

National Museum of the Pacific War

Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

Interview with

Mr. R. E. [Richard Eugene] **Broadwell**

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Mr. Metzler: This is Ed Metzler. Today is February the twenty-sixth, 2004. I'm interviewing Mr. R. E. Broadwell. This interview is taking place in Fredericksburg, Texas. This interview is in support of the Center for Pacific War Studies [also known as Nimitz Education and Research Center], Archives for the National Museum of the Pacific War, Texas Parks and Wildlife [also known as Texas Historical Commission], for the preservation of historical information related to this site. Let me start out R. E. by thanking you for spending the time to share your experiences with us and to add to the museum archives. Let me ask you to start by giving us your full name, where you were born and a little bit of information about your family.

Mr. Broadwell: Well, I was born in Hamlin, Texas in 1921. My daddy's name was Hugh Broadwell and my mother was Hattie Henson Broadwell. She was Hattie Henson. I have three sisters and one brother. I had an older sister that died in 1918 or 19-something who I didn't know. And then an older sister, Helen Broadwell. And then myself, I was the second, third child, really. And then Alroy [Alroy Jennings or A.J.] Broadwell, my brother, and then Lora Mae Pollard, Broadwell. She married Bill Pollard. And then Peggy Broadwell; you know, I can't even think who the hell she married. Isn't that terrible? I've been having trouble with my memory. My older sister and her husband

have had Alzheimer's for six or seven years and they don't. If you visit them and talk to them for more than five minutes, they forget what you said. And I'm nearly that bad. I'm in pretty bad shape myself. And my folks came to Roscoe in 1904. My daddy worked for the railroad. And we moved to Slaton, Texas. And then during the depression of 1929, my daddy got laid off from the railroad and we moved back to Roscoe and lived with his mother. And my mother and daddy separated in 1934 or 35. And divorced. My mother raised five children without a job during the depression. We was in pretty bad shape. In fact, I'd say that we was possibly the poorest people. If you had a mother, at least some of them had a daddy. But nobody had much. We were all in about the same boat.

Mr. Metzler: Times were tough.

Mr. Broadwell: Things was tough. And my brother, we went to school, you know, and going to school and my brother joined the National Guard in 1937. And he's fourteen years old. And that's when, apparently the United States had started preparing for the war. Somebody knew or they wouldn't have started increasing the National Guard. This is my opinion. So in '38, I joined. And my brother had told them he was eighteen years old. You had to be eighteen. So I had to be older than him, and I told them I was twenty-one. Anyway, I got in in '38. I was seventeen years old. And then we mobilized in November '40. We got a dollar a drill and we drilled once a week. And then we had summer encampments. And that was from a week to two weeks and we got a dollar a day, or that's what a private would get. I was a private first class,

(unintelligible) specialist and made thirty-six dollars. And at that time, we could take a dollar a week and we could go to the show and buy a hamburger and coke. Have a little money. There wasn't much money available. And we mobilized in November '40. And my brother went down, when they mobilized us, and he said he wanted out of the army, he wasn't old enough. They said, "Well, you've been in the National Guard four years! And you were eighteen when you got in here." And he said, "No, I'm not eighteen yet! And I want out." So he had to get his birth certificate to prove that he wasn't of age. And I got discharged in 1941, August '41. My three-year enlistment was up. And they started drafting 'em, you know, just to give them a year's training. And whenever my three years was up, I had the equivalent, the National Guard and the regular service, enough that I could get out, they could discharge me. And then when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, I knew that I'd go back into the service at some time. And a friend of mine, named Weldon Norris asked me, "What are you going to do?" And I said, "Well, I'll go back in the service." "When you going?" I said, "Well, I don't know." He said, "I'm fixin' to be drafted." We went to school together and he said, "I'm fixin' to be drafted. Would you like to go in with me?" And I said, "Well, certainly." I wanted to get in the air corps and he did too. You had to take an exam to get into the air corps. But at that time you had to make like ninety on the exam. I made eighty-four and he made a little less than I did, so we didn't qualify. And he was married and I wanted to go to Canada to get

into the Royal Canadian Air Force. Their restrictions wasn't as, was a little more lenient—

Mr. Metzler: Boy, you wanted to fly, didn't you?!

Mr. Broadwell: Well, they had a little better living conditions. I'd been in the infantry for three years and I knew what it was like. Anyway, we didn't make it. His wife said no on that so we didn't even go up there and try. I told him, "Whatever you want to do, you let me know and I'll do it. I don't care. You know, what we get into." So he showed up later on and said, "Let's get in the Paratroopers." I said, "I never heard of them." And he says, "Special diet, special training and fifty dollars a jump." And I said, "Now, fifty dollars. How many times do you jump?" And he said, "I guess all you want to!" I could see those fifty dollar bills adding up (chuckle). So we went and talked to, we went to Abilene and talked to them about it and they asked me was I registered for the draft and I said, "No." They asked me why and I said, "I don't know, I'm just not." And they said, "How old are you?" And I said, "I'm twenty." And they said, "Well, under twenty-one, the register is the sixteenth of February. So it would be a lot of trouble, you'd have to have a release from your mother to get in to the Paratroopers. And then you'll have to have your birth certificate and all this information. It would be easier if you waited and registered with the draft board and ask them for a release. And if they give you a release, then you come sign up." I said, "Okay." So on the sixteenth of February, Weldon Norris and I was together and we went over to Sweetwater and I registered with the draft board. And when I got through

registering, I said, "I'd like to get a release." They said, "Yeah, and so would millions of other people." (chuckle) I said, "Ya'll are going to give me one." They said, "We don't give many. What's your reason?" I said, "I want to join the service [Paratroopers]." They said, "You're right. We're going to let you go." So we went to Abilene and signed up with the Paratroopers and they sent us to (unintelligible). We was there three days, and my name come up to go to Fort Benning. And Weldon went up and looked at the board and said, "You're going to Fort Benning. My name's not on there. I wonder why?" I said, "I don't know. I'll go and find out." So I asked them, I said, "I want to know why, that we signed up to be together and you're sending me to Fort Benning and he's not on shipping orders and I want to know why." So they looked in the records and said, "You're a previous serviceman." I said, "That's correct." They said, "He's not. He has to have his basic training before he can get into the Paratroopers. He's got to go to California." Well, that's the way things go. So I went to Fort Benning and he went to California. And by the time that I finished jump school in Fort Benning, they sent me to Fort Bragg and he got his basic training in California and he went through jump school and I was on maneuvers at Fort Bragg and I knew, we kept in touch and I went over and visited him on the weekends. And he told me, "I'm getting a furlough tomorrow. And I'm going to go home." And I said, "Well, I'll see you later when you get back." By the time he got his furlough over and come back, I shipped overseas. And uh, he got killed at the Battle of the Bulge.

Mr. Metzler: Oh my goodness.

Mr. Broadwell: We signed up to be together, we were together four days and he got killed at the Battle of the Bulge. Which was a disappointment. And we went overseas on the Poelau Laut—

Mr. Metzler: On the ?

Mr. Broadwell: Poelau Laut. It's a Dutch ship. It was a cattle ship, so we were told. And they built bunks in there to carry people overseas. It took us forty-two days. I've never talked to anybody that took longer than that.

Mr. Metzler: That is one slow ship.

Mr. Broadwell: It was. We went by Panama and picked up a battalion. I was in the first parachute regiment formed. The 503rd was the first one formed in the army. It consisted of the 501, 502, 503 and 504 Battalion. But after I got out of jump school, I went into the brick barracks, I was in the 502, in the battalion. And then they formed the 503rd with our personnel. And they sent us over to Alabama area to get some training, you know, and then when we organized, they sent us straight to Fort Bragg. And they formed the 503rd Regiment. And they had sent one battalion overseas, which was the 503rd at the time and I understand, there's been some argument about whether it was or not, but anyway they jumped over there and it was supposed to be 503rd. Some of them say that's not true and others say it is. But regardless of what it was supposed to have been. And we went by to pick up a battalion. It was the 501st Battalion was in Panama and we picked up three companies and they sent D Company with us that they got out of another organization, and went

over with us. They got on the train and went with us over there. And we left in October and was on ship. I don't remember exactly when, we were on there forty-two days, but I don't remember exactly the day we went over, and then the date, it seems to me like it was the nineteenth to the second, but I don't know if that adds up or not. 'Cause I don't remember. We stayed there, went to uh. We pulled in, seemed to me like we pulled into Sidney and then went up to Brisbane and then went up to Cairns and we was stationed at Gardenville. And uh, we was the only troops up in that end and they were afraid the Japanese were moving up towards the north end. One day, anyways, we were there, so we did some hiking and jumping, some training.

