

*National Museum of the Pacific War*

*Nimitz Education and Research Center*

*Fredericksburg, Texas*

Interview with

**Mr. William “Bill” Batty**

Date of Interview: January 7, 2017

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### **Interview with Mr. William “Bill” Batty**

Interview in progress.

Ed Metzler: This is Ed Metzler. Today is the 7<sup>th</sup> of January 2017. I’m in New Braunfels [TX] at the home of Mr. Bill Batty, and I am interviewing him in his home. This interview is in support of the Nimitz Education and Research Center, archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Historical Commission, for the preservation of historical information related to this site. So, Bill, thank you for inviting me into your home to discuss your experiences in World War II. I’d like to start by having you ... introduce yourself – full name, date of birth, place of birth, and we’ll take it from there.

Mr. Batty: Okay, good morning, Ed, and I’d like to welcome you to our home here. I’m glad I got an opportunity to ... give you a little bit of my experience in the military. My name is ... William Ernest Batty, Jr.; I was born on December the 19<sup>th</sup>, 1925 ... in Camden, Alabama. And I graduated from high school in Meridian, Mississippi. And my family, my mother’s family is all from Mississippi, so I feel like a native Mississippian. And I’m ... I’m glad ...

Ed Metzler: Where’s your father from ... father’s family from?

Mr. Batty: He ... he was also born in Mississippi.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so ...

Mr. Batty: But our ... his family is ... uh, migrated from England in about 1867, right after the Civil War, and they finally settled in Mississippi. So, we’ve got a ... pretty good background from ... that standpoint. And ...

Ed Metzler: Now, what was the name of the town in Alabama where you were born?

Mr. Batty: Camden, C-a-m-d-e-n.

Ed Metzler: Did you stay there or did you move to Mississippi?

Mr. Batty: I ... well, I stayed there till I was twelve years old.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: And then we moved, and I've moved several times since then.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, what did your father do for a living?

Mr. Batty: He was ... involved in several different things. When I was ... younger ... as kid and shortly after ... was during the twelve-year period, he was in the sawmill business ... manu ... manufacturing ... cutting lumber from the sawmill hardwood lumber and the Depression ... caught it and wiped it out (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Batty: And after that, he had several assignments, several jobs, whatever he could find, and finally wound up with a job as ... with the government Corps of Engineers on a dredge boat, and along the south part of the Gulf of Mexico.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And uh, that was when ... we moved to Mississippi, and they dredged boat up right out of Pascagoula, Mississippi.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And he also was involved in ... some of the dredging activity on the ... Tombigbee River in Alabama and all that general area around ... the southeast. Of course, the main advantage ... as a kid, I enjoyed visiting with him on the dredge boats and things of that nature.

Ed Metzler: Now, do you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Batty: No, I'm the only child.

Ed Metzler: You're ... the one and only!

Mr. Batty: I'm ... one and only, that's right.

Ed Metzler: So, you were spoiled as a kid?

Mr. Batty: I'm sure I must have been (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: Uh, I hate to say that, but I guess I was, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah, you probably (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: And ... unfortunately, I have ... only one child myself.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, he ... he benefits from the same problem.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckles), I have ... he has two sons, and one of the son's has two children, so ... I've got two great-grandchildren.

Ed Metzler: You got ... great grans, huh?

Mr. Batty: Right now.

Ed Metzler: Well, congratulations! So ...

Mr. Batty: (Unintelligible) the family's going.

Ed Metzler: ... first ... nine years or so in Alabama, and then the rest of your high school years in ... Mississippi?

Mr. Batty: Well, no, I ... mentioned that Dad was working for the government, and I was in ... in the sixth grade in Mississippi, and ... he got transferred to the Veterans Administration in ... Tucson, Arizona. So, I spent a couple of years in Tucson in ... in high school. Then he got transferred to Amarillo, Texas, and I spent around a year in high school in Amarillo. Then he got transferred to ... New Orleans, and from New Orleans to Meridian, Mississippi. And so, I finally graduated from high school in Meridian, Mississippi.

Ed Metzler: You were almost like an Army brat (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: That's right, just about ... same thing.

Ed Metzler: Moved around, never really got to put roots down.

Mr. Batty: A government, a government, a government brat. That's true, but you know, I think it was good for me as a child. I got acquainted with a lot of different things, and easy to make friends with new people and that type of thing.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I don't regret it. And we lived in some interesting places and ... that was my first introduction to Texas. So ... in Amarillo, and that's a bad place to start (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: Yeah, not nearly ... as such as ... New Braunfels is a place to finish up.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I can ... I'm with you on that (laughter).

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), but ... so, I ... I don't find that that was too bad of a situation. I ... I got out of Arm ... uh, out of the high school really ... pretty good record, so it was alright from that point. And but then, that brought us up to the time when World War II was ... starting while I in high school. And all of these college ... schools, high schools, were starting training people for the Army.

Ed Metzler: So, you were like sixteen when ... Pearl Harbor happened, huh?

Mr. Batty: Yeah, about that.

Ed Metzler: In fact, you weren't quite sixteen yet.

Mr. Batty: Not quite sixteen.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: And ... all of the ... the high schools were starting ... uhm, oh, should I say courses to teach you how to climb over walls and things of that nature.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And a lot of them started ROTC programs to teach you how to be a soldier. In fact, that's where I first ... got into the ROTC in Amarillo, and they had a beginning in Amarillo ... program at that time. As I got down (unintelligible) they had summer programs starting, so I got a little insight into what the Army was like from that point of view. And then I graduated from high school in ... in Mississippi ... in Meridian.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And of course, at that time, the war was going strong ... two or three years into the war. I had ... been ... keeping up with all the news that was on ... the newsreels in the movies as well as the newspapers. We didn't have TV in those days, so it was news broadcast on the radio and ... seeing the ... the movie, of course. And every movie theater had the ... Movietone news or something.

Ed Metzler: Right, Movietone News, (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: And you'd see what's going on in ... battlefields and such as that. So, I had a pretty good idea of what was happening in both Europe and the Pac ... Pacific activity. And my dad had been a ... sailor in the Navy during World War I, so I was ... had ... a ... a contact from that aspect. I knew my turn was coming some day, so when I got ... turned eighteen, I was ... I graduated from high school in

... in 194 ... '44 ... '43, in ... in December of '43. And in April of '44, I was drafted into the Army.

Ed Metzler: Well, let me (throat clearing) ... tell me what you remember about ... Pearl Harbor Day and where you were and ... what you were doing on December the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Batty: Okay. Well, as I said, I had been pretty well up on what was going on in ... in the Pacific, and I ... and I knew that there ... there was military activities. I knew the Navy had an air base ... had a base in Pearl Harbor, and I knew there was a lot of ... open space among the ... the islands out there. It was a Sunday afternoon, and it was ... a chilly day in Meridian, and I remember I was laying down on the floor in the bedroom in front of a gas heater reading the funny paper (chuckles), and the news came in over the rad ... radio and at least I ... I knew enough about what was happening ... to appreciate what was going on; I knew where Pearl Harbor was for example.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, a lot of people didn't.

Mr. Batty: A lot of people didn't, yeah.

Ed Metzler: That's right.

Mr. Batty: I also had ... some idea of what the Navy ... was all about ...

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Batty: ... from my dad's experience, so I ... I was ... said, "Oh my god, what's going to happen next," you see? And the school system and the training programs ... I was going to ... I knew I was going to be drafted sometime soon. In Meridian, we had a ... uh, what they call a junior college, and as I started the junior college ... and they were offering a training program for ... technical ... technical work ... building ships and that, so I ... machinists, welders, pipefitters and all that type of training ... through a program that was in ... I guess the government was sponsoring it, and I took a program on ... me being a machinist. We had laths and drill presses and all kind of big machine type, heavy machine work. I wound up with about seven hundred hours of ... lab experience ...

Ed Metzler: My word!

Mr. Batty: ... being a machinist, thoroughly enjoyed it and learned a whole lot. So, was good for my ... rest of my life. And we had an old man who was a machinist all of his life; that guy could feel if ... thousands of an inch between his two fingers (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: Wow!

Mr. Batty: And so, he was an expert ... teacher ... from that standpoint. So, I felt that was a good ... helped me a lot and ... in getting ready for whatever. I didn't use it, but it helped me anyway. So then, after ... Pearl Harbor started and the next thing was ... anyone turns eighteen years old had to be registered for the draft. So, I dutifully registered and ... by the ... April or so of the following year then my number came up and ... I was drafted. In the meantime, having graduated from college, I had tried to apply for Officer Training courses in all branches of the service – Navy, Army, Air Corp at that time, even down to the ... to the Coast Guard ... of ... graduate ... a school in ... in, I believe, in New England. I (unintelligible) I passed the phys ... the mental exam, but I couldn't pass the physical because of my eye sight.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: My ... I wore glasses since I was in the seventh grade; that got me into the Army and they didn't mind I couldn't see ... that was alright. I was drafted and ...

Ed Metzler: You could see well enough (laughter).

Mr. Batty: I could see well enough, yeah.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: I ... I guess uh, they said, "Well, we'll take you for limited service," and I guess that they put me in the Signal Corps rather than the Infantry. But ... and I went into ... reception center at Camp Shelby, Mississippi.

Ed Metzler: Okay, it ... is that where you did basic?

Mr. Batty: No, that's where I was drafted in and they went through all the shots and ... various preparation and analysis and whatever. And there they selected for ... uh, some unknown reason, to the Signal Corps. They put me on a train and sent me to Camp Crowder, Missouri ... to go through boot training, uh, Signal Corps boot training.

Ed Metzler: What's the name of the camp that ...

Mr. Batty: Camp ... Camp Crowder.

Ed Metzler: Crower, okay.

Mr. Batty: C-r-o-w-d-e-r.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: Its in the southwest corner of ... Missouri, near the town of Neosho, Missouri.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I was there for basic training. Signal Corps basic training is different from Infantry basic training as you might ... imagine. They teach us the fundamentals of ... of ... military activity, military training, how to handle a gun and ... how to march in columns and ... that type of thing. We didn't have any ... digging up foxholes and that type of training. And then from there, I stayed at Camp Crowder into a ... advanced training to ... repairing telephone equipment. And I was there for several more months in training for telephone equipment which included a couple of weeks in Baltimore, Maryland, advanced training above what they had in ... in Camp Crowder. Then I went back to Camp Crowder for ... a few more weeks. And at that point, I was transferred into a Signal Repair Company in Lexington, Kentucky. I joined the 58<sup>th</sup> Signal Repair Company in Lexington; it was a Signal Depot in Lexington, Kentucky, and this is just before Christmas, 1944. So, we spent Christmas there in ... in Lexington. And right after that, the ... 58<sup>th</sup> company was transferred to ... Fort Jackson, South Carolina to go through preliminary training for overseas. And we ... we went from ... right after the first of the year, we ... we had a convoy trip ... trucks on a road, going from Lexington, Kentucky to (unintelligible) Jackson, South Carolina. And there we went for additional training and also field training – sleeping out in the woods and that type of ... of ...

Ed Metzler: Get ... getting used to the great outdoors.

Mr. Batty: ... getting used to ... great outdoors.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And preparation for ... moving to Europe, transfer to Europe. So we ... I don't remember how long it was, but it was two or three months probably.



Ed Metzler: So, uh, let me interrupt you for a second.

