

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

CENTER FOR PACIFIC WAR STUDIES

FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS

INTERVIEW OF

LYALL DEAN

INTERVIEWER

NED SMITH

PRIMARY SUBJECT

Guadalcanal

TAPE NO. 1012

MY NAME IS NED SMITH. TODAY IS 10/25/03. I AM REPRESENTING THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR IN FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS. I WILL BE DOING AN ORAL HISTORY TODAY WITH MR. LYALL DEAN. WE ARE IN THE CONFERENCE ROOM OF THE GEORGE BUSH GALLERY.

LYALL, WHERE AND WHEN WERE YOU BORN?

LAYALL

I WAS BORN IN WESTCHESTER, NEW YORK, HOLLUM MANOR IN NEW YORK, IN THE COUNTY OF WESTCHESTER, OCTOBER 19, 1919. I JUST HAD MY 84TH BIRTHDAY. SAME DAY AS DWIGHT EISENHOWER.

NED

WHO WERE YOUR PARENTS?

LYALL

MY PARENTS WERE LYALL DEAN AND HIS WIFE HELEN.

NED

HELEN'S MAIDEN NAME?

LYALL

STEARNS.

NED

DID YOU HAVE BROTHERS AND SISTERS?

LYALL

I HAD TWO BROTHERS, AN OLDER AND A YOUNGER ONE. I HAD TWO SISTERS. ONE OF THEM DIED 5 OR 6 YEARS AGO. WE ARE NOT TEEENIE BOPPERS ANY MORE.

NED

WERE ANY OF THE BROTHERS OR THE SISTER IN MILITARY SERVICE?

LYALL

ABSOLUTELY. MY OLDER BROTHER ENDED UP A COLONEL IN THE ARMY AND MY YOUNGER BROTHER GOT TO BE A CAPTAIN. HE WAS OVER UNDER PATTEN IN THE 3RD ARMY. MY OLDER BROTHER WAS PROBABLY MORE MILITARY MINDED THAT HIS TWO BROTHERS INCLUDING ME. HE DID WHAT HE WAS TOLD. HE HAD A KIND OF HARD TO UNDERSTAND, PERHAPS RESENTMENT, THAT HIS TWO YOUNGER BROTHERS HAD TO HAVE COMBAT. OF COURSE, WE WOULD LOVE TO HAVE SWAPPED WITH HIM ANYTIME. HE WAS, I'M SURE, A TOTALLY GOOD OFFICER. BOTH, MY OLDER AND YOUNGER BROTHER STAYED IN THE RESERVES. I GOT OUT.

NED

ONE YOU SAY RETIRED AS A COLONEL?

LYALL

HE WAS A LT. COL. BUT ON RETIREMENT HE GOT TO BE COLONEL. HE IS RETIRED SO HE GETS A PENSION. MY YOUNGER BROTHER RETIRED A CAPTAIN AND STAYED IN FOR THE MINIMUM TO GET 20 YEARS.

NED

WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL?

LYALL

I WENT TO HIGH SCHOOL AT A PRIVATE BOARDING SCHOOL IN MASSACHUSETTS. YOU HAVE HEARD OF DEERFIELD ACADEMY?

NED

I HAVE HEARD OF IT.

LYALL

IT IS A VERY FINE BOARDING SCHOOL. THEN I WENT TO A LITTLE COLLEGE UPSTATE NEW YORK CALLED UNION COLLEGE UP IN SCHENECTADY. I SPENT 2 YEARS ALL OF '39 UNTIL JUNE OF '41. FRANKLY, I WAS NOT A GOOD STUDENT. MY FATHER HAD DIED AND I GOT A SUMMER JOB IN THE SUMMER OF '41, STARTING EARNING MONEY AT A TEXTILE MACHINERY FOUNDRY OUTSIDE WORCHESTER, MASS. I REALLY WAS INTRIGUED BY THAT. I HAD NEVER DONE ANY WORK LIKE THAT. I WAS EARNING SOME MONEY, I THOUGHT, WHY TAKE MY MOTHER'S MONEY AND GO BACK TO UNION. THAT WAS SIX MONTHS AWAY FROM PEARL HARBOR. NOT BEING A GOOD STUDENT, I JUST THOUGHT THAT ----- I WAS TAKING A 2 YEAR SALES TRAINING COURSE FOR THIS TEXTILE MACHINERY CONCERN. THAT'S THE DIRECTION I'LL GO AND THAT WILL BE MY EARNING CARD. I WAS WORKING FOR THIS WHITE MACHINE CO., TEXTILE MACHINERY.

