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Place of Interview: San Antonio, Texas

Interviewer: Dr. R. E. Marcello

Terms of Use: Open

Approved: J W Bruce
(Signature)

Date: Dec 4, '82

Oral History Collection

John W. Bruce

Interviewer: Dr. Ronald E. Marcello

Place of Interview: San Antonio, Texas Date: December 4, 1982

Dr. Marcello: This is Ron Marcello interviewing John W. Bruce for the North Texas State University Oral History Collection. The interview is taking place on December 4, 1982, in San Antonio, Texas. I'm interviewing Mr. Bruce in order to get his reminiscences and experiences and impressions while he was a member of the 31st Bomb Squadron and stationed at Hickam Field during the Japanese attack there and at Pearl Harbor and the other military installations on December 7, 1941.

Mr. Bruce, to begin this interview, very briefly give me a biographical sketch of yourself. In other words, tell me when you were born, where you were born, your education--things of that nature. Just be very brief and general.

Mr. Bruce: I was born on October 28, 1917, in Bloomington, Indiana.

Dr. Marcello: Did you go to school in Bloomington?

Mr. Bruce: Yes, I finished high school there and two years at Indiana University. Then I went broke going to school and didn't have a job, so I joined the service in 1939.

Dr. Marcello: You said you joined the service in 1939. Did you join the

Army or the Army Air Corps?

Bruce: The Army Air Corps.

Marcello: You went directly into the Army Air Corps.

Bruce: Right. They had some kind of situation where, if you were a high school graduate, you could go into the Army Air Corps and get a choice of assignments, and they had overseas assignments. Of course, I think they were only the Philippines, Hawaii, and Panama. I'm not sure of that. Five of us from our hometown all chose to stay together, and we went to Hawaii.

Marcello: You indicated awhile ago that you went broke while you were at Indiana University, and that played a part in your decision. Am I to assume that the Depression was still being felt with in that particular section and with you personally at that time?

Bruce: Yes, I'm not sure Bloomington, Indiana, has ever got over the Depression (chuckle).

Marcello: You know, economic reasons are given by a lot of the people of your generation who went into the service as being the factor that influenced their decision.

Bruce: Well, true, and, also, I was wanting to study the criminalogical side of sociology, and the more I studied, the more disillusioned I became with that. So that and the fact that I ran out of money were the reasons that I decided to go ahead. Then we only had to sign up for two years. It took me five years, nine months, and one day to complete that two years; but that looked good, and I thought I could save some money while I was in the service and go

back to school.

Marcello: Why did you decide to enter the Army Air Corps as opposed to one of the other branches of Service?

Bruce: Well, aviation was coming into its own, and it had the higher requirements, which you didn't have to have a high school education at the time to get into the Navy or just the regular Army, I guess the Marines were the same; they'd take anything.

Marcello: I also think it's true, is it not, that a lot of people at that time still had a great deal of fascination with airplanes and things of that nature?

Bruce: Oh, yes, they were a novelty, really a novelty. I think I'd had two airplane rides up until that time, one in a three-engine forward and one in a biplane, open cockpit. Many people had never flown. Everytime an airplane came over, everyone would run outside the house. It was just like a one train a day through a town--everyone goes and watches it. It was the same way with airplanes.

Marcello: Where did you take your boot camp or your basic training, as they call it in the Air Corps?

Bruce: At Hickam Field.

Marcello: Oh, so you went directly from Bloomington or wherever you left from and went directly to Hickam Field?

Bruce: No, we were inducted at Fort Benjamin Harrison, which was an Army base at Indianapolis. From there, we went to Fort Slocum, which I don't think exists any longer. It was a little island

off the shore of New Rochelle, New York, and you were on the island there pulling details and anything you could do to kill time. So when the transport came in, it docked down at the Brooklyn Army Base, and then we'd go down there and load on and take off. Our troop transport happened to be the Chateau-Thierry, which was a World War I transport, and this was its maiden voyage after being de-commissioned after World War I. So it was a pretty rough old boat.

Marcello: How long did it take you to go from the Brooklyn Army Base to Hickam Field? How long did that trip take?

Bruce: I'm not sure on this, but I think it took five days to Panama, and then we went directly from Panama to Hawaii. I think that was seventeen days, but, as I say, I'm not so sure. Some of the ships would go on up to San Francisco and spend some time there.

Marcello: Now what happened when the ship docked at Honolulu? Describe the reception you received at that point, and then talk a little about your going into Hickam Field itself.

Bruce: Well, we just marched off like we were all Army then. They knew you by name, and they'd call you by hold such-and-such as to where you'd stayed in the ship. You came off, and you walked over or marched over to an area and waited there for busses. The busses took you from down around the Aloha Tower up to Hickam Field. Everything our particular load did was done out at Hickam Field.

Marcello: Describe what Hickam Field looked like from a physical standpoint at the time that you first entered it there in 1939.

Bruce: Well, it was a big place, really. It amazed me at the time, how large it was. It had very few buildings. The permanent barracks had been started but were no way near complete. So we moved to "Tent City," and most everyone lived in tents. There were a few quarters for some of them, I guess, senior married noncoms and officers. You had a Headquarters Building, of course, and like I often say, the least used building on the base, the chapel, was already built. They'll build it when they need something else everytime (chuckle). The hangars were built--eight of them--plus the Hawaiian Air Depot. What is the parking area today was our active runway back then.

Marcello: What kind of planes were kept there at Hickam Field during this period?

Bruce: In the bomber squadrons, all we had were B-18's. I think there was one B-10 or B-13, a Martin, but I don't know who it belonged to. We had one DC-3, which later became famous as the C-47. I think there were two A-12's, an old attack ship, and if I'm not mistaken, the Air Corps had only bought twenty or twenty-five of them, total. It was practically without armor, open cockpit, low-wing, external struts on it. It whistled coming through the air. It was good for the pilots to get out because they could blow steam off in it. But the bombers were all B-18, not sharp-nosed but the bulb-nosed model of the B-18. The last one that our government bought, I think, was number 37-19, which belonged

to our squadron. The 37 means that was the year that we took it from the contractor.

Marcello: When did you start getting in B-17's?

Bruce: May of 1941. I think our first flight of B-17's came in then. If I'm not mistaken, by then we had broken the 5th Group up into the 5th and 11th Group, and I think each squadron got two B-17's. We had three or four B-18's apiece.

Marcello: I guess that B-17 was considered to be a real miracle weapon at that time, was it not?

