin, and our food got bad. It fluctuated, but it really got bad the last portion of the war. It really got bad. I mean, when I say bad, there was just no food to speak of. We didn't ever get anything like sugar. But we didn't have the diseases that Kyle Thompson and the others up in Burma had. We didn't have that up there at all. It was a temperate climate. The only thing we were plagued with was fleas. There were millions of them. That was a big deal, to go out in the summertime and get the fleas out of your blanket before you left for work and then check them again at night and then try to wrap up. The fleas were bad.

Marcello: How about bedbugs or lice or things like that?

Stanbrough: We had a lot of them. We had to be careful. The lice problem was there. We found out something. We'd take turns going to take baths. Either the black Dutch went first, or we did. If they went first, of course, the water was old, and then we'd just go down there and splash a little fresh water on because we wouldn't get in the tub. I got lice only on one occasion, and I didn't know what it was. I'd never seen a creature like that. I didn't know what it was. It came from putting my clothes in a bathhouse box when you'd go to take your bath. I killed them with caustic soda and so forth where I cleaned my clothes up at work. At work I had an electric heater that I had made. Of course, you made some for the boss, and you've got one, too. I could boil water. Then in their processing there, they used these caustic sticks, and I could use that for soap. If you had any oil around, that would make soap--lye stick. Then you'd just rinse it out.

My life was bad in a way, but it was far better than any of the rest of the people they had in that camp. We finally got two hundred more Canadians, who came in from Hong Kong. A strange thing happened there. The guards got out and told us that they were bad people, and we were not to have anything to do with them and so forth. We were good prisoners. Well, these other guys, it turned out, were bad. They didn't like us. They were French-Canadians. They didn't care for us at all. I don't think they had any aspirations. I don't know what their aspirations were, but it wasn't loyalty to friends, to England, to anybody. We had very little contact with those people.

Marcello: When you were on duty, that is, when you were at work, did you ever take any opportunities to sabotage any of the work that was being done?

Stanbrough: Nope. I would have if I'd thought it had anything to do with the war effort. In our way we did. We did it by slowing things down as much as possible. That's one thing. Of course, we knew the war was about over because I remember when the order came out that no more oil was to go in the journals of the big motors. If you're an electrical engineer, you know it's all over. That means that they were told to run those motors without oil until they dried up--processing iron ore for the war. No more oil was to go in those journals.

Marcello: The journals?

Stanbrough: We're not talking about little motors; we're talking great big ones. The shaft's coming out, and this armature is on it, and it's got to turn. The thing clamps at the end there, and it's in a pool of oil. And the thing where it's put in at the top is called a journal. Then the oil was taken out of the storeroom and shipped off on a truck. What are you going to do with that? What's going to happen to the motors? They didn't know. We knew. It was all over, ol' buddy, because all you can do now is run them until they're dry. When they're dry, they just smoke and freeze.

Marcello: There are a couple things we should have talked about earlier, but we didn't. We were mentioning food awhile ago. How about Red Cross parcels? Did you ever receive any Red Cross parcels?

Stanbrough: Very few. I got some Red Cross parcels that came in. The first one came in in early December of 1944 or sometime like that.

Marcello: January, 1944.

Stanbrough: Somewhere in there, it might be. January maybe. Nope. Maybe...

Marcello: You received an English Red Cross parcel on May 17, 1943, according to your diary.

Stanbrough: Okay. Knights of Saint John. That's it.

Marcello: Let's see. I'm sorry. You're right. The first American Red Cross parcel came on March 5, 1944. You got a parcel from home on January 19, 1944.

Stanbrough: That's it.

Marcello: Let's talk about the...well, which parcel would you like to talk about first?

Stanbrough: The one that had Spam in it.

Marcello: Okay.

Stanbrough: The doctor said that if we had three ounces of protein a day, we'd make out all right. I got together with Sergeant Fair--master sergeant--and we agreed that we would trade off our sugar...there was sugar, chocolate, and everything.

Marcello: Well, let's back up. Which parcel are we talking about?

Stanbrough: I don't remember. The first parcel, as I remember, from the English was a little narrow one, and I think it was from the Knights of Saint John. There wasn't too much in it, but it was kind of nice. We were glad it got there. Then the parcel from home had a lot of things in it. There was no cigarettes or anything like that. Until you brought that to my attention, I'd forgotten that we'd had a parcel from home. Most of that stuff was pretty useful.

Marcello: What were some of the things you got from home? Do you remember?

Stanbrough: Well, I think they had a list of things. There were little candy bars, and there was some canned food and chewing gum and some things like that. Who needs chewing gum? There were also bouillon cubes, and that's very good, by the way. You just can't think of how good that would be to a person. I remember bouillon cubes because that means flavor and means food and means everything. Oh, there were the little Domino cubes of sugar. If you hadn't had sugar in a long time, this pure rice tastes like sugar to you because chemically, if you look at the formula, it's almost identical. As soon as it hits the saliva in your mouth, it starts converting. So it was like eating pure rice, only we didn't get pure rice. But I do remember the regular parcels better. I forget how many I got. We should of gotten two of those regular Red Cross parcels, I believe.

Marcello: It says on your notes here that you had three.

Stanbrough: Three?

Marcello: Yes.

Stanbrough: Okay. I see. I thought I had three parcels. I forgot about my personal one.

Marcello: How about the one from home? Did it have any clothing items or anything like that in it?

Stanbrough: Yes, it did. They had little scarves and things like that in it. When I say personal, I think some of the stuff was personal in the sense that they were purchased. I'm not certain that that was done by the immediate family because some of them had clerverly concealed little crosses inside of them. I didn't have that, but somebody else had it. I don't really recall. But the other thing is, when I got those other parcels--there was three; that's right--we wound up and traded and got a lot of Spam. We traded everything off for Spam--cigarettes and everything for Spam.

