

*Admiral Nimitz Historic Site  
National Museum of the Pacific War*

*Center for Pacific War Studies*

*Fredericksburg, Texas*

Interview with

**Mr. Wallace F. Pickard**  
(World War II - U.S. Army/Air Corps)  
(Pearl Harbor Survivor)  
Date of Interview: December 7, 2001

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Today is December 7, 2001 and I am Kevin Pickard representing the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas, and I will be doing an oral history interview with Wallace Frederick Pickard, who was a Major in the U.S. Army/Air Corps during World War II. We are on the porch at 4538 Eckert Road, Fredericksburg, Texas, and we are going to get the oral history of Wallace, also known as Wally, for the archives at the Nimitz Museum.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, Wally, my name is Kevin Pickard and we look forward to getting your oral history. I might add as a note to the transcriber that Wally and I are related. Wally is a first cousin of mine once removed. Wally, tell me where and when you were born.

**Wallace Pickard:** I was born on August 2, 1919, in New York City.

**Kevin Pickard:** Who were your parents?

**Wallace Pickard:** My parents were Nee Anna Vogel and Joseph Pickard, Jr.

**Kevin Pickard:** And the ages and names of your siblings.

**Wallace Pickard:** My brother, Joe is 83, and he is my only sibling.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, where did you go to school as a youngster, prior to any college, or anything of that nature.

**Wallace Pickard:** I went to grade school on 155th Street off of St. Nicholas Avenue in Manhattan.

**Kevin Pickard:** Manhattan, New York?

**Wallace Pickard:** Manhattan, New York City, right.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then after that you were in high school at what school?

**Wallace Pickard:** Edward W. Stitt High School at 166th Street and Edge Comb Avenue.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Wally, after that let's see, what year was this now when you

graduated from high school?

**Wallace Pickard:** I didn't graduate there. That was a Junior High School.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** We then moved to Bronxville, New York, and I went from the 8th grade to graduation in the 12th grade right through at the same school. Bronxville High School.

**Kevin Pickard:** Surely, I've been there. I know that school. All right, from Bronxville High School then, you decided that you would go to college.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what school did you go to?

**Wallace Pickard:** Washington and Lee at Lexington, Virginia.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what caused you to choose Washington Lee as a school to go to?

**Wallace Pickard:** I think probably my Advisor. We went through a number of schools and they he decided to recommend that to me, and I was accepted.

**Kevin Pickard:** This was your advisor at Bronxville High School?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** What year are we talking about now?

**Wallace Pickard:** Talking about 1936.

**Kevin Pickard:** Is that when you graduated from High School?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes

**Kevin Pickard:** In '36. So then you were at Washington Lee and how long were you at Washington Lee?

**Wallace Pickard:** I was there for three years.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then what happened?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, my father had reverses and we decided I would finish up my education in New York.

**Kevin Pickard:** In New York. Where was that?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, at that time we were living in Forest Hills, and there was a community college in Garden City I think. I went through my fourth year there. We are now up to 1940.

**Kevin Pickard:** '40. Now, after your graduation from the community college in Long Island, what was your next step? Is this the time you decided to enlist in the military?

**Wallace Pickard:** About that time because this is 1940 and I was aspiring to go into the Air Force and I had to take extensive physicals and some other examinations, which I did. Finally in about, I guess, August or September of 1940 I received my acceptance as a Flying Cadet.

**Kevin Pickard:** What were the reasons you chose the Army/Air Corps?

**Wallace Pickard:** Just wanted to fly.

**Kevin Pickard:** Tell me a little bit about your training then. Did you go right away into the Army/Air Corps?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** What type of training did you go into?

**Wallace Pickard:** Flying. I was a "Flying Cadet."

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. And as a "Flying Cadet," what type of aircraft did you use to train on?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, I started my primary training, if I recall correctly, in February of 1941, flying out of Lakeland, Florida, in a Primary School which was civilian run. They had a 2nd Lieutenant, over all in charge, but my instructor was a civilian. We were flying a Stearman PT-17, bi-wing cloth covered aircraft. One of the best and most pleasant ones to fly. I soloed in that airplane after five or six hours of instruction.

**Kevin Pickard:** Is that rather quick?

**Wallace Pickard:** No I think for that airplane it was more or less normal, and average.

**Kevin Pickard:** I know the Navy pilots of today are gaining a lot more time in the air before they let them out.

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, because they are flying different airplanes now.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** So I am sure that if we had the airplanes then that we have now, it would tend to be more than six hours.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, this interest in aircraft is that something that you've always had?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, my brother had a classmate who was doing the same thing. He was ahead of me. He was maybe six or eight months ahead of me and he filled me in on the type of training that he was getting, etc., and I think that he influenced me a great deal to pursuing my pilot's license.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, after your solo, in the Stearman, what was the next step in your training?

**Wallace Pickard:** That was to learn various maneuvers in that airplane. Aerobatics and other aspects of flying the aircraft, and landing. But this is prior to intermediate training, which is the middle phase of training.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you did most of your training after your solo in the Stearman?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** How long were you with the Stearman?

**Wallace Pickard:** Three months.

**Kevin Pickard:** At that time what did you do?

**Wallace Pickard:** I went to Augusta, Georgia. Once again, had to solo in their aircraft, which was a BC15 monoplane with a higher horsepower engine. It was a more difficult airplane to fly, but I seemed to have mastered it. I nosed over once.

**Kevin Pickard:** When you say "nosed over" what do you mean?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, went upon the prop, tail high.

**Kevin Pickard:** On landing?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yep. However, I was immediately given a test flight and flew with flying colors.

**Kevin Pickard:** You mention “S” flight? What does that mean? You said you were given an “S” Flight.

**Wallace Pickard:** A check flight.

**Kevin Pickard:** Check flight?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, a check ride they called it. I think maybe the brakes locked on me. The plane had just come out of the shop for having a brake job and there was something wrong. But anyway, when the brakes lock on you, you tend to nose over as I did.

**Kevin Pickard:** Was there a lot of damage to the aircraft when you nosed over?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, mainly to the prop.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you have any injuries from that?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, none. I was in the air easily fifteen minutes later.

**Kevin Pickard:** I’ll be darn.

**Wallace Pickard:** With the check ride.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Well, after getting through this training. On this particular aircraft.

**Wallace Pickard:** Three months more.

**Kevin Pickard:** BC15 is what you said?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then how long were you there?

**Wallace Pickard:** Another three months.

**Kevin Pickard:** And after that?

**Wallace Pickard:** And then to Montgomery, Alabama, which was advanced flying. Excellent aircraft. BT-6, a basic combat plane. There were two airplanes, I think coming up to 725 horsepower, which was more than the BC15, and an excellent aircraft to fly. This led to commission.

