

*National Museum of the Pacific War*

*Nimitz Education and Research Center*

*Fredericksburg, Texas*

Telephone Interview with

**Mr. Charles M. Callanan**

Date of Interview: May 14, 2009

# **National Museum of the Pacific War**

## **Fredericksburg, Texas**

### **Telephone Interview with Mr. Charles M. Callanan**

Telephone Interview in progress.

Ed Metzler: This is Ed Metzler. Today is the 14<sup>th</sup> of May, 2009. I am doing a telephone interview with Mr. Charles Callanan. He is at his home in St. Augustine, Florida; I am located in the Museum here in Fredericksburg, Texas. This interview is in support of the Center of Pacific War Studies, archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Historical Commission, and it's for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

Well, let me start out, Charles, by thanking you for spending the time today to share your experiences over the phone with us, and let me just...get you started by having you introduce yourself and tell us when and where you were born and we'll kind of take it from there.

Mr. Callanan: Okay, my name is Charles M. Callanan. I was born in Somerville, Massachusetts on January 20<sup>th</sup>, 1917. I...went to schools there – grammar school and high school. My family moved to Acton, Massachusetts and...

Ed Metzler: And which town was that now?

Mr. Callanan: Acton, A-c-t-o-n.

Ed Metzler: Acton, yeah, yeah, okay.

Mr. Callanan: Uh huh.

Ed Metzler: Now did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Callanan: Oh yes. I had three...three sisters and two brothers.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so...big...big family.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Although, not that big by those...by...in those days.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. Well, we were...my father worked for the post office, and he figured...wisely, that there was a depression going to come because things were buying too high.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: So, he bought a little farm out in the country in Acton.

Ed Metzler: Okay. Now where is that in the...in Mass...Massachusetts? (throat clearing)

Mr. Callanan: Okay (chuckle), Acton is right next to Concord as a matter of fact. It was known as Acton when we had the men who fought the battle in the...the Revolutionary fought war...(unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Had...Lexington and Concord.

Ed Metzler: Okay. Well, that's just a...suburb of Boston now, right?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I guess the city moved...grew out...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...and took it over, huh? And so, your father was actually farming then during the Depression?

Mr. Callanan: No, no. No, my father still worked for the post office.

Ed Metzler: I see!

Mr. Callanan: And we...it was only a small place, only three and half acres actually.

Ed Metzler: Oh okay.

Mr. Callanan: Just enough to raise our vegetables and things during the Depression.

Ed Metzler: Right. So, you always had...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible) and we...the kids...the kids usually farmed out the...the big strawberries and asparagus and...the various things that...and I remember one neighbor across the street had a cow.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And the cow died, I mean, he...he broke his leg so I became the...the caretaker of the cow.

Ed Metzler: Well, we had to keep the cow alive so you...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah!

Ed Metzler: ...so you could have milk, right?

Mr. Callanan: That's right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: So that...that...I was a big hero because we got free milk out of it.

Ed Metzler: My gosh! Those times were different back then, weren't they?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And...let's see, from then...I...I went...after graduating from high school, I took a couple of courses up northeast and...and then I got a job working for this...State of Maryland; I mean, the State of Massachusetts.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Uh, Boston actually...in the MDWSC which was the Metropolitan District Water Supply Commission.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: As a surveyor. And I worked for them for several years.

Ed Metzler: And all of this is before the war broke out then?

Mr. Callanan: That's right.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And I worked for them for a while; then I worked for...then I worked for the Navy before the war...war broke out.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible) inspector at Quadrant (sp?) Point.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you went into the Navy or were you a civilian employee?

Mr. Callanan: I was a civilian.

Ed Metzler: Okay, alright.

Mr. Callanan: And then as a civilian also, I went with the...a group to...to Northern Ireland and Scotland known as the TAF, Temporary Air Facilities, which was a lend-lease deal.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...till 1942, and I came back to this country and...was...well, the draft board said I...I didn't have to join, but I did anyway, and I got into the...uh, when I signed up, I signed up as a...as a Surveyor Engineer, I mean, a Surveyor...Instrument man, and so I ended up as being...in...in Miami studying instruments for the Air Force. But instead of that, I talked them out of it and they sent me back into the construction business, and I ended up in the...cad...cadre to March Field in...uh, '43...let's see, '44, yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay, well, let's...let's back up a little bit because I wanted to hear a little bit more about that Northern Ireland jaunt that you did. Now, roughly when did you go over there; what year was that...'40...'41?

Mr. Callanan: Well, about '40.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and...we went on...we went over with the...uh, crew of...and we worked...worked on the...various projects in...Scotland and Ireland, Northern Ireland mainly the...uh, piers and...uh, for ships...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...and in...Londonderry which is now Derry.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And also part...part of the crew worked on that underground...uh, electrical and surveyor...installation which was the...uh, eyes and ears of the Navy during the war.

Ed Metzler: Oh! I guess that was pretty highly classified back then, wasn't it?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, uh huh. Matter of fact, I didn't know much about it myself.

Ed Metzler: You never did find out much about it (laughter), huh?

Mr. Callanan: I was transferred then to Scotland.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And I worked...built a...a...a small hospital. The three of us over there...we...worked with the...Irish boys that came over from Ireland on temporary...they came for six months at a time and worked, and I...and then we built this...out of...what do you call them...Quonset huts?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, the Quonset huts, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and we built...a hospital.

Ed Metzler: And so, what...you were in just...shall we say, general construction or...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...you doing something specific?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay. Well, let's see, now...your family name; that sounds like that has Irish roots to it.

Mr. Callanan: Oh yes!

Ed Metzler: I was guessing it did. So, what was it like...interacting with the Irish boys when you were over there?

Mr. Callanan: Well (chuckles), I got along good with the Irish boys, but I didn't get along too good with the clergy.

Ed Metzler: What'd you do?

Mr. Callanan: I didn't get along too good with the clergy; the clergy was...well, lambasted us Irish boys coming back over and working for the English.

Ed Metzler: Oh!

Mr. Callanan: And on an island, you know?

Ed Metzler: It was still...a lot of...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words), oh, in those days it was terrible.

Ed Metzler: It really...hum!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, they got...for instance, you went to a...a dance, and if you danced with a Protestant girl, then the Irish girls would have nothing to do with you. If you

danced with an Irish girl, well, the...the English girls  
would...(unintelligible)...Scottish in there.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, the English would have nothing to do with you.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), well that made it kind of tough on you then, didn't it?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and if you sat at a table, that was it, you know? No...nobody could come  
near you...or...the others...

Ed Metzler: Isn't that amazing?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And...I worked...I had a...an Engineer worked with me who...came  
from...he was...graduated from Drexel University in...in Philadelphia.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: But had never had a job until we got over there because they...he, being  
Catholic, he figured they wouldn't hire him.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: So, that...that's just a little (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah! That's...that's real...really interesting; I didn't realize things were that  
tense between the...

Mr. Callanan: Oh, it...it was; at that time, it was...very, very tense.

Ed Metzler: Even if they had a...common enemy in the Germans, they'd still...had a...they  
still had their differences, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Well, they're...(chuckle), you'd go...I never had the occasion, but they told me  
that if you went to Dublin, you ran into both Germans and...and British, all of  
them.



Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. I know the...the British pilots used to fly over every once in a while, and get...and pick up some Irish booze so that they...(unintelligible words); there wasn't much of it in Scotland. It was all sold...to the United States.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), we drank it all up, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), I'll be darned. So, roughly how long were you over there then before you...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible) of '42.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so a couple of years then?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, I was...

Mr. Callanan: And then...

Ed Metzler: Go ahead.

