

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

THE NIMITZ MUSEUM

PRESENTS

AN ORAL HISTORY BY

CHESTER W. MARSHALL

TAPE # 347

THIS IS RICHARD PRATT. TODAY IS DECEMBER 8 2001. I AM INTERVIEWING MR. CHESTER W. MARSHALL. THIS INTERVIEW IS TAKING PLACE IN FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS AT THE BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH. THIS INTERVIEW IS IN SUPPORT OF THE CENTER FOR PACIFIC WAR STUDIES ARCHIVES FOR THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR, TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE FOR THE PRESERVATION OF HISTORICAL INFORMATION RELATED TO THIS SITE.

I WANT TO THANK YOU MR. MARSHALL FOR TAKING THE TIME TO GO THROUGH THIS INTERVIEW.

MARSHALL

WELL, THANK YOU FOR HAVING ME . I APPRECIATE IT.

RICHARD

I WANT TO START WITH BASIC BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION. WHERE AND WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

MARSHALL

I WAS BORN MARCH 19, 1917. I AM 84 YEAR OLD. I WAS BORN IN HOLMES COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI.

RICHARD

WHERE IS THAT NEAR IN MISSISSIPPI?

MARSHALL

THAT IS ABOUT 45-50 MILES NORTH OF JACKSON, THE CENTRAL PART OF THE STATE.

RICHARD

WHO WERE YOU'RE PARENTS? WHAT ARE THEIR NAMES AND WHERE WERE THEY FROM?

MARSHALL

MY DADDY'S NAME WAS WILL, WILLIAM, OSCAR MARSHALL AND MY MOTHER'S NAME WAS ABEE MARSHALL. THEY LIVE IN HOLMES COUNTY. MISS. WHERE I WAS BORN. WE LIVED THERE, I WOULD SAY MAYBE UNTIL I GREW UP TO ABOUT 12 YEARS OLD AND THEN WE MOVED TO BELLZONA, MISS., WHICH IS IN THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA ABOUT 35 MILES NORTH OF JACKSON.

RICHARD

HOW ABOUT BROTHERS AND SISTERS?

MARSHALL

I HAD TWO SISTERS AND THREE BROTHERS. THERE WERE SIX OF US IN THE FAMILY. I WAS THE THIRD IN THE FAMILY. CLAUDE WAS THE OLDEST, 4 YEARS OLDER THAN ME. THE NEXT WAS MY SISTER, ANNIE AND SHE WAS 4 YEARS YOUNGER THAN CLAUDE. I WAS THE NEXT ONE AND I WAS 4 YEARS YOUNGER THAN SHE WAS. THE NEXT CAME LURA MARSHALL WHO

WAS 3 YEARS YOUNGER THAN I WAS. AFTER LURA CAME CLAYTON, AND HE WAS THREE YEARS YOUNGER THAN LURA. THE BABY IN THE FAMILY WAS DOYLE MARSHALL. HE WAS THREE YEARS YOUNGR THAN HER. EVERY SO OFTEN, WE HAD A BROTHER OR SISTER.

RICHARD

WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL?

MARSHALL

I WENT TO SCHOOL BEGINNING IN HOLMES COUNTY MISS. BUT I WAS IN ABOUT THE FIFTH GRADE WHEN WE MOVED TO BELZONA, MISS. AND I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL THERE. AT THE HIGH SCHOOL IN '36, I THINK IT WAS, LONG TIME AGO, I DECIDED; IT WAS DURING THE DEPRESSION, YOU UNDERSTAND AND THERE WASN'T VERY MUCH MONEY. MY DADDY WAS A FARMER. HE GOT TO BE A PRETTY BIG FARMER UNTIL 1929 WHEN THE DRPRESSION STARTED. THE BANKS ALL WENT BUSTED AND SO DID MY DAD. HE WAS A FARMER. MONEY WAS KIND OF SHORT DURING THOSE DAYS. WE HAD PLENTY TO EAT AND ALL THAT KIND OF STUFF. AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, I DECIDED I WANTED TO WORK. I WENT TO WORK FOR A CLOTHING DEPARTMENT STORE IN OUR LITTLE CITY OF ABOUT 3,500 PEOPLE. I WORKED THERE FOR ABOUT A YEAR AND THEN I LIKED THE DRUG STORE. THERE WAS A DRUG STORE THERE AND I LIKED TO WORK THERE AND I WENT OVER THERE AND WORKED ABOUT A YEAR, THEN DECIDED TO GO TO A HIGHER SCHOOL AND SO FORTH.

MY SISTER, AT THAT TIME, WAS MAKING PRETTY GOOD MONEY IN HER JOB. SHE HELPED ME GO TO BOWLING GREEN BUSINESS UNIVERSITY IN BOWLING GREEN, KY. IN 1939. THAT WAS A GREAT PLACE. WHEN I HAVE A CHANCE TO GO BY THERE, ANYWHERE NEAR, I STILL LIKE TO GO BY. I WAS PLANNING ON--- NOW THIS WAS IN 1939. IN 1940 I REALLY WAS PLANNING ON LEARNING ENOUGH TO BECOME A----- (LOST THE WORD) WHEN I AM MAKING A LITTLE TALK, I I'VE ALREADY GOT A PERSON, SITTING PRETTY CLOSE HERE, TO REMIND ME WHAT WORD I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

RICHARD

SHE DOESN'T KNOW YOUR STORY.

MARSHALL

AT 84 YEARS OLD, A LOT OF TIMES, YOU DO HAVE MEMORY LAPSE, I GUESS YOU WOULD CALL IT.

VOICE

YOU'RE DOING GREAT.

MARSHALL

YOU TOOK BOOKKEEPING AND ALL THAT KIND OF STUFF AT THIS UNIVERSIY WHERE I WENT TO SCHOOL. IN THE MEANTIME, IN 1939, I WAS ON MY WAY BACK TO SCHOOL. ON

SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1939 GOING BACK TO BOWLING GREEN, KY. AND I HAD TO CHANGE BUSES IN NASHVILLE, TENN. I WALKED OUTSIDE TO GET A NEWSPAPER OUT OF A STAND AND SEE WHAT THE NEWS WAS FOR THE DAY. IT WAS BAD NEWS. THAT WAS THE DAY THAT HITLER DECIDED TO TAKE POLAND AND THAT IS WHEN WORLD WAR II STARTED. THAT DAY. I SAID, WELL, I'M GOING TO HAVE AN INTERESTING REST OF MY LIFE. I WASN'T MARRIED OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT AND I SAID, IT LOOKS LIKE I'LL BE GOING TO THE WAR. I WAS SAYING THIS TO MYSELF OF COURSE.

I WENT ON TO SCHOOL. IN ABOUT APRIL, THROUGH THAT SEMESTER, APRIL, MAY OR SOMEWHERE ALONG IN THERE, I WENT HOME. THERE WERE A LOT OF MY FRIENDS, A FEW YEARS OLDER MAYBE, HAD DECIDED----THEY HAD PUT ON SORT OF A CAMPAIGN IN JACKSON, MS. WE WEREN'T TOO FAR FROM JACKSON, MS., TO ENLIST PEOPLE INTO THE SERVICES. THAT BEGAN IN 1940 REALLY.

FEM. VOICE

DIDN'T YOUR BROTHER GO ALSO?

MARSHALL

YES, YES, TWO OF MY BROTHERS DID. MY OLDEST BROTHER DIDN'T. YOU SEE HE HAD TO KIND OF TAKE CARE OF MY MOTHER AND DADDY. HE WAS HAVING CHILDREN THEN TOO. HE FINALLY HAD FIVE. HE DIDN'T HAVE TO GO INTO THE SERVICE. THERE THREE OF US WHO WENT. TWO WENT TO THE NAVY, THE TWO YOUNGEST, INCLUDING MY BABY BROTHER. I USED TO KID THEM ABOUT IT. THEY SHOULD HAVE GOT IN A GOOD UNIT AND GOT IN THE AIR FORCE.

