

***NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR***

***Center for Pacific War Studies  
Fredericksburg, Texas***

***Interview with Elbert Dixon  
U.S. Marine Corps***

## Interview With Elbert Dixon

This is Steve Morris. Today is September fourth, 2004. I'm interviewing Mr. Elbert Dixon at the Hilton Hotel, San Antonio, Texas. This interview is in support of the Center for Pacific War Studies, Archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Parks and Wildlife, for the preservation of historical information related to this site.

**Mr. Morris:** I appreciate your taking your time.

**Mr. Dixon:** Glad to do it.

**Mr. Morris:** I usually like to start with a little background, where you were born, who your folks were. Fire away.

**Mr. Dixon:** Okay. Well, I was born on a farm near Turney, Missouri. Turney is north of Kansas City about an hour. That doesn't have any bearing on it (chuckles). The background doesn't hurt anything, does it.

**Mr. Morris:** No, it's nice to know where everybody comes from.

**Mr. Dixon:** Okay. Anyway, I was born there in 1926, the eighteenth of August, and, you want to know about my parents?

**Mr. Morris:** Sure.

**Mr. Dixon:** My father was Willis Dixon and my mother was Eunice Wray Gow, and they were married in 'twenty-five, sometime in 1925, and I was born August eighteenth, 1926. In 1927 my father was killed in a hunting accident, and my mother and my sister and I moved into Plattsburg, Missouri. Bought a house from my father's grandfather and we lived there. She remarried and had two children. My sister, direct sister, is Cara Lee Dickerson now. And we have two half-brothers and -sisters. When I was eight years old my mother died. So my grandparents on my father's side took my sister Cara Lee and I to the farm and raised us. It was during hard times, and things were pretty tough then. But anyway we made it through it and probably learned a lot of hard lessons and learned about economics in hard times and appreciated things in good times now.

**Mr. Morris:** How'd you come to join the Marine Corps?

**Mr. Dixon:** It's, I guess, kind of a long story, but in high school I was a freshman and a man by the name of Virgil Rogers was in the Marine Corps and had been, he came to an assembly at the high school and spoke to us. He had his dress blues on and he had been awarded the Silver Star and earned the Purple Heart on Tulagi. Which, Guadalcanal and Tulagi were in the same operation. And that kind of made an impression on me, I guess, and I decided I wanted to be in the Marine Corps. I had friends that were older than me that went on, two or three of 'em left school before they graduated and joined the Marine Corps. So I

decided I wanted to be in the Marine Corps and when I graduated from high school I went to Kansas City, which was about an hour south, and went to the Marine Corps Recruiting Office in the Federal Building in Kansas City. Talked to a lieutenant there, and I told him that the scar I have, a scar on my right eye. And he said, "Well, if you don't have twenty-twenty vision, why you probably can't get in." He said, "What you should do is wait and be drafted, and I'll give you a letter and you give them this letter and maybe it'll help you."

So I went to Leavenworth, Fort Leavenworth, took my physical over there. And that was in, I was eighteen, on August eighteenth I was eighteen, and shortly after that went to Leavenworth and took my physical. I was very anxious about passing the physical because of the scar on my right eye, and we were in a line going like this way, and you would get up to so far and step over, turn back, and read the eye chart. Well I memorized the eye chart as we went by. Anyway, memorized the eye chart but I didn't do twenty-twenty. I came down just a little bit with my right eye, and ended up I think twenty-fourty or something like that.

So everything got fine there. And the funny part of it was I was so anxious about passing the eye test that my heartbeat wouldn't go below a hundred and they kept me over there for two days, and in the end everything came out fine.

Well then, I was called back in November to go back to Leavenworth to go into service.

**Mr. Morris:** This is, what year is this now?

**Mr. Dixon:** Nineteen forty-four.

**Mr. Morris:** Forty-four, okay.

**Mr. Dixon:** So when I went back we did all the stuff we were supposed to do, and got ready, and I told them I wanted in the Marine Corps, and they said "The Marine Corps is not taking anybody now. You're going to have to go into the Navy." Well, I was disheartened by that news, but anyway, they put us on a bus and we went from Leavenworth to Kansas City to the Federal Building, right back where I'd gone the first time back in May, and this Navy man told me to take my clothes off so they could examine me for scars. And I felt that letter in my pocket and I pulled the letter out that the Marine lieutenant had given me and handed it to him, and he looked at it and he said "Put your clothes back on," and he took me next door and I was in the Marine Corps.

Now then, one of the things that happened, they said "Because you don't have twenty-twenty vision, you can't get into the regulars." I would have signed up in the regular Marine Corps for four years, but they said I couldn't get into the regulars and so I'd go into the reserve deal. Well, anyway, that's the way I got in. And four of us went from the Federal Building November the seventeenth to Parris Island, South Carolina. Most

everyone was going to San Diego. I don't know if San Diego was filled up or what, but anyway I'm one of the few Marines in our area that went through Perris Island. And we went to Perris Island, I was in Platoon 602, Third Battalion. They were taking pictures and of course I'd, now I was interested, but they didn't take a picture of our platoon. I'd give anything to have a picture of it because, to see the people and just how many people you would remember.

**Mr. Morris:** Right.

**Mr. Dixon:** Well, anyway, boot camp, and I said this to somebody yesterday, you know, I was on a farm, we didn't have running water, you went outside to the bathroom, and back in the 'thirties things were pretty tough. In Perris Island, even though there was somebody on top of us all the time chewing on us, we had running water (chuckles) and we didn't have to go outside, so it really wasn't, I didn't get home sick, home sick wasn't a thing that even entered into my mind. And I wondered about that, was it because I had lost my parents and had sort of an unstable life up to that point? Maybe that's what it was, I don't know. But anyway, boot camp, it was boot camp. We had thirteen weeks of it and I learned a lot of things and I think am a better man having gone through boot camp.

**Mr. Morris:** Did the training, I guess that's why it's called basic training, so you weren't given a specialty at this point or anything?

**Mr. Dixon:** No, you know, and people don't believe this, and I guess I kinda, I know it was that way, but I wanted to be a rifleman, I wanted to go overseas, and now something that I didn't, I haven't said, but in the interim between graduating from high school I had an uncle that lived in Kansas City and there was a trade school down there, Midland Radio and Television School. And I wanted to get in radio for whatever reason, and so I went down in May and enrolled in that school and went to radio school and stayed with my uncle down there. And he lived in North Kansas City and we drove probably fifteen miles into Kansas City and back every day. The thing, it was an interesting thing, there were I think about between two hundred and fifty and two hundred and seventy-five students going there, and about ten of us were men and the rest of 'em were women. That was hard to handle, of course, but, anyhow, I'm joking. One of the things that I didn't take and could have taken and it would have helped me, but it was code, Morse code. I learned to build radios, I learned all about the theory and I could build a radio and did build a radio. So I went to school there up until the time I was drafted. When I left I was still going to radio school.