I WAS THERE PEARL HARBOR WEEKEND. WHEN I WENT BACK I STARTED TALKING THINGS THAT HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH IT. I WENT BACK ON MONDAY MORNING, PEARL HARBOR AS YOU KNOW WAS SUNDAY, AND ALL THE GUYS; I WAS A YOUNG FELLOW THEN. GUYS MY AGE WEREN'T THERE ALREADY. THEY HAD SIGNED UP.

(MISSED PASSAGE) I DON'T TELL THIS TO MANY OF MY MARINE FRIENDS BECAUSE THEY WOULDN'T LIKE IT. I HAD MY DRAFT NUMBER AND I HAD BEEN CALLED. I THINK I HAD FAILED. I WAS IN TERRIBLE SHAPE. I FAILED THE PHYSICAL FOR THE DRAFT WHICH WAS AT THAT TIME WAS THE PITS. I HAD SOME ADOLESCENT ACNE ON BY BACK. YOU HAD TO BE IN PRETTY GOOD SHAPE APPARENTLY. I COULDN'T READ THOSE BLOODY EYE CHARTS. THAT DIDN'T SURPRISE ME BUT IT WAS HUMILIATING. I THOUGHT TO SALVE MY CONSCIENCE, I'LL APPLY FOR THE ARMY OR NAVY, AND NOT JUST THE DRAFT. I MAY HAVE BEEN PARTICULAR BECAUSE I KNEW THE NAVY WAS STRICTER THAN JUST THE DRAFT. THAT WAS PROBABLY THE EASIEST. TO SOLVE MY CONSCIENCE I DID THAT, I WAS LIVING IN WORCHESTER, MASS. AND I WENT INTO THE BOSTON NAVY YARD FOR A PHYSICAL. I WOULD HAVE FELT BETTER. (COULD NOT HEAR THE PASSAGE ABOUT THE MERCHANT MARINE) YOU REMEMBER THE SUBTLE PRESSURE WHEN ALL YOUR FRIENDS ARE SIGNING UP AND GETTING IN THE SERVICE, IT WAS HARD TO TAKE. I FELT FUNNY. ANYWAY, WHEN THE BOSTON NAVY YARD----- OH, IN THE MEANTIME, A FRIEND OF MINE WHO HAD BEEN DRAFTED IN THE ARMY: I DIDN'T SEE HIM OFTEN BUT I TOLD HIM I HAD BEEN REJECTED AND THE DAMN EYE CHARTS. HE SAID, "I'LL TELL YOU SOMETHING" THIS IS BACK NOW IN 1942, EARLY. HE SAID, "THE ARMY, THE NAVY, MARINE CORPS, COAST GUARD, YOU NAME IT ALL HAVE THE SAME EYE CHART. THERE ARE ONLY TWO OF THEM. THE FIRST LETTER IS ALWAYS THE SAME AND ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS READ THAT TOP LETTER, E, AND YOU CAN MEMORIZE THIS THING." I DIDN'T

THINK THAT WAS HONEST. I'M GOING TO MEMORIZE IT AND SEE WHAT HAPPENS. I WOULDN'T HAVE ROBBED ANYONE TO GET IN THE SERVICE. I WAS DESPERATE. I SHOULD HAVE SAID, "THANK GOD, I DON'T HAVE TO." SO, I DID THAT. I WENT INTO BOSTON FOR MY PHYSICAL. WHEN I CAME TO THE EYE CHART, I PURPOSELY MAKE A COUPLE OF MISTAKES. I DIDN'T WANT THEM TO KNOW I HAD MEMORIZED THE CHART. I DON'T THINK THEY WOULD HAVE CAREED IF I HAD BEEN PERFECT. THEIR JOB WAS TO ????. I PASSED THE EYE TEST OKAY. THEN I HAD THIS DARN ADOLESCENT ACNE AT THE TIME. YOU GO THROUGH A PHYSICAL EXAM IN A FORD FACTORY WAS SOMETHING WITH YOUR SHORTS ON: THEY JAB YOU HERE AND THERE. I WAS JUST ABOUT THROUGH IT AND SOME DOCTOR----- I WAS MOVING THIS WAY AND THE DOCTOR GAVE ME A PAT ON THE BACK AND ALMOST KILLED ME. HE SAID, "SON: I TURNED AROUND AND LOOKED AND HE WAS NOT MUCH OLDER THAT I WAS. HE WAS A YOUNG DOCTOR, AN ENSIGN AND HE SAID, "NOW DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT ACNE. YOU COME INTO BOSTON, YOU COME IN 2 OR 3 TIMES A WEEK FOR THE NEXT 2 OR 3 WEEKS, WE WILL GIVE YOU A LAMP TREATMENT AND WE WILL CLEAN IT UP." I SAID, "THAT'S GREAT, BUT WON'T THE ACNE COME BACK AS SOON AS THE LAMP TREATMENTS GO?" HE SAID, VERY HONESTLY, "ABSOLUTELY THEY WILL COME BACK BUT ALL YOU HAVE TO BE IS O K THE DAY I SIGN YOUR PAPER." I KNEW EVENTUALLY I WOULD GROW UP. THAT'S THE WAY I GOT IN THE MARINE CORPS. AS YOU SAY, MARINES ARE SUPER PEOPLE.