Mr. Batty: Okay ... (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: When we talk about telephones and Signal Corps in the World War II context, are we talking about landline phones or ... field and infantry ... portable phones or what ... both or ...

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: ... or what? Tell me what the scope is.

Mr. Batty: Well, basically what we're talking about is ... portable phones.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: They were ... in a ... a nice leather case, and you had to crank the crank to ... make a call, but they had batteries in them to ... put ... to take care of the ... of the actual conversation. And they could just connect to ... one wire, one connected to another one with a wire, and there ... nothing like what we see today in the type of communication the soldiers have today. But it would connect say a ... a company with a ... headquarters somewhere and they could have some communication back and forth. The Army would run the wires and hook the telephones to it, and if the telephone didn't work, they'd bring it back to us to fix it.

Ed Metzler: So, none of it ... but some of it was wireless as well (unintelligible) radio?

Mr. Batty: No, no. At that point it was all ... wired. Now, there ... there was just the beginning of small radios, but it was ... very few of them. And some of them, you've seen pictures of a soldier carrying one on his back.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: And ... the only communication was short distances, but then that was a very ... limited amount of communication. The rad ... the telephone was the best thing they had going basically. And there were other ... other types of more secure communication like ... not fax machines, but ... coded messages that would ... also ... could be transmitted by wire.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: But ...

Ed Metzler: It was almost like a telegraph, but it wasn't.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, and the ... the machine itself was ... had coded ears in it, and we ... our company also would maintain them. Certain guys were trained to maintain them.

Ed Metzler: So, its like a miniature enigma machine then ...

Mr. Batty: Something like that, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... that the Germans had ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... you ...

Mr. Batty: Similar idea.

Ed Metzler: ... send a different kind of code ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah. And what came out of it was a ... garbled up message that had to be ... reassembled at the receiver. But my ... my work was ... was the telephone and the switchboard operation. Uh, and we ... we had a ... our ... our company had ... fifteen units, fifteen trained groups. Each group had a ... shop truck; it was a two and half ton truck with a nice body built on the back of it with the most well-equipped shop you ever saw in your life. On each side of the ... of the body in there, there was a ... workbench; it was about two inches thick and maybe twenty-four or thirty inches wide of the best looking maple workbench you ever saw in your life. Of course, it was ... weather proof. And then we had a power unit on the outside that was ... enough to provide a hundred and ten volt of electricity to everything we had. So, we ... we had a very comfortable place to work. It had a heater in it, but it didn't have air conditioning.

Ed Metzler: No air?!

Mr. Batty: No air conditioning.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: Nobody knew air conditioning in those days.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, nobody knew what that was hardly.

Mr. Batty: No, they didn't.

Ed Metzler: Unless you'd gone to the movie theater.

Mr. Batty: The theaters were the only places in town that had air conditioning.

Ed Metzler: That's exactly right, and a few ... few department stores.

Mr. Batty: That's right. So ... but anyway, we felt lucky we had a place to get heat, get out of ... out of the rain and that sort of stuff. It was ... it was ... and we had little small hot plate we could warm up some food or anything of that nature. So, any ... anyway, we lived pretty comfortably. And then we had this two-and-a-half-ton truck which ... for transportation. And the ... the power unit was on a trailer. And so, it had a ... a jeep engine; it was a pretty good size power unit.

Ed Metzler: Sort of ... an electrical generator ...

Mr. Batty: The ... had re ... generator, yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... a portable generator.

Mr. Batty: And ... so, we had plenty of power, electric power for what we were going to do with it, so that's what we were training and how to ... operate out in the ... in the woods with that type of an operation. So, once we got through that, then we were ready to go overseas to ... Europe. And we ... had a train trip then from Fort Jackson, South Carolina to ... Camp Shanks, New York ... which is just up the river from New York City ... on the ... west side of the ... of the river.

Ed Metzler: Hudson River.

Mr. Batty: And we were there for, I don't know, just a matter of ... days or week or so. And we went back down to get on a ship in New York Harbor. Now, one of the things I recall, I thought, "Well, this is going to be great; I'll get to see the Statue of Liberty." I've ... I've thought about the statue, never seen it before in my life, and as close as this ... close to it, be nice to see it. So, I figured ... we'll sail out of here, go by the Statue of Liberty and I'll see it. But just as we got off ... away from the dock, they had all of us go downstairs for physical examination, and by that time, we were ... past the Statue of Liberty and I didn't see it.

Ed Metzler: Doggone it!

Mr. Batty: One of the disappointments (laughter). But ...

Ed Metzler: Now, did you get liberty before you went overseas to go home?

Mr. Batty: Don't recall. Uh, I don't think I did to tell you the truth. I don't remember it if I did.

Ed Metzler: So, you just headed overseas ...

Mr. Batty: We were ... pretty ... pretty quick.

Ed Metzler: ... and your parents ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... say, "Bye, bye, Bill," huh?

Mr. Batty: That's ... that's right. And my mother was very supportive of ... my activity in the Army. She wasn't criticizing it at all. And I know she was concerned about me being there, but ...

Ed Metzler: That's her only child!

Mr. Batty: Yeah, but she wasn't making a big to-do of it as far as I was concerned, and she supported everything.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: If I asked for something or whatever, you know? By mail, we corresponded. I didn't have a girlfriend at the time, so ... I wasn't burdened by that ... difficulty (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), that's relief! (laughter)

Mr. Batty: And so, she was ... she was a ... a good support for me. And even when I was crying ... , "I'm sure sorry I can't see you and wish you could come home," none of that kind of stuff, see?

Ed Metzler: That's good.

Mr. Batty: It was all positive.

Ed Metzler: It makes it easier for you.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, it does, exactly. And sometimes I'd say, you know, "Can you send me a bar of soap," or some ... special thing that we weren't getting, and so, sure enough, she'd send me another one ... like a ... a fruitcake at Christmas time and things of that nature. So, all in all, it was ... positive for both of us.

Ed Metzler: What about your dad? Where was he?

Mr. Batty: He was ... he was working and just ... he was at home, but working on some ... whatever job he could find. And he was ... had gotten by that time, he'd gotten out of the Internal Revenue Service, and he was looking for whatever he could do for himself. He tried getting into the hardware business, and I can't remember ... I think he had a ... yeah, he had the hardware store in Tunica,

Mississippi while I was in the service 'cause when I got out, I visited him once at the ... store.

Ed Metzler: Was he ever disappointed that you didn't go into the Navy?

Mr. Batty: No, I don't think so. Uh, we ... we never talked about his Navy experience hard ... hardly at all. We have several pictures, you know, of the graduation, me in my uniform and stuff of that nature, but I don't recall any ... criticism of him being or ... saying what ... the Navy was good ...

Ed Metzler: One way or the other, huh?

Mr. Batty: ... Navy was good over the other.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Mr. Batty: And my thought was ... uh, the Navy sounded pretty good; at least you get to sleep on clean sheets every night (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), and you can see the world, right?

Mr. Batty: You can see the world, that's right.

Ed Metzler: Join the Navy, see the world!

Mr. Batty: See the world. I saw Europe (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Well, that was enough ... probably.

Mr. Batty: That's right.

Ed Metzler: What was the ... crossing like?

Mr. Batty: You see pictures of ... guys get on big ... troop ships, you know, thousands of guys on a troop ship.

Ed Metzler: Or a luxury liner.

Mr. Batty: Luxury liner been converted. We'd had a ... a small ship; it was a ... you've heard the term "banana boat."

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), it was a ship that belonged to the United Fruit Company, I believe; they hauled bananas from Central America to the ... to the United States. There was a hundred and fifty of us and my ... in my company and I believe, as I recall, there was one other company ... just the two groups on the ship.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, it was a small ship with not too many people on it. But it was ... we got ... had some pretty rough weather ... going across the ocean, and we were in a convoy. And the ship was rocking pretty bad one way or the other. I was lucky, I don't remember getting sea sick, but we spent a lot of time ...

Ed Metzler: You were lucky!

Mr. Batty: ... we spent a lot of time out on deck ... during the ... when the weather was decent playing cards and ... anything you could do to kill time ... and looking at the ocean. You didn't see a whole lot going on. We were in a convoy, so we weren't going very fast.

Ed Metzler: No U-boats, huh?

Mr. Batty: Yeah, no ... well, we got about halfway across, we were going to South ... southern England, so we'd go into the English Channel. Somewhere about the middle of the Atlantic Ocean, there was a submarine scare and they rerouted our ... our convoy to go up north of Scotland and come in through the Irish Sea and do the ... that part of England. So, that delayed us a couple more days ... making the trip longer, and this was safer, I guess. And we landed at Cardiff in England ... in ... in Wales. From Cardiff then we got on a train and went to the ... oh, and English army base in Winchester, England, and we were there for probably two ... two weeks or so. And during that time, we were just kind of killing time here and there.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: I spent some time on KP duty and ... didn't take it as a punishment; it was kind of an opportunity. That's ... and ... during the wee hours of the morning, you had access to the refrigerator and any type of ... peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as you wanted (chuckle).

Ed Metzler: Oh, so it's pretty nice?

Mr. Batty: It was pretty nice, that's right. And so, I ... I wasn't complaining at all, from that point of view.

Ed Metzler: So, you had two weeks in the UK before you went ...

Mr. Batty: (Unintelligible), and we ... we got a chance to go into town a couple of times, and ...

Ed Metzler: I was going to ask you that.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, into Winchester, England, a small town not too far from ... Southampton, had no damage from the war in West ... in Winchester. And the story we heard was that the German planes coming over bombing Southampton, but ... ten miles away was ... Winchester and ... by that time, they'd already dropped their bombs in Southampton or ... gone and ... Winchester didn't suffer the pains of ...

Ed Metzler: Winchester ... inland?

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Or is it on the coast?

Mr. Batty: Its, no it's a little bit inland, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: Not ... not right on the shore.

Ed Metzler: They've got a famous cathedral over there ... (unintelligible) ...

Mr. Batty: That's right.

Ed Metzler: ... Winchester Cathedral; I remember that song.

Mr. Batty: I was going to ... that's what my next story is on, too.

Ed Metzler: Oh, I've ... taken your stories away from you; I'll keep quiet!

Mr. Batty: (Chuckles), yeah, and walking into town; this is my first experience in a foreign country, and so you'd walk down the street, there's a lot of old buildings on all sides. This one beautiful cathedral ... that was a real fancy structure; it was a Catholic church. I thought, "Well, that's nice," you know ... just ... what ... what it meant to me is ... a nice, beautiful, fancy Catholic church, and we went on about our business. And while I was there, I got a chance to drive a ... English truck into town and the, of course, the steering wheels on the wrong side, and you're shifting gears with the wrong hand and all that type of stuff and driving on the wrong side of the road. So, it was quite an experience, but I ... I successfully ... accomplished it and got back alright. Years later ... back in ... at home and ... I ... I don't ... how many years later it was, the song, *The Winchester Cathedral*, became a popular song, and I thought, "Well, that's beautiful music," and I enjoyed the song. It was still ... hadn't dawned on me that it's the same cathedral I had seen over there. But pretty soon it did dawn

and I realized that ... that was the song ... was about that cathedral ... in Winchester. So, that made a little bit more ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah! Made it personal for you.

Mr. Batty: Personal.

Ed Metzler: Did you have much interaction with the locals ...

Mr. Batty: No, none ... none at all ...

Ed Metzler: ... there in the UK?

Mr. Batty: ... none at all.

Ed Metzler: Didn't go to a pub ... or ...