I DECIDED, MY SISTER AND MY FAMILY EXCEPT MY DAD AND MOM AND MY OLDEST BROTHER, THEY DIDN'T WANT ME TO GO IN THE SERVICE. THEY KIND OF CRIED WHEN I LEFT AND THAT KIND OF STUFF. MY SISTER ENCOURAGED ME AND SAID, "THAT MAY NOT BE A BAD IDEA TO TRY TO GET INTO SOMETHING THAT YOU LIKED." I WANTED THE AIR FORCE. I DIN'T WANT TO BE WALKING AROUND IN MUD AND STUFF, IWO JIMA OR SOMEWHERE, WHICH I INCIDENTALLY DID, LATER ON. WHAT REALLY MADE ME CONSIDER GOING INTO THE AIR FORCE, I HAD THIS FRIEND THAT DID GO IN. HE HAD ALREADY GOTTEN IN THE SERVICE. HE CAME HOME ON HIS FIRST FURLOUGH. HE HAD ENLISTED AND HE LOOKED SO GOOD IN THAT UNIFORM. HE WENT TO BARKSDALE FIELD IN LOUISIANA. HE WENT TO JACKSON, MS. TO GET IN THEN THEY SENT HIM TO BARKSDALE FIELD. HE LOOKED SO AND GOOD AND HE SAID, "MAN, I'M GOING TO BE A 30 YEAR MAN." I ASKED HIM WHAT HE LIKED ABOUT IT. WE TALKED ABOUT IT AN ALL THE NEXT DAY OR TWO, I DECIDED TO GO DOWN TO JACKSON AND CHECK IT OUT.

RICHARD

HOW LONG AFTER SEPTEMBER 1ST WAS THIS?

MARSHALL

THIS WAS IN 1940. I HAD GONE TO SCHOOL AND THIS WAS IN SPRING BREAK OR SOMETHING. THE WAR STARTED THE 1ST OF SEPTMBER. THIS WAS IN SEPTEMBER OR OCTOBER.

RICHARD

IT WAS PRETTY SOON AFTER SEPTEMBER 1ST. IT WAS PRETTY SOON AFTER THAT?

MARSHALL

YES, IT WAS PRETTY SOON AFTER THAT. I WENT TO JACKSON AND DECIDED, THIS WAS IN 1940 WHEN I WENT DOWN THERE AND TALKED TO THEM, AFTER I DECIDED TO TRY TO GET INTO THE SEVICE AND I WANT TO GO IN TO THE AIR FORCE. I WENT TO JACKSON AND THIS WAS IN 1940 ABOUT THE FIRST OF JUNE. I WENT TO JACKSON AND ASKED ABOUT ENLISTING. THEY DECIDED, "WE WOULD LIKE TO TAKE YOUR NAME DOWN BUT WE CAN'T ENLIST YOU NOW. WE HAVE USED UP THE WHOLE QUOTA." AT THAT TIME, THEY HAD QUOTAS TO MEET FOR ENLISTMENTS TO TAKE NEW PEOPLE IN." THEY TOLD ME TO WATCH THE NEWSPAPERS AND THEY WOULD BE HAVING NOTICES IN THE JACKSON DAILY NEWS IF ANYTHING CAME UP THAT THEY WERE TAKING PEOPLE BACK. I SAW, ONE DAY ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THAT, AND I WENT DOWN THERE. THEY SAID THEY WERE TAKING PEOPLE. I RUSHED ON DOWN THERE AND THEY ACCEPTED ME. TOOK THE PHYSICAL AND THAT KIND OF STUFF.

FEM. VOICE

MUCH ADO. SOUNDS LIKE SOMEBODY WAS TRYING TO TELL YOU SOMETHING THE FIRST TIME. REAL FILLED UP.

MARSHALL

THE QUOTA DEAL; THE RECRUITING OFFICES, THEY HAVE A QUOTA. THEY SAY, A QOTA OF 100 A MONTH AND THEY ALREADY HAD THEIR 100 BY THE 20TH OF THE MONTH. THEY COULDN'T TAKE ANYMORE IN UNTIL THE FIRST OF THE NEXT MONTH. THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED THERE. I GOT IN THERE IN TIME TO GET IN TO THE NEXT MONTH.

THEY TOLD ME TO GO BACK HOME AND LET MY FOLS KNOW AND I HAD TO REPORT DOWN ON A CERTAIN DATE. THAT'S WHEN MY DAD AND ALL OF THEM CRIED. I LEFT DOWN THERE TO GO TO THE SERVICE.

RICHARD

AND WHERE DID YOU REPORT?

MARSHALL

I REPORTED TO BARKSDALE FIELD, LA. THAT'S AT SHREVEPORT, LA.

FEM VOICE

HOW DID FEEL ABOUT YOUR MOM AND DAD CRYING?

MARSHALL

IT MADE ME KIND OF SAD. I GOT HAPPY. THEY GOT ALRIGHT. I GOT IN SERVICE IN BARKSDALE FIELD. WHEN YOU GET IN, I SIGNED UP. OF COURSE, AT FIRST THEY GIVE YOU BASIC. BASIC MARCHING AND ALL THAT KIND OF STUFF; BOOT CAMP. THE NAVY CALLS IT BOOT CAMP. THEY CALL IT SOMETHING ELSE IN THE AIR FORCE. THAT WAS IN JUNE, THE LAST PART OF JUNE, THE 26TH. IS WHEN I SIGNED IN. THAT WAS THE FINAL. AT JACKSON, THEY TOOK ALL OF THE TESTS AND EVERYTHING. THEY DIDN'T SIGN ME UP AS AN ENLISTEE UNTIL I GOT TO BARKSDALE FIELD WHERE I WOULD TAKE MY BASIC TRAIING. JUNE 26TH IS WHEN I SIGNED UP AS A BUCK PRIVATE IN THE U.S. ARMY AIR CORPS. THEY CALLED IT AIR CORPS AT THE TIME. IT WAS HOT, LORD IT WAS HOT ABOUT THAT TIME, IN THE MIDDLE OF JUNE, JULY.

AT THAT TIME IT WAS SO HOT OUT THERE, ONE DAY, WE CAME IN WHEN I HAD BEEN THERE ABOUT A WEEK. THIS LT. COLONEL CAME IN WHEN WE WERE RESTING AT NOON AFTER WE ATE, THEY LET US LAY DOWN ON OUR BUNKS OUT ON A BIG PORCH. THIS LT. COLONEL CAME IN AND HE WAS TALKING TO US. HE WANTED TO KNOW IF THERE WAS ANYBODY IN THERE WHO KNEW HOW TO TYPE. I RAISED MY HAND AND VOLUNTEERED. THERE WERE ABOUT TWO MORE THAT SAID THEY COULD TYPE. HE TOLD US TO REPORT OVER TO THE RECRUITING OFFICE. THEY HAD A LITTLE SET-UP RECRUITING OFFICE OVER THERE IN THE THEATER BUILDING AT BARKSDALE FIELD. HE SAID, "JUST REPORT OVER THERE AND TELL THEM I TOLD YOU TO COME OVER." WE GOT OVER THERE AND HE PUT US TO TYPING, FILLING OUT SEERVICE CARDS AND ALL. IN THE MEANTIME, WE DIDN'T HAVE TO GO BACK OUT THERE IN THAT MARCHING.. WE WERE SITTING IN A COOL PLACE. I LIKED THAT.

RICHARD

LEARNED A LITTLE MILITARY THEORY THERE.

MITCHELL

THAT'S RIGHT. I GOT TO DOING PRETTY GOOD THERE. I MADE PFC, A ONE STRIPE DEAL, EVEN BEFORE I COULD DRAW THE PAY. YOU HAD TO BE IN SERVICE 3 MONTHS BEFORE YOU COULD DRAW ANY KIND OF PROMOTION. I MADE PFC AND THEN YOU HAD TO SIGN UP IN THOSE DAYS. I RECKION YOU STILL DO, WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO, WHAT KIND OF WORK YOU WOULD LIKE TO DO. I LIKED IT SO WELL IN THE TYPING PLACE, I SAID, "CLERICAL SCHOOL." THEY WERE SENDING PEOPLE TO SCHOOLS, TO BECOME DIFFERENT THINGS, LIKE AIRPLANE MECHANICS. THAT WAS THE LAST THING I WOULD HAVE WANTED, AIRPLANE MECHANIC. I PUT DOWN CLERICAL SCHOOL, MAYBE RADIO, THEN I SAID----. I DIDN'T PUT DOWN MECHANICS AT ALL. IT WASN'T OVER 2 MONTHS, THEY WERE OPENING UP A LOT OF THESE AIRPLANE MECHANICS SCHOOLS ALL AROUND, ST CHANUTE FIELD, IL. AND CLINTON, MS. AND PLACES

LIKE THAT. OF COURSE, HEY HAD PLANS OF BUILDING A LOT OF AIRPLANES. BY THEN, THEY KNEW WE WERE GOING TO WAR.

I PUT DOWN MY LIST. THE NEXT THING I KNEW, THEY CALLED ME UP TO GO TO CHANUTE FIELD AS AN AIRPLANE MECHANIC. YOU CAN'T WIN LIKE THAT. I WENT THERE TO AIRPLANE MECHANICS SCHOOL AND I FINISHED IT AND NEVER WORKED A SINGLE DAY AS AN AIRPLANE MECHANIC.