I FELT GREAT. I COULD RUN THE MILE AND ALL THAT STUFF. THAT'S HOW I GOT IN THE SERVICE AND THAT WAS LATE JANUARY AND IN FEBRUARY I WAS SWORN IN AT THE BOSTON POST OFFICE AND AWAY WE WENT ON THE TRAIN FOR PARRIS ISLAND THE NEXT MORNING.

NED

WHY DID YOU PICK THE MARINES OVER THE NAVY?

LYALL

THAT'S A GOOD POINT, BECAUSE I GUESS SOMEWHERE ALONG THE LINE SOMEONE SAID, 'YOU WOULD MAKE A GOOD MARINE.' IT MAY HAVE BEEN A DOCTOR THERE. YOU SEE, THAT WAS THE ARMY. THE MARINE CORPS HAS ONE OF THE BEST PUBLICITY. THEY MAKE YOU FEEL LIKE SUPERMAN WHEN YOU WEREN'T. IT WAS A CHALLENGE TOO. I DIDN'T KNOW TOO MUCH ABOUT THE MARINES. I HEARD THEY WERE A PART OF THE NAVY. I DIDN'T KNOW ANY GUYS IN THE MARINE CORPS THEN. THEY WERE ALL ARMY OR NAVY. THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION. I THINK IT WAS SOMEBODY'S

SUGGESTION. I KNOW, I HAD AN OLDER BROTHER THAT TOLD ME, AN OFFICER THAT HAD BEEN TO YALE UNIVERSITY AND HAD A COMMISSION. I DON'T THINK AT THAT TIME I EVEN REALIZED THE MARINES WERE PART OF THE NAVY AND HAD THEIR OWN DOCTORS AND THAT SORT. AFTER THREE YEARS AS AN ENLISTED MAN, I HAD THE OPPORTUNITY TO GO TO OFFICERS CANDIDATE SCHOOL. I DIDN'T CARE ABOUT THAT PARTICULARLY. ALL MY FRIENDS WERE ENLISTED MEN. HE REALLY PERSUADED ME TO GO TO OCS. IT TURNED OUT IT DIDN'T MATTER MUCH BY THE TIME I FINISHED ALL THAT, THE WAR WAS PRACTICALLY OVER. THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION, WHY IS THE MARINE IN THE NAVY AND I LIKED BEING AT SEA. IN THE NAVY IT IS THREE SQUARE MEALS A DAY, CLEAN SHEETS IF YOUR SHIP IS NOT SUNK. THAT IS NOT A VERY GOOD ANSWER BUT IT ?????.

NED

YOU WENT TO PARRIS ISLAND, YOU SAY? THAT WAS BOOT TRAINING?

LYALL

ABSOLUTELY. I HAD HEARD ABOUT THAT. IT WASN'T CRUELTY. IT WAS ROUGH. I WAS OTHERWISE IN GOOD SHAPE. I WAS PROUD TO BE IN THIS MARINE CORPS. IT WAS HARD WORK. THEN WE WENT TO CAMP LE JEUNE DOWN IN JACKSONVILLE, FL. BY THAT TIME IT WAS MARCH 1942. I HAD ENLISTED ON THE SECOND OF FEBRUARY, 1942. WE WERE THERE UNTIL JUNE AND IMMEDIATELY JOINED IN THE MAKING OF THE 1ST MARINE DIVISION AND I WAS ASSIGNED TO A MACHINE GUN COMPANY, H COMPANY IN THE 2ND BATTALION OF THE 1ST MARINE REGIMENT. BY MEMORIAL DAY OF '42 WE HAD BEEN THERE NOT VERY LONG. WE WERE GETTING READY TO GET ON PULLMAN TRAINS. WE WENT OUT TO SAN FRANCISCO AND BOARDED THE *GEORGE ELLIOT*. THE ONLY TROOP SHIP LANDING IN THE SOLOMONS THAT WAS SUNK BY THE JAPANESE. WE TOOK OFF.

