

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Mr. Robert Scripps

Date of Interview: September 28, 2002

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Interview in progress.

Cork Morris: This is Cork Morris. It's September 28th, 2002; I'm interviewing Mr. Robert Scripps and this Fredericksburg, Texas. 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.

Usually we start with...where you...where you were born and...

Mr. Scripps: I was born in Washington, D.C. because of World War I and my father was...there, but I grew up in California.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And I went to...Davis University of California for a year and half and then...I was there learning about the family business in...Ohio...Cincinnati and then I...went back to California...was getting involved (unintelligible) farming.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And the first...in 1940 the National Guard were called up...Fort Lewis Washington, and the first draftees. I was just...turned twenty-three on March 1st and...around the middle of March, my number came up. And they sent...the first draftees were sent to Fort Lewis Washington to bring the National Guard...up to full strength.

Cork Morris: Oh okay.

Mr. Scripps: It was part of the 41st Division. And...and then during that...we did the same training as the National Guard then...there...that year.

Cork Morris: And then you did the basic at Fort Lewis?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, the basic. The Army confined us to camp for about a month, and then after that we were just...learning the same thing the National Guard were doing.

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: We could...have it. And later in the year they divided...I was put in the Infantry in a company...there from Fort Lew...uh, from Medford, Oregon, but they changed to four regiments to three regiments (unintelligible) division and one of the unit was taken out...under 61st Infantry to go to the Philippines. And...they brought up to full strength and I was...I...seemed like it would be a lot nicer than spending the winter Fort Lewis (unintelligible).

Cork Morris: So, that's what you were thinking, yeah.

Mr. Scripps: So, anyway, we were on the train...going to Fort Lewis, uh, going to San Francisco to get on the boat to go to the Philippines on December 7th; we were pulling in San Francisco on December 7th.

Cork Morris: Huh!

Mr. Scripps: And then we were there for about a week; the ship had to be painted gray. It was one of the...regular passenger liners that...they had fixed up to...

Cork Morris: Uh huh.

Mr. Scripps: ...carry a large number of troops, but...so, as I say, we went to Hawaii and I spent all of 1942 in Hawaii. When we first got there, one of the first thing...blackout and curfew. And then we were on guard duty...different areas. And at one time were...building the fencing areas around Pearl Harbor; I never to actually...saw Pearl Harbor (unintelligible words)...the area there.

Cork Morris: Was there actually the feeling...when you were stationed in Hawaii that the Japanese might try a land invasion? Was that...?

Mr. Scripps: Well, that's what...at first it seemed that way; I know they were...they were digging an underground...communications center, and some of them would stand guard...out in an area...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...near the ocean there. And...then while we were there, one-tenth of the unit...would have to go to Honolulu on a pass, say, one-tenth of...a tremendous number of Navy...Army and Navy there.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: It was a blackout; you had to be back at the tent before dark. And...while we were on the west...uh, eastern side of the island...a cliff...uh, a road went around the cliff; we hit an explosive in the middle of the road...so they could blow the cliff...not to cut up...completely cut off...whole mountainside would have come...down...into us (unintelligible words)...around that was...late...later in the year, and then they started intensive training. I'm growing up...pretty much (unintelligible words)...like

maneuvers or going out...over...night. Sometimes different maneuvers there, but it more or less in that area...where they...I grew up around San Diego and...that's why they made me a swimming instructor. They had...

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Were you still a...still a Private or...?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, I was still a...Private.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: I was...I was assistant...Browning Automatic, BAR.

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: Each...each platoon had one First Class Private with a Bar and two assistants...or each squad in this platoon, I think.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And...they were getting ready to go someplace; we didn't know...where, and we left...it was in December...we were on the Republic which was a German passenger ship that had been...interned in World War I.

Cork Morris: Huh!

Mr. Scripps: And the Army had...it was...the United States kept it and it was made into...an Army ship to travel around...and taking soldiers to the Philippines, Panama and different places, so it was fit to use...for that.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: But it stopped in...Suva, Fiji Islands where we had about a week. And we left there then we were told we were going to Guadalcanal...

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: ...to...to relieve the Marines there. Those Marines...had been there...I think they...like they were...well, toward the middle of 1942.

Cork Morris: Uh huh.