Bruce: Oh, it was. It was so darn much faster. It was the one without the tailgunner, but it was a nice airplane, and the pilots enjoyed flying it a lot better. Your range was tremendous compared to the B-18. It had better engines. It was just a better plane all around.

Marcello: Awhile ago, you mentioned that when you first went to Hickam Field, you were living at "Tent City." Describe what the quarters were like in "Tent City." Describe one of those tents.

Bruce: They had wooden floors and a center pole. There must have been a pole at each corner and then outrigging poles to hold the canvas from the center pole. I believe there were six of us in each of those tents. Naturally, in military fashion they were in straight lines, perfectly straight, and then some distance away was the bathhouse or latrine, as they call it today. Then they had lister bags, which was a canvas bag which you could fill with water, and the sweating of the bags supposedly was a system that

you cooled the drinking water in there so you wouldn't have to run over to the latrine everytime you wanted a drink of water. But those are the same type of tents they used then, and they used it before. At this time they put prisoners in them in some states, and they complain about the living conditions of the prisoners (chuckle).

Marcello: Approximately how many of those tents would there have been there? You have to estimate this, of course. Take a guess.

Bruce: I would say a hundred, because there was the 17th Air Base Group, which we were a part of when we took our boot or recruit training; then there was the 5th Group, which also lived in tents because, like I said, the consolidated barracks was not filled yet; and then we had the transportation pool, which had a few tents of their own.

Marcello: So we're talking about a bunch of tents, then.

Bruce: Believe me!

Marcello: How long did boot camp last at that time, or your recruit training, as it was called?

Bruce: I think four weeks. That consisted almost exclusively of marching, and then we did have a trip to the firing range.

Marcello: You say you had a trip to the firing range. Can you be a little more specific on that?

Bruce: Well, you went out and you fired the shotgun--the riot gun--the .45-caliber pistol, and, I think, a .30-caliber water-cooled machine gun.

Marcello: How about the Springfield '03 rifle? Did you fire that?

Bruce; No, I never did fire it, Some of them were issued later on, but I was on flying status then,

Marcello: So the amount of experience that you had with small arms, at least in recruit training, was rather minimal,

Bruce; Right, Most of it, I would...well, absolutely, It was kept to a minimum,

Marcello; Okay, what happened when you got out of boot camp? In other words, what particular specialty did you lean toward?

Bruce; Well, I didn't know exactly, and you had no choice, They walked up and said, "You're on guard duty," I pulled three months and three weeks of guard duty, and then I went to the 31st Bombardment Squadron, I asked if they had any vacancies, and they had some openings in the armament. So I went into the armament section, and from there I went on into being an enlisted bombardier,

Marcello; Describe the process by which you initially went into the armament section and then eventually became a bombardier. Is there a close connection between the armament section and being a bombardier?

Bruce; I don't think so, really, It was just that I was there in the hangar where we kept the machine guns for the airplanes and all, We also kept what small arms the squadron had, We kept those up, I could see them at practice with this Norden bombsight out there in the hangar they used, Really, it looked pretty easy to me, I didn't know how involved it was, so I thought,

"Well, I might as well try for that," and an inquiry came out, "Anyone interested?" I put my name in and was selected and interviewed by, at the time, a bunch of high-echelon officers, I think they were majors and lieutenant colonels. Of course, there weren't too many colonels then, I was selected, and I think there were only maybe fifteen or twenty of us in that class.

Marcello: And did you take your bombardier training right there at Hickam Field?

Bruce: Right, right at Hickam Field. The practice bombs were dropped from an airplane which would be from my own squadron. I would be turned over to my section for training, and I was real lucky there because we had some good bombardiers, and I got a lot of help which some of the other kids in other squadrons didn't get.

Marcello: I do know that at that particular time, the services didn't have too much money with which to operate. How did that affect your training as a bombardier?

Bruce: I don't think that it bothered...well, if it did, I didn't know. I will say this, though, that I used to keep a log of my flying time, and a lot of months I would be high man--this was before the war--and I would have flown, say, thirty-five hours. Of course, our practice bombs didn't cost much because it was an old M-38 A-2, I think was the designation of it. It was a thin metal thing which you filled with sand and put a two-and-a-half-pound black powder

charge in the backend of it, so when you hit anything solid, you'd have the puff of smoke and take a picture. Live bombs, I don't ever remember dropping them until the war started.

Marcello: How long did you enter bombardier training after you got to Hickam Field?

Bruce: I would say I got into the bombardier training at the end of 1940. I'd already gone through armament school, and I was up to PFC, 3rd class specialist, and when they took me into the bombardier school, I made corporal, which was a lot of money. That was $42 a month plus $21 for flying.

Marcello: How long did the bombardier school last?

Bruce: Well, in theory it went on and on until you'd qualified at every altitude, and as I remember, there were about five altitudes, the lowest being 1,000 feet and the highest one at 20,000 or maybe 18,000 feet. I'd qualified at every altitude except the highest. Many of them hadn't. Well, you can look at it like this: on the darned old B-18,,,it's nasty to talk about,but at any altitude you had to have oxygen. It wasn't pressurized or anything, so you had a rubber hose connected to oxygen bottles and one wooden nipple (chuckle). You'd use the nipple for a while, and then you'd pass it to the other bombardier up there, and he'd use it. So I guess if there had been four bombardiers up there getting their practice runs off, all four of you would have been using that same old wooden chewed-up nipple.

Marcello: I'm even surprised that the B-18's even got up that high. I

didn't realize they got that high.

Bruce: I would say a maximum of 18,000. Now I don't remember for sure.

Marcello: With what frequency during your training as a bombardier would you be going up and actually dropping those dummy bombs?

Bruce: I would say it was weekly. We, if I'm not mistaken, had the second best record in the Air Force, I've been told, on our practice runs and bombs and all that out close. The first was supposed to have been an outfit in Panama. Whether that's so or not, I don't know. But we did a lot of bomb dropping.

Marcello: Did you ever do any practice against moving targets such as ships?

Bruce: Yes, the USS Utah, a battleship that had a bunch of wooden planks on top of it. It had taken off, and you'd bomb it. It was sort of nice to see. You'd hit it, and, boy, that big ol' splash of water...you'd fill your bombs with water then instead of sand. Also, we had some night bombing missions. That was sort of hairy because there was always some people up there not at the right altitude they should been at. That, to me, was the only moving legitimate targets. Every once in awhile there'd be a Japanese fishing boat out in your target area, so just for the hell of it, you'd make a run, drop a bomb on him. Boy, when that practice bomb hit, he dug right out; he didn't stay around to find out if he was in his water or your water.