Marcello: Did you eat it all at one time, or did you...

Stanbrough: Oh, of course not.

Marcello: ...ration it out?

Stanbrough: Fair and I went in together, and I think we got about twenty-five cans of it. We would divide it. It was twelve ounces, and we would cut it right down the middle. That's six ounces apiece. Then we would cut it right down the middle again, and that's three ounces. So today Fair would get three ounces, and I'd get three. Then if we had any fish the next day, we didn't eat the rest of the Spam. Then if we didn't have any fish or have any meat or anything, we'd split it because the doctor there said that if you had three ounces of protein a day, you'd pool it. We were getting to the point that I wanted to pool it. Those guys were making puddings and everything. It was kind of nice. But we just had Spam. That lasted us almost until the war was over.

Marcello: I knew that a lot of those Red Cross parcels had such things as powdered milk in them and cheese and things. Those are the things that you traded off for the Spam?

Stanbrough: That's right. We had one fellow who went out...he didn't like cheese, and he traded it off to the Japanese for something. I don't know why. This Japanese was out there, and he thought it was soap. He was out there trying to wash his hands with a bar of cheddar soap. He didn't know what it was because it was processed. I think that with the English parcel--I keep thinking in my mind--that we only had half of one. It was either a small box, or else we had it divided fifty-fifty.

Marcello: I'm even surprised that you received a full Red Cross parcel.

Stanbrough: We were, too. The Red Cross flooded that place because we even had beautiful Army overcoats that had come in, which the guards would get and keep and wear because these were much better than theirs. We got to laughing, and they found out what it was, and they cut the eagle buttons off.

Marcello: I know the Red Cross parcels also usually had cigarettes in them.

Stanbrough: They did.

Marcello: Were you a smoker at that time?

Stanbrough: No, I never was. I traded them off, though, and that was just part of it.

Marcello: I've heard some amazing stories about people trading food for cigarettes. Did this actually happen?

Stanbrough: They did that. They didn't like the American cigarettes after a while. Everybody at first wanted American cigarettes, but after we got American cigarettes, they were so weak. They liked the Japanese better. They were stronger.

This fellow Bolt that I keep mentioning...this is the story. One night he was reading. He got hold of a cookbook. I don't know where he got it. He was reading out the various menus over there--he and another fellow. You were asking earlier about this, and later in the war people did dream of food all the time. They might commence by talking about their girlfriends, but they would say, "Oh, she cooked a good pie." Then that was the end of that girl. From then on we talked about food. But he was reading this menu, and he was exclaiming, "Boy, does that sound good! I could just eat that!" He pulled the page out and ate the paper and all (chuckle). He was always into something.

Marcello: Did you have a favorite food that you were craving during that time?

Stanbrough: Steak. We thought that would be marvelous, but, of course, you couldn't have eaten a steak. Actually, our ambition was such that if we could get just a pure bowl of rice, we'd have been real happy.

Marcello: I know a lot of prisoners were always looking for something with which to flavor that rice. Was that true in your case, too?

Stanbrough: Yes, that's right. But, see, they use rice over there like bread, and we use it with gravy on it or something like that. By the way, I still contribute to the Red Cross to this day. I've heard a lot of people say the Red Cross is no good, that the Red Cross doesn't do this or that, and that the Salvation Army is better. I like the Salvation Army, but the Red Cross is such that I keep telling people that when you're really down and need some help, when there is no one who can do a thing for you--the United States government couldn't, not no one--the Red Cross did manage a little.

Marcello: How important were those Red Cross packages? In other words, I know that in some cases some of the prisoners have said that those were the difference between life and death. Was it that way in your case?

Stanbrough: It was critical for my health because when it got so that we didn't have any food, from the time that first Red Cross parcel came in...I was able...there was just nothing to eat hardly. We could still get grain. I was able to get my vitamins. We had long since learned that if you got a little fish, don't clean out the guts, because the doctor said that's where the vitamins are. I'm certain that it helped me. I'm positive. I was not in bad shape. I was never, ever sick, period. Now that's a very unusual thing. I would guess that in our camp there were no more than half a dozen people who would make this claim.

Marcello: Why do you figure that was so?

Stanbrough: Part of it was my training of not drinking bad water. The other was just conniving: trading news--when you could--for fried pies from Rayburn. That was not all of it, but that was part of it. Another thing was finding water when I needed it on that ship. There was also my good job. The job meant that I did not expend the energy that you would have to expend doing more physical labor. I had to walk two-and-a half miles to work, two-and-a-half miles back, but I sat on my behind up there most of the time and did technical things and thought technical questions. All I had to do was go back and tolerate the guards for a couple of hours until roll call, go to bed, and do it again the next day. No, I had a lot easier life than the rest of them.

Another thing was that I would be asked to go, with the guard accompanying me, down to the village to fix somebody's radio. It was not too many times, but several. The old lady there in this little farm house, who was a friend of Kato's or somebody, would be so delighted when I'd check her radio out and fix it up for her. They'd give me a little tea. Usually, the guards would go out looking for the girls, and then they would be nice to you. Japanese women were always nice to we prisoners if there were no males around. They might even give you food. They wouldn't even acknowledge you around a Japanese male. I was up to the mountains there one day, and the old man there had a stove, and he offered me some tea when the guard wasn't around. I found out that people were people, and the very simple farm people up there were nice to us. I didn't like those young "victory idiots." The "victory idiots" would kill you. Every ten days, we had to go from our place up to the mountains and do camp duties. In the wintertime, we'd go up to the mountains to bring wood down on slippery trails, and I took a terrible fall one day. It hurt my back for a long, long time. I'm over it now.