Back to, did I have a specialty then. There wasn't, and I kept saying I want to go, I want to be a rifleman, I want to go overseas, and believe it or not, the kids, I mean, we wanted to get the Japs. I mean, the Japs were after us and we wanted to avenge what had taken place at Pearl Harbor and what took place in all the other places that we'd heard of up to that point. So that was the primary objective, believe it or not.

In boot camp you don't, you're not assigned to anything. You just go through boot camp,

and from there went to Camp Lejeune, which was in Jacksonville, North Carolina. At that point if you lived west of the Mississippi they were giving furloughs then, and I got a fifteen day furlough because I lived west of the Mississippi. Not very far west, two hundred and fifty miles, in fact. We were there shortly, for a short time, and then got furloughs and got the train to Washington D.C. and then from there back to Kansas City. I had the fifteen day furlough and I remember going to high school, where I had graduated, and I remember the lady that was principal was "Well, I'll bet boot camp was really tough, wasn't it?" I didn't really think it was all that tough, but because I was on a farm and I'd handled and baled hay and all that kind of stuff, so the physical part wasn't that big a deal.

I came back from boot camp and then we went to advanced training, that's what they called it. We learned to throw grenades and we learned about demolition and all the things that you do as far as advanced training. We had an instructor who'd been on one of the islands, I don't remember which one it was, and we didn't pay too much attention, not enough attention, I guess, he thought. He said, "I tell you what, you all are just gonna be cannon fodder." He says, "If you don't pay attention to what I'm telling you, you won't even make it back." And of course that was to get our attention. But we went through all the stuff there.

We had a company commander who was a graduate of the Naval Academy, had graduated in the spring, and Lieutenant Mize, Charles D. Mize, had graduated in the spring, and he made an impression on me. He picked me and there were two or three others in our company to go to—I don't know where went, we rode a bus over someplace, and if you passed this three-week screening, then you would be eligible and they'd send you to Purdue or Northwestern for two years and you'd be eligible for a commission then. So I wanted to do that. And I talked about the fact that I'd been to an officer and been interviewed and had a scar on my right eye, and he said "Don't worry about that." He said, "We'll, maybe you can work through that."

So I went over there and was there about a week. I remember the first thing we had to do was to write a biography, about ourselves, kinda like we're doing here. We marched back and forth from the detail. We studied all the time. And to eat, and we had plates, you know, china and all that kind of stuff. It was really down pat (both chuckle).

But anyway, I got word that, and there was concern about my eye, got word that my outfit was going overseas. So, well, if I don't pass this I'm gonna be hung out here some place and there won't be anybody I know, so I got out of it. Now I think probably I'd look back and thought I was questioning whether I would have passed, not only the eye, but would I have passed the rest of it. And I didn't want to be with people I didn't know, so I pulled out of that and went back to Camp Lejeune to tent camp, and went on mess duty there.

I worked in the officers' mess and there was a certain place, a certain seat there, and it was my job, and I hated that, but it was my job to keep that open for Tom Fuller, he was the

C.O. of Tent Camp, and some major invariably would come in and sit down there, and I, just a private, would have to go up and ask the major to move, because that was Tom Fuller's seat.

From there, then, shortly after, we went overseas. I was in the fifty-fifth replacement draft. We left out of Norfolk, Virginia, April the twelfth, and I—

**Mr. Morris:** Forty-five?

**Mr. Dixon:** Um-hum. And it was the day President Roosevelt died. I never will forget that. Anyway, from there we went on and went to, we were going down through the Panama Canal, and we got off of the, they let us off the ship in Panama and we could look in. It was fenced in, we couldn't get out, and they wouldn't let the Marines go in, but the Navy people all went in. It was interesting to see the sailors come back, they had lipstick all over, one would be carrying the other one 'cause they had too much to drink. It was fun.

Something I'll always remember. I had a buddy named Domstead, Virgil Domstead, and when you went aboard ship you were supposed to salute the ensign and salute the officer of the deck. Well, Domstead was just in front of me and he turned and started to leave and the officer of the deck said "Hey, you're supposed to salute me"—no, "salute the ensign," that's what he said. Meaning the flag, see. Well, he didn't, he just couldn't find it, and finally the officer pointed to the flag up there, so he saluted it. That was one of the funny things.

Now back to boot camp. We were going through, we didn't have any clothes on, we were picking up our clothing after had our shower and all that other stuff, had our hair cut off. Anyway, this kid in front of me didn't move as fast as this fellow standing here, and he kicked him in the seat of the pants and he said "You move." Well, you can bet that I moved. It was Lou Diamond, who it was. I don't know if you know who Lou Diamond was, but he was one of the legends of the Marine Corps. He's dead now, but you can, Lou Diamond, if you get back to the old Corps why you'll find out all kinds of history there on Lou Diamond. He drank beer all night and got up in the morning and had a beer, and had a goatee, and they said, I don't know if it's true or not, he wouldn't salute anybody under a major. Now I couldn't prove that around there.

Now then. Back on to Panama. From there we went to Pearl Harbor, spent two or three weeks in Pearl Harbor, and—

**Mr. Morris:** What shape was Pearl Harbor in when you got there? Was there still, were they still cleaning up wreckage, or—

**Mr. Dixon:** You know, I don't remember. I honestly don't remember. Now as far as out in the bay, I don't remember that, but the downtown part, and we were stationed at a replacement deal is what it was, a transitional thing, and I don't remember seeing anything showing

where the bombing hit then. We went into Pearl Harbor, I can remember going in two or three times, on leave, and of course I wasn't old enough to drink and I had never had a drink in my life up to that point. I wasn't old enough to drink and didn't drink. But I had a buddy, E .J. Davis is his name, he lives in California. We went through boot camp together and were good friends. He and I would go on leave and we'd come back and we'd get in work details. They'd put us in work details. We'd get started and then we'd fall off, we'd get in back and then we'd fall off, fall out of the work detail. Go over to Kehoe Beach and swim that afternoon. I remember doing that several times, and he was more daring than I was, I guess, because he'd do that, and I remember back at tent camp, at Camp Lejuene, we hated standing in lines and so he would start up the line and he'd start going up to the front and guys, they wouldn't say anything 'til you stopped, and then you'd press in line and they'd go to talking to you but we'd start up a conversation with somebody. He was bad about that.

