

# National Park Service (NPS)

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Charles Moore  
July 19, 1994

Interview conducted by Daniel Martinez  
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Interviewee: Charles Moore

Military Rank: E Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division, USMC

Interviewer: Daniel Martinez

Hilton Hotel, Guam

Date: July 19<sup>th</sup>, 1994

—00:00:03

AUDIO DESCRIPTION:

Charles Moore is a Caucasian American man with glasses a gold chain necklace, wearing a salmon button-up shirt.

Q: The following oral history interview was conducted at the Hilton Hotel in Guam on July 19<sup>th</sup> 1994 at approximately 2:00 pm. The subject is Mr. Charles G. Moore, who served in E Company, 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Regiment, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division during World War II. My name is Daniel Martinez; I am a historian for the National Park Service at the USS Arizona Memorial in Hawaii. This interview is being made by the National Park Service War in the Pacific National Historical Park in conjunction with KGTF Channel 12 television in Guam. Now, Mr. Moore, I understand that the National Park Service has your permission to make this recording and to retain all literary and property rights derived from it. Is that your understanding?

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Moore: That is correct.

Q: Good afternoon Charlie, you said I could call you Charlie.

Moore: Yes.

Q: For the record, could you state for me your full and complete name and that means your middle name if you have one.

Moore: My name is Charles George Moore.

Q: And could you spell that last name for us?

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Moore: MOORE.

Q: And to make sure, I did read that you were in the following outfit here in Guam – Easy Company -

Moore: 2<sup>nd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marines, 3<sup>rd</sup> Division.

Q: And what was your date and place of birth?

Moore: My date and place of birth was September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1924 in Knoxville, Tennessee.

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Q: Did you grow up there, in Knoxville, Tennessee?

Moore: No.

Q: Where did you grow up?

Moore: Around the north side of Chattanooga, up in what they call the Harrison Bay area.

Q: And how many brothers and sisters did you have?

Moore: Two brothers and four sisters. In fact, one of my brothers was sent to 77<sup>th</sup> Army Division here on Guam.

Q: No kidding? Did you know that at the time?

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Moore: Yes, because we had been over to Saipan and floating reserve for Saipan and then they decided, well, we will use an Army Division in there instead of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division. So they said, we will take the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division and go back to Guam and we will re-take Guam. But then they found out more about enemy troops, guns and all, that was on Guam and they decided we would have to have a floating reserve. So we went back to the Marshall Islands and waited on the 77<sup>th</sup> Army Division to come out from Hawaii. And I did know that he was gonna be here because when they brief you for a landing, they give you all the information that they have and show you everything that they can, on the maps, tell you all that they know about gun positions and number of troops and so on.

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Q: Now did you ever see your brother while you were here?

Moore: Yes. After they declared the highlands secure, which it was far from secure, we were moving back from the north end of the island to start the mopping up operation around Barrigada. Barrigada Mountain area. And his unit, the C Company, 307<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 77<sup>th</sup> Division, was moving back to the crossroads in Barrigada. It was just one road and a trail at that time. And they were waiting there on transportation.

Q: Off to the side of the road?

Moore: Yeah. And my brother had been inquiring at our battalion headquarters, which had moved ahead of us, they moved up in trucks. We hoofed it. So our galley and battalion headquarters was already set up. So he found out from those people that I might be through there. Major Culpepper, our battalion commander at that time, told him, said, don't build your hopes up. He said, we had three Moores in that company and he said, I think we have one left. And said, the company was very hard hit. He was standing on the side of the trail up there and –

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Q: You and your brother, I suspect, were pretty close?

Moore: Yes. He was two year older. And he looked down at the column coming along there and he said, hey, have you got a Moore in this outfit? And George Fielding, an Indian from Peakstree Springs, Arizona, he said, yeah, we've got one back there. Look the SOB over. So I hopped out of the trail and walked on up through there. He had a fellow with him that had been home on furlough. That fellow grabbed me and shook me hollered and whooped and danced around like I was his brother. But we had about an hour and a half together.

Q: What did you discuss?

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Moore: Well, we had to talk – first thing we had to know how we had been making out and what we had been going through. Of course I had just got out of the hospital at that time, a field hospital. And we talked about that and talked about home a little bit. And then he had to leave, they moved in with the trucks and they had to leave out. I did get to see him again on Guam.

Q: You did?

Moore: Yes, when they left here, they went to Lady in the Philippines and then they went to Okinawa. And the 77<sup>th</sup> made a fake landing on one side of Okinawa to draw the Japanese troops over the opposite side of the island. While the Marines come in on the other side. And then they went around and hit Ie Shima, the little island where Ernie Pyle was killed. And then after they secured it, they went onto the main land of Okinawa. And then along about the end of the campaign, they flew him back to Guam, put him in the hospital down here.

Q: Did he get wounded?

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Moore: He had contacted some kind of a jungle virus or something and it affected his respiratory system. It liked to kill him.

Q: So you saw him here in the hospital?

Moore: Yeah, he was here about two weeks before they flew him on back to the States. At that time, you know, they had built several hospitals here.

Q: Quonsets?

Moore: Well, something similar to Quonset huts.

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Q: Well that is a unique story, to see your brother over here and both of you got out of here without a scratch, is your brother still alive?

Moore: No, this problem that he had, evidently brought on more complications, so he died at 44 years old.

Q: He died a young man. So just after the war ended, you said he was 24.

Moore: Well, he would have been 23 at the time he got out.

Q: So he died in the '60s.

Moore: He died at 44.

Q: I mean, in the 1960s.

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Moore: Yes, he died in '65.

Q: How many of your brothers and sisters are alive now?

Moore: Well, my four sisters, my two brothers, they are deceased.

Q: Big family. Mom and Dad?

Moore: Well, they are deceased. My dad died a couple of years ago at 91 years old.