Marcello: What did you call these people a while ago?

Stanbrough: "Victory idiots."

Marcello: "Victory idiots." That was the prisoners' name for them?

Stanbrough: Yes, the "victory idiots."

Marcello: Now who were they?

Stanbrough: They were the young boys, about nineteen or so, that guarded us. I don't know why they were there. We called them "victory idiots."

Another thing was that if you referred to them as "Japs," well, they know who you were talking about, and you were in trouble. So we found that the thing to do was to call them "Nipshits." They didn't ever get on to that one: "Nipshits." So if you said "Nipshits," that was it. We had new interpreters come in our camp. When they'd come in, they came over immediately, because they'd been hired to be interpreters. They'd come in and try their... I don't know what got into Lieutenant Smith one night, but he decided...he said, "Let's all speak pig Latin." So when this interpreter came in, everybody talked in this ol' pig Latin, and this guy couldn't converse. Of course, he was trying to speak Japanese English, see.

We had a lot of people that had beriberi in our camp.

I don't know why I didn't get it because I was having essentially the same food.

Marcello: From what you've said, I don't think you ever really got any beatings. At least you haven't mentioned any that were severe beatings.

Stanbrough: I only got hit one time. I was knocked on the head, and I deserved it.

Marcello: Your last statement is one that I have surmised from a lot of these interviews, and that is that in a lot of cases the prisoners were asking for it. They had broken a rule. Regardless of how outrageous the rule was, if they broke a rule, they'd suffer the consequences.

Stanbrough: Yes. We had some Australians...one of them, a big ol' raw-boned guy...he was a nice guy, a big guy. He had big arms and wrists and everything. He was a powerful man. He was a nice guy, but he'd deliberately go out of his way sometimes, I think, to aggravate those people. I remember one day they were out beating on him with a hoe handle. Of course, it broke the hoe handle, and the guard got mad and tried to jab him with it. Some of the Australians would really deliberately aggravate those guys. I did what I was told.

Marcello: How did this one bashing come about?

Stanbrough: Oh, we were marching around outside, and we were supposed to stand at attention, and he just slouched there and didn't stand at attention. That was one other thing. They were pretty rigorous about military things, and calisthenics.

Marcello: So what did he do? Did he just give you one good slap or what?

Stanbrough: Oh, in my case?

Marcello: Yes, I'm talking about your case.

Stanbrough: In my case it was because I was caught gambling with those boys up there. This is my watermelon story, the one that made the newspapers after I got back. We were not allowed to gamble. It was against the rules. We gambled in there --Wilburn Rockett and some others in our little cubicle. This is the first camp in Ohasi--in that little cubicle or room--the eight of us in there. They were playing poker. I think that's what it was. This corporal came in, and he observed the cards, and he asked what they were doing. They said they were playing Trump-o. Trump-o is their form of bridge or something, and the Japs do play it. So he didn't do anything. But we were sitting there--three of us--matching pennies. We were not good gamblers anyway, so we were matching the pennies--odd man business--and had the coins under our legs. He asked what we were doing, and we said, "Nothing." This guy told us to move back, and when we did the pennies showed up. These are Japanese pennies. He made us all stand up, and, of course, they were everybody's pennies. So he lectured us while we were standing on the floor there. He lectured us and then screamed at us and told us how bad we were. Then he just hit this guy on the head: BANG! BANG! BANG! He went BANG! BANG! Then by the time he came back...he's the one that normally takes roll call, and I was in charge of that room. I told him it was no good to do that and so forth, and he stopped.

Then that's when Wilburn Rockett...see, I deserved that hit on the head. I think he put two knots on my head. I always knew I wasn't supposed to do that. Worse than that, I shouldn't have got caught. But that's when Wilburn laughed and told me, "Stanbrough, your head sounds like a green watermelon." Everybody laughed and had a great time, but I didn't think it was funny because my head was hurting.

A little later, when that guard came by for roll call, Wilburn was sitting down. He was supposed to stand up at ease, and I'm supposed to let him know when the guard's coming by. I didn't. He looked in there and saw Wilburn slouching down, and he...because Wilburn always did; he wouldn't stand up. He got in there and whopped ol' Wilburn a couple of times. Then after he left, I told ol' Wilburn his head also, too, sounded like a green watermelon. That's the story he told his mother, and it made the Wichita Falls newspaper. You couldn't hurt Wilburn Rockett if you hit him with a sledge hammer. Wilburn is a good friend of mine;

I wouldn't have got him killed or anything.

Bolt got beat up a couple of times, but he was caught stealing vegetables. So as was true in my case, if you observe the rules and do the military things, you'd stay out of trouble.

Marcello: On March 5, December 12, and December 31, 1944, you received some letters and cards from home.

Stanbrough: Yes.

Marcello: First of all, what did they do for your morale?

Stanbrough: The first one was great, and I was real pleased to get it. It was very nice--from that wife I had--but the strange one is the second one...the next ones were kind of cold, and they had a wrong tinge to them.

Marcello: They were both from your wife, also.

Stanbrough: Yes.

Marcello: All the mail you received was from your wife?

Stanbrough: No, I received a little more. I didn't receive anything from my father. I don't know why. He said later that he was told that he couldn't write because if he did that meant my wife's letters wouldn't get through. I don't know who told him that. Nevertheless, some people got letters --a lot of them. I think Zeigler got eighty-some-odd letters.

But when I got the last letter there from my wife, I discovered something had chilled her passions. I was reading between the lines. It was just there. Sure enough, when I got back home, that's what had happened. She had found somebody else.