Mr. Callanan: Before that...the reason why I went over there was because...uh, I was going with my...future bride...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...and wanted to make...make enough money to...so we could get married.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so the...ex-patriot pay was going to help a lot, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did they pay you pretty well?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, not too bad, but I got back to this country...found out that things had risen so fast here...with the war on...that...the...the...we...had wasted my time over there.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), so the prices went up as fast as you could earn money, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Dad gum!

Mr. Callanan: And...but anyway, I...I still had a good nest egg.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: But...then...

Ed Metzler: So, you came back, excuse me, Charles, you came back after...the United States was in the war then? Because you came back in '42.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, I came back after Pearl Harbor, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Right. What was the run back across the Atlantic like? Wasn't that pretty tense...for you?

Mr. Callanan: No, I came...it...it was more tense going over.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, the...the...I went over with the...uh, Canadian outfit, uh, let's see, what...what was it called? But anyway, the British...the Germans claimed that they were...never arrived in...in England, but they did.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Callanan: And...but coming back, I came back on...the Q...uh, the Queen Mary.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: And...it...we came back and...and hit the roughest storm ever hit in the Atlantic, well up until that time.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Callanan: It took the bridge off the...or the temporary bridge...off the...upper decks and...and...anyway, we took...took a pretty good battering; it took six days instead of four...four and a half.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I know because she's an extremely fast ship.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And boy, she put the pedal to the metal there.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Reduced the chance of getting torpedoed.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: But that storm really slowed you down, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, but it also kept the submarines away, so (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Callanan: So then...I guess from then I was in the service.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you went into the Navy?

Mr. Callanan: No, I went into the...went into the Army.

Ed Metzler: Oh, you went into the Army, okay.

Mr. Callanan: Uh, into the Army, and...was...went to Barks Field, March Field rather, and they were forming a kind of...a...a battalion to...to, construction battalion.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: So, they needed surveyors and...construction people. And...well, let's see, we...we spent a...a year getting it altogether.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And finally set sail for...South Pacific in...oh, incidentally, in between times, I got married.

Ed Metzler: Ah! A little parenthetical...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, my...

Ed Metzler: ...event there.

Mr. Callanan: My wife, Betty, came out from Massachusetts, oh, I mean, from, yeah, from Massachusetts, and we got married in...

Ed Metzler: And so, where did you get married now?

Mr. Callanan: Hamilton Field in...in...I was there for a while and...at Hamilton Field in California.

Ed Metzler: Okay, okay. So, she came all the way across to get married then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, that was in...long story to that but I won't bother you with that.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), okay, that's not...that's not war story anyhow...is it?

Mr. Callanan: No, it's not.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: Almost turned into one though.

Ed Metzler: So...so...when you went into the Army that was what...mid '42?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, let's see.

Ed Metzler: Roughly.

Mr. Callanan: Actually, it was March of '42 I think.

Ed Metzler: Okay, early '42.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And then you did your basic training out in...

Mr. Callanan: Wait a minute, that was '43.

Ed Metzler: Oh, of '43 then, okay.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, '43, 'cause I didn't get back till '42.

Ed Metzler: Okay, okay. So, what was...what were they basically training you for when you went through, you know, your basic training and your training?

Mr. Callanan: Well, a little bit of everything.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: A little bit of everything. How to build...uh, airstrips, uh, we had practice...laying out airstrips and...and...(unintelligible) construction crews were build...were building and, uh, different types of structures; building temporary bridges and get...getting ready for what...all kinds of action when we got over there.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. So...

Ed Metzler: And so how long roughly did that last? Is that...the usual six weeks or was it longer than that?

Mr. Callanan: Oh, let's see, I got the book right here in front of me. (Pausing to look through book) Well...well, we were in training in California from March 1943 to March of 1944.

Ed Metzler: So, a whole year!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Boy, they must have put you through all kinds of training.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Anything in particular you remember about that one year in...uh, in all of those training exercises that come to mind immediately?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, the different types of...of...uh, the way the survey work was done in California...different from...altogether from Massachusetts.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. It...they were...let's say...let's say they...they boxed things different; they'd...so it was a...a (unintelligible) learning process for me.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and I had a...a...Ser...Sergeant above me...a...a Tech Sergeant, and I was a Sergeant.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...learned quite a bit from him.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And...

Ed Metzler: Were there any other boys from Massachusetts out there in that bunch?

Mr. Callanan: No, matter of fact, (chuckles) that's what I was going to mention. You coming from Texas...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: ...our...our main group were all Texas and Okies.

Ed Metzler: Really (laughter)?

Mr. Callanan: I was (unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: Boy, that must have been a...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible) quite surprised you haven't come across the 1876<sup>th</sup> again.

Ed Metzler: Well, I probably have, and I just...I probably just don't remember it. I've interviewed enough guys now that I can't remember (laughter) most of them. But...so, this is mostly Texans and Okies, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Boy, that must have been a culture shock for you.

Mr. Callanan: Well, (chuckle) it was, and there were a few...few Massachusetts; a few...Easterners but not many. Uh, they were quite a...a group to...that stuck pretty close together but came from Chicago, Illinois area.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, 'cause that was also a...a training ground for...for Engineers and stuff like that, temporary ones.

Ed Metzler: Right. So, did you learn to speak Texan?

Mr. Callanan: Well, I wanted to get along with them.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), was it that hard?

Mr. Callanan: Well, they...they were...they were very clannish.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I could imagine.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And you were a bit of an outsider then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: That's right.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Now did...did you form any...fairly close relationships with any of the guys while you were there for that year or...or not?

Mr. Callanan: Not...not with the Texans, but...I had a very good buddy from...from...Cleveland.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...(unintelligible) Chicago, so we...we had our own little clannish group, I guess...so...

Ed Metzler: Sure, well, that's not unusual.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, after the year basically was up, then it was time to go overseas into the...South Pacific, huh?

Mr. Callanan: That's right.

Ed Metzler: So...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: ...how did that happen; tell me what happened and...



Mr. Callanan: Well, we went to...Camp Stoneman from March Field, and prepared to...embark from there. And...we had a little...training...train...little training on what it's going to be like on a...on a ship and so forth like that.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: But nothing like...what it turned out to be.

Ed Metzler: And the training wasn't all...all it was cracked up to be, huh?

Mr. Callanan: No, 'cause we...took a good month to get from here to New Guinea.

Ed Metzler: Good gracious. Well, what was this on...a troop ship or...or...LST or what?

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words). No, it was on a...I guess you'd call it a converted Liberty ship.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah. And one of my jobs at the time (chuckles), if any...any action came along...from any submarines or...airplanes or anything like that. I was supposed to stand at the...at the gangway with a loaded rifle and make...make sure everybody stayed; nobody...coming...coming out of the hold.

Ed Metzler: Oh, is that right?! (laughter)

Mr. Callanan: Thank god, thank god, it was...it wasn't necessary.

Ed Metzler: And you probably wouldn't have been able to hold them back...probably.

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: I probably wouldn't have been able to shoot anybody anyway.

Ed Metzler: No, that's right; I wouldn't think so. So, they're...fleet was just a...

Mr. Callanan: Well, it was a long trip and of course, we crossed the equator, and...

Ed Metzler: Well, did you do the old shellback game with...?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, after they...they...I forget what the sailors did to us now actually; it was so long ago, but I know one thing...I got soaked. In all my pictures and everything else, I had my wallet...ruined.

Ed Metzler: Oh no.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: But they didn't actually throw you overboard?

Mr. Callanan: Oh no! No.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: There was too many of us.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, that's right (chuckles), that's...

Mr. Callanan: It was a...a battalion.

Ed Metzler: No kidding!

Mr. Callanan: And...yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now, was your equipment and stuff...along with you? I mean, you know, your heavy equipment and stuff or was it just...just personnel?

Mr. Callanan: Oh no, all...all of our equipment was...was... no, we...we picked up the equipment mainly when we got over there.