Q: What a grand life, huh? You said your dad worked – what was his form of a living when you were growing up?

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Moore: Well, he worked at a paper box company, made all sorts of paper boxes and they made notebook paper, tablets, and envelopes and all kind of paper products.

Q: So a big paper mill, huh?

Moore: Well, it wasn't too big a paper mill, they didn't produce the paper, they just made the finished products out of them and most of his work in life, he was a general foreman over the box company.

Q: What was your fondest memory about your childhood?

Moore: I guess when I was young and all of the family was together and of course a lot of that was back in the Depression days and it didn't take much to make people happy then. They were satisfied with what they had and what they could get.

Q: Which was just a square meal on the table, right? You say you went to school where?

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Moore: Well, I went to grammar school at three different locations. One was a little community just outside of Chattanooga, called Silverdale (sp?). And then another place was Harrison, which was about nine miles out of Chattanooga. And then the last place I went to school was a little community by the name of Tanner, which was probably 6, 8 mile out of Chattanooga.

Q: And then you went to high school?

Moore: Well, I went part of the way through high school. And well, the war was coming on, they had already started the draft and I figured, well, before I get out, before I can complete high school, I will be in the draft.

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Q: What year was that?

Moore: I quit I guess in '40. In 1940. I went to work when I was 16.

Q: The Pacific War is approaching and it's already started in Europe.

Moore: Well, it was approaching and – well, I was at work in '41 when they bombed Pearl Harbor.

Q: Oh, you were working? How did you hear the news, over the radio?

Moore: Well, over the radio. But I didn't know where Pearl Harbor was.

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Q: How did you find out?

Moore: Well, I went in home and my mother and dad had heard it over the radio and they said, the Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor. I said, where is Pearl Harbor? What is



that? They said it's in Hawaii. On the island of Oahu. So – those were names I had never heard of. How Hawaii and those names – and Pearl Harbor, never heard of that.

Q: Now it's forever etched in the American memory.

Moore: Oh yes.

Q: So once the war starts, you decide to enlist?

Moore: Well, I waited a while because I wasn't old enough to go in right when it started. So, when I became 18 years old, I joined the Marine Corps.

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Q: What year was that for you?

Moore: Well, that was in early '43.

Q: The Pacific War is really rolling at that time.

Moore: Well, yes. Our people had taken Guadalcanal and some of the islands out there.

Q: What prompted you to join the Marine Corps?

Moore: Well, just what I had read about the Marine Corps.

Q: Had quite a history.

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Moore: And also they were moving along good and I wanted to get this thing over with as soon as possible.

Q: Were you mad at the Japanese?

Moore: You know, I guess when somebody attacks a place like they attacked Pearl Harbor, that causes some real hard feelings.

Q: Especially when it's not a declared war.

Moore: That's right, that's right. And you want to get revenge, I guess, and you want to get the war over too.

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Q: Did you ever think that by enlisting, you might not come home?

Moore: Well, yes, that was a possibility. I knew there was going to be a lot of people killed.

Q: So they go off to boot camp, where did you do that?

Moore: Well, I went to a boot camp in San Diego, California. At that time, they had two recruit depots, one in Parris Island and one in San Diego.

Q: Parris Island would have been the closest.

Moore: Yes, but they were taking in so many people, they sent you where they had room for you.

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Q: Everybody has memories of boot camp, what is – were you prepared for these sergeants kind of taking a hold of you?

Moore: Definitely not.

Q: Do you remember your drill instructor's name?

Moore: Uh, Sergeant Todd.

Q: You know, I have yet to ask a Marine, and he not know his drill instructor's name. Every one of them remembers. What kind of a fellow was Todd? That sounds like a southern name.

Moore: Well, he was a good sergeant. Now we had two PFCs that were drill instructors. Now, they were the main ones. Sergeant Todd was easy going.

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Q: They refer to your heritage and use colorful language?

Moore: Well, to some extent, yes.

Q: What was – can you tell me, during your basic training, just something that you remember when you think of basic training?

Moore: Well, the first thing, right off the start, we went into this big receiving barracks and I believe there was maybe 400 of us in there, that had got in there that day. And they had us in this barracks and this big sergeant, he was up on the platform and he was making us a speech and giving us a lecture. And calling us a few names. We were the dumbest so and so's in the country and worth nothing, you know. And he said, anybody, any man in this room that thinks he can whip me, he said, you just step forward.

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Everything was real quiet. And then I heard this clump, clump, clump, coming from the rear, back there. And I heard somebody say, come back here, Tex! Come back here, Tex! And I look and here is this guy, he must have been about 6'5", had on a ten gallon hat and he had on cowboy boots. He stepped out there and he took his hat off and threw it down.

And they had a fight. They beat each other to a pulp. That sergeant, he was tough. But ole Tex, he was tough too. I would call it a draw. But they beat the living heck out of each other. Their faces looked like beef steak. They knocked each other down and they would come up a fighting and the other one would go down.

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They tore their clothes off.

Q: So with Tex, it was kind of a draw. I imagine all the men were kind of cheering and yelling and yelping.

Moore: Well, no, everybody was quiet.

Q: Just stone quiet, they didn't know what to think of this, huh?

Moore: They didn't know what to say. They knew it was one hell of a fight.

Q: So what happened to Tex?

Moore: Nothing. Because the sergeant invited him out there.

Q: What kind of Marine did Tex turn out to be?

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Moore: Well, I don't know, Tex was in another platoon, but I imagine he turned out to be a good one. See they divided this entire group up into about five platoons. At that time they run 'em through in 65 men platoons. My first two or three days in boot camp is what I remember most. After getting on the schedule, it wasn't too bad.

Q: They get you up early – physically it's very challenging.

Moore: Oh, yes it is, but growing up there in the Depression, I was used to working and I was used to roughing it, so physically, it didn't bother me.