AFTER LEAVING SAN FRANCISCO, IN ABOUT TWO WEEKS OR SO ON THE TROOP SHIP. I REMEMBER WE HAD ONE CRUISER, THE *HELENA*. WE ZIG ZAGGED ACROSS AND WE WENT TO WELLINGTON, NEW ZEALAND. THE *HELENA* WAS OUR ESCORT. I LIKED BEING AT SEA. IT WAS A NEW EXPERIENCE. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO NEW ZEALAND?

NED

YES, IN AUCKLAND.

LYALL

IN AUCKLAND WITH ALL THE BEAUTIFUL NATIONAL PARKS.

NED

SOMEPLACE I WOULD LOVE TO GO BACK TO.

LYALL

REALLY? YOU HAVE BEEN TO AUSTRALIA?

NED

NO. I NEVER DID GET TO AUSTRALIA.

LYALL

ANYWAY, WE WERE, I THINK IT WAS AT SEA FOR 3 WEEKS. AT SEA, APPARENTLY, ORDERS WERE GIVEN JUST WHEN THEY LEARNED ABOUT THE AIRPORT BEING BUILT ON GUADALCANAL, WE WERE GOING TO GO TO NEW ZEALAND AND TRAIN FOR SIX MONTHS SINCE WE HAD NOT HAD TOO MUCH (TRAINING) IN THE UNITED STATES. AT SEA, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN ORDERS THAT CAME TO US: I'M SURE THIS HAPPENED, THAT SHIPS FOR NEW ZEALAND WERE NOT COMBAT LOADED. THEY WERE GETTING US THERE AND TO CAMP SOMEWHERE. WHEN WE GOT TO WELLINGTON, THIS WAS IN EARLY JULY. IT WAS COLD, BITCHY AND WINDY AND LITERALLY, I NEVER WORKED SO HARD IN MY LIFE. WE HAD TEN DAYS, AND OUR JOB WAS TO UNLOAD THE SHIPS, COMBAT LOAD. AND WHERE DID WE HAVE TO UNLOAD ALL OF THE STUFF ON OUR SHIPS? ON THE DOCKS IN NEW ZEALAND. IT WAS POURING RAIN, IT WAS A MESS. WE WERE DOING COOLIE LABOR. WE HAD FOUR HOURS ON, FOUR HOURS OFF, IN THOSE FOUR HOURS OFF, YOU COULD EAT, YOU COULD SLEEP, YOU COULD TAKE LIBERTY AND DO THE TOWN IN WELLINGTON, WHICH WAS PITCH DARK ALL THE TIME. THEY HAD A MOVIE. I NEVER WENT IN. I JUST WANTED TO EAT OR SLEEP ALL THE TIME. NOT ONLY THAT, BUT THE WORKERS, THE DOCK WORKERS IN WELLINGTON WERE ON STRIKE. I COULDN'T GET OVER IT. THEY ARE OUR ALLIES AND THEY WERE NICE GUYS. WE WOULD CHAT WITH THEM.

NED

STRIKING IN WARTIME"

LYALL

SO, WE DID MOST OF THE WORK. THEIR DOCK MACHINES, THEIR CRANES WEREN'T WORKING. THERE WAS A LOT OF LIFTING WITH AS MANY GUYS AS YOU COULD GET ON A CARTON. I'LL NEVER FORGET IT AND YET SOMEHOW WE PERSEVERED. I THINK PART OF IT WAS TO GET OUT OF THE RAIN AND COLD.

THE OFFICERS WERE UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT WE WERE DOING. A LOT OF IT FRANKLY, I DON'T THINK AN HONEST MAN WOULD SAY HE NEVER MISSED A FOUR HOURS. I THINK PART OF IT WAS SYMPATHETIC OF THE COOLIES THAT WERE WORKING. MOST OF IT, WE DID IT. IT WAS TEN DAYS OF MY LIFE I WILL NEVER FORGET. IT WAS HARD WORK.

NED

WERE YOU A PFC AT THIS TIME?

LYALL

NO. A PRIVATE. PFE, PRIVATES FOREVER. WE HAD ONLY BEEN IN THE SERVICE FOR THREE MONTHS.

NED

DID YOU HAVE A SPECIALTY AT THIS TIME? YOU WEREN'T A LONGSHOREMAN BUT YOU WERE DOING LONGSHOREMAN WORK.