Ed Metzler: Now, okay.

Mr. Callanan: I came on a separate ship.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Now...and you didn't go through Pearl or anything like that, Pearl Harbor? You...

Mr. Callanan: No, we missed that. We went through...off the coast of...Australia though.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: But we thought we were going to land on Australia, but no, they turned...turned us around and (unintelligible) up to New Guinea.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so they...

Mr. Callanan: In (unintelligible)...(unintelligible), New Guinea. And that was in the...right...middle of the rain...rainy season, and the mud was so thick (chuckles) and so deep, you'd get stuck in it if you got off the road at all. And...uh,...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I thought it was rainy season twelve months out of the year down in New Guinea.

Mr. Callanan: Well, it was...mainly it is but...this was...this was particularly bad.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Callanan: And...Gessler (sp?) and I were...buddy and we had a...sent together, so we...like very body else, we built a little bridge over the...a little ditch with a bridge over it, so the water could run through the tent.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), you...as long as it didn't stay in the tent, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Isn't that something? That must have been a bit of a shock for you because you'd never really been to the tropics before, had you?

Mr. Callanan: No. No, but thank heavens, I got to the tropics, I...I hate cold weather.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so this...this...wasn't so bad after all.

Mr. Callanan: No, that was...a...a blessing in a way.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, so when you landed there, they just took everybody off and...put you in a...two men in a tent, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Well, we were...picked out our own spot actually.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words). They gave us an area and then we said, "This is...this is...the street there and everybody pick their own...tent (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: We weren't organized enough to...so the first night, well, an interesting thing happened there. The...I don't know whether it'd be interesting for you or not, but...

Ed Metzler: Well, tell me (laughter).

Mr. Callanan: The...we used to raise chickens, of course, on the farm.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And when the chickens got sick, you fed them...uh, kind of like (unintelligible words), you...you fed them...dried milk.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And when I opened my ten and one rations in New Guinea, and I stirred my coffee with dried...dried milk, they got violently sick....tried it twice and couldn't do it. The...the dried milk...uh, wouldn't let me drink the coffee, so I...so I've been drinking milk without coffee; I mean, coffee without milk for...ever since.

Ed Metzler: So that converted you to black coffee, huh?

Mr. Callanan: That's right.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), isn't that something?

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible)...and...then we built...we...went out and laid out hangars, temporary hangars, that...that were for the...fighter planes.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And they were big...uh, oh, uh, I forget how long they were, but...an interesting thing there, we built...laid out...carefully...(unintelligible) measurements and tape and stakes and so forth and...(chuckle) along comes B Company and the guy didn't believe our stake, so he...he got a rod that was sixteen foot and ran...ran about...along the ground and put the...his own stakes in.

Ed Metzler: Oh my gosh.

Mr. Callanan: So, when they put the steel up, they found out it wouldn't fit.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: So, I had a...a...little Corporal, Nash, whose...well, all the big...all big brass were all gathered together trying to figure out what to do, so he said...he came to me and says, "I know what to do." And I says, "What do you do?" He says, "Unbolt everything and start in the center and go both ways, and you'll pull it together." And by gosh, it worked!

Ed Metzler: Really?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, he didn't get a medal and neither did I.

Ed Metzler: Well, I'll be darned. It...it's a wonder they even listened to you.

Mr. Callanan: Well, (chuckles) they...they would listen to anything about that.

Ed Metzler: They were desperate, huh? (laughter)

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now did...

Mr. Callanan: But...

Ed Metzler: Go ahead.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Did you have...any problems with diseases while you were there? I mean, I've heard so many stories of guys that got sick when they were in New Guinea and elsewhere in the tropics.

Mr. Callanan: Well, the...I...I told you about this Sergeant Boleman (sp?) would...was my superior.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: He...he got what is known as jungle rot.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Callanan: You know, all...uh, what do you call it? Built up under...his fingers and his...under his arms and legs and so forth.

Ed Metzler: What did it look like?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, just...big sores, you know?

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Callanan: Whatever it's called.

Ed Metzler: Must be kind of like a fungus...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...or something.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, that's the word I was looking for (unintelligible), yeah.

Ed Metzler: Oh, okay.

Mr. Callanan: And so...so he was shipped back to Charleston, South...South Carolina. I think to a special hospital there, and I took over his job.

Ed Metzler: Hum! Well, did they give you pills for malaria and all that stuff?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, they didn't give us...they gave us...(pause)...

Ed Metzler: What...they call it atabrine or something like that?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, atabrine.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, atabrine (unintelligible)...turned everybody's...eyeballs yellow.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you got yellow.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And I heard that you peed black and all kinds of crazy things (laughter) as a result of the...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. Well, that wasn't...true actually. And also, we had a very good...uh, Colonel and Sergeant of our outfit, and he saw...he saw to it that everything was taken care of and made...made sure that we had showers and...and everybody took one (unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: He was...the next one's Colonel.

Ed Metzler: So, you're pretty happy with your...officers then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah. I didn't have any with...matter of fact, on the...on the boat coming over...on the ship coming over...from the States, we had a fellow, a newspaperman, come down from...I guess he was a newspaperman, come down

and started to ask us what we thought about (unintelligible). Oh no, that was, pardon me, that was...a little later when we were going to Moritai (sp?).

Ed Metzler: Oh really?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and he come down and he asked us what we thought about (unintelligible) and his fellows and...and we were going out to do his fighting for him. And (chuckles)...well...well, a lot of us were playing bridge; he stood up and he says, "Listen, buddy, if you want...if you don't get back up on the bridge, get out of our...well, you're going overboard."

Ed Metzler: Is that right? (laughter)

Mr. Callanan: He said, "We don't let anybody...start any stuff."

Ed Metzler: Right, he was just trying to stir something up, wasn't he?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Get a good story going, and make a...make a...news item.

Mr. Callanan: But...we had...a fairly good group of officers. As a matter of fact, uh, when they...when Gessler was later made a...a...Lieutenant, I took over his spot and became a Master Sergeant.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: But that was a little bit later.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Let's see now...

Ed Metzler: How did they feed you down there? I mean, was it pretty good food or...were you eating out of a can or what?



Mr. Callanan: Well, we had...a fairly good mess hall. But...I'd say...(chuckles) I...the only fight I got into...in the whole time in service was...a later date, and I...we...we were celebrating the...uh, oh, victory over...over Germany.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, V...yeah, V-E Day, right.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and...we were all gathered together in the tent...all of us Master Sergeants and...so forth, and (chuckle) we were drinking it up in good shape, and the...head cook came up to me and he said, "I never liked you; you...you always sneered every time you walked through the food line." (chuckles)

Ed Metzler: Every time you did what now?

Mr. Callanan: Walk through the food line.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah?

Mr. Callanan: And I said, "No, I don't...that's just my natural look."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And he says, "Well, I've been wanting to smash your face in." With that he hauled off and slugged me.

Ed Metzler: Did he really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. So, we mixed it up a little bit; everybody broke it up and...

Ed Metzler: I guess he was just in a bad mood or maybe he had too much to drink.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. Well, we all had too much to drink.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I guess that was quite a celebration probably.

Mr. Callanan: I (unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: But anyhow, pretty good mess...mess?

Mr. Callanan: The mess was...not too bad. Now, I'll tell you a story on...on Moritai, uh, not on Moritai, on...New Guinea.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: We were...ran out of food; every...everybody ran out of food. There...there was a couple of ships had been sunk.

Ed Metzler: Uh oh.

Mr. Callanan: So, everybody was out...out of food. And the only thing we had...(recording interruption).

Ed Metzler: Okay, this is side 2. So, you had plenty of bread; plenty of peanut butter and did you say plenty of salmon?