Q: How about mentally?

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Moore: You know, that is something you have to kinda control yourself. You are in a spot that you can't do much of anything about, so you make the best of it.

Q: So it's yes sergeant, no sergeant.

Moore: That's right.

Q: After completing your training, obviously a big part of that is weapons training and being proficient with firearms. How did you perform that way? I suspect you might have been a good shot.

Moore: Well, uh, I was not too good. I made sharpshooter, which I thought that was really good. I was used to firing small caliber weapons you know, and shot guns, but not the 30 caliber. It was quite a bit different.

Q: Got a good little kick, noisy --let you shoulder know it's there.

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Moore: Well, if you held it tight against your shoulder, you were alright. But if you held it loosely, it just knocked the heck out of you. And it might even get you up here in the jaw if you held it loosely.

Q: After completing your training, did you go on to more training or where did they send you?

Moore: We had a short uh, advanced training period at Camp Elliot, right out of San Diego. And then we loaded aboard ship, headed for the Pacific.

Q: No kidding? That quick? You had never seen the Pacific.

Moore: Oh no.

Q: Had you ever been on a ship before?

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Moore: No.

Q: How did your sea legs hold up?

Moore: Excellent. We were in a storm for the first four days out of San Diego. I got to feeling kind of urpy every now and then, but I never did really get seasick. But some of those poor fellows were so sick, they were praying to die.

Q: Did they take you to Hawaii?

Moore: No.

Q: Where did you go?

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Moore: We went straight to New Caledonia. Unloaded there. New Caledonia was kind of a distribution center for men and supplies at that time. And then -

Q: Did they assign you to an outfit or were you already assigned to an outfit?

Moore: No, we were in what they called a replacement battalion, to be split up and sent to

any division that needed us. So we left out of there – well, part of us did. They shipped ‘em out, maybe 100 or so at a time, I guess. But there were maybe 50 people in the group that I left there with.

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We went out by – through the Fiji Islands, stopped [unintelligible] and went up to the New Hubertus and made a short stop there. And then they carried us on into Bougainville, and to [unintelligible] where the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division was fighting at that time. So they put us to shore there and there is where I got into the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division.

Q: Was that your first combat experience?

Moore: Yes, yes.

Q: What was that like for you?

Moore: Well, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division was right before leaving there, so the biggest thing I was involved in was patrolling – combat patrols. And they were about ready to turn it over to the Army and of course they really just wanted enough of Bougainville to build an airstrip and the Army set up there in a permanent defense and held the Japs on the other side of this big swamp. At that point, it was about 40 mile across the island and a lot of it was through heavy jungle and swamp.

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So the Army held them there for the duration of the war. When the war was over, they picked up 35,000 Japs off of Bougainville. They were about to starve to death.

Q: Do you remember the first time a bullet came your way?

Moore: Well, it wasn't just one, it was several.

Q: That is kind of an interesting sound, I suspect.

Moore: Well, yes it is. You don't expect a bullet coming overhead to pop again and make kind of like an echoing sound when it goes over you. A lot of times it does.

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Q: What kind of weapon were you shouldering at that time?

Moore: Well, at that time, I was carrying an M1. M1 garand.

Q: When did you move on to carrying a BAR?

Moore: Well, we left Bougainville, we went back to Guadalcanal. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Division had a base camp there. Of course the jungle had grown over it when we got back there, but we stayed on Guadalcanal for a while and then they gave me a BAR there. And we trained for Kavieng. That was over close to – I believe the next island over from Rabaul.

Q: Why did they select you for BAR? You are a fairly substantial man.

Moore: A lot of people didn't want to carry a BAR.

Q: Why is that?

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Moore: On account of the weight.

Q: How heavy is a BAR?

Moore: With everything on it, it weighs 21 pounds. When you strip it down, take the flash outer and all that stuff off of it, it weighs 16 pounds. And then you carry one magazine in your rifle and 12 in your belt and they weight a pound and 13 ounces each. And then in



combat you load these bandoliers on you, as long as you can put one on. Because a BAR has a rate of fire of 550 rounds per minute. And then it can eat up a lot of ammunition.

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And then you have an assistant which carries six magazines for you and all of the bandoliers he can carry, plus his M1 and all of his other gear.

Q: That is a lot of weight.

Moore: Well, that is the reason a lot of people didn't want them. But you wait until the stuff gets hot and those guys like to crowd in close to you and all. On account of your fire power.

Q: Do you remember how many rounds were in a clip like that?

Moore: 20.

Q: So you could go through them pretty quick.

Moore: Oh yes, it has a change level on it, you could fire semi-automatic or full automatic.

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But in some of the places here on Guam, where the growth is heavy and you can't see anything through it, just like some of these cliffs around here that are full of caves. And all of this growth outside of them – when those people are firing at you from out of those places; you don't see 'em. So you kinda have something that will really pin 'em down, so you can get up to where you can see 'em, because you can't do much about them. Until you get up where you can see 'em. But you have to pin them down before you can do that.

Q: Sounds like a pretty good weapon for weed whacking.

Moore: Well, it was excellent for our needs.

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Q: Were you in any subsequent actions after Bougainville, or the next one is Guam for you.

Moore: Yes.

Q: What kind of training and preparations did you have for Guam?

Moore: Well, like I said, we had trained for Kavieng and the Japanese evacuated that island so they called that off. And then we had another training period which consisted of a little bit of training in house to house fighting. And that was about the only difference in any of their training.

Q: When you got aboard a ship to come to Guam, did they throw a map out there and say, this is where we are going?

Moore: Well, yes, after it got underway, they would take you and maybe one platoon at a time. They would bring out all of the maps, and all of the information that they had and they would give you all the information, show you everything they could on the maps and whatever information that they had, they passed onto you.

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Tried to make you as familiar with where you were going, as possible.