Mr. Batty: We didn't go ... no we didn't go into anything like that. We didn't have any ... parties or anything like that where the ... women come see ... I believe I did have one ... somewhere in the process, I must have gone on a ... date with a girl to movie or something, and she ... she asked me to go back to her apartment afterward, you know, for a little refreshment. She did something I've never seen before; we were going to have a sandwich with ... a cup of coffee. She had a loaf of bread and it was ... not sliced, and she buttered the end of the load of bread and then sliced a slice off of it. And I said, "Why don't you butter it again, and slice the slice." I'd always seen you slice ...

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: ... the bread and then ... butter it, see?

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, it's a little different in how you view things. That was the only ... significant thing I can remember, from that point of view.

Ed Metzler: Well, what time of year ... were you there in the UK? Was that wintertime, summertime ... ?

Mr. Batty: It was in the early spring.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so its early spring of what ... '40 ...

Mr. Batty: And it was ... it was ...

Ed Metzler: ... '45?

Mr. Batty: ... '40 ... '45, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Okay. So, the Normandy Invasion ...



Mr. Batty: Uh, no.

Ed Metzler: ... has already occurred.

Mr. Batty: Oh yes, and they're fighting in Germany, almost in Germany by now.

Ed Metzler: So, they're almost to Germany.

Mr. Batty: And the Battle of the Bulge was over with by that time.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, that was the Christmas of '44 ... or '45, right winter.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, that was all over with. And we were on the winning team ...

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Batty: ... at that point.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So ... but because of the weather, we happened to be, I mean a submarine scare, we happened to be in England rather than France where they wanted us the first place.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, when the weather got ... decent, they ... they did ... we got on a ship and went across the Channel into France and up the Seine River about ... thirty or forty miles to a great deployment camp, a place called ... Camp Twenty Grand. These camps were ... there were several camps in the area named for cigarette brands, and ours happened to be Twenty Grand. There was Philip Morris and ... all the other cigarette brands were ...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: ... representative names of these camps. And they ... the purpose of the camp was to take guys that were coming in and get them ready to go to ... get ready ... your stuff and go on into a battle situation. So, everything was ... pointing towards ... the transaction from getting there to being ready to go into ... in Germany. And so, we were there ... couple of three weeks, I've forgotten how long. We started on ... getting to Germany from there ... by truck, and we went through parts of France and Belgium and finally got into the northern part and went through Luxembourg, the city of Luxembourg.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And I recall ... in the city of Luxembourg, the street signs were in ... French and English; I mean permanent signs. They weren't just there for the war.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And so, they must have had an awful lot of visitors, you know, during ... during the civilian time ... of American visitors. And also, saw a lot of signs for Coca Cola ads that were ... they'd been there for years, you know, that ...

Ed Metzler: So, U.S. influence there.

Mr. Batty: ... that's ... I think, in ... influence there ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: It's a beautiful town, a small place but ... uh, small country; not as big as one of our counties hardly.

Ed Metzler: I know, it's very small.

Mr. Batty: And ... so, we got through there and got into ... Germany, in a little town called Mönchengladbach in the northern ... north ... western part of Germany, our first city that we stopped at in ... in Germany. And that was the first place we spent the night in a German situation. We took over for the ... for the short time we were going to be ... (unintelligible) days, [in] a mansion of some rich guy, a beautiful home, about a three story house, best construction you can imagine ... all concrete and tile and ... obviously a ... a rich guy. And down in the basement they had laundry tubs that were built-in tile laundry tubs, and made wonderful ... bathtubs for us. We could turn ... we got that thing full of warm water and take a bath, and that was something unusual ... find a place to take a bath in those days.

Ed Metzler: That was a real luxury (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: Yeah, a real luxury, that's right. And I recall one time ... one night I was on guard duty, all of our vehicles were parked around the street and outside, and I'm sitting in a cab of one of the trucks where I could see ... an area, and I ... I hear a shot fired one time and another shot somewhere else, and another shot. I said, "My god, what's going on here?" First time I'd heard shooting in ... and we're supposed to be in a war. So, I kind of perked up to be sure what was

going on. Next day I find it was somebody ... guys over in the other place shooting at rats (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), nothing more exciting than rat shooting (laughter)!

Mr. Batty: Nothing more exciting than rat shooting.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), now how ... how far from ... the frontline would you guess you were when you were in that town? I mean, was it fairly close to (unintelligible)?

Mr. Batty: Oh no, we were a long ways ...

Ed Metzler: ... way ...

Mr. Batty: ... we were a long ways; the frontlines were way up into Germany, and we were right on the edge of ... Germany and France.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: So, we were ... we were not in there ... any distance at all. Not far enough you could ... know what was going on. And we did see, of course, terrible damage to the cities that we drove through.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And there was one city, I've forgotten ... was it was Cologne or one of them, the damage was so bad we had to detour around the town.

Ed Metzler: Couldn't get through it.

Mr. Batty: Couldn't get through. And it was restrictive because of the rubble in the streets, you see?

Ed Metzler: Wow.

Mr. Batty: There was ... terrible damage to ...

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible), took a real pounding, yeah.

Mr. Batty: ... those ... those cities over there ... from the bombing that they did on them ... and ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... whatever local ... art ... artillery fire that might have been. All the bridges across rivers were destroyed. We were there and ... nobody seemed to know where we should be, where you need us. And so, the Captain of our count ... uh, company was ... gone ahead to some ... headquarters ... organization somewhere ... find out, "Where do you want us to be?" While he was there, he

happened to be in the area of a battle. And then he came back and, "Well, we're supposed to be over there." And everything was fine, no ... nobody worried about that (throat clearing). We finally wound up going into Nuremburg, Germany which is in the southern part of ... Germany, and that was our ultimate objective was Nuremburg. By this time, the war was just about over. And ... in fact, I guess, maybe it was ... pretty close to completely over. And we set up shop in an old margarine factory in Nuremburg. It was a big place; they had a dormitory there for their workers to live in the dormitory; they had a dining ar ... uh, facility, a dining room and kitchen and all that ... so we just kind of took it over for our company, very comfortable. We were there for just a week or two and then my group was transferred temporarily to go ... go out to a small country town about four or five hours away ... east of ... no, west of Nuremburg. And we set up shop in this little town, and it was just our company and that was all. I mean, our ... fifteen ... one of fifteen groups of the ... of the company. So ...

Ed Metzler: And so, how many guys in that group?

Mr. Batty: About ... about eight of us.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: A Sergeant in charge and ... (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: And how many vehicles?

Mr. Batty: ... about two ... two vehicles and ... the power unit.

Ed Metzler: Power unit, yeah.

Mr. Batty: And the power supply, and ...

Ed Metzler: So, four of you per vehicle.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, something like that. I never did ... understand ... what we were there for. We never did any work. We were there to repair telephones, and there were no telephones needing repair, so we just kind of ... had to do the best we could to ... to look out for ourselves. And we ... we ... we slept in a building that was, I guess, there were some German ... police had been there or something. The cots in the German place didn't have any springs in the cots. You had a double-deck cot and they ... the cot just was boards, a framework of a cot. But instead of a

spring like you'd expect, it was all solid boards, and that gets pretty hard to sleep on after so long a time.

Ed Metzler: I'll bet!

Mr. Batty: That first fifteen minutes (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Those Germans are tough, huh?!

Mr. Batty: They're tough, that's right!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So ... and we were there then ... and ... and until they decided what to do about us. But while we were there, the ... Sergeant in charge of our group was from the Midwest and he was quite a fisherman, so ... he got some ... some pins or needles or whatever you find to bend into fish hooks and he went fishing in some of those streams around there. So, we had some pretty good fish to eat while we were there, and we could cook them on our little electric ... heat ... uh, burner we had in the ... in the shops and trucks. We lived pretty good during that time.

Ed Metzler: Did you do some fishing as well?

Mr. Batty: No, I ... I didn't personally at that time. I can't remember what I did to kill time, but ... uh, he was the one that was ... kept us in good fish.

Ed Metzler: Did you have any interaction with the German locals?

Mr. Batty: Not ... that I recall, no. Now, we saw them, and ... the ... by the way, the ... the houses around there ... there was a farming type location, and the house would have a ... house and barn kind of built into the same ... facility. You go ... out the kitchen door into the barn ... type of thing. And so they had cattle and stuff in there, and ... and I guess the weather was ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: ... get ... could get in out of the weather.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... but we didn't have any personal contact with them at all. But the war was over and ... they called us back to Nuremburg. "You're going to ... you're going to the Pacific." Well, guess what? The climate in the Pacific is very humid. We've got telephones over here that ... if you get humid, they begin to

get ... corrosion and ... all kind of stuff in there ... inside ... and they don't work. So, we'd better learn how to not to get them corroded. They set up a school in Paris; they called it Moisture and Fungus Proofing, so we could teach us ... how to do that service on our telephones so that it would be protected from that moisture in the atmosphere. And I happened to be chosen as one of the guys to go to that school, me and another guy from our group. And so, they gave us a two-and-a-half-ton truck and said, "Be in Paris Friday morning." (laughter)

Ed Metzler: My word!

Mr. Batty: So, we drove from Nuremburg, Germany to Paris in ... about two and a half days or so ... very, very interesting.

Ed Metzler: That must have been an adventure!

Mr. Batty: It was an adventure. At that time, the war hadn't been over ... just about a ... a few weeks, so the ... the highways were clogged with ... what we called DPs, displaced persons. Now, you've seen pictures of people walking, carrying all their little baggage on their ... they liked to ... they don't know where they're going, but they're going someplace.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And the roads were just clogged with those ... people going on ... on the highway. And ... not much traffic; the roads were controlled by military police of the different military organizations that happened to be in that particular vicinity.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Batty: And as you went from one to the other, you had different regulations on the road to what the next one (unintelligible), you see. We didn't have seat belts, so we didn't have to worry about the seat belts (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: But each one of them ... the police would stop you and say, "Where you going?" ... check your papers and be sure everything is alright. And one place we stopped they said, "How far are y'all going?" And we said, "Well, we're going to Paris." "I've got a family over here that needs transportation in that direction; do y'all ... could y'all take them with you?" And we said, "Yeah, we

got this empty truck, we'd ... hap ... happy to take you." So there was a man and his wife and two teen age girls and ... you never saw so much stuff they had to take with them. So, we loaded all that stuff in the back of the truck and ... took off towards Paris. They were very appreciative ... of having ...

Ed Metzler: Were they French?

Mr. Batty: I ... don't know; no, they weren't French. I think they must have been ... oh, I'm not sure what ... nationality they were. We couldn't talk to them, and they couldn't talk to us. We could, you know, sign language.

Ed Metzler: Sign language, yeah.

Mr. Batty: And we spent one night on the road, camped on the side of the road. But we got them as far as we could go and ... you never saw anybody appre ... appreciate what you did for them as they were. They just couldn't ... get over themselves in thanking us for what we did. And we helped them an awful lot because ... as much stuff as they had and (unintelligible) ...

Ed Metzler: They never would have made it.

Mr. Batty: ... and ... no. And I don't know where they were going or what, but ... and I don't think any of the people did. They just wanted to be better than where they were, you know? "My house got blown up over there; let's go find something different," only thing I can think of. But anyway, they ... they were very appreciative of ... what we had done for them. And as we stopped for various breaks and rest breaks, they would ... we tried to talk them; they were happy to ... communicate with us if we could.