**Kevin Pickard:** When you say “led to commission,” you became an officer? A 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant?

**Wallace Pickard:** That is right, and got my wings.

**Kevin Pickard:** And get your wings. Well, what type of training did you do in this Advanced Training that you were getting?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, formation flying, night flying, emergency landings, all of those things...

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you consider the training good?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Outstanding.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And covered everything that you needed to know.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, I think that this was the first officer that I had for a flight instructor. He was, I think, a 2nd Lieutenant, maybe a 1st Lieutenant. I forget their names. It was a long time ago. I have them in my book.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, now you are going through this training, and this lasted how long?

**Wallace Pickard:** Another three months.

**Kevin Pickard:** Another three months. So now we are about nine months into your training.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then where did we go after the nine months, from Montgomery?

**Wallace Pickard:** I went home on leave. I went home on leave for ten days. My father was sick and in the hospital. I went home for about ten days, but I think I was caught short because they sent me a telegram to report back immediately to Maxwell Field.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what date was this?

**Wallace Pickard:** Had to be early September.

**Kevin Pickard:** Of 1941.

**Wallace Pickard:** Of 1941.

**Kevin Pickard:** Yes, OK. Early September. Now, you got this telegram. Why

do you think they asked you come back quickly like that?

**Wallace Pickard:** I don't have any idea. Don't have any clue.

**Kevin Pickard:** Were you, at the time, having any feelings that we might eventually be pulled into a war?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, I had no feeling in that respect.

**Kevin Pickard:** Were any of the other people that you were going through school with, or any of your instructors having a feeling that there might be, had a certain sense of urgency that we needed to get prepared as quickly as possible?

**Wallace Pickard:** None that I had any feelings of. Not that I had any knowledge of.

**Kevin Pickard:** It seems interesting that you were called back.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Quickly.

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, it wasn't that much short. I think they shortened me about two or three days.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** I know that I had to get out immediately.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you went back then... Did you go back to Montgomery?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And were you then assigned to a new aircraft to learn?

**Wallace Pickard:** No. As a matter of fact, I think I stayed on the same train and headed for the West Coast.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** My baggage was on the train, and stayed on the train. I don't think I got back to the Field at all.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you went to the West Coast. Whereabouts on the West Coast?

**Wallace Pickard:** I went to San Francisco.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what happened in San Francisco?

**Wallace Pickard:** I got on the Matson Line Ship called the Luraline. Went south on that ship to Los Angeles overnight. Left Los Angeles the next

morning for Hawaii.

**Kevin Pickard:** That must have, at that time, seemed like quite an exciting trip that you were taking.

**Wallace Pickard:** Absolutely.

**Kevin Pickard:** Were there other Armed Forces personnel on board?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. Thirty-two of my shipmates.

**Kevin Pickard:** And this particular ship that you took, were there civilians on it?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh yes, yes it was a civilian line.

**Kevin Pickard:** A civilian line with thirty-two military people. Were they all pilots?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, they were all classmates of mine.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. What were your thoughts about going to Hawaii?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, I was looking forward to it because Hawaii was known as a vacation spot, preferable assignment, so I was looking forward to it.

**Kevin Pickard:** How long did it take on the ship to get to Hawaii?

**Wallace Pickard:** Five days.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you had a chance to enjoy the ocean.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. I saved the menus every day.

**Kevin Pickard:** Are there any memorable experiences when you were on board the ship?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, it is just the people that I met, and the people that I remained friends with when I got to Hawaii. In particular there were a couple who were recently married and he was an FBI Agent. He was going out to investigate certain problems that they were having in Hawaii.

**Kevin Pickard:** Do you have any idea what those problems were?

**Wallace Pickard:** Prostitution.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oh I see. But, not problems with Japanese?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, no. Not necessarily from military.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Well it is interesting. Well, Wally, you are now on the ship.

Do you remember the name of ship? What was the name of the ship that you went to Hawaii on?

**Wallace Pickard:** “Luraline.”

**Kevin Pickard:** You arrived where in Hawaii?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oahu.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oahu and is that Honolulu?

**Wallace Pickard:** Honolulu is the port city on the island of Oahu.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. You get off the ship in Oahu, then where was your base? What base were you assigned to?

**Wallace Pickard:** Hickam Field

**Kevin Pickard:** How close is that to Honolulu?

**Wallace Pickard:** Fifteen, maybe eighteen miles at the most.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. And at Hickam Field what duties did you have?

**Wallace Pickard:** I had flights on B-18's.

**Kevin Pickard:** Tell me about a B-18.

**Wallace Pickard:** The B-18 was obsolete on December 7th. I was flying a plane that I was never going to fly again after December 7th. Of course I wasn't flying much after December 7th anyway. It was a twin-engine, medium range bomber, and as I say, old and obsolete. I didn't get many hours on that. I bet it wasn't even a week and then I was on the B-17 to do the same thing. To get oriented. The B-17, as you probably know, and everybody listening to this will know, it was a four-engine bomber that put in a very heavy workload in World War II. Not only in the Pacific, but in the European Theater. Good airplane.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did it have a crew?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, we had a crew of six.

**Kevin Pickard:** By any chance do you remember the names of the crew that you had?

**Wallace Pickard:** No because it varied. Didn't fly the same airplanes one day that

you flew the day before. So I don't remember any of those.

**Kevin Pickard:** Were these B-17's at Hickam?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. The letter escapes me, but it was a B-17D to the best of my recollection. Ours was a B-17D.

**Kevin Pickard:** Was that an early version of the Flying Fortress?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. Well, there were earlier ones. There were B's and C's I'm sure. Starting with an "A", but I'll tell you, interesting enough that the reason I remember that we had a "D" was because on the morning of December 7th there were B-17's that came in from Hamilton Field, California.

**Kevin Pickard:** Yes.

**Wallace Pickard:** And ironically they arrived almost the same time that the Japanese started their attack and their destination was to fly and land at Hickam. But many of them didn't. They went into other fields because they realized that there was an attack. How they did I don't know. I recognized the planes as not being ours because it was the later model. It was a B-17E, which had twin 50 caliber machine guns out the tail and there was a tail spit, which is easily recognized by somebody who knows the airplane, so that I knew that these were not ours. They had to be coming from some place else. Of course at the time I didn't know where they were coming from, but unfortunately the Japs shot down some of those planes, strafed them as they came down the runway. These B-17's were not loaded with ammunition and guns because they left Hamilton Field without any expectation that they were going to run into a combat situation.

**Kevin Pickard:** But it was also to keep down the weight as they crossed the ocean I'm sure.

**Wallace Pickard:** Sure, yes. I don't know how many they came in with, but at least a dozen.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, let's go back a little bit for a few hours prior to that.

