

(Tape 1 of 4)

An Oral History Tape Transcription

Of

Interviewer: Martha Mayo

Interviewee: Clifford Warren

November 10, 1987

MM: Sterling Municipal Library. I'm having an oral history conversation with Mr. Clifford Warren.

CW: I have, uh ...

MM: You were 17 when you went in?

CW: No, I was 16 when I went in.

MM: Sixteen? Let me make ...

MM: Ok, do you – did you have to have – you had to have permission from your parents? Or did you – how did you...

CW: Well, back in those days, we were ... uh, you know – I come out of East Texas, and we were just about to starve to death because of the

MM: Yeah. The Depression. Uh-huh.

CW: Depression. And we hadn't really come out of it – the Depression – when I went in. So, I pulled a little shenanigan and got some people to sign for my dad and mother.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And I went in as a 16 year-old saying I was 18.

MM: Oh, my goodness.

CW: And, uh, the only place that they had open at that time was the Philippines. And I took it. You know, I took any opportunity to better myself.

MM: Sure, sure. Yeah.

CW: You know what I mean? And ...

MM: There were probably a lot of young men in that position, weren't there?

CW: Yes, there was another fella in my battery that was uh, about six weeks younger than, uh – six weeks older than me. And after we were captured and in Cabanatuan, I met a man that was only 14 years-old, and went in the army.

MM: Oh.

CW: Now, a 16 year-old, like me and this other friend of mine ...

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And now, if you try, you can put yourself over. And we did try. We made, I think, a couple of the best soldiers there.

MM: Yeah.

CW: No one could really out compete us – let's put it that way – in the jobs that was assigned to us. But now, let's face it: no 14 year-old can actually put himself over.

MM: No.

CW: He was a huge, overgrown, sweet boy out of one of the northern states. But he was, mentally, he was just immature.

MM: Immature.

CW: And they had come on to the fact that he was only 14. And they had him papered up and everything to come back to the United States on the next ship, which, you know, unfortunately didn't get to make it.

MM: Oh.

CW: So, once through it and back here, he was a – you know, who questioned how old who was?

MM: Yeah.

CW: And especially all of the uh, uh ... paperwork and everything had been lost, naturally.

MM: Oh.

CW: He stayed in the military and retired out. And then joined the Silver Service and retired from it, and he's living in El Paso, Texas, now.

MM: My goodness. Just think: he probably retired when he was 34 years-old, huh? (Laughs)

CW: Yes, ma'am. Um-hmm. Right.

MM: From the army. Or from the military. Well, you, you went right to the Philippines? What year did you get to the Philippines?

CW: Uh, we got there in, in uh, April of '41 before the war started in December.

MM: So you were there a year?

CW: Not quite. About eight months.

MM: Oh, oh.

CW: Before the war began.

MM: Ok, but before Corregidor fell?

CW: Yes ma'am. Bout, before the war started.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Um ... see, we had six months of war before we were captured, see.

MM: Oh.

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: Well you at-, you were aware that war was coming when you'd gotten in?

CW: Yes, ma'am. We were more aware out there than the American people were back here. I mean, once we got there, and started training – see, we had no training back here.

MM: Oh.

CW: The, uh ...

MM: You went over there as a new recruit?

CW: Yes, ma'am. We had no training at all here. Uh ... they were putting men on ships and sending them over there, and giving them their first military training there. Um ... they were trying to build the Philippines up real quick to – they were trying to scare the Japanese into a thing. They wanted 'em to jump before they were really ready. And I really think that they made 'em do it.

MM: Oh.

CW: I, I'm serious.

MM: You mean, Pearl Harbor? You think they were ...

CW: Oh, I'm ...

MM: sucked in

CW: I'm always – I have always been of the opinion, course this is my opinion ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And not the official opinion, now. But, um, many of us has always been of the opinion that, uh, Pearl Harbor was no surprise to Roosevelt and his, uh, cabinet.

MM: Oh, I, I know of other people who have said that. Yeah.

CW: Certain people ... Yeah, certain people in his cabinet. Um, you see, the Japanese and the Germans had a, uh, peace pact, or a war pact.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: We call it peace; they call it war.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Ok, let's face it. And the – where if the Japanese got entangled with certain other powers, the Germans would come to their aid.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And the Americans and the British were the other powers, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Meaning, meaning them other powers. Well, uh, Roosevelt couldn't do anything in the world enough, that is, to anger the Germans to get them to declare war on us. Well the Democracy has never declared war first. See? Traditionally they haven't. And so they had to find a way into war through a backdoor. Number one to save England.

MM: Um-hmm. Yeah.

CW: Give us a place to go back in the continent. And to show you why that they done that, the German was the most dangerous military machine.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Let's face it. The German mind, military mind, was a lot more dangerous than the Japanese military mind. Their, uh, production capabilities and scientific advances were many times ahead

MM: Yeah.

CW: of the Japanese, see. So we were afraid of them. And to prove the point, where did the Americans go to, and who did they go to whip first? The Germans, naturally.

MM: Oh. Yeah.

CW: See, uh, the, uh, Japanese hit us, and – at Pearl Harbor, right?

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Ok. Now, traditionally we should have went out there and started boxing their ears around. But we didn't. We just, we went and sent all of our production to Europe to take care of the situation there first.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And we armed, completely armed, practically, every Russian soldier.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know. That kind of a thing. To do a number on the Germans first. We had to. Uh ... well, there's things that I could say that I don't have – but, uh, actual evidence on.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But I do believe that the British Intelligence Agencies had been informing Roosevelt of the progress the German's were making on the bomb. Big bomb.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Ok. That – the big bomb. So they were afraid of the Germans. More so than ...

MM: Yeah.

BW: But they had to have a way to get in war with the Germans. So the Japanese ...

MM: Oh.

CW: ... being a, an expansion-minded type people ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: They were ready to go to war. You know. But I do think that the, uh, Roosevelt's cabinet, him and his cabinet, um, caused the Japanese to jump some six months to maybe one year ...

MM: I see.

CW: ... before they ordinarily would have.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh-huh.

MM: Well, did you have any – did, did you feel like you could beat ‘em when you were out there? What, what did the people there ...

CW: Oh, yes ma’am. Yes, ma’am.

MM: ... feel like?

CW: When, uh, war broke out, we were very cocky.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know, let’s get at ‘em and the American’s will be here in three months, and so forth and so on, you know. And, uh – but that feeling went down the drain in, uh, mid-February.

MM: You knew that there was only one way it would end?

CW: Yes, ma’am. Only one way that it would be terminated. Uh, that is when – early in February – when General MacArthur left.

MM: Oh. Yes.

CW: And went to the Philippines, uh, left the Philippines and went to Australia.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Well, when – see, we did not know that he left that day.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yes. You’ve heard this old thing about MacArthur saying, “I’m going to go now, boys.”

MM: Yeah?

CW: Well, he didn’t say that when he left. He didn’t dare to. Like I was speaking earlier, before we started recording, just out there, out of gun range was about 20 Japanese ships. And if they would have known that he was slipping out ...

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: ... on them P.T. boats, they would have got enough small boats with the men in ‘em over the sides of their ships. And they would have completely sealed it off so our P.T. boat could not get out.

MM: Oh.

CW: And they would have caught him and captured him. They wanted him – they, um, he was more or less their arc enemy. They hated him.

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: Ok? Now, later, after he had, uh, garrisoned Japan, after the war, they learned to love the old man.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know. Uh, we was in charge, he was not a bad guy, he gave the ...

MM: Well, he was the right person for that ...

CW: Oh, yes he was.

MM: ... job, wasn't he?

CW: He, he certainly was. He was the right person. Uh, lots of people don't think much of Douglas MacArthur, but I think that he had one of the most brilliant military minds that the American people have ever produced.

MM: Oh, is that right?

CW: I do. He, he was a genius in his field.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And he had two things going for him: he knew the Japanese like he was one of them.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Ok, and the other thing was: he had come up with a method of saving lives even in a killing situation, which is war.

MM: Uh-huh. Oh.

CW: Yeah. Now, if they would have taken a general right out of the ranks here somewhere, and – or a colonel, like they took, um, General Eisenhower –

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: was a colonel when the war broke out.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And elevated him up, and sent him out there. He wouldn't have known anything but war. He wouldn't have knew the situation.

MM: Oh. But because MacArthur had grown up ... in the war.

CW: Grown up out there more or less.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Well, he would not, I mean, he couldn't – he would have sold men's lives to gain ground. Where, uh, MacArthur actually, he sold 'em very dear.

MM: Oh. Is that right?

CW: Um-hmm. Um ... I don't know exactly how many men lost their lives in, in World War II in the Pacific. Somewhere around 60,000 is all. And they were predicting, uh, you know – a half a million.

MM: Is that ... I didn't realize that.

CW: Um-hmm. Or more.

MM: Well, what about General Wainwright?

CW: What do you want to know?

MM: Well, I mean, was he ... was he just sort of left with a bad situation he had to make the best of? Or ...

CW: Yes, um ...

MM: ... was he in over his head, or?

CW: He, he wasn't in over his head. Uh, I think that he done a great deal for us in the surrendering.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: You, you have to understand, now, there had been some – unbeknowing to us until we were captured and we began to talk amongst each other in these big camps that they put us in. There was, uh, three to start with, and then they got 'em down to two big camps before they bursted us up into many, many work camps. You understand?

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Well, we were talking amongst ourselves, and there was – we found out that there had been some contact from General Wainwright's headquarters with the Japanese commander across the, on the peninsula.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Bataan. Prior to us surrendering.

MM: Oh.

CW: See we were down to approximately 14 days of food left. Eight days of water. We had been out of medication for a month or better.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yes, ma'am. And, uh, see, for the last three months we were fighting on Corregidor, we were just the same as being in prison. As far as the mental and physical condition was concerned.

MM: Hmm.

CW: You know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Bad, uh, bad food, uh, not enough of it, uh, not enough fresh water. We were – see, we were rationed on water, now. We were rationed on food. We were getting about, uh ... two teacups of water a day in the tropics.

MM: Mmm.

CW: Now that was the last, about last ten days we were down to about one canteen cup, which is about two big teacups full, see?

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: Ok. And that's what we got.

MM: That's not much.

CW: Uh ... medication: it was gone. And ...

MM: No pain medication?

CW: No pain medi-, they was out of it. Uh, had been out of it for, you know, several days. And there before the surrender.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Well, in more-or-less the surrender to the general and his staff about 16 other people in command, uh, was more-or-less a blessing. The way it come about.

MM: Oh.

CW: See, now, we were expecting a massacre. Totally and completely.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yes, ma'am. Totally and completely.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Um ... they, uh, had the track record of that in China. Remember?

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: In China, it ... they ... well, the Rape of Nanking, China, is the one that stands out mostly, but there's hundreds of other towns, and hundreds of them really. Uh, small towns like two, three, one, two, three, five thousand population that some flare up would happen, and a Japanese soldier would get killed. Well, they would just simply surround the village or town, and slowly walk in, and there wouldn't even be a live chicken left when they got to the middle.

MM: Oh.

CW: So we were expecting about the same thing. You understand? And, uh, it was really worrying – I think it was worrying the, uh, General Staff how that was best to surrender us. And I'm almost certain that there was a deal made. Um ... prior to that. Because the telephone line was still working from there to Manila, and then across to Bataan also. And, see that one thing – that thing right there – Bataan, when they surrendered, well we got our water. The island got their water from the, in a pipeline under the bay from Bataan.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh – the channel, not the bay.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Across the channel. Well, whenever the Japanese took Bataan, they just simply walked and ...