Ed Metzler: What's you do for food?

Mr. Batty: We ... canned food; we took Army canned food.

Ed Metzler: Okay, so you had rations and stuff.

Mr. Batty: Yes, we had food, yeah. And, by the way, C-rations on a can ... if you strap them ... 'cause they ... an exhaust manifold on an engine ... (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: It warms them up!

Ed Metzler: But do they swell up when you (laughter) ... ?

Mr. Batty: No, no they ... they just hot, warm enough to eat and that worked out pretty good.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: Drive an hour or two ... which was (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, then eat!

Mr. Batty: So, you ... you made a lot of things. And also, every ... every soldier carries a can opener on his key chain. You've seen the little ... can opener type thing?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, oh yeah, a little (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: Use things like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, uh huh.

Mr. Batty: So, you always got that with you so, everything is fine. So, we got to the ... school, the school was a week long, on the outskirts of Paris in some ... facility; I've forgot now what it was. But they taught us how to ... insulate the contacts inside of the telephones and stuff. And then ... okay, so the school will be over Friday at noon, and next Friday at noon time. By this time, the war had ... been over long enough ... the Army had taken over the major hotels in Paris for R&R type thing for the troops in active duty ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... and in battle condition. And we decided, "Well, we're going to spend the night somewhere, but we don't want to spend the night in a big hotel like that. Let's go out to the edge of town and there's got to be some little hotels we can ... stay in and ... be more comfortable." So, we went on ... the edge of town and ... lot of little neighborhood hotels. There's a street entrance and one room that's the lobby and the ... registration desk; all the rooms are upstairs ... with a stairwell coming down into the lobby.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And every one we went to, they were full, no room ... for the night. "No, no, sorry about that." So, we go on to another one. We must have gone to three or four of them and they were all full. And the last one we got into, we were trying to talk to this lady; she was French and didn't know any English at all. We didn't know any French, so we're trying to make out ... with her, and some



man came down the steps of, a well-dressed businessman, had on a nice suit coat and (unintelligible) clothes, I would say he was probably thirty-five, forty years old, something like that, and he saw the predicament we were in talking to her, so he says, “Well, can y’all speak any ... ,” and he listed about six or eight different languages ...

Ed Metzler: I’ll be darned.

Mr. Batty: ... that he could speak (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Holy ...

Mr. Batty: And one of them was Spanish.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: And I had taken Spanish when I was in school.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckle), so I could talk to him a little bit in Spanish. He talked to her in French and back to me in Spanish (chuckles).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And we ... we got a room for the night.

Ed Metzler: Well, that’s what’s ... the bottom line!

Mr. Batty: That’s what ... that’s what we were looking for.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, we spent the night there and then the next day ... started back ... driving back towards ... Nuremburg. It was a ... a nice trip. We had no difficulties on the road at all ... across the Rhine River on a pontoon bridge, and (chuckles) and things of that nature, see? Had no difficulty on the road, finding a way around was no trouble ... no problem. And we had approval to use the truck, so we ... everything was alright from there. You got back to Nuremburg, and then they had ... by that time, they had instruction of what we was going to do next. They ... we were going to go to the Pacific. Uh, the Army had a plan; we’d been fighting here now for four or five years.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And we’ve got a lot of guys that had been through hell and high water in the battles and no telling what, and they deserved to go home. You know, the war

is over in Europe and let's get them ... let them go home. We got another war going in the Pacific and we needed some of you guys over there, so that was the break up of the ... the group that we were in. They came up with a plan, a point system, and you earned points for what you had done. I'm sure you've heard of the point system.

Ed Metzler: I have.

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: Extra points for combat ...

Mr. Batty: For combat, and length ... length of the service ...

Ed Metzler: Right, that's right.

Mr. Batty: ... and age and all ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: ... and all that kind of stuff. And I've forgotten the number but if you had a significant number of points, you could go home. So, they separated those guys out of our group and sent them back to some ... control place, and so, "Now you guys are going home; the rest of you guys now ... get ready to go to ... to ... Pacific." So, we went back to another one of these camps in ... in France, and this time they were named for cities, so we went to a Camp Philadelphia this time. They were close to ... Camp Twenty Grand was one place; Camp Philadelphia was in a diff ... entirely different place.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: But our purpose here was to take all of our equipment and pack it up and ship it to the Pacific. You never saw such crates in your life as we had, wooden crates lined with waterproof paper, best ... pack ... packing job you could probably conceive of ... to protect all that equipment that we're going to send over there. So, we packed it all up and loaded up in truck and hauled it from northern France ... to Marseille ... down south shore on the ... on the ...

Ed Metzler: Oh, down to the Med.

Mr. Batty: ... on ... the Mediterranean shore of France.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: It was about a ... two or two-and-a-half-day trip down there, something like that. But we had all of our trucks, must have been, at least a hundred trucks or so and all this equipment that would have been packed up, we took it all down to Marseille. Then the truck drivers got on a train and went back to ... our camp in ... in Camp Philadelphia. And I happened to be one of the drivers and so we enjoyed the ride down there and back. Going on a convoy, you don't cover ... too much time in a hurry; you're not in ... big speed, speed demon, so between the two drivers ... you're switching drivers back and forth, and as you're sitting on the right hand of the ... truck going up a hill, there's a lot of ... of bicycle traffic going up the hill. You see girls riding bicycles with their skirts all the way up to here, you know.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: And you're ... I'd lean over there and ... I say ... I'd pick up ... I'd grab a girl's hand on her bicycle, and while we were going up this hill, maybe ten miles an hour, I could ... pull her along with the truck.

Ed Metzler: Pull up ... pull one up the hill.

Mr. Batty: Pull (chuckles), get her up the hill. So, that was fun.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: I got ... sitting there ... bouncing along in this ole heavy truck, and our power supply was in the trailer back behind us. By the way, we had put the power supply in a crate so it wasn't bolted down to the trailer, it was in a crate sitting in a ... in this trailer, and it was ... had softer springs in it. So, I climbed up over the back ... over the truck's body and got back and sat on that power supply back in the trailer. I'm riding back there like a king, you see, with soft springs and whatever. So, I sat there for a ... a few minutes and I says, "Well, might as well get back in the truck, I guess." So, I climbed back up and got in my seat in the truck. Now, the way that ... those little town in France are arranged on a highway ... the highway comes into town like this, then there's a center ... like a ... we have in some places here ... the courthouse or something there, and then the road splits and goes around ... both sides around here. And big trees all ... I mean, trees like this ...

Ed Metzler: *Big trees.*

Mr. Batty: ... all ... all along the side. So, I hadn't been up in the seat very long, we came to one of those little towns like that, and ... made the turn this way and then turned back to go ... and right at this point, that trailer turned over.

Ed Metzler: Oh no!

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), you know, the ... the ... going around the curve.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: The ... the trailer turned over, and the power supply slid out of it and hit one of those trees, and the trailer came back on its wheels again and ... followed the truck right on around when we stopped. I was sitting on the right-hand side of the truck and I ... looked back and I saw the ... power supply hit the tree and heard the racket going on back there. So, we stopped and ... picked it up and put it back in the ... and kept on going.

Ed Metzler: That could have been you sitting on that ... (laughter).

Mr. Batty: It could have been me, see?

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: That was ... that was the most dangerous thing I did while I was in that war over there.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckle)

Ed Metzler: But it could have been ...

Mr. Batty: It could have, and if ...

Ed Metzler: ... it could have been a life or death ...

Mr. Batty: ... fifteen minutes later, it would have been me, see?

Ed Metzler: Yes, that's right!

Mr. Batty: I was thankful for what ... my time ... at ... at that point.

Ed Metzler: Tell me what Nuremburg looked like?

Mr. Batty: I ... I didn't see a whole lot of Nuremburg; it was an old ... port city. And, you know, New Orleans or a lot of old port cities ... they kind of similar. We didn't get into town very much. There ... there was a ... one bar that ... the guys got a

chance to go in more than any of the rest of them. They'd met all the girls ... that ... that operated out of the bar, but I don't recall anything about ...

Ed Metzler: Now, you talking about Marseille or Nuremburg?

Mr. Batty: Marseille.

Ed Metzler: I'm talking Nuremburg.

Mr. Batty: Oh, Nuremburg, no ...

Ed Metzler: I'll come back to Marseille ...

Mr. Batty: ... oh, you said Marseille. Well, again, I wasn't in ... I didn't get into town in Nuremburg.

Ed Metzler: Let me ... wasn't it pretty heavily damaged? They bombed the ...

Mr. Batty: It ... it was ... it was, but ... you remember there was a ... a ... in the news you saw where Hitler had his big meetings and ... he'd get up there and speak to thousands of people ...

Ed Metzler: That was a stadium.

Mr. Batty: ... on stadium ... that had been converted into a ... a ... for us, at least, it was a storage place for food and ... all kind of supplies and things like that. And you ... you went over there in your truck to get a ... bunch of supplies ... that's where you went to. But I never did get ... get a chance to drive through town. I was always out ... in this little place out from town.

Ed Metzler: I figured they (unintelligible) bombed that back to the stone age ...

Mr. Batty: Uhm ...

Ed Metzler: ... because that was kind of the ...

Mr. Batty: Well, that was Hitler's ...

Ed Metzler: ... Nazi headquarters then.

Mr. Batty: ... Hitler's ... yeah, it was ... Hitler's headquarters were right close to his home, you know?

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: Right close there.

Ed Metzler: But they did have the Nuremburg Trials after the war.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, and it was a ...

Ed Metzler: And there was a building to have the trial in.

Mr. Batty: A nice place, yeah, that's right.

Ed Metzler: So ...

Mr. Batty: So, it ... it didn't ... apparently didn't get too much damage and Marseille didn't ... I didn't see any major damage there either, see?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, and that's because, you know, the southern extent of France didn't see that much combat.

Mr. Batty: No, that's right, they didn't. And they gave up too quick, you know, and ... and Paris didn't get any damage at all either.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I was just getting ready to say that. The French actually ... maybe in the end were really smart after all.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: But they sure gave up quick, didn't they? (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: They gave up their ... fairly quick, yeah (laughter). That's right. And ... but I did see a lot of Paris. See ...

Ed Metzler: What'd you think of Paris?

Mr. Batty: I enjoyed it. This ... camp where we were was about ... fifty miles from Paris. And while we were getting everything packed up and ready to go, they ... made arrangements to ... well, you know, we'd just come back from the war and Paris is a big thing; everybody likes Paris, you know? "Let's make arrangements so our guys can see Paris." And so we had a truck every day ... would take ten guys or so into Paris and spend the day and come back. So, I was ... I got one trip in there and then I'd have to drive the truck for another trip ... going there, and so we did that several times, enough to get all the guys a chance to go in and see Paris. And you took a lot of pictures and ... saw your way around and ... and you get acquainted with the city, you know? It ... it was a big thing, big deal. Everybody enjoyed it; Paris is the place to go. I remember, at that time, military or the ... USO or somebody ... was making arrangements for ... big programs in the United States to come over and put on a show in Paris.

Ed Metzler: Did you go to one of those?

Mr. Batty: I went ... I went to one of them, yeah, one night.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And it was ... I ... had it right on the tip of my tongue ...

Ed Metzler: It wasn't Bob Hope, huh?

Mr. Batty: No, it wasn't Bob Hope; it was one of these ... question and answer type shows, uh, where you know, they ask you a question; if you know the answer, you get fifty dollars or something like that.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, one of those quiz shows, yeah.

