

National Museum of the Pacific War

Center for Pacific War Studies

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Col (Ret) Gilberto S. Trevino
(World War II - U.S. Marine Corps)
[Iwo Jima]

Date of Interview: February 18, 2005

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I'm Scott Atkinson. Today is February 18, 2005. I'm interviewing Gilbert Trevino. This interview is taking place in Fredericksburg, Texas. This interview is in support for the Center for Pacific War Studies, Archives of the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Parks and Wildlife, for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

Mr. Atkinson: I would like first to get a little background on you. Can you tell us when and where you were born.

Col Trevino: I was born in Laredo, Texas.

Mr. Atkinson: The date?

Col Trevino: I was born on the 11th of January 1925. I became 80 years of age last month.

Mr. Atkinson: Congratulations.

Col Trevino: Thank you.

Mr. Atkinson: Your parents were?

Col Trevino: My parents were both born in Laredo, Texas. My Father's name was Geronimo, Trevino. My Mother's name was Stella Stephenson Trevino.

Mr. Atkinson: After you were born did you grow up in Laredo?

Col Trevino: Yes. I went through the elementary, junior, and high school schools of Laredo and graduated from Martin High School in 1942. I graduated third in my class out of 207, and then I went to Texas A&M at the age of 17. I had two years of college education when the time came for me to serve. I asked for the Marine Corps. Luckily I was assigned to the Marine Corps.

Mr. Atkinson: So you went to A&M for two years, and then you volunteered to go into the Marine Corps?

Col Trevino: Well, they gave me the option of choosing the Army, the Navy, Army/Air Corps, or the Marines, and I chose the Marine Corps.

Mr. Atkinson: Were they about to draft you?

Col Trevino: Yes.

Mr. Atkinson: So you enlisted at that point in time?

Col Trevino: That's right. They were about to draft me. They said for a bunch of us from San Antonio to go through the physical part to see if we were qualified to enter the service. When we were there I passed my physical, and I told them I wanted the Marine Corps. They said that unfortunately they had about 12 people who wanted to be in the Marine Corps, and they had room for only six. They wrote on a slip of paper an "M" which stood for Marines and a "N" which stood for the Navy. They put the slips in a sailor's hat and we drew. It was fate that gave me an "M" and that is the reason why I became a Marine.

Mr. Atkinson: But you wanted the Marines?

Col Trevino: Yes, I wanted the Marine Corps. I was sent to the San Diego California, Recruit Depot, and I underwent my Basic Training there.

Mr. Atkinson: What made you want to become a Marine?

Col Trevino: I tell all my friends that there was a simple reason. If I was going to be killed, I would rather die in a nice, sunny, tropical island, than die in the frigid north over there in Europe. Little did I know, but when we hit Iwo Jima on the 19th of February 1945 it was really cold. After Boot Camp they gave us ten days' leave, six of which were spent in travel from San Diego to Laredo, Texas, and back. I stayed in Laredo for four days and then my leave was up. I had to

report to San Diego again. In other words, to make a long story short, out of the ten day leave given to me, I spent six days on the train. The other four were spent at home. I suffered from a very acute case of appendicitis when I was returning to my home station there in San Diego. They had to take me to the Santa Margarita Naval Hospital in Camp Pendleton and operate on me that night. Since my appendix was almost ready to rupture, the appendectomy was performed urgently. I stayed there in the hospital for ten days. I remember that ten days following my operation because they asked for people who were interested in dive bombing. I raised my hand. They said “dive bombing” consisted of a broom stick with a nail on the end of it and I was to pick up all the gum wrappers and the candy wrappers around the hospital. I never again volunteered for another job. I shipped out of San Diego on the 12th of November 1944. Our destination was to be Guam. That is where the 3rd Marine Division was based. I arrived there on the 27th day of December. We were deployed to a camp area and were temporarily assigned to what they called the 28th Replacement Battalion. I was a part of a contingent of Marines that had absolutely no combat experience, were green, and we were actually being held in a transient capacity to find out, I guess, which one of the Marine Divisions needed us the worst. I was assigned to the 3rd Marine Division area and that is where I had my 20th birthday. A few weeks after I had my 20th birthday, we boarded a combat ship, and this time we were informed that we were going to combat to an island called Iwo Jima. I remember being told over and over again that the campaign was not going to take more than three days. This was one of the worst Intelligence disasters in American history. That was absolutely wrong. On the 19th of February 1945, the 4th and 5th Divisions were ordered to make the landing on the

