

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Nimitz Education and Research Center
Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With

Emmett Scott Prothero

Hurricane, Utah

April 19, 2018

Company A 2nd Battalion

102nd Combat Engineers

27th Infantry Division

Saipan, Okinawa

Mr. Misenhimer:

My name is Richard Misenhimer, today is April 19, 2018. I am interviewing Mr. Emmett Scott Prothero by telephone. His phone number is 702-443-2262. His address is 2072 S. Angell Heights Dr., Hurricane, Utah, 84737. His alternate contact is his daughter-in-law, her phone number is 435-313-5044. His son Ron lives at the same house, his phone number is 435-313-5045. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Scott, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Prothero:

Thank you, I appreciate that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this is okay with you.

Mr. Prothero:

Okay.

Mr. Misenhimer:

"Agreement Read"

Is that okay with you?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes. Yes it is.

Mr. Misenhimer:

My first question is, what is your birthdate?

Mr. Prothero:

November 3, 1923.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And where were you born?

Mr. Prothero:

Ogden, Utah. Weaver County, Utah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes. I had one brother and one sister.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was your brother older or younger than you?

Mr. Prothero:

My brother was four years older.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was he in World War II?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes, he was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is he still living?

Mr. Prothero:

No, he passed away 2000.

Mr. Misenhimer:

If he were I'd like to interview him. Now what was your mother's and father's first names?

Mr. Prothero:

My mother's first name was Hendrickij, H-e-n-d-r-i-c-k-i-j, I believe it was, Hendrickij Stark.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what was your father's first name?

Mr. Prothero:

Walter, Walter.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you grew up during the depression, how did the depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Prothero:

Well I can remember the depression when I was, I think in 1930s, back in about 1930s, '32. I remember my dad coming home and saying that as far as he knew he still had a job. And I remember that people were coming by and knocking on the door and asking for handouts or to have work done so they could have food. And there were, I just remember people down in the "hobo jungle," it's west of Ogden, where they were traveling by freight train to go one place to another. People were out of work and people were in soup lines and it was terrible as far as I can remember.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Prothero:

I went to Ogden High School in 1941 through 1943 and then Uncle Sam called me to, that I had to report to go in to service. I was called to go in the service. In 1942 I was drafted to go into the service. And there I think there were ten of us from high school who were called to go into service. While that's happening I was a 2nd Lieutenant in the ROTC, high school ROTC Army unit. And the Colonel of the ROTC, the Junior Colonel, one of the students Brent Scowcroft who was later on President Ford's Security Advisor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what actual date did you go into the service?

Mr. Prothero:

I went into the service in February the 13th, 1943 at Fort Douglas, Utah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now had you finished high school then?

Mr. Prothero:

That was mid-year and I crammed my studies and everything and as far as it was concerned I was considered as being graduated.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you were drafted not volunteered, is that correct?

Mr. Prothero:

Drafted, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you went into the Army?

Mr. Prothero:

The thing is I wanted to go into the Navy, but when we were lined up there every third one was told to go to the Army. And I was one of the third ones, so I was told to go to the Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where did you go for your basic training?

Mr. Prothero:

I went from Fort Douglas to Camp Wolters, Texas. That's W-o-l-t-e-r-s, Wolters near Mineral Wells, Texas.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how was that basic training?

Mr. Prothero:

It was good. It was a good basic training, a good group. I learned a lot. I got in a fight with one

of the guys behind the barracks and we became friends. And one of my buddies signed up for the paratroopers, I was ready to sign up for it and I was unable to go into the paratroopers. So I was there at Camp Wolters for eleven weeks and then we were called to leave.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were your drill instructors pretty tough on you?

Mr. Prothero:

It was good training. It was rifle practice and it was going on long hikes with full field packs. And it was just kind of a basic training, it's getting our bodies and our minds adjusted.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of weapons training did you have?