From there at Pearl Harbor, we were there three weeks doing different things. I was a prisoner chaser for awhile. I was talking to a fellow last night who was also. We had brig duty and we'd take fellows around for work details and so on, and they told us that if your prisoner escapes you serve his term. So we were pretty serious about what we were doing.

From there we went on to, we got on board ship then, and we went to Eniwetok and Truk and Kwajalein. We came by Saipan and Guam. We were, it was kinda like delivering the mail. And then the next thing, why, we were headed for Okinawa. Now the Battle of Okinawa was started the first of April. So then we finally got where we were going. I don't remember the ship, we were on the *Griggs* and it seems like there was a *Kelly*.

We ended up, we went into Okinawa, came in there, and I can remember the kamikaze attacks were going on all the time. We had a kamikaze attack and everybody was all suited up and we were up on top deck, and they made us all go down below, because we might get strafing or whatever. I didn't like that, I didn't like going below because I could imagine a bomb hitting and get caught down there. And going overseas on the ships, I wouldn't sleep down there. I'd go up and sleep on top of the deck. There were other people that were the same way I was. I'd take my shoes, my boon dockers off, and use them for a pillow. I know that doesn't make sense, but that's what I did, because it was softer than the deck was. I thought about, we wore a life preserver around our waist, and I thought about rolling and falling off of the ship and you'd be gone then.

But anyway, we went in and this kamikaze attack and then when it was over, we came, they got us back up and we went over the side of the ship. We had our full gear, packs and everything on. Went over the side of the ship. We were up two decks, and climbed down a rope ladder, it was a cargo net, is what it was. I can remember they said "Now don't hold on to the side, you hold on to the steps. If you hold on to the sides somebody above you is liable to step onto your hands." So we'd go down there, and you had a rifle on, you had a rifle, a full pack, and a helmet and the whole works, into the landing craft and then we

went in and landed there on Okinawa. Now the beach was already secure where we landed. I mean, it had been going a good while.

We landed there June the tenth, and June the tenth we landed and went on the beach and spent the night on the beach. We hadn't, the food hadn't been the best but it wasn't the worst. It wasn't too bad a deal, but I can remember Army trucks going by that had stuff on, had food on 'em, and I can still this, of the Marines running over and these guys driving these six-fives, and the Marine in the back throwing cans of food off, pineapple juice and stuff like that, off for us to drink. We spent the night there, and I remember one fellow opening a can with his K-bar and cut his hand. And they said, well you won't get a Purple Heart for that now, let me tell you.

We spent the night there, they loaded us on six-fives, and we started leaving where we were. I was turned around on Okinawa. North was south and vice versa. We went up to Naha and it was the capitol city there, and there were just a few buildings standing. They'd taken it. I remember seeing that it came to a turn in the road, and I remember seeing this officer there, you could see he was a general, a brigadier general, had stars. There was off to the side a Marine who was his guard, and a Doberman dog there. He was standing there for us to see that the general was about.

We moved on up to the Yonabaru Road, which was a road that went across Okinawa, and we spent the night there. That night artillery fired over us all night. I remember I had purchased a knife, a long knife, that I was carrying, and we were issued a K-bar at the same time, which was a similar knife, I don't know if you're familiar with a K-bar or not. For some reason I took my ammunition belt off and laid it down. I think when we slept that night I did because there wasn't anything going on right there. We were like here and the artillery's firing here up there, and it was quiet except for that. Somebody stole my K-bar, I never did know where it went or why they stole my K-bar.

We spent that day there, and then that afternoon, I remember this first sergeant came in and he had a, was carrying a .45 in a shoulder holster, cocked. And I thought, God almighty, I didn't know too much about the .45 at that time because we hadn't, we hadn't fired the .45. We'd fired the M1 and the .22 and the BAR. I fired sharpshooter, I fired two ninety five, and three oh six was expert. I'm going back to boot camp, it's something I forgot to say. I fired two ninety-five with the M1 and fired sharpshooter with the BAR as well. In those days, if you fired expert you got, I forget, I think it was like five dollars a month extra. If you fired sharpshooter you got three dollars a month extra. And we're making fifty-one dollars a month. So it was pretty good incentive. I really wanted to fire expert but someway I was off eleven clicks on the firing range when we first started firing at the hundred yard line. I finally got it straightened out, and this is going back but it's something I wanted to mention.

This fellow had this .45 cocked and he said "We're going to draw ammunition." We didn't have ammunition, we'd draw ammunition and go up on the line. Part of us took our, we

had our blankets on our packs, took our blanket rolls off because if we was gonna get up on the line we didn't want that extra weight. I took mine off, that was the last time I saw my blankets. Of course it had my name and everything on them. I kicked myself a hundred times, knowing now but I didn't know then.

We started out, and we marched in a, it wasn't a march, it was just followed him up there. And we get up to this area and it was the First Battalion, Fifth Marines. I didn't know at the time, but I remember them saying "Anybody here knows anything about a radio?" And then I pulled it down, I said "Well, they killed the radio man, I guess." So anyway he saw me and said "Come on up here." That's how I ended up being a radio man. I went into headquarters company, First Battalion, Fifth Marines. I didn't know one outfit from another, but that's where I ended up. We were in reserve at the time. I can remember we put up little tents, that are tents that are shelter halves, we put those up, each one of us had those, and I can remember the first night woke up and I could hear a machine gun, it wasn't very far away, a machine gun firing, and looked out and you could see tracers going across down there. It was getting, we were getting into the serious part then.

Next morning the first dead person I saw was a young lady that had been killed that night, a civilian, and of course there were civilians moving around all over the island. A hundred thousand Okinawans were killed on Okinawa. Civilians. And a hundred, I think a hundred and ten thousand Japanese were killed on Okinawa. And twelve thousand Americans, Army, Navy, Marines, whatever, were killed on Okinawa in the battle.

**Mr. Morris:** How come so many civilians? Has anyone ever figured that out?

**Mr. Dixon:** You just shot everything that moved. You had to. Because the Japanese would dress like them at times and so you couldn't tell who was what. And at night you'd just kill anything that moved. It was a tragic, tragic thing. Lots of people killed.

The next morning I went down and saw this lady laying there by the side of the road, and I can remember it was a bad deal. But anyway, we were in reserve until the eighteenth of June. The tenth was when we landed, until the eighteenth of June. And on those times they were teaching me how to be a radio man. Which we carried, a thirty-three pound SCR 300, Signal Corps Radio 300 on our backs. And it had a handle that you talked just like on a telephone. They taught me how to do that, and then we went out on patrols. And I can remember going out on patrols and the radio man would be attached to the officer, so he would have communications back to headquarters or battalion, whichever thing he needed to talk to. I can remember we had fellows with flame throwers and all that kind of stuff. And there wasn't much happened, I mean there wasn't anything hardly happened on these patrols.