LYALL

WE DIDN'T HAVE A SPECIALTY AT THIS TIME. I HADN'T EVEN SEEN A MACHINE GUN. NO, WELL, I HAD, IN NEW RIVER. WE SPENT TEN DAYS WHEN WE FINALLY LEFT NEW ZEALAND AND WENT. I DIDN'T GET TO KNOW A SINGLE NEW ZEALAND NATIVE. WE SPENT TEN DAYS IN WELLINGTON AND THEN WE TOOK OFF. WE DIDN'T KNOW WHERE WE WERE GOING. ABOARD SHIP WE WERE TOLD THE PLACE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

CALLED: NO ONE HAD EVER HEARD TO THE PLACE. THEY SHOWED US ON A MAP. WE HAD A PRACTICE LANDING. A LITTLE TINY ISLAND CALLED K O R O ISLAND IN THE FIJI GROUP. WE HAD A PRACTICE LANDING THERE ON THE WAY TO THE SOLOMONS. IT WAS A DISASTER. IT WAS A LOUSY DAY. I NEVER EVEN GO OFF THE SHIP ALONG WITH A LOT OF GUYS. THERE WAS ALWAYS A RUMOR, I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS TRUE, BUT I HEARD IT THAT SOME OF THE MARINES THAT GOT TO LAND ON THIS LITTLE TINY ISLAND, WHETHER THEY WENT OVER THE HILL ON A LITTLE DESERT ISLAND, THEY NEVER GOT BACK ON THE SHIP. I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS TRUE. ALL THE OFFICERS KEPT SAYING, WHETHER IT WAS FOR MORALE BUILDING OR THEY WERE HOODWINKED INTO BELIEVING. WHEN YOU HAVE A TERRIBLE PRACTICE LIKE THAT, AS THEY SAY ABOUT FOOTBALL PRACTICE, THAT MEANS YOU'RE BIG GAME WILL BE SUCCESSFUL. WE DIDN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT GUADALCANAL. INTELLIGENCE AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW WAS SECOND GUESSING. WE WEREN'T READY FOR THE INVASION. THAT WASN'T STRESSED. I SIGNED UP BECAUSE THERE WAS A WAR ON. WHAT WE HAD HEARD ABOUT THE JAPANESE WERE RUTHLESS, TENACIOUS, SOME TRUE, SOME EXAGGERATED. AS YOU KNOW, YOU KNOW ABOUT THE LANGUAGE AS OTHERS KNOW OUR POSITION.

I WAS ANXIOUS FOR THIS. I WAS PUT IN H COMPANY, THE MACHINE COMPANY INTO A PLATOON CALLED HEADQUARTERS PLATOON. WE WOULD GO OUT ON THE ISLAND SHOOTING AZIMUTHS, SOMETHING I WAS INTERESTED IN. THE CORPORAL WAS MAKING MAPS FOR THE MORTARS SO THEY COULD KNOW ANGLES WHERE THEY COULD FIRE THEIR WEAPONS. I FOUND THAT PART INTERESTING. I LEARNED TO SEMAPHORE BECAUSE HEADQUARTERS PLATOON WAS LOCATED ABOUT 200 YARDS FROM THE FRONT LINE. I WAS NOT IN THE MACHINE GUN PLATOON. I WAS IN H COMPANY HEADQUARTERS. I REMEMBER WE HAD A CAPTAIN THAT NO ONE RESPECTED. SOMEHOW HE GOT HOLD OF A TENT. THERE WEREN'T MANY TENTS AROUND: PROBABLY JAPANESE EQUIPMENT. THE JAPANESE HAD A LOT OF EQUIPMENT, SOLDIERS, AND KOREAN LABORERS. WE DIDN'T GET OURS ASHORE. THIS CAPTAIN SAID, "WE ARE GOING TO BUILD SOME DEEP FOXHOLES OR TRENCHES. HEADQUARTERS PLATOON (Lost sound) SOME OF THE OFFICERS SAID, "WE CAN ALL USE THAT." AS SOON AS WE GOT THAT DONE, HE SAID, "NOW, YOU GUYS GO OUT AND MAKE YOU OWN FOXHOLES SOMEWHERE." THAT DIDN'T ADD TO OUR RESPECT FOR THIS GUY. HE COULD HAVE BEEN HONEST WITH US.

WITHIN TWO WEEKS; WE LANDED ON THE 7TH AND ON THE 21ST OF AUGUST WAS THIS BATTLE AT TENARU. I WAS ABOUT 200 YARDS AWAY IN A LITTLE FOXHOLE. ONE OF MY FRIENDS WAS UP THERE ON THE LINE. THERE WAS A SURPRISE ATTACK AND ALL HELL BROKE LOOSE. OUR UNIT WAS INVOLVED IN IT INDIRECTLY. (COULD NO MAKE OUT A PASSAGE HERE) MY FRIEND GOT CALLED ON TO BE A RUNNER UP TO THE FRONT LINE. HE WAS SCARED BUT EVERYONE WAS SCARED. TO GET OUT OF A FOXHOLE AND WALK