**Wallace Pickard:** OK.

**Kevin Pickard:** You are at Hickam Field?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Tell me where Hickam Field is in relation to Pearl Harbor.

**Wallace Pickard:** It is immediate adjacent. Contiguous to the lines of demarcation, I guess, and the direction would be east. To the east of Pearl Harbor. We were, of course, subject to the same attack as Pearl Harbor, but not to the extent as the effort that was made there.

**Kevin Pickard:** So on the 6th, tell me about your day on the 6th. You were flying on the 6th? The day before?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. As a matter of fact, I was on 24-hour alert on the 6th.

**Kevin Pickard:** Why was it an alert?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, they varied. My squadron was a reconnaissance squadron, 4th Recon Sq and was on alert that day. The previous day (on the 5<sup>th</sup>) it was probably another outfit that was on 24-hour alert. It wasn't the whole Hickam Field on alert, but I did fly on December 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. When you are on alert, what does that mean exactly?

**Wallace Pickard:** That means you're available 24 hours for that day.

**Kevin Pickard:** All right. Now does that mean your equipment is already prepared for any situation that might evolve?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, not loaded with bombs. Now whether there was ammunition was on board I don't recall. I doubt it.

**Kevin Pickard:** If you are on alert, what would you do as a bomber pilot?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh, at that time you would do exactly what I did on the 6th. Would be reconnaissance, or at least available for whatever.

**Kevin Pickard:** Reconnaissance. I see. When you did Reconnaissance, was your plane armed?

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** Never?

**Wallace Pickard:** Never.

**Kevin Pickard:** If you had found an enemy ship or something of that nature, as a reconnaissance aircraft, you would report that back through your chain of command?

**Wallace Pickard:** Correct. And then get the hell out of there.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. I see. Then they see what they would want to do to neutralize that ship.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. Let me finish that reconnaissance mission.

**Kevin Pickard:** Sure.

**Wallace Pickard:** We did not decide our area. It was given to us -- you fly this heading and go so far, turn around and come back.

**Kevin Pickard:** Generally, how far was that?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, probably a couple of hundred miles.

**Kevin Pickard:** So, you would fly out a hundred miles from the island.

**Wallace Pickard:** And maybe go to the right or the left for fifty miles, then turn back.

**Kevin Pickard:** On the sixth, what direction did you go?

**Wallace Pickard:** I remember that day because we went in the wrong direction. We went almost 180 degrees to what we should have gone, or would have gone to find that force. Generally it probably would have been southwest we would have gone.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, were others going in the northeast direction?

**Wallace Pickard:** I don't know. I would presume not. Either that or they didn't go far enough because they would have found that array of ships which would have been very unusual.

**Kevin Pickard:** :Do you remember how far off shore, off the coast of Hawaii the main fleet was, the aircraft carriers that brought in the planes?

**Wallace Pickard:** I do not know. I don't recall. It is in the book somewhere, but I know the general direction would have been northeast.

**Kevin Pickard:** Northeast.

**Wallace Pickard:** Or maybe even north on the 6th of December maybe more north.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, after you had completed your reconnaissance on the 6th, you are back at Hickam?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right

**Kevin Pickard:** And at what time did you arrive back after your mission?

**Wallace Pickard:** Somewhere around six or seven o'clock.

**Kevin Pickard:** In the evening?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** After your mission, what was your normal procedure?

**Wallace Pickard:** I'd just hang around until midnight.

**Kevin Pickard:** Till midnight.

**Wallace Pickard:** Till midnight to finish the 24-hour day of December 6th.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then after that you went back to your barracks?

**Wallace Pickard:** I think I went into town.

**Kevin Pickard:** At midnight?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. I got back about three.

**Kevin Pickard:** About three in the morning, OK. And you just went to bed?

**Wallace Pickard:** I had a car. My roommate and I had bought a car.

**Kevin Pickard:** By the way, what type of car was it, just as a matter of pure curiosity?

**Wallace Pickard:** I believe it was a Chevy. About a 1936, used. It was a good car.

**Kevin Pickard:** Be kind of fun to have something like that today all restored wouldn't it?

**Wallace Pickard:** Sure would. I wish I had it with all of the bullet holes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oh well, now we are getting ahead of ourselves.

**Wallace Pickard:** OK.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. So you are back in your barracks and three o'clock in the morning.

**Wallace Pickard:** In the sack.

**Kevin Pickard:** In the sack. And you came back in your '36 Chevy?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** To go to bed?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** When did you wake up?

**Wallace Pickard:** When the bombs were going off.

**Kevin Pickard:** That is what made you wake up?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah.

**Kevin Pickard:** What time was that?

**Wallace Pickard:** Eight o'clock.

**Kevin Pickard:** Now, your barracks is at Hickam Field?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** The bombs are going off at about eight a.m. in the morning?

**Wallace Pickard:** Five of eight or eight.

**Kevin Pickard:** What was your first thought Wally when you heard that first explosion?

**Wallace Pickard:** To tell you the truth, I can't tell you what my first thought was, but my best recollection, or my best guess would be that I thought we were having local problems. Some explosions and out my barracks window, which faced Pearl Harbor, I could see smoke and hear these explosions. The furthest thing from my mind was a Japanese attack. It did not occur to me. But, I went outside my barracks in the street, had thrown on some clothes, and almost the time I hit the street the strafers were overhead and he couldn't have been more than a hundred feet high. I could see him. I could see the circle then it hit me what was going on. I did something, which was instinct, I went back up to my room. I got my 45 and a couple of clips and I went back down on to the street. The next one that came over I would shoot at it with my 45. Do you know what a 45 is?

**Kevin Pickard:** Absolutely.

**Wallace Pickard:** OK. You know then what my chances were of hitting that airplane?

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, were you ever a duck hunter?

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, you got to lead them.

**Wallace Pickard:** I trained and to qualify with a 45.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well I meant with shooting ducks where you have to lead them on your shot.

**Wallace Pickard:** I qualify in skeet.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well if anybody was going to hit them with a 45, somebody who had qualified on skeet would do it.

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, I tried to lead them, but nobody came down. Maybe if one of those bullets went through the fuselage it didn't cripple the plane, but I have my doubts about that.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well if they are flying at a hundred feet, you know, you never can tell.

**Wallace Pickard:** You know a 45 is considered to be a close range weapon.

**Kevin Pickard:** Yes. Surely. Well, Wally, so you are firing your 45 in the air and these bombs are going off and I guess at this time they were not only in Pearl Harbor, but at Hickam also. Is that correct?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh yeah. I would imagine that they were strafing us and bombing us too with dive bombers. Mainly they were armed with torpedoes.