But getting back to the letters, we had to be real good to get to write even a card at first. On a card you could check off: "I am well," or "I am this," and all these keen things. Then later they'd let you print a card, but it could be so many words on a line. But you had to work for a couple of months to earn the right to do that. Now I got a card one time--a nice one--from a Doctor Little's wife, Mrs. Little, and I answered that.

Marcello: Now who was she? Just a friend?

Stanbrough: She went to the same church I was--Presbytyrian Church--in Wichita Falls, Texas, and the dear lady wrote me a nice card. I was so pleased to get that from her that I sent one of my valuable cards to her, because the rest of the people weren't writing. Wilburn Rockett got all of his love letters from all of his lady friends, and everybody else seemed to get them. Here I was, getting very few letters. I sent that back to Mrs. Little, and she got it in a remarkably short time. My father was put out with me: Well, why didn't I write him? Why didn't I write something home? I said, "I wrote her because she wrote me." For a long time they held up the first letters that came in, and they cut holes all in them and everything like that. But later we got some.

Knowing the Japanese you can understand that. They were just trying to show off. After that they got lazy and just thought, "The hell with it."

Marcello: How many did you receive altogether?

Stanbrough: I don't think I got more than...I remember about three letters and maybe a couple of cards. Not very much. A lot more could have come through because I'm almost certain that Zeigler got up to eighty. I learned an important lesson in my life then. Those Catholic guys around there, their wives are much more loyal to stick with you than those Protestant types where I came from.

We had one Japanes officer--I've got to say this--that was good to us. We only had him for about a couple of months. His name was Inaki. He was transferred down to a camp that was later devastated by the battleships. Inaki would not allow any prisoners to be struck. Inaki made us put up volleyball nets. He was a good guy. He was a Catholic school product. I'm telling you, he was a nice guy.

Just before the war was over, the Navy came back the second time to Kamaishi, and they really blasted it. There was a lot of people that had been captured down on Wake Island and so forth in that camp that lost their lives. We had some eighteen or nineteen burn victims out of that. They brought them up to our place to try to do something.

I didn't do it because I'm not a medical type, but our medical boys--Navy guys-- were over there pulling flesh off of them. They'd spent a week suffering in a schoolhouse. Inaki had that camp right during the middle of the thing and was pulling prisoners out of the burning buildings. He was a good guy. I'm sure they didn't do anything to harm him after the war was over.

Marcello: I should've asked you this awhile ago when we were talking about the black Dutch and the bathing and so on. What kind of bathing facilities were available here at this camp?

Stanbrough: We used the public ones when we first got to the first camp.

Marcello: These are like communal tubs or something?

Stanbrough: Communal tubs, that's right. But there were separate ones for the males and females. It was a communal tub, Japanese style, at the main camp. It had a fire box which was attended to outside. Then it heated up this metal. Then the procedure is this: You'd stand on the floor that was the drain, and you've got wooden buckets with handles; and you scoop up the water, dip it over you, soap up, do it again; and then you jump in the tub. Well, in those days I didn't like to sit with some of those real black, black, black Dutch. So it was communal sitting, and the water was incredibly hot.

Marcello: Did the Japanese require you to take these baths, or was it strictly a voluntary sort of thing?

Stanbrough: I don't remember that other than I think that we were encouraged.

Marcello: How often did you take a bath?

Stanbrough: Twice a week. Our group had it first one time, and the next time it was second. So what we got in the habit of doing was that we would just take our turn when we were first because after that, when you get two hundred people in the water, it was kind of bad. You could keep pretty clean, and I was also in a position where I could get water at work.

Marcello: How often were you reissued clothing? Or weren't you ever reissued clothing?

Stanbrough: I was never reissued clothing. There was some Japanese-style worn-out, patched-up pants that one could go and ask for from the storekeeper at the camp. Most of the black Dutch had them, but all the rest of the guys were wearing their clothes with patches on them. I happened to wind up with three shirts and three trousers, and I made the war in those. In fact, when I went back, I was still remembered for it. No, we weren't really reissued anything. We didn't have any overcoats. We had some out of that first batch, but the Red Cross-issued Army overcoats, we didn't get those. The Japs kept them.

Marcello: You mentioned those blankets that were issued when you first went to Ohasi. They were pretty thin cotton blankets, weren't they?

Stanbrough: Yes, they were. I still have a blanket that I acquired from an Australian. I still have it at home now. I traded for it. So we carried a blanket; they didn't take it away from us.

Marcello: What had happened to your own blankets?

Stanbrough: I liked the Australian blanket better, so I traded my old ugly-looking, American army, olive-drab blanket for a good Australian blanket, and I kept it.

If anybody asked me what was really bad on the trip, I would guess I would say that it was pretty bad on that ship going to Japan because so many people were dying. I remember when Chief Alderman was dying. He was off the cruiser Houston. He was a real good radio operator. It was so cold up there. They put him on a separate place because when he had that diarrhea he was just messing up everything. Somebody would go up there and clean him up, and I don't remember who the other guy was. Just one other guy and myself would go up there and try and clean him up and tend to him, but he didn't last long. The poor guy just died. But we didn't have too many Americans die on the way up.

Marcello: On what leg of that trip were most of the deaths occurring? When you went from Formosa up to Japan?

Stanbrough: Yes, because it was a cumulative effect of lack of food and dysentery. I said diarrhea. Dysentery was what I was trying to say. Dysentery is disaster. If you drank any of that bad water, you got dysentery and you died. You could wash with it, but the Japanese would strike somebody if they saw you try and drink out of it. Somebody would if they got thirsty enough. I guess we would. I wouldn't. If you're convinced you're going to die if you drink that stuff, then you'd better not drink it.