RICHARD

YOU LUCKED OUT.

MARSHALL

THEN, THE WAR STARTED. PEARL HARBOR DAY. ONE WEEK AFTER THAT, AT BARKSDALE FIELD, THEY HAD COMPLETED THE BASIC AND EVERYTHING THERE THEN. I NEVER DID TAKE THE BASIC. I WENT TO THIS TYPING JOB. WHEN THE WAR STARTED, THEY DECIDED TO OPEN UP ANOTHER BOMBARDIER SCHOOL IN ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO. THEY ASKED FOR VOLUNTEERS WHO WANTED TO TRANSFER OUT OF ONE UNIT THERE AT BARKSDALE FIELD TO GO INTO THE ONE GOING TO ALBURQUERQUE, N.M. THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE HALF OF BARKSDALE FIELD AND BUILD ANOTHER BOMBARDIER SCHOOL AT ALBURQUERQUE. I VOLUNTEERED TO DO THAT. WHEN I ARRIVED IN ALBURQUERQUE, IT WAS COLD OUT THERE AND MY M.O.S., MILITARY OCCUPATIONAL SPECIALIST NUMBER WAS THAT I WAS AN AIRPLANE MECHANIC BECAUSE I HAD THAT IN MY RECORDS. THEY FOUND OUT, THEY HAD AN ORDERLY ROOM, THAT I WAS A GOOD TYPIST. THE CAPTAIN ASSIGNED ME TO THE ORDERLY ROOM AND I DIDN'T HAVE TO GO OUT IN THAT COLD WEATHER THERE, THAT COLD WIND IN ALBUQUERQUE, N.M. THAT COLD WIND WAS ROUGH. ALL THE EQUIPMENT THAT THEY WERE GOING TO USE TO OPEN THIS NEW PLACE, THEY PUT IT ALL ON 6 X 6'S OR TRUCKS. IT WAS A CONVOY, MUST HAVE BEEN 10 MILES LONG. IN THE MEANTIME, THE REASON I GOT IN THAT UNIT WAS ANOTHER PFC THERE IN THE UNIT THAT I WAS IN, WAS MARRIED AND ABOUT TO HAVE A BABY. HE WAS TRYING TO FIND SOMEBODY TO TRANSFER OUT OF THAT WITH HIS GRADE AND THEY ALLOWED THAT SO HE COULD STAY THERE IN THAT UNIT. I VOLUNTEERED TO TAKE HIS PLACE. IN THE MEANTIME, HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE IN THIS TRUCK. HE WAS SUPPOSED TO BE RIDING SHOTGUN IN THE TRUCK GOING TO ALBUQUERQUE, N.M.

RICHARD

DO THIS AT YOUR OWN PACE. EVENTUALLY, YOU ARE GOING TO LEARN HOW TO FLY AN AAIRPLANE.

MARSHALL

I'M GOING TO GET THERE IF YOU'LL JUST BEAR WITH ME. I MIGHT FORGET A LITTLE BIT. I MIGHT HAVE TO ASK YOU TO TELL ME WHAT I WAS TALKING ABOUT.

GOT OUT THERE TO ALBUQUERQUE. BY THEN, THIS WAS IN EARLY 1942. WORD GOT OUT THAT THE AIR FORCE WAS GOING TO BUILD UP A BUNCH OF PLANES, 100,000 WERE GOING TO BE BUILT. THEY NEEDED PILOTS, THEY NEEDED NAVIGATORS, AND BOMBARDIERS. ANYBODY IN SERVICE, IF THEY THOUGHT THEY WOULD LIKE TO TRAIN AS A PILOT OR NAVIGATOR OR BOMARDIER, TO SIGN UP. EVERY SO OFTEN THE GROUP MEDICAL WOULD COME BY. EVERY SO MANY DAYS, YOU COULD REPORT OVER THERE, GET YOUR PHYSICAL AND IF YOU WANTED TO DO THAT. I VOLUNTEERED FOR THAT. I PASSED THE PHYSICAL, PASSED THE MENTAL EXAMINATION. I GOT ACCEPTED AS AVIATION CADET TRAINING. BY THEN, I HAD MADE BUCK SERGEANT. I MADE CORPORAL JANUARY 1 AND FEBRUARY 1ST I MADE BUCK SERGEANT. THAT PAID AT THAT TIME, \$78.00 A MONTH. I WAS SINGLE. AVIATION CADET TRAINEES ONLY RECEIVED \$75.00. THAT WAS ALRIGHT WITH ME. MONEY THEN DIDN'T MEAN THAT MUCH. \$75.00 WAS PLENTY FOR ME. I PASSED EVERYTHING AT ALBUQUERUE, ,N.M. IT PUT ME AIR CORPS, UNASSIGNED.

AT THE TIME, THEY WERE TAKING OUT A GOOD MANY AVIATION CADETS FOR THIS TRAINING. IT WAS A BIG TIME THING, THEIR TRAINING. SOMETIMES, SOME OF THE GUYS HAD TO WAIT AS MUCH AS 2 OR 3 MONTHS BEFORE THIS CALL. I WAS IN PRETTY GOOD WITH THE PEOPLE IN THE O-ROOM. I SAID, "SHOOT, I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE STAFF SEARGEANT BEFORE I HAVE TO GO BECAUSE I WILL HAVE TO REVERT TO AVIATION CADETS AND I WOULDN'T BE AN ENLISTED MAN. THERE WOULD BE A VACANCY FOR THAT STAFF SERGEANT FOR THEM TO GIVE TO SOMEBODY ELSE. THEY WOULDN'T DO THAT.

I WENT ON TO SAN ANTONIO AVIATION CADET SCHOOL UP ON THE HILL FROM KELLY FIELD. IT'S CALLED LACKLAND NOW. I WENT THERE FOR A REUNION ONE TIME. I GOT TO DO THAT. IT TOOK ABOUT 2 WEEKS.

FEM. VOICE

IT WAS HOT AGAIN.

MARSHALL

IT WAS HOT. THEY DIDN'T HAVE AIR CONDITIONING BUT THEY HAD ELECTRICITY WHERE THEY COULD USE FANS.

WE WENT THROUGH A STRESSFUL PHYSICAL, EVERYTHING, TO SEE WHETHER YOU COULD LAND AN AIRPLANE. THAT'S THE WAY THEY SELECTED. THROUGH THESE PHYSICALS, THEY COULD SEE IF YOU HAD GOOD DEPTH PERCEPTION. IF YOU HAD THAT, IT WAS GOOD FOR YOU FOR LEARNING TO FLY. YOU WOULDN'T LAND 2 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND. I PASSED ALL OF THAT. WE WENT THROUGH PRE-FLIGHT THERE AT THAT FIELD, THEN WENT TO COLEMAN, TEXAS FOR BASIC TRAINING, BASIC FLYING TRAINING. WE FLEW A PT-13 OR SOMETHING, PT-19. I PASSED THAT AND HAD NO PROBLEM. I WAS TAKING IT DAY TO DAY. A LOT OF THEM WERE

WASHING OUT, CRYING AND HAVING TO GO BACK TO WHERE THEY WERE. I PASSED AND WENT THROUGH THE WHOLE THING. I GOT THROUGH BASIC THE SAME WAY AND ADVANCED.

THIS IS SOMETHING UNUSUAL. AT THAT TIME, THEY HAD THE BRITISH, RAF WAS SENDING, LOANING THE UNITED STATES SOME PILOT TRAINEES.

I FORGOT TO TELL YOU THIS. YOU GO THROUGH THESE TESTS TO DETERMINE WHETHER YOU WOULD BE A PILOT OR A NAVIGATOR OR A BOMBARDIER ACORDING TO WHETHER ARE GOOD AT FIGURES, YOU MIGHT GET NAVIGATOR. IF YOU HAD GOOD PERCEPTION, THEY WOULD MAKE YOU A PILOT. I MADE PILOT.