Then they started in, and Kinishi Ridge was one of the bad battles, and we could see it. We were up on a ridge where we were and there were trees there so you couldn't see, but

they'd say, we were kinda over the brow of this hill and you could look up out across this valley and you could see all the firing and at night, I mean, it was something else to see all them, the ships, we weren't very far from the coast. And the ships firing at them, it was like the Fourth of July every night, only not the kind of Fourth of July you wanted to see. I can remember 'em saying, two or three of the fellows were pretty friendly. Some of them weren't, and I've learned since then why they didn't want to be friends with you because most of the replacements didn't know what to do and they said they were up when they were supposed to be down and down when they're supposed to be up, and they get killed, so you just didn't want to make friends with them.

But there were two or three of them that were pretty good. I remember Al Cuff and J. R. Bumpass, and they were radio men, and they'd been on Palau, which was the island before Okinawa, and Al Cuff had been on Guadalcanal. They were guys that had been over there since the thing started. I remember Al Cuff was from New York and he wanted to know how it was back in the States. He'd been, this was 1945, and he'd been since 1942, he'd been with the First Marine Division. I always enjoyed visiting with him.

The eighteenth, after we'd gone, we went out on patrol and so on, and then the First Battalion was, we were going back on the line. We were going to Hills Seventy-nine and Eighty-one were our objectives. And I can remember early that morning we got up and started moving up and we went out across the valley and there was never any, we were never fired on. But we, two or three times they'd tell us to move off to the side of the road and get down in a ditch, and we would, and we'd get back up and move on up. We started up across, we started up, it wasn't a mountain but it was a hill and stuff, and everything was pretty well leveled, I mean as far as trees. They were knocked down, there'd been so much artillery fire and stuff that the leaves were off the trees and so on. And I remember coming to a turn in the trail that we were going through there, we were single file, and here's a dead Marine laying there on a stretcher. He'd been put there to remind us what lay ahead and to remind us that we needed to act accordingly. And we did.

I can remember going over that hill and going down, and there was, I remember seeing this Japanese artillery piece. Well General Buckner had been killed that day, and they said that was the piece that had fired that killed him. He was the general that was in charge of the whole operation of Okinawa and had gone up to look, I guess, at some of the stuff and see what was going on, and he, I said it was the eighteenth. Anyway, he'd gone up there and I guess the Japanese had seen the stuff flash on his, stars or whatever, and they fired the artillery piece in and it hit the coral and the coral bounced off and that's what killed him, they said, rather than actually a direct hit.

We went on down, then, into a, on the side of a hill. I was attached then to battalion, it was Battalion Headquarters. You know, when you just come into a place you don't really know where you are. I hadn't been connected that long. The battalion C.O. was there, and then they moved on down and we spent that day there and the next night. I talked about one of the fellows not being friendly? Okay, he and I had radio watch and I had it until I think it

was twelve o'clock from in the evening, four to twelve, however it figured out, and I was supposed to wake him up. Well of course there was firing and all kinds of stuff going on all the time and he slept, you couldn't dig a fox hole because it was all coral and stuff, but we were down in these rocks, and I was supposed to wake him up at twelve o'clock to go on watch. He was sleeping, had his K-bar stuck in the ground right there by him, and I was figuring out how in the world I'm gonna wake him up (chuckles) without him thinking I'm a Jap and trying to stab me. Well anyway, I did, and got him awake and then he went on duty.

The next morning then, we're in this, we stayed right in this same area, and I remember the colonel's body guard said, and you could look out across the valley, it would be this way, but look out across this valley and it was probably a half a mile over there, maybe a quarter of a mile. Between a half and a quarter of a mile. And there was a village there, and you could see people walking around in the village. And so this Blackie was his name, and I can remember him saying to the colonel, "You know, I think I can hit some of those over there from this range," and the colonel said "No, don't fire at them." He said, "You get to firing at them, they're going to be firing back at us. So just leave 'em alone." Which he did.

Down below us was the battalion aid station set up down there. Well the next day they started bringing fellows in, the dead and the wounded they'd work on in the tent, and the dead ones they'd take put them out there in a pile. Not in a pile, on stretchers side by side. I can remember during the day, I don't know when it was, and I didn't have my rifle like this, I wasn't carrying it, I wasn't on radio duty then, wasn't on watch, but we just stayed right around this same area. And somebody yells "Banzai" and starts, I mean really starts in yelling "Banzai" and you know what banzai meant. Well, it just scared the daylights out of all of us, and before I could pick my rifle up over there, somebody else had already picked it up. Well I'm trying to find a weapon to pick up, and it wasn't a banzai, it turned out it was a false alarm. But you talk about something being in bad shape, I was really upset about that. And after that you can believe I kept that thing close to me all the time. And that's probably one of those things that, as a replacement, I didn't realize how important it was, that anything could happen.

**Mr. Morris:** Any time.

**Mr. Dixon:** Any time. Now, Hill Seventy-Nine was just over the hill, and it wasn't very far, just right close by there. They set up mortars and they fired mortars and I can remember a short round and they yelling "Short round," and the short round hit out there in front, though nobody got hurt. And they brought six buoys up that had rockets on 'em, and they'd fire rockets out there and you could look down and you could see those rockets going. I don't know if you're familiar with what I'm talking about, they have them in racks, and they'd fire those things.

**Mr. Morris:** They'd go out all at once.

**Mr. Dixon:** Yeah (makes a swishing sound). And then, I'm just remembering this, out across this valley and it wasn't very far out there, there were, they had knocked out in the time it was working, they had knocked out five of our tanks. Our people, of course they'd get out of them if they could, but then the Japs would just slip up on those in the night when we'd left 'em and they could get in there and use them as a place to snipe from. It was hard to see 'em, and they wouldn't expect them, you didn't expect them at first. But they'd use the tanks the Infantry would, and they'd go in behind them and around them so they could lead them up into the hills. At night, and I know they talked about they didn't do it or shouldn't do it, but they'd fire flares and they'd be lined up at night so you could see, you'd look out there and see if there was any Japs coming in. And they'd fire those flares and then the next morning you could see those flares out there, I mean those parachutes that were nylon parachutes, that they stayed there, nobody was brave enough to go out there and get them, I mean they're dumb enough, I guess is the way you'd put it. Because nylon was a precious commodity and they'd get those, when they did get 'em, then they'd send them home to their families, girl friends, wives, whatever, and make things out of them.