Marcello: You mentioned awhile ago how much flying time you would get a month,

and I can't recall what you mentioned, Did you say thirty-five hours?

Bruce: A lot of times, with thirty-five hours, I'd be first or second man in the squadron in flying hours. We normally flew with a full crew. Even though you were going up there and you knew you weren't going to be in combat, you'd still have a full load aboard. I guess it was just in case. Of course, there were some people in flying status who flew four hours a month, and they'd get their pay for that. That would be your line chief or assistant line chief or something.

Marcello: I assume, then, that you were getting flight pay for this kind of work.

Bruce: Yes.

Marcello: So your income was being supplemented then.

Bruce: As I said, I made $42 a month as a corporal plus $21 a month for flying pay. Back then, you got 50 percent of your base pay for flying.

Marcello: So you were in "high cotton" compared to some of the other troops.

Bruce: Believe me! I helped support my mother, and I always sent here money every month, which didn't leave a lot to fool around with. When I made buck sergeant, the pay was still down. That was before the "Slave Act" really took effect. That was $90 plus $45 dollars for flying pay, and that was good money then.

Marcello: Now what particular act are you talking about?

Bruce: The "Slave Act," when the Draft Act of 1940 was passed.

Marcello: Is that a nickname that was given to that piece of legislation?

Bruce: Right. Those people, when they came in, they immediately came across with a pay raise. I don't remember what it was, but I do know that as a first lieutenant flying combat overseas, my best pay, I think, was $166 a month, so they weren't paying us by the wheelbarrowful.

Marcello: What kind of work were you doing when you weren't actually training as a bombardier? In other words, would you be going up in that B-18 and performing other functions in addition to those of being a bombardier?

Bruce: No. Really, like a person in prison, you had a lot of time to kill. Well, I knew one of the propeller men real well, Don Kundinger, so I used to go help him, and I could pull and replace a propeller. I used to work with the engine men just to have something to do, really. I might have been more in the way than I was good, with the exception of helping Don. Then as bombardiers we didn't maintain the bombsights. We took them down to the Hawaiian Air Depot for the maintenance on them and adjustment. See, the bombsight...to offset the movement of the airplane, it's just like any instrument on the airplane--gyroscopically balanced--but if your gyroscope's out of balance, your bombsight's way off. So you had to keep tab of how many hours, and then you'd pull them for an overhaul just like you would an airplane engine or something.

Marcello: You mentioned the Norden bombsight. I assume that at that early stage, it was still considered a super-secret weapon.

Bruce: Oh, yes, it was. Before we were taken into the school, the FBI screened our references, and I know that they came around to my hometown and asked some people some questions: how long had they known me, and had I ever been in trouble. Fortunately, They always asked the right people, I guess, because things went all right.

Marcello: What kind of security precautions were taken with that bombsight once you returned to base?

Bruce: Well, as bombardiers, if you want to call us that, we always carried a .45-caliber pistol. I always managed to qualify with it, but, really, that's the hardest thing to shoot with any accuracy than any gun I ever saw. You'd have trouble hitting the inside of a phone booth from inside, but we would always carry the .45-caliber pistol.

The first thing you did was take the bombsight out of the airplane and take it to a bombsight vault between the hangars, and we had an around-the-clock guard on it.

Marcello: Awhile ago, when I was asking you if you performed any other functions in addition to those of being a bombardier, I was wondering if you perhaps participated in any of the other missions that the B-18's would undertake. For example, were they also used for long-range reconnaissance and things of that nature?

Bruce: Well, after the war started, yes, we started using them. We would go out,..I believe we carried one bomb in one bomb bay tank, and it seems like to me we went out something like 300 miles

at an angle and then a hundred-mile leg of a "Y" and then come back in. Roughly, it was an eight-hour flight.

Marcello: But that sort of thing wasn't done before the war to your knowledge?

Bruce: No. No, we'd fly to the other islands or have a practice of formation flying, which, unless you had a formation bomb drop, I would do nothing but ride and sweat when the wingtips got a little closer together than I thought they should. But we did a lot of formation flying and group flying at the time. In the one group, there were four squadrons of us.

Marcello: It is true, though, is it not, that one of the functions of the Air Corps there on the Hawaiian Islands was to provide long-range reconnaissance for the Navy?

Bruce: No, I believe that it was the other way around.

Marcello: Short-range reconnaissance or what?

Bruce: Maybe short-range. They had what we always referred to as a PBY patrol that was supposed to be out and patrol daily. I have heard and read someplace that December 7 was one of the days that it did not get out. Another thing, a misconception so many people have, is that General Short, the Army man, was the commander of the whole Hawaiian Islands. But Kimmel wouldn't.., whatever Short told him went in one ear and out the other. Kimmel did it the way he wanted to do it. I have worked for the Navy as a civilian, and I have found them to be extremely hard to work with. They're so loaded with tradition and protecting their own

officers that even if there's something obviously wrong, they're not going to change it. They had made up their mind that they knew more about what was going on out there. Maybe we should have had them out, but we did not have daily patrols. We would have had to have been ordered out, you know, to do that. It shouldn't have taken any great amount of talent to have found the Japanese fleet that morning.

Marcello: What was the food like there at Hickam Field?

Bruce: Oh, not bad, really. We had a mess sergeant...well, we had a number of them assigned to each squadron, so a squadron could pick up en masse and move. I think they allocated 90¢ a day per man for rations. They fed you pretty well. Your big meal was lunch, and that's when all the married men would come in and eat. I think it cost them 30¢ for their entire lunch. Once you got the consolidated mess...and that consolidated mess was supposed to have been the first they had opened and tried. They got some of the kinds ironed out of it. I don't think you could complain about it, and oftentimes it wasn't a legitmate complaint.

Marcello: When did you move into the new barracks?

Bruce: That would have been in late 1940, maybe early 1941.

Marcello: Describe what they were like on the inside.

Bruce: Well, they were nice. The center part was where your mess hall was. They were three floors high. Of course, there were no basements in Hawaii. There were six spokes out, and then the other side, which had no spokes out, is where your service came in,

like, supplies for the mess hall and things like that. The three floors were of linoleum, and naturally we kept them waxed. The light plate switches were brass, and you kept those shined. We had venetian blinds, no windows, so sometimes when you'd get a good wind and a good rain, it'd blow in. On Christmas of 1940, we had a cold snap--I had no idea how cold it got--nothing real bad. The wind would come up, and, boy, it was miserable in those barracks, and those venetian blinds were chattering like a bunch of skeletons, anyway. It was horrible living. Then you had screens, of course, because there are mosquitoes over there--plenty of them.