I WAS GOING TO TELL YOU ABOUT THE BRITISH. THEY WERE DOING LIKE THE UNITED STATES. THEY HAD THOSE LEND-LEASE DEALS. THIS LEND-LEASE REVERSED BECAUSE THEY WERE SENDING SOME PILOTS OVER HERE TO HELP TRAIN AMERICAN PILOTS. THEY KNEW WE WERE BUILDING UP FAST. INCIDENTALLY, I CALLED THE RAF ASSOCIATION IN JAPAN NOT TOO LONG AGO TO MAKE AN ARTICLE FOR A MAGAZINE ABOUT THAT LEND-LEASE DEAL OF LOANING PILOTS TO COME OVER HERE AND TEACH. THERE WERE 3 OR 4 OF THEM IN MY DEAL WHERE I WENT TO ADVANCE FLYING. I WAS AT WACO, TEXAS. THAT IS WHERE I GRADUATED, GOT MY WINGS AND SECOND LEUTENANT BARS. I LIKED THAT RAF TRAINING PILOT. HE WAS A PILOT OFFICER, THEY CALLED THEM. HE WAS REAL GOOD. AT GRADUATION, MY SISTER, MY OLDEST SISTER, THE ONE THAT HELPED ME GET THROUGH SCHOOL.

FEM. VOICE

THE ONE WHO GOT YOU INTO THIS?

MARSHALL

THAT'S RIGHT. AND MY YOUNGEST BROTHER. HE WAS MORE OR LESS A KID. THEY CAME TO WACO WHEN I GRADUATED. HE GOT SICKER THAN A MULE SISTER SAID, BECAUSE HE ATE SOMETHING. THEY RODE THE TRAIN. SHE BROUGHT HIM OVER HERE ON THE TRAIN. THE GOT SICK AT HIS STOMACH OR SOMETHING. SHE SAID HE WAS JUST LIKE A BABY.

BUT. I GRADUATED GOT MY WINGS. MY RAF OFFICER SAID---HE CAME OVER---I HAD A FRIENDS FROM ATLANTA, HIS MOTHER WAS THERE AND THE 4 OR 5 OF US ATE AT ONE TABLE. WE WERE GOOD FRIENDS. MY PILOT OFFICER, LAVEL WAS HIS NAME, CAME OVER TO THE TABLE AND SAID, "LT. MARSHALL, LET ME ASK YOU SOMETHING." WE WERE EATING IN THE OFFICER'S CLUB. HE SAID, "HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO ANY ENGINEERING SCHOOL, AN ENGINEERING DEGREE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?" I SAID, "NO, NO. I DON'T HAVE AN ENGINEERING DEGREE, I JUST BARELY MADE IT THROUGH. WHY?" HE SAID, "I DON'T KNOW, BUT I THINK YOUR NAME IS ON SOMETHING THAT NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT. IT IS HIGHLY SECRET. NOBODY IN THIS PLACE KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT IT." I WONDERED WHAT THAT IS. WE WERE EATING LUNCH AND IT WAS ONE O'CLOCK, WE HAD A BREAK. WE STARTED AT ONE O'CLOCK ASSIGNING ALL OF US. WE HAD ALREADY BEEN THROUGH EVERYTHING. THEY WERE GOING EVERYBODY

TO CERTAIN UNITS, TRAINING UNITS OR COMBAT UNITS, GO DIRECTLY TO COMBAT. AT THE END, NOBODY TOLD US ANYTHING. PEOPLE STARTED DROPPING. AS THEY CALLED THEM THEY WOULD GET UP AND LEAVE AND GO ON 2 WEEKS (FURLOUGH). THEY HAD RELATIVES OUT THERE WAITING FOR THEM. THEY WOULD GO ON A 2 WEEK VACATION AND THEN REPORT TO THEIR BASE THEY WERE ORDERED TO.

FEM. VOICE

YOU WERE ALL PILOTS AT THIS POINT?

MARSHALL

YES. ABOUT 200 OF US PASSED AT THE SAME TIME AT THESE BASES.

FEM. VOICE

THEY GOT A BREAK BEFORE BEING ASSIGNED?

MARSHALL

YES. WE HAD OUR GRADUATION AND THEN WE HAD A BREAK TO MEET OUR FAMILIES AND WENT TO LUNCH. AFTER THE BREAK, WE GOT OUR ASSIGNMENTS. THERE WERE ONLY 12 OF US LEFT. TWELVE SITTING THERE AND YOU CAN IMAGINE ANYTHING. WHAT IN THE WORLD HAVE I DONE TO CAUSE THIS? WE WERE WAITING TO FIND OUT WHAT IN THE WORLD WAS GOING ON. WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO? WHY DON'T WE HAVE ORDERS? WE HAVE PEOPLE WAITING FOR US TO GO HOME FOR 2 WEEKS VACATION.

THEY SAID, "WE HAVE ORDERS FOR YOU TO SIT STILL FOR FURTHER ORDERS." THEN WE REALLY WONDERED WHAT IN THE WORLD. I HADN'T DONE ANYTHING, KILLED ANYONE OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT. I WONDERED WHAT IN THE WORLD THEY WERE HOLDING US IN THERE FOR. REALLY, THEY NEVER TOLD US ANYTHING. NOBODY KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON. THEY SAID, "YOU ARE GOING TO GO OUT THERE AND HELP CHECK IN THIS NEW CLASS COMING IN." EVERY 4 WEEKS, THEY HAD ANOTHER CLASS START. WHAT WE DID, EACH INDIVIDUALLY, CLIMB WITH ONE OF THOSE CADETS AND TEACH THEM HOW TO LAND THAT TWIN ENGINED AIRPLANE. WE WOULD FLY A TWO HOUR PERIOD. WE WENT THAT WAY FOR ABOUT A WEEK, STILL HADN'T HEARD ANYTHING. THEN WE HEARD ON THE RADIO----I WAS AT AN AUXILLIARY FIELD CHECKING THIS GUY OUT, CALLING ALL TWELVE OF US IN, "COME BACK TO THE FIELD IMMEDIATELY." WE WERE STILL IN THE DARK. THAT WAS IN EARLY JULY, RIGHT AFTER WE GRADUATED. WE GOT BACK TO THE FIELD AND THEY TOLD US THEN. "YOU FELLOWS ARE THE LUCKIEST PEOPLE IN THE AIR FORCE. YOU HAVE BEE ASSIGNED TO THE B-29's."

WHAT IS A B-29? AT THAT TIME IT WAS A REAL SECRET JUST LIKE THE ATOMIC BOMB WAS. THEY DIDN'T WANT THE JAPANESE TO KNOW WE WERE GETTING THESE PLANES. THEY BUILT THEM IN TWO YEARS FROM SCRATCH.

FEM. VOICE

HOW MANY B-29's DID THEY HAVE?

MARSHALL

WELL, THEY DIDN'T HAVE ANY THEN. THEY HAD THREE BUILT. THEY OPENED UP THE PLACE AT WITCHITA, KANSAS WHERE THEY BUILT B-29's AND 2 OR 3 OTHER PLACES. AT THAT BASE WHERE WE WENT, THEY HAD ONE B-29. WE COULD GO OUT THERE AND LOOK AT IT. THAT WAS ABOUT ALL. WHAT THEY WANTED US TO DO WAS THIS. WE WERE ASSIGNED TO WHAT WAS EVENTUALLY THE BIG 20TH AIR FORCE. IN THE MEANTIME, THEY HAD SET UP THE 30TH BOMBER COMMAND OF THE 20TH AIR FORCE. IT WAS AT SMOKEY HILL, KS, SALINA, KS. THEY SENT US THERE TO GO THROUGH A NINE WEEK COURSE TO BE A FLIGHT ENGINEER ON THE B-29. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHAT IN THE WORLD THEY WANTED OF US. WE HAD SPENT A YEAR GETTING OUR PILOT WINGS. WHAT IN THE WORLD DID THEY WANT US TO FLY AS FLIGHT ENGINEER. AT THAT TIME, THEY DECIDED THAT THIS SUPERFORTRESS, THE BIGGEST AIRPLANE BEING BUILT AT THIS TIME-----

FEM. VOICE

HAD YOU SEEN ONE AT THIS TIME?

MARSHALL

I DID SEE ONE AT SMOKEY HILL. YOU HAD TO HAVE THREE TICKETS TO GET OUT ON THE LINE WHERE THAT AIRPLANE WAS TO SEE IT.

FEM. VOICE

WHAT DID YOU THINK WHEN YOU SAW THAT BIG OLD THING?

MARSHALL

I SAID, "THAT THING WILL NEVER FLY."

FEM.VOICE

DID IT GET OFF THE GROUND?

MARSHALL

AT THAT TIME, IT WAS HAVING A LOT OF TROUBLE GETTING OFF THE GROUND BECAUSE THE ENGINES WERE HAVING A LOT OF TROUBLE. THEY WOULD GET TOO HOT AND YOU WOULD HAVE TO COME BACK IN. THAT IS THE WAY I GOT INTO B-29 OPERATIONS.

RICHARD

THIS WOULD BE THE SUMMER?