Mr. Callanan: Salmon, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Canned salmon, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. So, we'd get salmon for lun...for breakfast and peanut butter for lunch and...salmon for dinner.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And finally, after several days, he was...he thought he'd experiment, and he mixed the salmon and the peanut butter together; nobody could open their mouth.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), it sounds...not real good combination.

Mr. Callanan: No!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: But it only lasted for a couple of days, and then the food came in.

Ed Metzler: Thank goodness the food ship came in! (Chuckles)

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, but the food...the food, you know, basically, when you look back on it...it wasn't too bad, but we all complained about it at that time.

Ed Metzler: Well, of course, that's part of being in the Army, right?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well now, how long were you there on...New Guinea?

Mr. Callanan: April 20<sup>th</sup> to...August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1944.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you were there for about five months or so.

Mr. Callanan: Five months, yeah.

Ed Metzler: And during that period of time, you're building Quonset huts and...

Mr. Callanan: Well, not so much...(unintelligible)...

Ed Metzler: ...hangars.

Mr. Callanan: ...the hangars and the...

Ed Metzler: Hangars.

Mr. Callanan: ...the airstrips and...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: ...and (pause)...and through...through the mud.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now that's fairly far behind the active front at this point, you know.

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: So...so what are you seeing? Are you seeing...a lot of military aircraft action around there or is it...pretty much just a supply base or what?

Mr. Callanan: No, very quiet.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: It was very quiet as far as that was concerned.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And then we took off from there; we went to Aitape.

Ed Metzler: Where...where now?

Mr. Callanan: Aitape...which is A-i-t-a-p-e...on August 15<sup>th</sup> to...September the 3<sup>rd</sup> which is another part of New Guinea.

Ed Metzler: Oh, okay.

Mr. Callanan: And that's up where...MacArthur's headquarters were.

Ed Metzler: Oh, okay.

Mr. Callanan: And we were getting...we were forming in a...a...an attack force through...go through...Moritai Island, so...

Ed Metzler: So, I guess I've heard stories about the great General's compound upon...was up on a hill or something like that.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah; I never got to see it. No, we weren't...we were so busy getting ready that...

Ed Metzler: So, he didn't come down and shake your guys hands?

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: Didn't make it down, huh?

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), so what kind of things were you working on there?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, mainly preparation...getting in supplies and...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...(unintelligible; checking out...checking all this equipment and ready...uh, and...and...oh, I know one...one thing they...I was in a detail to unload...they used to bring in these...ducks...what...what do you call them.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And they'd be loaded with...

Ed Metzler: Those amphibious vehicles.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, uh hum, and they'd be loaded with...equipment and so forth, and we would unload them. And they came...kept...kept bringing them and bringing them and bringing them, and we kept unloading and unloading...and unloading (chuckles), and finally it was about five o'clock in the morning...just after we'd unloaded the last one, a jeep drove up and the...(chuckle) and the Captain got out and said, "What are you doing with all these supplies?" And I says, "I don't know, they...just...just sent here." And he said, "Well, I'm sorry, Sergeant," he said, "but you're going to have to load them all up again because..."

Ed Metzler: I was afraid you were going to say that (laughter). That made you quite happy I'm sure.

Mr. Callanan: So, I said to him, I said, "You got the wrong person." And he said, "What do you mean I got the wrong person?" I said, "We've been...seven hours unloading this stuff, now pick somebody else...seven hours to load it back up.

We're not...I'm sending my men home." And he said, "You can't do that." I says, "I'm doing it anyway."

Ed Metzler: No kidding!

Mr. Callanan: And he says, "I'm going to call your Colonel." And he called the Colonel, and the Colonel says, "You're damn right, he's sending them home!" He says, "There shouldn't have been...out here more than four of us." So, had to...get another...another company to come in and...load them up again and take them (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Callanan: Well...

Ed Metzler: Frustrating.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And...going from...uh, coming over from...uhm, Moritai, I mean going to Moritai, we were attacked several times by...by...in the air, and...

Ed Metzler: Okay, so...well, you've got basically a...a fleet of supply ships and what have you that go to Moritai then?

Mr. Callanan: Oh, they were a...regular armada.

Ed Metzler: An armada?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah, 'cause this was an invasion.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, now refresh my memory on where Moritai is. I'm...I'm...plead ignorance on that one.

Mr. Callanan: Okay. (Pause)...You heard of the New Hebrides Island?

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah, oh yeah, so they're in the New Hebrides?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Oh.

Mr. Callanan: Right on the equator.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, how long did it take you to get there? Is that a pretty short...jump or...?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, it was fairly short, and...we were there from August 15<sup>th</sup> to September 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Ed Metzler: So, a couple of weeks.

Mr. Callanan: No, pardon me, that's when I was in Aitape...Aitape, yeah. But...pardon me, got the wrong...got the wrong page again. Moritai we were...were there from September 15<sup>th</sup> to December the 31<sup>st</sup>.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: And...

Ed Metzler: So...

Mr. Callanan: But we...

Ed Metzler: So, you were there for three and a half months.

Mr. Callanan: Oh, we were there longer than that.

Ed Metzler: Well, what did you do when you were there; what was the task?

Mr. Callanan: Okay, the first thing we did...was make a survey and find out the best spot, and we built an airstrip...an airstrip on the...on the beach.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Callanan: On the...matter of fact, it was, not...not the beach, it was a...up...a palm grove; it belonged to Palm...Palmolive Oil Company actually.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Callanan: Had to...had to count all the trees so we'd know how many...we knocked down.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, they have huge plantations of...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...palm...palm trees, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And...we built that, and that was a rush job because they were flying...starting to fly...bombing missions into...uh, oh...(pause) one of the islands...what...what was the big island of...let's see.

Ed Metzler: Uh, was this...Saipan or...

Mr. Callanan: No, no, the other way.

Ed Metzler: ...now...the Philippines?

Mr. Callanan: The other way; it was...thousands of Philippines unless...I'm trying to think of it. Anyway, they...they had to...have a refueling stop.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And so, and then we built a...a beautiful...uh, airstrip that...that (unintelligible words). It was a...beautiful job (unintelligible words), and...it was all coral.

Ed Metzler: Well, I was going to...won...I was going to ask what kind of materials you used to build those airstrips.

Mr. Callanan: Well, in the...in the...on the airstrip on...on...on the...uh, (pause)...through the palm grove...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...that was pretty soggy, so, that was cov...all covered with pierced plank (unintelligible). Did you know...anything about pierced plank?

Ed Metzler: No, tell me more.



Mr. Callanan: Okay. It was a plank that was designed for...with interlocking...things so that you could lay a mat...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...and...on top of soggy ground and like that...and...and the planes could land on it, and (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Right. Now did you cover that with anything?

Mr. Callanan: No, it was...they landed right on the...

Ed Metzler: Right on the surface.

Mr. Callanan: ...right on the surface.

Ed Metzler: Okay, alright.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And you called it pierces pipe, is that what you called it?

Mr. Callanan: Yes, pierced plant.

Ed Metzler: Spell...uh...

Mr. Callanan: Pierced...uh, just because it was all holes in it and so forth.

Ed Metzler: Oh, pierced pipe, okay, I'm with you now.

Mr. Callanan: It...was pierced plank.

Ed Metzler: Yep, yep, yep.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Hum, but the...now the...now the other one that you were talking about...where you used the coral, that's where you had a firmer ground to build on.

Mr. Callanan: Yes, that was up on the heights. This island was in two levels.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And the...the...the coral...was...I mean, the whole strip was coral and the revetments and everything else.

Ed Metzler: And so...when you get...

Mr. Callanan: They were...they (unintelligible) became a real base.

Ed Metzler: So, you could actually just, I guess, just quarry the...the coral formations there on the island and grind it up and then...lay it or how'd that work?