Marcello: Now were you actually living in the regular bay as such, or did you have enough rank by that time that you perhaps got one of the smaller rooms.

Bruce: No, I always was a little late there. When I made corporal, they made a bay chief out of me. Well, by then they had staff sergeants living out there, but they didn't do any of the work. The corporal had to make out the duty detail and everything. Well, then they opened up some quarters for noncoms, top three grades. Well, they moved out, and I moved on the other side of this spoke. I was buck sergeant then, and I was a bay chief over there. From that spoke, I could stand up and look right over into Pearl Harbor, and that's how I realized we were under attack after the first explosion. The second airplane had a big sun on it.

Marcello: So you were up on the third floor of this barracks, then?

Bruce: Second,

Marcello: You were on the second floor,

Bruce: Right,

Marcello: And we have to remember that Hickam was just adjacent to Pearl Harbor,

Bruce: Right, a fence between us,

Marcello: And from your barracks, you did have a good view of the harbor,

Bruce: Not a real good view. You could see, you know, masts and things like that. But the second...I would say a torpedo bomber came in at an angle--it looked like to me--down the channel, and you got a good look at it. They made no attempt to camouflage it, of course,

Marcello: In general, as you look back on life in that Army Air Corps before Pearl Harbor, do you think you had made the right choice? Do you think you made a good decision to go into the service?

Bruce: I have never regretted what I have done or what I've seen, and I've done a lot of traveling; but there are many other fields of endeavor if I'd have gotten in that would have paid me way more money. I'm not bragging, but if I'd have stayed in as a pilot, I'd had it made. I came back to pilot school and went to the 8th Air Force and flew a tour over there as a pilot and had a chance to stay in operations, which was automatic promotions. But I always wanted to go to Brazil, and I still did; and when I got out, I went to school and went down to work for the Brazilian Air Force for fourteen months,

Marcello: But in general, you were pretty happy in that Air Force at that time?

Bruce: Yes. See, a lot of people then were,,,like I say, we were fashionable, very fashionable, when it was fashionable to be poor, There were so many of us who were poor then that it was no big disgrace, There were a heck of a lot of us who had started to school who just had to quit because of money problems or,,,now, as I look back, I realize that I was not cut out to be a penologist or a social worker, But, like, my buddy here, who's a veternarian, he had started to school, and he ran out of money,too, So when he got out of the service, he went on back to school and finished his work, You could always have gotten a job, you know, once the war started, paying good money if you could have gotten out, That was an impossibility.

I encourage anyone,,,well, I believe that there ought to be a law that everyone has to serve his country, not particularly in the military but in some way or fashion, like, the old CCC or social work or,,,well, we've just got such a darn good thing going here that so many people don't realize it,

There's one thing I would like to point out that so many people have asked me on the outside and you haven't: "Did you realize that Pearl Harbor was going to happen?" It wouldn't take a damn fool to realize things had to happen if you read the paper, We were putting the squeeze to them on their importing to us and trying to export to them at outlandish prices, Plus, I had been

told by Cecil L. Faulkner, who was a pilot, got killed...I was his bombardier. He told me...I talked to him about getting on one of these crew going to the Philippines. I figured I might as well see that part of the world while I could. He said, "Well, John, don't worry." He said, "You won't eat Christmas dinner here at Hickam, anyway." Well, you figure the difference between Christmas and December 7 is not too many days--eighteen, I think.

Evidently, we were getting ready to move some more airplanes. I know I had already shipped...I had a record collection and pictures, and I'd already sent all of that home, as many people had. Well, we started getting newer airplanes, which we needed, so if we got them, we also knew that the Japanese must be getting them. When the war started, it suddenly occurred to me that the pictures I'd been studying as a bombardier of what the Japanese had to throw at you were certainly outdated--some of these old airplanes with nonretractable landing gears and all. Really, when the war started, the Zero was a fine airplane. If they had been able to keep coming up with newer models and all, it would have been maybe...well, it wouldn't have been a different story, but it would have taken a lot more American lives.

Marcello: I was, incidentally, going to ask you a question along those lines. That's getting a little ahead of our story, and we'll probably be coming back and talking about that in a moment.

fried frog legs was 90¢. Your money went a little farther,

Then, of course, they had all kinds of cathouses there. The funny part of it was that when we first got that raise after the "Slave Act," the cathouses down there...I think the price was $3, and you were allowed all of three minutes, so you better have your mind made up. Anyway, we got this pay raise, and it didn't amount to a heck of a lot, but as soon as it came through, the cathouses raised their prices. You can check back, and I believe the name of the newspaper was the Honolulu Advertiser, and they had an editorial about what was the matter. Weren't those girls down there patriotic? (Chuckle) They dropped their prices back to the previous price.

Of course, we also played softball. I played basketball. We had no football, but we could go to Schofield Barracks, and we saw up there, shortly before the war, the University of Hawaii play one of the Schofield teams. Some guy who got out of the "nut" ward ran straight down the field, and he didn't even have a tattoo on. Boy, I'll tell you, that's the most shocking thing I've ever seen in my life--just sitting there at a football game, and here comes a stark-raving man down. He circles under the goal post, starts back up, jumps on the goal post, and about that time the MP's grab him.

Marcello: I understand that boxing was a pretty popular sport at that time, also,

Bruce: No, not in the Air Force, not in the Air Force.

Marcello: The boxing smokers were not so numerous or perhaps so well attended as they were in the other branches then?

Bruce: Well, we didn't even have a boxing team to my knowledge. Now a kid who went over with us was one of the best boxers in his weight class that I ever saw. He didn't have a high school education, and he boxed for the Army. Some fellow got him transferred to Wheeler Field, so maybe Wheeler Field had a boxing team. But Waldron boxed for some team there. I know he had three fights there at Fort Slocum where I told you we were. He was in the ring less than three minutes. He knew what he was doing, and he never came back from Australia. He died just recently.

Marcello: This Waldron?

Bruce: Waldron. He has a brother who's falling along the same...he had become an "alkie" down there, I guess. He had a brother who is the same now. His father had been, which gives a little credence to this that maybe alcoholism is a bit inherited instead of all environmental.