CW: ... disconnected the switch, and ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: That put us on a timed ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: Thing. Ok? And also, there was about 8,000 men on the island. And there was about two, three – about 3,000 men or more got off of Bataan back onto the island that helped deplete our stores and water supply.

MM: Yes.

CW: You understand?

MM: Yes, uh-huh.

CW: So, um ... it was, uh... just not what they had really intended.

MM: Yes.

CW: You know. It wasn't the way really intended. I don't know the real intentions of the Americans prior – you know, I'm talking about ...

MM: Yeah, the plans.

CW: many years prior to all of this, but uh, the – once it happened the way it did, well, the Americans in Washington, they wrote us off the next week. I'm sure. Because we had no airplanes.

MM: No.

CW: We had – let's face it: the Americans absolutely didn't have enough stuff to come back and reinforce us. They certainly didn't. Now, I – I meet men come out of that prison with me today that, uh, lambast the American government like you wouldn't believe in your life. In fact a friend of mine lives right here in Baytown named Snider. He hates the American government the worst than any person I ever seen in my life because they didn't – because they let us go down the drain. Well, I'm saying that we just happened to get caught in a bad situation at the wrong time.

MM: Yeah.

CW: I did. The other men did, too. Um ... just how they totally, how that the Americans caused them to jump early, I don't know the entire thing.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But I do think that the Japanese, uh, through some manipulation, and I think by sending a big influx of Americans out there – now, I got there in April. There was another boatload that got there in June. And then the air force sent several boatloads of raw recruits over there. Ok? And then, uh, they flew in about 30 or 40, B-17's: the most modern plane that we had, actually. And about 25, 30, P-40's, which was the – at that time – was the most modern fighter plane we had. And, you see, this was just enough to really scare the Japanese. You understand?

MM: I see, yeah.

CW: The bomber was supposed to have been – when the conflict started, the bomber was so long-ranged, it could be flown out to Australia immediately.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: But they got caught on the ground. Like Pearl Harbor. But not the first day. It was the second day of war, and I'll never understand that.

MM: They were attacked there?

CW: Yes, ma'am. The second day of the war, our air force was caught on the airfields like, um ...

MM: Well, I knew around Manila they were – I, but on ...

CW: In Manila. Yeah. In Manila. That's what I speak of. In Clark Field.

MM: Now what is the name of that?

CW: Clark Field.

MM: Clark Field. I've read about that.

CW: Nichols Field, uh, two or three others.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Up and down the chain there. But Clark and Nichols is the largest two. And, uh, the B-17's all was burned on the ground, except about six that managed to fly out that night to Australia.

MM: Gosh.

CW: Yes, ma'am. But, uh, we, uh ... did come on to this information amongst ourselves.

MM: Yeah.

CW: That there was a deal made between the Japanese and us. And my big thing was: why wasn't it a bigger battle for Corregidor? See, the battle didn't last long enough. Ok. And there was not enough men in it. On the small part of the island here, from this right here, this tunnel ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: on out, now, to somewhere

MM: Yeah.

CW: about here. Well, because of the influx of men from Bataan, and when it fell, and what they had put on there, and the, even the Filipino Scouts, which was the best soldier ...

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: that I have ever met. They had quite a few in here. Well, there were 3,000 men in, in this. Ok? This area.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Now, there was no reinforcements off of this end of the island, and there was about 9,000 men out there.

MM: Why, why not? Or you don't know why? That's what you were saying?

CW: I think – yes, I don't know why. And, you know, except it was part of this deal that might have – I repeat now – might

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: have been made between the General Staff and the Japanese.

MM: coughs (excuse me)

CW: I do know that, uh, a General Kean, and one other general, or two other generals had made a trip from Corregidor, across to Bataan, uh, about eight days before the invasion of us.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, uh, they wanted to keep, they wanted to keep General Kean over there as a hostage, and finally they told him no, we'll ... you know, said, we must have him back to help hammer out this thing

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: to present back to you people. And I don't think that they went back, but I do think that they talked to him on the telephone. And I think, now, that they made a deal with the Japanese. Said now, if you make a, you invade the island, we will make a token show of force and give up.

MM: Oh.

CW: You see, and no general wants to give up

MM: No.

CW: without a fight.

MM: That's right. Yeah.

CW: Ok? That's why, at the end of World War II, there was about two weeks of the, in Japan that we thought we were going to have to fight. You remember?

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Because there was about six generals that did not want to give up without showing some fight.

MM: Yeah.

CW: They wanted to fight for their home.

MM: Which is new to the Japanese.

CW: Um-hmm. Now this, uh, area that you see right in here.

MM: Yeah?

CW: Now, you have to remember this is a sandbox.

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: Picture. And that little haze?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Right there.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Is a beach. Now that's where the Japanese come aboard the island.

MM: Now where were you when that happened? You were at this little ...

CW: Right in here.

MM: jog there.

CW: Yes, ma'am. Just, just past the ...

MM: I see. And, and – did they come at night, or daytime? Or what was the situation?

CW: It was, it was nine o'clock on that night when they boarded the island. The, uh, three days prior to this, now, well – they had, uh, shelled around the clock.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Now from, for many days prior to that, they had stopped at dark and began at twilight of next morning, see.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: First light. And, uh, but for three days and nights, they went around the clock. And all of their guns that they were, you know, chewing this island up from one end to the other with, was all pointed right into that one end there you s...

MM: Oh my goodness

CW: On that small end. And they were dropping a many of them in the water. And that was to, uh, disrupt any mines that we had planted, see?

MM: Oh. So you knew that they were gonna be coming?

CW: Yes, ma'am, we knew they were coming, and we knew they were, you know, it was, uh ... couldn't be but within the week. We didn't know what day, naturally, but we knew they were coming. And, uh, the third day – now, this shelling was so intense, that you could not sleep. You couldn't – you just couldn't live for it. You understand?

MM: Yeah.

CW: And our people, our command, would not move us out. Naturally. Why? I didn't know – no one knew. And the shelling was so intent that we could not take care of the dead and wounded. Uh ... it was, it was about 1,200 guns from three and-a-half inch to ten inch in diameter, all pointed on that one place.

MM: And you weren't one of them?

CW: Uh, not physically. I think mentally, I was wounded a little bit. (Laughs) But anyway.

MM: Oh. Yes.

CW: But anyway, the, uh – it, it was so intent that you couldn't sleep. Now at six o'clock that afternoon, every gun stopped on one command. Just like you're pulling the window shade down.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And you know what we done? We went to sleep.

MM: Well, I guess you were exhausted.

CW: We went to sleep.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And it was, uh ... nine o'clock. Well, they – Japanese were aboard the island, and we didn't know it.

MM: Oh.

CW: Now, see as this shelling was going on, they were coming across the bay; we didn't see it.

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: They were coming across the bay. I have all idea that the Japanese had already come to the beach on a one or two nights previous with

MM: Oh.

CW: their frogmen-type people

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: and cleared the beach of mines.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Because no mine went off there. But now, I'm not saying that the Japanese had a easy time. They had a very bad time of this. It, it was costly in men to them. But whenever they came up the side of that island, they began to run into a few Marines that was left in there. And, a fight broke out, and immediately some men got up where we were, and told us that they were on the island, you know. And we – several batteries of men there – we, uh, had a few lieutenants and captains amongst us,

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: but not, not anything higher. And we pushed them back in the water and got rid of 'em. And we literally got rid of the first bunch. But it wasn't many now, see. But right behind them was many, many other barge-loads, and they just looked like ants sticking on a stick. They were so – standing all over

MM: Yeah.

CW: and so thick, you know. They were freight barges. Not, not little invasion barges. No, they were huge freight barges. And there was possibly 5,000 men on each barge. Just as, like, they could stand like this, you know.

MM: Oh.

CW: And we couldn't cope with that kind of a ... of personnel.

MM: How many people were where you were?

CW: Uh, at that time?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Roughly 1,000. See, there were only about 3,000 of us out there.

MM: Soldiers. Yeah.

CW: And, uh, it did take but a little while, they was, you know, that we couldn't handle them. And we went back over the point of the island here. To this long thing right here.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Ok, we formed a line down this road. And then – this other road going down this a way,

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: we formed a line all around here. And, uh, then at, at about four o'clock next morning – it was fighting all night and all down through here. They took this – they first went this way and took this. Several ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: you know, they took about 1,500. Now, I say took: they killed 'em. There was no taking, ok.

MM: Oh.

CW: They killed every one of 'em. Except a handful. And then, at very light next morning, well they – this, all of this artillery, they put it on us. And the Japanese back-to-back, see.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And they put a, a light up, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they knew where to fire on. And it done a number on us. Ok. And then, all through the morning, the battle was right in that general area. They made several charges on us, and we would reshape our lines, and everything, and try to hold 'em best we could. But, uh, at about 10:30 – well, we seen that we couldn't hold 'em. And we were down then to about 300 men.

MM: Wow.

CW: Ok. And, uh, we run in, back in, to this little hook. You see that little hook right there?

MM: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

CW: That's a gun position.

MM: Oh.

CW: The American's had put it in there. You notice it curled around -

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: little, little, row,

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: went around a knob there. And they had put a eight-inch navy rifle off of a cruiser in there. And they had never fired it. I don't know why. But it was a quite a large area --

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: in that little hook. And we went into there, and naturally, all we could carry in there with us was, uh, the ammunition we had on us. And it didn't last but, like, uh ... 30 minutes. You know, and -- and at that point, the Japanese stopped firing. When we stopped firing, they did.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And then, about 20 minutes later -- well, they run, uh, about 500 Japanese in there on us that was hopped up on opium. Um-hmm. They were hopped up on something. I don't know if it was opium or what.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But they were hopped up, they were drunk -- they were either drunk, or doped. I don't, I don't know, but ...

MM: Not afraid of anything, I mean, just ...

CW: Not afraid of anything ...

MM: going in and keeping everything.

CW: Um, we -- we were just sitting there. You know. The whole world had been lost to us.

MM: Oh, yes.

CW: Could you imagine the feeling?

MM: Oh. And no sleep, and ...

CW: No sleep, and no nothing till ...

MM: and had been run back.

CW: And we really, you know, death in a way, would have really been, uh, a blessing in -- actually it would have. Now that's odd to say.

MM: No, I can understand how it would.

CW: Ok. But, uh, we were so exhausted.

MM: That you didn't know what you were gonna be facing, too.

CW: No, we didn't. See, we had no idea at all. And we, we just knew that if we lived, well, they would just carry us down that road there somewhere and massacre us then or next day. But anyway, uh, they run in them on us.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they was clubbing and a stabbing and a shooting, and then they run in about 500 men on them that was not doped, and they wasn't worrying about what it was. You know. At all.

MM: Hmm.

CW: They wasn't worried about – anything about us, it was getting them doped up, hopped up people, and getting them out. Then they come back in, and took this group that you see there – that's a little bit more than what's in that picture, now – you know, on each side. And they marched us down to the side here, about this next little hook.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Ok. They – we went the opposite direction right here, and then come back to about here. And they went back in there and shot everything in there. You know, wounded or dead got a extra bullet. They did-, they didn't want 'em. If they couldn't walk, they ... you know, no problems. They didn't want any problems.

MM: Yeah.

CW: See? Now, sounds gross. And it is. But, I'm almost certain that we would have done the same thing. We would have been that same position.

MM: Oh is that ... uh-huh.

CW: You see what I mean? So in the heat of battle, and this, that and the other, uh ... I can't say that I blame them.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Um, it seemed a gross way to do things, but down when the Americans coming back through the lower islands down in the Pacific.

MM: Um-hmm. Um-hmm.

CW: Same thing.

MM: Same thing.