Mr. Scripps: We went there to relieve the Marines and by the time we got there, the first time we went into combat we were...up in the...some place up in the mountains there. We had the Japanese surrounded and I know we...the Marine company that was there...they said, "Well, when night fell...come in." They showed us one or two or fifteen killed a night...for...so, and the Infantry, we always stayed three together with your foxhole with one awake and two...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...could sleep at night. And just about...(unintelligible) sorry to hear the rifles, Japanese riflemen, were sitting back.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: We threw a few hand grenades where...(unintelligible) brush there and they started...we never stopped it really (unintelligible). We threw some hand grenades (unintelligible), and then we...mortar fire came in; they...we had to...withdraw...up the hill where they...so they could have artillery bomb them.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words), and then after that...the final...retreated the Japanese towards the north. We followed them some going...our company...maybe several companies...were going on...on the hill. Guadalcanal had...right along the beach where the coconut plantations were...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...and then...northern hills; we'd go up one hill and down...and ran into small groups of Japanese that were...wounded or sick, and we...we had very little luck getting them to surrender; it was just a matter of...instead of killing them...went right up to them, but...'cause they had rifles and stuff, too.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: I know one time we did come upon a...Japanese (unintelligible) spoke English; he had been a radio operator, and he was pretty mad about them leaving him there...sick.

Cork Morris: Yeah.

Mr. Scripps: He was so weak that he could even...diarrhea and malaria...they could barely even hold it, but they put him in a stretcher and took him out; whether he survived or not I don't know. So when that ended and the final Japanese they were taking off in submarines and...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...(unintelligible) I think they were...twelve thousand or something like that. A lot of them officers...some of them. But then after that we were

there for...sometimes unloading ships (unintelligible words). If you...you were on the boat; no docking there; ships had to come in...(unintelligible)...with small boats and (unintelligible). If you had to stay on...on the ship...to work on the ship there, you...you got a meal and cooked...with the crew which was a lot better (unintelligible words.) And then take...taking the stuff into the (unintelligible words). But...later on...well, I came down with malaria; they kept it under control with Atabrine and another kind of medicine.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: But it never could...it didn't cure it, so we went...if you had...(unintelligible words) spleen, I guess, it was swollen then they'd send...well, we got sent...to New Hebrides islands; it was a regular hosp...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...hospital, and we giving our (unintelligible) to go back to our...(unintelligible) to be evacuated...the (unintelligible) there.

Cork Morris: Hum!

Mr. Scripps: I'd been with the same outfit...well, most of us...wanted to go back to our outfit. And, once they gave you quinine, you get over it pretty quickly.

Cork Morris: Uh hum. What sort of...did like everybody get malaria or dysentery or something like that just a huge percentage or...?

Mr. Scripps: Well, a certain percentage...most of them...they made us...they made everybody...in fact, a lot of people wanted to (unintelligible words) evacuate.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: So, when you went...(unintelligible words)...gave you a pill and...

Cork Morris: Physically made you do it?

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Yeah.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words), but anyway, I was...I was there about a month or so and then end up...came back. And then...they had an opportunity...they came around asking...any of us wanted to go...to...regimental...join a regimental reconnaissance platoon, and I volunteered for that, see? I'd studied surveying in school and college; I knew something about...surveying distance...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...(unintelligible words), so I got in that platoon there. And very shortly after that...that was around the middle...'43 (unintelligible) later (unintelligible words). Well, let's see, before we left...before we left Hawaii, the 161st Infantry was put in the 25th Division which was a Hawaiian Division.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Then...that division went and invaded...uh, let's see, that must be...Georgia; I know...we were joined by...I know there was about twelve of us in the platoon...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...(unintelligible) platoon. We had two...Solomon Island (unintelligible) join us. One was...Wolf (sp?), Sergeant Major Wolf; there's a picture of him used to be in (unintelligible) here.

Cork Morris: Oh!

Mr. Scripps: He was...in the Solomon Islands; he was a (unintelligible words) Sergeant McFleece (sp?) was...and Japanese invaded...there; he worked there, on the airfield there...

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...and made a map and knew all the ridgelines (unintelligible words)...

Cork Morris: Oh okay.

Mr. Scripps: ...Marines arrived he had...all kind of information.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: He was captured at one time and had his throat cut, but...interviewed him and...and...they didn't want to shoot him because it was in an area...I think he was...they went into...the natives there could go right into the Japanese camps, you know, there...and look around maybe, to sell trinkets or something; those Japanese are...something or other. So, if they could get information that way, but they noticed they had a little American flag, so they...arrested him and tied him up to...officer told

one with the bayonet and cut his...almost bled to death but he survived,
and...moved on or something...