Mr. Callanan: No. It...well, we did that...some of that to fill in some spots.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: But mainly, it was scraping and clearing.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you just used the existing substrate that was there in place.

Mr. Callanan: Right.

Ed Metzler: And so, are you driving heavy equipment, you know, caterpillar...?

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah. Matter of fact, about that time I rolled over...(unintelligible words) (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: You did what?

Mr. Callanan: I rolled a palm; it was...it was never published because they...they said I didn't have the...the proper (unintelligible) in it.

Ed Metzler: Oh, darn!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. But anyway, the...

Ed Metzler: Now did you guys have any access to beer or alcohol or any of that kind of stuff while...?

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: And was that legal or illegal?

Mr. Callanan: Well, it was...legal beer; we got to have...around that time we weren't getting any, no.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: It wasn't until we got to the Philippines...

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: ...Philippines that (unintelligible)...

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: ...started getting our supply of beer.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And...

Ed Metzler: I've heard great stories about all the innovative ways of brewing some sort of a...you know, concoction out of whatever they'd get their hands on.

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah, they...they made it in New Guinea; used to take coconut and...mix it with sugar and...ferment it and...bury it in the ground for a couple of days and then take it out and drink it.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: But I never tried it; I...

Ed Metzler: Doesn't sound very appealing.

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Callanan: But...if you...if you wanted a drink, I guess you'd drink anything.

Ed Metzler: I guess if you want it bad enough.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. So, after you did the landing strips in Moritai, then where did you go?

Mr. Callanan: From there...we went to the...Philippines.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so the Phil...so, was this while the Philippines were still being liberated or was it secure when you got there?

Mr. Callanan: Well, it...we...we landed there on...D+4.

Ed Metzler: Oh, my goodness! Where, in Leyte?

Mr. Callanan: In Leyte.

Ed Metzler: Oh, D+4!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: You were pretty right...you were just right close to the front line there!

Mr. Callanan: That's right. And...that's where we built another pierced plank; that was...one of my...proudest moments. Uh, they wanted it built immediately for...so...that they had the fighter planes that some place to land.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And the only place there was...uh, rice paddies.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: So, they...Maj...Major and myself...we said we...we had to come up with another plan, so...and they wanted it done in a day!

Ed Metzler: Oh no (chuckles)!

Mr. Callanan: Or...two days at the most. So, we come up with a plan that...you couldn't put lights on because the...uh, the...the Japs were still flying over us.

Ed Metzler: Right, they still had aircraft and were...around in the air.

Mr. Callanan: So...what we did was we...he took a...a...his jeep and I took my weapon carrier and we put them at the...each end of where we were going to...wanted to make the airstrip.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And then he left me with a...with his jeep and another and a driver and what we'd do is we'd...put the lights on and we started to pull the graders, bulldozers, would move from one...set of lights to the other set of lights and back and forth and so forth. So, we'd keep moving them over until we had the...the whole area graded.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And we had a...we did it all in one night.

Ed Metzler: Man! And did you have any problem with enemy aircraft?

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: That's good.

Mr. Callanan: And the next day...went...the whole...the whole she-bang, even the secretary and the office manager and everybody was out there with pierced planks, laying pierced planks.

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Callanan: And the...the job was done in two days.

Ed Metzler: Man!

Mr. Callanan: Which was quite a feat.

Ed Metzler: I was going to say! That sound like a...heck of a...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...fast...assembly.

Mr. Callanan: And then we...then we proceeded down with the 7<sup>th</sup>...uh, let's see...37<sup>th</sup> Division into...uh, Manila.

Ed Metzler: Okay. Now, uhm, okay so...well, can we go back to Leyte for just a moment.

Mr. Callanan: So...

Ed Metzler: Were you...were you on Leyte for a fairly brief period of time then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: I mean, I don't need the exact dates; I'm just trying to keep things in...scale here.

Mr. Callanan: (Pause), uh, oh. On...on Leyte, we...we were there for...uh, a long time actually.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: 'Cause it took a...it took a fair amount of time as I remember to actually secure Leyte.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: It was a lot of jungle fighting and all this kind of stuff.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, well that's...we were...as I said we...we followed the 37<sup>th</sup> Division.

Ed Metzler: Right. Now...

Mr. Callanan: And...building roads and (unintelligible); fixing up things as we went.

Ed Metzler: Now describe to me your landing when you went in. That was...uh, on the fourth day after the, you know, the first landings.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh, was there any...resistance that you experienced or was it smooth sailing or what?

Mr. Callanan: Not...not...not in Lingayen (throat clearing); we landed in the Lingayen Gulf.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And there was...no resistance at all. And we...pulled in alongside of another...aviation battalion and...by...fortunately we...were picked to go south with the 37<sup>th</sup> Division and they were picked to go north with the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And that's where all the fighting was.

Ed Metzler: So, they really got roughed up, huh?

Mr. Callanan: They really got roughed up, yeah. They...

Ed Metzler: Okay, so this is up on the big island of Luzon?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, uh hum. And you went south with the 37<sup>th</sup> headed to Manila and Clark Field and what have you?

Mr. Callanan: Right. Well, not my...not...not March Field; that was in the States.

Ed Metzler: I thought it was Clark Field.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, it was Clark Field.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: But...

Ed Metzler: So, what...so what was that like? Was that pretty easy duty there or...?

Mr. Callanan: Oh no, that was...

Ed Metzler: Tell me about it.

Mr. Callanan: Okay, from there, uh, we were...practically twenty-four hours a day in...uh, and then finally we got to...well, I just don't know how to describe it. Uh, we...we...our battalion did very little fighting.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: But we were back-up on...on a lot of stuff.

Ed Metzler: Well, you weren't supposed to do the fighting.

Mr. Callanan: Right.

Ed Metzler: You were supposed to do the building.

Mr. Callanan: Right. And...finally they got through Manila, and...uh, we built a bridge across the Pasig River.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And that was a...that...that was the closest I came to getting killed.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well tell...

Mr. Callanan: Gessler and I were standing on the...surveying the...for the...wreckage and how we were going to have to build a...a new Bailey bridge across there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, so the old bridge had been...

Mr. Callanan: Demolished, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...wiped out, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And...yeah, all of a sudden, we heard *ruh-ruh-ruh-ruh*; it was the whirling of a shell coming, so we both hopped up; dropped off the...brid...uh, edge of the bridge...



Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: ...onto the seat of the bridge which was about six foot...six foot or four foot below or something like that.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: And...ducked down waiting for the explosion, and it just turned out to be a dud. But that was the closest I came.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's good that they...had a dud there, otherwise, you might not be here, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Right. And...

Ed Metzler: So, how did you feel after that happens? Does that kind of scare you or...did it bother you at all or...?

Mr. Callanan: Well, I had...then I needed...a volunteer to go over to the other side where the fighting was on there...in walled city; the walled city was on the other side of the bridge.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: And everybody looked at me and said, "You go, Sergeant."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: So, I went.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And across the (unintelligible) bridge...across the...which is where the infantry and...uh, I...get about half way across and a dead Jap pass...passed underneath me...

Ed Metzler: You're kidding!

Mr. Callanan: ...yeah, so...

Ed Metzler: Just floating in the water, you mean?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And then a couple more went by. But the...the post office was on the other side, and that...they had terrible...fighting there.

Ed Metzler: Really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And...had a lot of snipers around.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: So, we had to be very...very careful. But I got to the other side and we...were able to get...get a ride around in sector...districts across that we would need...for Bailey bridge parts.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: So, we...went back across the swaying bridge again and...

Ed Metzler: And so, did you actually build the...the new bridge across the water there?

Mr. Callanan: Well, we built a Bailey bridge across there.

Ed Metzler: Which is what, a floating bridge, huh?