Mr. Metzler: What was it like in Australia?

Mr. Broadwell: Well, Australia was a good town. Good country. You know, they're people like us; spoke the language and stuff. And I got a furlough while I was there, into Sidney, Australia. Me and one of the fellas by the name of George West, we went together for a week. And then after we had gone into, sent us overseas up to New Guinea, uh, we got a furlough, they come back to Brisbane. We come back for rest area, after we went Markham Valley, Nadzad jump and they sent us back to Brisbane for, into the rest area and they let everybody have a leave to Sidney or Newcastle, wherever, telling everybody they could go. And a friend of mine from Nashville, Tennessee, Sam McCord, we went to Sidney, Australia.

Mr. Metzler: Was Sidney your favorite city?

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, ours. Some others went to other places. I don't see how any of them can be any better. Of course we met some girls there. Spent quite a bit of time with them. And uh, they come back to, they wanted to come to Brisbane. We were in Brisbane and they wanted to come to Brisbane. I told Sam, we spent all our money, I said, "We don't have no money. We can't afford no girls there." And they said, "We'll make our own way." Anyhow, we stayed together with the gals. We went and rented a place and then come out orders. They're going to send us back to Port Moresby. Well Sam was a dog robber for Captain Clark—

Mr. Metzler: He was a —?

Mr. Broadwell: Dog robber. He was a, you know, took care of the one of the guys that was a, he was a captain at the time, later on got out as a colonel. You know they have somebody, every one of them, they call them dog robbers, cleaned up their tent, made up their bed—

Mr. Metzler: Personal attaché.

Mr. Broadwell: That's right. He had good relations with them and he was well liked. He was a nice fella. But they up and sent me out earlier, we had to load the ship. And we hadn't been there, them girls hadn't been there too long. They come up there and I was on guard duty. And they had hired a cab, they had to walk across, you couldn't go from Queens into New South Wales, across like a state line and everything, you had to walk across, and so they got a cab and had this cab bring 'em to Brisbane. And I'm on guard duty and they come down there, Sam came down there with 'em. "Look what I got! These two!"

Funny. But I was on guard duty and I said, "Well, I can't get off." He said, "You got any money?" I said, "No, I don't have no money. You know I don't have no money. We spent all our money." And he said, "You know anybody who's got any money?" I said, "Yeah, I know. George Winston's got some." He said, "Can you get it?" I said, "Yeah, I can get it." So the guys that I was, that's on guard duty with me, said, "You go on and take off and we'll cover for ya. We'll do double duty and everything will be all right." So we took off and I went up to George West, woke him up. I told him, I said, "I need some money." He said, "How much you want?" I said, "I want all you got!" (laughter) I knew that he got six hundred dollars from home. And he said, "Well, I need some of it." I said, "Well, would ten pounds" Australian money, you know, "would ten pounds be enough for you?" Which was twenty-seven dollars, I think. I said, "That's all you need. We need the money. We gotta rent this outfit." That was \$120.00. (laughter) So he let me have the money.

Mr. Metzler: That's a friend.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, yeah, we was. We was lifelong friends, he's dead now. We was lifelong friends. You know, we were friends there. (laughter) I'll just take it all. Here's the ten pounds. You can make beer call. But I had some money coming. I'd loaned some money to some guys that went on furlough and then whenever they got paid. And I told him, I said, "I'll have some money, when it's payday, you know. I'll pay you back." Which I did. I got the money to pay him back. We was together there about two or three days, we'd rented a

house, we had to catch a cab every day to go over to see the girls. Whenever we was going to, they were going to send us back to Port Moresby, and uh, we had to load these ships. They took me on the ship. And there I am, the gals don't have any money, I had all the money. So I told some of the guys on there, everybody was wanting off, but they weren't going to let us get off, all this secret stuff, didn't amount to nothing. And I told them, "I can get you off. If some of you guys want to get off." So I got ten or fifteen guys, got 'em in a squad and marched 'em off. Just went down and told them I was detailed. Had all these guys, we marched off, marched three or four blocks. I said, "Y'all go where you want to." So I was off. Went and spent the night, and gave the gals some money, and told them I enjoyed the trip that we had and I had to go. I went back. Whenever I come in there, why, one of the officers saw me and said, "Sarge, arrest that man." (laughter) You know, 'cause I'd jumped ship. When I was just gone that night. So they put me in the hole. Arrested me and threw me in the hole. But I saw my first sergeant, name was Bodinsky. And I said, "Bo, they put me in there. Whenever Captain Davis, Company Commander, come in, you tell him I'm in the hole and I want him to get me outta here!" So, Bodinsky told him, when he come on there, he went down there and said, "What'd you do?" I told him the same story I told you. And I said, "I wanted to go one more time, spend one more night, I didn't know whether I'd ever see another white girl or not. I was up here and had to deliver some money and I was going. It don't make any difference. I did it, I'll admit it. I don't deny it." And I said, "I don't regret it. But I don't

want to be in here!" (laughter) "Get me out of here!" He says, "I don't blame you. If I was in your place, I'd probably have done the same thing." He said, "Guard, let this man out." (laughter) We's pretty good friends. (unintelligible) One time, stateside, me and Sam had went A-W-O-L [absent without leave]. And the night watchmen there in Roscoe, Texas, that's where I live, they'd been notified by the War Department to pick me up, that I was A-W-O-L. And uh, they saw my daddy, my mother and daddy separated and divorced, but they saw my daddy and said, "Your son is AWOL." And he asked about it and said, "I'm supposed to pick him up. Will you give me a chance to go talk to him?" They said, "Yeah." So my daddy said, "Son, did you know you was AWOL?" I said, "Yes, sir." And he said, "Well, what are you gonna do?" I said, "Well, I'm going back to the company." He said, "I'll just go with you." He was going into Stratford after he was leaving so he said, "We'll just go together." And he asked the night man, he said, "You won't arrest him then? You'll give him a chance?" And he said, "I'm lookin' for him. But I'll have to at some time." Anyway, I got into Oklahoma City and I stepped off the bus and my dad got off at Stratford and I was on the bus. Got in to Oklahoma City and stepped off the bus and the MPs [Military Police] got me. Asked me if I was AWOL and I said, "Yeah." "Where was I going?"

Mr. Metzler: When was this?

Mr. Broadwell: This was in '42. They threw me in there and they called. Asked what outfit I was in, my name, where I was going. I said, "I'm going back to the base." And they said, "Well, we can have you sent back with escorts" and told me all

they could do, who my company commander was and I told them, John Davis. So they called him. And said, "We have a man that's A-W-O-L from your company. R. E. Broadwell. Do you want him shipped back with escort?" "Well, what did he say? Where'd he say he was he going?" "He said he's coming back to the outfit." He said, "Turn him loose. If he said he's coming back, he'll be here." So they turned me loose, so I told those boys, I said, "I wonder if you'd give me a note here saying that I've been picked up before they get me again. I've already gone through this, just let me go on my way." (laughter)

Mr. Metzler: You didn't want to go through it again.