CW: Same thing happened there. You know, um, another words they wouldn't take any prisoners. Now, they carried us there, and set us down, and then about three o'clock – well, Wainwright and his staff was brought out past us, and they were going over to this invasion thing.

MM: Oh.

CW: Now, they wouldn't carry 'em to the dock. The docks were still mined.

MM: Oh.

CW: And the Japanese didn't want to risk a boat in there.

MM: Oh.

CW: But they, they knew this place over here, because they had –

MM: They had cleared it, yeah.

CW: Cleared it. They knew it was clear of mines. So they got him and his staff out there. Carried them first to Bataan, across the Bataan, I understand. And then from Bataan, on in to Manila.

MM: Now, those were the people that had been in the tunnel?

CW: Yes, ma'am.

MM: Ok.

CW: Just the staff only; he and his staff. The men that you see here, now, they, they were just people like us. He – they were just G.I.'s. Now, they didn't carry them out, no. They had cleared them out, and then they carried us around here -

MM: Yeah.

CW: and set us down at this place.

MM: Oh.

CW: Ok, that was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and we just all just fell out and slept.

MM: I bet you did.

CW: And we slept around the clock, or more so. This was taken about three o'clock the next afternoon. They got us up, and got us to – you know, with their guns making us hold our – you can see this Japanese troop here.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And the back of one's head here.

MM: There's on here. Yeah.

CW: Back – this is a cab of a truck incidentally.

MM: Oh.

CW: And back behind it, must be two or three hundred other Japanese. Ok?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Now, they ... uh, took about 20 snaps with an old camera. There's a few of 'em around here that's got that big, black – thing.

MM: Oh, that you put the cloth over your head?

CW: Yeah.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Now the reason that they were taking this picture the next day, and not the first day, is they did not have a photographer to come aboard the island with the troops. And they was waiting, holding this. Ok, this showed up a day or two later in the Japanese newspapers as the official surrender picture of the Philippines.

MM: Oh.

CW: You understand? The last stronghold to give up. But anyway, the, uh ... uh ...

MM: We can talk just a little bit, and then I'll need to flip it over.

CW: But now, they carried, uh, General Wainwright and his staff to Manila. Down about three, four hundred miles south of us was several hundred troops. I don't know, it might have been several thousand. I don't ...

MM: Japanese, or American?

CW: Americans.

MM: Oh.

CW: We didn't even know they were down there.

MM: Oh.

CW: We really didn't. They were new, fairly new arrivals.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, uh, they were trying to get him to surrender 'em. He said that I'm not in charge of them. Well, he was a good liar, you know. I mean –

MM: Yeah.

CW: But they knew he was in charge.

MM: Continued on side two.

(End of tape)

(Tape 2 of 4)

MM: Here's ... here's a ... there's ... is that big island there Mindanao?

CW: Mindanao. Uh-huh.

MM: Ok.

CW: There were some – they was at Davao.

MM: Oh.

CW: And they imprisoned them, the men that they captured there, they imprisoned 'em in a, in the, an old penal colony. They called it the Davao Penal Colony.

MM: Oh.

CW: Now, on Corregidor, when we surrendered here – no, I mean when the island had surrendered, and after this picture here, well then they put us, uh, over here at this site right here.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: For a few, just got us away from the tunnel. They wanted us here for a picture and that's all. They carried us over here, and then they began to bring these men off of the big end of island

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: up here in groups, mind you. They wouldn't, they were afraid of the acceptance.

MM: Not too many together at one time, I guess.

CW: Yeah. So they were manageable groups. And they brought them down through here, and they added us with them, and then we went into, they put us in this area here

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: which is a big beach area.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And the 92nd, uh, coast artillery barracks had been right in this area right there.

MM: And that's that picture you showed me that had been your barracks?

CW: No.

MM: Oh.

CW: That was a Filipino – 92nd post artillery

MM: Oh.

CW: was a Filipino outfit, uh – scouts.

MM: Oh.

CW: Ok, now they put us here at, at their garage area, which was right on the beach.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they had all 12,000 men in there, and then they ringed this around up here with machine guns and mortars and art-, and light artil-, other light artillery. And they used us as a hostage to, um, Mr. Wainwright

MM: Oh.

CW: to get him to surrender that few hundred, or a few thousand – I think it was about 3,000 men down there.

MM: Oh.

CW: And told him that, uh, they was going to massacre us.

MM: Well, he had no reason to think they weren't telling the truth, I guess. Given that ...

CW: He knew they were telling the truth.

MM: Yeah.

CW: He, he absolutely knew they were telling the truth. So he had to send – and believe it or not, he's, they allowed him to send a captain out with a truck, out of Manila, by himself, and he got off down there somewhere and come back in about three days, made out like he got lost and couldn't find 'em.

MM: Oh.

CW: Well, going by truck is the wrong thing anyway. And I think all Wainwright was doing was delaying the Japanese.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know, he – like I say, I think he was an excellent liar.

MM: Yeah.

CW: I really do. And the, I think that one of the reasons that he was sent out there, he would, he could tell a lie, or the truth, or anything else. And you ask him a year later what he say, and he'd come up with the same answer. You see?

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: So he was misleading the Japanese. Now, you can look at the map, and tell – now this is very jungly country. There's no, no reason to go from, try to go from there with all that water between.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: In a, in a truck.

MM: Yeah, that's right! (Laughs)

CW: So eventually the Japanese wound up, and said, "Hey, we'll fly him down there."

MM: Yeah.

CW: And they put him and two other people in a plane, and they flew 'em into a place down there. And they went down and talked to the Americans. Uh, they could not contact them by radio or, uh, was no telephones.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: System was not good enough to contact them. And they went down there and talked 'em into surrendering. And – that's something else I'll never understand: I don't understand why that group of men hadn't, you know, already swarmed into the mountains.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Just meekly sit there and give up. They didn't fight.

MM: Oh.

CW: It's amazing. I mean, it's amazing to someone that's my age.

MM: Cause it was easy to hide in this kind of ...

CW: Oh, very jungly country.

MM: stuff like that.

CW: You know, the Japanese would still been looking for 'em

MM: Oh. Yeah.

CW: if they'd a went in there, went and hid.

MM: Yeah. That is strange.

CW: Yeah. Now, some of them did. Some of them got out, formed guerilla, guerilla groups and things like that.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: But not many. You know, if I would have been there, I'd have certainly, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: I didn't have an opportunity on the

MM: besides sit and wait.

CW: you know, we couldn't swim off of that island.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But I would have, you know – it's the fighting person's mind verses someone that had never been in battles' mind.

MM: Oh. Oh – and you said they were new.

CW: See what I'm talking about? New troops, and what have you. Yeah. But I certainly wouldn't have set there and waited like two for the Japanese

MM: Yeah.

CW: Or three weeks for the Japanese. Now once they surrendered, then they put us on ships and carried us to Manila. And they put us on boxcars, and we went on from there, and to Cabanatuan.

MM: Now where is Cabanatuan? Where, where is that?

CW: Cabanatuan is north of ...

MM: I heard of that one.

CW: North of Manila.

MM: Ok.

CW: Ok, there's Manila. And naturally, a mountain like this, you couldn't see it.

MM: Yeah. I see. Uh-huh.

CW: But Cabanatuan would be right about there.

MM: I see.

CW: Ok. It was a small town then about, uh ... oh, 1,000, 1,500 population. But it's, it's around 10, 15,000 population now.

MM: How many, how many troops, how many prisoners did they put there?

CW: Approx-, well not counting the Filipinos, now. Ok. Just Americans, there was approximately ... oh, I really never did hear the exact

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: number. But it had to be like 24, 25,000 men.

MM: Oh. Well, what did it look like? What was, what was the facility like? Do you know?

CW: It was an old Filipino training camp, which they made their camp, their buildings out of um, out of palm leaves. And they just didn't palm leaves throw together, now, these leaves put in a factory

MM: Oh.

CW: is put between binders. You understand? Bamboo binders.

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: And it's something about this long, and about this wide.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they, they put up two-by-fours, and then they lay this on it

MM: Oh.

CW: and down the sides.

MM: U-huh.

CW: Now they're, for the tropics, they're you know I, they're ideal.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Ok, the area here, about waist high would raise up. And you could prop it up from the outside, you know?

MM: Yeah.

CW: And air could come in very well. That was good.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And there was a sleeping bay, about seven feet long here, and then a aisle about this wide.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And on the other side was a sleeping bay. About that, like that. And then it was, naturally, a dirt floor.

MM: Hmm.

CW: Which it didn't hurt, it was a, a dirt floor. Um – very weatherproof. But naturally, uh, storms could, you know, damage them quite easy. But, uh ... the facilities were already there. You know. And so the Japanese caught about three times as many men as they expected to survive the battles, and you know. So they, uh, actually, uh, had to use these facilities.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And their, for the, uh, situation that existed at that time, I think it was about one of the best things they could put us in. Now, however, see they put us in there, and put guards on us, and gave us just a little food. That was all, sweat pea. They didn't give us anything else. No food in excess, you know, I know –

MM: Well they wanted to, I guess, weaken – keep ...

CW: They wanted you in a weakened condition.

MM: Uh well, was it just rice?

CW: Uh ... mostly to start out with, it was just rice.

MM: Oh.

CW: Every once in a while, you'd get a little black beans, and then they would had some old vines that – we swore they come out of barley. I don't know where they come – they taste like they did. You know. And, uh, but it was something green.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Uh ... the meat was nonexistent. You know, in other words, it was not, not a protein diet at all.

MM: Well what about things like beriberi and ...

CW: Oh!

MM: Vitamin deficiency?

CW: Very quickly. See, we was already suffering from that kind of a thing, uh, when the, when we were put in there.

MM: Oh.

CW: Because of ...

MM: So it didn't take much to ...

CW: Didn't take much.

MM: Did you suffer?

CW: I got the – what they called the dry beriberi.

MM: Oh. Hmm.

CW: It didn't, I didn't swell.

MM: Oh, I didn't realize there was a ...

CW: Yeah, there's one that, where your, um, it's akin to – you ever of the term, medical term, pelegery (Pellagra)?

MM: Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

CW: It's akin to that. Ok. It goes to your, uh ... nerve ends.

MM: Oh.

CW: Actually withers away, and the muscle and everything on the leg, you know.

MM: Oh.

CW: And you touch it, and you just go into spasms.

MM: That painful?

CW: Yes, ma'am. Now, I had that – not all the time. But I got that two or three times.

MM: Oh. And, and then you'd eat something green, and ...

CW: Um-hmm. We'd get a little bit better diet, then you would get a little better.

MM: Oh.

CW: And I was in that one big camp for four months, uh, in Cabanatuan. Camp 3 in Cabanatuan. I saw that it was the wrong place for me. You know. Wrong camp. Even if I was gonna be a prisoner. They were sending out details, but they wouldn't tell you where they were going. And they carried us – a hundred and about five men – they carried us to a little down they called, uh, Lipa city and, near Batangas. And we started an airfield, uh ... I think in October. Yes, it was; it was in October. And, um, I was on that one detail 15 months. Thank goodness. Now, it was a – if there was ever a good prison detail, that was to start out with.

MM: That was better food? Or you just were having

CW: Better food.

MM: access to stuff that – from the jungle, or ...

CW: Well, better food. We had, uh, opportunities to – better, better opportunity to escape for the first three months there, and there was two, only two escapes. Uh, but that taught us not to ...

MM: Did they not make it?

CW: We don't know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: If those two men made it or not. They didn't bring the – if they didn't make it, they didn't bring 'em back there. Um, they, uh, actually, there was no execution in that camp.