Mr. Callanan: No, it's a...it's a...rigid bridge.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Uh, above the water, and...it...it was invented by a British...uh, and it comes in sections.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And the...the sections...all bolt together. Now, you can build it, uh, it has a...you can build it...uh, three deep. In other words, three...what's...well, let's put it this way. You know the...the...side of a bridge...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...usually is one straight line. Well, the Bailey bridge was built so that you could have three sides...three sides of it and go three high...depending on how long the bridge was or how much weight we were going to have.

Ed Metzler: I see.

Mr. Callanan: And...and the floor was built just like the...the...bridge deck was constructed so that you could build it...build it up depending on how much weight you were going to...

Ed Metzler: Alright.

Mr. Callanan: And, it had a nosecone on it. I mean, you built a nosecone on it so that...you keep building it and pushing it out across the river until it...the nosecone reaches the other side, then they'd pull the nosecone up and get it...and the rest of the bridge...I don't know if I can explain it. I...

Ed Metzler: No, I...I think I can picture that; kind of locks into place then on the other side.

Mr. Callanan: Right.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Right. And...so...and...we had a sign on the...on the bridge there, "No (unintelligible) 1876 (unintelligible),"...I forget now what the sign said, but it's in the book here some place.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), well, that was something to be proud of.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And the...

Ed Metzler: Did any of the...your guys get hurt or injured or...killed or anything?

Mr. Callanan: We lost...we lost, uh, a few.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Not very many.

Ed Metzler: What snipers or just accidents or what?

Mr. Callanan: Well, mainly accidents.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: But...one...one boy...he was a...his brother...he got notice that his brother got killed, and he went kind of berserk and...loaded up his gear and took off, so he killed a few Japs.

Ed Metzler: Oh no.

Mr. Callanan: Then they got him. Well, that's the...sometimes you lose your head.

Ed Metzler: Yep, sometimes you just lose it.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, did he ever come back?

Mr. Callanan: No, he was killed.

Ed Metzler: He was bound to have been, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. But he was a...he was the only...I think he was about the only one killed in combat.

Ed Metzler: Hum.

Mr. Callanan: The rest of them were...accidents or something. And...but then...we continued south. After Manila we continued south; I think it was the First Cavalry that we was camping by that time.

Ed Metzler: First Cavalry?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...we got to...(pause), oh, one spot on the river...only...you know that party I was telling you about the...where the cook took...took a swing at me?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Okay, that's where it occurred, 'cause...

Ed Metzler: Okay, so that's getting into May of '45...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...because that's when Germany surrendered.

Mr. Callanan: Right. And...uh, I...so I wasn't feeling too good the next morning.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Callanan: And decided I was going to sleep in 'cause we just arrived there the night before.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And...a couple of my boys came and said...woke me up and said, "The maids and the Lieutenant are waiting for you, Major Murill (sp?) and his Lieutenant were waiting for us down at the river; we have to build a bridge across it."

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Callanan: So you know the shape I was in. But anyway, they got me sobered up a little bit and...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: ...and put me in the station wagon and...I says, "How long they been here?" He says, "Oh, god, they've probably been there an hour and a half waiting for you."

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle), oh no!

Mr. Callanan: So, anyway...we driving down towards the bridge and I said, "Hey, wait a minute. Take this path over here," and the fellow in the station wagon says, "That only goes into the jungle." I says, "Take it." He says, "They're waiting for you down there." I says, "Take it!" So, he went in there, and there was two bridge abutments...one...one on each side of the river and was all covered by the jungles.

Ed Metzler: They were truck...covered by what?

Mr. Callanan: The jungle.

Ed Metzler: Oh, so it...

Mr. Callanan: ...(unintelligible words), built...

Ed Metzler: ...uh, grown over then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Grown over. So, I tell him I says, "Alright, now let's go talk to the Major." So, we get back to town and talk...to the...and the Major says, "Where you been, Sergeant?" And I said, "Went up there (unintelligible) at the bridge...bridge abutment...waiting for you."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And he says, "What bridge abutment?!" And I says, "Come on, I'll show you." So, we drove up there and he looked it and I don't know if you ever saw Edward R. Murrow on the television, newscaster?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Okay, well this...this fellow looked remarkably like him.

Ed Metzler: Really?

Mr. Callanan: But I didn't know whether he was related or not.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: But anyway, he...he sat down on the bri...on the edge of the bridge abutment and he says, "Sergeant, come here, sit down." So, I went over and sat down, and he said, "I've heard about the luck of the Irish," but he says, "this is the first time I've ever really seen it!"

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), so you...he knew you got lucky, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. So...so, we...we built the bridge in...in less than a...I think it was (unintelligible) months, and if it had to build a, you know, a...pile bridge and so forth, we built one of those Bailey bridges for that...what I was talking about before.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: We built a Bailey bridge across, yeah. But the...

Ed Metzler: Now, this was south of Manila then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: That...was south of Manila.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: I forget the...spot.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: But it was a deep gorge and a...a nice...a nice spot for a Bailey bridge not too far across, so...

Ed Metzler: Did you guys ever have trouble ever getting sufficient supplies? I'm just sitting here picturing all of this building that you guys were doing, and all of the materials it takes to do it.

Mr. Callanan: We had a...we had, our C Company made...was...had a sawmill; had all the equipment to...uh, let's put...let's put it this way...to build things. B Company was a labor force, more or less.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And A Company was the...uh, the...the experts, I mean, the...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: ...the fellows that knew how (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: So, you were in the A Company?

Mr. Callanan: No, we...we...we were Headquarters Company.

Ed Metzler: Oh, you were Headquarters...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...Company?

Mr. Callanan: Which was a small outfit (unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: Okay, okay.

Mr. Callanan: We'd...and...

Ed Metzler: So, were you still on the Philippines then when the Japanese surrendered and the war was over or what?

Mr. Callanan: I...I know I...I think I was...was...let's see; I came home in...Nov...uh, December of '45.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And the war was over in the...and the surrender signed in early September.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.



Ed Metzler: So, you were still in the Philippines. Did you go straight home from the Philippines?

Mr. Callanan: Yes, I...I went...our outfit continued on...went up there 'cause most of the fellows hadn't been in...but I had just enough points to get...to make it to (unintelligible)...

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: ...to come back home.

Ed Metzler: Alright, so you never...had to go to Japan or...

Mr. Callanan: No.

Ed Metzler: ...or anywhere else, hum.

Mr. Callanan: But funny, one other interesting thing that...in...building on that...being south of Manila after...we went...investigating roads and bridges, you know, and the wall was...(recording stopped momentarily).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, okay, this is tape 2, side 1; go ahead Charles, sorry.

Mr. Callanan: Uh huh. So, we...always at second roads and bridges and so forth, and this...this one time they told me to check several bridges and they marked them on the map. So, see if they were still standing and so forth, so I...me and my boys, we climbed in the station wagon, a...a weapons carrier and we started down the road and we...checked them off and they were all standing...still standing, so...we...coming back again, and we hear some shooting in front. So, we slowed down and then it got quiet and then finally we saw a...a soldier up ahead...waving; he says, "Come on," (chuckles), so we came around the corner and there was a big tank (unintelligible); they'd just had a battle there and

they...they had wiped out a...about four...forty Japanese. We...we were actually behind the lines checking those bridges.

Ed Metzler: Oh my gosh!

Mr. Callanan: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: And didn't know it!

Mr. Callanan: Didn't know it and...didn't...bother us, so...

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Callanan: But we almost got it coming back by...by just coming...if we'd come too fast, we'd have gotten in the middle of the fight.

Ed Metzler: So, you can say you were behind enemy lines!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), my gosh!

Mr. Callanan: Well...but...where the mines were at that phase was...

Ed Metzler: It's hard to know probably.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Did you...