Q: Now did any of those fellows predict how many days it would take on this combat action?

Moore: No.

Q: Did they say it was going to be tough or moderately tough?

Moore: Well, they said it was going to be tough due to the land and beaches, the coral reefs and the cliffs, the caves and the jungle growth. They said it was going to be tough.

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Q: And there you are, sitting at this and you are thinking, this one is going to be tough, but do you ever think [tape cuts]

So after the briefing, they told you it was going to be a tough battle because of the terrain and such. Did you have any second thoughts to thinking about your own safety regarding this action?

Moore: Well no, you are going in as group, you have trained as a group, you are going in and you are going to win. You never talk about losing anything when you are training. You are trained to win. And a lot of times that training and your determination and having in mind that you are going to come out a winner, will carry you through a lot of tough spots. If somebody said, well you are liable to be killed, all of you might be killed, that would be demoralizing.

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Q: Kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

Moore: But you are training that you are going to win every battle, you are not going to lose any of them. You know that some of your people are going to be killed but you are going to try to be one of those people that survive.

Q: When they lay that map out, they told you what all these units – who are going to be involved, and 77<sup>th</sup> was mentioned, is that correct?

Moore: Yes.

Q: That is the outfit that your brother was in.

Moore: Right, he was in the 307 C Company.

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Q: How did that news greet you?

Moore: Well, I was a little bit surprised because I didn't know he was in the Pacific at that time. The 307 – or the 77<sup>th</sup> Army Division had trained all over the United States for every type of warfare there was. Then they decided to send him to the Pacific. So I was thinking, well, I gotta make it. And I was thinking, because he was going to be on floating reserve, that would be – that would give him a good chance of getting on the island without getting hurt or killed, because somebody would be making the beach head and pushing in and making some room for them to land.

Q: So you thought, well, I had better do my job very well, because my brother is coming. Did you land in the first wave?

Moore: No, not in the first wave. I don't remember what wave it was. We landed on the extreme left flank of Red Beach one.

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Q: Adelup Point then, right?

Moore: Just on the other side of Adelup Point. Where Chanita Cliff jutted out into the ocean. And we landed right beside – my platoon hit right beside where it jutted out into the ocean, then there was no road cut through it. The road went around it, into the water and then back onto the hard sand of the beach. So we were right there beside it. And of course we had a little strip of beach and then the ground – very steep.

Q: Were you under fire immediately upon landing?

Moore: Oh yes, we were under fire before we got to the island. We landed in amphibious

tractors; they have a propellant on them to push them through the water like a boat.

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Very slow boat. And then when they hit the coral reefs, they threw the tracks in gear and then the tracks pulled it over the coral reef, which was a pretty rough ride.

Q: You mean inside, it's not a whole bunch of fun.

Moore: No, no, you are down in there and the diesel fumes are coming back over you and as soon as we got to the reefs, they were trying to get us either with heavy mortars or artillery. And I thought it looked like for a while that they were going to do it, because one mortar or one shell that hit on one side of the tractors and maybe one on the other and one in the front of it and one behind it, and they would splatter water over into the amphib tractor.

Q: So they are bracketing you, right?

Moore: Yes, and I thought, well, they've got us. And actually they would hit so close the whole tractor would kinda bounce. That is how close they were getting.

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Q: How many men in that?

Moore: There was – best I remember there was about a half of a platoon. A platoon was 45 men. I think you had maybe one platoon split up between two tractors, which were supposed to land almost side by side. So -

Q: Now who drove these tractors, were these Navy [unintelligible] or were they Marines?

Moore: No, these were Marines. And of course any landing craft, Navy people handled those, but due to the coral reefs, those landing barges couldn't get in. So by the time we got in, close enough for small arms fire to reach us, they were splattering the tractor with

machine gun fire.

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The one that I was in, had kind of a short cab on it with a windshield. Well, that windshield splattered. And the driver, he would duck down, you know, and then he raise his head up, kind of line the tractor up and then he would get down again. But right before we got into the beach, I was looking up on these high ridges and see if I could see anything up there, which I couldn't see nothing but the green undergrowth, the bushes and so on. But while I was looking up, I saw this coconut tree, these fronds that fall down alongside of them; I saw one of them open up and a rifle comes out. So I threw my BAR up like that and started firing. Well these fellas in the tractor with me, they jumped around, they thought I was crazy. They said, quit that! I said, well, that is one less we won't have to worry about.

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Q: So did you see that man fall out of that tree?

Moore: Well, he fell part of the way, but he had a rope around him, he was hanging there. He fell, took the slack out of that rope.

Q: Was this the first man you actually shot?

Moore: Yeah, it was the first Japanese I saw.

Q: So this was the first man that you ever killed, you knew you got him, right?

Moore: Well, I guess it is the first one that I ever actually saw. Because at Bougainville, we were in heavy jungle. It was really heavy jungle there. So you were shooting at the sound of fire coming from those people.

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Q: Did that surprise you that the sniper was up there like that?

Moore: It surprised me that he was still up there like that, because a lot of the coconut trees were broken off, had been shelled out.

Q: So he had gone up there and there was no way for him to escape, so he decided this is the way he's going out, right?

Moore: Right. But I was not actually looking for that, I was trying to see what I could up on the steep ridges, up on Chanita Ridge. And the ridge to our right, which they called Bundschu Ridge, named after the captain of A Company that took that ridge.

Q: Well, that is rugged country. So you land, you get your tack vehicle on the beach, you guys now bail out or do you guys go forward with it?

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Moore: Well, we pulled in there a few feet from the water's edge and each tractor had a case of 30 caliber ammunition, a few mortar rounds and a can of – a five gallon can or two of water and a case or two of C rations. First thing they do is throw all of that stuff out. Then you jump out. At that time, the tractors we used didn't have the ramp on the back, which they later built them with ramps on the back that would fall down and you could run out the back, we had to go over the side.