Cork Morris: Huh!

Mr. Scripps: ...and left him there...thinking he was dead or dying and...

Cork Morris: Geez!

Mr. Scripps: ...cut him up. But after...a month or so...but anyway, he went to New Georgia, and the other native, at that time, was one of the few...well, I came down with malaria right after (unintelligible); I knew I was...going to get it. You wake up in the morning with a head...headache and by evening you'd have a hundred and four temperature.

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: So, we was in the hospital for a week or so there. But one (unintelligible) and then...was...but they had...we had...the division had quite a few...cas...casualties...more...had very few cas...anything in the Solomon...in Guadalcanal went their way...wasn't fair that they were fighting...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...and they were promising (unintelligible); we were mostly with the Colonel and sometimes...one or two of us would go with the natives to follow a trail and things like that (unintelligible). And the one...one time there we came into a...a (unintelligible) a Japanese hospital area and they had...we found all kind of rations; they had some real nice canned beef.

Cork Morris: Huh!

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, maybe there was officers had been there or something, but they left quite a bit of...a lot of their rations; we...we were...just enough time...had the whole C-ration cans with that so we were pretty happy with that...and so on. It wasn't a very good diet for the tropics for the Japanese to have...dried rice...

Cork Morris: Uhm.

Mr. Scripps: ...and...well, they had...rice and...kind of something like there'd be oatmeal; you could put water in and heat...heat it and it and it really (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: So, went up...so we were in that area...one...sometimes we went...(unintelligible) company or the regiment...guard around the airfield if had to...after the fighting was over. And...we left Guadal...we left...then we went back to Guadalcanal which was around the end of the year, December...and then we went to New Zealand.

Cork Morris: Hum!

Mr. Scripps: So, we spent a whole year in the Solomon Islands.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And then we went to New Zealand and we were there...in northern New Zealand but the regimental company, head...the headquarters' company...they were...instead of being in a large camp, they put us...in just one small town, and that was...maybe Fredericksburg might have been...for a year or so.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: But they had some camp there up at...the New Zealand army had trained them with little buildings, so we stayed at those...they had...(unintelligible) so more or less...recreation and...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, we did...travel some time. I think one time I had a two- or three-day pass and then...train there...did a lot of traveling around to different places, but...most the time, it was just drinking.

Cork Morris: I hear they drink over there.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Were they...uh, did you know if they were training you to do...some other...act...action somewhere or...?

Mr. Scripps: What?

Cork Morris: When you were stationed in New Zealand, was there a...any particular job they would train you for?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, we...we kept on...I know we got a new Lieutenant there...that was supposed to train us for that reconnaissance with him.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: So, we...did some training all the time...map...map reading, estimating distances and...

Cork Morris: Uh hum, this like...sneaking around in the woods and (unintelligible words)?

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible)...things like...

Cork Morris: Yeah.

Mr. Scripps: ...that...that's...we got a...before we...didn't have a regular...Lieutenant training us there, we just...learned with the Colonel there, but...and we were there about three months. And then we went to New Caledonia.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: That was the division had to be built up to full strength again. Some...wounded...been killed in action, and...a lot...a lot of sec...lot of sections.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible) and that was all new; were...were pretty...pretty young.

Cork Morris: Uh hum

Mr. Scripps: Ones that had just got out of basic...training were sent there...New Caledonia. So, we were there...most of the year. (Pause)...(unintelligible) Tennessee...training. Spent one time...one time I had to go to...Noumea on pass with (unintelligible) there. It wasn't...we was probably forty, fifty miles or something from there, but it was a pretty good area for training and everything. It was a large...(unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: I assume there were no...no Jap...Jap...had the Japanese ever held that island?

Mr. Scripps: No.

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: It was a French island...it was a French island...still is.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Same kind of natives...were in the Solomon Islands; middle (unintelligible) native with the curly hair and dark skin live there. Their main industry there was...mining...nickel; I think it was nickel...nickel mine or something like...I think it was that, and then...cattle, I assume.

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: I don't think they're doing much farming there, at least in the area where...where we were.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: The French that lived there had...pretty big (unintelligible words). I know we chipped...we'd all chipped in...not (unintelligible) I know we had...it was one...fellow from Louisiana that spoke French that was one of the jeep drivers and (unintelligible words) ranches that would have...steer...

Cork Morris: Oh, dinner!