MM: Oh.

CW: It, it wasn't. Now, up in Cabanatuan, there was quite a few executions at one time or another. But down there, they was building this huge airfield at Lipa. And, uh, a few months later – like three months later – they send down a huge bunch of men down there then and put to work on the airfield. And I left there to be, uh, be oper-, cured of, Manila to be operated on for appendicitis.

MM: That must have been a ...

CW: And, they ...

MM: Bad news at a time like that.

CW: Well, it was. But I wound up, it wasn't appendicitis, but it was a, been that just as bad. And Bilibid and Manila was the ...

MM: Ok, I've heard of that. Yeah.

CW: That was the old Filipino federal prison. And it's – they still operate it as such today.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, uh, it had some – the barracks was real good. You know. And so they was using it to, to um, put all of the men that had missing limbs and so forth – they stayed there. They didn't stay out on the big details with us.

MM: Oh.

CW: They kept 'em there in Manila, uh, all of the convalescence cases that, uh, you know, come out of the battle areas where they were caught. Now, if you got sick off up there somewhere, you just stayed there till you got better or died. But if you come out of the field – you know what I mean – with a

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: leg off

MM: Yeah.

CW: arm off or something – well, you stayed in Bilibid.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yes. Now, I saw some men up in them other camps that got through the screen, screening process, and was up there with arms off.

MM: Hmm.

CW: They wouldn't put them back, send 'em back down to Bilibid either. The paperwork: they wanted to stay away from that.

MM: Yeah. Yeah.

CW: You know, they, they wasn't very keen on paperwork like Americans were.

MM: Yeah. (Laughs)

CW: But the executions, themselves, they were – I, I witnessed 13 there in Bilibid one day.

MM: In one day? [Inaudible].

CW: Yes, ma'am, they were. There was a new building over here, a masonry building that the Filipino government was putting up inside the prison. And it was not complete, but the flooring was complete. It had never been occupied

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: as a building. It was about five or six stories high. And I think it was to be an administrative building. And they put us in this. We were on the way into this, uh, uh ... work detail.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And we stopped in Bilibid. They had, believe it or not, hot showers and the whole works, you know. I mean, but ...

MM: [Inaudible].

CW: not much food now, but hot showers and fairly good bunks, you know. Course we had to just lay out our blanket up there in that new place and, and sleep. But these people that (tape cuts off)

CW: You know, as ...

MM: Like those pictures that we would see.

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: Yeah.

CW: They, they executed 'em so where you could actually see the, see the execution from up there where we were.

MM: Oh.

CW: Um, there was others, you know, up in the, the two Cabanatuan camps. There was several executions up there by a firing squad. Uh, one or two by sword. And so forth.

MM: Was it for people trying to escape, or ...

CW: Yes, ma'am. Uh ...

MM: [Inaudible] or what?

CW: Yes, ma'am, there was three men that we, we're not cer – four men. We're not certain today whether them men was trying to escape, or what. They could have just got lost off of a wood detail. They would go out and cut wood.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And anyway, they – they had come in and counted the group. They were four short. And they looked up, and here come four men running across the ... running across the rice field out there. See, I know, it was no rice, no rice in it at that time, but I mean, it had been. And they run out and got them. Now where the men were trying to go, I don't know. But, uh, if I were trying to escape, I would be going the other direction.

MM: Yeah. Right.

CW: See? Now they wasn't ...

MM: Wouldn't go across an open piece of land.

CW: They was not running directly toward the camp.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: For some odd reason. They was running across this field – they would have run into the camp, but farther past the gate.

MM: Oh.

CW: You understand? Down the road farther. I don't know why they run that way. But that was just a, just as bad. Uh, they ... about two hours later, they carried them out on the hill out there, and executed them.

MM: Oh.

CW: Inside our camp. And it was for a – in their mind – it was for a reason. You know, it give us the message.

MM: They shoot 'em all.

CW: You know, it give us the message. See. And I think it went a long way to stop the, stop the runaway. Yeah. Uh, the uh, two that, uh, escaped off that Lipa detail, one of them lived in Austin, Texas. I don't know where the other one lived.

MM: Oh.

CW: But see, they had us paired off in 10-man details. If one man out of that group left, well, they were supposed to execute the rest of them. And for some odd reason, when them two men left, they didn't execute that other 10 men.

MM: Oh.

CW: One was out of one squad,

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: one another, which meant it would have been 19, uh, 18 men.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But they did sit them out for three days and nights; kneeled them down on their knees. Now that doesn't sound very

MM: No.

CW: much punishment does it.

MM: Well, in the hot sun, I suppose. And no food or water?

CW: No food and water for three days and nights. But now, I want you to try – yourself – you just go right out here somewhere, the most

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: smoothest place you can find. Now they didn't look for the most smooth place.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And you kneel down, and see how long you can stay in one position.

MM: Oh. So that was their punishment.

CW: And, and in three minutes, you're trying to find a comfortable position. In an hour, you're almost in tears.

MM: Oh.

CW: And by the end of the day, you know, you, you just don't care whether the world stays in orbit or not.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, it, it's – you just can't, you know, that's some of that Japanese ...

MM: Did you ever have to do that? Was that ever a ...

CW: That was ...

CW: That was one thing that I never got was that type of, um ... punishment.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Uh, they put a ax handle looking thing between my legs and squatted me down on it. Now that was bad.

MM: I bet. Oh.

CW: Um. But I think ...

MM: Especially if you had this beriberi condition that you're talking about before.

CW: I think that I might be, you know – am I, am I getting over into something

MM: No, no!

CW: which bothers you?

MM: This is ... no! No, not at all.

CW: Well, I happen to be one of the men that come out of the camp that it doesn't bother me. But I don't want to get over too far into some of that stuff.

MM: No! No, now I want to know your personal history. Now I – I have an 18 year-old son. My youngest is 18.

CW: Oh, ok.

MM: And I'm trying to picture him.

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: And he, you know, he thinks he's tough. I'm trying to think what in the world it must have been like for ...

CW: Well, he ...

MM: for a person that young

CW: He, he probably is tough.

MM: to be experiencing that.

CW: But, after ... uh, this detail. You know, I was sent to ... to finish out, you know, quickly. I was sent to Bilibid to be operated on. And it was not appendicitis.

MM: Oh.

CW: It was, uh ... a intestine had growed inside an old wound.

MM: Eww!

CW: And I had pulled it, the intestine loose. And they went in there and fixed that. The Americans done this, now.

MM: Oh, there were American doctors there?

CW: Americans, yes.

MM: Oh.

CW: And that was quite an ordeal because the, uh, they gave me a local – you know the needle that they go down your back? And the, um, serum had been off of ice about a year.

MM: Oh.

CW: And it had no strength left, so about six men held me, and they went in and done their work.

MM: You mean, you – you felt it?

CW: Oh, definitely. Yes. And then, uh, after that, I was sent to the Manila doc for about 90 days. At one of the finest details. I'll never quite understand that detail: they ate the best, of course you could steel a lot off of them ships, see. To eat, I'm talking about.

MM: Oh. That was what they were doing was unloading ...

CW: Loading, unloading ships.

MM: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

CW: Now, you've heard the old thing that the American, or prisoners are not supposed to handle military equipment – we handled it all. We loaded tanks, we loaded, uh, ammunition, we had, uh, bomb, aerial bombs.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Crates of grenades. I never saw a rifle. But, um, all that type of ordinance, we handled it, you know?

MM: Oh.

CW: And, uh, then, uh, we began to booby trap some of their ships

MM: Oh, did you?

CW: And that's, that's a ... another story all within itself, you know.

MM: Oh!

CW: But, uh, I just never could let a good thing pass.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know? An opportunity. I, I really didn't. Anytime that I could throw sand in a bearing, or on one of them freight cars – anything where they were bringing ...

MM: You were able to do that?

CW: Oh, yes.

MM: I bet that made you feel like you were doing something.

CW: Yeah, the Filipinos got the blame for it, you know.

MM: Oh, uh-huh.

CW: But we didn't feel bad for some of them getting knocked around a little bit. Uh, after all they had to fight for their country, too, you know?

MM: Yeah. Yeah.

CW: It was their country.

MM: That's right.

CW: And ... but anyway, um, at that detail, well, there was a – uh, they had run out of gasoline, uh, oil tankers, you understand.

MM: Oh.

CW: The tankers. The Americans had, going in and, they're – plucking their tankers out

MM: Oh.

CW: with their – our submarines had, and they were running short of ‘em, and they were having to ship aviation gasoline in 55-gallon drums.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And a lot of the drums were used drums, reconditioned drums, and they were – shouldn’t have been shipping it in it.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, um, a marine sergeant, by the name of Cherry and I, we had never give up. Any time we could do anything, we’d do it. And the opportunities was just too good. We found some dynamite fuse up in the front of the ship in the crew’s quarters, and we booby trapped that ship with dynamite fuse. And, uh, it went off about – oh, about an hour and a half after we got off from it that it went off.

MM: Did you see it go off? Or hear it?

CW: Oh, yes. We was looking at it when it went off. Was watching, waiting.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And anyway, the Japanese didn’t know if, if it was sabotage or if it was, uh ... and they certainly didn’t know if the America – there’s, some Filipinos had been working on it, too.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And what have you, and they didn’t know but what it might have been a total accident.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Because they did know the danger of shipping in 55-gallon

MM: Yeah.

CW: reconditioned drums. In a freighter, see.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know, of all things. And anyway, they shut that detail down, and they were getting other shiploads of men ready to go to Japan. And they put us on the ship two weeks later for Japan.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And the last year of the war, I was up in Japan.

MM: Where, where in Japan?

CW: Uh, northern part of Honshu, and uh, uh, just upside the mountain from Hosu. A little, little old burg. Little old village up there just hanging on side of the mountain. They’re called Kamioka.

MM: Oh.

CW: And just a few days ago I saw Kamioka on the news here.

MM: Did you?

CW: And the mine that we were working at – it was a lead mine.

MM: Hmm.

CW: Uh, some scientific foundation has got that mine – it's an old worked-out mine now.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they got that mine, uh ... (Tape cuts off, loop begins.)

CW: ... put us on the ship two weeks later for Japan. And the last year of the war I was up in Japan.

MM: Where, where in Japan?

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MM: Did you?

CW: And the mine that we were working at – it was a lead mine.

MM: Hmm.

CW: Uh, some scientific foundation has got that mine – it's an old worked-out mine now.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they got that mine, uh, they have scientific equipment there now to check, uh, rays coming in from outer space that goes on through the earth.

MM: Oh.

CW: And they're detecting them down in that thing. Yeah, and I saw that.

MM: For goodness sake.

CW: I actually saw the mine entrance that we walked in and out.

MM: You did?

CW: And they went down in it with their ...

MM: How long were you there?

CW: A year.

MM: Well, how did the camp in Japan compare to the ones in the Philippines ?

CW: Well the one that I was in, they carried us up in there – we got off of the ship in uh, down at uh, a little down named Moji. And they carried all prisoners in one, brought 'em into one port. They wouldn't just bring 'em in all across Japan.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: A little town named Moji, which was about the size of Beaumont. And they brought the prisoners in there, and they bursted us up right there into details to go out.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And I went out on the first 200 men that they called. I wanted off of that quick, you know.

CW: But we were sick. We'd been in bout a – been down in the hole of that ship for 19 days, and just a sip of water and a handful of rice every day and, uh ...

MM: Oh!

CW: Hundred and 20 degrees, you know.

MM: Ooo.

CW: Uh, while we was in there. We went up in the summer time, thank goodness. We were lucky. Uh, it would have been totally adverse for us to have gotten to Japan in the dead of the winter coming out of the tropics. You understand?