But the main thing is, they really were not humane in the shipping of prisoners at all. They'd crowd all of them in the holds, and there was no place to sleep. We had to sleep on bodies. You either stood up, or you had your own space, or you were on somebody. You could get somebody to crowd over, but you were touching somebody or something. That was really a bad situation.

Marcello: You mentioned having contact with the Japanese soldiers on one of these ships. In fact, you mentioned you virtually slept among them.

Stanbrough: I slept underneath the...that was Jack Karney, who arranged that on the Dai Nichi Maru. We were going on a short trip.

Marcello: From everything I've read, they packed those guys in, too.

Stanbrough: Oh, yes, we were packed in. I thought it was just temporary, that they were holding us there until we moved.

Marcello: I mean the Japanese soldiers. I think they even packed them in real tight.

Stanbrough: Oh, no. No, no, no. That was very interesting to go up in their hold. They had two tiers in their hold and an open area in the center. They had bunks with _tatami_ mats on them all the way around, and then they had another layer of each. So each man had his traditional...those mats, I think...I'm going to say they are either 6 x 4 or 8 x 4. But they're pretty big, and each man had that. So he had his own _tatami_ mat. I observed them.

That's another thing I noticed. They sat around there and laughed like little children. These were combat troops. They had on these little G-strings that they'd wear, and they had a head band on, and they were playing little card games and laughing and cutting up. They looked like a bunch of kids, and it was real hard for me to imagine that those guys could go out and defeat us.

Like I said, one of them there was just determined I had to teach him how to sing "Home on the Range." I cannot sing. He knew a little English, and he was determined to sing it. He liked to sing "Blue Moon," and he would sing that. The other one was "Home on the Range." But everytime he came to the part where they said, "...the skies are not cloudy all day," he was calling them "skis." They had a little rice patty thing or something.

But Karney arranged that for us. That boy was an incredible guy about getting things done. How he ever talked them into letting us come up there...because we were the only two. But you're right. They were incredibly crowded, and the ship going to Japan was just about the same as the Dai Nichi Maru.

Marcello: From most everything that I've read and seen, it seems as though the attrition rate among the Americans was always considerably lower than that of any other nationality, possibly with the exception of the Australians, and then maybe it was about even there. How do you account for this?

Stanbrough: In our case it was because of our head start on the shots and the food we had to kick it off with. Now I don't know if that bears out in every place, but we had a complete head start on the English. The poor English didn't have any shots at all.

Marcello: That's so simple that nobody has ever mentioned it before, and I'm glad you have--just this whole business of the inoculation program that one goes through when one enters the service.

Stanbrough: Look how many times.

Marcello: That's right.

Stanbrough: The first was in the National Guard when we got mobilized. We got shots. We go down to Camp Bowie, and the duty doctor said, "More shots." Everytime we turned around...when we got ready to go over to the PLUM, we had to have some more shots. We get over there, and we're getting ready to go...it looks like it's getting bad, and we don't know what's going on, so our own doctors give us more shots. We really got, I would say, at least three times the shots we should have in a very short time. That's just my guess, but there's something that accounted for it.

The other thing was, of course, that we had a few months' food on them. They didn't. We definitely did not share the money the officers had--our American group. That was used for only the cruiser Houston and our group. That was 680 people roughly. So that meant we were not in terribly bad shape in October.

I don't know how long shots last, but I know this had to have something to do with it.

Marcello: Okay, this brings us into those days just before the actual surrender itself.

Stanbrough: Oh, wait. When you say surrender, there's a little difference in my thinking of surrender and capitulation. If you surrendered in battle, I don't think you'd wind up with all your goodies. Capitulation is when the whole country surrenders. The whole country capitulates. Well, you've got everybody in the same shoes, and everybody in our case had all their little goodies with them. The cruiser Houston was in battle, and they were captured when they came ashore, or they picked them up in the water. They had nothing on.

Marcello: I'm referring to the Japanese surrender, not your surrender.

Stanbrough: Oh, I'm sorry. I'm sorry. Okay.

Marcello: Now let's talk about the days leading up to the end for Japan.

Stanbrough: All right. It was pretty simple. I had heard on my radio what had happened, and from my study of physics, I understood when they said the energy of the sun. I knew it was atomic. When they started talking about it as twenty kilotons or something, I knew that was pretty big. So these are the things I heard.

We knew that there was something going on because the radio was talking about it. However, the townspeople were told that the emperor would address the people. They were very glad to hear that the emperor was going to talk to them--on the radio. I don't know that he'd ever done this before. I don't think he had. But there's one thing for sure. They were not going to let any prisoners hear the emperor because it would be sacrilege for us to hear the god's voice, they thought. That day we marched to work, and sometime in the morning--I don't know whether it was ten or eleven o'clock or something--they took the prisoners out and moved us up into the tunnel where the ore cars went, and they took a guard with us. Now this is a fellow named Sanchu. They did this in the other section of the place, too. We could not hear the emperor's voice.

After that we went back, and there were girls sitting around crying. The men were sitting and just looking strange and staring. Of course, our guard hadn't heard the news, so he wanted to know right away what was up. They told him, and his face fell, too. Then immediately the Japs told us to get our things, and we were marched back to our camp. That was the last day we worked.

My attitude, and Zeigler's, too, was that the little sons-of-bitches got the news today. We got down to the camp, and it was very shortly thereafter...we didn't work anymore. The guards disappeared, except the good ones. The good guards were still there, and we stayed in the camp. A little later a group came down to the village and made Zeigler the mayor of the village. They also gave him a car, a Buick, that belonged to the mayor.

Marcello: Was he the ranking officer in this camp?

Stanbrough: No, it was a fellow named Dockweiler, and I don't know why he wasn't made mayor. I didn't care much about Dockweiler. I don't know much about him. Maybe he left or something, but, yes, I would say he was probably the ranking man at that time.