Mr. Broadwell: He said, "I'm not worried one bit about you." He said, "You talked us out of it. And your company commander must think a lot of you." (laughter) So they let me go and I got back to Fort Bragg. John Harris had went AWOL with me and Sam McCord and me, there's three of us. And one of us got in one day, and one the next and one the next and they put us under arrest of quarters and they tried us for being A-W-O-L. And after they tried us, they gave us, they reduced us to grade of private, fined us two-thirds of our pay. And I come in, my first sergeant, Bodinsky, I said, "Bodinsky, I want to go to town." He said, "Yeah, I bet you do. What did they do to you?" I said, "They gave us ninety days and ninety dollars. No restriction and no hard labor." He said, "I don't believe you." I said, "Well, call him. Get the phone and call him." And I said, "I'm supposed to be treated like the rest of them. When I do my punishment and been penalized for it." He said, "I don't

believe you.” And he called them. And Tolleson, he later got to be a lieutenant general but at that time I think he was a colonel, lieutenant colonel, and he asked us how we pleaded and we pled guilty and asked for the mercy of the court and so that’s what he done. He didn’t do nothing but just what he had to do. And I told Bodinsky, I said, “What about my pass?” He said, “You’re entitled to one.” He said, “I’m going to give it to you.” He said, “You lucky rascal, you.” (laughter) Well, while I was under arrest of quarters, that’s when they shipped us, to go overseas. We was on a train going to Camp Stoneman and I refused an order from John Hanson, but my sergeant, his name was Malleck and he got a brother killed on the Arizona, when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and he thought everybody should soldier, and not do anything wrong, you know, you ought to out and march and soldier and let all you can. He thought you ought to kill every Jap over there. He was riding me, every time I’d get a detail, every time he’d see me, he’d put me on a detail. And I hadn’t had time to get my stuff ready and I told John Hanson, I said, “I haven’t had anything to eat and I’m going to eat. I’ve been on detail, every time I turn around they grab me for a detail.” And I said, “I’m going to go eat and then—” He said, “You refuse?” I said, “Yes.” So he started to say. I said, “Now, don’t argue with me. Your job is to go report me to the company commander. That’s all you have to do. Just go tell them I refused an order.” So he went and told Bodinsky and Bodinsky sent the charge of quarters down there and told me to report to the Orderly Room. I said, “I’ll be up there as soon as I wash my mess kit.” (chuckle) God dang

here he come. And he was the light-weight champion of Fort Sam Houston in 1937. And he was a boxer but he was bound to be a heavy-weight. And he got right in my face and fussed at me about it. He said, "Didn't I tell you—" I said, "Yes you did Sergeant." And I said, "I was going to come but I needed to wash my mess kit and finishing eating." And he sent me into John Day. And he said, "I'm going to put you under arrest of quarters. You're restricted to barracks, mess hall, the latrine. And we're fixing to leave, we're moving and I'd appreciate it if you'd help us get ready." And I said, "Yes, Sir." "You understand that? You know what it is to be under arrest of quarters?" "Yes, Sir." And I saluted him and walked out. Whenever I did, there was a lieutenant in our company and he said, "Hey, Broadwell!" And I said, "Yes, Sir." And he said, "I want you to get a detail. I want to put you in charge of loading this train here." (chuckle) I said, "All right. You, you and you." I got six or seven guys. Company Commander said, "Lieutenant, I've got him under arrest of quarters. I don't want him doing nothing. He's not in charge of nothing!" He said, "I'm in charge of this detail and you need to get another lieutenant or I want Broadwell in charge." And he just turned around and went back in his tent. (chuckle) And I was in charge of it and the other guys said, "I don't understand you. You go AWOL, over the hill, you do everything and turn around and you're in charge of something! I don't understand why." I said, "Well, it's because I'm a good soldier. All of you are good soldiers so let's get this done." Anyway, when we got to California, Stoneman, me and a guy by the name of Steve Votrell, we wanted to go to the

last night out. So, a guy by the name of Pruell, had lost, he had a pass and they were only giving five percent passes and he lost his money and didn't have it (unintelligible) and he was broke and couldn't go out. And I said, "Well, if you're not going to use your pass, give it to me!" "I don't care, you can have it." So me and Steve, you know, went. I showed the pass and they let me out and we get in trouble with the MPs. And they hauled us in and we were going to ship out the next morning before daylight. And I told the (unintelligible) I said, "Now, we're supposed to ship in the morning. If you don't carry us to the company, we're going to miss shipment. And I don't want to miss shipment." And he said, "I'll check on ya." I said, "Well, you do that." And so he checked and he said, "Yeah, You're right. You're supposed to ship the next morning." And uh—

Mr. Metzler: And it took you forty-two days to get over there.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, and so. We, uh, he uh, turned me, you know, he just went back in there and said. Well anyway, after he give me his pass and we're go out and get in trouble, and the first one I see is my First Sergeant in town. There I am up there, and I'm under arrest of quarters. Only 5% of them get out and I'm down and Bodinsky saw me and hollered at me. "Aren't you under arrest of quarters?" I said, "Yes I am, Sergeant." He said, "Which way are you going?" I said, "I'm going this way." He said, "I'm going this way and don't you tell anybody I saw you." I said, "I don't do no talking, Sergeant." (laughter) He says, "I can't believe this! You're under arrest of quarters and you're the first one I see in town!" (laughter) But after we'd been out at sea

for about seven days, I told Pruell, I said, "Pruell, I've gotta make a confession. I just got to tell ya." I said, "I went to town on your pass." You know, you give 'em the pass. And I said, "Me and Steve got into trouble. And the MPs picked us up and carried us out to the guardhouse and they're going to get you! I told them my name was (unintelligible) Pruell." And he started to cuss at me. And everytime I'd see him, I said I'm sorry, he'd start cussing at me again. Of course, in two or three days I told him, I said, "I didn't do that. I threwed that pass away when I got off. I didn't tell on ya."

Mr. Metzler: You had mentioned New Guinea. And you were in Australia and then you were headed to New Guinea. Is that right?

Mr. Broadwell: Again. We went over there and they gave us a rest there. We went to Brisbane and stayed for a while.

Mr. Metzler: And then where did you go?

Mr. Broadwell: Back to Port Moresby.

Mr. Metzler: Back to Port Moresby. And then from there?

Mr. Broadwell: Uh, I'm really not sure of all the places. Lot of these places—

Mr. Metzler: Yeah, I know.

Mr. Broadwell: I don't really remember all of them. We jumped at Nadzab the first time and then the next time we went to Noemfoor—

Mr. Metzler: And how is that spelled?

Mr. Broadwell: I don't really know.

Mr. Metzler: It's an unusual name.

Mr. Broadwell: It was close to Lae. You know, down from it. Markham Valley is what it was. Markham Valley, Nadzab and Markham Valley. We jumped there to make a landing strip for the Australians. There was, I think, around 20,000 Japs at Lae and they was going to come in, from the sea-borne outfit, they was going to come in, and we was going to clear a field where they could land there—

Mr. Metzler: So did you land there or did you jump?

Mr. Broadwell: We jumped. And we were supposed to be there three days. And we stayed there two weeks. Our battalion stayed there three weeks. Third Battalion. And some of the Intelligence people said that, the Japs was leaving Lae because these other people was coming in. And so they sent a battalion, I was up there, Third Battalion, we was the only ones there, to stop 'em and we did, of course, march up there. And some of us, coming through, and we did, that's the first time that we saw any action. We didn't only just jump, we cleared, just there to clear up where these others could jump, it wasn't really a. It was a combat jump and we didn't know where they'd come in—

Mr. Metzler: Didn't know what to expect.

Mr. Broadwell: No, didn't know what to expect. And, uh. G Company came to a native village and they went out and knew that some Japs went through there and they went up there and got in combat with them and I don't know who. They killed four of five of our guys, I don't know how many of theirs we killed, maybe a few. And we spent the night, and the next morning, that night, on that night, some more Japs come through there at night. And Swenamom and,

Swenamon was one and Votol, Steve Votol, someone else threw some hand grenades at them. And had injured some of them. They had crawled in the trees. I think Sam McCord killed one. Guy by the name of Wells killed one. And Swenamon killed one when he threw the hand grenade. And they killed four, five, six Japs, I don't remember, not a whole lot. They didn't resist or nothing, they were trying to escape. And they moved us out of there, I believe, we might have spent two nights up there, one or two nights. And the thing that I was impressed with was this General Tolson. One day we went up there and this other company, G Company went out there and got in combat with these others. We was there in this village, not far from them, about a hundred yards from 'em. And you could hear the shooting and stuff going on and somebody hollered "Knee mortar!" And when they did, why, people's trained, you know, you don't run and bunch up. Spread out and stay where you are and keep down. Scatter. Don't be together. And they started jumping up and running off in every direction. But I was eating next to a tree and the tree was this tall and had the limbs coming out of it so whenever I sat down to eat, well I got up there in the corner of that tree, it was the best place you could get.

Mr. Metzler: It made a nice table and a chair.