When we had that four or five days, took Hills Seventy-Nine and Eighty-One, and I remember one night they came up and said they needed volunteers to carry ammunition and food up to A Company. So I volunteered and the fellow next to me said "Ah, don't do that." He said "No, don't do that." So I didn't do it. I've looked back and it was, you know you never volunteer for anything, but I did volunteer for that, and it was do I listen to my friend here or do I go? Well, I listened to my friend and stayed. And whether that was gonna cost me anything or not I don't know. I'm here, you know what I'm saying. So maybe that's one of the reasons I'm here. I would have gone if he hadn't said that, I would have gone and hard telling what I would have gotten into.

When it was over, when the battles were over there, Seventy-Nine and Eighty-One were taken, then they formed a skirmish line and you had a line all across Okinawa. Now we were down on the southern tip of it and it wasn't very wide across, but you were as far as you could see somebody all the time. And that was to clean out all the Japs that were left. And I was carrying a radio on my back and was with the lieutenant, and I don't remember what his name was, but we walked. That evening we came, it was early evening, we came up to a place and we decided to spend the night there. And the lieutenant wanted, there was a little hill over there, and I say a little hill. It was one that you'd have to crawl up the side of and it was bare on top, I mean there wasn't any trees up there, but there were trees around and brush and stuff, getting up.

Well, he went up ahead of me and so I went behind him and I was going up I looked and I noticed some sugar cane there. I wondered what in the world that sugar cane was doing there. I went on up right behind him, and the fellow that came up behind me, just as soon as he got up there, he turned around and started firing. There was a Jap in there. The Jap had been eating that sugar cane, and I didn't see him, but I had to have gone right by him, you know. Well, he had a grenade, and this fellow behind me, as I said, and I can

remember this officer, we were, oh, that far apart. When I got up there and he started firing, and I remember that officer motioning for me to lay down.

When it was all over, why, we went back, went down, and the Jap we pulled him down there, and he had one of those stick hand grenades. That was the closest thing that I had, which didn't happen, I'm here, but it could have. He could have grabbed me and that would have been the end of it. I've thought about that many times. Or he could have tossed it up there when the rest of us got up there and killed all of us.

From there we moved on back to close to Yanabaru Road and spent probably two or three weeks there. We just lived in fox holes and it was pretty common stuff then, food wasn't good or anything. But then we moved back into the rest area and they hauled us back to the northern end of the island, and that's where we were then. We stayed there until the war was over. Am I talking too long?

**Mr. Morris:** Go right ahead.

**Mr. Dixon:** Moved back to the northern end of the island and we had tents then, I don't know whatcha call 'em, but they were, six or eight or ten of us could sleep in a tent. They were big tents. We had our cots in there, and of course mosquito nets over and so on. I can remember it was dull, we'd go down to the beach and swim, come back up, and there wasn't anything going on in the evening, we'd go down and we could take showers down there. Somebody had a pair of monkeys and—

**Mr. Morris:** Monkeys?

**Mr. Dixon:** Monkeys. And I say a pair of 'em. Well, we'd go down and every evening they'd turn the monkeys loose, put 'em together, and they'd have intercourse every evening. Of course, that was entertainment (both laugh) for the fellows to watch the monkeys. And I can remember another thing for entertainment. It was just dull as can be. The same old, same old, same old. The food wasn't good or anything. And I can remember that the Army and the Marine pilots would get up and they'd do dog fights, and they'd dive them down and they'd come down, there was Corsair and I don't remember what the other one was, but they'd dive down and come down so close that when they pulled out they would just, the dust and everything would just go everywhere. And you were watching, hoping sure enough they wouldn't forget to pull out.

From there we boarded ships and it was in the latter part of September or the first of October, I don't remember exactly when. From there we went to, boarded ships and went to China. The war was over. I remember going down, we had kind of an amphitheater, it was just the way the shape of the hill, and had some entertainers come in there. I remember this thing, the general was down there and I don't remember what his name was, but the general was down there and he got out of his car and had shorts on. And shorts on a

general, in shorts, we couldn't believe that kind of a deal. Had on khaki shorts and had his khaki shirt on, (chuckles) and so it struck me as funny, and everybody else, too.

I remember Ish Kabble, I don't know if you ever heard of him or not, but he was an entertainer that was with some fellow that had a band, and it wasn't any, he was one of the lesser known people. They entertained us.

From there back going to China, we landed at Tangu. They call it Taku, Tangu, I called it Tangu, but out in the bay, I guess you'd say, because it was so shallow that they couldn't get in too close. And I remember us talking on the radio when the party was going in, and we finally then went aboard a landing craft and went into Tangu. We spent, that's very vague in my mind. I remember going in there, but we spent maybe a day or a night and a day there, and then got on a train and went to Peking. I say Peking, that's what we called it then. Went to Peking and went to the American Legation, which is the same as the American Embassy, but they called it Legation. And was there for two or three weeks, and then went to, they transferred me and I'd never, two or three of us radio men, they went out to the West Airfield and we were attached to the Army, doing communications for them. I think probably what we were probably guarding there, and were the radio people for the guard detail.

They were flying, the Army was flying Chiang Kai-Shek's troops in from Shanghai and flying them up there in C47s. In the beginning, they thought about this in the beginning, they thought this was fun. They'd get to doing didos, they'd taken all the seats out and the troops were just sitting on the deck in the plane. Well, they got sick, and you can imagine what. And they stopped doing that, the didos, you know.

Another thing that I remember, while we were out there, and I've got pictures that I brought with me that show airplanes and things that were there, showing the troops coming in. They had two different currencies. China, CNC was China National Currency, and FRB was Federal Reserve Bank. Federal Reserve Bank money was scarce in north China and these guys were coming from Shanghai and they'd bring FRB notes up and you could buy a whole bunch of China National Currency with those. They got to bringing up a bunch of it and then the authorities, whoever it was, found out about it and it was against the law to do that because of the people who were, I mean they were making money, lots of money, out of it.

We was out there, I was out there for a month or so, I guess, and then went back, and we'd go in on liberty and I can remember riding a truck and going through the big gates in the wall that was around Peking, and way off in the distance you could see the China Wall, and you'd see coming in, it was black there, and you could see camel trains coming in from people that had been, I don't know where they'd come from, Mongolia or where.

Then I was transferred back to, not back to, but to Tientsin, out to the French Arsenal. Stayed out there for a month or two, I guess.