Q: So you are most exposed to gunfire when you do that.

Moore: Yes, when we threw all of our stuff out, there was a kid from Kingsport, Tennessee, I don't remember his name, he was the first man that started up. Well, he fell back down and he had been hit right through the head.

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When he got hit, everybody had started to jump, went down. And everybody started up

again and the machine gun fire was ricocheting off the tractor. Everybody went up and down, three or four times, then everybody went out and tried to find a shell hole or some place to get into.

Q: Did they get any of those people or did everybody pretty make it out safe?

Moore: Well, they didn't get any of us that was in the tractor, in that particular tractor. We found us a shell hole or a place to get into and I jumped in a hole with a boy there – a shell hole. He looked around at me and said, man, he said, you outta have been here a few minutes ago. He said it was really hot. They were just getting the artillery started on the beach.

Q: The Japanese or the American artillery?

Moore: Oh, the Japanese artillery was coming in.

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Q: They were starting to throw the rounds your way.

Moore: Yes, their mortars and their artillery was coming in. Of course they had machine guns all over the place there. We had to clear out a lot of them there. We didn't move forward for a while on account of so many machine guns.

Q: So you landed in the morning?

Moore: In the morning, in the morning.

Q: So your outfit, you get everybody together and who was your officer in charge?

Moore: My platoon leader was Martin O'Brien.

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Q: What kind of fellow was he?

Moore: He was a good platoon leader; he was a real, natural born leader. But we moved on up to higher ground, but our first objective was to turn to our left and go down to Adelup Point and take it. There was supposed to be four dual purpose guns sitting on Adelup Point, along with a lot of riflemen and machine gunners. But my platoon was supposed to take Adelup Point that day. But we had so much resistance from the heels up in front of us that we didn't have a chance to try to move. We had all we could handle, right there in front of us. Because being in the flank, they were bringing in reserve troops and hitting us with those people, trying to roll up the flank, push down the flank.

Q: Now Captain Moore was in charge of your unit there?

Moore: Captain Moore, he was our company commander.

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Q: Can you tell me a little bit about Captain Moore?

Moore: Captain Moore, he was another man that I would say was a natural born leader. And he had a lot of respect and care for his men. And during the time that he was with us, before he was wounded, he was always leading. But as we worked our way up towards the steep ridge in front of us, we were stalled down there due to the heavy resistance and the troops that they were throwing in on us. So we didn't get up the ridge, we just got part of the way up that day.

Q: Now this was the first day, right?

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Moore: That was the first day.

Q: Now, the second day, Captain Moore also lead a flanking movement, right? Around the ridge? Can you describe that?

Moore: Well, I was being led or I was under the direction of my platoon leader at that time, Martin O'Brien. Lieutenant Martin O'Brien. Of course, Captain More was in overall charge, and but my attention was toward my platoon leader and his directions. But we had to dig in on the slope that night and we didn't have too many problems that night. But of course when daylight came, we had an attack right at daylight.

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Q: Bonzai attack?

Moore: No, just a well organized attack.

Q: The Japanese moved in some heavy weapons up against you at that time.

Moore: Well, yes. The Japanese, well they had the place pretty well zeroed in with heavy weapons, but the machine gun fire was one of the things that was really bothering us the most. Because they had to hide around on us and of course if you have been up on top on those ridges, which I know you fellows have, it's like looking down, maybe like shooting fish in a barrel, like they say. Because you are trying to claw your way up a steep ridge and fight an enemy that you don't see, but you there is lots of them there.

Q: That terrain is just tough.

Moore: It is tough.

Q: Is it true that some of you guys had to sling arms just to climb up those ridges, keep both hands –

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Moore: I guess some people did, but I didn't.

Q: How did you haul that 21 pound beast up there?

Moore: Going up, I would use the butt of my rifle to help pull myself along. I didn't put it on – I didn't sling it, I used it to help pull and push myself up through there. And the second day, we attacked up the ridge. We got part of the way up and the last thing I heard from my platoon leader, Lieutenant O'Brien, they passed the word over to me, said, Moore over to where O'Brien is set – O'Brien's combat name was Obie. You didn't call any officer lieutenant or captain and you didn't call nobody sergeant or corporal.

Q: You didn't?

Moore: No.

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Q: Why is that?

Moore: If your enemy overhears you calling somebody's name, maybe that night he is going to be out there and he's gonna say, hey, Charlie, I'm wounded, come and get me. I'm wounded, help me. And if you go out there, you are going to get shot. So you don't let names out. As far as a regular enlisted man, you don't even want to call him a name where somebody down here in the bushes may hear you.

Q: And there were instances where that happened, right?

Moore: Yes, yes.

Q: Did the Japanese ever exchange insults? I know in Saipan, they would say, Joe, you die tonight and all kinds of stuff.

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Moore: Oh yeah, you would hear that. They do a lot of sayings to harass you, to try to keep you from resting. To try to demoralize you and maybe affect you mentally.

Q: Did any of that ever happen to you here, in Guam? Hear anything like that?

Moore: Well, a few times, I have heard them out there, hollering, screw Roosevelt! Or all Marines eat crap. But they would be out there in the darkness, you know, you didn't see 'em and you weren't going to fire on them, because if you fired, then they are going to see the blaze come out of this 30 caliber weapon and fire at you. So if you do anything, you holler back, Toe Joe eats crap or their emperor is so-and-so, you know, SOB and all that kind of stuff. You let them know that you are not gonna fire at 'em, to be fired back at, but you are going to throw something back at him.

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Q: One of the Marines I interviewed said that they got into one of these shouting contests and it was actually pretty humorous because sometimes the Japanese would use something that just didn't even make sense. Some kind of English language. And there would be a little bit of a chuckle when somebody got a good saying off to the Japanese. Is that pretty accurate?