UP 200 YARDS. THE GUYS ON THE FRONT LINE WERE DUG IN WITH MACHINE GUN NEST AND SO ON. I FELT I WOULD BE CALLED, JUST A MATTER OF TIME. I DIDN'T AND I HEARD THIS FRIEND OF MINE GO OFF. HE GAVE HIS NAME AND THE PASSWORD AND DON'T SHOOT. HE WAS SCARED LIKE ME. HE SURVIVED THAT. HE DID HIS DUTY. THAT NEVER HAPPENED TO ME. I WAS LUCKY. I HAVE BEEN LUCKY IN SO MANY THINGS IN MY LIFE. SO, I SWEATED THAT NIGHT OUT WITH OTHER PEOPLE AND WAITED TO BE CALLED. SHORTLY AFTER THAT BATTLE, THE PLATOON LOST SOME MEN. I WAS TAKEN OUT OF THE HEADQUARTERS AND PUT IN THE 2ND PLATOON, ONE OF THOSE THAT HAD BEEN IN COMBAT AT TENARU.

WHEN WE JOINED THE MARINE CORPS, IT WASN'T CALLED CAMP LE JUENE, IT WAS CALLED TENT CITY. WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY OFFICERS THERE IN SIX WEEKS. ONE DAY WE WERE OUT IN BIVOUAC AND WHEN ARE WE GETTING SOME OFFICERS? WE DID HAVE AN OFFICER, PROBABLY A 1ST LIEUTENANT OR SOMETHING. ONE DAY WE ARE OUT AND WE GOT WORD, "WE ARE GETTING OFFICERS. THEY ARE COMING IN MAYBE TODAY." THEY SAW THESE OFFICERS COMING IN. THERE WAS A GUY WHO CAME IN AND I WAS A LITTLE AWAY FROM HIM. I SAID TO A FRIEND OF MINE, "I KNOW THAT GUY. I WAS IN COLLEGE WITH HIM," I WASN'T SURE. SHORTLY THEREAFTER, AN OFFICER, ONE OF THAT GANG THAT CAME WAS ASSIGNED TO THIS GROUP I WAS IN, HEADQUARTERS BATTALION. HE SAID TO ME, "OBVIOUSLY YOU KNOW ALL THESE GUYS. THEY ARE YOUR FRIENDS. IS THERE A MAN NAMED MALLOY THERE? YEAH, ROBERT MALLOY. I SAID, "DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT HIM?" "YEAH, WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?" I SAID, "WHERE DID HE GO TO COLLEGE?" HE HAD BEEN TWO YEARS AHEAD OF ME AT UNION COLLEGE, WHICH I LEFT AT THE END OF SOPHOMORE YEAR. HE GRADUATED. HE HAD BEEN A VERY CLOSE FRIEND OF THE MAN THAT I HAD GONE TO UNION WITH. I WAS NEVER A STUDENT, UNION WAS NEVER A TOP TIER COLLEGE. I SAID, "CHEEZ, I WENT TO COLLEGE WITH HIM." I KNEW HIM, NOT LIKE A BROTHER, BUT I KNEW HIM VERY WELL. HE HAD RUSHED ME FOR HIS FRATERNITY AND ALL THAT. IT WAS VERY EASY FOR ME. IT WAS A NATURAL. I TRIED TO PUT MYSELF IN HIS POSITION. THE MOMENT I SAW HIM DOWN THERE IN UNIFORM; I HADN'T SEEN HIM SINCE HE GRADUATED THIS LAST JUNE. I SAID, "I CALLED HIM LT. MALLOY" AND DID ALL THROUGH THE WAR EXCEPT ONE DAY DURING THE FIRST MAIL CALL. I HAD A LETTER FROM MY MOTHER AND SHE TOLD ME MY BEST FRIEND IN THE WORLD HAD BEEN KILLED RECENTLY IN THE ARMY AIR CORPS FLYING ANTI-SUBMARINE PATROL OVER THE EAST COAST DOWN IN THE CAROLINAS. AS I GOT THE STORY, SOME CLOWN PUTTING GASOLINE IN THE PLANE. HE HAD A CREW OF 2 OR 3. HE SAW TO IT THAT THEY BAILED OUT AND HE WAS GOING TO TRY TO LAND AND HE HAD A FEW PROBLEMS. I HAD TO LEARN THIS LATER THAT GETTING OUT OF THE

COCKPIT ON TO THE WING AND THERE WAS SOME MIX UP WITH HIS HARNESS. HE WENT DOWN WITH HIS PLANE. HIS TWIN BROTHER WENT DOWN TO IDENTIFY HIM

I GOT THIS LETTER AND BOB MALLOY, A CLASSMATE AND I REMEMBER, I WASN'T THINKING: IT WOULDN'T HAVE MATTERED, MALLOY WAS A TERRIFIC GUY. I HAD TEARS IN MY EYES. I DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER BOB HAD HEARD THAT ONE OF HIS COLLEGE CLASSMATES HAD BEEN KILLED, A UNION COLLEGE CLASSMATE. I WENT TO SEE HIM AND I SAID, "BOB: I CALLED HIM BOB THE FIRST AND ONLY TIME. I JUST REMEMBER SHARING WITH HIM AND HIS ARM ON MY SHOULDER.