Mr. Prothero:

We trained at first with the ..., I'm trying to think of it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Springfield rifle?

Mr. Prothero:

I think it was, if I'm not mistaken. And then later on, later on we received the M1 rifle. That's what it was on training and was target shooting, target training, every day.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you train on any machine gun?

Mr. Prothero:

We trained with machine guns by taking it out of the bipod and holding it in our arms like a gun and shooting it until we could control it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have the infiltration course where they were firing the machine gun over you?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes actually we crawled underneath, like a trench, with machine guns shooting over us. And I could hear and almost feel those bullets as they're going, ripping over me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

It's kind of scary isn't it?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes it was. At that time at age eighteen or nineteen that was scary (*laughing*).

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a lot of marching?

Mr. Prothero:

Oh tremendous. A whole day marching, just with full field packs and just keep on going and going. And if we fell behind we got punished by going into a sandpit to march some more.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now did being in the ROTC help you any?

Mr. Prothero:

You know that ROTC it's not necessarily real. In ROTC in high school I did just more or less drilling guys and that as 2nd Lieutenant. And then in the Army, serving in the Army that didn't help at all.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you finished basic then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Okay about eleven weeks of training, in the middle of the night I believe it was, we were called

to get up, get ready, and get our stuff together and be shipped out.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to?

Mr. Prothero:

We headed by train from Camp Wolters all the way to California and ended up in ..., oh good gosh I can't think of the name of it. Anyway, in California we were getting ready to board a ship.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Had you been assigned to an outfit at this point?

Mr. Prothero:

No. We weren't assigned to any outfit or anything like that. We were just getting ready to go, take a ship to go to Hawaii.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know what ship you got on?

Mr. Prothero:

If I'm not mistaken I believe ..., let me, check my notes here, *Republic. Republic* to Hawaii in 1943, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was that date?

Mr. Prothero:

That was in 1943. That was eleven weeks after my introduction.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So what month was that?

Mr. Prothero:

That would have been ..., let's see eleven weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About May or something?

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah I think it, well yeah somewhere, about that, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And you went to Hawaii?

Mr. Prothero:

I went to Hawaii.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where in Hawaii did you go to?

Mr. Prothero:

We went to a place called Kailua, which is just over the mountain path there of Pali and it was a little town village called Kailua.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what island was that on?

Mr. Prothero:

That was on Oahu.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that trip over on the ship?

Mr. Prothero:

Well (*laughing*) I don't know whether I should mention it but anyway I'll mention it and you can block it out if you want. On board ship everything was all closed in and everything was dark on the outside. You could go outside the ship, hold, and it'd be completely dark and no light at all.

And so I went out there and I was eating an apple along with a 2nd Lieutenant out on the deck.

And we threw this apple overboard and was all of a sudden caught by this ship's security, I

guess. And they put us in the brig (*laughing*) for throwing the apple core overboard. They said you don't throw stuff overboard to draw attention.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So what did they do to you then?

Mr. Prothero:

We just stayed one day, one night in the brig and that's about all (*laughing*).

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was the sea pretty rough going over?

Mr. Prothero:

No, it wasn't bad at all going over, it was pretty good. I remember looking out during the daytime and there were ships on each side of us, and in front us, and in back of us going to Hawaii.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you were in a big convoy then?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And about how long did it take you to get to Hawaii?

Mr. Prothero:

You know that I don't quite recall, it's been so long ago.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Something over a week probably.

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah, it's something like that, I just don't recall.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when you got to Hawaii what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

We went to Schofield Barracks and while there at Schofield Barracks all of us were assigned to different divisions. And I was assigned to the 27th Infantry Division, 102nd Combat Engineers, 105th Infantry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were 105th Battalion?

Mr. Prothero:

105th Battalion, Company A and that was 102nd Engineers Combat, Engineers.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what did you do in that organization? Did you have some kind of training when you got there?