Moore: Yes. Yeah, some of the Japanese could speak much better English than I can. Of course I guess a lot of those had been educated in the US.

Q: There was some of that and of course English was very – as it is today in Japan, a very sought after language to learn. Let's get back to that second day's fighting. That second day's fighting was a rough, rough event – what kind of weapon's support did Marines bring up to counteract what you were running up against?

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Moore: Well, we had mortars and we had the heavy and light mortars. And we had

artillery. But in that – on that ridge, we didn't really have all of the artillery support that we should have had, because there was too many machine guns on that ridge to take it with just rifle fire. Against an enemy that is well dug in and entrenched and well camouflaged and when there is a lot of firing going on, it's hard to place where the shots are coming from, so you are hoping to pin those people down, till you can get on top of 'em. And if you can't do that, then you are in trouble.

Q: Now, did you see much of the enemy out there? You say it's hard to see 'em.

Moore: No, no.

Q: You just see a flash or something like that and they are gone, right?

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Moore: Well, those people who dug in, their positions are camouflaged, their ammunition was smokeless. Where ours, we had a heck of a muzzle blast and smoke coming from our 30 caliber, .30.06. And of course those ridges to either side of the ridge we were on, there was machine guns set up on those, firing a cross fire, across that ridge. And the day that my platoon leader, O'Brien, was killed, he had called for me to come over. Evidently he wanted the fire power of another BAR because he had one BAR man right there with him, Willy Steele from South Carolina. Well, before I got to him, they said, it's too late Moore, he's dead. So –

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Q: Did you see him at all?

Moore: No, I didn't see him.

Q: Did you hear how he got hit or what happened?

Moore: Well, he got hit with machine gun fire. Him and Willy Steele both. Both of them

had been spread across the chest.

Q: Both dead then.

Moore: So we had to pull back down off the hill and reorganize. We didn't hit it again until the next day.

Q: Day three.

Moore: Yes, and our platoon sergeant, Joseph Reinthaler was leading us that time. But didn't make it that time, we didn't get all the way to the top. We had to pull back. Our platoon sergeant, he was wounded, plus other people wounded and killed.

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Q: This is starting to be a bit of a meat grinder up there, isn't it?

Moore: Oh yes. Sergeant Joseph Reinthaler, our platoon sergeant, he had been shot in the hip, his hip was blown open. His hip bone was flakes of it in the flesh. He had been hit by an explosive bullet. It exploded like an artillery shell would. He was sent on back aboard a hospital ship. They operated on it to get this other bullet out of him, he died on the operating table because that thing exploded and blew his guts out. Or that is what they tell me. But anyway, he was dead. On the next day, Captain Moore led us around there, we went up around the side of it, up a drawl and we made our way to the back side of the ridge and come in behind it, on the back side of it and we took it.

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Q: The Japanese, did they retreat into caves or did they come out and meet you?

Moore: Well, no, they were not expecting us to make it up the way we did and come through all of those rock in behind. Behind that ridge was very rugged rocks, trees and heavy growth. But we got out and we got into the rocks behind them where we could fire in

on them and then moved in on them and finished 'em off.

Q: That must have been quite an action - that was a four day action, right?

Moore: Well, almost a four day. That was the third day that we finally get 'em.

Q: Did you remember the big banzai attack, were you involved in that?

Moore: Oh yes.

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Q: Can you describe that to me? Your impression and how that all happened?

Moore: On the fifth day we moved out from behind that ridge and moved down Fonte Ridge. Before we got to the Mt. Tenjo Road, my company commander, [name] Moore had been wounded.

Q: Where was he wounded?

Moore: He had a chest wound, what we called a "sucking chest wound". When he would get his breath, it would suck blood in through the hole and then it would bubble in and out. But we lost him right there. Of course he survived, but we moved down Mt. Tenjo Road, part of the way down the ridge. And then our battalion commander was killed. Colonel Hector [name], he was killed before we stopped to dig in for the night.

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Well, moving down Mt. Tenjo Road, we came to kind of a curve in the road and there was gap in there and this drop, what country boys call a "holler" in between two ridges. So part of my company, my platoon, set up in this drop, there was steep ridges, pretty steep, on either side. So we set up there and they brought a machine gun up there from the machine gun section and set it up. And that is where we were the night that they pulled the big

attack to try to push us off the island. Everything was pretty quiet there, until I guess maybe 11:00 that night. Then we heard all this hollering and screaming and then we heard grenade detonators going, you know. They come running and throwing grenades like it was raining.

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But I was fortunate. Right after it got dark or right about it got – the time it got dark, that you couldn't see very far, I had my two stakes cut and I drove one on each side of the front of the foxhole. I had a mosquito net that I stretched in-between these stakes, leaving a space about that high underneath the mosquito net, where I could look under. Then the mosquito net of course came on up about that high. These grenades hitting that stretched tied mosquito net, would bounce away instead of coming over in the hole, they would bounce out.

Q: Now how the heck did you think of that?

Moore: Well, I guess from watching people play tennis. When that ball hits the net, it comes back, it don't go over. So I left myself that much space underneath it, which, they would have to throw it maybe sling it to bring it in under there. That gave me room to see as well as you could see.

Q: And shoot, right?

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Moore: Yes. And that helped save me from the shower of the grenades. But then they had a machine gun set up back there that was spraying back and forth and some riflemen. And they hit like a herd of cattle. Like a shower in a swell of grenades. And we beat 'em off.

Q: Was it hand to hand in there?

Moore: No hand to hand right then. It did come later. I guess maybe 45 minutes later, it



happened all over again. We beat 'em off again. But each time, we lost some people. The third time they hit, they broke through. I was the last man left firing. Nobody else in our line was firing. They were shooting up fires from behind us and that gave us some light, but it also made a lot of shadows. Lots of shadows on the ground. The flares were coming down on parachutes and it caused some flickering, looks like a lot of movement out there. It helps, but it kind of makes you want to fire at something that is not there, when you see all of these moving shadows that is created by the flare coming down.