Then they dropped food and supplies; later the airplanes came in. Meanwhile, back at the camp, I went up and got my transmitter that I had constructed, brought it down to the camp, turned my fifty-watt job on, and tried to contact people--unsuccessfully. I put up a good antenna. I knew it was working. I put a florescent tube out, and I could light it up and draw an arc off of it. But I couldn't get anybody. The airplanes came over and dropped food out of B-29's, but the parachute lines would break, and it would spill those fifty-five-gallon drums. Some of them were welded together to make 110-gallon loads, and they had peaches in them and everything. One of them went right through our outhouse and splashed down all that stuff up. I watched that stuff, and I saw it break. They were little black dots that got bigger, bigger, and bigger as they came down. I saw then where it was going to hit, and I'd move. They actually injured some of the people in the village across the road.

Marcello: What was your reaction when you heard that the war was over?

Stanbrough: Oh, boy, I wasn't shocked, but I couldn't do a thing. I was listening, and it was the middle of the night. I was really hanging in there on that radio. I crawled down my ladder and went over there and got by the foot of Zeigler and Captain Epley, I believe it was. It was a Navy officer there, a surgeon. I told him, "It's all over," and what had happened, and it was in hushed tones. Some of the other people knew about it, and the question was, "What do we do about it?" They elected that we had to keep quiet until the Japanese heard about it, because they said you couldn't afford to just turn the whole camp loose, running around loose. That was a hard secret to keep.

Marcello: A lot of guys, had they known that the war was over, would of tried to test their freedom or test the Japanese or whatever.

Stanbrough: The whole thing was maintaining discipline. I don't know what the thing is, but we had discipline in our camp still. Oh, yes, they cussed people out, and the sergeants treated each other as equals and all; but, nevertheless, when Captain So-and-so gave an order, that was what you did. We sergeants would try to see that it was carried out. We didn't have that much say-so, but we did respect our officers. The reason is, Zeigler had to go and face the Japanese commandant when there was something to be faced. That takes courage when you are afraid. That's why I think he had more courage than people give him credit for. He got sick, got upset, and stumbled and turned up, but if honor and duty said he had to do it, he'd go over there and get into trouble. I'm very fond of him. A lot of people are not, but they didn't know him.

It was a long time ago, and I really don't remember much more. I've talked all day, but it's hard to remember things. Actually, I do remember those notes I had hold of, and that brings back things. Of course, you've touched buttons that I'd forgotten all about.

Marcello: So the war's over, and you know it. Then the Japanese come up and make Zeigler the mayor of the town. Now everybody knows that the war is over. Like you mentioned, very shortly the planes come over, and they drop the food.

Stanbrough: Yes, everybody knows the war's over. And worse than that, some of the villagers got some of the food, and the police caught them and brought them back and asked Zeigler what he wanted done with them. If he'd said, "Shoot them," they would, because they were dorobos, thieves. So what he did was, he ordered that they have signs made to what they had done and that the policemen would march them--starting tomorrow--from one village here to the next village and do it all day until the sun went down. The police were very pleased with that situation. They were so proud of carrying out the order of marching those crooks up and down the road all day long. This is their own people!

Marcello: Did you leave camp at all at this stage? Now that the war is over?

Stanbrough: No. At any time I was in Japan, I had never seen a cow; but they brought some cattle in there so they could be slaughtered, and we could have meat. One thing we found out later is that we really were in no condition to eat beef or anything like that. So we stayed there. I was listening to the radio, and I knew about the landing up in the north and stuff. Sergeant Kelley wanted to leave, and somebody else did. Kelley was going to go to Tokyo. That was the big deal--go to Tokyo. We were told by MacArthur on the radio that the prisoners were to stay in the camps. We were told that, and they actually sent teams up to tell us that. A couple of Americans came in, all well-dressed. But it turns out that he was bound to go anyway, and I said, "Well, that's the wrong way to go. The ships are up in a harbor in the other direction. I wouldn't want to go to Tokyo with everybody. Go the other way." He now says that that was a good thing for him because he went the other way and announced himself, and the Navy took him over right away. They were up on Hokkaido at Hakodake and other places up there.

Marcello: So do the Americans come to you, or do you go to the Americans?

Stanbrough: They came up there, and we got on a train, and they took us down to the village. They took us down to a big white hospital ship out there in September. The Americans came up there, and we rode the train. We went down to the village and got on the train. We went down to Kamaishi; everybody was standing around on the banks and waving good-bye at us. And you know what? We prisoners got very upset when we saw new Americans chasing people and trying to take their swords away from them, because the police were really and truly law-and-order people and had never, ever bothered any of us, the ones in uniform. So we tried to protect them and got very upset about these Americans stealing things. See, we'd been there so long that we were indoctrinated that you don't steal. Well, they were trying to take things out of people's houses, and we were very opposed to that.

Marcello: These would be the American occupation troops in Japan.

Stanbrough: Right.

Marcello: Just like the Japanese occupation troops in other areas where you were.

Stanbrough: Yes. We had one interesting happening. There was a fellow from Taiwan, Chinese, who had gone to one of these missionary schools. His name was Furioshi. That's what they called him, even though that's not Chinese. But he'd gone off to Tokyo, gone to a university. He was very, very bright, an effervescent guy; and he liked us. He did not like the Japanese particularly, even though he was an engineer there. He kept us informed about everything the Japanese did, almost, and cautioned us about being careful. He really went out of his way; he had to be careful. He wanted to go home to Formosa in the worst way (that's what they called it then). Zeigler made arrangements with him: "You be down there with your minimum stuff on the dock when we leave." And so he did. He was down there in the crowd on the dock waving good-bye like everybody else. Zeigler went back over to tell him good-bye and pushed him over there, and we put him on the boat and carried him home. And his name is Furioshi. Zeigler got that done.