Mr. Batty: Quiz shows.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: And it was a well-known quiz show in this country. I ... I knew it, I had watched it when I was in ... at ... at home.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I went to that and saw it ... at least, 'cause ... write to my mom said, "Look what I ... I went to see this thing." And while I was there in this school, I didn't get a chance to do anything like that, but anyway, we ... all the guys enjoyed going to Paris. And I enjoyed two trips in there that way, at least ...

Ed Metzler: Did you have ... uhm, letters back home and ... care packages from home over there?

Mr. Batty: Oh yeah, yeah. A lot ... lot of ...

Ed Metzler: Were you a ... a faithful letter writer?

Mr. Batty: I ... I wrote quite a few letters and ... my mom answered them all. And by the way, we had V-mail. I don't know whether you're familiar with that?

Ed Metzler: I've heard of it.

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: But go ahead, tell me about it.

Mr. Batty: Uh, if you wrote a letter on ... pen ... pen and paper, then it had to be ... censored by ... an officer in your group. If he saw anything that was ... questionable, he'd cut it out, and he sent it on ... then he mailed it on to whoever it was going. And ... it took about two or three weeks to get an answer, maybe longer than that ... to get home, get an answer and get it back to you, see? So, by the time you got the answer, you've forgotten what the question was (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: But ...

Ed Metzler: And you don't even know if they got the question or whatever was censored.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, that's right, that's right.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckle)

Mr. Batty: But anyway, they ... they ... somebody came over the idea of V-mail, and the purpose of V-mail was ... it was ... you would ... write your letter on a special form, and then it could be transmitted electronically ... from that form to a similar form and then post those ... area in the United States. And then, they put it in the envelope and mailed it to ... wherever it was going in the United States. As a result, it would get there within ... two or three days ... instead of being two or three weeks. And that was a big help.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Batty: And, of course, you were limited in how much space you had to write 'cause you couldn't say, "page two" or anything of that nature. So, you've got this limited space of ... two or three paragraphs and that would be about all you could write.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: But it was wonderful to have this speed with which you could get the word across, and then they could do the same thing back to you ... 'cause of V-mail coming back. And the Army had good mail service. You've seen APOs and ... such as this?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: They kept those where you were ... pretty darned good. And you ... you would get mail at least every day or two or three times a week. And mail call was one of the ... biggest things that could happen in the day's time.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Batty: The ... and each ... each group had a mail clerk, so the mail clerk took care of ... ingoing and outcoming ... uh, outgoing/incoming mail. And ... then they'd have mail call whenever the ... mail ... came ... came in. Everybody was there waiting for a letter from home, you see? And you could also write to your friends in some other APO area, and I did that a couple of times. I had a ... a



cousin that was in ... in General Patton's army over there, and I wrote ... note ... back and forth him a couple of times.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Batty: And same thing with that mail back that way. So, it was a good service.

Ed Metzler: Who was your ... Commanding Officer? Who did you report to? A Captain you mentioned ...

Mr. Batty: It was ... a Captain was the head of our ... of our company, can't think of his name now; he was a good guy, but he was the ... the highest rank we had. And we didn't report to a division or ... some other regiment or anything of that nature. We were support to anybody that needed us. For example, in Europe, they had ... the fighting forces were in divisions and ... and those divisions were in ... armies and they fought various areas. There was also an area that supported the Army with gasoline and all kind of supplies and that was called the Communication Zone ... which was from the battle zone back several ... hundred miles, I guess, to all the supplies that had to be ... carried forward into the battle zone. And so, they ... that area was called the Communication Zone. Now, we were attached to a group called the Advanced Section of the Communication Zone, so we were right up in the ... just behind the ...

Ed Metzler: Pretty close or ...

Mr. Batty: ... just behind the fighting guys.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: If ... if you had a ... a telephone needed repairs, bring it back to us, and we'll get it back to you quick ... pretty quick. We didn't ever have to do that, but that was the ... the theory behind it.

Ed Metzler: Did you ever ... get your hands on or ... get a chance to look into what the Germans used in the way of telephone system?

Mr. Batty: No, we didn't, we didn't ... we didn't ...

Ed Metzler: Had no idea of ...

Mr. Batty: ... get any place where they were captured or anything.

Ed Metzler: ... how ours compared ...

Mr. Batty: No.

Ed Metzler: ... to theirs ...

Mr. Batty: No.

Ed Metzler: ... or anything?

Mr. Batty: Not ... not whether they were leading the technology ...

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible), I mean ...

Mr. Batty: ... or idea. I'm not ... I'm sure they had ... good stuff.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: Now, another thing, you're talking about their equipment ... one of the prize ... items was a ... pistol, a German pistol.

Ed Metzler: A Luger probably.

Mr. Batty: A Luger, yep.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: And the Army ... frowned on us ... getting Lugers, you know? That ... that was stealing, and so they didn't ... they didn't like that idea. And I didn't get one myself, but I saw guys that did get one. Then ... they had to hide it because [if] they'd get caught with it, they ... that's a ... bad offense, you see?

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: But it was a prize ... uh, I mean, surprise ... uh, prize to take home with you.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, very little looting that I saw ... that went on. And another ... another thing ... in Germany, the government didn't approve of you having association with the German people; that was "verboten" [forbidden].

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: And ... there was a term for it, I've forgotten now what the term was, but you ... uh, fraternization.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: You couldn't fraternize with the civilians – men, women or ... children or whatever. It wasn't a matter of keeping you away from pretty girls, it was keeping you away from the civilian population, and so that ... that kept you from ... getting acquainted with the Germans, you might say ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... to that degree. So, I don't know of any case where we had a ... had occasion to have any interface with ... German ... population.

Ed Metzler: When you were in Germany, did you ever see any of the autobahn system ... that they had ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah, yeah, we did.

Ed Metzler: ... that they had built?

Mr. Batty: And that's a beautiful system.

Ed Metzler: It was beautiful back then, and ...

Mr. Batty: Oh, it was then, see? And what you're looking at is super highways. The two lanes ... there were two lanes wide in each direction, separated by a wide ... median of ... strip or something or other.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And then ... then there'd be going up ... all through the mountains and whatever, a beautiful, beautiful deal. I remember one of them ... we came across this ... it was a valley and a big road going down here and there was a river down at the bottom and going back up again. The ... you go down this thing and the bridge at the bottom was bombed out (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, you had ... (unintelligible) get around the bridge.

Ed Metzler: So ... so be alert when you're on the autobahn (chuckles) ...

Mr. Batty: Be alert, that's right.

Ed Metzler: ... when you come to a bridge.

Mr. Batty: That's right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: But ... now, see, that's what ... that's what resulted in our interstate highway systems.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I know; it was our model.

Mr. Batty: Eisenhower saw it, and he said ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: ... , "They got a good idea." So, he ... started the ... the inter ... national highway system. Its not very noticeable, I don't think, but I've heard that part

of the deal of building the interstate highways ... there had to be a ... one mile straight stretch every so often in order to land an airplane ... on the interstate highways.

Ed Metzler: On our interstate ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah, on our interstates.

Ed Metzler: ... and ... I didn't know that!

Mr. Batty: That was ... I've heard that; I haven't seen it in ... in print, but I've heard that ... that was part of the specifications ...

Ed Metzler: I'll be darned!

Mr. Batty: ... for the highway.

Ed Metzler: I've never heard that.

Mr. Batty: And see, the military ... they (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Oh yeah, that was the original ... was moving military ...

Mr. Batty: ... military equipment, yeah, that's right.

Ed Metzler: ... and manpower (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: That's right. So, that's why they ... as emergency landing strip for an airplane.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Batty: They wanted a straight stretch somewhere ... or ... very often that you could find.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Batty: And I've never ... seen on a highway, I've never been able to see okay, this is a straight stretch right here.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, there's a straight stretch!

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: Now, recognizing you never did any hand to hand with Germans, but ... Germany was the enemy ...

Mr. Batty: Hum.

Ed Metzler: ... and you were a ... a patriot and an American ...

Mr. Batty: And ... and we were the ... we were the victor.

Ed Metzler: ... how did ... how did ... yeah, and the victor. How did you feel about ... Germans and Germany then and how do you feel about them now?

Mr. Batty: I had no animosity towards the German population as far as the ... you kind of felt sorry for the ... population 'cause they'd been through so much ... problem ... with ... and the ... the other thing is, you got some of the Germans that were, should we say Nazis and other Germans that were just like you and me - we believed in what was right. And the ... of us that ... to do ... what they had to do, they became Nazis and how much of it was sunk in as part of "had to do it or what I want to do it," we don't know, see?

Ed Metzler: Yeah, well ...

Mr. Batty: But we had no ... as far as the German, average German citizen, we had no animosity towards them that I could see. And we had an awful lot of them, after the war was over, German soldiers, that were working for us as helpers in our camps. In fact, in Camp Philadelphia, they had ... together ... routine maintenance type stuff in the camp; they wore the same uniform I did; the only difference was on the back of the uniform it had "PW" painted in big letters ... PRISONER OF WAR ... in them big letters.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... but if you faced the guy face to face ...

Ed Metzler: You couldn't tell.

Mr. Batty: ... couldn't tell the difference. If you saw him from behind, it ... you could see it. Now, we were living in large tents, twenty-four men in a tent, and these tents were lined up ... like this with a walkway between more tents here, and ...

Ed Metzler: This is at Camp Philadelphia?

Mr. Batty: ... in Camp Philadelphia, right.

Ed Metzler: How far from Paris was Camp Philadelphia?

Mr. Batty: It was about fifty miles.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: It was right on the Seine River ...

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: ... in northern France.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, go ahead.

Mr. Batty: Oh, and that ... brings up another ... comment. One Sunday afternoon we were laying around, didn't have anything to do, so we walked over in this ... bank of the river was kind of a sloping area down there and we saw an American/French (?) freighter going up the river towards Paris, and the flag was at half-staff ... on the ship. Wonder why that is? We hadn't heard anything that would be ... half-staff. It turned out ... President Roosevelt had died, and that was ...

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible) '45.

Mr. Batty: And that was the first we'd heard about it was seeing that ship ...

Ed Metzler: Isn't that something?

Mr. Batty: ... with a ... half ...

Ed Metzler: That's the way you found out.

Mr. Batty: ... that's the way we found out. And it was several hours later when we found out it was somebody that knew why this flag was at half-mast. Now, why we didn't get that word quicker, I don't know. But ...

Ed Metzler: Well, the war was still on when you saw that.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, that ... that may have been ... when we left ... Camp Twenty Grand, Camp Twenty Grand.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: That ... that was in March.

Ed Metzler: Where were you when the Europ ... the war in the European Theater was over, VE Day? Were you up in Germany (unintelligible)?

Mr. Batty: No, no we were in ... we were in Germany at that time.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: Somewhere around ... after the being Nuremburg and this other little town.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, and I don't remember there being anything different than yesterday.

Ed Metzler: So, it was just another day.

Mr. Batty: It was just another day.

Ed Metzler: Was no drunkenness and ...

Mr. Batty: No, nothing ...

Ed Metzler: ... and cheering in the streets?

Mr. Batty: No, huh uh, nothing. But now, that's different from when the war was over in ... in Japan.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: Now, when that was over, we went into Marseille, or ... let me finish this story. We took our trucks ... trucks down there and they were shipped ... over to the Philippines. Then ... we all went back to Camp Philadelphia on ... on a ... train. Uh, Forty and Eight, you've heard that term?