**Mr. Morris:** You say French Arsenal. Were there French troops there also?

**Mr. Dixon:** No, not that I'm aware of. It was a place that had been prior to the war, the French had had that and it was an arsenal that they had, but I don't think there were any French troops there. The only troops that we saw, there were some, I think there were some British Marines or Netherland Marines. Most all of us, and this was the First Marine Division. The Sixth I think had gone south and they were not in the area where we were. But I was attached then to the Eleventh Marines which was an artillery outfit.

Why, I don't know, I don't know what the situation was, but there were several of us radio men that were at the French Arsenal. We would, it was just kinda like we were on leave there because we could go into Tiensin at night. I can remember going in. Had a good restaurant we ate in, they had consommé and borscht, and I'm from the farm and I didn't know what in the world that kinda stuff was, but I found out. It was pretty good.

(Chuckles.) Our money, the first night I went out, I can remember in Peking, we went to the Peking Hotel and we ordered chicken. We hadn't had chicken in a long time. We ordered chicken and they brought this chicken out on a platter and the feet were on it, and the head was on it. They'd cooked the whole thing together. There was half a dozen of us Marines there and I was from the farm. I'd seen my grandmother cut chickens up many times so I ordered a plate and a knife and I cut the feet off and the head off and had 'em take it away and then we cut the chicken up and ate it. I later found out that the head was a delicacy, the head in China was something that they ate the whole works. Well, I'd eaten the feet on the farm, but never did eat the head.

We were at the French Arsenal and then about that time the four of us went to a rice mill. It was out in the country, just like you'd go out here twenty-five miles, and there was this big rice mill and there were about twenty-two thousand twenty-five hundred Japanese soldiers there. We're guarding these Japanese soldiers. Now, if you can believe that, from the Chinese. The relations between the Chinese and the Japanese wasn't very good. But the Japanese had operated this rice mill, so there was an officer, and Alex Agase was, and I saw his name on my Internet e-mail the other day, he was a lieutenant then, and he was out there, and he and I used to play ping-pong all the time. He beat me about all the time. He played football for Illinois and then was a coach later, and I forget where it was, but anyway he was one of the famous, but anyway, I knew him.

We were out there and I remember the first night we had a radio jeep, a jeep that had a radio in it, and I can remember going out at midnight to check in to battalion at Tangu on this radio, and I went out and here's this Japanese soldier out there in uniform, had a rifle that had a bayonet on it about this long. I walked out there, we'd just come from Okinawa and you know what you did then. So he came to attention and I guessed everything was all right. I was thinking about going back and getting my MP1. carbine, I had a carbine then. I went on in and checked in, and that was the routine, and there were four of us and there were part of us on and part of us off all the time. The officer was there just to see that everything ran okay.

There was a general, a Japanese general, and we had a Japanese interpreter. He said that the general would like to have dinner with us. And they cooked all our food and brought it over, and we were in, it wasn't, it was just a big room is what it was. The general ate with us one night, he and his aide and the interpreter.

I'm gonna regress here a little bit. I told you I'd never had anything to drink. On Okinawa when it was over, I think it was once a week, they would issue us four or five cans of beer. I drank, tasted a can of it, it wasn't good. It was hot and I didn't like it, so I sold mine. I smoked, so I sold mine and bought cigarettes with it. When we went to China they told us—now, one of the fellows at Okinawa went down to the shore and took some bayonets and some Japanese stuff down there and traded it for a bottle of whiskey. And I got it, that was the first whiskey I tasted in my life, was on Okinawa, and he said he paid fifty dollars for it, he sold the stuff and then bought it.

We went to China and they told us the water wasn't good, so we had to drink beer. Well, I developed a good taste for beer and it was good there (chuckles), really. They'd serve wine, or saki, when we had this dinner, and I could tell when I'd drunk so much saki and my head would get to feel like it had a string around it. I knew when to quit.

I liked the Japanese general's chopsticks, so the next morning he calls me over and I went in there, and he presented me with a pair, a set of chopsticks and a nice case, ivory case, which was fine. They still had all their weapons and so we then, one time, I was stationed there at different times. So I went back, I took with me, they gave us some, I had a Japanese saber, Japanese rifle, Mauser pistol, and a Nambu pistol. And I remember taking those back to Tangu to the headquarters, battalion headquarters, and I had a Chinese make a box big enough to send this, and a shotgun, it was a thirty-six inch ten gauge shotgun, and I mailed all that stuff home, if you can imagine, except the two pistols. Can you imagine sending all that stuff back home?

**Mr. Morris:** You'd be in prison.

**Mr. Dixon:** The mail carrier brought it right to the house, I mean it was out in the country. When I got back, one of the fellows who was an old timer, Goldie was his name, and he said why don't you give him that Nambu pistol, he's going home. So I did, I gave it to him, and I kept the Mauser. I went back out there and served out there on two or three different occasions.

Then went back and stayed at Tangu and then went out on railroad duty, guarding railroad bridges. At Bridge Twenty-One. And we had an officer, and I think there was around thirty or thirty-five of us out there. We had a barracks that had been built, it was a wooden deal, is what it was. It wasn't a building. And it had all around it sandbags, so we could get down in case—well, the Chinese Nationalists and the Chinese Communists were fighting all the time.

It was pretty boring out there, you were just out there, and of course you'd be on radio watch. We decided one day we'd go hunting. We walked and about two or three miles from this, where we were at this bridge was a village. It had a wall around it. We went up and, you know, Marines, we're gonna do whatever we want to do. We went in the village, there were, I don't know, two, three hundred people maybe in it. And I never will forget this and I talked to, I told my wife about this the other day. There was a red headed boy in there about that big, and they all kept making fun of him. He was red headed, and you know what that meant. Somebody, his mother, somewhere there'd been a whatever, and they kept making fun of him. And I told my wife, we saw something on television, it was talking about things, how people get picked on and so on, but he had lived with that in that place and I'm sure it wasn't a good experience for him.

They had a mule that they said we had shot in the leg. There were I think half a dozen of us or so in the party, and a corpsman was with, their corpsman was with us, and a gunnery sergeant. And then me as a radio man. And I don't remember how many of us, but anyway we went back and the corpsman told them he'd bring some medicine back. We had, I don't know what it was, it was purple in color that they used to put on if you had jungle rot, you had all kinds of stuff. This gunnery sergeant, Bobish was his name, and the corpsman went back that afternoon and took this medication. As they got up close to the village, the corpsman said there was some old man came out and motioned for them to go back. Well, they kept on walking of course. They started firing at them. They hit the gunnery sergeant and the corpsman, he took off, and I could hear the shots, I was a long way off, but I could see him running, and he came running in and told us what had happened, so the lieutenant had me get on the radio and call the battalion and they sent, the only way you could go back and forth was on a train. So they sent up a platoon and two or three officers came out that evening. It was pretty hot around there, there was about thirty, thirty-five of us, and this platoon, and nothing happened that night, but we were on full alert all night long.