Mr. Callanan: And I was on the...on the unpleasant side.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I bet that felt uncomfortable.

Mr. Callanan: Well, no, on...on the un...unpleasant side we saw some horrible things that the...that...happened on both sides.

Ed Metzler: Oh really? Like what?

Mr. Callanan: Well, for instance, there was one town that we can across...came into...where the...men had...gone into the...into the jungle and became, you know,

(unintelligible words)...what do you call it? Were...were fight...fighting the Japs for (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And so they gathered, the Japs gathered all the...women and children and all the rest of them into the...little town hall and so forth like that and burned the place down.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Callanan: And then shot them if they tried to get out.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Callanan: That was...one terrible thing.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Now...

Mr. Callanan: And on the other side, we saw some Japs that had been captured and they...had their fingernails torn out; their eyeballs pulled out and everything; their teeth pulled out and then marched out to shoot them.

Ed Metzler: And who do you think did that?

Mr. Callanan: Uh, Filipinos.

Ed Metzler: I was going to say 'cause they didn't...there was no love lost between them and the Japanese.

Mr. Callanan: Oh (unintelligible words), and we were there...well, when they...when they...freed the...American prisoners in...in Manila which was (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah! And boy, it was...it was...(unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Now was this like the San Tomas [s/b Santo Tomas] prison camp?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, that's it, that's it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: But...

Ed Metzler: So, you were there? Tell me what you mean by "there." Would...you actually see it?

Mr. Callanan: Well, we were...we were outside on the road when they...when they released them and...and they came out and (unintelligible), and a bunch of scarecrows you might say.

Ed Metzler: Really? Tell me...tell me about...what you saw.

Mr. Callanan: Well, we...they went by so fast; they were waving and so forth, but they...they all...they...they looked...they looked clean, and...and their clothes looked...looked fairly decent.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: But they were so...all thin and emaciated, and...that's...that's about all I can say about it, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum. Yeah, a lot of those were civilians that were in the prison.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: You know, American civilians who happened to be there when it fell to the Japanese. Yeah, and I've heard some horrible stories about...some of the things they went through. Uhm! Well, speaking of the Filipinos, now, did you have much exposure to the local population or much interaction with any of them?

Mr. Callanan: To get back to...uh, Lingayen Gulf...

Ed Metzler: Oh okay.

Mr. Callanan: ...on that...when we were...laying that pierced plank and so forth like that...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...after that, we...were invited to a...a Filipino party. Oh boy, we had one fellow in our outfit who was a Filipino.

Ed Metzler: Oh!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and he had...he invited me and a couple of others to...to go to his house and they found out that my wife had just had a baby.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: So, they gave me a...a...a Hawaiian, I mean, a Filipino...uh, dress, baby, a baby dress for a new baby.

Ed Metzler: Oh really?!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. It was beautiful! All...all made out of gold braid and all that sort of stuff.

Ed Metzler: Really?! That was very kind of them.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. So, I sent it home to my wife and they got a big kick out of it because it...our baby was...the one who was born...weighed nine pounds and something.

Ed Metzler: Oh, my goodness!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, so he was a big buster! And...so they passed it around the soldiers, a couple of the relatives and somebody's...never got it back again.

Ed Metzler: Oh! So, you don't know where it ended up?

Mr. Callanan: No, don't know where it ended up, no.

Ed Metzler: But...but you...

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: ...was it big enough to even get on your baby at one...

Mr. Callanan: No, no...

Ed Metzler: You never could use it? (chuckle)

Mr. Callanan: ...never...never...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: ...no, it was real tiny.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned.

Mr. Callanan: And so, we had...very good relations with...with the...the Filipinos actually.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, well I'm sure they indeed did...look as you guys as their liberators.

Mr. Callanan: Some of them did; some of them...well, we had...uh, a couple...a couple of...(chuckles)...it's funny, we were buying jewelry. You know jade was the big thing over there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And we bought a couple of pieces of jade, and we...bargained and bargained and bargained and...the...fellow...trying to bargain with these..., "I wish the Japs were back; they paid better than you guys!"

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: I can't understand that 'cause they only...got a bowl of rice and a couple of fish to...

Ed Metzler: Yeah (laughter). But did they speak English...most of the Filipinos?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, a lot of them did, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay, alright (laughter).

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words).

Ed Metzler: Well now, were you able to stay in...pretty close contact back...stateside during this period of time? I mean, here you are with a pregnant wife and everything.

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah, yeah. The Red Cross was...very good about that. They...they...notified me when the baby was born, but that's...that's about it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. But you were able to write letters and that kind of stuff?

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. After they were censored...then they...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, after they cut holes in them (laughter).

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah. But my mother was the amazing one. She knew...she'd tell my daugh, uh, my wife...exactly where I was.

Ed Metzler: Well, how did she know that?

Mr. Callanan: I don't know, sixth sense or something!

Ed Metzler: Yeah, that...that motherly sixth sense, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned.

Mr. Callanan: She...she knew; she knew where I was and...just from the...from the tone of the letters, I guess. On the...or following it on...oh, she was a great one for following it on the maps and so forth.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, what do you think about the...what are your feelings towards the Japanese...after, you know, seeing...some of the things that they did and, you know, knowing that they were the enemy and all that kind of thing?

Mr. Callanan: Well, I do...(unintelligible); I thought they were terrible, especially as far as the cruelty and so forth.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: But then I came to realize that none of the Asian people seem to have any respect for...for life at all anyway.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, something not like what we Westerners look at it.

Mr. Callanan: No, no. That's why I get a big kick out of what a big fight it was...waterboarding and so forth like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: One day we'll realize that we're...the rest of the world don't...look at things the same as we do.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah. Although I...maybe that's a reason to be proud, but it may also work against us.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So...

Mr. Callanan: And...but...you got...you got to admire those things that they do. For instance, the Jap...as I said, the Japanese would...would have a couple of handfuls of rice and a...and a couple of dead fish and...or frozen fish or dried fish, and...be able to last for a week and so forth like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.



Mr. Callanan: And we couldn't travel without our mess tents.

Ed Metzler: Right. Yeah, they were *tough*, no question about it.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. Although our...I...I have great admiration for our fighting men, too...

Ed Metzler: Oh sure!

Mr. Callanan: ...because, you know...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, they didn't have mess tents either up there on the front lines (laughter).

Mr. Callanan: No, no.

Ed Metzler: No, I know it was tough on both sides. Well, when you...when the war was over and you came back home, what would...would you come back on...what...a troop ship or what?

Mr. Callanan: Yes, we came back on a...on a...another LS...not a...not a Liberty ship...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...yeah.

Ed Metzler: And that was towards the end of the year then, huh?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah, that was in December.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: We came into Seattle.

Ed Metzler: Into Seattle?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, what...

Mr. Callanan: And that's...that's when I got mad at the Red Cross.

Ed Metzler: Why is that?

Mr. Callanan: (Chuckles), we came from the temperature of a hundred and five degrees in Manila...to a temperature of about thirty-four degrees in...in Seattle.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), it's a little different up there, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And they...they met us at the...at the...ship...was ice cold milk and...and donuts.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: Everybody said, "To hell with the milk, where's the coffee?!"

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah, right!

Mr. Callanan: (Unintelligible words)

Ed Metzler: The coffee and hot soup!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, they said, "We figured you hadn't had milk for so long, we...,"..., "Who...who likes milk...whatever!"

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: "Give me a...give me a shot and a beer!"

Ed Metzler: Yeah, where's the beer?! (laughter) Well, how did it feel coming back to the good ole United States?

Mr. Callanan: Well, well...felt wonderful.

Ed Metzler: I'll bet.