Marcello: On a weekend, either on Hickam Field or in Honolulu, would there be a lot of drinking and carousing and this sort of thing?

Bruce: Oh, in Honolulu, yes. See, the sailors, up until this pay scale was equalized, they drew more money. Then, here again, say, if they had been out to sea for,say,ninety days, well, they had some money saved up, and they could come in and really throw a

"wing-ding." At the time, we were only being paid once a month, and they were being paid twice a month. Well, anyway, on that once a month payday, on a weekend, that was a wild, wild place because everyone had money then. Like they often said, "The smart soldier would take his few dollars and go buy himself a few bags of Bull Durham, a few hard packs of cigarettes, shaving blades and shaving soap, and then gamble the rest. He'd try to get a wad so he could go to town. So if he lost it, he had another month to wait."

Marcello: You mentioned gambling. How prevalent was gambling at Hickam Field?

Bruce: Oh, we always had gambling. Our squadron tried to keep their gambling within the squad room, in the day room, and as I remember, they took a cut of...when the pot got so big, they'd pull a quarter or something like that, and they'd pay for squadron parties and things like that. By having no outsiders, you eliminated a lot of possibilities of cheating and fighting. I used to play blackjack quite a lot, and I haven't figured out yet...someone marked the cards, and a buddy of mine figured out how to read them (chuckle). He tapped me off but good; I mean, he was just smart enough that he figured out that whoever had marked them, the way he'd marked them, and he could read whether to hit or stand. When he got the deal, he made a killing.

Marcello: Were these high stakes games or not?

Bruce: Not the ones we were in. The old story--I can't verify this--was

that up at Schofield Barracks, there were many, many people,.. that was our biggest installation of manpower until just before the war, But it'd get down to two or three people, and they'd gamble to see who made it, It was the same two or three,

One of the ways of making money was the 20 percent for..,let's see,..what was it? Five for four, I'd give you four dollars now, and you'd give me five dollars payday--20 percent interest. Legally, that's usury, Today that's a damn good interest rate (chuckle), But there was quite a lot of that going on.

Marcello: I know there was also a place on Hickam Field that's sometimes referred to as the Snake Ranch, Are you familiar with it?

Bruce: Oh, hell, yes,

Marcello: What was the Snake Ranch and describe it,

Bruce; It was an old wooden beer hall that I remember,..well, I remember they had Miller, Budweiser, and probably Pabst in cans in barrels of ice. They were two for a quarter, and then they had Primo, which was made locally over there then and was owned by Schlitz Brewery later on, was a dime, They had a few snacks, like, dried, salted shrimp, I think maybe you could get a little package of crackers and fresh shrimp. Like I say, it was just an old barracks sort of thing, wooden floor, and you'd sit in there, and if you wanted a few beers, they'd open after duty hours and close at something like nine-thirty or ten o'clock. See, lights went out in the barracks at nine-thirty, and you wouldn't even

light a cigarette after nine-thirty. Then you got up at five-thirty, which is a bit ridiculous, because at five-thirty all you did was clean up, eat breakfast, police up your own personal area, and then wait around there until eight o'clock for the duty call. That was the tradition, so that's the way we did it.

Marcello: We were talking about your recreational activities and so on, and at one point you mentioned a record collection and a photo collection?

Bruce: Yes.

Marcello: These were both pretty big pasttimes for people at that time, were they not?

Bruce: Right.

Marcello: I know I've talked a lot of servicemen, and it seems that they had photo albums in particular.

Bruce: Yes.

Marcello: I'm still amazed when they tell me that they could actually rent a camera down in Honolulu for your picture-taking.

Bruce: Well, I didn't know that. My sister back in Indiana had given me a camera, is what I did mine with, and, of course, phonograph records were 78 rpm. They were 35¢ for Decca and Bluebird and 50¢ for Columbia and RCA. So it depended on what artists you wanted to hear, what you paid for your records. But after they got a little moisture and all, they warped and all, and everytime I'd break one, it'd break my heart a little, so I gave the whole

collection away.

Marcello: So did you or did you not send records home? I think awhile ago you mentioned that you had sent a bunch of your records home.

Bruce: Yes. I had a little record player which would sit in the bottom of my wall locker, and then I had, oh, I would say, maybe twenty records. Then I'd play it and get a few too many, and I'd get a box from one of the record companies. Parcel post didn't cost too much, and I'd just ship them on home.

Marcello: What was your favorite music?

Bruce: I think Jimmy Dorsey was my favorite band at the time. I, of course, liked Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey, also. I never had cared for hillbilly music, and it hadn't made the big comeback that it has today.

Marcello: Now as one gets closer and closer to December 7, 1941, and as conditions between the two countries continued to worsen, what changes, if any, could you detect in your training routine or in the general routine there at Hickam Field?

Bruce: Well, the general thing I could see was--it looked like to me--that they were trying to put you into a crew situation, where the same group would fly together all the time instead of you going out to an airplane, where you'd never seen the pilot or the copilot before, or you'd never flown with them before--you know, such things. I do believe we started flying a little more. I'm not sure of that. But any big, big things, I wouldn't

say I'd noticed.

Marcello: Did the base perhaps seem to be more obsessed more than usual with the possibility of sabotage being committed? In other words, the islands, as we know, had quite a few people of Japanese descent, and I think most authorities considered them a possible threat as saboteurs. So were any precautions taken to protect the planes and things of that nature in those days leading up to the attack?

Bruce: No, We had had what we called the guard detail...I told you before we had our bombsight vault there. We had that. Then we had a guard detail that was picked sort of at random, a roster sort of deal, and then you'd walk around the airplanes. You'd get that ever so often. The airplanes, naturally, were parked in fairly close to the hangars, and it wasn't too much trouble that...I guess one guy was supposed to keep up a patrol around six airplanes. You had an officer-of-the-guard and a sergeant-of-the-guard.

Marcello: Was it standard operating procedure to line the planes up there in a nice, neat rows?

Bruce: Oh, yes. Well, really, it's the only sensible way if you are limited for space. Now another thing that I read in this book recently--that was wrong--was that all the airplanes were clustered right there together. Now we had airplanes across the runway at Hickam after they had hit on the 7th. I don't know whether it was negligence that we had not pulled them back across the way or

or what, but there were airplanes across the runway. We did not have revetments to put them in.

Marcello: I guess that it was much easier to fuel those planes, too, was it not, when they were lined up in rows.