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible)

Mr. Batty: The French term for Forty and Eight train ... is a railroad car ... a ... a ... like a freight car that's big enough for forty men or eight horses, that's left over from World War I, and its just a ... an open box ... kind of boxcar with some airstrips around the top, but you could put forty men in it or you could put eight horses in it.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: So, they called it Forty and Eight. And it was there for World War II and ... and World War I.

Ed Metzler: That's probably what they hauled some of the Jews off to the concentration camps (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: It probably ... probably is, yeah.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, right.

Mr. Batty: So, we ... that is what we rode from Marseille back to ...

Ed Metzler: So, it was a real luxury ride, huh?!

Mr. Batty: That's right!

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And you slept on the floor, see? (chuckles)

Ed Metzler: Well, if you were German, you were used to that though (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Yeah (chuckles), that's right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And if you ... if you had to go to the bathroom, you had to wait till the train stops and you get off the train to ... do whatever you had to do, see? Uh, so it was a ... a rough ride, but that was the only way you could get there. Now, they

did have passenger trains, but ... uh, we didn't ... rate one of them. But anyway, riding the trains, the train would stop at various places in railroad yards and things like that and you'd be sitting there for ... a long time. You didn't know when it was going to start up again, but ... you might be fifteen minutes and maybe three hours. But while you're there, you look around, there's a lot of railroad cars stopped in this ... rail ... yard, and ... the French people shipped wine in tank cars and tank cars are made out of oak wood.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), yeah.

Mr. Batty: And the tank cars are old and they'd been shipping wine for many years, so the wine seeps through the ... bottom of the oak tank and drips out the bottom of the car (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, we'd take a can and go out there, two or three cans, and that car ... we'd put the can under it ... this one put the can under it ...

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: ... and ... but you come back in fifteen or twenty minutes and check your cans and they'd be ... a good bit of wine in it, see?

Ed Metzler: So, is that how you became a ... French wine connoisseur?

Mr. Batty: Yes, that's right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And (chuckles), and you (unintelligible) hey, its the ... the wine over in that car is better than the wine in this one (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter), yeah, that's red wine, that's white wine (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Yeah, so we all ... had the ... some ... special.

Ed Metzler: I have never heard a story about that (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Well, that ... that's ... and ... as long as you stayed in this railroad yard, the more of the cars you found that were dripping, see? So, it was ... you have all kind of things to take advantage of.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: We didn't have any cheese to go with it, but we had ... (laughter) ...

Ed Metzler: Well, doggone it! (chuckles)



Mr. Batty: ... but had the ... had the wine. So, all those little things helped pass the time of day.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: Uh ...

Ed Metzler: Have you ever been back to France after the war was over?

Mr. Batty: I went back in ... '92. My wife had to go over there on ... a business trip.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And I went with her. I was retired at the time.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: But we didn't go up to the battle zone. She was ... in ... in Paris.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I was only in Paris with her.

Ed Metzler: Well, at least you got to say hello to Paris again.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, that's right.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And ... then ... I told you about my ... my family was from Europe, uh from England.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, Joyce had ... was in a meeting in ... Paris, and she had to go to a meeting in Portugal the next week, so she went ... we both went to Paris, next we got ... went to England. She went to Portugal; I went to England to (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: Where in the UK is that?

Mr. Batty: What ... Port ...

Ed Metzler: Where did you go in England?

Mr. Batty: Oh, just outside of the city of Manchester.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: Manchester was the airport ... I went to, and ... oh, I can't think of the name of the town. Where's ... the name of the town is same as ... for stainless steel, and knives and things like ...

Ed Metzler: Oh, uh, Sheffield.

Mr. Batty: Sheffield, that's it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: That's where my folks are from, Sheffield.

Ed Metzler: Okay! Industrial country, yeah.

Mr. Batty: And so, that's where I was going. I had heard that ... all of the ... churches in England had the historical generic ... genealogy records of all the people.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I got there Sunday morning, find this church in town. So, I waited till that church service was over, and then I went and talked to the preacher. I told him that's what I was looking for. He said, "Oh, I'm sorry," says, "three or four years ago we transferred all that stuff over to the state archives, and you can find they ... they've got a place," he told me where it was in town, "and you can go down there tomorrow and ... and see what they've got." So, I went down (unintelligible) and there was a sign on the window, "Closed." Seems like I got there during a bank holiday. And in bank holidays even the pubs are closed (laughter) for several ...

Ed Metzler: Now, that's a serious setback.

Mr. Batty: ... for several days, that's a serious situation.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: But several days, I was just sitting as a tourist with no place to go.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And ... and so I said ... well, I ... I'd like to see the place, so I got on a bus ... one local buses and all the buses were ... going to Sherwood Forest or some kind of Robin Hood name.

Ed Metzler: Nottingham or something, yeah.

Mr. Batty: Nottingham ... all those names ... would be on the (unintelligible) of ... of the bus. So, I got on a bus, I've forgotten which one it said and we rode all through town and got out to the end of the line, and everybody's off the bus but me. I'm sitting there on the bus ... waiting for it to turn around. And the driver looks at me and says, "This is as far as I go if you want to get off." I said, "No," and I told him what I was doing. He said, "Well, I'm ... we're going back." So, I rode back to town with him. But ... anyway, that's how I spent my time doing

that, looking at the town. They had a museum downtown; I went through the museum, see how they lived in those days.

Ed Metzler: So, let's go back to Marseille. You were in Marseille ... when ... the Japanese surrendered?

Mr. Batty: Right, right.

Ed Metzler: So, was there a big ... party then or not?

Mr. Batty: Again, yeah, we were ... we were there in Marseille, and the ship was there also. And so, we were ... we were there ... going to get on a ship like ... tomorrow. And they had all the people lined up in tents and all the ships were lined up in the harbor ... already stuffed with provisions for wherever it was going.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And then they dropped the bomb in Japan. Well, you never saw such excitement in your life.

Ed Metzler: When the bomb was dropped?

Mr. Batty: When the bomb was dropped. And I guess it was ... there were two bombs. Now, I don't remember which one I'm talking about; we didn't know that ... I didn't know that there were two bombs at that time.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: We may have been talking about the second bomb, I don't know. It was the one that ended the war, and the second bomb ended the war.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, well that was the Nagasaki (unintelligible) ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... finally caused ...

Mr. Batty: But anyway, as soon as we heard the war was over ... everybody that had a gun was shooting it up in the air.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible)

Mr. Batty: Yeah, and we were ... we were in a camp area that was all rock, gravel. You could hear the bullets falling in the rocks.

Ed Metzler: Oh my gosh!

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), I went and got my hard hat and put it on.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), luckily ... I ... one didn't come too close in, but you could hear them and it was nighttime, so you could hear them ... fall on the rocks. But everybody was happy as could be, see. Well then, the next day ... we didn't get on a ship. And no ... nobody knows what to do. You know, we got a bunch of guys here, we got to ship in and there's nothing to do, we don't need them ... in Japan, and they don't have enough points to get ... to go back home; what are we going to do with them? Somebody said, "Well hell, they're already there, put them on a ship and send them back to the United States. So, that's what they did. They put us on a ship there and we went back to Nor ... Norfolk, Virginia.

Ed Metzler: What just a freighter (unintelligible)?

Mr. Batty: It was just ... it was a freighter ... made ...

Ed Metzler: Nondescript freighter of some sort?

Mr. Batty: ... no, it was a ... bigger ship. It was a freighter that had been redesigned to carry troops.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: In the ... in the holds they had put bunks and stuff like that.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... but ... since the situation was ... as it is, they put five hundred more guys on the ship than it had ... facilities for.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: But ... nobody cared (laughter), you know?

Ed Metzler: Get me home! (laughter)

Mr. Batty: Get me home!

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: If you had to sleep on deck, that was alright. It was ...

Ed Metzler: That's okay, too.

Mr. Batty: ... it was September, the weather was nice, and so everything was fine. We ... we got ... we left ... late one afternoon I think, and the next morning we went through Gibraltar and out into the ocean. And all through the Mediterranean

that ship was just like this room, just solid as ... got in the ocean and it ... ship begin to rocking.

Ed Metzler: The Atlantic, North Atlantic is something you ...

Mr. Batty: And ... its something else.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: Well, that's when ... a lot of guys started getting sea sick. And as I said, there were more guys on there than there was ... facilities for, so it was ... not too good. (laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And the food ... service was down below in a hold and you got down below and the kitchens and the steam and the smell of food and ... and a bunch of guys ... standing around there ...

Ed Metzler: You get (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: ... is not the most appetizing place in the world, see, even though the food is decent to eat. You don't feel too ... and that thing is rocking, you can't see out, so its ... it wasn't too ... and ... and a couple of days later it settled down and everything was alright. Well, we got back to ... to Norfolk. Again, they didn't need us anywhere, so they said, "Okay, here's your orders ... for a thirty-day furlough to go home, travel orders to ... to go home." So, they sent me back to ... Camp Shelby, Mississippi which is fifty miles from home ...

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Batty: And ... thirty days furlough. Well before the thirty days was up, they said, "Here's fifteen more days; we don't need you ... still ... here's fifteen more days. Take fifteen (unintelligible), but then report back to ... your company in Camp Campbell, Kentucky." So, the 58<sup>th</sup> Signal Repair Company was going to reassemble in Camp Campbell, Kentucky. And so, this forty-five days at home, and then ... they ... I got a ... orders to go to Camp Campbell with ... personal transportation; they didn't provide ... they ... the government couldn't ...

Ed Metzler: On your own?!

Mr. Batty: ... the government couldn't provide transportation, so they said, "Use personal conveyance ...

Ed Metzler: So, what'd you do ... hitchhike or what?

Mr. Batty: ... and we'd pay you three ... three cents a mile."

Ed Metzler: Oh, they would ... they would pay you?

Mr. Batty: They'd pay you, yeah, three cents a mile, and at that time, pay, okay. Well, one of the guys in the group was from New Orleans, so he had to go from New Orleans to Camp Campbell ... says go right by where I was, so ... he stopped and picked ... I rode with him ... on back to Camp Campbell. And then ... the whole ... within a few days then everybody got back to Camp Campbell. And they didn't need us then, so the ... organization was dis ... dissipated.

Ed Metzler: So, you went up to Camp Campbell to get discharged ... you come back home (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Yeah, just ... well, not ... not, no, no, not discharged but ... to get out of the org ... organization.

Ed Metzler: Okay and then what happened?

Mr. Batty: Uh, we was ... we were assigned to different places for some reason.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: Okay. I was assigned to a Signal ... Signal ... Signal Construction Battalion building telephone lines and that type of thing in ... in Camp Campbell. And we hadn't been there more than a few days and they transferred that organization to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. So, I went to Fort Bragg with this ... uh, construction out ... outfit. And ... there I was assigned as a ... lineman, telephone, I was climbing telephone poles and that type of thing. And ... very shortly after I got through that, I got assigned to the Motor Pool as a Mechanic, Truck Mechanic, in the Motor Pool. And very shortly, I was made the ... Motor Sergeant in charge of the whole Motor Pool. We had about twenty or twenty-five trucks and I was ... in charge of maintenance of all the ... trucks and ... assignment of trucks for duty every day and that type of stuff. So, I ... I enjoyed that, and that's where I was when I got discharged.

Ed Metzler: That's right, because you didn't get discharged till '46.

