

Scott Batt  
Cedar City Library Veterans' History Project  
Interviewed by: Alex E. and Holly Jolley  
Date: July 30, 2007  
Final Edit: November 2010

Int: Could you please state your full name?

Vet: Scott Batt

Int: Where do you currently reside? Where do you currently reside?

Vet: Right here.

Int: Cedar City, Utah?

Vet: Cedar City, Utah.

Int: Is this the same area where you resided when you were drafted or when you were enlisted?

Vet: Well I was raised right down the street and then I, after I got back and the wife and I, we were married, and then she lived with her folks while I was gone. Right up where the post- or the telephone office is? Right up on Center Street? Right on the corner. They lived right there. That's where they were when I come back. Then we moved in this home right over here. She bought that, and then we got this home. My Uncle Nat had owned this home. And we bought this home and that's where we lived ever since.

Int: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

Vet: I was drafted.

Int: Which branch of the service did you serve?

Vet: Well I was in the military, in the Army, and I was...discharged, I was discharged in Hatfield, California.

Int: That's your discharge certificate?

Vet: This is my discharge papers here.

Int: So an honorable discharge on the 31<sup>st</sup> of October in 1946.

Vet: And it wasn't final until, this is August 31, '46.

Int: Did you serve full time or were you in a reserve unit?

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Vet: The full time? All we done, we went down to camp, like I said, Fort Hood, California or Texas, that's just out of Waco, Texas. Well it was just out of Gatesville. And I served there and it was a, what we were doing, we were in the anti-aircraft battalion and we served on those big guns. Then when I went overseas, I was, I went in, course we took the training there. But for my primary duty was on a switch board, army switchboard. I would call in the fire orders to the guns, to the big guns, for them to fire those rifles at the enemies or any target that we had. That's what I served in there, says right here, switchboard operator, could see that. But we also served as guards. Course all of us took, took turns on doing guard duty, but we were guarding those Japanese soldiers, and they started shipping all of the supplies for those islands there into Manila, and you probably read about Corregidor and right up into the harbor there in Manila. That Corregidor was just a great big stone outpost right in the middle of the harbor. Anyhow, we served there with those Japanese until, like I say, until they dispersed them. They did have, they had a place right in Manila where they had a big cement wall, a brick wall all around us. Then after they dispersed those troops, course we got out and we had to go out on them trucks looking for those Japanese. They didn't even know, a lot of those Japanese didn't know that the war was over. Some of them went for a number of years before they finally come in and found out that the war was over. Then they moved us from there, and we went up to what they call the Caloocan railroad yards, our primary duty there was to take and load supplies on to the railroad, onto the train cars and deliver them up to the northern end of Luzon, which was San Fernando, La Union was the last stop we made when we stopped at Clark Field and delivered to Clark Field. Then we would make the trip on up to San Fernando, La Union and come back. We stopped at, one incident that I remember very vividly, we stopped for lunchtime at Clark Field. You formed a line and just went up along the line and they served you the food. They were serving three different types of meat that day. There was a great big truck, he as a big guy, course they had, they weren't actually tables, but their serving counters that they had, we were going up along those, and we see this big cook asking a man, he had a army uniform on, a US uniform on, and he was trying to talk to him and asking him what he wanted, what meat he wanted to eat. He just looked at him and wouldn't say a word. Finally he just reached over the counter and jerked him back up over. Then just a second there was MPs right there and they grabbed him. We found out later when we come back down through there that he'd been a Japanese soldier, but he had an army, a US Army uniform on. Where he got it, they didn't know. He could've killed the soldier that had it, but it fit him almost perfectly, but it was an army uniform and he was a Japanese. The Japanese soldiers, when they were there, had plundered the islands until they took all of the food, or most of the food, that the Japanese would have lived on, and they took most of that. They even took the, they didn't get all the coconuts because they had to go out in the jungle to get those, but the bananas and different stuff like that that they raise there, they took that. They just got, he got starved out. There was a number of them that come out of the jungle after the war was over. They had got starved out, and they came out to get food. We were right along that Pasig River. We had out camp right next to the