Bruce: Well, we didn't have central point fueling. That was all just like servicing an automobile. You'd get up on the wing and put it in the top of the wing and put the cap back on. If you had a lot of airplanes to service, that would be more sensible. Now at Weaver Field, they had them clustered in clusters of three, I understand. Wingtip to wingtip would be two fighters and then one towed in with the tail sort of up by the cockpits, so that was a nice, pretty thing, I guess, for the Japs to see.

Marcello: By this time, had most of the B-18's been replaced by the B-17's?

Bruce: Oh, no. At the time of the attack, we had one B-17, I believe. We had started sending...they took the 14th Bombardment Squadron from the 11th Group. Every squadron on the base gave them a few maintenance people plus one airplane and crew to go over, and that was the backbone of the 18th Bomb Group that you've heard so much about. It started out as the 14th Provisional Group. We might have had five B-18's at the time, but we did not have many B-17's.

Marcello: At that time, that is, prior to December 7, when you thought of a typical Japanese, what kind of person did you conjure up in your own mind? Again, I'm taking about that period prior to the attack.

Bruce: I would say he was a small person with glasses. I wasn't at the

time racially conscious of the fact,..well, it's obvious that they're yellow, but it didn't bother me. I did know that they were small. I had never, for some strange reason, given it much thought about their capabilities as pilots and all, I'd read an old, old article by Davenport, I think, in the Post or Collier's, "Impregnable Pearl Harbor," which was one of the most misleading articles ever written, I think. Then we had all read, I'm sure, that the Japanese had inferior eyesight--is why they wore glasses, I don't think we ever figured it out that it was because they examined their eyes more thoroughly than they did here in the States, is why more of them wore glasses,

Marcello: Now as relations between the two countries continued to worsen, did you and your buddies, when you got around in bull sessions, ever talk about the possibility of the Japanese hitting Pearl Harbor, or hitting the Hawaiian islands, I guess I should say, Did that ever come up?

Bruce: No, it seemed like to me we were always the attackers. I never will forget, when I went through armament school, a fellow by the name of Icenogle. He was an instructor. He was talking... teaching some phase of armament training. He said if the Japanese ever gave us any real trouble, all we would have to do is to load all these B-18's with bombs, and we could bomb those islands into oblivion. Well, I waited until I got home and got to the library or something, and it didn't take much

gumption to figure out there was no way in Christ's world you could reach there with a B-18 and that the Japanese islands were pretty big. But I didn't make a big point of it, although I did see then that logistically we were a long way apart.

Marcello: Okay, this takes us into that weekend of December 7, 1941, and I guess we need to go into this period in a great more detail. Let me ask you this, I should have asked you this awhile ago: did they occur with more frequency than perhaps they had formerly?

Bruce: I don't, to my knowledge, remember an alert. Now, you know, living on the base, not having to go through or in and out of the gate, I could have missed it. But the fact of living in the barracks right there close to the flight line, there was no problem having men on alert because you were right there at their beck and call. Now I can't think of any alerts we ever had, not even a weather alert, really.

Marcello: So from what you said there, I gather it was more or less a routine procedure right up to the attack itself.

Bruce: Well, no, Alerts or maneuvers or whatever you want to call it, we had been on one. We went off of it,,,oh, I don't even remember when the first one was. But we had been on another one up until December 6. See, our work week was five days of work, and then every Saturday morning you would have a personnel inspection, a parade, and then you'd work for a couple of hours

until noon, and then you were off for a day-and-a-half.

Well, this particular Saturday, December 6, we'd been on the alert that week. I guess that is what you'd call an alert. To my knowledge, you couldn't get off the base, but I hadn't tried. We had our regular inspection and everything else, and then they said, "Well, you can go to town." That was on December 6, and I guess maybe the week or maybe even two weeks before you hadn't been able to, which was no problem. So "Scrappy" O'Brien and I went into town Saturday night, December 6.

Marcello: What took place during that alert that was called off that Saturday morning? How did that alert affect you?

Bruce: I believe we did some more of the same training flights that we'd done before--with the practice bombs--and we also, you know, would practice air-to-air gunnery. Another bomber would tow a sleeve which you'd shoot at. The artillery would have a bomber tow a sleeve across there and shoot at it.

Marcello: Okay, you mentioned that when the alert was called off, you and a buddy went into town that Saturday. What did you do in town?

Bruce: Oh, I knew a girl, and her family was in from the big island, so we met with them and had a few drinks and dinner. Then we went back to the base. We were going to see them later on, but we got in, I'd say, roughly at midnight or something.

Marcello: Were you in pretty good shape when you were back aboard base?

Bruce: You mean drunk alcohol-wise?

Marcello: Yes. What kind of shape were you in?

Bruce: Oh, all right, pretty good shape. We'd had, like I say, a few drinks, but we were not on our hands and knees or anything like that. "Scrappy" never was too much of a drinker, anyway.

Marcello: How difficult or easy was it to get an overnight pass and stay in Honolulu, let's say, on a Saturday night?

Bruce: It wasn't hard once you had...I think it was three months. You could get a Class A pass, which you could come and go at will. There was just one of those things--it was all right until you abused it, and then they made you sorry about it. A number of the fellows had what was called "shack rats" in town who they'd live with. Yet for some strange reason...well, not strange either, because, say, in an alert like you just mentioned, they'd have to maintain a bunk and their space out in the barracks; so here they'd come trudging in about six o'clock or six-thirty or seven o'clock in the morning and sweep up and knock the dust off their shoes and tighten up their blankets, and they'd be ready for another day.

Marcello: And these women were called "shack rats?"

Bruce: Shack rats.

Marcello: On a weekend, and you would have to estimate this, what percentage of personnel might be on the base? Or would there be a constant movement on and off, and you couldn't really tell how many were on the base?

Bruce: I would say roughly 75 to 90 percent would be on the base. Now,

see, a lot of times we could get what today would be called a Special Services bus, and we had a real rough beach named Nanakuli, which is off-limits now because it's so rough. But we used to get one of those busses, and the motorpool, if someone had a license, they'd let him drive it, and the mess hall would fix you a lunch, and you'd go there for the day. Of course, you couldn't take any beer or anything on a GI vehicle, but you'd go out there and swim or go to some of the other places. Special Services would have maybe a tour to the Pali that'd take maybe three or four hours. Then you'd come back. There just wasn't...most of the people didn't have anyplace to go on the weekend, really.

Marcello: Okay, let's talk about that morning of December 7, 1941. Did you have to get up at a particular time on a Sunday morning, or could you stay in the sack if you wanted to?