Mr. Batty: That's right, '46.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible) '46.

Mr. Batty: That's right, April of '46.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, April, okay.

Mr. Batty: So ... and this was September, late Sept ... or early October when I got transferred over there. So, I had that much time from October to April of next year and I still had to serve. And so I was discharged out of that assignment and I was promoted to a Staff Sergeant while I was in that ... Motor (unintelligible) job ... which I was ... felt like I did pretty good to get ... promoted ... two years I was in the service. But ... and then they ... they give me transportation to go from there back home.

Ed Metzler: Did you ever toy with the idea of staying in the service?

Mr. Batty: Several times, yeah. Uh, I was very comfortable. As a Sergeant I did ... good job, and I was ... uh, didn't have any connections at home other than my mother, so I didn't have a girlfriend or ... wife or anybody else there at home, so I thought very seriously about it. And ... the word was that our group, the organization, was going to be transferred from Fort Bragg to ... Governor's Island, New York which is New York Harbor. And that would be a big deal, you know, being in New York City, and by god, what you could do in it on your time off in New York City. So, I thought very seriously about it. But then I got to thinking ... you know, had ... that's ... ah, I don't know whether I like this life for ... for lifetime or not, so I ... I better get out and go to college.

Ed Metzler: Uhm, a (unintelligible) decision.

Mr. Batty: So, I got ... I got discharged in ... in April and then went back home and ... and started back to school in ... in September of that year, Mississippi State College.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: As ... as a result of ... telephone work, I'd got interested in electricity, so I got my degree in electrical engineering. Went through the degree at ... with the ... government assistance, the GI Bill.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: Which is one of the greatest things the government ever did.

Ed Metzler: You bet!

Mr. Batty: And its still working ... for guys that are coming out of the ...

Ed Metzler: You bet!

Mr. Batty: ... current military.

Ed Metzler: You bet!

Mr. Batty: So, it was a deal all the way through. I saved ...

Ed Metzler: Now, did you stay in ... I'm sorry, I interrupted you, please ...

Mr. Batty: ... I ... I got ... through ... through there at Mississippi State ... and then luckily I got a job when I got out with the IBM Corporation (dog barking in background). And ... my ... so I went (dog continuing to bark) a week later, I started with IBM; hence the rest of my career for thirty-eight years. No other ... no other company.

Ed Metzler: (Talking to dog), settle down.

Mr. Batty: So, that was my career and ... as a result of that I stayed in the frontline of IBM ... electronically, you might say, for a little while. They got ... that was before computers hit the market.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... I got trained on some of the early computers. I was working in Birmingham, Alabama as a repairman for their ... their equipment and it was all electric ... mechanical up to that point.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... I happened to be the ... one of the person ... is the youngest in that office and all the other older guys hadn't even heard of electronics.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckles), so ... the ... the boss sent me to a ... a school of ... of electronic computers, so I was the first one to get into that part of the ... work in Birmingham.

Ed Metzler: After the war, did you stay in touch with any of your old buds from the war years?

Mr. Batty: Yeah, I did. I stayed in touch with ... three other guys (dog barking in background), and we ... and Christmas cards and ... just this, that and the other and ... until one of them in Montana ... I liked him for a long time ... till he died. And his wife sent me some pictures of ... that ... they left it with him. And



another one that ... was from ... oh, he was a farm boy from Arkansas, and he and I stayed in touch for a long time, we had a lot in common. And then somewhere ... (unintelligible) I lost track of him, I don't know what happened. And the third one was a close friend and he lived in Massachusetts. He worked for the ... telephone company in Massachusetts (dog barking in background). So, when he got out of the Army, he went back with the telephone company again and everything was fine.

Ed Metzler: Did you ever have reunions of your outfit?

Mr. Batty: No, we didn't. The outfit disappeared and ... and it wasn't like you have today ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... with some of them ... coming back together.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: We had no connection, no official ... connection with anybody in the ... in the group. Now, this ... one guy that ... in Massachusetts, he and I stayed close together for a long time. In fact, we're still close together even though he died. And if you have time, I'd like to fill you in a little bit on ... on there. During the ... the ... our active working years, he was working for the telephone company in ... in Massachusetts. I'm working for the IBM Corporation down here, and ... a lot of time we ... was writing back and forth ... letters back and forth (dog barking in background), and ... sometimes at night he'd be working ... a late shift on a switchboard or something and he'd call me up, and we'd talk for an hour or two on the telephone ... two o'clock in the morning.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckles) ... (chimes ringing in background), three ... three ... three meals on ... the telephone, see?

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, we stayed in touch all these years, and ... one of his sons ... graduated from a flight school in San Antonio and he and his wife came down to be there for the graduation. They stopped and visited with us in Austin.

Ed Metzler: And how long ago was this?

Mr. Batty: That would have been in the late ... early ... late ... 70s.

Ed Metzler: Okay, that long ago?

Mr. Batty: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: Okay.

Mr. Batty: When his son was graduating from ... military flight school ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... in San Antonio, see? And ... so that boy graduated from ... from the school there and he was ... now he's retired from the Air Force.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles), time marches on, doesn't it?! (laughter)

Mr. Batty: It sure does. And ... his last assignment in the Air Force was ... pilot on a ... on one of these aerial tankers and he got ... he got discharged and now he's a pilot for UPS on their ... their ... freighters.

Ed Metzler: Hum!

Mr. Batty: Uh, he also had another son that was ... oh, let me back up. I never met the ... the ... his kids, met his wife ... when she came down here ... going to see the kid, but I never met the kids. In 2010, I believe it was, he and his wife were celebrating their ... 50 ... 65<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary and then ... the kids were setting up a party and they called me and said, "Would ... would you like to come? Don't tell Dad you're coming; it's going to be a surprise, but we'd love to have you come up for the party." "Oh, we'll be happy to." So, Joyce and I went up there. He says, "Made you a hotel reservation, call me when you get in town," you know. So, I called him and said ... , "We're here." "Well, I tell you we ... we told Dad you were coming (laughter); we didn't want to surprise him too much."

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you don't want a ... too big a surprise (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Yeah (laughter), that's right. So, "We told him you were coming, and we'll meet you tomorrow for lunch at the hotel." So, that's ... that was ... a big deal, we enjoyed it.

Ed Metzler: I'll bet!

Mr. Batty: We met all of his kids and had a ... the whole time ... we were there several days and just kind of felt like part of the family, and they took us in like part of the family.

Ed Metzler: Well, that relationship goes *way* (unintelligible)!

Mr. Batty: Oh yeah. Well, it's still going. In fact, that's why you are here. Because one of the sons ... I took them over ... he was here visiting with us. I said, "One of the best places to go is that museum over in Fredericksburg." So, we went over to the museum, and he was amazed!

Ed Metzler: So, now this has tied it all together ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah, that's right.

Ed Metzler: ... with how you ended up at the museum.

Mr. Batty: That's right. So, we went and ... we ... started and then ... it took him so long going through, we only got halfway through; he was reading every word.

Ed Metzler: Ah yeah, you can't do that (laughter).

Mr. Batty: And he was reading every word, taking pictures of all the displays ... whatever.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I only got halfway through the museum (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And he had to leave. He said, "But I'm coming back," he said (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: So, back in December ... he came back, and ... but anyway, that's when we went out and left out of there. I signed the ...

Ed Metzler: Right, the log.

Mr. Batty: ... thing there, the log.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And there's a question about being recorded like this.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: I said, "Yeah, I'd be glad to do it, but I don't have time right now."

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Batty: “And we ... come back later.” “That’s fine.” “Okay.” So, we ... later then he came back in December ... we went over ... and instead of starting in the middle and go ... he started at the first again and went all through ...

Ed Metzler: No, you can’t do that (laughter)!

Mr. Batty: We had all day, see? So, I ...

Ed Metzler: You got the whole thing!

Mr. Batty: ... first and went all the way through it.

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: And then ... when I got out ... the same time I stopped at the office there, told the gal, “Oh, I’m sorry, the ... the guy that does it, is not here right now, but ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah.

Mr. Batty: ... I’ll give you his phone number.”

Ed Metzler: Yeah, we just needed that ...

Mr. Batty: And that ... and that’s how you got involved.

Ed Metzler: ... yeah, well that’s great.

Mr. Batty: And the next thing was ... you called me. It was a long story about the ... the son that was over there. My friend’s name ... Harris, married a girl in Massachusetts, and his wife’s brother ... was in the Air ... in the Army in the uh, one of the Airborne divisions, I’ve forgot, anyway, they was ... they was jumping ... as para ... he was a paratrooper; they jump in ... D-Day and right after D-Day.

Ed Metzler: That would have been the 82<sup>nd</sup> ... or the 101<sup>st</sup>.

Mr. Batty: And one ... you may have heard ... there was a ... there was a ... a battle called Market Garden; have you heard of that?

Ed Metzler: I have.

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: That was a mess.

Mr. Batty: He was killed in that ... that jump in Market Garden ... deal; this boy’s uncle. And of course, he wasn’t his uncle then ‘cause ...he wasn’t born at that time.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: But, as a result of that, and ... when he got old enough, he knew about his uncle being killed in ... war.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And he's been ... dedicating his ... whole life to find out what happened to his uncle.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And the uncle's organization has had a lot of ... meetings, annual meetings.

Ed Metzler: Reunions and stuff.

Mr. Batty: Reunions. This boy is quite active in that reunion ... management of the reunions.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: They had one in San Antonio ... 2015 maybe ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... and he invited George and I to come down to the ... to it, and we were there the whole time; it was a week-long ... deal. And so, I met the whole ... whole idea, and that organization is still active in the Army, and ... and they're stationed at Fort Bragg.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And three of the guys from Fort Bragg were over here at the meeting, and ... and down in San Antonio, so it was ... it was a big deal. And now they call ... its not the ... the 508<sup>th</sup> ... is the name of the organization, but its not just the 508s, its 508<sup>th</sup> Friends and Family. Most of the guys are gone; there's still a few of them, but ... now they've got the Friends and Family of the guys that are ... keeping the organization going.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, yeah.

Mr. Batty: so, its a ... its an active organization, and guy ... most active in it and he's one of the leaders in it now.

Ed Metzler: Uhm.

Mr. Batty: And that's why we were (unintelligible) the second time ... over at the museum in Fredericksburg to go through this ... finish the whole deal off.

Ed Metzler: (Unintelligible), (chuckles).

Mr. Batty: But the other side of the coin is ... at the ... anniversary meeting up there now, I met all of his family. And this boy (unintelligible). But I also met another son who was in the Navy, and this son was a ... a Lieutenant Commander in the Navy in Washington D.C. And he was up there at the ... in Massachusetts at the ... party. So, we got to talking about this thing and another, and he says ... I asked him, I said, “Well, you been there for almost two years, you’ve been overseas, been a lot of different locations, and Lieutenant Commander is a pretty good rank in ... in the Navy.

Ed Metzler: Yes, it is!

Mr. Batty: And so he ... he said, “My next assignment is going to be ... I’m going to be the Commander of a Navy Training School in Meridian, Mississippi.” Guess who’s hometown is Meridian, Mississippi?! (laughter)

Ed Metzler: I know (laughter).