The next morning they went over there and found the gunnery sergeant's body, and they had taken his weapon. There wasn't anything in the village, there wasn't anybody there, but the thing is, and this was going on all the time, they had bandits that would travel in bands, and they would come in and do what they wanted in a village and take food and then just move on. It could have been that, or it could have been the Chinese Communists. We never did know who it was.

They brought the gunny's body in and took it back on the train. There was an article in the paper, that I brought with me, telling about it, it was at Bridge Twenty-one at Lutai, is what they said, about this gunnery sergeant Bobish being killed. And our concern was, now we did this voluntarily, is that gonna be called, is his wife gonna be able to get his insurance. We were very concerned about that. And was the lieutenant gonna be in trouble because we'd gone off and left our post there. Well, nothing ever occurred, I mean, that we knew of. That was worked through. So everything did come out, it did come out okay, and what happened to him, he was buried there, I assume, hat's all we ever knew.

From Tangu, from there, I was out there two or three different times at that outpost. As a radio man it was difficult for me to establish any long time terms because I was never on one group all the time, where I see you every morning or every night. I was attached to different outfits. Went back to Tangu, I was a private I believe for fifteen months. And then I made PFC., and then about two months later I made corporal, and it's something that looked like I was gonna be a private the whole time but it worked out okay. After coming back in there, then, after I made corporal I was kinda, not in charge but in charge of the section there. We had a sergeant and when it came time in July I had enough points, you had to have so many points before you could go home, I had enough points to go home and I remember the sergeant, our staff sergeant, saying, "Dixon, if you'll stay over, why, I'll see you make sergeant, if you stay over for six months." I was ready to go home, and so we went home.

The China duty, it was something that the Marine Corps doesn't get into very often in this respect. We had a house boy that made our beds, made our bunks, washed our clothes, sewed stripes, patched socks, did everything. We didn't have to do anything. It was excellent duty. You could go out. I haven't mentioned it, but I remember in Tensing there was a whole block of a building of four or five stories, and it was prostitutes, that's all it was. When we first got there, a package of cigarettes or chocolate candy bar would get just about anything you wanted or thought you needed, you know what I'm saying.

**Mr. Morris:** I do.

**Mr. Dixon:** It was interesting, and I've not been in a place in the United States that was like that, that I've ever known of. It was one of those things and of course, young red-blooded American boys, we were ignorant and we made (chuckles)—

**Mr. Morris:** You figured out your candy bars.

**Mr. Dixon:** It was a good time. We really, I look back on it and it was a good time. And the thing, I said I wasn't homesick in boot camp, and I wasn't. But all my buddies that I'd gone over with, we'd gone through boot camp with, we were going home at the same time. I've thought about this, and talked about it last night, I was raised on a farm. You plant corn and soy beans and you see those things grow in the spring and you harvest them in the fall, and you see cycles and you see things going on. You raise hogs, you raise cattle, there's something productive. To me there was productive, and for me in the Marine Corps it seemed in China, eight hours I was a radio man, and the other eight hours I was kinda at a loss, you know. I mean, at a loss, but I guess I was too young to, I was eighteen and nineteen. But I still hadn't matured enough to me, as an individual, to see that as a vocation that I wanted to do. I could, and I wanted to, my grandparents and my uncles, they're brothers, had five hundred and seventy-two acres of farm land, which was a big farm at that time, and I wanted to own that, and that's what I wanted to do, was to go home and farm, and I couldn't see the Marine Corps as something that I could really feel as an accomplishment. There are people that do and did, but I wasn't made that way.

Although, I'm so proud now that I was a Marine at that time, and still consider myself a Marine. It's something I wouldn't take a million dollars for if somebody could buy it, I wouldn't sell it.

It's one of those things that, I wanted to go home, so we went home. I'll never forget when we went back, we took a landing craft out to the ship, the *USS Butner*, and it was a two stacker, and we ended up having—

**Mr. Morris:** It was named after the general who died on Okinawa?

**Mr. Dixon:** No. Buckner and Butner. The Buckner was the general that died and the *Butner* was the ship. It was a two stacker and I think there were around five to six thousand Marines going home and a couple thousand sailors. I get on board ship and we get up there, and we're looking down, and there are other fellows coming in. And I never will forget looking down there and seeing this officer, had a sea bag or some kind of a bag, and here this bottle of whiskey rolls out of it and rolls across the deck, and this, I don't know whether he was a private or a corporal or what he was, reached down and picked it up and just like that, with this officer over there, and he didn't know who was looking down from up above, and so there wasn't anything said or anything done, but anyway he lost his bottle of whiskey.

Get on the ship, and we get down in our bunks and it was, I had the top bunk and there was a water cooler I could reach, if I had to I could reach that water cooler from my bunk and get a drink. And I don't know what this ship was in the beginning, but there hadn't been any water coolers on any that I'd been on before. Got settled in, and went up on the fantail, was setting up there on an ammunition box, and I'll be durned, I looked and there was a fellow from my home town, Eugene Bonwell, who was in the Navy. He was going home and he had been at Singtao, which was south there. He and I were buddies and he went into the Navy. He was a year younger than me to the day, August eighteenth. He'd been in the Navy and he was going home.

I can remember us setting there and we, now, it wasn't the day we started, because it was later than that, because we were at sea then, when this happened. And we were setting there on these deals and it started getting rough. And it started getting rougher, and rougher, and rougher, and it was pretty soon the waves were like hills. And people started getting sick, and everybody left and Bonwell, Eugene left, he went downstairs. Well, I finally went down, and there was a head down below and there were guys laying there, believe it or not, guys laying on the floor, there was water coming here and there, and they just lay there and guys had the trots, and sick at their stomach, and it was terrible.

Made it back to the center of the ship, is where we were, that's where my bunk was, and we got back there and they wouldn't let us go up topside for three days. We were in typhoon, that's what we got into. The ship was, it had, it was a two-screw outfit, and you could hear

those screws come up out of the water, that's how rough it was (makes a sound "rrrrmm") like that. Now, that was a quite a feeling.

Now I'm going to regress again and go back to tent camp. We were in little quonset sheds and there were, I don't know, maybe half a dozen or eight of us in those things. Had a wood stove in the middle of it. This is in February, January and February. We had, and of course it was always burn coal. I woke up one night and I could hear a thump, thump, thump, thump. And out of front was a boardwalk about so wide, that went in front of us. And I could hear thump, thump, thump. What the hell is that, anyway? I had to go to the bathroom. I mean, I had to go to the bathroom bad. And I got up and I got down to the head which wasn't too far away, and there were guys going to the bathroom outside, inside, guys taking showers. They had diarrhea, that's what it was. And I mean first class diarrhea, and it was, oh man, it was something else. There was guys that had done it in their pants (chuckles) and it was terrible, really. Well, we got diarrhea from food poisoning, is what it was.