Mr. Callanan: And they treated us *very* good. The...when we got through the...the camp, uh, they had a...a real good meal. Of course, none of us were used to eating that big a meal anyway.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: And...but anyway, we really enjoyed it. And they...people treated us...uh, I don't...no complaints.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Our...our trip back from the...from the States, I mean, from the...Seattle to...Fort Devens was quite an experience because we traveled in wooden boxcars.

Ed Metzler: Oh, my gosh!

Mr. Callanan: Now we, unfortunately, I mean, that's...not boxcars, uh, wooden...Pullman cars.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: I think, but they had one...steel...uh, that was a troop train car. I don't know if you know...know what they were, but they...they were all...all...bunks.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.

Mr. Callanan: You know, three-tier bunks and...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: ...and...and so...they wanted me to take my...my group into one of the...Pullmans. And I said, "No," I said, "whose...whose in...have...have the...metal car?" And they said, "You want it? Nobody wants it." And I says, "I do." So, I took them in there; all...all my boys grumbled, but after they got in there, they found out the difference 'cause...'cause you could lounge around and do whatever you wanted all the time.

Ed Metzler: Right, and lay down and...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And the...and the Pullmans...you had to sit up and...and...especially when we get to Chicago where we had to change...change trains.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: Because the...the wooden cars couldn't go on the...New York tracks; they had to be steel cars on the New York...

Ed Metzler: Oh!

Mr. Callanan: ...and so they...we had to lay over there waiting for another...change of cars.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Callanan: And we were, a little side story, we were staying...sitting on a siding and just down the road we could see over the fence, we could see the beer...beer sign flashing. So, one of the fellows says, "I'm going over the fence and get some...(unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And I said, "Two (unintelligible?). He said, "No."

Ed Metzler: You said what now?

Mr. Callanan: I said..., "That's alright as far as I'm concerned, but I think what you ought to do is go...with four or five of you at one time, and then four or five of you come back and then another four...or five go, but bring back some but don't...don't stay there and drink." And they said, "That's a good idea," so he said. They come back...and...and everybody bought some, everybody was nice, and about that time...a...Lieutenant come in, no, pardon me, a Captain come in and he says, "I understand you guys have...a bunch of boys...a bunch of group going over and getting some booze." And I said, "Yes sir, what do you want?"

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: And...he looked at me and he said, "Now that you mention it," he says, "I'll take a Scotch if anybody's got a..."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: So, we all sat around and had a good time.

Ed Metzler: Oh my gosh!

Mr. Callanan: But...well, if the war was over, you know...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: ...there's no sense in putting us on...

Ed Metzler: Time to relax a little bit.

Mr. Callanan: ...(unintelligible), put us on report for that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: So, everybody was nice when we got back.

Ed Metzler: Well, you guys built a long of things out there, and were a critical part of the team.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: And...

Mr. Callanan: I'd like to send you...to see this book.

Ed Metzler: I would really like to see it...uh, how can...how can we arrange that?

Mr. Callanan: Well, I can...put it in...in a...envelope, a padded envelope.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: And...send it to you.

Ed Metzler: And then we'll send it back to you when...

Mr. Callanan: Yes.

Ed Metzler: ...when we've looked at it?

Mr. Callanan: Well, actually I think you might keep it.

Ed Metzler: Well, do you want to...do you want to...donate it to the Museum and have us just put it in the library?

Mr. Callanan: That's good.

Ed Metzler: That'd be great!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: That will work! And, so...why don't you mail it to us here at the Museum and then I'll get a chance to look at it and then we'll go ahead and...donate it in your name to the Museum.

Mr. Callanan: Very good.

Ed Metzler: That's good! Let me...have you got a pencil handy?

Mr. Callanan: Wait a minute. I think I've got some paper here, yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Callanan: I got to...

Ed Metzler: And I don't remember whether I put...a mailing address on that or not?

Mr. Callanan: 340<sup>th</sup> (?)

Ed Metzler: Yes! East Main Street.

Mr. Callanan: East Main Street.

Ed Metzler: Fredericksburg...78624.

Mr. Callanan: Right.

Ed Metzler: Great! If you'll send that to my attention, and then I'll make sure that...first I'll sneak a look at it because I'll get to be the first...

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ...and then I'll go ahead and put it into the library.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: That'd be super!

Mr. Callanan: 'Cause I'd...I know it...it will eventually get thrown away by somebody.

Ed Metzler: That's true.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, let me go ahead and finish this tape, and...is there anything else that we need to talk about, Charles, while I've got you on the line with regard to your World War II experiences?

Mr. Callanan: Oh...

Ed Metzler: Have we pretty well covered the waterfront or is something else come to mind?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, the trip out of San Francisco.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, well tell me about that.

Mr. Callanan: (Chuckles), the...the only...the only compliment I got in the whole war. We come...come out and...I don't know if anybody else mentioned about what the...when you come out...under the Golden Gate Bridge, you get these swells, and...everybody...everybody on the ship was practically sick.

Ed Metzler: Right, that first...really open ocean, yeah.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, and...and it's got that constant swells.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...uh, we were all standing out in the cold in...in a mess line...waiting to eat there. And we got to the gangway that goes out...down into the...and...as soon as the smell of the food and so forth hit everybody...they...they were all sick.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Callanan: There was a mess, oh what a mess!

Ed Metzler: Oh, my gosh.

Mr. Callanan: So, for some reason or another, I'd been across a couple of oceans, so I...didn't bother me too much.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you'd seen the North Atlantic, so you could handle this!

Mr. Callanan: Right. So, I stepped...stepped through it all and went up to the chow line, and there was only one cook, one guy and my...in the line, and he looked at me and he says, "Buddy, the Navy could use men like you!" (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah! My gosh!

Mr. Callanan: So, he...I got...I got...big kick out of that.

Ed Metzler: You got all the food you could use, too!

Mr. Callanan: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Well, yeah, that's a reason to be proud. But most of the guys got over it, but I...I've heard enough stories from the sailors about, you know, those first...few experiences when you're out in the open ocean.

Mr. Callanan: Oh yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: And some guys never get over it.

Mr. Callanan: No, that's true! Some...some people never get over that sea sickness, no.

Ed Metzler: Yeah. Do you ever think about your times over there at night, you know, since you were back home aft...after all these years?

Mr. Callanan: Yeah, more or less, I think about some of...buddies. We...we had a reunion afterwards.

Ed Metzler: Uh huh.



Mr. Callanan: And...uh, I went to the...I went to the reunion...was held in Memphis, Tennessee.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And...unfortunately, when I got to the...I started asking about the...Gessler and...some of the others that I knew, “Oh, he’s dead; oh, he’s dead; you know, he couldn’t make it,” and so forth.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: None of my buddies were there.

Ed Metzler: That’s a shame.

Mr. Callanan: Yeah. And there was a tremendous amount of...young...younger fellows.

Ed Metzler: Okay, ‘cause...so, this was...

Mr. Callanan: That had gone on to...had got to Japan and so forth.

Ed Metzler: Right, right.

Mr. Callanan: But...one of the interesting things about this book was the fact that the...in the...it was...it was actually written...got together by the Colonel that I was telling you about, Colonel...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: ...Colonel Padding (sp?)

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Callanan: And all the...all the photos were actual photos...were made by...

Ed Metzler: By guys who were there.

Mr. Callanan: ...uh, for...yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Callanan: And all the sketches were made by the...an artist.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Callanan: So, it's a very interesting book.

Ed Metzler: Well, that's good. Well, I look forward to seeing it.

Mr. Callanan: Okay.

Ed Metzler: Alright, well let me go ahead and end the interview here. Thanks for spending the time, Charles, to describe your experiences and thank you for what you did for our country during the war. I just want to make sure we get that on tape, too.

Mr. Callanan: Uh huh.

Ed Metzler: We don't do that enough, so, thank you sir.

Mr. Callanan: Thank you.

(end of interview)

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