MARSHALL

THIS WOULD BE IN THE LATTER PART OF 1943 AT SALINA, KANSAS. THAT WAS SET UP AS THE FIRST B-29 FLIGHT ENGINEER SCHOOL. THEY LATER CHANGED IT AND SENT IT SOMEWHERE ELSE.

WE BECAME, THE 12 OF US-----THEY BROUGHT IN GUYS LIKE US, BRAND NEW PILOTS, FROM ALL THE TRAINING COMMANDS. THEY BROUGHT THEM INTO SALINA, KS. TO TRAIN THEM AS FLIGHT ENGINEERS. NOBODY IN THE AIR FORCE HAD BEEN USING FLIGHT ENGINEERS AS FLIGHT ENGINEERS. THEY HAD THEIR OWN INSTRUMENT PANEL JUST LIKE THE TWO PILOTS DID. THEY CRANKED UP THE ENGINES AND OTHER DUTIES. THEY HAD AN INFLUENTIAL JOB WITH THE PLANE, BUT IT WASN'T FLYING. ALL OF US WERE DISGRUNTLED ABOUT THE FACT THAT THE FLIGHT ENGINEER WAS SITTING BACKWARDS, FLYING BACKWARDS. WE BECAME DISGRUNTLED AND WE PUT IN COMPLAINTS. THEY WERE HAVING TROUBLE GETTING B-29's BUILT. THEY WERE HAVING TROUBLE WITH THE BUILDING AT THE BOEING AIRCRAFT FACTORY IN WICHITA. IT TOOK FOREVER TO GET ENOUGH AIRPLANES BUILT. THEY HAD ALREADY SET UP THE 58TH WING OF THE 20TH AIR FORCE, THE ONE THAT EVENTUALLY WENT TO INDIA. THEY STARTED BOMBING JAPAN FROM INDIA AND CHINA. THAT WAS THE FIRST WING SET UP AND WE WERE ASSIGNED TO THAT. WE WERE, ALL THAT I KNEW, WERE WANTING TO GET OUT OF THE B-29. WE DIDN'T WANT THAT. WE WANTED TO GET IN A B-17 AND MAYBE GO TO COMBAT. I'D RATHER FLY COMBAT THAN SIT HERE.

AS IT HAPPENED, THEY DID DECIDE SINCE THEY DIDN'T HAVE ENOUGH B-29's YET, THEY BROUGHT IN B-17's.

RICHARD

HOW MUCH BIGGER IS THE B-29 THAN THE B-17?

MARSHALL

IT IS ABOUT 1 AND ½ TIMES BIGGER. IT COULD CARRY NEARLY TWICE AS MUCH ORDINANCE.

RICHARD

IS IT A FOUR-ENGINE PLANE?

MARSHALL

OH YES. (POWERED BY) R- 3350 ENGINES OF ABOUT 2,300 HORSE POWER, TOTALED 8,800 HORSE POWER. THESE WERE THE BIGGEST ENGINES IN USE. THEY WERE BUILT BY WRIGHT CO. FOR THE PLANE.

WE EVENTUALLY TALKED THEM OUT----THEY SAW WE WERE SO DISGUSTED WITH OUR JOB. WE WERE NOT GETTING ANY FLYING LIKE OUR FRIENDS. SOME OF THEM HAD MADE CAPTAIN OVER IN EUROPE. WE WERE STILL 2ND LEUTENANTS. FINALLY, THEY DECIDED TO TAKE ALL OF US, THESE GUYS THAT THEY BROUGHT IN THERE HAD BEEN THROUGH AN AIRPLANE

MECHANICS SCHOOL JUST LIKE I HAD. THEY HAD HAD SOME EXPERIENCE WITH THE ENGINES, THEY WOULD BE GOOD DOING IT AFTER ANOTHER COURSE AS A FLIGHT ENGINEER. IT WORKED OUT GOOD FOR OTHER PEOPLE BUT THE ONES THAT HAD ALREADY MADE PILOT, SOME OF THEM DID GO ON. IT GOT DOWN TO THAT. I WENT TO B-17 TRANSITION. THEY SENT US TO ROSWELL, N.M TO GO THROUGH THE REGULAR TRAINING ON A FOUR ENGINED PLANE WHICH IS A B-17. THAT IS WHERE I GOT THAT TRAINING. I WAS CALLED BACK TO THE 73RD WING AND ASSIGNED TO CREWS. WE WENT THROUGH COMBAT TRAINING AT SALINA, KS. I PRACTICED TO GO TO COMBAT.

IN 1944, THE 58TH WING HAD ALREADY GONE TO INDIA AND THEY WERE FLYING OVER THE HUMP TO GO CHINA TO TRY TO GET TO JAPAN.

END SIDE ONE

RICHARD

WHAT WERE THE DUTIES OF A FLIGHT ENGINEER?

MARSHALL

THE FLIGHT ENGINEER ACTUALLY HAD THE CONTROLS OVER A LOT OF THE INSTRUMENTS. THAT WOULD HELP THE PILOTS. THEY DIDN'T CALL THEM CO-PILOTS IN THE B-29. THEY WERE AIRPLANE COMMANDER AND PILOT. IT WAS THE SAME THING. THE PILOT SAT ON THE RIGHT SIDE AND THE AIRPLANE COMMANDER SAT ON THE LEFT. IN ESTIMATE, I WAS ACTUALLY ASSIGNED. I HAD A DUAL RATING. I HAD A FLIGHT ENGINEER AND A PILOT. THEREFORE, I SAT ON THE RIGHT SIDE. COX WAS THE AIRPLANE COMMANDER BUT I HAD OTHER DUTIES TOO. I FLEW HALF THE TIME AS FIRST PILOT WITH HIM. I GOT CREDIT FOR FIRST PILOT. FLIGHT ENGINEERS HAD A REAL JOB THAT THEY HAD TO PERFORM.

RICHARD

I GUESS WHEN THE MACHINE GOT THAT MUCH BIGGER, YOU NEEDED THE EXTRA HELP SPECIFICALLY FOR THAT.

MARSHALL

YES, AND THEY NEEDED US FOR THE LONG RANGE. THE B-29 HAD A MUCH LONGER RANGE. WE COULD CARRY AT A FULL LOAD OF GASOLINE INCLUDING SOME EXTRA TANKS THAT THEY PUT IN ONE OF THE BOMB BAYS. WE HAD TWO BOMB BAYS INSTEAD OF ONE. WE COULD CARRY 20,000 POUNDS OF BOMBS AT LOW ALTITUDE. A FULL LOAD OF FUEL WAS 8,000 GALLONS OF GASOLINE. THAT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF----

RICHARD

THAT'S ABOUT 65,000 POUNDS.

MARSHALL

THAT IS THE EQUIVALENT OF A TANK CAR FULL OF GASOLINE, A RAILROAD TANK CAR.

FEM. VOICE

2 AND ½ P.T. BOATS FULL.

MARSHALL

WE WOULD USE THAT MUCH ON EACH MISSION TO TOKYO, GOING TO AND FROM YOKYO, JAPAN. IT WAS 1,500 MILES FROM SAIPAN APPROXIMATELY TO THE TARGET IN JAPAN. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY PLACE TO LAND. 95% OF THAT TIME WAS FLYING OVER (THE OCEAN).

FEM. VOICE

WAS THAT THE MARSHALL ISLANDS?

MARSHALL

NO, THE MARIANAS ISLANDS. IWO JIMA IS RIGHT UP IN HERE SOMEWHERE..

RICHARD

WHEN DID YOU FINALLY GET TO FLYING? THIS IS IN 1944.

MARSHALL

IN 1944 WHEN THEY DECIDED TO PULL US ALL OUT OF THE FLIGHT ENGINEER DEALS THAT WERE PILOTS, THEY SENT US TO B-17 TRANSITION AT ROSWELL, N.M. TO LEARN TO BE AND GOT ASSIGNED INTO A CREW. WE STARTED COMBAT TRAINING THERE AT SMOKEY HILL AT SALINA, KS. AT THAT TIME, WE HAD COMPLETED OUR TRAINING PROJECT FOR COMBAT. BEGINNING THE LATTER PART OF OCTOBER, 1944, WE HAD TO GO THROUGH A WHOLE LIST OF STUFF WE HAD TO COMPLETE BEFORE WE WOULD BE READY TO GO TO COMBAT. THEY STARTED SENDING US TO COMBAT IN NOVEMBER OF THAT YEAR. IN OCTOBER, THE FIRST B-29 LANDED IN THE PACIFIC. THE OTHER BUNCH WAS OVER IN CHINA. THEY WERE NOT HITTING THE MAIN PART OF JAPAN.

FEM. VOICE

WE ALREADY HAD B-29's GOING FROM INDIA TO JAPAN?