One time on board ship, the same thing happened again. And I was talking about two times. You know, things are funny when they're not funny. But this was funny. The same thing on board ship, and there were guys hanging over the side of the ship going, there were guys in—there they had a trough that the water ran in, and you'd just go in that trough. Well, that was one of the embarrassing times.

Back to coming home then. We got out of that and they finally let us come topside. Took us sixteen days from Tangu to San Diego. We were the, I think, I'm trying to think if there was a band there or not, but it wasn't too big a deal 'cause most people didn't know we were coming in to start with.

**Mr. Morris:** What year was this now?

**Mr. Dixon:** Forty-six. It was August of forty-six. They took us to MCRD and to San Diego, the recruit depot, and we stayed there, oh, I'm trying to think, August the twentieth is when I got discharged. And I can remember milk, we hadn't had milk, and we drank milk by the gallons. They talked about us drinking so much milk. One of the fellows went down to Tijuana, and I never did go to Tijuana. They'd come back and they'd tell stories about things and I was just an old country boy that didn't really care about getting into that kinda stuff. It was an entertaining time.

I can remember when we got discharged and this warrant officer tried to get me to sign up in the Reserves, and I wouldn't do that either, I was going home. I caught a bus and rode a bus from San Diego to L.A., spent the night, and then caught the bus from L.A. back to Plattsburg, Missouri. I went out, caught a ride home, and my grandparents, my sister was there, and my grandparents, and it was a good homecoming. I didn't do anything for a year. And I look back on that and wonder what I was thinking about, but the Fifty-Two Twenty Club, has anybody mentioned that?

**Mr. Morris:** No.

**Mr. Dixon:** For a year, fifty-two weeks, you could draw twenty dollars a week. And the Fifty-Two Twenty Club, that was something you, it was, I don't know if it was state or government or what it was, but you got twenty dollars a week if you weren't working. And a lot of us did that. Back then twenty dollars a week was, you could kinda get along on, staying home. Then I went to work on the farm for my uncles. Over the years I ended up owning that five hundred and seventy-two acres. Bought most all of it. And retired. I sold it, ended up selling it in 1997 I sold it and moved into town.

I had two officers, don't ask me why, but I had two officers, Lieutenant Mize and Lieutenant Dollar, Dollar was another one of our officers, he went, when we went overseas we all went on the same Fifty-Fifth Replacement Draft. Dollar was the one that interviewed me for when I made corporal, and he was in A Company, First Battalion Fifth Marines in China and on Okinawa too. I can remember him asking me, we were talking about radio, he said "Do you think television will ever amount to anything?" And I said "Well, yes, I think it would." Yes, sir, that I thought it would. They'd get things developed and they had these oscilloscopes and the cathode ray tubes and all that kind of stuff. and I thought it would. Well, little did I know, or he know, either one, what television would come to.

I'm trying to think when it was, it's been five or six years ago, I'm a Shriner, and was commander of our Legion of Honor, which is the military part of the Shrine. We had, oh I forget how many, we had several members. I was commander, and in 1994, that's when it was, I went to Washington D.C. and we lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier on Veterans' Day. We're there, and Captain Mize, he was Lieutenant Mize at the time, he's one of those people that I never did forget him. And any time I would always ask, "Did you ever hear of a Lieutenant Mize or Lieutenant Dollar?"

In ninety-four I had gone to San Diego, I'd stayed pretty close to the Marine Corps, and a recruiter out there in St. Joe, there was a planeload of us went to San Diego. They flew us out there on a Marine Corps DC9, and I heard that Mize had retired. So when I went to Washington to lay that wreath, I looked in the telephone book and there's General General Charles D. Mize. This was something significant for me. So I get my nerve up and I call him, and told him who I was. Now I didn't expect him to remember me as a individual, but he might remember incidents. And I told him that he had picked me to go from this, on this opportunity to have been an officer, and I told him that I was sorry if I disappointed him, but I just told him what the situation that I was afraid that I wouldn't pass the physical and didn't want to be left by my—and the last time I'd seen him was on board ship, and I never will forget seeing him, and we saluted.

He said, "Well, what have you done?" And I said, "I've been a farmer, and I have an insurance agency, and I'm a county commissioner now." He said, "It sounds like you served your country in another way, too. That was very good and I'm proud of you." (Mr.

Dixon's voice is breaking on that last sentence.) And I never will forget that conversation, because he had picked me out special at tent camp, and consequently he'd always been special in my mind.

We had a visit and he died, oh, it's been a couple of years ago. I read about it in a Leatherneck. He had, he'd been wounded on Okinawa, he went into the Sixty Marine Division, I think, Twenty-Ninth Marines. And then he had been company commander in Korea and had got the Navy Cross. So he was an exceptional man. I asked him about Dollar, and he said "Oh, Dollar, he retired as brigadier general. He lives in upstate Virginia someplace." He didn't know just exactly where. So I tried to locate Dollar, I never was able to locate him, he died this past summer, it was in The Leatherneck, and he was a brigadier general. He had been awarded the Bronze Star. Garland, Judy Garland, was the lieutenant's name, that was on Okinawa, he was in A Company. And his company, you've probably heard this, his company was the one that put the flag on Shuri Castle on Okinawa.

In visiting with Garland, he had, I'm trying to think. He ran into Dollar—oh, he remembered Dollar back when we were in China. He said that he knew that he was gonna be a top dog in the Marine Corps sometime. Then I've seen him later, it was in Palm Desert last year to the First Marine Division Reunion, and he was there, and we visited. He said he must have pissed somebody off, because he didn't make it, he didn't go on up. But he was the kind of an officer, he had a mustache, a small mustache, and he was a tall man, had been a seagoing Marine and had won appointment to the Naval Academy. And was a very distinguished looking man. And I always wanted to talk to him, tried to locate him, never could locate him.

I've stayed close to the Marine Corps and have been to, this outfit was at Charleston in what, '02, and we went to Perris Island and went back. Of course, it's a lot different looking place than it was when I went through boot camp. The barracks were wooden when I was there and I think they're all brick now.

I know I've talked too long—

**Mr. Morris:** Not enough. No one ever talks too long. I appreciate your time, and I do appreciate your telling me your career.

Transcribed by: Betty Paieda  
1 August 2009  
Harbor City, California