Bruce: You could stay in the sack. Like I say, "Scrappy" and I had been out, and I heard this first airplane...I've always been pretty much of a light sleeper, and I looked at my watch. I figured then, "Well, heck. I'll just stay here and sleep instead of getting up and going on down to the mess hall for breakfast." I said to myself, "There's that damn crazy Navy up there flying!"

Marcello: What made you think it was the Navy?

Bruce: Well, because that silly bunch of bastards, you never knew when they were going to be airborne or what they were going to do, and here it was, Sunday morning, and I knew none of us would have

taken off; and you could tell it was a single-engine airplane, for another thing. And Wheeler Field, their airplanes seldom ever came down to our place.

Marcello: About what time was this when you glanced at your watch?

Bruce: Let's see, it started at seven fifty-five, so this must have been roughly at seven forty-five because I think the mess hall closed at eight o'clock. I figured, if I hustled, I could get down there for chow.

Marcello: Okay, so you hear these airplanes, and you look at your watch, and the time's about seven forty-five. Pick up the story from that point.

Bruce: All right. Then I hear this airplane dive, and I figure, "Well, he's making a practice dive at the harbor."

Marcello: And this was common for the Navy to do this.

Bruce: Yes, to make these dives. You know, an airplane has got its own sound--the propellers changing pitch and everything.

Anyway, he came down, and then I hear this explosion. I said to myself, "Boy, there's one of them that didn't make it out!" I got up, and I just walked across. See, there was one row of bunks between me and the screen. I looked over there, and then here comes a second one in, and I saw the rising sun on it. So I hollered, "We're under attack! Get up!" or something. I wish I could think of something heroic to say, but I can't. But I did holler.

Marcello: What was the reaction of the rest of the people in the bay?

Bruce; Well, they sort of didn't believe it either: "What are you talking about?" Then you could see over there, you know, the smoke starting to billow up already, and they were about as much shocked,,,and actually, we just sort of milled around and,,,well, I put on fatigues, regular fatigue uniform, because that was the easiest thing to get into, I checked on "Scrappy" O'Brien; he lived on the other side. Don Kinsell, my other close buddy, was in the hospital having his tonsils taken out. They made a corpsman out of him, then, when the injured started coming in. So we fooled around, went down to the first floor, and the guy who had been in charge of quarters was a fellow by the name of Jack Fox. Well, then they were strafing and bombing at will anything and everything. And ol' Jack said to me, "Well, John..." It's sort of unusual to call people in the old military by their first name. He said, Well, John, do you think they'll finally declare war now?" I said, "Well, I suppose so." I didn't hear until later that he had stepped outside the barracks, and a fragmentation bomb took off his head, because I went back through the barracks and went on over to flight line.

Marcello: About how much time had elapsed from the time you initially saw the first Japanese plane until you got over to the flight line?

Bruce: I would say thirty to forty-five minutes.

Marcello: That much time elapsed?

Bruce; Yes.

Marcello: What were you doing in the meantime? Simply milling around?

Bruce; Right. Like headless sheep, I guess (chuckle).

Marcello: Were you waiting for orders or instructions? Was there confusion? Chaos?

Bruce; Well, you had nothing to do anything with. This shows how smart I am. I had the gas mask and a helmet issued to me, which I sure wished I had with me, but I'd left that locked up over in the bombsight room, and I couldn't get in there. I didn't have the key. Well, if they'd gassed that last time, they'd have wiped out the islands because most people had put the gas mask someplace and didn't know where in the heck it was.

Marcello: In the meantime, are you watching what is taking place, or are you inside and just hearing things?

Bruce; You're watching. See, the wings come out like this (gesture), and you could stand out here (gesture), and over here was Pearl Harbor, and then back over here (gesture) the flight line, and every once in awhile, here'd come an airplane across strafing the parade ground. The barracks were hit a number of times. See, one hit right in the mess hall. When the one hit in the mess hall, I was already over at the flight line.

Marcello: Describe what you saw occurring out on the flight line when you were still in the barracks.

Bruce; Well, I didn't see anything, really, because we were at the north end of the barracks, and on the flight line...from where

we were, all we could see was the control tower.

That first B-17 that was flying in from the States was hit on the ground. The Japs dropped--it looked like--an incendiary bomb right in the radio compartment. That's the one that is always showed sitting burned. I never saw that happen, but it was there.

Marcello: From what direction were those Japanese planes coming? Do you know?

Bruce: The first one I saw seemed to come from sort of up the Pearl Harbor channel from the Honolulu end, in that way, instead of coming over the mountains and drop in which, it seemed like, would have been more or less logical.

Marcello: How low were these planes flying?

Bruce: Oh, gosh darn, for a torpedo plane, that one that I recognized, I would estimate it must have been not over 500 feet, maybe down to as low as 250 feet. We were right close to the Pearl Harbor channel there, and the channel opened up right into Pearl Harbor.

Marcello: Now was the attack still going on when you went from the barracks over to the flight line?

Bruce: Yes.

Marcello: Describe your journey from the barracks to the flight line.

Bruce: Well, we went through the barracks as far as we could. Then when we got out there, we ran over to the hangars. We were in the second...the hangars were...there were eight of them, in

pairs, and we were in the second pair. So we ran over there, and on the way over, I recoginized a kid who was a "pencil pusher" in a different outfit, and a concussion must have gotten him because his hair was just as perfectly parted back here (gesture)--he was lying on his face--and not a bit of blood.

Someone was with me, and I can't remember who now. It might have been O'Brien. We went on over to the hangar then and went to the bombsight room. Well, naturally, it was still closed. We didn't have any bombsights; we didn't even know if we had any airplanes to go.

Marcello: Your reaction was, I suppose, to try and get those airplanes in the air. That's why you went over there.

Bruce: Right. It was some more milling around, really, and as I mentioned, this fellow's name, Cecil Faulkner, before...we were in the operations side--that was toward the landing strip--and some Zeros, I guess they were, came down through there. He made the comment, "With a P-36 you could shoot them all down!" But there we were, and still not knowing what was going on.

I had no idea how long that first attack lasted, but they had everything their own way. There was absolutely no opposition, other than maybe here or there was a ground-operated machine gun. I think the Navy finally started getting off some good ammunition, but part of it fell out of the city of Honolulu.

Marcello: What was the fate of your airplane?