southeastern part of the island. Actually there were only two places where we could have landed, and that was on the southeastern part of the island or a smaller beach on the southwestern part of the island since the rest of the island was inaccessible to land on because of the craggy rocks that didn't permit the Higgins Boats to get too close to shore. What happened is that the 4th and 5th Divisions hit the island on the 19th of February approximately 9 o'clock in the morning. Before the Japanese realized what had happened, we had two division ashore. They expected the brunt of the attack to come from the western part of the island. They thought the 5th was only a diversionary attack. We could see all of these proceedings from aboard ship. The 3rd Marine Division was still not ashore. We were supposed to provide the labor to offload all of our military materiel. That was supposed to be our job. By noon of the second day, the 4th and 5th had been hit so heavily that they had sustained about a 50% casualty rate. Our Commanding General of the 3rd Marine Division, a gentleman by the name of Graves Erskine, had begged the senior officer, a Marine Lt General, for permission to allow the 3rd Marine Division to participate in the combat because they needed some more troops. The next senior Marine was Lt General Howland M. Smith, called "Howling Mad" Smith by the troops. He was the most senior Marine General, in command of all of the Marines there. He thought that we should not be too hasty to commit the 3rd Division, and finally by the fourth day it became obvious that the mission was not going to get accomplished without some more help. So approval was given to permit the 21st Marine Regiment and the 9th Marine Regiment to land and support the 4th and 5th Divisions. It was decided to keep the 3rd Marine Regiment on standby reserve until they were needed. Well, the 3rd Marine Regiment never

landed and they were returned to Guam, so only two regiments of the 3rd Marine Division landed. These were the 21st and the 9th Infantry Regiments and the 12th Artillery. I was assigned to the 28th Replacement Battalion. They quickly mobilized some of the guys that were absolutely “green” troops. We didn’t know our butts from shinola about fighting. I had qualified to be an expert rifleman. When they called my name I went ashore and they assigned me to Charlie Company. They were still very hesitant about deploying anybody in the 28th Replacement Battalion to the front lines because they knew that we had not received any advanced infantry training. We didn’t know whether we would be assets or liabilities. To put it very frankly, they had doubts about whether the people in the 28th Replacement Battalion would assist fighting units or act as an albatross. We landed. I will never forget the first day we landed. Maybe I’m talking too much.

Mr. Atkinson:

No, you are doing fine.

Col Trevino:

There was such a stench when we landed on Iwo Jima, and there were pieces of Marines’ bodies strewn all over that island. I saw legs with the combat boots still attached to them, hands blown off, intestines. I saw people shot in the thorax with big gapping holes because the Japanese offloaded every weapon that they had. There were looking at us from Mount Suribachi and they were fighting from pill boxes, bunkers, and trenches. They could see all of the Marine troops and they threw everything at us that they had in their armament arsenal. Because we were so closely clustered and the beaches were made out of volcanic ash, it was very difficult not only to go up the terraces, or the beach, because you sank up to your ankles in volcanic ash, and digging a fox hole in that ash was equivalent to trying to make a hole in a sugar bowl. If you depress the sugar in the sugar bowl and withdraw your finger, the rest

of the sugar will cover up that hole. To dig a fox hole there on the beach was just as difficult.

Mr. Atkinson: Did they think that you would be able to dig fox holes before you landed?

Col Trevino: I don't think anyone knew what the beaches would be like. Oh, we had trenching tools. We were ordered to dig in. I was one of those, and I remember, the 3rd Marine Division was not ordered to land on the island until about the 24th of February. Incidentally, that was the day that the flag raising took place. There was still combat materiel scattered up and down that beach. There were disabled tanks and disabled vehicles of all types. There were dead Marines lined up, covered by their ponchos, side by side. A small battalion aid station had been placed there. There were a lot of people getting hit, but by the time we landed the 4th and 5th Divisions had established a beach head. It was not as difficult for the 3rd Marine Division to get ashore, but once ashore it was just as hard as it was for the others to face the onslaught, or the horrible cascades of fire from the defenders. We had been well trained in Boot Camp, and we hated the Japanese.

Mr. Atkinson: I can understand that.

Col Trevino: We understood that they were going to fight to bring glory to the Emperor. They were glad to die for the Emperor. As you probably know, they considered the Emperor to be immortal. Anyway, all of them were willing to die for the Emperor. All of us were unanimous in seeing to it that their wish of dying for their Emperor was met. You really couldn't see the Japanese firing at you. So despite the fact that I was an expert rifleman, it was difficult to see our targets.