Marcello: Describe the processing that you underwent now that you were liberated and aboard ship.

Stanbrough: Well, we were brought in there, and they checked us all out. We took the clothes off, and they looked at us and thumped us and filled out little pieces of paper. They were very careful about what we had to eat. We thought we'd get steaks. No way. We couldn't have eaten a steak; it would've killed us. They gave us light foods. The thing that I recall is that over and over, for a long time, the treatment was this canned fruit cocktail. You could get all the fruit cocktail you wanted. That's the most amazing thing. They had some mashed potatoes but not too much butter or anything--the stuff that's not too rich. They were very careful not to let us have rich things.

Marcello: What kind of material, other than peaches, was being dropped to you when you were back up in the camp?

Stanbrough: It was canned vegetables and stuff like that.

Marcello: How about K-Rations or C-Rations or any of that sort of thing?

Stanbrough: Yes, we had some of those. I didn't think they were bad at all. It was pretty good. Oh, they also dropped jackets and clothing. In fact, up until recently, I had the jacket that I brought back.

Marcello: I know that in some cases the prisoners were deloused and so on. Did that happen to you or your group?

Stanbrough: I don't remember what they did. I think we were a cleaner group than that. We did go and take showers, that's true, and I remember that we did use some kind of smelly soap. I think that was it.

Then they put us on this ship and took us down to be processed. Somehow or other, we got to Tokyo and eventually down to the 29th Replacement Depot around Manila. We had to stay there until we got fattened up, and that's simple.

Marcello: It doesn't take long to put that weight back on, does it?

Stanbrough: No, but they sure wouldn't feed much fancy foods to us. They kept the kitchen opened night and day. At the Replacement Depot, they had a few Japanese prisoners maintaining the place and all, and they were having trouble getting them to do the work. They were a little surly group. That's what we were told. My gosh, when one of the guys went out there and shouted at them and everything, boy, they jumped to attention and didn't present any more problems because they knew they were under a different breed of cats then. I saw Americans there--enlisted men--that was very rude to officers. They said things that we would have never permitted, and we could see that things had really gone downhill.

The interrogation was very interesting, and I've told this story many times. Maybe you've heard it. The interrogation was that brought you in for your interviews, and they'd check off where you were. Then they took it, and that meant you went to certain places. They had files there, and they started bringing pictures out, and you would look at all the pictures to see if you knew anyone in those pictures of Japanese. If you did, they wanted to know. They had numbers down here (gesture), and you'd tell what number. And you would then write on the back of this about if you knew his name or anything to do with his family. I remember I saw one that I recognized, and I said, "Well, he was a good guy." He said, "Well, he might have been good to you but not to someone else. I came to find out he was atrocious! They were looking for him. He was the one that was so brutal to the Canadians.

Marcello: Where did this interrogation or debriefing take place?

Stanbrough: I want to say it was the 19th or 29th (or whatever it is) Replacement Depot south of Manila.

Marcello: That's kind of interesting because at least in your case you knew the names of some the people with whom you were associated. Those guys up in the jungle, I swear, didn't know anything but nicknames. I don't think most of them knew the names of their guards.

Stanbrough: We went to a lot of problems to know their names. And not only that, this one fellow by the name of Owashti or "Smitty the Spy," as we called him...Well, "Smitty" actually worked for the company. "Smitty" told me two years before the war was over that they were going to get wiped out, that America was going to win. He said, "If they could read my thoughts, I would be executed," which is true. He kept us informed of all these things. Plus, he was also a camp photographer and took pictures. Do you know he came around and sold those pictures of everybody in the camp. You could get pictures of Japanese officers and everything. We gave him one yen for a picture, so we had a whole stack of photographs back in our camp. You might of seen some of them, the Japanese camp. I have them--a bunch--in my cellar.

Marcello: Once you get back to the States, what further processing took place?

Stanbrough: I insisted upon flying back, and I did get to do that; but the main gang, my group at the Replacement Depot, went off in a ship about three days before. They stayed out in the harbor for some time. I got to fly back via Hawaii, then to San Francisco, and to the hospital there in San Francisco. I remember we came in at night, so they took us immediately in to get something to eat. It was that fruit cocktail. You could have oatmeal, too, and stuff like that.

The next morning at daybreak, a bunch of us were sitting out there--they made us have these robes on--on the steps of the hospital. We watched these pretty-looking girls coming to work with red lipstick, and we hadn't seen that in about three-and-a-half to four years. Of course, the girls looked great. If you hadn't seen painted lips, it looked so strange, and we sat there and marveled at that.

So we stayed there and got a check-up. Then they sent me the next thing down to...they'd send you to a hospital near your destination, and I went to Van Nuys, California, to a hospital there. I stayed there for a little while. Then a member of the family came to get me, and so I checked out of the hospital and left with orders to come back on a certain date.

Marcello: Was part of your family living in the Van Nuys area?

Stanbrough: Well, my wife was there. She came up to get me, but she also the same night told me that she wanted divorce. You know, there were a hell of a lot of things happening, and I later asked her, "Why didn't you let me know when I called you, or why didn't you let me know when I was in the prison camp? You wrote. Why didn't you tell me then?" She said she just couldn't do that because she'd heard about all these other problems that we were supposedly having. I said, "Don't you know that when you're in a bad situation, a little more trouble doesn't hurt?" And it really wouldn't have. That was my least concern, about what she was doing right then, I'm sure.