Mr. Scripps: ...so, we'd have fresh meat there. But when that was...that fall...then it was time to go...then get ready to move from there, they put us on a...ship, I guess was a liberty ship...(unintelligible) troops there, and we didn't know where we were going; cruised around and then we went to Guadalcanal and practiced landing. Some of our outfit...from the northwest had stayed there; they put in a lumber camp and there was some...like...from our same...from...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...from Washington that would stay there the rest of the war...the whole war running the lumber mill...

Cork Morris: Hum!

Mr. Scripps: ...and lumbering in that area. And from there...so we didn't know if we...there was rumors it would be Formosa or...Philippines; Leyte had already been invaded.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: So, I think it was...I know we had Christmas...in...(unintelligible) there, but it was just a day or two later when we landed in...(unintelligible) the Philippines.

Cork Morris: And this is...'44?

Mr. Scripps: ...'40...uh, '45.

Cork Morris: '45?

Mr. Scripps: See, well, the last of '44 we were there in New Caledonia and (unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: So, '45. I know the first time we...went on a patrol to a river...to a little town on a river...to see if there was any Japanese (unintelligible); it was night time and...wandering around...somebody was shooting (unintelligible) at the Filipinos there; nobody was...hurt but...they said they were...Japanese, groups of Japanese soldiers, wandering around in (unintelligible words) patrol there, too, at the same time we were there.

The next...the next day the whole...regiment, and I was in...they crossed the river with no resistance or anything and...(unintelligible) fair-sized town; we got there in the evening; we had...when we got there we had...some Filip...we had a Filipino Lieutenant, (unintelligible), his name was and he was...had been in the Philippine army...the surrender on Bataan and he said he asked some officers on the death march there, said, "Do I have to stay?" And he said, "Well, if you can do it." And...he...he said he would escape.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And...during the Japanese occupation he was there; the resistance force, but he wound up...we usually had several other Filipinos (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: (Unintelligible words).

Mr. Scripps: The land and everything. But I know the first night we got in that town after dark, there was some Japanese tanks hidden in the town, so they opened up and came out and starting...

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...shooting, so there was a bunch of shooting that night. They killed them, and the next morning the tanks...they had the natives in them setting them on fire and a lot of dead Japanese around...the tanks there.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Well, after that...we went on this other patrol; they have some of the longest...for four or five days we went way across the country; it was all

flat in that area to a town that was going to be bombed to see...find out what was in the town and warn people. Their children could go into the town to sell eggs and things to the Japanese; we (unintelligible). There was a farmer there that...stayed in his place; they was...better...than the school...was kind of running things; see what the principal of the school and town or something (unintelligible) had some business there, but they were staying in the (unintelligible words). Going there we traveled at night, and laid low in the daytime.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: One time we stopped at a little town...it was all rice farming country and it was small towns where the people stayed turning the harvest time...harvest or planting was. One time a man came in...with a bayonet wound in his head, this old man, he and his...daughter and son in law went into Jap patrol and they shot...him or bayoneted him.

Cork Morris: Hum!

Mr. Scripps: Left him for dead and he came to; came down (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Tough old bird!

Mr. Scripps: Then...by then...that night...(unintelligible) place, the Filipinos already knew when...when we got there; it was around midnight, they had a meal and they were (unintelligible words)...had a meal...

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...there; they was eating and everything, so we...were...there for a couple of days when they bombed the...town. There were several...there were

some Japanese (unintelligible) children...by going into town to tell us exactly what was...there...to sell eggs, and so we went back and forth; knew what was there. We had a radio to send...

Cork Morris: How many guys were in your little...recon?

Mr. Scripps: Well, we had...there were about...by that time, I think there were about six...six of us there and five or six Filipinos. (Unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Then...the rest of the fighting...there was other...I know that...well, even the headquarters' company that we'd been in (unintelligible words) they were attacked one night...some casualties...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...by Japanese attacking them there, but we...when we were out on that patrol there.

Cork Morris: So, the Japanese weren't just giving up?

Mr. Scripps: No, they were...they were...retreating toward the north.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: It was a...a mountain...mountain area there and that's where we...when...when everything...everything was cleared from where we landed (unintelligible words) to Manila the Japanese were moving north...in the mountainous area. And that was when...while we were up in that area, General MacArthur came there. Our Colonel was...well, (unintelligible) first name...should have made a (unintelligible) but he

was a Colonel of our regiment there...kind of...directly under...him there.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And...on the first patrol we went out on...down the highway; there was a small town, maybe a filling station and...a little store and a few houses; we took us...a jeep up to the...to see...there were Japanese in the town and we approached the...(unintelligible) about...(recording stopped momentarily).