**Kevin Pickard:** What was your immediate reaction. What was your training telling you to do at this point?

**Wallace Pickard:** Go to my hangar.

**Kevin Pickard:** Go to your hangar?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah. That would be what we would do.

**Kevin Pickard:** And the purpose of that was what?

**Wallace Pickard:** If we were going to be able to get planes off and do whatever. These planes had to come from a source, so I guess we weren't loaded. We didn't have bombs on the airplanes. We didn't have ammunitions and I don't think we had machine guns loaded. Very bad.

This is Kevin Pickard: Pickard again, and this is a continuation of the interview with Wallace Pickard. We are going to continue on Side B of this tape.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, you are firing a 45 in the air, with a great deal of frustration I am sure.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** What then happens?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well I go back up to my barracks. When I had gone up to get the 45 I woke my roommate and told him what I thought was happening. I put on some more proper clothes and I'm going to the hangar. So I said, "I'll leave the car for you and I'll walk over." We weren't too far from the hangar. Hangar 9 Hickam Field. That is where I went. On the way over I saw bodies and destruction. When I got to my hangar, it was very badly damaged and on fire, and I was told there some enlisted men in the hangar and they were in a bad position because they didn't have anything to put the fire out with, etc. I was a volunteer fireman during my pre-Air Force time and I wanted to see if I could help. I saved three guys. The rest of them died.

**Kevin Pickard:** How many were killed Wally?

**Wallace Pickard:** Six or eight.

**Kevin Pickard:** And they were killed because what happened?

**Wallace Pickard:** Because by the time that I got to the hangar, it was free of any bombs that the first wave had brought. But the first airplanes that hit Hickam were finished. So it didn't seem to be any problem of hanging around to see what we could do, which turned out to be

wrong, but in any event where do we go from there?

**Kevin Pickard:** Well the six men that were killed, how did they die?

**Wallace Pickard:** During the initial bombardment.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. They were already in there and there was a fire. The three that you were able to pull out were rescued.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did they all survive. The three that you pulled out?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes they did. I found out later that they did.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. All right, you got these three men out, what next? What goes on next?

**Wallace Pickard:** I think probably the most interesting part of my morning then came into play and that was when I was just outside the hangar door and I heard airplanes. I looked skyward and I saw bombers, probably at about 10,000 or 12,000 feet. They were in such a position I knew that if they had dropped any bombs on us they were on their way down because they weren't right overhead, but you know the trajectory that I was familiar with and I hadn't even gotten that thought out of my mind when bombs came down around me. During the first raid one of the big steel hangar doors had been knocked off its rail, the track which provided a "V" in the doors. I dove into the "V", but before I did a bomb came down and got me. So I'm inside that "V" and I didn't feel a thing.

**Kevin Pickard:** In your right arm?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** In your right arm. And where was it hit in your arm?

**Wallace Pickard:** My hand.

**Kevin Pickard:** The hand was hit.

**Wallace Pickard:** My hand. So it wasn't really, if you want to be definitive, it wasn't my right arm. It was my right hand. The right hand is attached to the arm so its, so you know the limitation is there. So where are

we?

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, you are now injured.

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh, I'm injured.

**Kevin Pickard:** You are under this steel door, behind the steel door of this hangar.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** What were your thoughts? You realized you were injured?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. I looked at the hand. Oh, I will tell you this. Just about that time, I guess after I had been hit, I had that experience that many have when they are under those circumstances. In seconds my whole life went before me. From the time I was a kid, through school, everything. Just about that time a couple of more bombs came down. That is when I really got scared. I didn't have a chance to get scared before, but I really got scared because a bomb fragment came through the hangar door into my hip. That hurt. I felt that and I said, "Gee, look at my hand, I didn't even feel that." I felt that thing going in my hip and I figured that I had had it. But the reason I felt that, I was told later the reason I felt the injury to the hip was because the hangar door had slowed the shrapnel down.

**Kevin Pickard:** And taken the energy out of it?

**Wallace Pickard:** Taken the energy out of it and slowed the speed so that it didn't do as much damage.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Whereabouts in your hip did you get hit?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right there.

**Kevin Pickard:** Looks more like your buttocks.

**Wallace Pickard:** Well no, it was on the side.

**Kevin Pickard:** On the side.

**Wallace Pickard:** On the side, yeah. I have a good sized scar. As a matter of fact, when I was retired they included it as one of the items rated.

**Kevin Pickard:** You got a good kick in the tail with that one.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah, a good way to put it.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you got hit twice?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah, I guess you could say that.

**Kevin Pickard:** You got hit twice, but that was during the second raid on Hickam.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. The planes that I spotted at high altitude were the first planes of the second wave. I think the amount of time between the end of the first and the beginning of the second probably was about 20-25 minutes.

**Kevin Pickard:** What type of damage was done to Hickam Field on the second raid?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, it was substantial, but I don't know how much for the first and how much for the second because I was out of it after that because I wasn't able.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, how did you get out from behind the door?

**Wallace Pickard:** Walked.

**Kevin Pickard:** You walked. And where did you walk to?

**Wallace Pickard:** I walked across the parade ground with another injured guy to the Hickam Hospital. We had our own small base hospital. I went there and they gave me shots. You know, marked your forehead that you got morphine or whatever. I got a bandage wrapped around my hand. They gave me a shot of whiskey, hit my stomach, and I threw up violently.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wasn't good whiskey?

**Wallace Pickard:** I don't know what it was, but anyway, I laid there for an hour or so before they put me in an ambulance and took me to Tripler Hospital, which is a hospital in Oahu.

**Kevin Pickard:** In Oahu?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Was that in Honolulu or outside?

**Wallace Pickard:** I don't know. Outside.

**Kevin Pickard:** Outside. Wally, all right at the hospital, was your hand still bleeding by the time you got to the hospital.

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh sure.

**Kevin Pickard:** Still bleeding. And what was the routine in the hospital when you got there?

**Wallace Pickard:** You know, of course now I'm a little bit out of it. My recollections after this until I came out of anesthesia are hazy, but under the circumstances, and I'm reflecting, they conducted themselves very well. There wasn't any panic or yelling. I was waiting to go to an operating room. So, from then on, things are very, very hazy because I was under sedation, etc. But I can tell you something about it because subsequent to that, maybe the next day, or maybe during the next two or three days the operating room nurses came and filled me in as to what was happening, or what happened to me, which is very important as I sit here and talk to you that I was told that I might not have had my hand if it hadn't been for a Dr. John J. Moorehead, Retired Colonel in the Medical Corps from World War I, who happened to be in Hawaii lecturing on traumatic surgery. He was a Traumatic Surgeon, and he was at the next table and he heard what was going on. Because the tables were just piled up. He heard them preparing to take my hand. It was beyond repair. He looked over and came over and looked at my hand and said, "Well I'm going finish up in five minutes, leave him alone and I'd like to have his case." She said he came over and started repairing the bleeding, cutting away this and that, and she told me the story. As I turned out I ended up being his patient at Hickam Field. He wrote it up in Reader's digest.