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But after realizing that I was the only one left firing and I was about out of ammunition, in fact I quit firing and I only had a half a magazine left.

Q: Where was everybody else?

Moore: Everybody else was knocked out.

Q: They were killed or wounded?

Moore: Killed or wounded. I thought, well, there is no way that I can get out of here; there is too many Japs all the way around.

Q: They were walking all around?

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Moore: Well, yes, they were milling around there. And some of them passed on through. And I was laying there and I thought, well, I'm going to save this ammunition and if I have to make a break for it, and run, I might be able to save myself with what I have left.

Q: Now this was the BAR weapon?

Moore: Right, right. And so there was three Japs, stopped at my hole, I was over on the

flank, not right in the middle where they were trying to dive through. They stopped and the kid in the hole with me, he was dead. I was lying there with my BAR like that. I didn't move. I didn't even breathe. And they hit this kid on the shin with the rifle butt. Wham. He didn't move. Of course he wasn't going to move, he was dead. They stood there for maybe 30 seconds and they turned and went on. Well, I started breathing again then. But if they had hit me on the shin, I would try to shoot the three of them and then I would have had to run, any direction I could get.

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But I stayed put. Daylight, everything was pretty quiet. But I was laying in the hole there, I watched them come and go. They carried off some of their wounded, they carried off some of their dead and come daylight, I went down the line, checking people and I got some stretchers up there. Some of our people are dead, a buddy of mine, they had chopped him across the back with a saber, through his backbone, into his intestines. And another friend of mine, they had chopped him across the butt; he was unconscious at the time from grenades going off in the hole with him. He had shrapnel wounds and he was unconscious. This guy was whacking him across the butt and across the back of the legs. And he came to and he shot this Jap. The Jap fell right on top of him, fell right across his butt. I think that is what kept him from bleeding to death that night.

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But he was alive, he was unconscious, but he was still alive the next morning. We got him out from there. And got our dead out. And wounded.

Q: There must have been hundreds of bodies there.

Moore: Well, not of our bodies.

Q: Theirs?

Moore: Because yes – there was a lot of bodies, I don't know what the numbers was, they

carried off a lot of them. But there was a big bomb crater right behind us and one of our fellas, the one that was chopped across the back, he was in it, he was not in his position. I guess he was trying to get more protection. But he was the fella that was chopped through the backbone. And this fella that was chopped across the legs, he did survive. He didn't walk anymore for nine months after several operations, but he did survive.

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Q: I guess it would be safe to say that you were the sole survivor of your company that wasn't wounded.

Moore: Not of my company, because there was only part of my company set up right in that particular area.

Q: How many men were set up there?

Moore: Approximately, counting the machine gunners, there was approximately 15 men. And of course some of the machine gunners died their too and after we got our wounded out, their dead out and then we started dragging the Japanese and putting them in this bomb crater. Later they sent up a small bulldozer and covered them up.

Q: Masquerade.

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Moore: Yeah, and then we took all of our riflemen that was left in company, of the three rifle platoons, which you have 45 men in a full strength platoon. We put those together and made a squad of 17 or 18 men out of them. Of course we had more machine gunners and mortar men left in the company than we did anything else. We moved on from there. The going was easier after that because that mass attack all up and down the lines, which was intended to push us off the island, they wasted so many men in that attack, that they never was able to set up a good strong defense line any more. They did set up some strong lines, but not in length, like they could have if they hadn't have wasted so many men. The

number, the head count that I heard that died in that attack that night, of the Japanese, was 5,000 soldiers in that one big attack that night, which was all up and down the line. So actually, that was a backbreaking thing to them. We did meet resistance all along, but not any real stiff resistance like we had at times before. There were spots, it was tough, but we moved on from there.

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And moved on down the ridge and we stopped just short of the cross island road. At that time there was only one road across the island, it started in Agana and went across the island through Yona and over the cliff over there and down onto the beach and on toward Talofofo Falls, out into that area. But we stopped for a while there to cross island road, overlooking again a swamp. And while we were stopped there, we were waiting for the troops on our flank to catch up with us. And overlooking the swamp, the Agana Swamp, we saw some people come out in the open on the other side. We didn't realize who they were, but some of them looked like civilians. But some of them looked like Japanese troops; we didn't know what was going on. And before we really realized what was happening, they lined these people up and shot them.

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It was Japanese troops and Guamanians, Chamorros. They were too far away for us to fire on them with rifles, but if we had known what was going to happen, we couldn't have done anything with artillery without killing the Chamorros too.

Q: So you witness an execution from a distance and couldn't do anything about it.

Moore: Yes and really I think that was intentional for us to see that. Because the more things that happened to them, the more that they seemed to take out on the people here. The helpless people here.

Q: I imagine that got your anger up pretty good.

Moore: Oh yes it did, it sure did.

Q: Did you guys – what was the idea about taking prisoners? This was getting pretty bitter here.

Moore: Well, you know, the rules of that was set on Guadalcanal. There was some things happened on Guadalcanal where Japanese troops came out on a riverbank with a white flag, they were going to surrender. When the Marines started across this little river, to take them in, they opened up on 'em with machine guns and mowed 'em down. So that made it hard for any surrender to take place after that.

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But on any of the islands, our planes would fly over and they would drop surrender leaflets. Giving the Japanese instructions on how to surrender. Those surrender leaflets that were dropped here, told the Japanese, in Japanese, to strip off their clothes and come in with their hands up.

Q: So that is why we see these pictures that are so vivid from World War II and they are just basically in breach cloths of something like that and they are all practically naked and based on those -

Moore: Right, right. But actually we were told, before we landed, if you take a prisoner, he belongs to you. You take care of him; you share your food and water with him. He is your man.