Mr. Atkinson: It didn't help out a whole lot.

Col Trevino: No, because you couldn't see them. There were hidden in

the most wonderfully designed pillboxes, caves, tunnels, and bunkers, and the way the pillboxes were connected to each other made it impossible to see them. Furthermore, the very large strongholds that they had, such as the ones they put up facing Hills #382 and #362, which caused most of the casualties in the 3rd and 4th Divisions. The northeastern part of the island held up the 4th Division for several weeks. The 4th Division found it difficult to make very much progress. They assigned the two regiments of the 3rd to the center of the island. The left side of the island was for the 5th. A platoon of the 28th Marine Regiment of the 5th Marine Division were the ones that raised the flag. A lot of us cheered when we saw our flag on top of Mount Suribachi, and it raised our hopes that it had been conquered. That was, of course, premature. They still had a lot of people dug in the caves. They lived underground. After I had been on Iwo it became apparent to us that these people had underground hospitals. They had underground quarters. They had underground places where they stored their motorized units, such as tanks, trucks, jeep-like vehicles, their motor pools. They also had, in the case of the motor pools, large fans to blow out the exhaust fumes. The mess halls were also underground. It was very, very difficult to conquer, or overtake, some of their larger bunkers because they had large mortars and other artillery, and they had very efficient machine guns. They called them Nambu machine guns. They could fire much more rapidly than ours, but the basic infantry weapon was a rifle that was not as accurate as our M-1. We used M-1 Garand rifles and 30 caliber carbines, in addition to Browning automatic rifles (BAR's). Their weapons were quite effective since they could be fired from anywhere on that island.

Mr. Atkinson:

When you hit the beach, what happened?

Col Trevino:

When the platoon that I eventually joined hit the beach there was very little, if any, large artillery fire, thanks to the beachhead made by the 4th and the 5th. It was safe to say that the main area of Mount Suribachi was already cut off from the rest of the island. There were enough Marines at the extreme south part of the island, who in essence, had isolated the Japanese remaining on Suribachi from the bulk of the enemy left to the north, east, and west. We got a lot of support from the Army Air Corps and from Marine pilots and Navy pilots taking off from aircraft carriers. They had bombed Iwo Jima for about 72 consecutive days, before we ever landed. The caves, however, were about 7 or 8 feet of solid rock, so the bombing and strafing didn't hurt the Japanese on Iwo Jima. It took more than small arms fire to reach them. Although I was only a Private, the thing that was the most helpful to us was the 14 inch guns that the Navy had. The strong enemy bunkers could be destroyed only by the large 14 inch Navy guns. The Naval artillery was extremely helpful to us. Our tanks were extremely helpful with their capacity to hit their emplacements. The flame throwing tanks, and the guys who had a tank on their backs, were able to take out a lot of the enemy, but it was the foot soldiers with their Garand rifles and hand grenades who made believers out of the Japs. Very few of the Japanese surrendered.

Mr. Atkinson:

That is what I understand.

Col Trevino:

I would like to tell you a story about one of my most memorable experiences. On/about the 15th day of March, I was a member of a small detachment from Company "C" to go out on a combat patrol. We were only a small details out of "C" Company. We approached a cave and we had an Nisei interpreter. (That is a second generation Japanese American interpreter.) He spoke

fluent English, and of course he was fluent in Japanese. We set up large speakers at the mouth of the cave and he told them in Japanese that we knew they were there. He told them exactly what our senior officer at the time, 1st Lt Goetzman, ordered him to say. I was close enough to hear him say, “You tell them this, and you tell them that. . .” The interpreter faithfully transmitted all of that information into the microphone and the loud speakers facing the cave. The rest of us were deployed around the mouth of the cave with our weapons ready to fire. We were armed with hand grenades, two bandoliers of ammunition, etc, the usual armament that the “grunt” carries in combat. A little while later one of the Japanese soldiers that was inside that cave came out. He was bowing, and he held a Japanese sword in his hands. As he came out bowing, he looked around and he presented it to the officer that was beside the interpreter. I heard Lt Goetzman ask him how many more are down there. I think he said 10 or 12. I don’t remember the precise number, but it was about 10 or 12 guys. They wanted to surrender, but they were afraid to surrender to the Marines because they had heard that anybody that tried to surrender to Marines would be killed immediately. Our officer told the interpreter to tell the prisoner that, if they surrendered, we would treat them according to the principles of the Geneva Convention; that we would treat their sick, we would give them food and water, we would give them medicine. He gave them a brief time for them to make up their minds. If they didn’t do this quickly we would close the cave entrance with demolition crews, The soldier said that he would have to go back and discuss this with the ones who were still in the cave. He said they had three who were very ill. They had been wounded – shot up. He came back in about 10 or 15 minutes, and they all had their hands behind their heads, clasped behind their head, except