Mr. Broadwell: That's right. Cover and concealment. So I was in that corner and they hollered "Knee mortar!" And everybody started running and I'm just sitting there and I just keep eating and I looked around and this Tolson had his arms crossed like this. And he said, "At ease, men. At ease." And he called some

of the guys names. And uh, just like this, they turned around and saw him standing there and he hollered, "At ease. At ease. This is what we trained for." And just like that, they all settled down, just like nothing's going on. But when they saw him, and I never forgot it. But I thought a lot about it. And I thought, "Why is the use to run? You know you could get hit. Get yourself a place and stay there." Keep your head down, stay there until something happened and you see what happened. And I never forgot it and told some and I didn't see him until '63, I believe it's '63 at one of our reunions. In Pennsylvania, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. And he come in, and I went over and shook hands with him. Was talking to him and I told him, I said, "I want to tell you something." I said, "You remember when we jumped at Log Crossing?" And I said, "We's up there and they hollered, "Knee mortar!", that outfit. Do you remember when they hollered?" He said, "I can tell you exactly what I said." And he said, "Bodinsky, you son of a bitch! Where are you going?" And then he started calling two or three names and they were running and they weren't supposed to do it. And I said, "Just like that they all settled down." And I said, "I never forgot it." It always reminded me the best place to get cover and concealment, whenever. And when somebody shoots at ya, get down. And stay down.

Mr. Metzler: And what did he say?

Mr. Broadwell: He didn't say anything. You know. Just that he knew, that he remembered what he said. And they settled down. Yes he did. He got to be lieutenant general. He was, he was an awfully good person, good soldier, good leader.

Just everything. I can't think of nothing bad to say about him. He was just a man that did a good job. I don't know why he didn't go up higher. Well, I do know one reason. He was assigned his plane, his observation plane and wasn't supposed to be, and crashed it, and killed one of the majors in our outfit. And somebody, evidently, was, well he got transferred to MacArthur's headquarters. And I thought, took care of him, where nobody could touch him. You know, he was right under him and nobody could touch him. And he didn't deserve touching. You know, it was an accident, you know. And it really wasn't his fault.

Mr. Metzler: So what was the next action that your group saw then?

Mr. Broadwell: Oh, we did some scouting, patrolling around in some of those other little villages around there. I don't remember but we didn't run into much opposition. We'd find a few stragglers. More or less just scouting and patrolling. And then we went to uh, I believe it was Noemfoor that we was on and there was 1,900 Japanese on Neit and what we did was more or less scouting and patrolling. And they wouldn't surrender and they had some natives there, Taiwans, doing their—

Mr. Metzler: Okay, so this was where now?

Mr. Broadwell: Noemfoor.

Mr. Metzler: I'm just wondering where on the map.

Mr. Broadwell: I think it's in Dutch New Guinea.

Mr. Metzler: Okay, so this is still down in New Guinea, down over here. This is just a map of the Philippines here.

Mr. Broadwell: Well and Noemfoor, I don't really know. It's just a small island. Four by eight and they jumped us there. Another outfit, 158th I believe, was there and they thought the island had been reinforced on one side and they needed some more people there, more personnel there and we was the only specialized troop and so they jumped us there. And we jumped on an airstrip. You know, it was uh, wasn't necessary that it be done. You know everything. But you don't know that and they get some bad information and things happen. And we did scouting and patrolling and the Japs had killed a few of ours and a few of theirs. At times, they bonsai charged, some of them. So like I said, we went about scouting and patrolling. One time, I went on one, went scouting one time. We was on patrol, just enlisted men, no officers with us and we was down, Shiver, Sgt Shiver and there was some mortar men and machine gunners too, doing scouting and patrolling. And we's gone on a three-day deal and we camped at night down close to the creek and no officers or nothing. I was a private, and we had spent the night there and was down washing our mess kits and stuff and fixing our breakfast and eight Japs walked up on the dang creek. And Condidio D. Garcia and a guy by the name of Boston and they's both, well one of them was Mexican, you know, and had dark complexion and hair, and Boston, he was black-headed and they was small. And these Japs started speaking Japanese to them.

Mr. Metzler: Oh, they thought maybe they were Japanese?

Mr. Broadwell: That's what they thought! And Garcia says, "They're Japs! Shoot 'em! Shoot 'em!" (laughter) God dang, everybody, of course I don't know about

it. You know, a lot of shooting going on. Look up there and I see 'em ashooting in trees. "What in the hell is going on?" And in a little while, one of the guys come back and said, "Come on. I want to show you one of those Japs we killed. He's bigger than you are." I wasn't very big, weighed 145. But most of the Japs were small. And so I went over there, but when I went, I picked up Sgt Shiver's rifle. It was sitting on the tree, same one that mine was and I thought it was my gun. I just reached down and got it and went over there and when we got over there, a Jap jumped out in front of us and started running, and he'd shot all the shells. (chuckle) It didn't have no shells in it. And I'm trying to shoot and the guy behind me, I'm saying, "Shoot him! Shoot him! Something's wrong with this gun!" And he shot him and said, "I got him! I got him!" And we walked out and went back on around and while we sat there, I got on top of where we was, and I saw two Japs head out from the trees, bunch of trees, into an opening on the hill. And I told 'em, I said, "Don't shoot at them. That's your outpost." I thought that we'd put an outpost at night. (unintelligible) They didn't have weapons. Those others did. Some of them did. Anyhow, I started howlerin, there was a lot of shooting going on. One of our guys shot one of our guys in the arm because he was behind him, shooting through personnel. Anyway, Shiver and I, we had been scouting and we told 'em, we had killed one the day before, before we hit these. And Shiver and I shot at them at the same time, so we was over there and he said, "What do you want to do?" He said, "Oh, shoot. I'll count to three and we both shoot." I said, "Okay." So we shot and got him. And

then we went over there and there's two in there. They didn't have weapons, they's running trying to get around. And we went on each side of a tree, and he killed one and I did. I killed one. And then we didn't hit anymore until I was playing bridge with Bodinsky over at H Company. I was in Headquarters, Third, and I was (unintelligible) and uh, somebody come in with one of those natives and said that there's seventeen Japs on the hill out there and they had these natives' wives and things in there. And they wanted us to go in and kill them Japs. And Bo said, "Why don't you go get your rifle and come back and join us?" I said, "Okay. Now don't leave before I get back. I'm going to get my gun and I'll be right back." He said, "Okay." So I joined 'em and of course, nobody would ever say, I wasn't going to come then. We went behind the scrimmage line and we go by two Japs and they're speaking Japanese. And they told us, you know, there was two up there and they had some people with tommy guns, it was close stuff, you know. We wasn't no farther than from here to that barn from them, you know. But it was all trembling trees. So I went on past these two and up there, and I knew they was on the hill, you know. We got to surprise them, bypass the outpost that they had and get up on the, you know, up where you get 'em. Surprise 'em, you know. And I walked over, and I stopped, and uh, I started going through the trees, you know, we got in a scrimmage line and they give the signal to go up on the hill so we bypassed them, leaving these two guys with tommy guns, kill these when the shooting starts. And I hadn't gone much further than from here to that damn wall and I heard one. But I didn't know if it was one of our

guys ahead of me, I didn't know what he was and I had my rifle, you know, like this and I was going through them damn trees and about the time I cleared the trees, he stood up and he saw me about the time that I saw him. So I dropped down on him and got him, and killed him. And of course, that started the war. Went over there, they had to shoot them others and then we had to go over there and it was loaded. The ones on top, knew we was coming then. And we got on up pretty close to the tree and I told Bodinsky, was to my left and I told him, "Bo." I said, "There's a sink hole over by that tree, Bo. See if there's a Jap behind that tree. Have somebody check that out over there." And he had somebody check, there wasn't anybody behind it. And I took three or four more steps and there's a big log laying there, this high, and four Japs jumped up—

Mr. Metzler: From behind the log?

Mr. Broadwell: From behind the log, oh yeah. And I was just [clicking sound of shooting]. They didn't know just where we was and they jumped up, and when they jumped up, why I started shooting 'em. And uh, then one of them, that was in the other outfit, there's some others doing some shooting over in this area, and some of them hollered, "We need a hand grenade, hand grenade!" Well, I didn't know where the hell the hand grenade was, but I was close to that damn post and I'd already been over it and I shot each one of them when I jumped over it, I shot them in the head, just to be sure. You know, a lot of them would wait and shoot you in the back or throw a hand grenade. So I never took a chance, I shot 'em to be sure that they was dead. And then I jumped

over the three and one of them was an officer. He had a saber and a pistol and a pouch bag with him and I got it. And somebody stole the damn saber, when I was at the VFW [Veterans of Foreign Wars], I was the manager and I kept that saber over there and I left it after I quit, I left it out there and somebody stole it.