MM: Yeah, you couldn't have ...

CW: In our weakened condition that ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now ... I got on a train – we, they put us on a train and right there. And incidentally, Moji is just outside of Hiroshima.

MM: Oh, no! Gosh.

CW: It's almost a suburb of Hiroshima. And they sent us to North Japan to that mine, and the mine was worked – owned – by Mitsubishi.

MM: Oh.

CW: The big Mitsui Companies.

MM: Yeah, uh-huh.

CW: One of the biggest companies in the world. Even back then it was giant.

MM: Is that right?

CW: And, uh, I rather expect that Mitsui knew what side of their rice had the Oleo on it.

MM: Oh.

CW: Because they laid down some rules for the Japanese military. See, the reason that they were sending us up there is they had run out of labor in Japan.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And they couldn't even keep up with production, much less expand it for an expanding war.

MM: Oh.

CW: And they were stripping everything that could work. They were picking 'em up and, off of the streets and everywhere else, and sending 'em to Japan. And anyway, uh, that's how come they send us prisoners to Japan.

MM: Oh.

CW: Was to help out with the, uh, anyway we could

MM: Yeah.

CW: with the, you know, production. And the – when we left the camp, the military counted us, and turned us over to Mitsui's foremen's.

MM: Oh.

CW: And there was not a guard one in there went in that mine with us. And then when we come back, we were counted and turned back over to the military – the military around the camp.

MM: That means you probably weren't very productive then, right?

CW: We were quite productive in there.

MM: Oh.

CW: But, uh, the civilians were just as much gung-ho more or less

MM: Oh.

CW: saying as your civilians because – uh, I mean, as your military because everyone in Japan carried a military rank. Let's face it.

MM: Oh.

CW: All males carried a military rank.

MM: I did not know that.

CW: Yes. They were – all males in Japan, from the time he could say military.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: You know. Well, he was, um ...

MM: Oh.

CW: in one branch of military or another.

MM: Oh.

CW: And wore the little ol' cap, and a little 'ol jacket and ...

MM: Is that right?

CW: Yeah, right on up through school. At about 12 years old, well, they had to decide which branch that they put 'em in. They didn't do this much deciding themselves.

MM: Yes.

CW: It was pretty well decided

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: for them. You understand? But, uh, then our food up there was better than what we had experienced down in the Philippines. We got so much protein.

MM: And it wasn't so tropical, too.

CW: It was not, not tropic at all. Now, that, that – that was against us.

MM: Oh.

CW: In a, in a way.

MM: uh-hmm

CW: Um ... wintertime struck.

MM: Hmm.

CW: And it was – we were 8,000 feet up.

MM: Eww.

CW: And North Japan gets very cold in the wintertime. We – it was around 20 above to 40 below. And ...

MM: Did they provide clothing for you?

CW: Yes, they gave us – for, for prisoners, now. Ok?

MM: Um-hmm. Yeah.

CW: For, for prisoners, I think we got adequate. We got a army – American or British Army wool overcoat.

MM: Oh.

CW: And then the Japanese had a prison uniform that they gave us up there. It was a – made specifically for prison prisoners.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And it was something about like blue denim. Ok. And then there was two others. Uh, you got two of them, then you got two of, uh, underwear.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Like your old time underwear here in the United States.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: It was woolized. And then you got five blankets. But they were not very good blanket. They made – they were made out of a weed.

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: And they wouldn't lay down on you, they would buckle up.

MM: Oh, so you got a lot of air blowing through on you.

CW: Lot of airspace. Too much airspace, yes.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now they, uh ... Mitsui, I think, had a great deal to say about this. The only bad thing was we had no heat in our barracks.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh-huh. They had rooms about the size of this that 12 men occupied that room. You had a bay here for four: four up here and four up there. Um, we liked that. But it – see, the idea was conserve heat.

MM: Body heat. Yeah.

CW: Um-hmm. And, uh, the barracks up there were double-walled. They were fairly good ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: You know what I mean? But ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: Up to a point – see, because you, there's nothing that'll combat that kind of a weather.

MM: I bet not.

CW: You just – you just can't stand it, uh, hardly. And inside the mines stayed about 72 in the summer, or 78 in the – no, 76 in the summer, and 72 in the winter. It stayed almost the same thing.

MM: It's – uh-huh. Oh.

CW: So in the winter, we'd run to get in the mine. (Laughs)

MM: I bet you did.

CW: To pull a shift. (Laughs) We regular run. (Laughs)

MM: Yeah.

CW: And, uh, but this shaft going in, you know, sometime we would have to take picks and take off the icicles so we could go in and out this shaft.

MM: Hmm.

CW: Um-hmm. Once you got in there, you know, well it was so warm it wouldn't freeze.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But right at the mouth

MM: (Right at the mouth)

CW: where there was drip, water dripping through the rocks.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know? It would actually seal itself off.

MM: Oh. Yeah.

CW: It was so cold. It was ...

MM: When were you liberated?

CW: Uh ... we got down to, uh, Tokyo – uh, I mean Yokohama ... be ... about a week before the peace treaty was signed.

MM: Ok. They – you were free then?

CW: Yes, ma'am.

MM: They, they came – freed you?

CW: Uh, we stayed up there after the bomb hit. Uh, that day, well, uh, we went up to the work detail, you know, we present them how many men were sick, and ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: So forth that couldn't actually work. And then they would say, "Tell us how many for a shift." And ... they were in a very downcast looking mood. And I, I was one that I could speak Japanese at that time almost perfectly.

MM: Oh, really?

CW: At that time. I can't know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And ... I, I was one of them that carried the thing up there. And the Dutch, a mean a Dutchmen brought the others down. And anyway, I said, told this sergeant, Japanese sergeant, that I had the detail, you know – I mean the sick men and whatever. He said, "We don't need it," said, "we..."

CW: I said, uh, "No work today?"

CW: He said, "No work today. None today."

CW: I said, "Why?"

CW: And he said, uh, "Holiday."

CW: And I said, "Ok."

CW: I went back down to the, our lieutenant – now, our lieutenant was not a very hopped-up, hyped-up type of a fella. You know? He was very subdued kind of fella, ok? Uh ... I told him what had happened. He said, “Well, holiday. Take the day off. Cheers.”

CW: I said, “No, no, no. Wait a minute. Something’s wrong.”

CW: He said, “Don’t look a gift horse in the mouth. Take the day off if they said take it off.”

CW: And so I turned and went right down to the old Sergeant Cherry. He and I happened to still be together. I said, “Cherry, something’s wrong.”

CW: He said, “Why?”

CW: I told him.

CW: He said, and he said, “Well hey you go back with that list in an hour and see what they’re gonna tell you then.”

MM: Hmm.

CW: I went back up there in an hour, you know, and I said, “Hey, I’ve got this list and they want to know down there now how many of them we getting ready. And we’re done eating.” You know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And I really give him a big

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: thing there to, you know, to think on. And he looked at me real, and he said, real slow and he looked around at some of the other others and said something in Japanese so fast that I couldn’t understand what he was saying.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And he looked back at me and he said, uh, “Send your officer up at one o’clock.”

CW: And see now his officer had been in there while I was gone. You understand?

MM: Oh.

CW: Had to be. Anyway, at one o’clock, well, our – our lieutenant and, and, uh a sergeant that was representing some of the other people and then a lieutenant – a British lieutenant that they had in there, and a Dutch ...

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Uh, went up there all together. And they outright told ‘em that ...

MM: That the bomb?

CW: That, uh, the bomb had hit Hiroshima.

MM: And you had no – you had not seen it or, uh, had any indication of ... let me.

MM: Continued on tape two.

(End of tape)

(Tape 3 of 4)

CW: ...course we were about 40 – 30, 40 miles from the coast.

MM: Oh.

CW: And you give the right, and the barrel pointed straight at you. You know what I mean?

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Of a six, 14, 16-in Navy gun off of a battleship or ... even a eight-inch off of a cruiser, uh, you could hear it.

MM: I didn't realize that.

CW: For a 30, 40 miles. Yes. You could hear it. And it, very, very distant.

MM: So you knew the end was coming?

CW: Uh, yes, we had a newspaper slipped in to us. We knew that, uh, the cities were getting tore up, but we didn't know how much.

MM: Um-hmm.

[buzzer]

CW: We ...

MM: (Oh, just hang on. I'll get that.)

CW: Uh, we knew, uh, quite a bit that was going on, but, uh, as far as actually knowing

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: that the end might be near. No, we had no idea just how near it was. The Japanese were doing a very good job of trying, of keeping us in the dark. There was a Korean laborer, and old man –

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: that would bring us a Japanese paper in it.

[buzzer]

MM: [Inaudible] well, excuse me.

CW: He would bring this newspaper to us.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And, uh, some of us, you know, could decipher it.

MM: Could you read Japanese?

CW: Uh ... quite a bit.

MM: You could read the Japanese characters, as well as ...

CW: Quite a bit, yeah. The kado kunji I could.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh, the hiro kunji, I couldn't.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: But there was several of us in there that could, and we would go through that newspaper. Now, you have to un-, you have to understand that they didn't let their own people know about their disasters.

MM: That's what I remember.

CW: See? So naturally, they – it wasn't in the paper for us to pick up.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Um... When they did admit a island was lost, they said, well we're, we could tell where the war was at because of that.

CW: It said like for instance, "Truc Island, we have lost," you know, "Truc Island," said, "we're the winners, though. We killed," um, "thousands and thousands and we knocked out well a thousand tanks, sunk 200 ships."

MM: Uh-huh. That we left, huh? (Laughs)

CW: And all like that. But, you know, whoever owns the real estate's the winner.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Irregardless of the cost, you know. Let's face. So we could tell about where the war was.

MM: Sure.

CW: But we did not know the extent of the devastation of them cities down there. And we were just as flabbergasted as you could be when we drove – uh, went into them towns on that train.

MM: Is that right? [Inaudible]

CW: Uh, you could stand in that train window and look 20 miles across Tokyo.

MM: Just flat.

CW: Flattened. Just ... you know, it was a, mostly a wooden city. You have to understand that. It was -

MM: Um-hmm. Yeah.

CW: Quite a bit of masonry. But most of the masonry was down on the ground. And the wooden buildings were built up on it.

MM: Yes.

CW: And not, not masonry like we were building here in the United States.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Yet, you know. And, um... Anyway, the Japanese up in, uh, Kamioka and Funatsu up there – Funatsu was a five miles below us, and it was a smeltered to this mines.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: That was ringed around in the mountains up there.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, uh, anyway, it was quite a large town. The, uh ... uh, Kamioka, the – was controlled militarily from Funatsu. Or Hunatsu, I think is the way they pronounced it. And they ... they just couldn't tell us anything. They wouldn't tell us anything.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Yeah. But, uh, we had a Japanese officer – I don't know what his rank was – come up there about ... oh, two months before the war was over. And he made a speech to us. He tied a talk to us. He had talked to the camp down there in Hunatsu. And, uh, the jest of his entire thing was that we were invaded. We possibly can't let you people stand behind the lines.

MM: Oh.

CW: And them was the, them was the exact words –

MM: Yeah.

CW: He was speaking English, now. Broken English, but ...

MM: Oh.

CW: that, he was speaking English

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: not Japanese. And the old boys went back down in their barracks, you know, just as happy about, well, you know. I said, "Hey, boys."

MM: Well that could only mean one thing.

CW: Didn't you ...

MM: I would think.

CW: Could only mean one thing.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And... they, they ... they were – their minds, sweetheart.

MM: Sure.

CW: Were so far gone.

MM: Yeah.