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supply depot along that Pasig River, and you just went down the steep embankment and then up and across the Pasig River. The only way we could get across there was to get one of those little, they were just a dugout out of a large log that'd been carved out, and then take poles or paddles and go across that Pasig River. Anyhow, we'd take regular shifts, and usually, some of them ten hours, some of them twelve, before we were relieved. We even had some of those Japanese that was coming right in there and would come into that depot to get stuff; try to steal it. Right where we were at, we had one light that come from a pole over across the street, the roadway, hooked up here and it was right in the middle of hangin' right up above the roadway. We had a boy by the name of Ferrugio, and he was from Chicago. We were all in the truck, course they had those seats on each side, personnel carriers and he was standing up and the Japs cut loose on him, on that truck, and they just cut him right in half. That was a near, you know, things like that was as near as we got to what we called combat. Course my job like this, they would run those lines and string them out to the forward positions. And usually where they would come from, we would have a man way out, up in a big high tree or somewhere, and they he was callin' the direction back to me through the switchboard. Then I was giving them to the boys that were operating the guns. It run in mils, how many mils we had them to move right, left, or whatever. This was primarily what I done, but I wasn't right up where the fighting was.

Int: So you had a non-combat position?

Vet: Well, it was combat. You was close enough so you was where you could hear the fire. But then there was danger in that because the first thing that the Japanese would try to do would be to get those forward observers and those on the switchboard. If they could knock them out of commission, then the big guns didn't have any direction or any signals where to lob their shells to. But you had to do it, as far as I was concerned, I was ready to go any time that they called me. And it was a sad day when I left the wife and the two children because they were little kids. But, like I said, I had a brother that left here with the National Guard 222<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, and they went in with Patton, and when they invaded Europe from England. They went clear through that war. My older brother, he was flying airplanes. What he was doing was in the transport command, which was either transporting troops or planes back and forth. But he made it back. In that outfit, the unit that left here in Cedar, there was one boy that got killed in all of the fighting that they done, and they went in, like I said, at Normandy. And they invaded Normandy, and they fought their way right on through. This brother of mine told me, and he won't, well, you don't talk about a lot of these things that you remember. One thing I can remember, and I'll tell you this, I told my children when I come back, when you have something to put on your plate to eat, eat it. Because what I saw, like I said, the Japanese had plundered the islands. They plundered everything that they could get their hands on because they were short of supplies too. And so those little Japanese kids, and they had cans, some of them were rusty, it didn't matter. But after we got

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through eating, we had those big trays and everything, when we got through, the food that was left on the trays when we didn't eat all of it, a lot of times we had so much time to eat and then be on our way, and we would take that and scrape it off into a 35 gallon, great, big galvanized garbage can, is what we use 'em for. But anyhow, we'd scrape 'em into there. When we'd get that, going through that line, those little kids would just come out of the jungle. They were just like a hive of bees. They were starving to death, and they would fight one another, they would do anything to get that. As quick as they'd got their pan or can full, or whatever bucket, or anything, and then they'd just disappear. And when you get so hungry, there was a few of 'em that I made friends with, 'cause I had these little kids back home. I would motion them and they would stick their eyes out, and I'd just motion them to come over, and then I'd scrape mine into their, into whatever container they had. That way they didn't have it all mixed up with the other stuff. And you know, you see things like that, these little kids starving to death. Those people over there, they, you very seldom ever saw a dog. And I'll tell you why. They had what they called the dog market, up at Baguio, which was the capital of the Philippines, their summer capital of the Philippines. And they would take those dogs and they half-starve them 'til they got to the point of where they were just almost skin and bones. Then they wouldn't give 'em any water, or too much water and they wouldn't give 'em too much food. Then they'd take a big pile of rice and give it to them, and then give them all the water they could drink. Then they would kill those dogs. Then they would roast 'em and go in there, and of course all of the food, everything they'd eaten before was gone. All that was in there was rice and the fluid that they'd ingested. And it would just, that's what they ate. And the cats, I never did see them eat cats. To them, this dog market, and I asked some people over there, "How could you eat a dog? I love dogs." I said, "I've had dogs all my life from the time I was a boy. And I depended on those dogs a lot to help me herd the sheep," because I had sheep. To them it was a delicacy and there wasn't much meat left on the dogs, but they sure did eat that rice. But I couldn't hardly eat the rice because they would cook that rice until it was just like glue. When we were out in the jungle, we got word that there was Japanese troops off some where. It come through the grapevine that the Philippines, from their troops and the people, come through the grapevine, and then we would go out in these Army trucks looking for them. We'd get out there, and for the coconuts, and like I say, the bananas out in the jungle, we'd just shoot those off with our rifles and then bring 'em back to base with us. That's what we ate, we'd eat those just. I don't know, you know, you see so many things like that, and yet the Japanese, when I come back I told the wife and she'll verify it, I have more respect for the Japanese people, and more respect for the Japanese soldier, what I had to do with 'em. And we were with 'em all the time while we were there. They had men guarding them all the time. We'd march 'em out of the compound into the depot, that supply depot, and had them sort out the material that we had that was being loaded on and going to the other islands. Those Japanese, speak to them and they bow to you, smile. They never did give you any trouble. They done it obediently. They were polite. But the Filipinos, we didn't have time enough to wash our uniforms a lot of time and that