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I guess there was maybe no more than couple that ever offered to surrender around where I was at. The only prisoners that any of my company took on Guam was a woman and her baby. That was during the mopping up operation, up around the Mt. Santa Rosa area. We patrolled to all of that area, getting all of the scattered Japs. See, there was a lot of units that were disorganized that were broken up into small groups and they were hunting food

and trying to survive, but this particular group, the woman and the baby was saying there was about eight or ten of them. We saw them down this trail. We opened fire and about that time, they jerked this woman out into the trail. And it was a girl; I would say she was maybe 12, 13 years old. They jerked her out into the trail, a little girl was killed, a woman was shot through the leg. And I guess there was maybe three or four other Japanese soldiers got away. Well, we got down there and this woman was holding this baby up to her breast. I guess she thought that we were going to kill her.

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The little girl was already dead; there was nothing we could do for her.

Q: These were local people, Chamorros?

Moore: No, no. this woman was a Japanese major's wife. We found that out later. And that was her baby, it belonged to her and that Japanese major and also the little girl belonged to her.

Q: Was his daughter.

Moore: But these people had jerked them out, they thought we would not shoot the woman, but we had already opened up, you know, and it was unavoidable. We didn't know there was a woman in the area. They jerked her out of the brush alongside of the trail. Well, we – a couple of guys took off their jackets and cut some poles, made a stretcher, tied these jackets on it and carried her and her baby back to camp.

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That is the only prisoners that I know of that my company took.

Q: We have been talking her for over an hour and 15 minutes, it's been unbelievable stories that you have told me. We could go on forever. But is there – we have to bring this interview, unfortunately, to a close. Is there anything that we didn't discuss that you would

like to tell me before we close?

Moore: Well, really like I said, we didn't meet a lot of resistance till we got on up to the northern end of the island and near the last few days, my battalion, what was left of it, was sent out to find a trail that went over the cliff. Well, we got out there and got a trail, actually it was a trail leading from the village of Salisbury and I think it actually went over the cliff to another little village, I guess it was maybe on top of the cliff, or down on the beach, I'm not sure.

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But anyway, this was a trail we should have followed, but we turned and went towards Salisbury. Of course we didn't have maps that were much good, we were just guessing. We went towards Salisbury and dark caught us out there, so there was a banana grove there on this hillside, on this slope. So we dug in, in a circle around this banana grove. And right about dark, Japanese troops attacked us. We beat 'em off. And a little later, maybe 9:00 that night, we heard some noise and these people had pulled an artillery piece down that trail. We heard this noise and they started firing, straight up through the banana grove. Well, that didn't last long. We knocked them off there in short order. And then everything was quiet along up to about midnight. And the boy that was in the hole with me, he woke me up and he said, Moore, he said, I hear some engines running, he said, I think some of our tanks are coming. I told him, I said, those engines don't belong to anything that we've got, that is not our tanks, that is not an engine on any vehicle we have.

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I said, that's not ours. And here come a tank rolling up. Pulled right up into the banana grove, we were in this circle. And then another one. And another one. Five tanks pulled up there. One boy is sitting there with a machine gun, sitting outside the hole, he had to pull the machine gun back in the hole, they came so close, they would have run over the barrel of his machine gun. So they pulled up in there, they didn't know that we were there. They started firing here and there. They wanted to draw fire. At night, the muzzle blast of that .30-.06 would go out that far. With the BAR it would stretch on out there four or five

foot, just a blaze of fire. At night, firing one of them, you would pull in on your target, close your eyes and jerk off a burst and then open your eyes, because if you was looking at that muzzle blast, it would blind you.

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But we didn't fire. We didn't return fire, because we knew better. Well, they sat there, after a few minutes one of them crawled out on top of the turret and hollered, hoorah for the Marines! The big brave Marines! And then there was rifle fire coming from every direction then, bouncing off that tank. These boys didn't like that hoorah for the Marines coming from him. And then they started firing, loud, all over the place, the tanks did. Well, our people quit firing because with those 57s firing around there and all those machine guns from the tanks firing, we figured we would get the bad end of it. So about 4:00 that morning, they passed the word around to move out. That was your own chance, you know, was to move. We had one bazooka and it would not fire. And all we had was machine guns and rifles, which was no good against tanks.

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So instead of moving back, the direction that we had followed on the trail coming in, we had to go toward the cliffs, through all these rocks and everything, stumbling through there in the dark. We made a circle and got back to our unit about 10:00 the next morning. So they said, well, we are going to give you two tanks. You go back and get 'em. So then they had to cut a trail into this Salisbury Trail so we could get the tanks in there. Well, we went back to the banana groves, there was no tanks there, they had went back the other way. Well, dark caught us again and we had to stop for the night. The next morning we moved out and about 9:00 we found the tanks and there was nine of them there. But see, we were up ahead in the bushes, we were not moving in the trail, we were moving in the underbrush along the trail. So we, with a little radio, two-way radio, we told our tanks exactly where the Japanese tanks were at. I said, now, when you round the [unintelligible] they are going to be dead ahead at 12:00, be ready to fire because they are ready to fire on you.

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Well, our lead tank come around the curve and blam! He got their lead tank. And their next tank kind of pulled up kind of along the side and they got the next tank. Well, that tank battle didn't last – it was very short. And actually that was end of the action for us and against the organized resistance. Of course we stayed here, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division made their base camp here and stayed here and went through the mopping up operation, getting all the scattered Japs. Well, we didn't get all of them; I think some of them is still coming out of the brush, 20-25 years later.

Q: Well Charlie, we have gone almost an hour and a half and I want to thank you on behalf of the National Park Service for your story. I'm sure you have many, many more, but they were quite vivid and they really kind of reflected what it must have been like being here. Thank you very much.

[END OF SESSION]