Mr. Prothero:

Well certainly, left Schofield we went to ..., training anyway. And yes we had training, jungle training, going through the jungles all night long, finding our way out of that all night long, all that is jungle training. Anyway it was, we had a lot of training anyway there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get any engineer training?

Mr. Prothero:

You know we didn't, it wasn't too much engineering training. The outfit originally, before I got there they built that highway on the main island of Oahu, Hawaii. But when it came to Oahu, it was more or less a training for combat. We didn't have any engineering training. Oh yes, yes, yes we did. We did a little of demolition of, underwater demolition with composition C2 and TNT training.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Then after our training we spent one year in Hawaii training and going to Waikiki and going to Diamond Head. Inside Diamond Head they had a firing range there, inside of Diamond Head.

And we'd go there for practicing. And then the Royal Hotel in Oahu, Honolulu was a training hotel where we would go in the high diving board with full pack, helmet, rifles and everything and jump off that into the water. And I couldn't understand what the training of that was until, actually later on I'd find out that that would have been important aboard ship, if we had do that to jump off. That was part of the training.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So abandoning ship?

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah. If we had to.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Well then just at times we'd go to town with a couple of buddies and do our thing. And go to the milk shops and milkshake shops and different things, just take in the town. And I don't know, just regular stuff. And went to church a couple of times.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get to Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Prothero:

I didn't get a chance to go to Pearl Harbor while I was there. It was still under ..., they hadn't quite built it up yet or reconstructed it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there much damage anywhere where you were?

Mr. Prothero:

I remember along the coastline, all the way around Hawaii, they had barbed wire fences all the way around. I remember going to Waikiki and two or three rows of barbed wire fences along the beach.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were the people there in Hawaii friendly?

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah they seemed friendly. They seemed friendly to me. I didn't get really a chance, a chance to really to get that much acquainted with the civilians.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Well then after a year of training in Hawaii we were told that we had to start stocking, to work out on the decks and board ships with the jeeps and the trucks. And I had to go in there and help them to stock the trucks in the holds of the ships. And to get ready for an invasion, which we didn't know exactly what invasion it was at that time. And then when we got orders in a, say about, I'm trying to think in May of 19 ..., I'll tell you first part of May, April or May of 1944. We were told that we would be going into battle.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Be going where?

Mr. Prothero:

We didn't know exactly where we were going at the time until we got aboard the ship. And when we got aboard the ship then we were called to attention, after we were out at sea, that it would be the island of Saipan, in the Mariana Islands.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Then we were aboard that ship there and then on May the 28th was of course landings, 1944. Then we, the 27th Division and our outfit, 105th were held back as a reserve. And the 165th Division were the Old Irish Fighting 69th of the 27th went in first on to the island along with the Marines. And we were held back as a reserve until about ..., I think around probably May the

28th, 1944. Then we boarded a landing craft and hit the beaches of Saipan. And then as we advanced we didn't have any problems at the beginning because the advance outfit cleared that beach pretty well. But as we were advancing onto the beach or in the beach or from the beach I remember that all of a sudden we were fired upon. And we crouched down on the ground and there were Japanese enemy in the coconut trees, on top of the coconut trees shooting down at us. So that was kind of a gunfire there, which we cleared that area. And being nineteen years old I was scared. So I did something that I guess is, I don't know whether it's unusual or I, everything else was all quiet and I knelt down and I said a prayer that I would be protected and everything would be fine. And then from then on I wasn't scared any longer.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So these snipers were up in the trees shooting at you then?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you all shoot them?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes, we fired at them and shot at them. And I don't know whether I hit any of them, but anyway somebody did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What rifle did you have?

Mr. Prothero:

I had the M1 rifle, semi-automatic, that's a good rifle.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I know some of the engineers had the carbine.