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was one requirement that we had: you keep your uniforms clean, you keep everything clean. We would, those Filipinos would come and get the, a lot of the times it would be just a little boy or a little girl. They could hardly take your clothes, but they'd take 'em. When they'd bring 'em back we would pay them so much. They would tell us how many Pesos that we paid them. We'd give it to them. One thing about it, you never turned your back on a Filipino. If you had anything laying around in your tent, and they were just open, if you valued it you'd better not leave it laying around because when you, when they come in there, they went out it went with 'em. But the Japanese, you could have those Japanese, you never lost a thing. I had a lot of respect for the Japanese people. Right today, I think the Japanese are some of the loyalist people toward the United States that there is.

Int: So you spent most of your time right in the Philippines?

Vet: Yeah. Well, like I said, we hit, we hit Manila Harbor, we hit Manila and then we went from there, and we wasn't at there very long. And then we went from there to Enewetok in the Marshall Islands. And then we were there, and we went from there right up through into the Philippines and right up through the Lingayen Gulf. Now those Philippine Islands were scattered all over. We went right up through the Lingayen Gulf, ( ??) in Leyte, and from Leyte right on up and onto the island of Luzon. That's where I spent about all my time was mostly right on the island of Luzon. We run from, like I said, from along the Pasig River. I don't know, you just lost time, you didn't pay any attention to it anyhow. Anyhow, we spent time there and then we went to the Caloocan railroad yards, on those trains. That's where, when I come back, I got back here and four days after I got here I went to work out at the iron mines. I got a job there on the iron mines, and I was there for 35 years dropping those railroad cars down under the loading tip that'd load the iron ore onto ship it up to Geneva.

Int: During what years were you in the service? When did you go into the service?

Vet: I went into the service, what was it, March, yeah, March of '45. [Wife's voice, "yes."] Then I got back and even though I got back late in the fall, it was November when we come from California because they were. . .

Vet's Wife: No. It was September. Look on your discharge paper.

Vet: I know what the discharge said, but after I got back I didn't get my discharge papers for better than three months.

Vet's Wife: I went down and met you.

Vet: Yes, she met me down there.

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Int: September '46.

Vet: Well, it said that I was down . . .

Vet's Wife: He was gone there for fourteen months.

Vet: I was there for fourteen months.

Vet's Wife: In Texas for five.

Int: What was the highest rank you achieved?

Vet: Well, right there. My kids, I never told, that I was an expert rifleman. I'd used guns all my life.

Int: So what was the highest rank you achieved?

Vet: I never receive any rank. You know I found out one thing, when you got over there you better not try to get rank, and I'll tell you why. The first people, the first ones that the enemy tried to get was the people that was leading. And if it was a lieutenant, a sergeant, anyone with stripes, they got it first because they figured if they got them then they could just have their way with the rest of them. I didn't want it. That sounds silly because it didn't matter over there. You was looking out for your own benefit. I never even told my kids that I was an expert rifleman. In fact, Alice said to me, "If a . . . ."

Int: So you were just considered a private then?