MARSHALL

THEY MADE ABOUT 3 MISSIONS OVER THERE. THEY HAD TO FLY OVER THE MOUNTAINS, OVER THE HIMALAYA MOUNTAINS ABOUT 5 TIMES EACH PLANE WOULD HAVE TO TAKE A LOAD OF GASOLINE AND BOMBS OVER AND LEAVE THEM THERE IN PILE AND COME BACK AND GET ANOTHER LOAD. IT WASN'T FEASIBLE TO DO IT. THEY HAD A LOT OF TROUBLE WITH THE ENGINES. I'M NOT SAYING THEY DIDN'T DO ANYTHING. WE LOST A LOT OF PEOPLE KILLED TOO.

THEY GOT THAT 3RD WING GOING. WE STARTED ARRIVING AT SAIPAN, WHICH IS NORTHERN FIELD OF THE MARIANA ISLAND WHERE WE WERE BASED. WE WERE EVENTUALLY BASED ISLEY FIELD ON TINIAN ISLAND WHICH IS 3 MILES FROM SAIPAN. ONE OF OUR STATIONS, THEN THEY HAD ANOTHER ONE AT GUAM; THREE DIFFERENT ISLANDS. ON NOVEMBER 24, ----- LET ME TELL YOU THIS. THIS IS WHAT HAPPENED. WE LIKE TO HAVE HAD A BATTLE BETWEEN--- AW, I SHOULDN'T TELL YOU THIS BUT IT HAS BEEN PUBLISHED. ADM. KANE (SP ???) ---- THE B-29's WERE SET UP AS A SEPARATE OPERATION FORCE. WE WASN'T SUBJECT TO BE CALLED LIKE MACARTHUR WANTED SOME B-29's TO COME OVER HERE AND FLY OUT OF HIS PLACE. THEY DIDN'T DO IT LIKE THAT. IT WAS SET UP LIKE THE NAVY. THEY HAD UNITS THAT COULD GO OUT AND OPERATE DIRECTLY FROM WASHINGTON.

RICHARD

THEY WERE MORE INDEPENDENT, RIGHT?

MARSHALL

THEY WERE MORE INDEPENDENT IS WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY. THEY COULD OPERATE DIRECTLY FROM WASHINGTON. THE NAVY DID THAT. THAT'S THE WAY THEY DID IT. OUR LEADERS TALKED THE NAVY AND THE COMBINED FORCES UP THERE IN WASHINGTON THAT THAT'S WHAT THE B-29 SUPERFORTS SHOULD DO. WE WERE GOING TO HAVE TO BE GOING OVER A LONG RANGE, LIKE 3,000 MILE TRIPS. WE JUST COULDN'T OPERATE WITH 2 OR 3 COMMANDERS TELLING WHAT TO DO, FIGHTING OVER WHO WAS SUPPOSED TO BE HELPING THEM.

AS IT TURNED OUT, GEN. HANSELL WAS THE COMMANDER OF THE 31ST BOMB COMMAND THAT I WAS IN AT SAIPAN. HE WAS THE FIRST ONE OVER THERE OVERSEAS, OCTOBER 12, 1944. HE SAID, "WHEN HE GOT 100 B-29's OVER THERE, IT WAS COMING OUT PRETTY GOOD THEN, HE WAS GOING TO MAKE A RAID ON TOKYO." THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED, BUT IT ALMOST HAPPENED THAT WE WERE GOING TO HAVE THE NAVY READY TO LET US GO. AS IT TURNED UT, GEN. ARNOLD, COMMANDER OF HEADQUARTERS IN WASHINGTON, GAVE HANSEL PERMISSION TO GO AHEAD ON THE RAID WITHOUT THE NAVY. HANSELL SAID, "LOOK, WE HAVE TRAINED. WE DON'T HAVE TO WAIT ON THE NAVY. WE CAN DO IT OURSLEVES."

FEM. VOICE

SHOULD YOU GET 100 B-29'S TOGETHER AT THE TIME? THEY HAD 100 B-29'S BUILT AND READY TO GO?

MARSHALL

YOU MEAN ON MY STORY HERE?

FEM. VOICE

YEAH.

MARSHALL

THEY WERE BUILDING THEM AS FAST AS THEY COULD BUILD THEM. EACH WING HAD TO HAVE----THERE WERE 4 GROUPS IN A WING AND EACH WING HAD ABOUT 20 PLANES. ACTUALLY, THERE WERE MORE THAN THAT. WE HAD 20 PLANES TO A GROUP AND WE HAD 4 GROUPS. WE HAD 20 AIPLANES TO A SQUADRON. THERE WERE 3 SQUADRONS IN A GROUP.

RICHARD

SO IT WAS 3 TIMES 20 TIMES 4. ---240 PLANES IN A WING. HOW MANY WINGS WERE THERE?

MARSHALL

THEY HAD FIVE WINGS EVENTUALLY; NOT COUNTING THE COMPOSITE GROUP THAT TIBBETS BROUGHT OVER THERE TO DROP THE ATOMIC BOMB. HE HAD ONLY 15 AIRPLANES. IT WAS A GROUP. HE DROPPED TWO ATOMIC BOMBS. THAT'S ALL THEY HAD MADE AT THE TIME. NOBODY KNEW THAT.

YOU KNOW THAT SHIP THAT GOT SUNK (*U.S.S. INDIANAPOLIS*). DID YOU SEE THAT SHOW NOT LONG AGO? THE *INDIANAOPPLIS* TOOK THE FIRING MECHANISM OF THE BOMB THEY DROPPED ON NAGASAKI. THEY BROUGHT IT OVER THERE SEPARATLY TO TINIAN. THAT WAS JUST A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE WAR WAS OVER. THEY BROUGHT IT TO TINIAN AND DROPPED THAT MECHANISM OFF. THEY DIDN'T WANT TO SEND IT OVER THERE TOGETHER. WHEN THE *INDIANAPOLIS* LEFT TINIAN, THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO GO TO THE PHILIPPINES I BELIEVE ON A REGULAR RUN. IT WAS A WEEK OR SO BEFORE THE WAR WAS OVER. IN THE MEANTIME, A JAPANESE SUBMARINE HAD FOLLOWED THE SHIP AFTER THEY LEFT TINIAN. ABOUT 800 MILES OUT OF TINIAN, THEY SANK THE *INIDANAPOLIS*. IT WAS ON A SHOW. I HAVE BOOKS ABOUT IT IS THE REASON I KNOW ABOUT IT. AS A RESULT, 800 PEOPLE DIED. THEY HAD A COURT MARTIAL ABOUT IT. SOME PEOPLE GOT REALLY BURNED ON THAT.

WE WENT ON AND HAD FIVE DIFFERENT WINGS. WE HAD ONE AT SAIPAN, WE HAD TWO, AND IF YOU COUNT TIBBETS, WE HAD 3 , BUT IF YOU JUST COUNT WINGS, WE HAD 2 WINGS ON TINIAN, THE 313TH AND 314TH . WE HAD TWO AT GUAM. WE HAD FIVE WINGS. WE WENT TO WORK ON THEM DUDES.

AT FIRST, WE WERE FLYING IN AT 25-35,000 FEET, 30,000 FEET MOSTLY, OVER JAPAN. THIS IS SOMETHING ELSE A LOT OF PEOPLE DON'T KNOW. WE ARE THE FIRST ONES WHO DISCOVERED THE JET STREAM. YOU HAD NEVER HEARD OF THE JEST STREAM BEFORE THEN. WHERE WE FOUND IT WAS ABOVE 35,000 FEET ABOVE TOKYO. YOU KNOW HOW THE JET STREAM RUNS. WE COULD FLY ABOUT 300 MILES PER HOUR. WHEN YOU GET IN THAT JET STREAM GOING DOWNWIND DROPPING BOMBS, INSTEAD OF 300 MILES, WE WERE GOING OVER 600 MILES AN HOUR. WE WERE MISSING TARGETS. WE WERE MISSING THEM SO FAR IT WAS UNBELIEVABLE. IF YOU WENT UPSTREAM, IT WAS JUST LIKE YOU WEREN'T MOVING HARDLY. I KNOW BECAUSE I WENT UPSTREAM SOME. THE JET STREAM FINALLY GOT IN THE NEWS. THAT'S WHAT THEY

CALLED IT. THAT IS THE NATURAL WIND BLOWING THAT YOU SEE THE CHANGES AND THAT IS WHAT DEVELOPS THE WEATHER.