Cork Morris: Go ahead.

Mr. Scripps: So, (unintelligible words). A bullet went in right (unintelligible) and came out at the back; it didn't even knock him down. He was laying there but...then we...accomplished our mission. The Captain (unintelligible words), so we...went back. It wasn't too long...the jeep picked us up and brought us back. But he went back and...(pause)...but he stayed...well, we was...but anyway, we went on other patrols in the mountains. One that I went on...I was...we were told to follow a trail. There was a trail going up; it was open country, open, hilly country, and the trail went into the...head of...woods and we were supposed to follow the trail. Well, we didn't want...to see if the Japanese were using that trail; well probably some. And we were walking along on a ridge; it was early in the morning...we went up there...which was daylight, and we noticed there were...down where the trail was, there were...soldiers. First, we thought they was...only soldier. They were just

four...Americans and about six or eight Filipinos on that patrol, and...we...we followed them. I was...we were up on the ridge; I was looking...field glasses and I could see them looking back at me in field glasses (unintelligible words). It was pretty good distance; maybe half...half...mile...it...it was a good distance; you couldn't recognize anybody's faces that far away but...and right away, he raised his hands and they all disappeared into the brush. Well, they'd accomplished their mission...they...the Japanese. But instead of going back, we cut across to another town and just didn't take...and spent the night there. And then the next morning we decided to go back across...I was in charge and I was a Sergeant by this...by this time.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: I was in charge there, so we...we started back to the...for that same patrol and we stopped at a farmhouse and they gave us...some of that black...the Filipinos like eggs (unintelligible) chicken in them.

Cork Morris: Well, I've heard that, yeah.

Mr. Scripps: But they gave us (sounds of furniture being moved)...we didn't want that, but they gave us (unintelligible words). But while we were there, Ed (sp?) came in and said there was a Japanese soldier taking a bath in the creek there...behind the (unintelligible), and we went there and we...and caught some Japanese (unintelligible) about surrendering and things. And...(unintelligible words) and finally, one of them went there and approached them, and shot him in the leg. And the blood was...he hit an

artery there and...we didn't...ended up his rifle jammed but...(unintelligible words) his rifle, killed him...put him out of his misery. But I know the Filipinos that were with us...they wouldn't have...they could have saved his leg, but they really wouldn't have...helped us.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: They would have...you know, want to kill him anyway. But I...I got (unintelligible) and we came back and we...killed him...(unintelligible) not able to find any...then we were told, "Well, if you can bring in a prisoner, you get a three-day pass (unintelligible).

Cork Morris: (Laughter)

Mr. Scripps: But anyway, it continued on up into the mountains; the Japanese were retreating. And...then we had an observation...then they decided...(unintelligible) was an observation post, so we were up on a ridge; our headquarters was down...well, it was about a two hour...two hour or more walk from where the headquarters were up to our observation post. And we had a pretty good telescope. The highway, it was called The Balete Pass; on the northern part of Luzon and the Japanese landed a shell (unintelligible) they could land a shell any place in the world they wanted to.

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: And they thought they were shooting caves. And one of our jobs...observation post day and night, watched the ridges for any flash,

and the American Army (unintelligible words) artillery back there, and they were shooting. We went back, and boy, we could hear those shells...whistling by (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: I bet!

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words) the Japanese. The Army just...both sides one regiment; one on one side of the road built their own through the edge of the mountains and a regiment on the other side...(unintelligible words). And...(pause)...

Cork Morris: Was the object of that the...to silence both guns (unintelligible)?

Mr. Scripps: The Japanese orders were to fight to the last man; if there wasn't a last man, he was to stay in the area...and do whatever damage he could do.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: I know we had a telephone line...observation post, we had a telephone line; it was cut every night. Most often it was a...it was our own man...wanted to (unintelligible words) or something. With all that wire staying around, nobody knew where it went.

Cork Morris: Yeah.

Mr. Scripps: But, at that time, we...we moved the observation post several times. Sometimes our artillery observers came up there; it was interesting because to see how they...they had a target picked out – maybe a grove of trees, oh, would see an activity, and they would land a smoke shell, two or three smoke shells, (unintelligible words) and then all of a sudden you'd see the old (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: That's all done with computers and things now, but (unintelligible words) observer that had to estimate little lines on his field glasses...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...and get distances...(unintelligible), but that was interesting to...(unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Yeah, it...