CW: They couldn't – they couldn't grasp the ...

MM: I gotcha

CW: anything that drastic. You know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: I went down and talked with Cherry, and this that and the other, and so Cherry and I got us about 12 other people that was still hopped-up and everything, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And we began to arm ourselves the best we could, you know. Spikes, uh, old files and sharpen 'em off, and bring 'em out of the mine. You know, that kind of a thing.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And we had about 24 people that was just as armed as we could possibly be

MM: Yeah.

CW: with things like that. Now, two Sundays prior, we were off about – in them days they had gotten there, gotten off of three shifts down to one shift in the mine, because down south, they couldn't take the production of three shifts.

MM: Oh.

CW: You understand?

MM: Yeah.

CW: Yeah. And, uh ... so, uh, they were carrying us on a hike around here. Around the mountain about five miles. Everybody went out. On the list that we were admitted to that camp on. Not the one that existed then.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And some men had died. They couldn't understand why they wasn't on that – where are they?

MM: (Laughs)

CW: You know?

MM: Yeah.

CW: And I had to explain to 'em, you got the wrong list. But what is was, is it was the execution detail, and we didn't know it. In other words, if there would have been an invasion, then they would have carried us around there.

MM: Oh.

CW: Ok. Hanging up there was just a overhang of zillions of tons of mountain. And mineshafts, old tests. They would have packed, had them packed full of dynamite, see, and down it would have come on us.

MM: Oh!

CW: Now these – 98 percent of these men down here couldn't grasp the fact ...

MM: No.

CW: But they carried us to the same place and set us down for two hours. Two different Sundays in a row.

MM: So you were that close?

CW: We were that close. If we would – if there would have been an American invasion of Japan, well, there's where we would have been today. Our remains would have been under there.

MM: How many men, how many people were in your group? Or in the whole group itself?

CW: Uh, five ... 500 and – no, 900 there. There was about 500 American, 480 Americans. Uh, the others were Dutch out of the islands down there.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: There were, uh, Javanese.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: The old pug, some of 'em pug nosed.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Black as any ...

MM: Oh, is that right?

CW: Yeah. Uh, there was only – there were Dutch subjects, Dutch subjects now.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: You have to understand that. Holland owned them islands out there

MM: Yeah.

CW: for 500 years, you know.

MM: Dutch East Indies.

CW: Um-hmm. Now, they had never seen Holland, though.

MM: Oh. So they just saw. Yeah.

CW: There was only – there was only six actual Hollanders up there.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh-huh.

MM: Oh.

CW: But now, they did not carry them around there, see. They were not the arc enemy of Japan.

MM: Oh.

CW: They were not the ones that was going

MM: Yeah.

CW: to invade Japan.

MM: To – yeah.

CW: You see. But ... um ... then, uh ... at the ... after the bomb hit.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Well, then they told us. Then we tried to get their guns that day. They said, “No. We now have to protect you from the civilians. They might want to run in here on you.”

CW: We said, no we’ll do the protecting. And they wouldn’t do it. Well, that night, they left. The army.

MM: Yeah.

CW: The military had left. They carried their guns with ‘em. And hey, we were at the civilians’ mercy at that point. If they would have wanted to get a little bit ornery with us ... see?

MM: But they didn’t, huh?

CW: But they didn’t. The military was called away because they didn’t want us getting our hands on the military.

MM: Oh.

CW: And the camp staff left with ‘em. Now, our officer wouldn’t let us leave.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh ...

MM: Was that to keep you safe? [Inaudible]

CW: Well, he said we’ll get orders. We’ll get – no, it wasn’t to keep us safe.

MM: Oh.

CW: He, “We’ll get orders from headquarters.”

CW: Well, where was headquarters? My goodness, nobody knew.

MM: And did they know you were there?

CW: And they didn’t know we were there first place.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Uh ... about four days later, five days later, a B-17 come across the valley over there, and dropped food and clothing to the prison camp below us

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: down there in Hiratsu. And, uh, they didn't see us up there on the side of the hill.

MM: Oh!

CW: We, we had PW.

MM: Yeah.

CW: We had got out there real quick and put PW on top of the building. And so the next day, the same B-29 come across to drop them some more down there, you know. And they had got out their PW with a big arrow pointing upside the hill.

MM: Oh!

CW: Huge arrow. And the, them aviators seen it, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And they looked up there and seen that one.

MM: The sign there, yeah.

CW: And they made a turn.

MM: Oh!

CW: And we was watching 'em.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know, just mouth just watering. Ok.

MM: Yeah, I bet.

CW: And ... we, we were watching 'em. They went back out across the valley. Way over there. Must have been 40 miles. Was just a little bitty thing. And here he come. Now mind you, he was below the top of this mountain.

MM: Oh.

CW: When he crossed us. Ok. Going right straight out that mountain. He had turned and was flying up the angle of that mountain whenever they dropped that food and stuff on us.

MM: Oh!

CW: They were climbing to make, make it over that mountain.

MM: How dangerous. How dangerous, though.

CW: Yes, it was dangerous. Um-hmm.

MM: I'll talk to you later.

CW: And, uh, they dropped food out of – that was the most huge one plane. I said how in the world can they get anything that big off the ground?

MM: Gosh.

CW: I didn't know they could make a plane as big as B-29.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now, it's a little bitty toy, you know.

MM: Yeah. I know. Well that was a big thing.

CW: And, uh, you have to understand where our minds – how small our minds were, you know.

MM: Oh, yes.

CW: I mean, the world had advanced off away from us.

MM: That's right – you, what? Three and a half years?

CW: Yeah.

MM: You say you were ...

CW: Mentally, we were out of step with the world.

MM: Oh!

CW: You see what I'm talking about? We were absolutely out of step with the world.

MM: Well, did American troops ever come into your camp and, uh ...

CW: No. Uh ... after ... after the, we went out and got the food and

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: canned goods and everything. A lot of it dropped loose and hit on the side of the mountain and ruined it.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh, the parachute wouldn't open.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But we stayed there about another eight days. And we told our officer one day, well some of us did, you know, said, "Hey, we don't care if you stay here the rest of your life. We're going to go."

MM: (Laughs) Yeah.

CW: And we went down to Hiratsu and we – some, we'd, some of the men already been down in town, and I hadn't. And men had talked with them men down there, and they said that they were going to leave that day. And they had went out and talked across the river the railroad track. And they had talked

to the people on the railroad, and said yes we'll send cars for you. Well, then they went and made arrangements for a car – cars to pick us up. So we went and told our officer. He said, "No, no, no, you can't go. We have to wait for our order."

CW: Well you just stay here and wait for 'em, we'll go. (Laughs)

MM: (Laughs)

CW: So, away we went. We went over there the next day, and of course he come with us, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And ... uh, three days later we was down at, uh, Yokohama. And, uh... Now, mind you the peace treaty had not been signed yet.

MM: Oh.

CW: And we, on the way down, were meeting Japanese troops, armed troops going to their defense positions for this invasion that they thought was gonna happen any day.

MM: Yeah. And they didn't come toward you at all? And they didn't ?

CW: Yeah, but they were still wanting to fight.

MM: They didn't ...

CW: Well, they – they didn't see us, thank goodness.

MM: Oh.

CW: We pulled the shades down real quick when we seen was meeting. Uh, we had the Japanese camp commander that was of our camp.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Now, he was a good guy.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And we had him with us and he volunteered to stay. Now, we didn't make him stay.

MM: Yeah.

CW: He volunteered to stay. He didn't leave with them other people. And he was a, an old school teacher, really. At that time about 55, 58 years old, you know.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And he went down with us and he's the one that warned us about them troops. He said, "Now pull your, pull your blinds down."

MM: Oh.

CW: "Them people are armed." And we didn't even have – we, we had scrounged up about three rifles. Is all we had. About that one train had close to 500 men on it. So we would have been at their mercy, you know.

MM: Sure.

CW: And, uh, we got on down to Yokohama, well, it was real comical this Japanese going around trying to surrender himself to the Americans. They could care less about ...

MM: And they didn't care anything about him! (Laughs)

CW: Care less about him.

(Laughter)

CW: I've got so many of your troops. Or I got so many of your predators. You know, "Keep that guy away there," you know. Telling their MP's, "Keep him away."

CW: It was on Haneda Airfield.

MM: Oh!

CW: And Americans had occupied that by air.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know, come in by planes and had the MP's.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, uh, marines and MP's, uh, there you know, "Hey, get that Jap, get him outta here. Get him away from here."

MM: And where were you all?

CW: We were lined up there waiting – you know, we'd been brought from Yokohama over to Haneda on some trucks. You know. Well, they were getting us out of the country as fast as they possibly could.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Because the Americans still thought there was going to be a battle.

MM: Oh.

CW: For their homeland. And they didn't want us in the way.

MM: Yeah.

CW: The Americans didn't want us in the way, they – because we would have been so helpless.

MM: Yes.

CW: You know. And they would have had to have tried to guard us; we couldn't have fought. No way in the world.

MM: Yeah. You were just so ...

CW: In our mental and physical conditions was not ...

MM: How much did you weigh when you came out?

CW: When I come out?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: About 125 pounds. I had put on some weight.

MM: Is that right?

CW: Yes, ma'am. Um ... down in the Philippines when I was working on that airfield down there, we was not on a very much of a pro-, high protein diet. In fact, it was almost nonexistent. While I was working at about 112, 15 pounds. Uh-huh. That's about average of a person. I was 5'8".

MM: Yeah.

CW: And 5'8" ...

MM: Pretty tired all the time.

CW: All the time. Super tired. It just, you know, it didn't take anything at all. Tired.

MM: What about malaria and dysentery? Were they just with you all the time?

CW: Yes, ma'am. I had the malaria, but not the kind that lingers.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Ok. Uh, I had the dysentery, but not the type that, uh ... uh, ravaged you.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Another words, the amebic dysentery is a live ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: animal. Or live ...

MM: parasite.

CW: Bug.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Parasite. Under a slide, you can actually see him crawling around.

MM: Yeah. And it does liver damage and all sorts of ...

CW: He attacks the wall of the stomach.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And your stomach throws fluid in there, and it dehydrates you. You know.

MM: Oh.

CW: And that's, that – that was the thing that carried most men out was dysentery.

MM: And it did kill ...

CW: Yes, ma'am.

MM: A lot. Ok.

CW: Now there was – the first six months of the war, in the Japanese sweep across the Pacific.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Ok, they took up about 33,000 Americans. And 17,400 come back. Now that's actual figures.

MM: Yeah.

CW: That's not my conju-, conjuring up.

MM: Yeah, I understand. Uh-huh.

CW: That's the actual figures. Now, all of 'em didn't die from disease. The ships going to Japan: a lot of 'em was lost on those ships.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: There was many men sent to Manchuria and, uh – like I say, the Japanese ... uh, the Japanese in that day was still going by the code of the warrior. You understand?

MM: Yes.

CW: The Bushido.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Ok, he – he was taught war from so high on up. He, he – the way of the warrior. Just like your old medieval

MM: Yeah.

CW: times in Europe. Um, but anyway, they carried their men to Manchuria. And they left the Philippines and got there in the wintertime. Around zero. And some of 'em they would make 'em stand outside three and four hour. No clothes on before they even let 'em in the barracks. Well it was very few could walk on in to the barracks, and very few survived. And then, uh, many more died from exposure the first and second winter there, you know. Uh, pneumonia and this – this kind of a thing.

MM: Yeah.

CW: We had one cold spell more so than any other one up there that killed about – you know, from exposure: pneumonia and so forth – killed about 25, 30 people. Or 40 people, uh, after it warmed up a little bit. Where I was at, ok, there was other places in Japan. Now in your mind, down south was coal mines. And the coal would, uh ... slide in on the men, you know. Not enough bracing. They didn't have it in the first place.