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah, the officers had the carbines and they had .45 pistols. They furnished, I was still a Private. And then I had an M1 then. It was a heavy gun, you know but it, every time it would kick back

and I had to really adjust the way I held it so my knuckles wouldn't hit me in the chest, when it kicked back. But it was a good rifle. I understand that carbine rifle though always got a little sand within it and it kind of clogged on us. But the M1 rifle didn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, the M1 was a good gun.

Mr. Prothero:

Yep, it's a good gun.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when those Japanese fired on you from the trees did they hit anybody anywhere around you?

Mr. Prothero:

No, there's one fellow that was hit, he wasn't an engineer he was one of the infantry guys that was just ahead of us. He was hit and we went up on the path they had taken care of him. But they didn't do too much damage there at that time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Then we a, oh good gosh if I could remember. Oh we just went on further and I remember, let's see I was assigned with the 2nd Battalion, Company A and we went along the beach going north. I remember being on the beach and I remember the night, I can't tell you what date it was, I can't tell you what date, that we were told to, the outfit I was in, the part of the 102nd Engineer group was to go up out of the beach and to go up on the hill to a ..., I'm trying to remember. You know it's been seventy some odd years and I just never thought of these things before. Let me just think of this for a minute. A command post that they wanted us, this outfit I was in to go up on this hill and protect this command post that was up there on the hill they'd just established for a command post. So that night, particular night we went up to that command post and during the night we heard gunfire, cannon fires going on down on the beach. And while that was happening

a barrage of gunfire started firing at the command post above us, we were on a hill but there was a hill higher. There was a firing upon us and so we fired back and we killed two or three Japanese that were advancing upon our command post. And this is early morning, early next morning it was. And one of the guys had a bazooka and fired it at the direction where the Japanese were. And they captured one Japanese soldier and I remember him. And they questioned him and I don't know what they said to him anyway, but they were questioning him. And I don't know where they took him. But that next morning, or during that night they started to come up on the hill, all we heard was, this was early morning, they heard tanks coming down the beach and firing and the shots going on. Early morning, we could barely see what was going on. And this Japanese, group of Japanese soldiers, enemy soldiers, rushing down from the north along the beach at our troops that were on the beach where I was originally. And the regular gunfire and they came up toward the hill where we were, some of them. And some of these guys, I could just see them, a couple of them they looked like just young guys, Japanese, young soldiers. And so one of the guys, I helped him to use a machine gun on the ones that were approaching us on the hill. And we did kill them. And right afterwards that morning we went down further toward the beach and then we went back up. But anyway I just try to remember all these things.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, you're doing fine, keep on, keep going, you're doing fine.

Mr. Prothero:

I'm just trying to remember, but I remember this one Japanese, one enemy, coming up close to that machine gun gunner and I, and I just picked up my rifle and shot back at him. After that our troops down on the beach and that were up south, they cleaned out and wiped out that group. There were hundreds of them, Japanese coming at our beach, they'd clean them up. So, after that it was a kind of a mop up, just clean up, to mop up the caves and the trenches that they had, the Japanese had. And about, oh I don't know if it was a week or two days, three days later or whatever, my outfit that I was in went down into this canyon, which was loaded with caves that