Mr. Scripps: And one time, I was not there...I was not there; had gone back to what...usually be there a day or two and then go back to give...(unintelligible) care of things on the map, and...(unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Early one morning...Japanese sniper came in; they were still...more or less asleep there, one was getting ahead and killed him (unintelligible) laying and the other one was shot. I think it was...small machine guns was hitting them...both legs.

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: I was...(unintelligible words) across the...

Cork Morris: Too close for comfort!

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words) that was the end of the war for him...(unintelligible)...

Cork Morris: Yeah.

Mr. Scripps: ...they weren't...serious wounds. And then...and then we...it wasn't too long after that...it was, more or less over with. The

Japanese...other...we were relieved. Our Colonel...the last patrol we went on...it was...we were up in that area, and we were...went probably...(unintelligible) miles or more...another area where our company had moved to. But (unintelligible words) the Japanese...I know we went through one large Japanese camp where they camped; there were foxholes and some of them covered; it was real spooky there...(unintelligible words)...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...but even so, it looked like smoke coming out (unintelligible) had rotted...(unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: But anyway, I know we spent...we found a...one night it was raining and we found a little...like it was...(unintelligible words) Filipinos that lived more or less in that mountain area and farmed a little bit; it was probably one of their...so we spent the night there...walking around, and I was full of leaches. I know we had those...(unintelligible) crawling; we didn't get much sleep that night with...and the next day we headed back for...and that was the last patrol. And then we moved...to an area...not sure exactly where it was; (unintelligible words) and the regiment was getting...they were getting ready for the Philippines...for the Japanese invasion.

Cork Morris: For...invasion of the country (unintelligible)?

Mr. Scripps: Japan. They was...the fighting was over for at least our part, I guess; there was still some...of the Japanese toward the north...they were still...(unintelligible) other outfits had taken over, and...

Cork Morris: Did they tell you that that was the next plan was to invade Japan?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, that was in that...(unintelligible) the regiment was getting ready to go over there. Now, we had a point system; I had enough points...fact, all of us...ones that had been in all the time...most of us all had enough...points to get out, so we were...we were there, I guess, about a month. And when...(unintelligible words) town, small town, was there; you'd go into town...and go to the bar and things.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And so I'm...I'm (unintelligible) Filipinos (unintelligible words) the Japanese women were (unintelligible words), and...but then...then they put us on a train to go to...to Manila; put...we were there in another camp in Manila for...about a week, and then we were on a troop ship headed back to the States. And on the ship coming back, the announcement came that Pearl Harbor [s/b Hiroshima?] had been bombed. That ship...there was a big passenger ship; there was probably seven thousand or more soldiers; it was real crowded. They'd start feeding...breakfast about...five in the morning and they were though about ten or eleven...getting everybody breakfast.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And (unintelligible words)...

Cork Morris: (Unintelligible) dinner?

Mr. Scripps: Those two meals...the same thing. They had...anyway, on the...but that's when the war ended; Pearl Harbor had been blown to...

Cork Morris: You mean Hiroshima?

Mr. Scripps: What...we were on the ship there.

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: And we arrived in San Francisco; I think it was about the same day...that the Japanese had agreed to...surrender there, and there were big celebrations (unintelligible)...San Francisco.

Cork Morris: (Unintelligible words).

Mr. Scripps: And we stayed there on Angel Island which is the same place we stayed when we left San Francisco. All...the cooks and people taking (unintelligible) there...they said...their (unintelligible)...(unintelligible) the war, but they could camp...

Cork Morris: Huh!

Mr. Scripps: ...run the camp...

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: ...and catch anything for us then...

Cork Morris: Good food, I'll bet!

Mr. Scripps: So, but we were there and then they...put on the train to...a camp near Los Angeles where we were getting our discharge.

Cork Morris: Do you have...

Mr. Scripps: Uh one...one thing...interesting thing, too, I know in our outfit, and our outfit...there was an Italian...one who had (unintelligible)...which he'd gone to Italy to visit his parents; he was born in the United States, but he'd gone to visit his grandparents...

Cork Morris: Uh huh.

Mr. Scripps: ...and he was put in the Italian army...

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...uh, in this prison...war, but they put him right into their infantry. Normally he was...I think (unintelligible words) or something.

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: But I try...another thing...the Philippine, Colonel Dalton, in that place in the mountains, he went in to inspect an area that had just been occupied by the Japanese and a sniper got him right here.

Cork Morris: Oh really?!