Mr. Metzler: Oh no.

Mr. Broadwell: And I have a scabbard and uh. Then we went into, uh. G Company run into a guy that had a bayonet, he had one of our tommy guns. G Company got in a deal with him and got the first scout with the tommy gun killed and the Japs got the weapon and we run into 'em on the hill up there. And uh, the guy stepped in there and killed four of 'em. Name was Rodriguez, and he got the tommy gun but he didn't know how to work it. He didn't get a chance to use it. But we knew we'd hit part of the main body because they'd hit them before and killed the scouts, you know, the lead scouts. Killed 'em and knew that was the main body. And we started up the hill, and we didn't get very far up the hill and they had this, they got up on top of this hill and they was in (unintelligible) and behind trees and we're going up the hill after 'em. And they didn't kill any of our people, personnel, at that time. And we backed off the hill a ways, waited for artillery support, and a plane came over, an observation plane, and then we had a plane come by and drop some bombs on it, blowed up. And then, the next morning, H Company come up, gonna relieve G Company and uh. They were going to send us around H Company and some around on the other side and attack 'em from the far side, and they

had these on this side, and sent out a party to draw fire to see if they're still up there. And they went up there and got shot at and they moved back, and we come around—

(end of CD #1)

Mr. Metzler: Did this phase go on? These battles you're describing. Was this a week, two weeks?

Mr. Broadwell: Well, they went up there. What they did, they went up and hit the Japs. On this outfit, there was 1,900 Japs on it and 600 slave laborers. And when they hit 'em, they drove, they had an airstrip on the beach. It had some pillboxes and things and they ran 'em off into the jungle. The island was only four by eight, and they thought they'd got re-supplied and we jumped there and then on the Fourth of July. And uh, they wiped 'em out, we finished wiping them out. I got hit three days before, I got hit on this hill they destroyed, I got hit on it. And I was probably the only man in the outfit that this sniper behind us, because he shot at us when I was bringing my squad by there, he shot at us. And we moved down the hill and he got several shots. I think there's, oh, I don't know how many of 'em, got a few killed, and some of 'em were shot, and moved back and they took us out on litters, we had—

Mr. Metzler: Now, you say you got hit?

Mr. Broadwell: Um-hm. [yes]

Mr. Metzler: Where were you hit?

Mr. Broadwell: Got hit on the side and in the arm here. I was shooting up the hill and I knew the sniper was here. And we go down on this hill, and I didn't see any Jap,

but there's a lot of shooting going on, but I didn't see any of 'em. And then we moved back on this hill, and one of the guys that had been shot, was laying up there on this hill. And this sniper, when we come through there, when I come through with my squad, I knew that this sniper shot at us. You know, when there's a lot of shooting going on, I knew that he shot at us. So I knew he was behind us. Well, they bring a guy up outta there, that was wounded, and had him laying up on top giving him blood plasma. And I wanted a machine gun over here on the left and I see him. And he shot at 'em two or three times but there's lots of trees about that big around, you know, and they were being shot at but they didn't know it. And so I went over there and told 'em, I said, "Y'all gotta get out of here. This here's sniper fire." I said, "There's a sniper back there behind us." And, uh, I thought I knew about where he was, you know, from where the shells. I thought I knew, I couldn't see him, he's in the trees. I knew he's in the trees, I went over there and I'm shooting that thing, that tommy gun. I got some machine gun ammunition and I was shooting this machine gun and I was behind a tree, about this big around, and, you know, I was just sticking my head around enough that I could shoot. I might of shot at 'em two or three times, I don't know, because one of them got me.

Mr. Metzler: And they took you down on a litter?

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah. Going back. And they put us on a litter, me, and Bodinsky, my first sergeant, and Colonel Erickson, battalion commander and my platoon leader,

Gates, and him, and my platoon officer, leader. He got shot and I got shot and Gage got shot.

Mr. Metzler: So what they'd do? Take you back to a, kind of a medical outpost?

Mr. Broadwell: Well, they. It took 'em two hours and forty-five minutes to get us out of the hills. They had to carry us down there and put us on a boat and went around the island to the 71st Backaway Shop. And they had never had any soldier that had been shot. We was their first ones. They treated us with royalty. But they had shelled the island before we did. And then they had put up this hospital outfit, the 71st Back Camp, and then a storm come up and them damn trees fell on our damn tent. While we were there in the hospital. And, uh, the tent come down on us. Of course, they're trying to move us out. Find a place for us and it's a raining and the winds a blowin' and it, uh, of course, it didn't. The wind and stuff, all of us got hot. Bodinsky, he and Gage. Gage died. He was my corporal and uh Bodinsky was my first sergeant, and then my platoon leader, and uh. Of course, we was always in front, you know, your squad leader was in the front. And I was always the one with them, although I was only a private, but I'd been in the army long enough that they knew that I was a pretty good soldier –

Mr. Metzler: So how long were you in the field hospital?

Mr. Broadwell: Oh, they kept me a few days, then sent me down to the Fifth Field Hospital. I was in the evacuation hospital. And they sent me to the Fifth Field Hospital and I was in there and everybody that was in this tent, had been wounded. Everybody, no exception. And there's one guy next to me, and he didn't like

the food and he didn't like the army and he'd just got married and he'd been over there six months. Crybaby, all the time, didn't like the nurse or nothing, and I got tired listening to him. And I told him, I said, "I've heard all your god-damn blab I want to." I said, "Every man in this outfit. You think you won the god damn war?" I said, "Everybody in the outfit's been shot. There's a guy who's been over forty-two months and he's been shot through and through." I said, "You're shot in the god damn leg!" I said, "I don't want to hear you anymore. If I hear anymore, I'm going to jerk your ass out of that bed and I'm going to whoop your god damn ass. I'm not going to listen to you." I said, "Let me go home and get married. Then I'll have more to fight for than I've got now! And you're complaining? You haven't been over here but six months. Hell, I've been over two years! I don't want to hear it." So he turned me in. And they come over there. I said, "I want outta here. I want to go back to my outfit." And they said, "Well, you've got an open wound. We can't send you back." I said, "I'll be all right." And they said, "We can't dismiss ya." I said, "I don't want to stay here. I don't want to be with these people. I want to be with mine." I said, "I don't want to be around people like this." And, uh, so I left, (laughter) and they sent a guard after me and brought me back. The doctor come talk to me and he said, "You're not happy here, are you?" I said, "No. I'm not happy. I want to go back and be with my people." I told him I want to go home. I call it my home, you know. I said, "I want to go with people I know, people I've been with all the time." And I said, "I don't like this crybaby stuff. I don't like this."

Mr. Metzler: So you went back to your?

Mr. Broadwell: He let me go. He said, "I'm not supposed to do this, but I'm gonna let you go." And so I went down to the airport and caught a plane and went over to an island that was about eight miles out, caught a plane there and then caught a boat back over to my company. And stayed with them, then, until. Well, we went into Leyte after then. We wasn't in no activity there. Some of them was. I think they sent a patrol up to some place and got some of our guys killed, got some of theirs. And then we went into Mindoro and they shelled that, and it wasn't nothing. I think they had a hundred and twenty Japs on it and they got all our ships up there. Well, some suicide planes did hit us. Killed our task force commander. They did hit the one ship and killed our task force commander. But it wasn't nothing. I was on the, one of them LCI, little ships, you know. We had a bunch of big ships and whenever they started yelling, I went up to see what was going on. I knew that a person, if I was going to hit a ship, I wouldn't hit a little small boat, if there's a big one out there —

Mr. Metzler: They'd hit a big one.

Mr. Broadwell: That's right. And I knew they would too. And they said, "Aren't you afraid?" And I said, "No. Why would they want to mess with us? They got big ships."

Mr. Metzler: So that was all near Mindoro?

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, going into Mindoro.

Mr. Metzler: Then was Corregidor next, after that?