**Kevin Pickard:** I'll be darn.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. Well, after then where are you going from the hospital there in Oahu?

**Wallace Pickard:** I was in there.

**Kevin Pickard:** For how long?

**Wallace Pickard:** I was in there until the 20th or 22nd of February.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Well you were there for about 2 ½ months.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah, I never got back to my quarters. I just got orders to get on a troop ship. It must have been a hospital ship. My roommate, he didn't get hit at all because he didn't come over to the hangar, he inherited the car that was badly shot up. So I came back on the 22nd of February into Letterman General Hospital.

**Kevin Pickard:** George Washington's birthday, the 22nd of February.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, well that is rough. I don't know it could have been the 21st or the 20th, but anyway.

**Kevin Pickard:** Letterman is where?

**Wallace Pickard:** Letterman was in San Francisco.

**Kevin Pickard:** San Francisco.

**Wallace Pickard:** And interesting enough there, I took the car with me.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oh the shot up car?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yeah. My roommate dug up some tires because we lost a couple of tires and everything was in short supply. Tires were very easy to get because nobody was buying tires. It was not difficult to get the car on a ship because they were coming over to Hawaii loaded with supplies and war stuff and they needed ballast to go back. They welcomed the car along with others to give the ship the weight that they needed to clear sailing. When I got to San Francisco the guys on the ship had painted on the side of the car "Remember Pearl Harbor." Would you believe that?

**Kevin Pickard:** What a great car for you.

**Wallace Pickard:** Got the car off of the ship, drove it to San Francisco, and every place I went. (It had a Hawaii license plate on it, "Remember Pearl Harbor," and 20 or 30 bullet holes in it.) It attracted a lot of attention.

**Kevin Pickard:** I'm sure. Wally, you are in San Francisco at Letterman. How long were you there?

**Wallace Pickard:** Three or four days.

**Kevin Pickard:** And did you have any operations there on your hand?

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then from there you went to where?

**Wallace Pickard:** From there, after selling the car for a war bond drive to a Department Store and they put it in the window.

**Kevin Pickard:** Were you ever transferred to Walter Reed?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, but not yet.

**Kevin Pickard:** Not yet?

**Wallace Pickard:** What happened was I was there for three or four days and I called home and I found out that my Father had died just four or five days before when I was at sea coming back. I got orders about three or four days later after I got to Letterman to come to Walter Reed General Hospital. I had a Brigadier General as a physician, General Dewitt.

**Kevin Pickard:** General Walter Dewitt?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. He was in the Medical Corps. He was a Doctor. Even his wife got out of that same train with me. He dressed my hand once or twice but it was a good trip for him. Usually they would have probably have sent a Major or a Captain. Anyway I had the General. We stopped in Chicago and then went to Walter Reed in Washington, D.C. An ambulance picked me up at the train, took me to Walter Reed and I was there about 2 or 3 days and they sent me up to New York.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oh, and what happened in New York?

**Wallace Pickard:** I went into the hospital for special surgery where Colonel Moorehead was Chief of Surgery.

**Kevin Pickard:** Is he back from Honolulu now?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes he was back from Honolulu because he was just out there in a civilian capacity. He requested that I be sent up to him so he could pick up the medical attention that he gave me in Hawaii. So he did an operation on me. He replaced a skin graft that they had started, etc., and also the fact that my Father had died was instrumental there. I guess I was in New York about ten days.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you have any military duties at this time?

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** And after New York for ten days what happened?

**Wallace Pickard:** I went back to Walter Reed.

**Kevin Pickard:** Went to Walter Reed. Did you have additional operations there?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes. They started doing the reconstruction

**Kevin Pickard:** How many total operations did you have on that arm?

**Wallace Pickard:** Not on the arm, but over all because they took shrapnel out of my back that was pinching a nerve.

**Kevin Pickard:** That was on the hip?

**Wallace Pickard:** The total operations that I had were about twenty-two.

**Kevin Pickard:** Twenty-two. Well, did you get back to military duty?

**Wallace Pickard:** Not yet.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK.

**Wallace Pickard:** Not yet.

**Kevin Pickard:** After these operations then, what?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, the middle of the summer of 1942 I got a promotion for some reason or other to 1st Lieutenant. I think somewhere around April, May, June I was ordered to go back to duty as an Aide to General Marshall and that is what I did.

**Kevin Pickard:** How did that happen? How did you get to be an Aide to General Marshall?

**Wallace Pickard:** Too long of a story.

**Kevin Pickard:** I'd like to know.

**Wallace Pickard:** Really? All right. When I was wounded my Mother got the usual telegram, “Your son was seriously wounded in the attack, etc.” My Father was very sick at the time. Now we are going way back to mid-December. My Mother got this message and my Father was in the hospital in very serious condition. So, she didn’t hear anything more. It got around to the 21st or 22nd of December and she hadn’t heard another word, so she called Catherine Marshall, General Marshall’s wife, who my Mother was very good friends with at Fire Island. She had a home there.

**Kevin Pickard:** At Fire Island, New York?

**Wallace Pickard:** Fire Island, New York. She was there before she married General Marshall and she was a good friend of my Mother’s. So, my Mother’s friends knew that she was worried and my Father was in the hospital, so they said to her, “Why don’t you call Catherine Marshall and find out how Wally is.” So she did. So Catherine Marshall spoke to the General and I remember that somewhere around Christmas of that December, can I say “the shit hit the fan.”

**Kevin Pickard:** Sure.

**Wallace Pickard:** Out there in Hawaii because a Major came in to see me, “How are you doing? They taking care of you?” And a Colonel came in. Then the Brigadier General who was head of the hospital came in and everybody was buzzing, “what’s going on?” What happened was I found out later because I have the files, General Marshall sent a note to General (I forget his name), he said “I know how busy you are and I hate to bother you, but would you have someone on your staff check on a Lt Pickard who was injured on the 7<sup>th</sup> and report back to me. I would appreciate you doing this.” So that is what happened the day his message hit Hawaii, and that is the day I said, “the shit hit the fan” and the attention I got. Everybody, of course, the nurses and the doctors were wondering what’s going on.

Anyway, when I got back to Letterman in San Francisco, that is how the orders came in so quick to get me to Walter Reed and that is how I got to New York because they were giving me a little bit of VIP treatment.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, so it was in New York then that you were told that would be assigned to General Marshall's staff?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** What were your duties?