AFTER THE TENARU, I JOINED MALLOY'S PLATOON. MAYBE HE ASKED FOR ME, I DON'T KNOW. SUPPOSEDLY, I KNEW SOMETHING ABOUT MACHINE GUNS FROM TRAINING. I DIDN'T KNOW I WAS GOING TO END UP IN MACHINE GUNS. I JOINED THAT BUT IT WAS AFTER THE MAJOR BATTLE.

YOU KNOW, I WAS ASKING AT LUNCH TODAY. WHAT WOULD BE YOUR BALLPARK GUESS. WE WERE ON THE ISLAND FOR 4 MONTHS, HOW MUCH OF THAT TIME DO YOU THINK WE WERE EITHER IN DIRECT COMBAT WITH THE ENEMY, OR IN A BOMBING RAID OR SHELLING, OR MAYBE ON A PATROL WHERE THERE WAS SOME FIREPOWER GOING ON? FRANK, DON'T THINK UNDERSTOOD. I MEANT IT TECHNICALLY, AND HE SAID, "WE WERE THERE FOUR MONTH." I SAID, "BUT WE WERE NOT IN COMBAT ALL THE TIME." THERE WERE TIMES WHEN WE WERE BORED TO DEATH, OR SCARED TO DEATH. HE SAID, ' I CANT ANSWER THAT, I DON'T KNOW." I SAID, "I NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT THIS." YOU KNOW, AN AIR RAID IS 3 OR 4 MINUTES. THE SHELLING WAS WORSE.

NED

DID YOU HAVE BOMB SHELTERS THAT YOU WENT TO?

LYALL

WE HAD FOXHOLES. OR YOU WOULD BE OUT ON A PATROL OR SOMETHING. YOU KNEW THEY WERE BOMBING THE AIRPORT. THE THINGS YOU DO INSTINCTIVELY: WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING THAT ARE RIDICULOUS. WHEN I GOT IN THE 2ND PLATOON, BEFORE THE BATTLE OF TENARU, I WAS OUT AND A MAP ????? SHOOTING AZIMUTHS. WE WERE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE AIRPORT. THERE WAS A BOMBING RAID. WE DIDN'T HAVE VERY GOOD ANTI-AIRCRAFT COVER. IT WAS EARLY IN THE CAMPAIGN. THE PLANES WERE COMING IN LOW AND WE HAD A GOOD DAY KNOCKING THEM DOWN. YOU COULD ALMOST SET YOUR WATCH BY THEM ABOUT NOON EVERY DAY. I DON'T REMEMBER ANY WARNINGS. THEY CAME AND THE CORPORAL ON THIS PATROL AND I

WERE THERE TOGETHER. WE SAW A BLANKET ON THE GROUND TOWARD THE END OF THE AIRPORT WHERE IT WAS SORT OF WOODED. WE JUMPED AND GOT OFF THE RUNWAY. WE GOT INTO AN AREA I SUPPOSE YOU COULDN'T SEE TOO WELL FROM THE AIR. WE SAW THIS BLANKET ON THE GROUND. IT WAS A WARM DRY DAY AND WE PICKED UP AND GOT UNDER IT. THAT WAS UTTERLY STUPID. I MEAN, IT WASN'T DOING ANY ----THERE WASN'T ANY PROTECTION. FIRST OF ALL, WE WERE BOTH LAYING UNDER THAT BLANKET AND CLOSENESS GAVE A KIND OF SECURITY. THE BLANKET, BEING COVERED, NOBODY COULD SEE US AND DOESN'T MEAN WE WERE ANY SAFER WITH BOMBS DROPPING. I THINK WHEN I TALK ABOUT IT HOW STUPID, FUNNY. YOU KNOW, YOU DO THINGS. WE WERE LUCKY. THE BOMBS DIDN'T COME NEAR US THAT DAY. ONE GUY, JONES IN THE 2ND PLATOON----- WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY IMMEDIATE FIRE FIGHTS LIKE AT TENARU WHEN WE MOVED TO A POSITION BEHIND THE AIRPORT. THAT'S WHEN WE HAD THE FIRST DANGEROUS SHELLING COMING IN AFTER CHOW.