Vet: Yeah, I was a private. You know I didn't, when I went I didn't want glory and I learned that when we first got over there. Because the guys that would go out on those patrols, and the first people to come back, when they come back the first people that they were shooting at was the ones that was leading. They was the lieutenants or the sergeants, were the first that they tried to get, and then anyone with a stripe that they could see. They were the first ones that got it. And you wore those stripes on your arms all the time and they had binoculars. I didn't want anything, just like I didn't aspire for any advancement in the Church. I didn't want one. If I could be of service in the Church, I done it. But I had to, I served in the bishopric with Eric Tait, Executive Secretary. Delles Imlay was the Bishop. But I'd been, well, I got it, at first I was the superintendant of the Sunday School. They called me into that, Lanor Jones, Bishop called me to that. From there on it wasn't up to me, they called me, and when they called. But I did turn down several times, when they asked me. I worked as an assistant to the High Priest Group Leader in a ward, and I worked with four different men as High

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Final Edit: November 2010

Priest Group Leaders. But they come after me and I told 'em," No. I think you better get someone else because I don't aspire for it. You get someone else and I'll work with 'em." And I done that. I was the same way in the army. I didn't want it.

Int: Did you ever get any decorations?

Vet: Nope. I got decorations, I had to take off.

Int: You had a, your record says and Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal and a World War II Victory Medal.

Vet: Yep. Where they are I don't know. But you don't, a lot of people they aspire to those things and I didn't care. I done my duty and that was it.

Int: Were there any people of your acquaintance who have become prominent historical figures?

Vet: No, not that I know of.

Int: Do you have a most vivid memory of your service?

Vet: Yes. A lot of that you don't remember. You remember but you don't want to. My brother now is, after what he went through in that over there. The thing of it is, they don't talk about it. I think right here in Cedar, out of that 222<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery Battalion, there's about three of those boys left living in Cedar. The rest of them are all gone. But you, there's things that you saw that you don't want to remember. I saw some of the women over in the Philippines that had been mutilated by the Japanese. You don't want to remember, you want to forget. You see a lot of these things. When I got there, when we were out along the Pasig River, and I found out that there was a group of six men right down on the harbor, it was 35 miles, that were holding church services for the LDS Church. I had gone to different services while I was in the service. There weren't any of them that were like the LDS services. When I found that out I got permission from our commanding officer to get a pass on Sunday. Then I would get out, and I'd grab those Army trucks because they were running back and forth from that supply depot down to Manila Harbor and I'd grab a truck. I'd ride that truck 35 miles and I'd get off the truck right in Manila, right along by what they called the Jones Bridge, which was an arching bridge up over a canal there. And then walk from there down to the pier. I had done business with a man here in Cedar. He had a service station right over where Bradshaw's is now. I saw this fellow walking down there, and I thought there's only one man in the world that walks that way: Sid Porter. I caught up to him, walked up and looked at him and I didn't even know he was over there. And I looked at him and he looked at me. We were both really surprised. But anyhow, that was just before we come home. Anyhow,

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he, it wasn't too long before we come home. But anyhow, he caught a boat before I did. When I went over, I went over on the USS WG Hahn; spelled H A H N. [Actual spelling suggests Haan.] When I come back, I was on a merchant marine ship. They just grabbed anything that they could put the soldiers on and shipped 'em back.

Int: So you had some moments of sorrow, did you have any moments of joy in your service?

Vet: Well, no, about the most moments of joy that you ever had over there was when you got a letter from home telling you that you was all right. Before I go home, the wife ended up, did you go into the hospital, Mom?

Vet's Wife: When?

Int: When your mother and them was sick? I tried to get a trip home.

Vet's Wife: No. Mother had surgery. Just not too long 'fore David died.

Vet: Her brother had come back from over in Europe, and he got killed in a car wreck. Her mother was in the hospital and she wasn't well. When I come back, she weighed 90 pounds. She'd been sick, and then she had those two little children. I went to the Red Cross, and the Red Cross said if we can get your people there in Utah to OK it, we'll fly you home. When they called here, the Red Cross turned 'em down. I didn't call, but the Army called, and they turned 'em down. I had seen enough over there of the Red Cross, that I . . . I, she could tell you [gestures to wife]. I've never donated one dime to the Red Cross since we come back. I could tell you why, but I won't. That was one of the reasons. But I saw things over there that those Red Cross nurses done that . . . They treated the common GI over there, if you was an officer, you was just like, treated like a prince. And if you wasn't an officer, they just ignored you. You know, those things, you remember those things. They leave a vivid memory with you and you never forget, and I never . . . Alice, she used to donate to the RedCross, and after I got home I said you donate if you want to, but don't do it in my name.