**Wallace Pickard:** My duties were to sit in the same office with his receptionist. She had a big office for a receptionist. She was more like a secretary. They moved another desk in there for me and my duties turned out to be that I would go in every morning, I would get reports from Operations, and peruse them, look them over, pick out the important things the General would want to read. He was very, very detailed. I would go in every morning around 7:30 or 8 o'clock and brief the General on what happened the day before. So, it was a very interesting assignment.

**Kevin Pickard:** His overall responsibilities at that time were what?

**Wallace Pickard:** Chief of Staff and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or combined Chiefs of Staff, I'm not sure which, but anyway, his position was the top man in the Army and the Air Force. At the time General Arnold was Chief of Staff of the Air Force.

**Kevin Pickard:** U.S. Army/Air Corps.

**Wallace Pickard:** U.S. Army/Air Corps that is what it was called then. Later on it was called the Army/Air Force, but in any event that was my responsibility. I would also greet visitors. I would meet these dignitaries who had an appointment with General Marshall. We were on the second floor. I would go down and when they got out of the car, introduce myself, and tell them that the General sent me down to escort them up and I would sit with them, talking with

them, and I was allowed to give them some of the interesting information that I had given the General that morning until he was ready to see them. They didn't sit there alone.

**Kevin Pickard:** Yes.

**Wallace Pickard:** And then they would ask me about Pearl Harbor and I'd give them facts that they probably didn't know.

**Kevin Pickard:** That is interesting. Well, on the staff, at this point were you married?

**Wallace Pickard:** No. This is 1942-43. I was married in '44.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** Married in March of '44.

**Kevin Pickard:** After you getting on the staff and you had your responsibilities of briefing General Marshall, were there any other interesting experiences that you had at that time? What was it like working for General Marshall?

**Wallace Pickard:** Tough.

**Kevin Pickard:** In what way Wally?

**Wallace Pickard:** Just he was a tough man. He was very, very straight. There was no peripheral conversation. He was very private.

**Kevin Pickard:** How many people were on his staff?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, he had a Secretary of the War Department General Staff, he had a Secretary, receptionist, who I was with and 4-5 other officers.

**Kevin Pickard:** That was his immediate staff.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Didn't he have other sections, like?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh sure. He had the operations, intelligence, logistics, personnel, etc., and I had to deal with all of those.

**Kevin Pickard:** And that was all located

**Wallace Pickard:** In the Pentagon.

**Kevin Pickard:** At the Pentagon?

**Wallace Pickard:** At the Pentagon, probably most of it in the reception area. One of the things is Mrs. Marshall invited my Mother down. She was down for about a week and stayed with General and Mrs. Marshall at Fort Meyer and I was invited over for dinner a couple of times.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally after this, you are in Washington at the Pentagon on General Marshall's staff.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** What was the feeling at the Pentagon? How the war was going? We were fighting a war on two fronts now, in Europe and Asia. What was the feeling there. What kind of feelings did everyone at the Pentagon have in the beginning when you first went there?

**Wallace Pickard:** It was a tough time because things weren't going great in the Pacific. The Japs had the upper hand and they really crippled us as far as the Navy was concerned so we were kind of fighting, what would you call it, a stand still, or just keeping what we had and not losing anything more and trying to develop a defense that would work, so it was a matter of time. Everybody knew that. And, of course, the decision had been made not to go overboard over in Europe.

**Kevin Pickard:** When you say, "not go overboard?"

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, you know, we were eventually going to have to invade Italy, Sicily, France, etc. They weren't rushing that because all the effort was out in the Pacific.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well was there a "positive air" at the Pentagon, or a neutral, or a negative air at the Pentagon?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, it was a neutral-to-positive.

**Kevin Pickard:** Neutral-to-positive. People felt confident that we could win this conflict?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, yes they did. And they were determined to do this. The decision had been made to put the European war second on the list

and concentrate on winning the Pacific War.

**Kevin Pickard:** That is interesting because we won the European war first.

**Wallace Pickard:** That's right. That's right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Even though that was secondary priority.

**Wallace Pickard:** That is right. Because things improved in the Pacific enough that we were able to invade North Africa in '43. North Africa and the Mediterranean coast. So things went fairly well. The invasion had to be put off one or two times.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did General Marshall go overseas quite a bit?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, because there were conferences. There were conferences in Casablanca, etc.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you go on these trips?

**Wallace Pickard:** No I didn't go on any of those trips. I did go on a trip that General Marshall sponsored. Do you want to go into that?

**Kevin Pickard:** Surely. Yes. It's your story.

**Wallace Pickard:** In 1943, we invaded North Africa, the Atlantic coast of North Africa and the Mediterranean to Algiers, Morocco on the east, and it was very successful operation. We had a lot of casualties. All of a sudden in late '43, this is around September-October of '43 the invasion was. There was a lot of criticism that we sent soldiers not properly trained into this operation and the media picked it up and it was reported that we were not responsible as far as training the troops we sent in on the invasion. General Marshall took the Commander of the American Legion and the Commander-elect and ordered that we take them around the United States to see our training service, overseas to where the invasion was, and report back to him. He gave me the job working out the itinerary and escorting these officials of the Legion.

(We are continuing our conversation on the second tape so we will begin from here)

**Kevin Pickard:** Now Wally, as we left the last tape, you were given the assignment

of having to plan an itinerary for the American Legion to show them how the training of the troops was going on. This is from General Marshall's office. So, tell me a little bit about that. How did that go down and what did you have to do?

**Wallace Pickard:**

Well, let me repeat from our last conversation the purpose of this expedition was to counter the media and the perception that we were sending untrained troops into the combat zone invasion of North Africa. So General Marshall selected the Commander of the American Legion and the Commander-elect to go on a round-the-world, not round-the-world, but into the areas that we were in combat to allay these suspicions that we were entering troops into the combat zone without adequate training. In any event, I was assigned to take these people, the Commander of the American Legion, the Commander-elect of the American Legion, and in the company was a Brigadier General, who was liaison between the War Department General Staff and Congress. I was responsible for arranging the itinerary, issuing their equipment and supplies, and whatever, and arranging the itinerary. To start it off we went around the United States to the various training camps and some of the facilities that were supplying the aircraft and so forth. I don't know why that was included, but in any event we ended up in Miami, Florida. We took off from there on a Pan American aircraft. We went to Cuba, Panama, Trinidad, Brazil, and to Dakar in North Africa. We then went up to Marakesh, and Casablanca and along the way the two gentlemen from the American Legion spoke with people in command and in authority in these various facilities and became acquainted with what they were doing to this effort in the war.

**Kevin Pickard:**

Wally, were the people that were speaking to U.S. commanders of troops or were they foreign commanders?