WE FINALLY GOT TO FIVE WINGS. WE ALL GOT INCLUDED IN THE OPERATION. I THINK THEY FINALLY BUILT SOMETHING LIKE OVER 4,000 B-29's. WE DIDN'T GET THEM ALL IN BECAUSE WE DIDN'T NEED TO. IN THE WAR, WE HAD DONE MORE DAMAGE AFTER THEY DROPPED THE BOMB, THE ATOMIC BOMB. ON MARCH 9TH AND 10TH, 1945 GEN LeMAY WAS LEADING US THEN AND HE DECIDED TO BRING US DOWN FROM HIGH ALTITUDE TO 5 AND 6 THOUSAND FEET OR MAYBE 8,000 FEET ABOVE THE GROUND.

FEM. VOICE

YOU TRIED TO BOMB ALL THIS TIME?

MARSHALL

YEAH. WE WERE TRYING TO BOMB FROM HIGH ALTITUDE. HE BROUGHT US DOWN FROM HIGH ALTITUDE TO LOW ALTITUDE AND SENT US OVER TOKYO THAT FIRST TIME ON MARCH 9TH AND 10TH. WE BURNED ABOUT 17 SQUARE MILES OF TOKYO. WE DID MORE DAMAGE THAT PARTICULAR MISSION THAN THE ATOMIC BOMB DID, KILLING MORE PEOPLE AND BURNING UP MORE HOMES. THAT WAS THE THING THAT MADE THEM COME TO THEIR KNEES.

FEM. VOICE

DID YOU KNOW THAT ATOMIC BOMB WAS COMING?

MARSHALL

NO. NO.

FEM. VOICE

NOBODY KNEW.

MARSHALL

WE WERE ONLY 3 MILES ACROSS THE BAY THERE FROM TINIAN AND SAIPAN, WHERE THEY WERE AND WHERE THEY LOADED. I FINISHED MY MISSIONS IN JUNE OF THAT YEAR, 30 MISSIONS IS WHAT THE ORIGINAL CREWS HAD TO FLY, THEN ROTATE BACK TO THE STATES. WE DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT.

FEM. VOICE

THERE WERE NO RUMORS OR ANYTHING?

MARSHALL

NO RUMORS, NO NOTHING. IF ANYBODY WORKING FOR TIPPETS, FOR THAT UNIT, THEY PUT THEM WAY OUT WEST AT WENDOVER. IF ANYBODY PUT OUT ANY NEWS AT ALL, HE SHIPPED THEM WAY OFF SOMEWHERE. I HEARD HIM SAY THAT AGAIN THE OTHER NIGHT. I

KNOW HIM PERSONALLY. I WAS HIS HOST ONE NIGHT AT THE MEMPHIS BELLE ASSOCIATION. YOU KNOW, THE B-17, THE MEMPHIS BELLE.

FEM. VOICE

THERE WAS A MOVIE ABOUT THE MEMPHIS BELLE.

MARSHALL

THAT PLANE IS STILL THERE. I WAS A DIRECTOR OF THE MEMPHIS BELLE ASSOCIATION. BOB MULLIGAN FLEW THE MEMPHIS BELLE. THE FIRST PLANE TO FINISH 25 MISSIONS OVER GERMANY AND COME BACK. HIS GIRL FRIEND WAS IN MEMPHIS. THAT IS WHERE SHE LIVED. HE USED TO FLY IN AND OUT. HE STILL COMES TO MEMPHIS ALL THE TIME TO DO STUFF WITH THE MEMPHIS BELLE. BOB MULLIGAN MARRIED A YOUNGER GIRL. HE WAS IN HIS 70's THE. HE IS IN HIS 80's NOW. HIS WIFE HAD DIED AND THEY GOT MARRIED UNDER THE WINGS OF THE MEMPHIS BELLE. THEY HAD RED CARPETS EVERYWHERE. TIBBITS IS HARD OF HEARING. HE CN'T STAND A LOT OF NOISE. TIBBETS WAS THERE. HE HAD MARRIED A FRENCH GIRL. SHE IS REAL NICE. HE SAID, "WHY DON'T YOU TAKE THEM OUT SOMEWHERE TO EAT?" WE ARE GOING TO HAVE A BIG PARTY DOWN AT THE PEABODY HOTEL DOWNTOWN. HE (TIBBETS) DIDN'T WANT TO GO TO IT BECAUSE OF THE NOISE, SO I DID.

IN THE MEANTIME, I HELPED ORGINIZE THE B-29 CLUB IN MEMPHIS. WE GOT ABOUT 50 MEMBERS IN IT AND THEY STILL MEET ONCE A MONTH. I TOLD THIS FRIEND OF MINE, "YOU GET YOUR WIFE AND I'LL GET MY WIFE AND CALL ALL THE B-29 GUYS AND TRY TO GET AS MANY AS YOU CAN AND MEET AT HIS HOUSE BECAUSE IT IS CLOSE TO THE PEABODY. WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE PARTY HERE WITH TIBBETS AND HIS WIFE." AFTER THE PARTY, WE TOOK HIM BACK TO THE HOTEL. WE HAD A GREAT TIME.

ANYWAY, WE WON THE WAR.

RICHARD

HOW LONG WERE YOU IN THE SERVICE AFTER THE WAR? WHEN DID YOU MUSTER OUT AND WHERE?

MARSHALL

I WAS BACK AT ROSWELL AIR FORCE BASE JUST ABOUT THE TIME THE WAR ENDED. I WAS BACK AT SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS WAITING FOR REASSIGNMENT. I WAS ASSIGNED AS A B-29 FLIGHT INSTRUCTOR AND SENT BACK TO ROSWELL, N.M. I GOT BACK THERE AND THEY DECIDED TO SHUT DOWN FLYING ALL THE B-29's USING UP ALL THE GAS. THEY BROUGHT IN A BUNCH THEY HAD, ABOUT 8,000 PEOPLE, LEUTENANTS, CAPTAINS AND SO FORTH TRAIING ON B-29's. THAT IS WHAT I WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN DOING. THEY DECIDED TO SHUT DOWN THE B-29 FLYING AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER. THEY BROUGHT IN AT-6's, PUT ONE GUY IN THE BACK

AND FLY 3 HOURS, LAND TEN TIMES AND GIVE HIM CREDIT FOR 4 HOURS FLYING SO HE COULD DRAW HIS FLIGHT PAY. I DID THAT FOR A WHILE. I WAS OFFERED THE JOB OF DOING SOME WEATHER FLYING UP AND DOWN THE WEST COAST. I PUT IN TO DO THAT. I GOT TO THINKING ABOUT AND SAID, "SHOOT, OF ALL OF MY FRIENDS, I WAS THE ONLY ONE FROM COMBAT TO COME BACK AND DIDN'T KNOW ANYBODY. I THINK I'LL JUST GET OUT."

THEY SET UP A SEPARATION CENTER THERE TO GET RID OF ALL THESE SURPLUS TROOPS AND ALL OF THESE PEOPLE THEY WERE TRAINING. I WENT OVER THERE AND ASKED, "CAN I GET OUT? I'VE GOT ENOUGH POINTS." HE SAID, "IF YOU WAIT UNTIL YOU LET US GET THROUGH LETTING ALL THESE OTHER PEOPLE OUT, YOU CAN GET OUT IF YOU WANT TO."

I SAID, "THEN TAKE THAT AGREEMENT I SIGNED THERE TO STAY IN AND I CAN GET OUT." THAT'S WHAT I DID, I GOT OUT.

FEM. VOICE

DO YOU EVER SEE ANY OF THE ORIGINAL 12 GUYS THAT TRAINED TOGETHER AS FLIGHT ENGINEERS?

MARSHALL

I WASN'T WITH THEM ANYMORE.

FEB. VOICE

DID YOU RUN ACROSS THEM OVER THE YEARS?

MARSHALL

OH, YES. WE STILL HAVE REUNIONS EVERY YEAR, ONCE A YEAR AT DIFFERENT SPOTS IN THE UNITED STATES.

RICHARD

WHEN WAS THIS WHEN YOU GOT OUT?

MARSHALL

I GOT OUT NOVEMBER 1945. I WENT AHEAD AND GOT OUT. I STAYED IN THE RESERVE FOR TEN YEARS. ALSO, I WAS A COMPANY COMMANDER IN THE NATIONAL GUARD FOR 2 YEARS IN A TANK COMPANY AND I HAD NEVER SEEN A TANK.

RICHARD

I'M GOING TO BACKTRACK A BIT. I WANT TO FIND OUT SOMETHING. YOU SAID YOU JOINED THE ARI FORCE SO THAT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TO WALK IN THE MUD, BUT YOU DID HAVE TO AT ONE POINT ON IWO JIMA.