the Japanese had built and had used. And as we came across one cave, there's about three of us, three of us walked up toward this cave and as we did so a hand grenade was thrown out of the cave and landed just in front of us, the three of us. And I don't know why but it exploded, it exploded behind a rock or a huge rock or something, but anyway, but the two guys that were with me were hit with shrapnel, not bad but they were hit with shrapnel, wounded. And I got a piece of shrapnel in my arm which I, it was just kind of a scratch, it wasn't a deep wound. But as we approached some of the caves, other caves, one of the Japanese soldiers came, was in one of the caves. And one of the guys in our outfit had a flame thrower. And he shot a burst of flames into the cave and then he came running out on fire and as he did the guys in the outfit shot at him and put him out of his misery. But we went up to, as engineers we, that was our duty to clean out some of these caves and make sure that the people were out of it. And so we'd go up and holler into the cave, tell them to come out, that we were friendly soldiers and we wouldn't hurt them. And finally a mother and a child came out, and an old man came out with their hands up. Then they told the interpreters there that they said there were Japanese soldiers there but they wouldn't come out. So we just blocked that cave up. But anyway, some of the civilians on the Saipan were told by the Japanese soldiers that American soldiers would kill them if they caught them if they come, so they were so scared that they jumped over cliffs. Afraid that we would rape them or kill them or whatever. But we treated the civilians good. And then from there, Saipan, Battle of Saipan, we went, we were told that we were to go to a rest camp. And we were told that it would be in this Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides Islands, which was French owned islands. And it was the worst rest camp or camp that you could ever imagine to be in. It was hot and miserable, terrible. It was a jungle island, New Hebrides, it was owned by the French people. So that was our French rest camp for seven months. And while we were there, I remember one Christmas, it was at Christmas time and we were underneath the coconut trees. And here comes, it was a Christmas morning I'm pretty sure, here comes a group of four or five natives, wild natives completely nude, black as ink, going through the camp with spears, going to the beach I guess. And so we just held ourselves, we just didn't want to bother them. But it was

a miserable rest camp.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And where was that camp at?

Mr. Prothero:

It was in Espiritu Santo in New Hebrides Islands.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Prothero:

Then one of the lighter sides, when I was in the, still in with the combat engineers or engineers, one afternoon I went to the motor pool and I said, "Gee, I'd like to get in the motor pool." They said, "You would?" I said, "Yeah." They said, "Okay, we'll get you in the motor pool."

(End of side one of tape.)

(Beginning of side two of tape.)

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay you got in the motor pool and what happened then?

Mr. Prothero:

Then they said, "Well would you like to drive a truck or that jeep?" And I said, "Yeah, yeah, I'd like that as a change." So they put me as a jeep driver and a truck driver. So one day I hauled a group of guys to have tetanus shots and I had a tetanus shot and then driving back to camp without, my arm was sore I could hardly drive the truck. But one time I was told to haul this truck load of pontoon bridges to a destination across the island there. And as I was coming back to camp it was raining, pouring, raining, and miserably hot, sweaty hot. And I could hardly see the road as I was going down the road. And I leaned back down to shift gears to put into fourth gear and I lost control and I went down *(laughing)* an embankment through a guardrail and ended up in a Seabee outfit, camp. And I was, I guess as white as a ghost I guess, I was scared. The guys come out there and gave me a cup of coffee and I just went on my way, I didn't want to be bothered about questionings. So that was the lighter side, lighter side of that island, that

terrible island, that island of Espiritu Santo. But after we were there for some while we were told that we would be getting ready, we were there for seven months, we were told to get ready to go on a landing on an island called Okinawa. And we were boarded, boarded the ship, I think it could have been maybe March, later part of March, or first part of April I think of 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

April 1st was the landing on Okinawa.

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah. Before we landed on the island of Okinawa we were hoisted down, we climbed down the ladder of the ship to get into the barge to go to the island, Okinawa to go to battle. And just as we got into the barge, LST, we were called to go back up the ladder, go aboard ship immediately. And which we did. And when we got back aboard ship we were told that our President Franklin Roosevelt had died. And that kind of hit us hard. And we were then ready saying we got to clean up this mess, so we climbed back down and went into battle. And I vaguely remember landing on Okinawa, because we were as a reserve unit and the first units had already gone in and was in battle and cleaned the beach and cleared the beach. But when we went in there our outfit set up a command post. And just beyond Naha, the city of Okinawa, and just before Naha there's a cliff and before the cliff there was a rice field and before that was caves and a city, a little small town or a village. And that's where the command post was. And we advanced toward that cliff and that evening we decided to settle down and make camp or dig in down there for the night. And I can remember, I remember the ships out in the bay, American ships, the bay was full of American battleships. And they're firing in and toward I guess Naha and toward this cliff. And we could see this cliff, we could see gunfire coming from the cliff firing at the ships. And we saw Japanese planes strafing at the ships and trying to hit the ships. And we could see all this and just as we were about ready to settle down for the night, because where we were it was quiet, all of a sudden a big barrage of explosion all around us came. Which we found out later it was coming from the cliff, they turned the Japanese guns onto us, cannons. It was firing point blank at us, our troops, our engineer troops. And we couldn't, for some reason we didn't