Mr. Scripps: And they named...he was one of the youngest Generals...of West Point, (unintelligible) at that time.

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: And they named... Balete Pass, they changed the name to...

Cork Morris: Dalton Pass?

Mr. Scripps: ...Dalton Pass, yeah.

Cork Morris: Huh. Well...

Mr. Scripps: Then another thing, too. After we left to go to...the Philippines, we had two Japanese interpreters joined up with them, too.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Our reconnaissance team...

Cork Morris: Did...did you work for...like...I don't even know if there was...like...Army Intelligence unit or anything like that or was this just...

Mr. Scripps: This was just...re...

Cork Morris: Just (unintelligible)?

Mr. Scripps: ...this was just a reg...regimental reconnaissance (unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Okay, so you didn't.

Mr. Scripps: It wasn't...it wasn't any...of a large intelligence...

Cork Morris: Okay.

Mr. Scripps: ...if they did have. I know the two...in California a lot of Japanese families wanted their children to learn Japanese. (Unintelligible words) Japanese people formed a...formed a...school there. There was...some parents made some of them go to Japanese schools and study (unintelligible words), but they did learn to speak and write...read and write Japanese.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: They had learned to speak it...in their homes (unintelligible) a lot of them, but...but those were the times that they picked for...I know the two boys that (unintelligible words) Japanese school...kids...they could read and write Japanese. And they had information; they had...any papers

written in it were found on them...they could (unintelligible words) read it and get information out of that.

Cork Morris: Did...what was...after all this, what was coming home like?

Mr. Scripps: Well, once we got...well, I hadn't seen my parents since...my mother came up to see me...when...just before we left to go to...Hawaii.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: That's the last time I'd seen her.

Cork Morris: So, did you go...

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible) we weren't even allowed to go...on pass (unintelligible) to dinner (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Oh, they had to come and see you?

Mr. Scripps: They had to come and see me. I didn't...have much chance to leave it. When we first got to San Francisco, they didn't know what was going...they had us on guard duty; they didn't give us our ammunition but they had...we had our rifles at first...around city parks and things until they had sent us over to Angel Island there as a regular (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: My mother did get to come over to Angel Island to visit one time (unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: But I hadn't seen her.

Cork Morris: Did...did you ever ger recurrences of your malaria?

Mr. Scripps: What? Oh yeah. On the malaria...well, that was in the Philippines, also an area of time there I lived out in the country there on patrols and things and...and (unintelligible words) from that for a few days...and (unintelligible) give you medicine for that. But the malaria...by taking Atabrine regular there...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...kept from getting...once I got out of the Army I didn't know that...August when I got out of the Army on December...I came down...with malaria.

Cork Morris: Hum, where...where were you at that time?

Mr. Scripps: Well, at that time, when I came back...(unintelligible words) back east but family business there...had a meeting there and we (unintelligible words)...step-father was...(unintelligible words) and that's when I came down with it. But I...they put me on a real...spent...just one...one night or two in the hospital then; they put me on a real strong diet of quinine...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...so much it made your...head (unintelligible words) just taking a lot of quinine and never got malaria again.

Cork Morris: Never again? Yeah, I guess quinine...is all they could do, right?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah. Well see, the Jap...the quinine was in short supply because (unintelligible words) trees...

Cork Morris: Oh okay.

Mr. Scripps: ...the Japanese control there.

Cork Morris: Uh huh.

Mr. Scripps: That would be before...the war started. The United States and Japan had taken over most of their (unintelligible) plantations for (unintelligible words) trees.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: I think now they have much better medicines for that.

Cork Morris: Hope so! Now, you don't hear much about...well, uh, we in America you don't hear much about malaria as being a huge epidemic, but I bet it's still...on those little islands...

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words) a sailor...I read some place that a number of people that die with it.

Cork Morris: Oh really?

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible) the Solomon Islands I...I guess the natives...became immune to it...or else there probably was a lot of...child mortality...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...(unintelligible) and, you know, died with it. The planters that lived in the...the planters that lived in that area...a lot of them had...died with it sometimes.

Cork Morris: Yeah?

Mr. Scripps: And while we were there on Guadalcanal – one interesting thing, too, the missionaries...the Japanese, more or less, left the missionaries alone. They were Catholic; Seventh Day Adventist and several others.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And they...made sure they didn't have any radios...things like that, but they didn't...bother them. They were the ones that were running the school; teaching the natives to read and write.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: Or teaching the natives, at least, to speak English and so on.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: And then there was a gold mine there; the gold mine...I don't know whether it was Australian or what...they hid out during the whole Japanese occupation of the Solomon Islands.