three. Those three were unable to do that because they had been almost baked by flame-throwers and their flesh was dropping off their skin. Two of them were blind. They had been blinded by the flame-throwers. They came and sat in the middle of our small contingent of Marines. A lot of the Marines wanted to do away with them, but we had been told that these people may possess some information that might be valuable to our Intelligence Corps, so we withheld our fire. Absolutely no one was to kill any of these prisoners. We locked our weapons. We still had them ready to use at any moment. The thing that was so impressive about this story is that the guy who had brought up the Japanese sword as a token of surrender was very close to me, and he was wearing a knap sack. On the back of his knap sack he held a copy of the Pony Edition of Time Magazine. Most young people today do not know what the Pony Edition of Time Magazine was. The Pony Edition of Time Magazine was published in Hawaii for distribution to all the troops in the Pacific. It was an abbreviated issue of Time that had no ads in it. It had small print, and the magazine itself was short and very thin. It contained exactly the same information as the regular issue of Time, but its small size could quadruple the volume of the magazines that could be sent out to the troops in the Pacific. You'll never believe what was in that magazine! This soldier had the magazine open to the first page, not the cover page, and it had a picture of the flag raising on Iwo Jima! Can you believe that? I didn't notice what the date on the magazine was, but I knew it was in March. This is 60 years ago, and I told some of my friends what I'm telling you now, that I had taken that magazine from this Japanese soldier and the first page had the picture of our flag raising. As a Private you didn't get that type of information. I tell all my friends that I became aware how well we were doing in combat by

reading that magazine.

Mr. Atkinson: Did you ever find out how that Japanese fellow got the magazine?

Col Trevino: Yes, I asked him. I said, “Where did you get this magazine?” He said that he had taken it from a dead Marine. Probably he killed the Marine. I don’t know. Probably to evade the possibility of getting shot on the spot. I gave it back to him in hopes that it would help Intelligence. As the years have passed, I have told that story to my children and to my friends. One of them said, “Gil, that is a good story, but you can’t prove it.” This was about six months ago. So, I got home and thought that guy was right. There is nobody that is going to believe what I’m telling you unless I can get a copy of the magazine that I took from that prisoner. My unit, Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, holds biennial reunions. During these meetings, and I make every one of them now, we get together and lie to each other, drink a lot of beer, cry, tell a bunch of lies, etc., and I told some of my fellow Marines this story. Some of them were luckily in that detachment. We were all from Charlie Company, but not all of the Charlie Company was involved in the taking of these prisoners. I wonder what in the world I was going to do to get a copy of that magazine. I got on the internet and I tried every way in the world that I could to get Time Magazine to tell me how I could get just a copy. I didn’t want anything more than a copy of that Pony Edition that had appeared sometime in March 1945. People want to know how I remembered that it was March. Well, it was very simple, because we were still at war. Organized resistance ended on March 26, 1945. I didn’t leave Iwo Jima until the 6th day of April 1945. So it had to have happened between the Flag Raising and the 26th day of March. I didn’t know the precise date, as I didn’t keep a record of

that. I didn't have a camera. Anyway, I got four or five replies to my letters, answers, and one of them was from a company, whose name is One Million Magazines, or something like that. They replied and said they didn't have any Pony Editions at all, or anything that happened during March of 1945. I went to my Public Library and they said they didn't keep anything like that. They had a copy of Time Magazines since the 50's, but they didn't go back to war time. I wrote a letter to Time Magazine. They referred me to a headquarters they have in Florida. They said they didn't have any copies like the one I was referring to. In the first place, the Time employee didn't even know what a Pony Edition of Time Magazine was. Anyway, eventually they directed me to the Corporation in Rockefeller Center, New York. As a last resort I wrote to them and told them that I found it incredible that such a corporate giant could not have in its archives a copy of the magazine that I sought, the Pony Edition. I heard nothing from them until about six weeks ago. They sent me a copy of the magazine that I had plucked out of this soldier's knap sack showing the picture of the Flag Raising. It was nine days after the flag was raised that Time Magazine was published in Hawaii. This Japanese had that magazine in his knap sack while the war was still going on. Joe Rosenthal's picture, the most famous picture that has ever been taken in combat, was prominently displayed on the first page, but no one had any how famous this picture would become for the Marine Corps and for the whole country. Even Joe Rosenthal didn't know the magnitude of what he had because he sent the negatives by air to Hawaii, for publication. Those people that published it and saw the Flag Raising for the first time didn't know that it was going to evolve into the model for the most famous statue ever dedicated to the Marine Corps in Arlington. Isn't that amazing?