MM: Oh, so there were deaths by accident, too.

CW: Death by accidents. Uh... actually our bombers counted for quite a few in them, uh ... uh, big cities had them steel, had 'em in steel mills, even.

MM: Oh.

CW: Steel mills and the working, uh, docks and so forth.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And they were devastated. The, you know, devastated the area.

MM: Yeah.

CW: They were in it just like the Japanese civilian was in it. The worker. The ships going to Japan, and – course I can tell you about the deaths, but the how ... you know, there's some things I will not get over into.

MM: Yeah. That's alright.

CW: Now, a book that I suggest if you would, would want to find out something

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: that went on in the ship – now, I went over on a ship. No problem getting from Philippines to Japan. I think I was, we were on the last ship that didn't have any problems.

MM: Oh.

CW: A couple prior to us had got attacked, and several behind us were attacked.

MM: Oh.

CW: And two or three of 'em were sank. There was one ship started out with about 1,500 men. I think eight got to Japan. Uh, there was a ... I think the worst one – in fact I know it was – the Okyo Maru. If you track it down, you might have it in your – you might accidentally have that in your, uh, library. But if you don't, it'd be very easy to get a hold of it. I don't know who wrote it.

MM: That's the name of the book? Okyo Maru?

CW: Yes, ma'am. Okyo Maru.

MM: O-K-O?

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: And then maru like you see on all the ships?

CW: O-K-Y-O

MM: Oh. Ok.

CW: O-K-Y-O, I believe is the way it's spelled. But it'll give you a pretty good idea of really what the bad ships

MM: Yeah.

CW: were like.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh, just to mention one or two of the things, ok, the cannibalism did break out on ship.

MM: Well ... I can't say I'd blame somebody in that situation for that.

CW: Well, they had – they had went out of their minds.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Completely out of their minds. You take 18 days or so without water. Period.

MM: Yes.

CW: Ok. Then your body chemicals overloads

MM: Oh, yes.

CW: your blood stream, and it, it numbs your ...

MM: I guess so.

CW: Numbs your brain. Yes, ma'am. Uh ... that is the one that comes to mind. There is several more. I will bring you, if you want them ...

MM: Oh, I'd like that.

CW: I will bring you the titles of them now.

MM: Ok.

CW: Ok? One day pretty soon. And I will, uh ... come on to anything else. Now, NBC, and this is something you can track down pretty good – I don't think they'll let you have it – but NBC made a documentary. Uh, "The Forgotten Hell," I believe was the, was the name that they had on this.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And I saw it up there, a, a boy that, believe it or not, was a prisoner for nine months before he was born. (Laughs)

MM: Is that right?

CW: Yeah, he was...

MM: His mother ...

CW: In other words he was ...

MM: obviously was a prisoner.

CW: Yeah. But he was born in there, see.

MM: Oh.

CW: Well, anyway, uh... he, uh... he's a banker... what town is he live? Anyway, he makes every one of our ex-POW meetings in Fontana Dam.

MM: Is that right?

CW: See. And he has this. And shows it with the permission ...

MM: Yeah.

CW: of NBC. But he will not let you copy it because ...

MM: Oh. Yeah.

CW: of NBC's copyright things, ok. But it, it shows some of this other thing. And it shows this thing about these men I was telling you about running down through these, uh ... uh, palm trees and what have you. You know. And now, we didn't have any people with cameras.

MM: Yeah.

CW: See? That's what I'm talking about.

MM: You were already having a gun. Yeah.

CW: So it had to be – it had to be off of this film

MM: Yeah.

CW: that the Japanese was using as pe-

MM: Yeah.

CW: using those – I wasn't in it – using those prisoners to make this, uh ...

MM: Sure.

CW: show that they was

MM: Yeah.

CW: going to, you know, show to their people. Ok.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now, that's as close to accurate for a ...

MM: That's fascinating. But tell me about your ...

CW: one hour thing.

MM: Tell me about your, um, your joke collection. I just thought that was... Do you think that's what kept you alive? At some point?

CW: No, it didn't really keep me alive, but am I keeping you?

MM: No, not at all.

CW: I'm afraid I am.

MM: No, you're not. This is fascinating to me. I – my husband and I are both World War II – we read a lot of books about World War II. Because it was such a part of our childhood.

CW: I have arthritis,

CW: and I have to ease that leg going so I ...

MM: Oh.

CW: Ok, my jokes. Uh, down at this big airfield, like I was saying, the first few months down there was a ideal detail as far as prisons can be details. Now, don't get me wrong, there was beatings, there was ...

MM: Now, where was that?

CW: Lipa, the one where I said I first went.

MM: Ok.

CW: And, uh ...

MM: Cruelty existed.

CW: The – our first guards down there, down at the first three, four months, five months with us, we had fought them same people on Bataan, and some of 'em had been in the invasion of Corregidor.

MM: Oh.

CW: So they respected us as a fighting man.

MM: Oh, I see.

CW: You understand?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: There's one fighting man more or less respects another one.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Now, I think that if I captured someone in the field, I captured two people in the field. And one of 'em put a fight, and I had to subdue him. And one of 'em just run around and finally threw his hands up and give up. I think I'd have a lot more respect for that other man that I had to subdue.

MM: Yeah. I see what you mean.

CW: You understand?

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: So that was there idea. They were a war-minded people.

MM: And they respected that in ...

CW: They respected force.

MM: ... someone. Yeah.

CW: Ok. They respected, uh, that kind of a thing. And I have set down there, actually, and talked with some of them men about certain things on a certain hill ...

MM: Oh, you did?

CW: ... a certain day. "Yeah, I was there."

CW: Can you imagine that? Him saying, "Well, I was there."

MM: In that same place.

CW: Yeah, he was, he was – he was there.

MM: Goodnight.

CW: Naturally, I didn't see him.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now, some of the – some of the time, we would've been pull-, a few of us been pulled off of Corregidor and sent to Bataan to plug a hole that they had opened up and tried to run through. See. And that was what I was speaking of. On about three occasions, I have been put in the line over in Bataan.

MM: Oh.

CW: To help plug them holes up. And we were talking about some of them things and the Japanese. And its comical sometimes sitting there – I would sit there with a smile on my face just wondering how in the world am I sitting here talking to a man and ...

MM: Who was shooting at you!

CW: ... that was shooting at me, you know?

MM: Yeah. (Laughs)

CW: But it was comical. But now, I – just laying a background, a little background here.

MM: Yeah.

CW: They did treat us fairly fair for the first few months, um, there. And they were wanting to get this detail, airfield detail, started. They needed the airfield. And they fed us fairly good.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: And so forth. And they gave us every Sunday off. Believe it or not. Now, they worked the mischief out of us six days ...

MM: Yeah. Yeah.

CW: At least 12 hours a day. See.

MM: Oh.

CW: Minimum 12 hours a day. But, on a ... I guess about third to fourth Sunday, uh, of about the third month after the other group of, big group come down – see, it was just 200 of us went down there to start that detail.

MM: Oh.

CW: A hundred ... 100 of us went down to start detail, and then they sent about 400 down there. So about 500 men, and we got the idea, said, “Why don’t we see about putting on a show?”

CW: And, you know, two or three of the men had an old guitar, a violin that they’d brought out of the, uh, battles with them and what have you. We made a drum or two, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Out of a nail cag or something.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, on and on like that. And finally, we had about six pieces of instruments, you know, one type or the other. And so we had, uh, a man that we called – his name was Art, Arthur Wormworth, and we called him The Bull of Bataan. And that’s like ... very fitting. Very fitting name. He actually, he just – just an old, just an old bull. You know.

MM: Yeah. (Laughs)

CW: And tough, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And that’s why we called him that. I – at, at some other time, I’ll tell you about Art Wormworth. He was a super human being. And one of the best soldiers I’ve ever seen.

MM: Oh, is that right?

CW: Yeah. And anyway, um, he went over and talked to the Japanese about the ... and they, they come back with something. Said, well, not only that, we’ll give, get you some – enough equipment put on a ballgame here on a Sunday.

MM: My goodness.

CW: Yeah. Now they had a acre-and-a-half or so out there, that they had this acre-and-a-half so we go to be counted in. That’s all it was out there for.

MM: Oh. Uh-huh.

CW: A cross fence. But they also let us put ball diamond out there. And finally put two out there, and we got two teams up and we, you know, compete with each other. And, uh, the Japanese never would get in a competition with us.

MM: I bet they wouldn’t! (Laughs)

CW: And we had – we invited ‘em, but they didn’t want to.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now ...

MM: But did they watch it? Were they interested?

CW: They always come watched us.

MM: Oh!

CW: Every Sunday we had, they had them to watch us.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Now, in the camp shows, well – being as I had got the, originated the idea, they said, “Cliff, we want you to MC ‘em.”

CW: And so I – I didn’t know anything about anything like that. You know? I said ...

MM: And you were just 17 or 18, right?

CW: I, I was ... I was 18 at that time. And I said, “Well, I’ll give it a try.” You know. And so we had, uh, religious groups to sing, and ...

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: Some guys done this. Finally, finally on about the third one I said, “Well, let’s find somebody that can tell jokes.”

CW: And the old boy got tellin’ them – I get some ol’ Tennessean or something up there.

MM: Yeah.

CW: That knew good jokes, you know. And I get him to tell jokes. He’d tell two or three, and get another one, tell two or three. And the men would laugh at anything.

MM: Oh. Oh, so ready for it, I bet. Yeah.

CW: Any, any distraction. You know what I mean? Anything would, would – you know, help. So, finally I said I’m wasting everything. So I went and I started writing these jokes down on backs of, uh, labels ...

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: come off of cans. That’s the only thing I could find.

MM: Yeah.

CW: To put it on. And, uh, did I tell you I lost ‘em?

MM: Yes! That, I thought that was interesting how ...

CW: Yeah, and, uh, Haneda airport that day, we - we left Japan on a big C-54.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, uh, they flew us to Okinawa. Well, it was not all that far down to Okinawa in one of those big planes. Like, uh, three hours or three and-a-half hours, something like that. But, uh, they were going to fly us from there on to the Philippines in a B-24.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Ok, it was eight hours flying time, and they took two big boards and laid across the bomb bay.

MM: Oh.

CW: And we were loading.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Getting ready to go. We had stayed on Okinawa three days. I'll tell you another, something else in a minute that happened to me on Okinawa. But the aviator, the man in charge of the plane, the head aviator – whatever you call it – pilot.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Well, he said, "You boys in those old heavy coats."

CW: You know they dropped 'em to us out of them bombers, you know.

MM: Uh-huh. Yeah.

CW: And we, we would keep needles, and little pieces of string, and wire, and everything. Just like any other prisoner, you know.

MM: Sure.

CW: You gather up everything there ...

MM: Anything you could get.

CW: And he said, "Y'all throw them old heavy coats away," said, "We're gonna be 6,000 feet up. Gonna be Spring weather all the way down."

CW: And I just dropped my coat in the pile. Big ol' pockets, you know?

MM: Yeah.

CW: Them big ol' pockets on them green looking jackets.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Winter jackets. My jokes was in that pocket. (Laughs)

MM: Oh!

CW: About two hours out, I said, "Oh, love."

MM: And it was back.

CW: Back there.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yeah, but in Okinawa, we was there, was on Okinawa three days. And the airfield is on the side of the mountain.

MM: Um-hmm.