Mr. Broadwell: Yes, but I wasn't on Corregidor. See, I had to. At the time, I was the only man in the company that was wounded. And I had more time in service and had all kinds of points. And wounded had priority. And so they'd been getting a lot of personnel moving in and out and Lieutenant Sanford was my first lieutenant, and uh, they shipped out some while I was in the Fifth Field Hospital, they had sent some people home. And when I come back, they sent some people home. And then they were going to send some more so I went up and told the Lieutenant, I said, "I want to know, you're the senior officer here, and as far as I'm concerned, I'm supposed to have priority. I want to know why I haven't been sent home?" And he said, "Well, the reason you haven't been sent home is whenever it come up, you was in the hospital in the Fifth Field Hospital and we didn't have your papers. So we sent somebody from here." And I said, "I can understand that." And I said, "And then I come back and you sent some more." He said, "Well, you was here and your papers was there." I said, "Have you got my papers?" He said, "Yeah." I said, "I want to be on the next shipping list." So they put me on as a rotation, you know, you go home and come back. And you're supposed to have your choice, if you want to be rotated or if you want furlough back. And I didn't want no furlough. I didn't want to go there and come back. I wanted to be rotated. Go to stateside—

Mr. Metzler: Go to some other assignment.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah. Some other assignment stateside. So he had put Pool, Pool was gonna be rotated. He was older than we was and he was going to let him go and stay

there and had another, they had two going, and uh, so I told them, I said, "I want that, I want to be furloughed, rotated." I said, "I want to go home and stay." Well, whenever they took Pool off it, he wouldn't go. He didn't want a furlough. He didn't want to go home and then come back. He said, "I want to stay when I get over there. I don't want to come back." So he didn't. He stayed. And a guy by the name of Benton, Daltry Benton, he said, "I'll take it! I'll take it!" And so they give me the, I was rotated and Benton, he went home on furlough and they got to California, after he'd been here, you know, and we'd had thirty days, twenty-one days (unintelligible) and a bunch of stuff. And the war was getting close to an end, at that time. And so when he got to the States, if you had so many points, you did not have to go back overseas. So he got sent back into Fort Benning there and didn't have to go over. Where a lot of them had to go over. And Billiski, they offered it to him, and he wouldn't take it and he got killed on Corregidor. You know, I, it's a matter of opinion, but I knew I had priority.

Mr. Metzler: And so, what happened to you when you left? You went home then, is that right?

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah. I went home and I went back to, uh, went home on furlough and then went back to Fort Benning. You know, they have a place where we went to Arkansas. It was called Vocation Rehabilitation, where they tell you all the changes and all that stuff and wanted to know where I wanted to go. You know, you could request that and I said, "I want to go back to school." So they sent me there and I got up there and Bodinsky's there, I went and visited

him and some of the others that had come back, you know. I knew one, Lieutenant Garrett, he was the first sergeant at one time. He was in C stage. Bodinsky was over in Alabama area. And he said, "Come over here, I'll make you sergeant and you won't have to do nothing, just march about. You won't have to do nothing. Lieutenant Garrett said, "You want C stage." And I asked him, I said, "What's the best deal here in this school anyway?" And they said, "Jump Master." And so I went and asked 'em about D stage, Jump Master. And I was accepted, they accepted me. And that was in, I guess, April and then in June they come out, if you had so many points, you could get discharged. And I had plenty of points. And I told 'em, I said, "I want out."

Mr. Metzler: So if you think back over the time that you were overseas, how closely could you stay in touch with the people at home, here, stateside. Did you get regular mail?

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, yeah. I had regular mail and I didn't write my mother and the Red Cross got after me. You know, because it had been six months or so and I hadn't written my mother.

Mr. Metzler: So the Red Cross got after you for not writing home?

Mr. Broadwell: That's right. Called my company commander. And he gave me an order, "You sit down there right now and write a letter."

Mr. Metzler: I have never heard of that.

Mr. Broadwell: Well—

Mr. Metzler: And did you?

Mr. Broadwell: Yes, sir. I did. Yes, sir. I did. But I never thought about it. I told Mother, I said, "Mother, if you don't hear from me, everything's all right." "Well, I can't help but worry. You know. I can't help but worry about you. And I like to hear from you." And I can understand I was wrong about not doing it that way and I love my mother. I don't know why I didn't. I just don't know why.

Mr. Metzler: Well, you were young and you were busy.

Mr. Broadwell: (laughter) Well, I don't know why I didn't. I really don't know why I didn't. But Mother worried about me and I understand, that somebody's over there and that they might, something might happen to 'em. And you haven't heard and you wonder.

Mr. Metzler: Well, what is the saddest thing that you saw, that happened to you while you were over there? What sticks in your mind as kind of the low point?

Mr. Broadwell: I don't really believe that I had any low points. There was never no doubt in my mind when I was coming home. And when I joined, my sister, my brother and sister told me, "Mother's not going to sign a release where you can get in." I said, "Well, I'm going to be twenty-one on March twenty-third and I'm going to join the service." And I said, "And this way, I can go in with (unintelligible) and Art and we was buddies all the way through school, from the time we was nine years old on, and I'd rather be with them than anybody over there, you know. And he wants to be with me." And I said, "You're just keeping me from being with him. He's going to be drafted and I swear I'm

going anyway.” And, so Mother signed it. And she told me, she said, “I feel like I’m signing your death warrant.” That might be the worst thing.

Mr. Metzler: Now, what was the funniest thing that happened to you. The time you were over there. Anything that you really thought was humorous?

Mr. Broadwell: Well—

Mr. Metzler: Anything come to mind?

Mr. Broadwell: No, not necessarily. The furloughs. We always had, and the girls over there, at that time, you know. They knew you was coming in and they’d catch your arm and say, “Where we going?” And you’d say, “Anywhere you want to. I’m with you.” (laughter)

Mr. Metzler: This is in Australia?

Mr. Broadwell: Australia, yeah. They had shipped all their people out. They were scattered all over.

Mr. Metzler: Right. There was no men to be had.

Mr. Broadwell: Correct. Correct. You’re on the right track. (laughter) So you could imagine, it wasn’t the best people.

Mr. Metzler: It was a wonderland.

Mr. Broadwell: That’s right. That’s right. And my brother, why he uh, he came in later, he was drafted. And he was a combat engineer, 116 Engineers, and he got two Silver Stars and I think, three Bronze Stars—

Mr. Metzler: Where was he?

Mr. Broadwell: His first mission was Normandy, went into Normandy. And then he went on to Czechoslovakia, going through. And he made the invasion and on the

invasion, his platoon leader got shot. And he pulled him out of the water and pulled him to the beach and had to blow the obstacles, and so he blowed some of the obstacles and then he got to where he couldn't go on. He said some of the guys coming off the ships were using the obstacles as protection, to keep from being shot at. And he said, you couldn't make them to leave, and if you blew them up, you'd kill 'em. He tried to get 'em off. [They'd say,] "Oh, no." One would leave and another would come up there. And he got to the beach and then went back, he and three others and got his platoon leader, who was in the steel outfit, his dad owned a steel outfit in Houston, Texas. And he still stays in touch with the guy's wife. And the guy told him, he said, "You saved my life." And he got the Silver Star for it because he was in the safety; he was down at the beach. And went down and got this guy out of the water and brought him back. He pulled him out of the water, carried him out. And the, uh, he got the Silver Star for that and then he did another outfit, and he got another Silver Star, got the cluster. Got three or four and never did get shot. They shot his canteen off one time. But he never did get shot.

Mr. Metzler: When you came back stateside, what was your feeling? Did things seem to have changed a lot at home or had you changed a lot? What was it like when you came back?

Mr. Broadwell: Ah, I really never. I'll just say there was never a doubt in my mind when I was coming back. And after I got back, there was no doubt, I knew we was going to win the war. I could see that the end was—

Mr. Metzler: In sight.

Mr. Broadwell: In sight. I did some of the things that they did overseas that I didn't think was necessary and got some people killed. I thought that some of the things they did really wouldn't have been necessary. I don't know that Corregidor was necessary. I don't know that Negros was. Neither of them. You know, they could bypass them. No way they could get off of there. Absolutely no way they could possibly get off of there.