Mr. Atkinson: That is an amazing story. That is a great story.

Col Trevino: I have a Major General here who is my guest. He was my Battalion Commander on Iwo Jima. He is being interviewed by Mr. Cox at this moment. His name is Carey Randal. We have become very good friends over many years. I told him this story. I love him. The look in his eyes convinced me that he didn't believe a word I said. So I showed him that magazine yesterday. He believes it now.

Mr. Atkinson: That is a very interesting story. One of the most unique stories that I've heard.

Col Trevino: After the war I returned to Texas A&M and I became a veterinarian. I was called for the Korean War, but this time I went as an Officer. They released me from the Korean War early in 1954.

Mr. Atkinson: You finished your degree?

Col Trevino: I earned my Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree at Texas A&M in 1952. I served for two years and I got out of the service in 1954. I was commissioned in the U.S. Army in 1951 after serving four years in the ROTC at Texas A&M. My service during the Korean War was the second time I had been in the Armed Forces. The third time they recalled me was in 1959. At that time I was assigned to Walter Reed to be trained as a Pathologist at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Walter Reed General Hospital. In 1965, the Army sent me to get a PhD in Pathology at Michigan State University. I did that and I stayed in the service until 1976 with a total of 28 years service. I am a Full Colonel.

Mr. Atkinson: That is quite a career.

Col Trevino: Then I returned to Texas A&M as a full Professor. I am also a retired Professor from Texas A&M University. I retired again in 1982, having gotten credit for a long time, many years of

service, even though I was not physically present there all that time. In retired from Texas A&M as a full professor in 1982 with 29 years of service. I still haven't retired. I became a "relief" veterinarian. If a Practitioner wants to go on a vacation with his family, he calls a relief veterinarian. I still derive a great deal of pleasure from clinical veterinary medicine. I am still small animal, but my PhD is in Pathology. I derive a lot of pleasure in being a pathologist also.

Mr. Atkinson:

Quite a story – your military career.

Col Trevino:

I have left a lot of blanks there because my Army career was blessed in many ways. I am one of the few people in the 3rd Marine Division that has seen service through three wars. I volunteered to go to Viet Nam, but they said that they didn't want any "old Marine Colonels." They wanted people that could take up arms and go against the Vietnamese. I don't blame them for that. I was getting old by then. I'm 80 years old now. I wrote a letter to President Bush and told him I would volunteer for the War in Iraq, and even though I was old, I could still shoot a rifle. That is another incredible story. After 9-11, in October of 2001, one month after 9-11, I wrote a letter to President Bush and I told him that I couldn't remember any other President that had had the multiplicity of problems that had confronted him – the Afghanistan war, the Iraqi war – medical care, Social Security, Immigration, all of the problems that have since erupted; the presence of anthrax in letters, the economy, etc. Our poor President has had a little black cloud over his head ever since he became President, but I believe in him. I voted for him. I underwent a lot of experiences in the Army as well. The ones that I have told you about, my service in the Marine Corps, are very memorable. One doesn't forget a combat like Iwo Jima easily. I think that battle has inflicted wounds, and scars on everybody's mind that took part in that battle. We suppress them,

but they are still there.

Mr. Atkinson: I suspect that is the reason why most military men from World War II never talked about their experiences.

Col Trevino: That's right. They are painful experiences. General Randal and I and two other people have just toured a part of the museum. When we came to the part of the Pacific War – Pearl Harbor, Wake Island, Midway and Iwo Jima, and other parts in between, you can't help but remember. It makes you sad. I lost a lot of friends on Iwo. Some of them died in front of you.

Mr. Atkinson: That is the terrible part of war.