Mr. Batty: Okay, well he thought he was going to the tail-end of the universe. He grew up in Massachusetts, and to go to Mississippi, what could be worse?! (laughter)

Ed Metzler: Yeah, what could be worse, yeah. (laughter)

Mr. Batty: And any ... anyway, I ... I told him, I said, “That’s not for ... that’s pretty good; Meridian is my hometown,” see, he didn’t know that. When we were talking, he didn’t know that. So, I told him that. So, well he ... sympathized with me, I guess (laughter).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: And then came time for the ... assignment, he went ... invited us to come to his Change of Command ceremony, and that’s a big deal ... in the Navy.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum!

Mr. Batty: I’m not much ... at that that I’ve seen in the Army, until you get up to something like Fort Hood. But, I guess, every Navy organization is ... stretched out pretty ... pretty good. So, he invited us to come to the ... this ... it was going to be next year, February sometime. Well, it turns out, I got a ... also, I’ll be there if the creeks don’t rise. By the time we got home from there, the creeks started to rise. I got a note from my son ... uh, my grandson was getting in Las ... Las

Vegas the same weekend. Now, which place do you go to? (laughter) We decided to ... in answer to family relations, we'd better go to the wedding.

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Batty: Well anyway, the Navy changed the date of the ... of this thing to some later date; we got to both of them.

Ed Metzler: You got to both.

Mr. Batty: And so, we went to the ... over there to his ... his initial assignment, and he ... and he was there two years. He loved it; he got promoted to a Captain while he was there and he'd done apparently a good job. He loved Meridian as a ... as anything could be. He was a big fish in a little pond, see (laughter).

Ed Metzler: Yeah, sure!

Mr. Batty: (Laughter), and ... all the people in town, all the big ... wheels in town took him into all the meetings and he was part of the crowd, you know?

Ed Metzler: Right!

Mr. Batty: And so, he thoroughly enjoyed his assignment.

Ed Metzler: So, Meridian wasn't so bad after all?

Mr. Batty: Wasn't bad after all, no.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: (Laughter)

Ed Metzler: Let me ask you one last question ...

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: ... about World War II.

Mr. Batty: Okay.

Ed Metzler: Uh, you went ... into the Army as an eighteen-year-old kid.

Mr. Batty: Uh hum.

Ed Metzler: And did, you know, did know nothing about the world.

Mr. Batty: Right.

Ed Metzler: Although you'd been around the U.S., and two years later you came back from overseas. Tell me how your Army and World War II experience changed you in the way you looked at life.

Mr. Batty: Well, that's a ... a good question, Ed, I don't know how to answer it. Uh, it made a man out of me, let's put it that way.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: Uh, I ... I looked at things like ... , "What's my future going to be?" And my ... by the way, I changed my pattern of ... future from ... when I first went in the service, I thought I was going to go to school as a chemical engineer, but my experience with telephones and that, I became an electrical engineer.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, that was my theory. So, I immediately went to college and most everybody at school was veterans.

Ed Metzler: That's right.

Mr. Batty: Uhm, we all had the same idea of, "Let's do this thing right and get a good job."

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: Now ... to ... how much fun can we have going to ... somewhere and having a party.

Ed Metzler: Which may have been where you were when you ... were young and went into the Army.

Mr. Batty: Probably, could be, yeah.

Ed Metzler: But when you came out, you were mature, huh?

Mr. Batty: That's right. And ... uh, it was so busy with new people coming into school, the school wasn't really ... didn't have a place for ... I had to live off campus while I was there. And, so I didn't get associated with the ... that much of the evening hours ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... with the kids in the dormitory. But everybody was ... veterans. You know I bet there wasn't five ... kids that ... were going to school there. There were a few girls that were out ... just out of high school and going to school there, but mostly we was ... all veterans and ... we had a different idea about life, you know, and we wanted to study and learn what we could ... about our ... whatever our goal was.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.



Mr. Batty: And ... likewise in the ... in the ROTC. I took the ... part ... the ROTC part of the ... the school deal, and as I say, got a commission as Second Lieutenant in the artillery that included a ... summer deal in Fort Benning, Georgia. And, by the way, while I was at ... at Mississippi State, I became the Regimental Commander for all the Cadet Corps ...

Ed Metzler: Uhm!

Mr. Batty: ... at Mississippi State which I thought ... was a pretty good honor.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... but I enjoyed the military part of the ... part of that there, too, see? And so, it was a ... a growth period in school as well as ... in the ... in the military.

Ed Metzler: Hum.

Mr. Batty: And ... I had no ... no qualms at all about how bad the military is or anything ... of that sort. I have a good ... place in my heart ... for the military.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, all ... all those kind of things, I ... I sum it up and say it made a man out of me.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And I ... I appreciated things that my mother was doing. I appreciated ... how she was getting along with ... dad being out of town most of the time.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: And all that sort of stuff. And, again, at the time, I didn't have a serious ... girlfriend connection.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I didn't have that ... hanging over my head or (unintelligible).

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: If that's the right word.

Ed Metzler: (Laughter)

Mr. Batty: Uhm, I did have a ... meet my future wife at ... on a blind date while I was in school which is an interesting thing to tell you that, too. Maybe when you cut the ...

Ed Metzler: Yeah, I'll cut it off and then I'll want to hear your story.

Mr. Batty: So, all those kind of things made you appreciate ... life, and appreciate living among the ... (unintelligible) people ... being off the campus.

Ed Metzler: Uhm. So, what other things about your World War II experience ... can we talk about ... while I've got you on the air here?

Mr. Batty: Well, I think you've pretty well covered ...

Ed Metzler: We've covered a lot of ground.

Mr. Batty: ... most of it, yeah, was a lot of ground. Uhm, and again, there's nothing on ... in there that I'm sorry for; I ... I ... nothing that I've hated while I was going through it. Uhm, I was lucky that I didn't have a bad ... boot camp like ... some people do.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum, and you had good Commanding Officers.

Mr. Batty: And ... had a good Commanding Officer all the way through.

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: So, I have no ... no qualms of ... problems with the military.

Ed Metzler: And you had ... buddies that you've connected with ...

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: ... and stayed in contact with.

Mr. Batty: Yeah, yeah.

Ed Metzler: So ...

Mr. Batty: And ... well ... we had buddies that we made trips to Paris together.

Ed Metzler: Right.

Mr. Batty: We took pictures, you know, and that type of thing. Uhm, so all in all, and again, I was the youngest one of the bunch.

Ed Metzler: Yeah, you were the baby of the bunch.

Mr. Batty: I was the baby of the bunch. In fact, going through basic training and ... in Camp Crowder, Missouri, I guess I had never been in a bar before.

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: (Chuckle), come ...

Ed Metzler: There's no reason to be; you're eighteen.

Mr. Batty: ... coming from Miss ... uh, Mississippi, is in ... that's not part of our culture.

Ed Metzler: That's right (laughter).

Mr. Batty: So, one of the guys that was in our group ... also had been in ... through basics, well he was thirty-five years old or something; we called him the Old Man.  
(laughter)

Ed Metzler: (Chuckles)

Mr. Batty: And for some reason, he'd gotten through ... he hadn't gotten ... drafted ... through all his younger period ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... but he got drafted at thirty-five, I got drafted at eighteen, and we became friends while we were going to school. So, one night we went out to ... uh, a hotel bar and I said, "What do I do now?" So, he told me a good drink to order and I got one and everything went good from there on. (Laughter), I didn't get drunk on the way home or anything like that.

Ed Metzler: No, and you learned how to master it, and yeah.

Mr. Batty: So, I guess that would be an experience. And then he knew ... he and I stayed in ... mail contact with each other until he died ... years later. And ... he lived in Montana, so I never did get a chance to see him.

Ed Metzler: That was the Montana connection.

Mr. Batty: But ... I ... since he died, I writ ... had two or three letters from his wife, and ...

Ed Metzler: Uh hum.

Mr. Batty: ... she sent me pictures of guys that ... said, "Hope you can identify some of these people." But anyway, that ... that was a ... real good connection, and the fact that he ... he was older than ... than I was and ... and any of us in the group, so we all called him the Old Man.

Ed Metzler: Uhm. Well, I want to thank you for spending the time sharing your experiences. I ... have interviewed a lot of World War II veterans, but never anybody from the Signal Corps.

Mr. Batty: Yeah.

Ed Metzler: So, you're a first for me and I found it very enjoyable. Matter of fact ...

Mr. Batty: Well, I'm glad it worked out; I ... I ... I'm kind of proud of the fact that I was there. As I said, I didn't do anything worthwhile, but I ... I think ...

Ed Metzler: And never got the chance.

Mr. Batty: ... some ... somebody wanted me there anyway.

Ed Metzler: You bet!

Mr. Batty: And we did what they asked to be done.

Ed Metzler: And ... and that's all you could ask for.

Mr. Batty: And ... I ... I have to be proud of that.

Ed Metzler: You bet.

Mr. Batty: As I've told people, I ... I was in the Army for two years and ... battle zone and won ... got one battle star, but I never heard a shot fired in anger.

Ed Metzler: But you did have to dodge the bullets coming down from overhead.

Mr. Batty: (Chuckles) ... from overhead.

Ed Metzler: From celebration for VJ-Day (laughter).

Mr. Batty: That's right. And the ... and the thought of going to Japan to be in a part ... over there. And I tell you, I have seen the battle plan for the Invasion of Japan, and that is one hell of a thing! You can't conceive of a military operation as big as that. The ... the ... Normandy Operation was peanuts compared to what they had planned for ... over there. And ... the ... right now the thing that bothers me the most ... you find people that say, "Oh, what a horrible thing it was to drop the bomb in Japan; we killed a hundred thousand people. How terrible can that be? How could Truman make a decision to do something like that?" The fact is, he made the best decision possible. He made a decision that *saved more than a hundred thousand lives*, and most of them were ours. People today don't realize the situation.

Ed Metzler: You're (unintelligible).

Mr. Batty: We've got so many ... I call them ... do gooders or tree huggers, however you want to call them and don't believe in killing people, and war is made to kill people. But primarily the other guy, not me.

Ed Metzler: Yep!

Mr. Batty: Okay? And over there, it would have been both of us. We'd of ... we'd of lost a hundred thousand Americans as well as ...

Ed Metzler: *Easy!*

Mr. Batty: ... a hundred thousand Japanese.

Ed Metzler: We lost thirteen thousand just at Okinawa.

Mr. Batty: That's right, see?

Ed Metzler: So ...

Mr. Batty: And so, you don't appreciate that ... until you stop and look back and think it was ... them and not us! Now, that's bad and ... it's horrible and ... all the good things that go with it, but *any* war is horrible.

Ed Metzler: Yep! War is ...

Mr. Batty: And war is designed ... to kill people, the enemy. And that's what ...

Ed Metzler: What ... it's like what George Patton, uh, General Patton said in that introduction to the movie, Patton ...

Mr. Batty: Uh huh.

Ed Metzler: ... he says, "I don't want you to give your life for your country; I want the other poor bastard to give ...

Other Person: *Yea.*

Mr. Batty: His life.

Ed Metzler: ... his life for his country (laughter).

Mr. Batty: That's what ... make him a hero.

Ed Metzler: Anyhow, I want to thank you for spending the time with me.

Mr. Batty: Well, I'm glad to do that.

Ed Metzler: And that you for what you did for our country.

Mr. Batty: Thank you, I appreciate that.

Ed Metzler: And you guys truly are the Greatest Generation.

Mr. Batty: Well, we did it ... not trying ... but it just came out that way.

Ed Metzler: But you guys did it.

(end of interview)

**FINAL** copy

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