Mr. Metzler: I've often wondered about some of the islands that we. You know, they said that we did island-hopping but when we hopped a few but it seemed like we did a lot that we maybe could have hopped.

Mr. Broadwell: I wonder. Of course, I wasn't one of the leaders, but I could understand, I thought we lost. You see, we hadn't lost no personnel when we was on these other islands. But there wasn't nothing you know, there's nothing. And them people that was getting away from the Japs up there, they're going to go into tunnels but they can't going nowhere, they can't do nothing. They're going to starve to death. You know, I don't understand where. They're not going to do you no harm. They can't do no harm. They're going to stay on that island. They're going to starve to death or whatever. It don't make a difference, they can't do nothing. They can't get off of it. So I don't see the importance of getting a bunch of people killed. And I guess they told you, some of them had, you know, when they jumped us, there was only supposed to be 800 Japs on that island.

Mr. Metzler: And there were quite a bit more.

Mr. Broadwell: 6,000. (laughter) And they left 1,000 to fight 6,000. You don't win wars that-a-way. And it was a miracle that they happened to kill the leader of the outfit. They thought he was going to make an invasion and they caught him down there and they killed him. All the intelligence people down there that was watching them to see what they was going to do. They didn't think that there was going to be an airborne and these guys on patrol jumped up there and saw him and killed him. He was their leader. So they killed their brains. Cut their head off—

Mr. Metzler: That's it.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah. Well, you know with that many over. Our weapons was superior to theirs. Our weapons was superior. We had automatic weapons. And even them natives. They say, "Americana." (unintelligible) Napon, boom, boom.

Mr. Metzler: So they knew you had the automatics.

Mr. Broadwell: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Mr. Metzler: And that made all the difference.

Mr. Broadwell: Absolutely. Absolutely.

Mr. Metzler: What about the food? I know a lot of the times you were in the field, but I mean, just in general, looking back over it. I know the food must have been good in Australia, but when you were in action, how was it?

Mr. Broadwell: Ah, well, I never really thought too much about it. As I say, I was in the depression and my folks were poor. You eat all they put on your plate and uh, I could eat anything, didn't make any difference. (chuckle) But we had some guys I thought were going to starve on the boat.

Mr. Metzler: Because they were sick?

Mr. Broadwell: No. Because they couldn't eat that stuff.

Mr. Metzler: They just didn't like the food.

Mr. Broadwell: They didn't like it and had (laughter) didn't look forward to eating it. Well, I could eat anything. They said, "Do you like that?" I said, "No! But that's all there is!" We had a little advantage. We broke into the hole, me and some other guys, and got some C-rations, D-bars, candy bars that they had stored. And then, so we had some of that to go with that. Sam McCord, he got to be the dog robber for one of the officers and he was accused of being on board, he wasn't supposed to be on board, he was supposed to be on top. And uh, a guy by the name of Mark looked just exactly like him; blonde head, wavy hair and both of 'em had a little chip of gold tooth, right in the middle, and uh, I could see. And John Davis got him mixed up with Sam and told Bodinsky that Sam McCord was on deck and he wasn't supposed to sleep up there, he was supposed to be down in the hole. And so, Bo went and got Sam and Sam said, "I wasn't up there!" "If Company Commander says you were up there, you were up there! And you're going to be punished." Well, he put him in the Officer's Mess. Well, the Officer's Mess gets special food. And so Sam, as soon as he saw that, (chuckle) he said, "Bo, I'm going to save you some trouble. You won't have to appoint nobody else on this. I'll take it all the trip over there." And he'd bring me sandwiches and stuff out of the their outfit. So I had a little more advantage than some of the other—

Mr. Metzler: Had more of the officer's type food.

Mr. Broadwell: That's correct. That's correct. (laughter) But I don't remember, nothing like that.

Mr. Metzler: And what about the leadership. You know, your commanding officers and the people that were leading you.

Mr. Broadwell: Ah, they made some mistakes. This lieutenant made some mistakes. Whenever we was jumping on Lae, we didn't have any officers in our plane. And uh, Lieutenant Sanford said, "Y'all jump on me. You wait until you see me. When you see me jump out of that plane, y'all start jumping." And we're waiting on Sanford, and I could draw it at night and tell ya. You know, where we was coming, where we was going and what was going on. And, on the way up there, when we was getting in formation, there was a damn B-25 that damn near cut us half in two and they dove the plane. And when he pulled it out, why he cracked it, you know, and we all hit the ceiling and so did Borsock. It cut his head about that far, you know, he hit the head in the ribs and cut his head open. And the officer came back in there and apologized. But I was standing in the door looking out, when it happened and my parachute caught it, you know. I didn't go that far and my parachute was there. But some of them got knocked on the head, some of them had helmets on and didn't hurt 'em. But when they pulled it out, that plane was, did some cracking and stuff and a lot of the other guys worried about whether it was going to make it there or not and the officer come back there and told us, "If I hadn't of dove it, we'd got killed. That plane would've cut us half in two." And so, we got up, got ready to jump. And Gates was in the front and he got

killed. He got shot the same time I did, but he died the next day. And uh, this officer had told us, you jump on me. Well, when we come over, the plane goes down and it comes up and levels off and you get the green light. He hadn't jumped. And when this happened, I told Gates, I said, "This is it. Let's go! Let's go!" He said, "Lieutenant," I said, "To hell with the god damn lieutenant. This is it. Jump! Jump!" But we had already traveled farther than I thought we should, before we jumped. And we jumped, and uh, I tried to get my squad together for one man. You know, this kunai grass is as high as this building and you couldn't see anywhere and I hollered and hollered and hollered. And I told Wes, I said, "Well, let's go." I said, "They know this area and they won't get lost." And I asked Wes, I looked at my compass and saw some of the planes coming the other direction. All of them are supposed to be one direction. And they're going the wrong direction and I said, "I must of broke my compass. Let's see yours." And I looked at his and I said, "Oh hell. They missed the damn field, is what they've done. And coming back." And uh, anyway, I started walking out to the lane, kind of a creek deal on the far side that we had the map of, and I was using the compass, you know, to get out with. And uh, some guys got to gathering behind me and behind me and behind me and I was leading and they'd hurry up, up there. And god damn it was hot and you'd step off in a hole, you know, and fall and stumbled, trying to break through the damn kunai grass—

Mr. Metzler: What kind of grass?

Mr. Broadwell: Kunai grass.

Mr. Metzler: Kunai.

Mr. Broadwell: Kunai. Yeah, they called it kunai grass and it was as tall as this building. And we kept on, two or three times, and I told 'em "You don't have to follow me! If you want to go, go ahead." You know, I'd been leading the whole damn time and when you have a little bit of a trail it helps a lot so I got over to the lane. And Colonel Erickson come by and he said, "Where's assembly?" I said, "Just follow right down here." He's our daily commander and I said, "Just follow right down here and you'll run into it." And here come a captain and then told me, he said, "Y'all go. Let's get up and go." I said, "I'm not going 'til I rest up." I said, "I've got a squad in there. I got a machine gun." And I said, "When I get there, I'll have the gun and all the ammunition." I said, "It wouldn't do any good if I get up there and I've got the bipod and don't have the machine gun or no ammunition. It won't do me any good." And I said, "The Colonel come by and he didn't tell me to go. And I'm not going to leave until I get ready, 'til the men come here." And I moved on down where I'd be sure they'd hit and come through there. And they did. In a little while, they all come in and we got together and marched in. And some of them was gathering up in different places, you know, Company G in one place, H another. And they're sitting about and so I had the machine gun and I lifted it over and wanted to set the machine gun over here and the other machine gun cross-firing with us. And so I went to Colonel Erickson and I said, "Colonel, our platoon leader hasn't got here." And I said, "I've got my section here and I've got the guns. And I said, "I want to set up the gun. I