Anyway, I'd like to have then come back to Fort Sam Houston, and one of the decisions to be made was about what I wanted to do. I told my wife I was going back to college, coming back to Texas. She said, "I'm not going back to Texas." But that was a discussion a day or two later. So I indeed stayed around and came back. I was determined to go back to college.

Marcello: Just for the record, did you have any problems adjusting to civilian life once you got back?

Stanbrough: Well, I didn't think I did. We had been briefed...oh, that's another part of our briefing--that you were away from the family and that you should be careful because they were not accustomed to your ways and so forth. Of course, meanwhile, "back at the ranch," they were getting the same kind of story in pamphlets, getting mailings and so forth, that you know you're a returning veteran or something. I didn't have too much trouble.

Marcello: When did you begin school?

Stanbrough: February of 1946.

Marcello: At the University of Texas?

Stanbrough: No, at Midwestern. I went in and tried to get enrolled because I was just out of the hospital. I was on one of these ninety-day furloughs, because they kept us in until June 14 or something. Anyway, I had time on my hands, and

I was really upset about my family situation in a way, so I went to see if I could go back into school there. They were very kind to me. The registrar allowed me to do so even though the semester had started. It was agreed that I had to make up the first quizzes. So I signed up, and I had a good time going to school. People were very nice and kind to me. I do remember that one boy came to me one day and said, "Look, we were in the service, too. Why are you wearing your uniform?" I said, "Because I'm still in." And I was. They kept your mind busy, and I worked that summer. Then I went off to the University of Texas.

Marcello: That had always been your goal, to go to the University of Texas, had it not?

Stanbrough: No, Texas A & M. I had always wanted to go to Texas A & M all my life.

Marcello: For engineering?

Stanbrough: That, yes, and I wanted to go to that school. I actually took the car and drove from Wichita Falls directly to Texas A & M, drove into the front of the campus, drove around, took a look at that bleak place for a second. I saw a sign that said, "Don't park, by the order of the commandant," people and GI's policing the grounds. I didn't even stop the motor. I just went and sailed around over there, and I saw a little place where the guys were lined up to go to the theater, and I headed for "heaven."

I went to Austin, Texas, to the University of Texas. It looked like a gorgeous campus with beautiful young women on Guadeloupe Street on the "Drag." I went over to see the registrar, and he let me register. Within a half an hour after I parked the car, I was already in. Now that's pretty good, and I was really glad. I had had my transcripts and stuff from the place.

Marcello: And you eventually majored in physics at the University of Texas.

Stanbrough: That's right. I went in at first in engineering, but in engineering I was so far behind. I was taking elements of mechanism, and it was way too tough for me. I was taking advanced calculus, and I'd forgotten it. By Christmastime I was getting back into it, but it was way too late. I was headed for probation, and I did indeed make probation. The dean had me over in his office, and he encouraged me not to get too discouraged. He said, "You have a very good exam from your board. You've got to get settled down." Of course, I had to learn how to study again.

So I switched. I had met a fellow that was another fellow "Ham," and by this time I had a fine radio station. I was being heard all over Australia again and later, Okinawa, because I had put up a big beam antenna. I switched to the Physics Department because they had a lot of good electronics courses. I was headed for a B.S. because I wanted to work for the oil business, especially Schlumberger. I got my B.S., but I stayed on. The professor got me to stay on for the master's degree because he wanted me to continue my work. And that's about the history of it. Good ol' Uncle Sam paid for my education.

Marcello: So you did get both the bachelor's and the master's degree at the University of Texas.

Stanbrough: Yes, at the University of Texas. I got a job that summer after I got my master's. Once you get a job making money, it's kind of hard to stop, so I thought it'd be all right to stay out another year. I took a couple of courses toward the Ph.D., but then I got a good job with the Defense Research Laboratory working on Navy problems. And I've continued to be supported by contracts from the Navy ever since, off and on.

Marcello: So you've been working with that organization since 19...

Stanbrough: Well, I worked for them for ten years, and then I went for one year to Woods Hole Oceanographic on Cape Cod, and from there I've been all over the world. I've been just everywhere. I've been to the Seychelles, Madagascar, all over there, making measurements. I actually was in charge as the chief scientist of a Navy expedition in 1977 to the Indian Ocean and up to the Arabian Sea, Straits of Hormuz, Bahrain, and all the places we're worried about now. We did the acoustics there, and it has all been mapped up and reported. We now know what the water is like.

Because of my electronic background, I was asked to do the electronics on a little job, and this job led to the formation of a company. We had four guys. From these four people, Tracor now has grown to something like 9,000. It's headquartered in Austin, and that's why I like to go back there. It's sort of interesting that you get mixed up in one thing that leads to another--the connection from one to the other. Then that leads to something else in electronics. Here's a company that four of us started, and now it has that many people.

I don't know...it's been a very rewarding life. I've had a good life. There are several things people ask: "Well, what did you learn in the prisoner-of-war camp?" It sounds facetious when you say "survival," but that is true. One thing is survival. The other thing is that I resolved that, although I might never be rich, I'd never be poor or hungry. If you come to my house at Cape Cod...if anyone hears this, and they come visit, they'll see a nice freezer filled up with food. They'll ask me, "Well, you're a bachelor. Why do you have all that?" I have a nice big house on a one-acre lot and a big freezer. I'll say, "Well, that's called the POW syndrome," and that's it.

Marcello: Well, I think that's a pretty good place to end this interview, Mr. Stanbrough. I want to thank you very much for taking this time to speak with me. You've said a lot of very interesting, and, I think, important things. Let it be said that I have finally interviewed Jess Stanbrough. They've been telling me I needed to do this for a long time.

Stanbrough: I'm considered a character. Thank you very much, and it's been my pleasure. You've been very good, and I'm sure glad you could take time to do it.