dig deep in the ground for a foxhole and all of a sudden just everything exploded went all around us from the explosions. And loud, loud explosions. And it ruptured your eardrums, it was terrible. So we all started to rush into these caves, the Japanese had already made these inner mountain caves. These caves that went in and out. Our troops ran into these caves for protection. And I remember this one officer, I can't think of his name, but he was, I remember he carried his .45 pistol, revolver on his hip. He got shell shocked and he was just standing there in the middle of that field, just standing there not moving. And I said, "Come, you'd better come with me!" And I took him back about I'd say fifty yards to the command post. But that day we had a password called, "double trouble." And you'd say, "double" and the other one if it's American he'd say, "trouble", "double trouble." But anyway went there and I brought him back to the camp and then I headed back to where I was originally. And I got back into one of the holes while they were bombing, Japanese were bombing us. But our troops on board our ships was firing at this gun position and they quieted them down. Anyway we didn't get a chance, our outfit to go into Naha. It was pretty well taken care of. I remember after the cleanup of Okinawa, the Battle of Okinawa, which was bad, which I didn't get really involved in a lot of the great fighting or the great warfare there. But I remember this one little village down this little canyon had Okinawan homes where people had been living for years and years and years, and in that little village they told the people they had to move out of there because they were going to put an American airstrip in that location to cover that up. But anyway, I don't know what more I can tell you. I didn't, I mean there's more but I can't remember everything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well go ahead, just remember whatever you can.

Mr. Prothero:

Anyway, as I was sitting on this hill there came announcement that Tokyo was bombed and that they dropped the atomic bomb. And we knew that, we were told before then that we'd be about the third wave going into Japan, to invade Japan. And that would probably wouldn't be able to get through, the first three waves probably wouldn't make it, but anyway we were assigned to

this third wave. And so we were pretty well thrilled and happy that that bomb was dropped. And then we were told that the war would be over. We went to, after we were there on Okinawa for a bit, my outfit that I was in, I was a Corporal T-5 at the time, was told that we'd fly into Japan as a garrison group. And so eventually we boarded the plane there in Okinawa and we flew to Tokyo and landed in the airstrip there near Tokyo, I can't recall which airstrip it was. And we drove from Tokyo to Niigata, Japan, the city of Niigata which was a beautiful city, a modern city with escalators and all. And that's where we were stationed as a garrison troop. And we stayed there from September I believe it was, September until December, just before Christmas time. And I was waiting for my points to come up so I could leave and go home. And I was asked if I wanted to go back to New York City with the outfit, the 27th Division was a New York outfit. And I didn't want to stay in the service. I boarded this ship and I can't recall what the name of the ship was now. We headed back in December and landed in, we circled around to bypass a hurricane which we hit the end in part. We ended in Seattle, Washington on I believe it was Christmas Day. And we were told that we wouldn't be able to go home at the time, we had to stay there until afterwards for two days. But finally we went on home. And arrived home in January and I arrived home after Christmas in January, first part of January I believe it was, 1946. The family held Christmas for me until I got home. Anyway, that's about it. Not much of a story.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when did you get discharged then?

Mr. Prothero:

I got discharged January the 7th, 1946.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So when you came back to Seattle you were discharged shortly after that?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes, I was discharged in Fort Douglas, Utah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, then you went from there back home?