want to set up my gun up here on this knoll, cross-firing this way and the other, there's a place over here. And I'll cut a fire lane for them and the others." He said, "That's right where I want it." I said, "All right, sir." So I went and dug the damn foxhole and set up the machine gun. And about dark, here come the lieutenant. He'd landed them in the trees and on up there and we got there at one o'clock and he got there at dark. He said, "Broadwell." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "I want you to move that machine gun over here." And I says, "I'm not moving the machine gun. And I'm not going to order my men to move it." I said, "If you'd jumped when you're supposed to, you'd been here and I'd put it anywhere you wanted it. But you wasn't here. And I went and cleared it by the colonel. And if you want it changed, you go talk to the colonel and if he tells me to move it, I'll move it." I know he's not going to go over there. That colonel is gonna know that he screwed up. And he knew that I did. I said, "If you'd jumped when you were supposed to, you'd been here and I'd put it anyplace you wanted it. But you wasn't here. And I cleared it with the colonel." He said, "We'll see." I said, "Yes, sir." And uh, he never did tell me to do nothing after that. Never. He knew that I knew he was wrong. And he knew he was wrong and he knew that he should, that he was the one that made the mistake. And he never did say. But I thought that he was. He was in charge whenever I didn't get sent home. And I thought he might have been punishing me for, you know, for not taking orders from him. And he knew that he couldn't go to the colonel, 'cause the colonel wasn't going to be in his favor. (laughter) And uh, oh I guess he was all-and I don't

guess he was doing that. You can't never tell. You just can't tell about 'em. You know, one might be just as cool in one outfit and then next time, something will happen to him. And incidently, Borsock got killed. The one that got his head cut. He got killed later on in the war. And so did Gates, got killed. The one that was jumping in front of me. But we was good friends, all of us was good friends and things, you know, they just happen. But I had two in my squad, Jeff Spencer and West. I couldn't put them together. I could not put them together. (whispering) He said, "Did you see that?" "I think there's one right over here." "Did you see this?" (end whispering) And they just all night. They'd say, "We can't sleep." And I had to stay with one and the other guys would stay with the other. And I had to separate 'em. And they'd see things, and I say, "No, it's all right. That's not nothing. That's not nothing." And they wouldn't leave ya. And they wasn't cowards. But they couldn't, you know. And West, incidently, on this field, when he stabbed this guy, and stabbed him 157 times. He went to combat fatigue and they sent him back.

Mr. Metzler: 157 times?

Mr. Broadwell: 157 times. And he'd already killed him by sticking him in the stomach. And he told me, he said, "I thought that he might crawl back into that hole. That son-of-a-bitch ain't coming back no more!" And he told me about it and so did Hunt. And Hunt said, "I finally pulled him off. God damn, he's dead. No need to stick him no more." But he stabbed him a 156 times or 157 times. (unintelligible) But he just went—

Mr. Metzler: Off his rocker.

Mr. Broadwell: But he'd get to thinking, you know, when we was getting close, they were firing on him, he'd go all vicious. And he wasn't a coward. He wasn't a coward. He wasn't going to leave ya. But he—

Mr. Metzler: But it tore him up.

Mr. Broadwell: Tore him up. And others, it didn't affect 'em.

Mr. Metzler: Isn't that something.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, it is. Yes it is. But I think that the service was actually the best thing that ever happened to me.

Mr. Metzler: How's that?

Mr. Broadwell: Well, I learned a lot about people, you know. And how to get along with 'em and control the people. And get 'em, you know, rather than holler at 'em and punish 'em for doing things, talk to 'em. I raised my children that way. I didn't want my children to be no god damn long-haired hippies or nothing, neither. They say, "Yes, sir." And "No, sir." And they will not walk in front of somebody. If you was watchin' that television, you couldn't make 'em walk in front of it. (chuckle) Just talk to 'em. It's respectful to do it. And, I think, I whooped each one of my kids maybe once. And I talked to 'em. If you can't talk to 'em. If you can't get 'em and talk to 'em—

Mr. Metzler: And you learned that skill?

Mr. Broadwell: That's right. And different ones was hateful and mean to 'em. And when Garrett got killed, I heard a guy said it. He said, "If it comes between you and death, I'm going to get you first." I heard him say it! And I believe he'd done it. I certainly believe he'd done it. And Bodinsky and Garrett changed. And

Bodinsky went to his company and he went to ours. And when he come over, Kelly Garrett, was the officer under him and he told me, he said, "Broadwell. I had to have the money." I was the first sergeant. And if I didn't punish these people, and I didn't think it was right. But if I didn't, he'd get somebody else to. And I needed the money. But over here, I'd have done something different." You want to be sure that guy behind ya, you know, he's all right. Treat him right. Don't mistreat him.

Mr. Metzler: You don't want to alienate those people that are going in—

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah. I wouldn't want to. And I saw that. You don't correct a grown man or teach him anything by knocking him in the head or mistreating him. You know, just talk to him. Then I, in '48, we had a VFW there at home and I always went to the VFW and the firing squad. In fact, I was the head of the firing squad. But I was a private. I went in the army, I was in there six and half years and got to be a private. (laughter)

Mr. Metzler: (laughter) Oh well.

Mr. Broadwell: And I tried pretty hard (laughter). You know, and they hired me as a bouncer. They was having some trouble with managers going to correct somebody and sometimes they'd correct them wrong. You know, and if you'd tell 'em, you'd quiet them down or behave or whatever. And uh, after, you know, the manager'd say, "If you say too much, I'll drag your ass out behind that barn and whoop ya." And so, they was having some trouble, and a guy by the name of Carlos Mars, he was in a technical outfit. And nearly all our directors, at that time, were business people. You know, they'd come back

and their daddy's had businesses and they'd work or some of them had their own business. And I got to paying more attention to them than I did the drunks, you know. I noticed how to take, how they operated and stuff. Oh we made a lot of money. We bought a building there and had slot machines and had a hell of a business. And I stayed there four years and they had, they paid \$100 and some odd thousand dollars for the damn building and we had over a hundred thousand. And we give away a lot of money. And we give a lot of damn money away. And we'd more or less control the elections. And damn thing you were running, if you were an attorney or lawyer or county attorney 'cause everybody had a bunch of damn kinfolks. And me and a guy by the name of Leonard Kesden, I was in 36th Division and he lost a leg over there, and he was commander and some other commanders. And we'd go out, and uh, get people, 'cause we'd go out and solicit 'em to join the VFW. And I told 'em, I said, "If you'll join the VFW, if you attend everything that we have free and you come out here and you say you haven't gotten your money's worth, I'll give your money back." I never gave anybody's back. You know, 'cause we fed twice a week and had other things that was free to the VFW members. And I left in '54 and now I'm the director on the American Legion and the VFW. But they wanted me to come, they asked me, you know, "I want you to come and be a director." I said, "You don't want me as director. I ask too many questions." But I did. I got in and ran some god damn people off that needed running off. Now the, the outfit I have, we have about 250, we have 30, 35,000 and it's going down every month, every month. And we got

a commander, and he's a good person but he, uh, he needed some help.

Whenever I showed up, he showed me the outfit, he said, "Now we're making money." He said, "We went from never making any money until you got on the directors." They had \$190. The Legion, they busted it. And now, we got down to \$190. When I got on the outfit and now they have over \$6,000. It's just getting taking care of the money and getting the damn thieves out of it. Getting their hands out of it.

Mr. Metzler: Okay, well, is there anything else, then, that you want to summarize for us, R. E.?

Mr. Broadwell: No, not that I know of.

Mr. Metzler: Quite an experience you had.

Mr. Broadwell: Yeah, I did.

Mr. Metzler: Well, I thank you for taking the time to tell us about it.

Mr. Broadwell: And, you know, I told you my mother raised five children during the depression. Three of us are millionaires. Nobody gave us nothing. (laughter) We started on the bottom floor. I think that's highly unusual. And my son, he has two boys, they got their doctor degrees in pharmacists. And they make, their starting salary, one of them just got out, been out about three months, the other one's been out two years, starting salary \$80,000.

Mr. Metzler: That's not bad.

Mr. Broadwell: Not bad salary.

Mr. Metzler: That's a living wage.

Mr. Broadwell: Yes, it is. (laughter) You can get by on it, if you're careful.

Mr. Metzler: Okay, well thank you a lot.

(end of disc 2)

[Transcriber Note: According to an obituary found for R. E. Broadwell, his full name was "Richard Eugene Broadwell and a proud member of the U.S. Army 503 Regimental Combat Team, seeing action in Mindoro Island and the Philippines. R. E. received several medals, including the Purple Heart and Bronze Star. March 23, 1921 – May 21, 2006"]

[Transcriber Note: Soldiers names have not been verified and are phonetically spelled.]

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