Bruce: See, we didn't have an airplane. There were more crews than there were airplanes. Number 3917, the airplane we flew, was across the way, so it wasn't hurt at all. Waldron was a captain then, and he eventually retired as a two-star general. He went as pilot, Hal Breck, who's also here, was a copilot, _____, who has since died, was the radio operator. I was a bombardier. The navigator, who got killed, was General Tinker.

We went out and flew in the area, I'm sure, they told us to fly in. By then, clouds had lowered because I think we were in the same area they were--maybe not out far enough. We never spotted anything because, if we had, I wouldn't be here talking to you. I never will forget, though,,,this isn't heroism, but we were at 2,000 feet looking for them, and Waldron came down, and he said, "John, if we find them, we'll drop down to 1,800 feet to bomb. Set up everything for 130 miles per hour, and then we'll try to get back up in the clouds." So that shows the speed and all that we were trying to operate at then.

Marcello: Could you detect a first wave and a second wave or a first attack and a second attack?

Bruce: Oh, certainly. The second attack, I would say, was more or less precision bombing because they were up high and came along. They bent--and it's still bent--the door on the bombsight room. We didn't even know enough--this shows our preparedness--to keep windows open and doors open. We closed them. Well, hell, the concussion bent that door.

And it was the same way when we got shot down at Midway. At the time we were still new enough at this business that they hadn't taught us to put your back where you're going to get the impact, and that's how I broke a vertabrae in my back. I sat around back there in the radio room when we hit the "drink," and we were lucky to do as well as we did. But if we'd been better instructed, or if anyone had known--might have been a better term--it would have been a lot better.

Marcello: All this time, I assume that nobody was really giving any orders. Nobody was taking charge.

Bruce: Not to my knowledge. They came out, and it was just a volunteer crew that went up on that first one.

Marcello: What kind of armament did that bomber have when you finally took off?

Bruce: Well, we had a kid from the 72nd, and his last name was Mills. He had on .30-caliber up in front of the bombardier, and I think there was one .30-caliber in each waist window. That was the size of it.

Marcello: You had no bombs?

Bruce: Oh, yes, we had,..was it two or four 500-pound bombs? They would have been nice to drop in the middle of a carrier. But the B-18 was getting pretty old, and it didn't carry much.

Marcello: When did that plane get into the air?

Bruce: I can't tell you that. I would say, roughly, "noonish."

Marcello: So it was quite a long time after the attack was actually over then...

several hours after the attack was over?

Bruce: Yes. A couple of B-17's had tried to take off. One of them tried to taxi out, and there was a chock there, and he ate enough power to finally tip over and grind the edges of the propellers off, so that took care of that one. That wasn't our squadron, by the way.

Marcello: Speaking of B-17's do you recall that flight of B-17's coming in from the States?

Bruce: Yes.

Marcello: Describe what you saw from their activity.

Bruce: Well, see, I'd never seen a B-17E before. That's the one with the big tail. They were coming over Kamehameha, the fort, right there. You'd circle over Kamehameha and come into Hickam. The poor ol' artillery boys had never seen them, either, so, hell, they were just cutting loose on them. They were shooting at them, so they had a rough row to hoe. I think it was a mixed flight--B-17E's, some C's maybe, and D's.

Marcello: Do you remember the Japanese planes swooping down on these B-17's?

Bruce: No, I don't. Really, I don't think that many came in that day. I don't know of a number, really. One landed and then off the runway of it at Bellows Field, I know, and one landed someplace else.

Marcello: When did you come back in that evening?

Bruce: Oh, I would say four-thirty maybe.

Marcello: So you were out several hours, then, looking for the Japanese?

Bruce: Right.

Marcello: Were many other planes with your plane?

Bruce: No.

Marcello: That always reminds me of a dog chasing an eighteen-wheel truck. What are you going to do if you catch it?

Bruce: That's exactly what it would have been like. If we'd have found anything, I wouldn't be here.

Marcello: What did you do that evening when you came back?

Bruce: I looked for someplace to eat. See, the mess hall was damaged, and I saw a place there that had a field kitchen set up. I had a mess kit,,,they had also issued us mess kits someplace. I guess it was when we got the gas mask. In going through the line, this guy said, "What outfit are you in?" I said, "Well, what outfit are you feeding?" He said, "The 72nd." So I said, "That's the one I'm in!" (Chuckle) I never will forget--they had ham!

Marcello: How would you describe the emotions that you had through this whole attack?

Bruce: Surprise.

Marcello: How about fear?

Bruce: I would describe myself as a born coward, really, but at the same time, I'm afraid to let the fear overcome me. Like many times in the 8th Air Force, I'd say, "Once I get this bomber on the ground, I'm going to tell them they can jam it! I'm finished flying!" Then I'd get to think, "Well, no, that's not the thing to do. Everyone else is flying."

Marcello: Could you hear very much shooting that night?

Bruce: Oh, yes, anything that moved. There was some poor Navy airplane that came up through the channel (chuckle), and I think every boat that was still afloat cut loose.

Marcello: Did you see that?

Bruce: Yes, it was a pretty display.

Marcello: What did you do the days immediately following the attack?

Bruce: A few days later, we moved to Waimanalo. They broke up into B-17's and B-18's. So I went to Waimanalo. I was a junior bombardier on the field, so naturally I got them lovely ol' B-18's instead of the B-17's.

Marcello: I've never heard of Waimanalo.

Bruce: Bellows Field.

Marcello: Oh, you'd be over at Bellows Field.

Bruce: Yes, the city was Waimanalo. We had just a crash runway there.

Marcello: I'd assume that in the meantime you were probably trying to cannibalize a lot of parts to put a few airplanes together, were you not?

Bruce: Right. They did that, and I thought that, considering the training of most of them, they did an outstanding job.

Marcello: When did you finally leave the Hawaiian Islands?

Bruce: It was toward the end of 1942 when I came back to flying school. See, I was in the 72nd, and they were getting ready to go on down to the Solomons and New Guinea.

Marcello: Awhile ago you mentioned that you participated in the Battle of

Midway, and I assume that you were flying out of Hawaii?

Bruce: Yes, We went over from Bellows Field to Midway and gassed up and went out on attack.

Marcello: What kind of plane were you flying then?

Bruce: B-17's,

Marcello: Well, Mr. Bruce, that's probably a good place to end this interview. In one sense, it always leaves me a little frustrated because you guys have so many experiences after Pearl Harbor, and I feel like I ought to get those, too. But this project is concerned only with Pearl Harbor. I want to thank you very much for having participating. You've said a lot of very interesting and important things.

Bruce: Well, thanks, Ron, and I'll see you around.