Col Trevino: Sure. Everybody in the service in World War II used to get \$50 a month. That was our salary as a Private. I think that a 2nd Lieutenant now probably makes about \$25,000 when you figure out all of his allowances – his housing allowance, his uniform allowance, if they still have one. We used to get a uniform allowance. The difference in compensation that we received then and that which is paid to our modern service people today is incredible. Families that lost loved ones in World War II received \$10,000 if the deceased soldier had taken out an insurance policy, which he had to pay for. If he didn't have an insurance policy, that was too bad, they didn't receive anything. As you know now, they are increasing that to \$100,000, \$450,000 for families of our combat dead. I'm glad to see that, but in those days we went to war because we were ordered to go. Nobody came out and said, "I'm going to go to war because I love to go kill people." No, we went because it was our duty to go. I recognize that some of them volunteered for active duty and they went into the service following the treacherous Pearl Harbor attack by the Japanese. It caused a lot of people to volunteer for active duty at that time. I don't think that any soldier can say that he went into the service in hopes of making

General and drawing a very large annuity.

Mr. Atkinson:

That's true.

Col Trevino:

Do you know that Congressmen, even those that are just members of the House for a period of two years entitles them to a retirement income of \$15,000 a month with the privilege of getting treated at Walter Reed or at some of the best bastions of medicine in the armed forces, whereas we, who dedicated 20 or 30 years of service to our country, don't get half that much. We hear a lot of rhetoric from our politicians every 4th of July, Veterans' Day, Memorial Day, and countless talks about "The Greatest Generation," but most of it is just pithy stuff.

Mr. Atkinson:

Yet, you had to basically build your own World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

Col Trevino:

That's right. The veterans are always fighting for every nickle that they get from the Government.

Mr. Atkinson:

They provided the security of the country. They should have taken care of them better than they did.

Col Trevino:

I am one of the lucky ones. I have two independent sources of income. I really feel for my compatriots that were not able to get an education. Those that don't have the medical support that we who have spent a major time of our lives in the service enjoy. Still, I can't go to any post/base installation for medical treatment. I do have Tri-Care, but that leaves a lot to be desired. It is not like the original contract that we made with the Government. We will serve 20 or 30 years in exchange for you giving us medical privileges for perpetuity. No such animal! I'm not bitter about it. I'm very happy that I got back. The only outward sign of a wound that I got on Iwo Jima is that I'm deaf. I had a very large mortar explode very close to me and it ruptured both of my ear drums, gave me a mild concussion, but I never reported to Sick Bay. I had a bad

headache the next day, and I couldn't hear because both of my ear drums were ruptured. I've been wearing hearing aids since my 40's, and without my hearing aids I can't hear. I also performed a job for the Army in 1962 that exposed me to radiation, and as a result of that radiation I got cataracts. They took out the cataracts in both of my eyes and I wear contact lens. Both of these disabilities I received while in the service through no fault of mine. Other than that I'm in good shape.

Mr. Atkinson: Knock on wood! You look in great shape.

Col Trevino: Thank you.

Mr. Atkinson: I know that the country is, whether they realize it or not, owes a great deal of debt to the veterans, especially the World War II veterans. At that time the whole world was at war. My viewpoint is that you guys went out there and saved the world basically and saved the country.

Col Trevino: You are too young to know how those seniors were dismissed from the service following World War II.

Mr. Atkinson: I've read the stories.

Col Trevino: You were given a number of points. One point was given for every month you spent in the service, and one point for every month you spent overseas. You received 12 points for having a child, a dependent. Most of us were so young that we didn't have any children. We had a lot of Gunny's who had families and they hadn't seen their families in over three years. You talk about sacrifices – those guys have made sacrifices – leaving their families behind, their wives with a couple of kids with no ostensible means of support. Those were the people that made far more sacrifices. I was a single man so I didn't have those problems. It was by the Grace of God that we came back, those of us who survived. You know, at Iwo Jima we suffered over 27,000 casualties. Seven

thousand of those were fatalities. Over 20,000 were wounded in the space of 36 days of fighting. There was a very high percentage of casualties because we had 2 2/3 Divisions land on Iwo Jima. I figure there are 20,000 men in one division. So you might say that we had a little over 50,000 Marines because the 3rd Marine Regiment never landed, and out of that number there were 27,000 casualties. That is a lot of casualties.

Mr. Atkinson: Yes, hard to understand.

Col Trevino: I'm very happy to have met you.

Mr. Atkinson: Likewise.

Col Trevino: I'm very sorry that I cannot stay longer with you, but we have to return to San Antonio and be there by 4 o'clock.

Mr. Atkinson: Thank you again for taking the time to give us this interview.

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