FEM. VOICE

I WONDERED ABOUT THAT TOO. WHAT IS THAT STORY?

MARSHALL

YOU HAVE TO HAVE SOMETHING IN YOUR STORY TO MAKE IT INTERESTING. PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. ON MARCH 29, 1945 WE WERE ASSIGNED A WEATHER STRICK, WE CALLED IT. A WEATHER STRIKE IS THIS. WE WERE NO GETTING ANY HELP OUT OF RUSSIA IN GETTING WEATHER FORCASTS FROM OVER IN THAT PART OF THE COUNTRY. THEY SET UP A SYSTEM OF SENDING UP B-29's INDIVIDUALLY UP THERE WITH A TRAINED WEATHER MAN WITH ALL OF HIS INSTRUMENTS TO MAKE FORCASTS. WE WOULD GO UP AND FLY ALL OVER JAPAN AT HIGH ALTITUDE AND TAKE INSTRUMENT READINGS SO THEY COULD FORCST FOR A MAJOR STRIKE PLANNED FOR THE NEXT DAY. EVERYBODY LIKE TO GET ON OF THOSE ASSIGNMENTS. MARCH 29, THE VERY DAY THAT IWO JIMA WAS SECURED, I THINK IT WS MARCH 29TH. 1945. WE WENT UP THERE ON THIS WEATHER STRIKE, WENT ALL ACROSS THE ISLAND OF JAPAN, GOT SHOT AT 3 OR 4 TIMES. IN THE MEANTIME, WE HAD A LITTLE TROUBLE WITH ONE OF THE ENGINES WHILE IN FLIGHT. WE DIDN'T PAY MUCH ATTENTION TO IT AND MAKE OUR RUN, HEADED BACK JUST ABOUT TIME BIG BATTLESHIP WAS SHOOTING AT US SO WE TRIED TO GET OUT OF THERE IN A HURRY. THEY HAD BEEN FIGHTING ON IWO JIMA SINCE THE EARLY PART OF MARCH. THEY HAD IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE. I FACT, THEY HAD TOLD US THAT IF WE WERE IN TROUBLE AND REALLY HAD TO LAND, THAT WE COULD LAND THERE. SEVERAL PLANES DID DO THAT, INCLUDING US. WHAT HAPPENED TO US WAS WE LOST TWO ENGINES ABOUT HALF WAY FTO IWO JIMA FROM THE ISLAND OF HONSHU. WE HAD TO MAKE A DECISION, HIT THE WATER OR TRY TO MAKE IT TO IWO JIMA TO LAND. WE DECIDED TO MAKE IT TO IWO JIMA, WHICH WE DID. WE GOT INTO IWO JIMA WITH TWO ENGINES OUT. AFTER WE GOT ON THE GROUND, WE FOUND WE WERE GOING TO LOSE ANOTHER ONE RIGHT QUICK.

RICHARD

THAT WAS KIND OF SCARY.

MARSHALL

IT WAS. WE WERE DOWN RIGHT BY THAT MOUNTAIN SURABACHI. THERE WAS STILL FIGHTING GOING ON THERE. YOU COULD SEE IT UP ON THE END OF THE ISLAND. WE SPENT THE NIGHT THERE. WE WALKED AROUND. IT WASN'T EXACTLY MUD BUT IT WAS THAT OLD VOLCANIC ASH AND JUST LIKE MUD.

RICHARD

SO YOU GOT THE LIFE OF AN INFRANTRYMAN?

MARSHALL

YES, AND THOSE BULLETS. THEY HAD STAR SHELLS AND STUFF GOING ALL NIGHT LONG. I WAS SHAKING LIKE MAD AND THAT WAS IN MARCH. IT'S HOT ON SAIPAN IN MARCH. I THOUGHT I WAS FREEZING. WE MADE IT BACK.

RICHARD

AFTER THE WAR, YOU SEPARATED IN NOVEMBER, 1945. WHAT LINE OF WORK DID YOU GET INTO?

MARSHALL

I WAS ALWAYS INTERESTED IN THE NEWSPAPER BUSINESS.

RICHARD

THERE YOU GO TYPING.

MARSHALL

THAT'S RIGHT. UNDER THE G.I. BILL OF RIGHTS, I LEARNED HOW TO RUN A NEWSPAPER AT MY HOMETOWN, BELZONA, Ms. IT WAS A WEEKLY NEWSPAPER. THAT'S WHAT I DID. I GOT TO LEARN THE DIFFERENT PHASES, EVERYTHING EXCEPT LINOTYPING. I NEVER DID THAT. I WAS DOING EVERYTHING ELSE MAKING UP A NEWSPAPER, SELLING ADS, WRITING. I DID MOST OF IT. THAT'S WHAT I STAYED IN AND THAT'S WHAT I RETIRED IN AT THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL ON MEMPHIS, TN.

RICHARD

YOU MENTIONED BEFORE THE INTERVIEW THAT YOU HAD WRITTEN BOOKS ON THE B-29.

MARSHALL

YES, YES. I STARTED IT AS ONE OF THE MAIN THINGS THAT I SAID I WAS GOING TO MAKE MY FIRST MILLION ON. I FELT PRETTY GOOD WITH THE BOOKS. I HAD SOME MAJOR PUBLISHERS, STILL HAVE. I DID THE FIRST ONE I CALLED "SKY GIANTS OVER JAPAN" TAKEN FROM A DAIRY WE KEPT OVER THERE DAILY. A SIDELIGHT ON THAT IS, THIS PAST MAY, MY PUBLISHER IN JAPAN PUBLISHED THAT SAME BOOK THAT WAS TRANSLATED INTO JAPANESE. HE WENT THROUGH THREE PRINTINGS OF IT. I HAD SIGNED THE CONTRACT WITH HIM FOR THE FOURTH AND BEYOND. THERE IS A LITTLE RECESSION GOING ON OVER THERE NOW. I'VE GOT SOME SCATTERED AROUND ALLL OVER THE COUNTRY. I DONATED ABOUT SIX OF THEM TO THE MUSEUM. THEY ARE IN THE LIBRARY. YOU CAN GO UP THERE AND LOOK AT THEM WHEN YOU CAN GET UP THERE. THERE IS A LOT OF COLOR IN SOME OF THEM.

RICHARD

THAT'S GOOD. WE LIKE COLOR.

MARSHALL

I'M NOT TRYING TO SELL THEM.

RICHARD

WE ALSO APPRECIATE YOUR TAKING THIS TIME.

MARSHALL

IT HAS BEEN A GREAT PLEASURE. I DIDN'T MEAN TO TAKE UP SO MUCH TIME. IN 84 YEARS MAN, YOU HAVE DONE A WHOLE LOT OF STUFF.

FEM. VOICE

I HAVE A QUESTION. EXACTLY HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU FLY FROM SAIPAN TO JAPAN?

MARSHALL

THIRTY TIMES.

FEM. VOICE

THIRTY TIMES WITH A LOAD OF BOMBS?

MARSHALL

YES. THE WEATHER SHIP WAS NOT A REGULAR COMBAT MISSION BUT WE TOOK BOMBS AND DROPPED THEM TOO. I MADE 30 COMBAT MISSIONS AGAINST JAPAN. THAT WAS WHAT YOU HAD TO GET. THAT WAS WHAT ASSIGNED AND THEN YOU COULD BE ROTATED BACK TO THE STATES. THAT COMPLETED A TOUR OF DUTY.

FEM. VOICE

WERE PEOPLE FIRING AT YOU ALL THE TIME?

MARSHALL

NOT ALL THE TIME, BUT THEY WERE FIRING AT US.

FEM. VOICE

WAS THAT JAPANESE BATTLESHIP FIRING AT YOU?

MARSHALL

YES, BATTLESHIPS WHEN WE WERE OVER WATER, WE DID GET SOME FIRE FROM BATTLESHIPS.

FEM. VOICE

DID YOU GO AHEAD AND BOMB THEM?

MARSHALL

YOUR REALLY HAD TO KIND STAY----THE BOMBARDIER WANTED TO PULL OVER THAT BATTLESHIP. ABOUT THAT TIME, HERE CAME A BIG BLACK PUFF RIGHT OUT BY US. WE LEFT.

RICHARD

THIS HAS BEEN A GOOD INTERVIEW.

MARSHALL

I HOPE SO. I DIDN'T MEAN----

RICHARD

TAPE IS CHEAP.

MARSHALL

USE WHAT YOU WANT. THE REASON I SAY I AM GOING TO MOVE, MY SON IS AT FORT

SMITH

END OF TAPE.

TRANSCRIBED BY FOREST J. REES
FREDERICKSBURG, TX AUGUST 2002