Int: What were your feelings of support that you got from your family and your country while you were serving?

Vet: I'll tell you. They gave you more support then than they're giving the soldiers and the army men now. You had all the support in the world. You couldn't have asked for any more support. And your families, they were writing to you all the time.

Int: How often did you get letters?



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Final Edit: November 2010

Vet: Well, sometimes we'd get a whole bundle, and then we'd maybe go for two weeks or a month, or maybe longer and never get anything at mail call. But they had to go over, they were processed here. You had an APO number, and then they went over there and you had another APO number, and then they were sorted over there and then they had to go through all these commands to get back to the place where you were at. That's why it fouled the mail up. It took time, and it was slow. You can imagine why, but it took a lot of time to get that mail to you. You got all of that support. I didn't only get support from her, but I got support from, I even got letters from a brother that was in the service over there, that'd come to me there. But they come from Europe and all over. Most of my support I got from the wife and from her family and from my father. My mother died when I was 22, when I was two years, or four years old. She died in 1922. There was five boys, no girls. They, Dad raised all five of us, kept us together. If it was today, they'd come in and say you're not fit to raise these children. You can't raise 'em and take 'em away from him, but he raised five boys. Of that five boys, three of us went into the service. We come back home, they didn't, as far as I could see, we done a pretty good job, anyhow. None of us ended up in jail, but we've lived pretty good lives.

Int: Do you have any regrets about your military service?

Vet: I'll tell you, I wouldn't take a million dollars for the service, for the time I spent in the service. But they couldn't give me a million dollars to get me to go back. It was different then that it is now. I had uncles and relatives that served in the First World War. Her father served in it [gestures to wife]. They served in it, and, course things were different then than when we went in. But they was different when we went in than they are now. You go in to fight a war, and when we went in there we went in to win the war and get it over with and get back home. That was the main thing that we went in for. Now they're over there, and all they're doing is just, I can't see that they're fighting a war. If they fought a war, you went in there as a group and when you had the enemy out in front of you, you either killed them or they killed you. But you just kept moving until it was over with. After you got them out of the way, you went to the next group. But now, it looks to me like all they can think about is just, more or less, policing things over there. Those people over there are killing the soldiers and civilians, at will, it looks to me like.

Int: So how do you feel about that current situation in Iraq?

Vet: I'll tell you. I think that what they'd ought to do is, when they went in there, they should have wiped those people out. I don't mean the innocent people. I'm talking about the people that had the uniforms on, and that were on the offensive against 'em. Get rid of 'em. If they didn't give up, and surrender, kill 'em. That's what you were trained to do. Cause if you turned your back on them, they'd kill you. Either you shoot first or they're gonna kill you. And when you see it, you see, like I told you, this boy, Ferrugio,

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he was a young boy and he was a good kid - really good boy. They just opened fire with that machine gun and they just cut him right in half. They kept shootin', but they didn't get any of the rest of us.

Int: So what would you, if you could give advice to the service men and women today, what would it be?

Vet: Well, I would tell 'em one thing. I think, of course, maybe I'm a little bit different, being LDS, but if you got a chance to get to church where you can get as close to your Father in Heaven as you could get, get there, and that would be one of the main things that you would do. Another thing, have compassion on those people that are left over there, or wherever you're fighting, because they're not the ones that were trying to kill you. It was other people. Get rid of those people first and then treat the other people that are left with compassion, because the biggest part of these people don't want war. All they want is peace. I think if you do that you're going to be rewarded, not only here, but you're rewarded on the other side.

Int: Did you have a single most positive experience of your service?