Cork Morris: Oh, the miners did?

Mr. Scripps: The miners did. And the governor...when I get the thing to fill it in, the governor...there's a book here, Alone on Guadalcanal,...he was an Englishman...Englishman that went in the Foreign Service when he was pretty young; he was one of the first...job was being, more or less, the governor or head of...of Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands area.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: He'd...outrun the whole war there. He'd have a radio...he had a radio...there was coast watchers, too, on Guadalcanal.

Cork Morris: Right, right. (Pause) Did...you hear all these stories about these Japanese soldiers and individuals that would...even when the war was over...uh, were still fighting...resisting...back in these jungles. I mean, did...

Mr. Scripps: Well, I think there were a few; I think it might have been on Guam. I think there was some...hidden out...there's a book called, Never Surrender,...

Cork Morris: It was written by a Japanese guy, right?

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: He was one of the last ones...

Mr. Scripps: ...and he'd hid out for thirty years or more on a little island there in the Solomons (unintelligible words) on the Philippine islands.

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: He was an intelligent...he was in...in (unintelligible) Intelligence; was supposed to have been...some...some kind of Intelligence position there, but...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...he and an other man...the other...I think there were three of them...well, some of them...committed sui...he surrendered...on a small island in...in...when the war ended, I mean, there was still a few there that...some of them...believed that...he believed that...just fake...in the book here; it's pretty interesting.

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: Well, couldn't believe that Japan could have...surrendered but thought maybe they had...acted like they surrendered but they were still...having the war.

Cork Morris: Uhm.

Mr. Scripps: But they was...I think...

Cork Morris: Did you ever...when you got out of the service, did you keep in contact with your...guys who were...in service with?

Mr. Scripps: Well, I wrote letters...to a few of them. I wrote...letters for one of...a couple of...(unintelligible)...Lieutenant (unintelligible) and then with (unintelligible) in the Philippines, I kept in touch with him...for a few years there; not too long.

Cork Morris: Did things kind of...drift apart or...?

Mr. Scripps: Well, they just...drift apart.

Cork Morris: Get tired of thinking about it?

Mr. Scripps: They're the ones that I...ones in the Army that I went to California (unintelligible words)...I moved to Texas, I guess, not too long after the war, you know. (Unintelligible words) in the oil business...(unintelligible words) between Midland...or between Fort Stockton...(unintelligible).

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words) twenty-five year lease on a section of land for a dollar an acre (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: That's the reason I came to Texas.

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: And I been here ever since. That was in '47...I came here.

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: At least it stuck!

Mr. Scripps: Yeah.

Cork Morris: Hum. Now, when you got back from the service, was there anything different in the country, you know, like...uh, availability of products and stuff that supplied you?

Mr. Scripps: Yeah, there were shortages and things; I know my mother talked about shortages and...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...(unintelligible words) lived on a ranch, too, in the country there, but...but I know the ranch that my grandfather had was near...Miramar...Miramar Naval Air Station...which probably (unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Hum.

Mr. Scripps: My grandfather went to California in...19...1890 or something like that.

Cork Morris: Huh.

Mr. Scripps: He was in the newspaper business in Ohio but he went...when he finally retired he...(unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: Huh! Hum. Uh, well, this covers everything unless...

Mr. Scripps: (Unintelligible words).

Cork Morris: ...you have something else to say.

Mr. Scripps: I...I wrote out...because Sally McDonald told me that she wanted to have it...interview...sometime, and I started...I...I wrote out the whole

deal; a lot of personal stuff in there, too, but I started rewriting the...the dates...(unintelligible words) the towns we went to in the Philippines. I was able to get a book on the 25th Division and I could that exactly...

Cork Morris: Uh hum.

Mr. Scripps: ...where we'd been; the names of the towns, and I have that all written down...on exact dates and things like that.

Cork Morris: Well, I'm sure she'd love to see that.

Mr. Scripps: I'll probably...when I get back from (unintelligible) I'll send in...

Cork Morris: Oh sure, sure! I'm sure they're going to want to see that.

Mr. Scripps: ...send...exact dates and names of towns I think we were in.

Cork Morris: Uh hum. Well, okay then.

Mr. Scripps: Yeah.

Cork Morris: I guess we're done.

Mr. Scripps: Yeah.

(end of interview)

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