**Wallace Pickard:** Not foreign.

**Kevin Pickard:** They were all U.S. forces.

**Wallace Pickard:** All U.S. yes, and civilian producers of American aircraft and also military training.

**Kevin Pickard:** Now this was the case in Marakesh and Dakar in Africa. You were interviewing U.S. personnel, U.S. Commanders?

**Wallace Pickard:** U.S. Commanders and U.S. personnel and right down the ranks, right down to the soldiers.

**Kevin Pickard:** What kind of information were you getting back from these people?

**Wallace Pickard:** That they were adequately trained. They felt confident that they could complete the mission that they were assigned and there was no indication, I'm speaking now from the standpoint that I was not present at any of the conferences. That was not my job. It was their mission, the Commander of the American Legion and the Commander-elect, it was their job to ascertain whether or not the Commanders in the region and the individuals down the ranks, what they felt about the training that they had received stateside for this mission that they were on. I was not involved with that.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, what year was this. What time of year?

**Wallace Pickard:** This was 1941, I would say January.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** The invasion of North Africa was November '43, so I'm talking about early '44.

**Kevin Pickard:** Early '44? So you were talking about January-February of 1944?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** Was there any negative information that was given back?

**Wallace Pickard:** None that I knew of. I was not on that end of the conferences and consultations. I tell you what, it was reported at the end of it when we came back to the States, I know what that report was.

**Kevin Pickard:** What was that?

**Wallace Pickard:** That was that the troops were adequately trained, adequately advised, adequately equipped and there was no complaint from either the soldiers themselves, or the officers in charge of the operation. I'm ahead of the game because that is only when we got back that that was reported to General Marshall.

**Kevin Pickard:** What type of aircraft flew you around?

**Wallace Pickard:** Pan American flew us to North Africa. ATC, American Transport, flew us from base to base, from Dakar, Marakesh, mainly ATC. Pan American until we got into Africa and then ATC, American Transport.

**Kevin Pickard:** Pan American was an American airline. That was a civilian airline.

**Wallace Pickard:** Pan American at that time.

**Kevin Pickard:** A civilian airline correct?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And were they flying to North Africa in early 1944?

**Wallace Pickard:** Pan American was.

**Kevin Pickard:** With normal flights?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, no, we were strictly military.

**Kevin Pickard:** But I mean, Pan American was a civilian aircraft, and I was curious from the standpoint that they were flying to North Africa. Wasn't that a combat zone at that time?

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** It was not.

**Wallace Pickard:** No.

**Kevin Pickard:** So, they would have scheduled flights, or just as needed?

**Wallace Pickard:** No, this is strictly Pan American, United States Government.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK, but you were flying over waters and there were German submarines in them.

**Wallace Pickard:** No civilian aircraft. No civilian passengers aboard.

**Kevin Pickard:** Just military?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. Well, Wally, you've gone to Africa, you've gathered information for the individuals that needed that information and what happened next? You got back to the States. What were your duties after you got back from this trip?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, let me still stay with the trip.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK.

**Wallace Pickard:** OK. It was up to the individuals that we had on this trip that were important was the Commander of the American Legion and the Commander-elect. They consulted with the top governmental agencies in the various places, the Sultan of Iran, and various others. It was extremely interesting because we were entertained at luncheons and dinners and there was the protocol that you did not eat, you had to eat with your fingers, your hand, and had a very interesting situation where I was at dinner at the Sultan of Marakesh and I had this injury to my right hand and I couldn't eat.

**Kevin Pickard:** My goodness. You ate nothing?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, until one of our interpreters interceded with the Sultan, no it was the Pashav of Marakesh explained the situation that there was a person who was visiting who had injury to his right hand. He got up from the podium, came down to me, and discussed with me, briefly, the attack of Japan on Hawaii.

**Kevin Pickard:** On December 7th.

**Wallace Pickard:** On December 7th. And gave me permission to eat with my left hand.

**Kevin Pickard:** My goodness. The left hand was used for things other than eating?

**Wallace Pickard:** Was used for. I don't know what the word is. Anyway, you did not use your left hand to eat. But I got permission to do that or I wasn't going to eat.

**Kevin Pickard:** Wally, you mentioned Iran. Were you in Iran also?

**Wallace Pickard:** Not Iran.

**Kevin Pickard:** You said the Sultan of Iran.

**Wallace Pickard:** I'm sorry, forget it.

**Kevin Pickard:** You were in Marakesh?

**Wallace Pickard:** Iran is up in the Middle East.

**Kevin Pickard:** Right.

**Wallace Pickard:** And we're down Algiers, Morocco, which is down there in North Africa, but it wasn't Iran.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well Wally, you're back now after the trip was finished and completed, you went back to Washington, correct?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** And your guests, they had to give their report on what they found.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** As you indicated earlier, you said there was no indication of a problem with the training given to the troops.

**Wallace Pickard:** That's right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did that assignment finish?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** OK. What's the time frame for us at this point? I would say 1944, but

**Wallace Pickard:** No, no.

**Kevin Pickard:** You said it ended in 1944, January and February.

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, this is 1944.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then what was your assignment after that? Were you back on General Marshall's staff?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, for a very short period of time. On the recommendation of the Commander of the American Legion, his report to General Marshall on the basis of that report I was promoted to Captain.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. So while you were with the American Legion you were a 1st Lieutenant.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right, on this mission I was a First Lieutenant.

**Kevin Pickard:** All right. You got back then you were promoted to Captain?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then what assignment did you have?

**Wallace Pickard:** I came back and I think maybe I was about a month or two and I came up because medically it had been reported that there was nothing more they could do for me medically. So it was mandatory that I go before a retirement board. I went before a retirement board and they retired me as a Major.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what time frame is this?

**Wallace Pickard:** Oh, mid-44, maybe September 1944.

**Kevin Pickard:** Had to be after 1944 because you came back from your trip in the early part of 1944. You were promoted to Captain when you came back?

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then after that you went up to a retirement board.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** Because there was nothing else they could do for you medically.

**Wallace Pickard:** Right.

**Kevin Pickard:** All of this happened in 1944?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes.

**Kevin Pickard:** And then you retired as a Major in 1944?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, and immediately within days I was approached, maybe the same that the retirement met, I was approached by a Colonel, and I think because of my association on General Marshall's staff. I was very much acquainted with staff papers, Joint Chiefs of Staff papers, etc., I was asked to continue service on a limited basis being that they couldn't send me overseas without my consent. They wanted me to come back to duty as Executive Officer of the 20th Air Force, which was then being put together and being formed.

**Kevin Pickard:** Where was it being put together, the 20th Air Force?

**Wallace Pickard:** In the Pentagon building.

**Kevin Pickard:** Oh, I see, on paper.

**Wallace Pickard:** The Headquarters of the 20th Air Force was going to be in Washington, D.C. because it was conceived to be a global, at that time a global "Air Force."