Mr. Prothero:

Then I went back home.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you got out did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah, you know when I got home from Fort Douglas I went downtown in my uniform and everything and walked the street there, sitting nobody'd came up and said hey congratulations, or hello, or anything else. And I didn't see anybody I knew, except one person. And that person was an old girlfriend, a high school girlfriend, and I saw her coming out of a bank. And I went up to her and she said, "Oh hi, I'm married and I've got three kids." *(Laughing)* Said, "Okay." So I went home, took my uniform off, never put it back on. Never even talked about it, never even thought about it, the Army again. And it was, I don't know whether it was any harder to adjust, I guess it was, I guess it was. It was difficult. And finally I did, I started to go to Weaver College, which is now a university, Weaver College and then I went to Ogden Business College. And then on, and on, and the years went on.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your G.I. Bill to go to college?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes I did, a little bit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Mr. Prothero:

I brought back from, I think it was Saipan or Okinawa, I brought back from there a Samurai sword, two Samurai swords. I had shipped back a .31 caliber Japanese rifle and a .30 caliber Japanese rifle.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you still have those?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes. I gave them to my son here, he's got them here.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale in your outfit?

Mr. Prothero:

Well, I think the morale was good. It seemed that everyone was for each other, was helping each other. And the outfit I was in, they were the old New York National Guard outfit, they're the old timers. When I went in I was the youngest guy. And they called me Scott, or little Scott (*laughing*). They treated me fine, the morale was good as far as I could see.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes. Yes I, that's the thing we used to listen to her, especially when I was on Okinawa, I'd listen to her. And she'd play the music (*laughter*), I remember that. And she would say, "Come on boys, you don't want to be here." I remember that. "You want to be home, with your girlfriends back home." We would laugh. But we liked her music because she played good music. Yeah, yeah, I sure remember her. I remember seeing, when I was over in Hawaii, I think it was Hawaii or was it in..., I don't remember. I remember seeing ..., I didn't see Bob Hope but I saw Bing Crosby, I believe it was Bing Crosby.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on August the 15th of '45 Japan surrendered, did y'all have any kind of a celebration then?

Mr. Prothero:

No, you know we didn't have, I was in Okinawa. And the only celebration that I know of in Okinawa was sitting on that hill and really clapping our hands and yelling and saying, "Hey that's great!" You know, "The war is over!" But that's about all that I know of. I don't know what celebrations they had in the States, I had no idea.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What ribbons did you get and medals?

Mr. Prothero:

I got the Presidential Unit Citation for engineer group and of course the Good Conduct Medal. The rifle, I didn't get the Rifle Medal because I wasn't in Infantry I was in Combat, I was in Engineering, so I was unable to get that one because I wasn't in Infantry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You got the American Defense I'm sure.

Mr. Prothero:

Yes, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And how many battle stars did you get?

Mr. Prothero:

Two battle stars.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions of your outfit since you've been out?

Mr. Prothero:

I went one time, many years ago with the outfit to Las Vegas, Nevada and met my Sergeant and my Lieutenant, met them there. This was back, oh good gosh, this was back in 1996. Too long ago. But I lost track of them and I don't know whether they're still living or not. I guess, I suppose not.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Mr. Prothero:

Yes, I went there two years ago.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Prothero:

Well they rushed us too fast (*laughing*), too fast. I wanted to just concentrate on it and look at the Memorials and different places. I really enjoyed that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your civilian career?

Mr. Prothero:

After I left the Army I went to ..., okay I'm trying to think back.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went to college right?

Mr. Prothero:

Yeah I went to college and then I followed my daughter to California. She got married, I followed her to California and I worked for Sears. I worked for Sears Distributing Center in Oakland, California for a short time and then I worked for the Cal Eastern Airways as a time keeper. Well I wanted to get in to radio, I wanted to be a disc jockey after the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well Scott I want to thank you for taking time to do this today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Prothero:

Thank you for your time.

(End of interview.)

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