(A GOOD PORTION WAS UNINTELLIGIBLE)

NED

WERE THOSE JAPANESE SHIPS SHELLING FROM OFF SHORE AND WERE THEY ACCURATE WITH THEIR AIM?

LYALL

THEY WERE THERE THE FIRST NIGHT FOR A COUPLE OF HOURS. YOU COULD HEAR EVERY ONE OF THE SHELLS COMING IN. IT WAS FAR WORSE THAN AN AIR RAID. AGAIN, WE WERE A LITTLE WAY FROM THE AIRPORT. THE BOMBERS JUST DROPPED THEIR BOMBS AND SCATTERED THEM LIKE THEY WERE IN A HURRY TO GET AWAY OR SOMETHING.

I STAYED WITH THE PLATOON. I DID GO OUT ON PATROLS, NIGHT PATROLS AND THINGS.

NED

HOW LONG WERE YOU-----?

LYALL

WE WERE ON GUADALCANAL; WE LANDED ON THE 7TH OF AUGUST AND IT WAS LESS THAN A WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS, WE WERE FINALLY TAKEN OFF THE LINE. THE ARMY TOOK OVER WHEN WE LEFT AND ANOTHER TWO MONTHS BEFORE THE ISLAND WAS SECURED. WE WERE THERE AS LONG AS THE MARINES WERE. I REMEMBER SPENDING CHRISTMAS DAY ON THE SHIP. WE HAD A SERVICE BECAUSE THEY HAD A CHAPLAIN THERE. WE WERE ON OUR WAY TO FIJI. WE WERE THERE ABOUT TEN DAYS ON THE WAY AND THEN WE WERE ON THE WAY TO AUSTRALIA. WE WERE IN FIJI. IT WASN'T EITHER SUVA OR NANDY (????) IT WAS ONE OF THOSE SOMEWHERE IN THE ADMIRALTIES. I REMEMBER THE TROOPS ARRIVING THERE BY TROOPSHIP FROM GUADALCANAL. THE *ENTERPRISE* WAS IN THERE. WE WERE TOLD THAT THE NAVY WOULD TAKE US OUT TO ANY SHIP WE WANTED TO VISIT. THEY HAD NOTHING TO DO AND GETTING READY TO SET SAIL SOMEWHERE. THEY WERE GETTING PATCHED UP OR WHATEVER. A LOT OF US CHOSE TO VISIT THE *ENTERPRISE*. WE HAD NEVER BEEN ABOARD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER. THAT HAD BEEN HALSEY'S SHIP. HALSEY WAS A HERO TO US. GHORMLEY PHILOSOPHY APPARENTLY WAS "WE DON'T WANT TO RISK SHIPS, WE MIGHT LOSE SOME." HALSEY'S WAS, WE'RE NOT EVER GOING TO DO ANYTHING UNLESS YOU RISK SHIPS.

NED

"GIVE 'EM HELL. HE WAS A MORALE BUILDER.

LYALL

I NEVER MET HIM BUT I NEVER SAW HIM IN PERSON. LONG AFTER HALSEY RETIRED, I HAD DINNER AT THE ARMORY AT NORFOLK I WAS INVITED. HE WAS A SHRIVELED LITTLE MAN (LOST SOUND. THE COMMENTARY AS I CAN MAKE OUT, CONCERNED ADM. GHORMLEY AND HIS PULL OUT OF THE SUPPLY SHIPS AT GUADALCANAL.)

FIJI WAS WHERE WE HAD THIS PRACTICE LANDING WE WERE AT ESPIRITU SANTO ON NEW HEBRIDES . WE KNEW WE WERE GOING TO SOME PLACE TO REST AND RECUPERATE.

THAT WAS NINE MONTHS (THE GUADALCANAL CAMPAIGN) AND A LOT OF THE GUYS WENT HOME. WE ALL HAD MALARIA. MALARIA IS SORT OF A NUISANCE.

NED

IT RECURRED ALL THE TIME.

LYALL

WELL, YOU DID AND YOU DIDN'T. I HAD A SERIOUS ATTACK IN AUSTRALIA IN THE HOSPITAL OUTSIDE OF MELBOURNE. THIS WAS A SMALL HOSPITAL. MALARIA WAS THE MAIN INJURY. I ALWAYS REMEMBER THE BEAUTIFUL WOMAN THAT VISITED. SHE STOPPED AT EVERY SINGLE BED TO SAY SOMETHING GOOD. (A SIZABLE PORTION COULD NOT BE UNDERSTOOD.)

TAPE ENDED.

TRANSCRIBED BY FOREST J. REES
PROOFED BY MARJORIE REES