**Kevin Pickard:** What was the purpose of this 20th Air Force?

**Wallace Pickard:** B-29's to take the war to Japan.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see. Now this happened at the end of '43?

**Wallace Pickard:** Middle of '44.

**Kevin Pickard:** Middle of '44. And as Executive Officer of that unit, what were some of your responsibilities?

**Wallace Pickard:** My responsibilities to the Chief of Staff of the 20th Air Force was to prepare proposals, papers with respect to the organization of the 20th Air Force, the equipment, the various problems with expediting the deployment of the B-29's, and submitting them to my Chief of Staff, who was a General and then these papers would be forwarded to the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

**Kevin Pickard:** What happened? Where did you go from here?

**Wallace Pickard:** Sat there in Washington, D.C. in the Pentagon.

**Kevin Pickard:** Did you do that for the rest of the war?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, almost. In the meantime, we had acquired the bases, oh no, by that time we had acquired -- ask me something else.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, Wally, you said you were in this position for the rest of the war.

**Wallace Pickard:** Executive Officer of the 20th Air Force.

**Kevin Pickard:** Now, how long did this go on? For the rest of the war?

**Wallace Pickard:** Well, it went on for a number of months. We had the Mariannas at that time. We had acquired Okinawa. And up until that time the headquarters of the 20th Air Force was in Washington, D.C.

General Arnold was Commander-in-Chief of the 20th Air Force. It was a very unusual situation because there were Air Force Bases all over the country, all over the world and General Arnold was the Commander of that and in this particular case he was also commanding the 20th Air Force. The officer I worked for, General Hansel, was Chief of Staff. What happened then was that they had decided to move the headquarters of the 20th Air Force to Okinawa, which we had just then taken over with that “advance on to Japan.” The 20th Air Force Headquarters was going to move to Okinawa. I’d been married in ‘44 and in ‘45 I had a daughter born in March.

**Kevin Pickard:** Now, Wally, let’s go back. Now you didn’t mention meeting your wife and getting married.

**Wallace Pickard:** OK. You are right. When I came back into Washington in ‘42 and went to New York for a brief period of time, I came back to Walter Reed into the Orthopedic Ward. I met a nurse whom I was very attracted to, and apparently she to me. That was in 1943. In March of 1944 we were married.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you met her in ‘43. What month in ‘43?

**Wallace Pickard:** In ‘43, maybe when I came back from New York, maybe April-March.

**Kevin Pickard:** You were just back from Africa.

**Wallace Pickard:** No, not Africa.

**Kevin Pickard:** Yeah, you were with the Veterans of Foreign War in Africa.

**Wallace Pickard:** Hadn’t gone yet.

**Kevin Pickard:** In ‘43? You said you came back in ‘43.

**Wallace Pickard:** No, no I went in ‘43. I was in Africa in ‘43 for maybe March-November. Something like that. But I had met this gal when I had first gotten back from New York after being there for a couple of weeks for surgery and we’d gone out on a couple of dates, so forth, but then I had to cut off with her and go on this mission to

North Africa. I came back from there, and picked up the relationship with Trudy in late 1943 and in March of '44 we were married.

**Kevin Pickard:** What were your thoughts at this time about the war? And what did the general people in the country think of the war? We were still at war with Japan and Germany.

**Wallace Pickard:** We were making progress. It was stabilizing in the Pacific and we could give more support to the European. We were still concentrating on the European. I don't recall exactly, but I believe it was in June of '44 that we launched our invasion, D-Day.

**Kevin Pickard:** D-Day, you were in Washington?

**Wallace Pickard:** Yes, I was executive Officer of the 20th Air Force.

**Kevin Pickard:** I see.

**Wallace Pickard:** So, all right, to my marriage in March of '44. I stayed in the 20th Air Force. Oh, and then after taking Okinawa they decided to move the Headquarters of the 20th Air Force to Okinawa where they could better command the bombardment on Japan. I was offered a promotion to Lt Colonel. I had only been a Major for less than a year, but I was promised a promotion to Lt Colonel if I went with the headquarters to Okinawa. There was always the impression that the first in was the first out. We were looking forward to the end of the war. First in, first out, last in, last out. I had a daughter in March of '45. Went home and I said to Trudy, "Here's what the situation is." She said, "I don't want you to go." So I went back the next day and I told them I wanted out. There was no problem. I just went back into Walter Reed, scheduled for a discharge and that was it.

**Kevin Pickard:** So you were out of the Army then?

**Wallace Pickard:** I was out of the Air Force.

**Kevin Pickard:** And what date was your discharge?

**Wallace Pickard:** By this time it was 1945.

**Kevin Pickard:** So what month?

**Wallace Pickard:** May of 1945.

**Kevin Pickard:** May of 1945. The war was almost over by then.

**Wallace Pickard:** Almost. As a matter of fact I was back at Fire Island on August 2nd or August 3rd, or whatever it was when the Atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima. Three days later on Nagasaki. And that was it. That was the way the war ended.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, Wally, what are your thoughts about your service?

**Wallace Pickard:** My thoughts are that I am happy with my service. I am grateful to be here talking to you, Kevin Pickard, on December 7th, 2001 because had it gone differently I might not be here. I would like to say also, I'm showing you my hand, which is still with me, but severely disabled. This is bad. But there is also good that comes with some bad. As far as I'm concerned the good is the fact that I was wounded and had this disability. If I had not had it, number one I think I would have been killed, if not on December 7th, subsequent to that many of the guys that I went out there with did not come back. I think that possibly I would have joined them and not come back. The good is being that I had this injury, I ended up at Walter Reed General Hospital, I met this wonderful gal who was a nurse and we fell in love and we got married. Without this injury I know that would not have happened. Having gotten married I have three children, all of whom are grown. One of which, my son, the middle one, went into the Air Force and he retired a month ago as a Brigadier General in the Air Force with three children. So he has a great future. He is 55 years old and still has many years ahead of him and I am very proud of the fact that I had a son who became a pilot, and a Brigadier General.

**Kevin Pickard:** Well, Wally, that is very good and we certainly appreciate you

sharing your experiences with us and I think what we will do is that we will kind of close this down right now. Again, the whole country owes the people of World War II, the people who fought in that war, we owe you all a tremendous debt of gratitude, and we do appreciate it. And we appreciate you sharing your experiences with us.

**Wallace Pickard:** It has been my pleasure.

**Kevin Pickard:** This is the end of this interview with Wallace Pickard. Wallace Pickard is currently living in Lighthouse Point, Florida, during the winter, but in the summertime he is living in Fire Island, New York. This ends this interview.

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