Vet: Well, no. They were all about the same. Every day over there, like I said, the one thing that bothered me, well, there was one thing that I do remember and I regretted it, but it was what you were trained to do. When we were walking up to our post, when we were out along the Pasig River, we walked so far this way. Then we come back, and on the other side of the depot, you had another man that was walking. He was walking that way, you were walking this way. We had someone that come in there, they were coming in, we didn't know if they were Filipinos, Japanese, or who they are. [Hand gestures]. We were supposed to protect those supplies. They cut loose on the person that come in there. When we found out what he had, all he had in a box, was the soles of shoes and the heels in that box. The one on the other side caught him, he came running through. I don't know whether he shot him, whether I shot him, it didn't matter. I hope I didn't. But anyhow, there was a canal, just a stream of water going right down along the edge of the jungle. He made it across that. When they found him, why, all he had was that little box of, it was nothing. Yet, that's what we were trained to do. We didn't know whether he was Japanese or what. That's one thing that's bothered me and it still does. They said he had five bullets in him. The saddest part of it was, he had a wife with five children. I don't know, you know, I guess what he was, they said that he repaired shoes for people; got paid for it. But they didn't have the materials so they could get them out of the depot. If I'd a known that that's all he had, I wouldn't have fired a shot. I mighta got court marshaled for it. At least I didn't have that guilty feeling. These are the things that, the happiest day that I ever had in my life over there was when I was loadin' up to come home, because I knew that when I got home I'd be with my wife and children and with my father and my brothers and the people that I knew right here in Cedar. These are the

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things that you remember most, the things you cherish the most. You don't cherish the things that happened over there, that you had to, the duties that you had to perform. The good ones, yes, but the bad ones, no.

Int: Do you think your time in the service changed how you felt about politics or religion?

Vet: Well, I don't know. I never was too involved in politics. It never did matter to me. I voted for who I thought would be the best person for the job, and I still do that pretty much. I don't know. One thing it did do, and it brought to my mind, like I told you, there's a difference in the LDS faith and the other faiths. The other faiths don't teach what the LDS Church faith teaches. These are the things, stay close to your church, but I would tell anyone, of any faith, "If you get in a situation like that, stay close to the church regardless of what church you belong to because all churches are good." Some are better than others. I wouldn't trade my religion for any others. Maybe I'm wrong, but I'll leave it up to someone else to decide. They'll be the ones that'll be the judge on me.

Int: Well, thank you. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Vet: Well, I don't know. All I can say is just pray for those people that they're fighting over there now. Not only those people, but there's other people in other parts of the world, soldiers in other parts of the world that have duties they have to perform. I'm sure that a lot of 'em don't like 'em. They don't like what they have to, a lot of the things they have to do. The Army teaches you to do it, and you do it. You do what you're told. All I can say is pray for those that have to do these things and that are in a foreign land because there's no place that I've went into, and I'll tell you that ocean is awful big. When you get, when we went over, we was 31 days on water on that boat all the way over. You'd zigzag one way and then another because they had submarines and everything else. That zig zag took us a long time to get over there to where we going. We made it safe. A lot of the people, a lot of these boys . . . There's one thing about it, I'll say one thing. When you get in the Army and you have to go to something like that you grow up awful fast. They give you a little bit of a shovel about that long that folds up. When the firing starts, you dig a foxhole awful fast and you get in it. That's all I can tell you. For one thing, be thankful that you're an American.

Int: Thank you.

Vet: I hated to say what I did about those people because there's good Filipinos. There're good people. There's good and bad in all races. Like I told the wife and then the kids, I had more respect for the Japanese than I did for the Filipinos people for the simple reason that you could trust the Japanese and you couldn't trust the Filipinos. All the Filipinos wanted was all the help that you could give them and that's all they cared

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about. I had a buddy in, a boy from Salt Lake City. His name's Vernon Nott. We got in a tight place and we had to go through a crowd of Filipinos. Then they said you keep your wallets and stuff in your back pocket. I never did keep mine there. I kept mine right in my front pocket. When we got through that group of people, they were Filipino, his wallet was gone and he never did find it. He had pictures of his wife and children and they were gone. I'll tell you, they could get those things out of your pocket and you didn't even feel it. They'd get you in a crowd and you'd get to moving, they'd jostle you back and forth. When he got through, why he reached for his wallet and he didn't have it. They would, they were the slickest thieves you've ever seen. That doesn't sound right, but it's the truth. Like I say, there's good and bad in all people. I'm not supposed to judge, but I did make that judgment.

Int: Thank you.

Vet: You're welcome.