CW: Top of the mount-, flat mountain up here. And they carried us by truck down to the beach. Now the beaches were just mile after mile after mile, and that's where the American's invaded to take Okinawa. Ok, they were using Okinawa as the England. They were building on Okinawa for, as a big base build-up to invade Japan, see.

MM: Yeah. Uh-huh.

CW: And there was a million men on Okinawa, and there was one kitchen down that beach after another one. When we drove up on them trucks, smell them kitchens. Oh, my goodness! Can you imagine?

MM: Oh! Smelled like home cooking, I'll bet.

CW: Oh, it was – it did. But the thing that I wanted most was a cup of coffee. I could smell ...

MM: And you had not had coffee all that time?

CW: There'd been four years, now, since I drank a cup of coffee.

MM: Oh!

CW: And them old boys are running in there getting them ol' big dishes of hash and this and that and the other. And I run over there, I got me a canteen cup plumb full of black coffee. And set down and sipped that thing. It taste so good, I went and got a half of one, and then you know, and then I went and got my food, and. My body, being weakened, and then not being used to, uh, caffeine, I didn't sleep for two days and nights. (Laughter) All night of, "What is wrong with me?"

MM: Yeah. Oh my goodness!

CW: And eventually it dawned on me what was wrong.

MM: It was that coffee.

CW: I wasn't used to caffeine. It, it – my body was so weakened and out of joint, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Because of ...

MM: Oh!

CW: (Laughs) And I had been away from it for so long.

MM: Oh!

CW: It did. It just – it done a number on me. I was up two days and nights with no ...

MM: Isn't that funny?

CW: Two nights and two days, I just ...

MM: Well, they flew you to Okinawa and then, then what? Where'd you go?

CW: To the Philippines, and then ...

MM: [Inaudible].

CW: Uh, to a replacement center. Supposed to have got out of there two days later on to the United States, and there was a letter from my mother there waiting for me. It had been stopped there.

MM: Oh.

CW: And she said, "You have two brothers in the Philippines."

CW: Didn't give their name, they didn't – well, I knew who – which two, but it didn't give their ... Didn't even ...

MM: Didn't know where, or ...

CW: No! Well, there they were. Five million men.

MM: Continued on the other side.

(End of tape)

(Tape 4 of 4)

MM: What did you – what did you do?

CW: Well, there was five million men in the Philippines, ok. And, what was I to do?

MM: Yes.

CW: But I was ...

MM: And you, you don't exactly have an unusual name. There must – how many of those people must have been named Warren?

CW: But ... yeah, lots of 'em. Anyway, I was going to make a try. And they already had the list posted for the boat to leave, see. And I said to heck with it.

MM: Oh.

CW: I went in and talked to the, talked to an officer. I said, "Now, I got a brother here." And I said, "I want to see him."

CW: He said, "Leave him word. Get to that boat."

CW: I got to thinking, you know, just coming out of that place and the man wanted to give me a run around like that? No thought at all for considerations, you know.

MM: Yeah. What you'd been through.

CW: I just went to one of my buddies, and I said, "If y'all hear 'em call my name, don't even wink cause I ain't gonna be ready to go."

MM: Yeah.

CW: So I went out to Manila next day, and to the post office building. Uh, the post office building is – Americans had put their headquarters I found out in the post office building, ok. And, uh, I went to the post office building, and started tracking him down. And finally, the third day of me sleeping in the hallway, now, a sergeant comes to ...

MM: In the – of the post office?

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: You mean you just camped there?

CW: Headquarter – I camped there. No one wanted to do anything for me. You understand?

MM: Gosh.

CW: And I said somebody is going to do something for me. And this ...

MM: You were pretty tough by then, too, you weren't gonna ...

CW: This was a, this was a post office building, of course.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: Now, it had – this is a pre-war picture.

MM: Oh.

CW: That's the post office building.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And, uh, I was trying to find it here, and I can't. But anyway, the third day, well I, uh, this sergeant come out and he said, "Son," he said, "I'm going to do my best to track your brother down for you."

MM: Whoops! These chairs aren't the ...

CW: And I said, "I sure hope you do," I said, "because they have the MP's out looking for me by this time."

CW: And so, he went in and about 20 minutes he come back out, and he said, "Now your brother ..."

CW: And he give me his name, his serial number.

MM: Oh!

CW: Where he was at and all like that, you know. And it was right at dark. I said, "Is any ..."

CW: And, and he was at Cabanatuan, back at that place where I had been in prison camp, see.

MM: Oh!

CW: Now, I, uh, said, "Any way I can get up there tonight?"

CW: He said, "Son, there ain't but one way you can get up there, and it's wait till daylight and get out there on one of them roads and hitchhike just like them thousands of other men is doing." He said, "We

can't furnish you with no transportation, now." But he said, "This'll be no sweat, now, if you can get on that main road, main highway." He said, "You know where it's at?"

CW: And I said, "Yeah, I know where it's at."

CW: He said, "Get one of these Filipino taxis to drop you out there," and he said, uh, "You start thumbing," said, "You can get to Cabanatuan today or tomorrow."

CW: Well, I thought: I better go back down to the replacement center. Well, I had to just about, to get fed, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: And about 20 miles outside of town. I went out there, and third time I thumbed, well, uh, few minutes I was at the replacement center. And when I got off of the truck that carried me, you know, my name was being called out over the loud speaker. I thought: uh-oh, they want to put me on the brig, you know.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Or something. For missing the boat. Well, anyway, I walked around there, you know, and I said ... And there stood my brother.

MM: Oh!

CW: Yeah, he'd been down there, too – he'd been down there ...

MM: He'd been looking for you.

CW: All day waiting for me.

MM: Oh, for goodness sakes.

CW: And ... so, uh, then the next day, he and I went into Manila, and he had a jeep, you know.

MM: Uh-huh.

CW: We went into Manila and stayed, or, looked over where some of the old places that I had been around.

MM: Yeah.

CW: And then we went back up to Cabanatuan. And his, uh, company or battery, or what – battery, was camped, encamped about a mile from the prison camp where I had, uh, been.

MM: Is that right? Had he had any idea you had been in that prison camp?

CW: Uh, not that particular one he wouldn't have. But he almost got killed at Bilibid while they were having the Battle of Manila. Uh, at Bilibid, he was going to try to get in Bilibid to see if I was in there. And, uh, a ranger almost cut his throat for it. Yeah.

MM: You mean a – one of our people?

CW: Our, one of our people, yeah.

MM: Oh. Were you at Bilibid at that point?

CW: No, ma'am, I was in Japan at that time.

MM: Oh. So he wouldn't have been.

CW: He wouldn't have found me, but, uh – the Battle of Manila, uh, this is some of the pictures I ...

MM: Oh.

CW: Of the city after they'd – after the Americans got through with it.

MM: Gosh.

CW: And the Japanese.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You know.

MM: Just not much.

CW: So you can imagine what kind of, uh – you can see the bullet and shell holes all ...

MM: Yeah, uh-huh.

CW: In all of these things. You can imagine the battle that was going on for the cities, ok. And this is my brother that met me.

MM: Oh!

CW: Um-hmm.

MM: And that's you?

CW: That's me.

MM: Oh, my goodness!

CW: Now, my face looks real good, but it's, it's – it's flushed. You know what I mean?

MM: Yeah. Yeah.

CW: But see that little old s... uh ...

MM: Yeah, a skinny arm? Yeah.

CW: (Laughs)

MM: Right.

CW: That, that – that's the dead giveaway right there.

MM: Oh!

CW: See? How that little ol' arm is there.

MM: How neat! Oh, I bet your brother was glad to see you.

CW: Oh, yeah. We'd ... and he ...

MM: Almost as glad as you were to see him.

CW: He lives in Kountze over here now.

MM: Oh.

CW: Uh ...

MM: And what – how about your other brother? You, did you ...

CW: No, he was, uh ... uh, had been, already been shipped up to North Japan to – well, were being shipped up North Japan. He was on Cebu Island, the – one of the islands out there in the water. And he was shipped to Hokkaido Island in the northern part of Japan. Now, this is the pier that I was on in Manila doing stevedoring for the Japanese.

MM: Oh.

CW: And this is after the, uh, war, and American bombers done a number on that.

MM: My goodness.

CW: I'm sure glad I wasn't on that pier that day.

MM: Yes! Oh, I bet.

(Laughter)

CW: And you see how this building is canning?

MM: Yes. Uh-huh.

CW: That's the University of the Philippines. Now that's where they had civilian, uh, prisoners in, in here.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, and look how they were chewed up.

MM: Ooo.

CW: Yeah. This is Manila Hotel.

MM: Yeah.

CW: You notice it didn't get hit? That was MacArthur's hotel.

MM: So they, they avoided that.

CW: His property. Yeah.

MM: Oh.

CW: And this ...

MM: And look at all the holes.

CW: Your – this is the other side of the University of the Philippines.

MM: Yeah.

CW: See another building.

MM: Gosh.

CW: Another end of it. And see how they're all shot.

MM: Hmm.

CW: Ok, this – this here, is this building here. At another angle, you see.

MM: Are they really crooked like that?

CW: Yes, ma'am.

MM: Oh.

CW: Yeah, they caved in. Now this is the – this is that headquarters. But here is during the battle.

MM: Hmm. That smoke.

CW: It's – you can still see the smoke. Now this is the, uh, post office I showed you.

MM: Yeah.

CW: Uh, where they had cleaned it out and put our, uh, headquarters. That's where I found my brother's address and everything in it.

MM: But did you get mail from your family?

CW: And ...

MM: While you were in those camps?

CW: Oh, no.

MM: Were you able ever ...

CW: Oh, no. I ...

MM: But they knew you were a prisoner of war, but didn't know whether you were alive or not?

CW: Yeah, they knew that I had been taken. Uh, now I, I was able – the Japanese sent, uh ... I could, I mailed out four cards. Now my mother got two of 'em. Believe it or not she got two of 'em from me. Um ... sometime like, uh, one year after we were all captured, the Japanese turned over a list.

MM: Oh.

CW: To the people in Geneva.

MM: Alright.

CW: Although they didn't have to; they didn't belong to the convention.

MM: Yeah, I knew they didn't.

CW: Um, but they turned over a list, and the American government was able to inform all families which people were captured. They couldn't say who had survived the camps, now, till – you know, for one year.

MM: Yeah.

CW: But, uh, they could ...

MM: Oh.

CW: Now, this is a picture taken while I was in camp.

MM: Oh!

CW: In, uh, North Japan. I was mad there. I was ... they had gotten me out of bed to take my picture.

MM: Oh! (Coughs)

CW: I was angry. And you see my hair is even combed?

MM: Yes.

CW: They made us do that.

MM: Uh, the Japanese took the picture?

CW: Yeah. They kept ...

MM: Why?

CW: Uh, identification. It was a real small thing, you know.

MM: Oh.

CW: And, uh, they took two of 'em and put in an album. And you see the number?

MM: Well, why did they want to do that?

CW: (Inaudible) [7:58]

MM: What was there purpose in doing that?

CW: I think that Mitsubishi had a hand in it.

MM: Oh.

CW: Not the military.

MM: Oh.

CW: Mitsubishi, again, I could see their hand in this thing because I – the military really didn't care anything about you, but Mitsui wanted some evidence, like I say, they knew what side of their rice had the Oleo on it, though.

MM: Yeah. Yeah.

CW: And they knew that eventually, that the Americans were going to get the upper hand, and they would eventually have to be doing business with the Americans.

MM: So they wanted ...

CW: So they wanted as good a relations they could. And if there was people lost there, that they could tell the Americans that they were lost up there.

MM: Oh! Oh.

CW: You know. Well, they could certainly ...

MM: And that ...

(End of tape)

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