

# Howell Malham

May 29, 2018

Interviewed by Leah Cohen

Transcribed by Natalie Yaw

Edited by Eric Bradach & Leah Cohen

Cohen: My name is Leah Cohen, today is May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2018. I have the pleasure of interviewing Mr. Howell Malham Sr.,

Malham: Howell Joseph

Cohen: Howell Joseph Malham Sr., at the Pritzker Military Museum and Library. Mr. Howell has been honored with the Purple Heart military decoration, which he received for his heroism during the battle of Okinawa, as part of the 6<sup>th</sup> Marine Division

Malham: 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment

Cohen: 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment. After seventy-three years, he is ready to tell his story. So, we thought we could talk a little bit about your life before the war.

Malham: Isn't it seventy-four years?

Cohen: I'm, I'm not sure!

Malham: Well, seventy-four from...

Cohen: Okay, seventy-four years.

Malham: I'm sorry, go ahead

Cohen: That's okay, that's okay! So, I'm wondering, where were you born?

Malham: Well, it's kinda strange to say that I was born in Cuba because I'm not Spanish, and I didn't meet Castro, although we were born at about the same time. Anyway, my parents came from Persia. During the

outbreak of the Ottoman Empire and WWI, they were told to leave because they were Christian, even though they were very close to all the Muslims. I mean, very close. The Shah's father, the Shahanshah, was a kind gentleman, very much like his son became. But my mother's uncle was a Catholic priest in Persia, and he advised them that it would be for their betterment and safety to be escorted by the small Assyrian army that was trained by the British, who were very much involved in Persia as you know because of the oil. But that's a footnote. So, they escorted them out to the border of Iraq and Abadan. At Abadan they were transported over to Mosul, where my sister was born. Mosul is now, as you know, devastated, bombed out... the churches, the Catholic Chaldean—Chaldean is one of the branches of the Catholic Church—they are currently, as you know, without homes, without churches, and slaughtered and bombed. And Pope Francis recently wrote a letter to the people there and they're soliciting all kinds of funds to build their churches, to build their homes, to get back together and to normal. And I received one of their solicitations from one of their organizations in New York and made my contribution because I told them that the Chaldeans are my people, but that when we came here we switched to the Catholic Church. Even though Chaldean is Catholic, but we became Catholic officially. And so, they were escorted to Mosul.

My dad, before he had married my mother, had come to the United States, during WWI and tried to enlist when he came to Ohio. But they said, "You don't speak English, so we'd appreciate you being here, but there's no point in your joining." So, he went back to Mosul, where he met my mother, they got married, my sister was born there, my oldest one who is still living at ninety-five, out in Shaumburg. And so, they transported themselves by motorcar, I thought they had taken the famous river from Iraq to...what is the big port in Syria? What's the name of the big port in Syria? I mean, it's the big city?

Cohen: Damascus? Hamas?

Malham: They stayed there for a couple of days. Oh, my God...such a popular common name, which is now the center of all that bombing and everything else... Anyway,

Cohen: Aleppo?

Malham: They stayed there and then they decided to go to Marseilles. They stayed in Marseilles for a couple of years where my brother was born. Needless to say, they were having fun. So, from there they decided they want to go to the United States, but first they thought they could go to Canada. But then because my mother had relatives in Chicago, a cousin of hers, they decided they wanted to come to the United States. Cuba was a port of entry for visas. So, they got there, travelling from Marseilles to Cuba.

There were violent storms on the ocean, my mother was pregnant with me, and as a little footnote, the reason that I didn't join the Navy was because carrying me inside her womb, I was left with the scar of hating water. I mean, I hated water. The whole idea of being part of the Navy would make me throw up. I would go swimming at the boy's club and I would say to my brother, "I can't handle this!" But anyway, because of that, well, because of that, that left a mark on me about hating water. And when I explained to my mother, "Well, I don't know why..." and then she told me, she said, "Howie, I was pregnant with you going from Marseilles to Cuba, I couldn't eat, I couldn't sleep, pregnant with you. It was terrible, so I'm not surprised that it has impacted on you."

So, we got to Cuba, we stayed there about two years, came to the United States in 1928, the three of us. My sister, Josephine, the oldest, my brother Ronnie and myself. And we arrived in the United States, [Miami, Florida] we lived on what was Center Street, what is now Armitage. I grew up, went to Saint Michael's. I went first of all,

to a public grade school called Arnold. They couldn't accept me because I wasn't speaking English! My mother said, "All you did was speak Spanish." And I wish I could speak Spanish now, you know, because I love to tango and all that. Anyway, from there I switched to Saint Michael's where I received my First Communion.... I graduated, and I was fascinated by the military, so I enrolled in Saint Mel's Military High School... [shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor].

Cohen: So, what, oh sorry...

Malham: No, sorry.

Cohen: So, what fascinated you about the military? And were you aware of events in Europe leading up to the Second World War?

#### **[7:48 – Enlisting in the Marines]**

Malham: Oh, absolutely! I was very much involved because I was in Saint Mel's High School in 1942. Saint Mel's was a military school. We wore uniforms. I was raised to the rank of corporal. We marched, we drilled, we did all of that. By the time I turned seventeen, I was so concerned about not being in the war, the Second World War, because in 1942 they were getting ready to clean things up, D-Day was coming up and all of that, so, and I was afraid to turn eighteen because I didn't want, at that time, at eighteen, you were automatically drafted. And they put you where they wanted. And I didn't want to be drafted into the Army and clean horse stalls, so, I decided I wanted to join the Marines. So, an orphan friend of mine named Danny, and I went to the place on Plymouth Court here, on Van Buren [Street], where they had the Marine recruiting bureau, and we said, "We'd like to enlist," and they said, "How old are you?" And I said, "Seventeen," and he said, "Seventeen." They said, "Well, go home and get your parents signature." Oh, I said, "That's gonna be impossible because they don't want me to join." He says, "We

can't take you without it." I went home and fought them for four months. They brought in major domos of the family, to persuade me. "Marines--suicide! They'll kill you! You'll die! You'll never make it back!" I'm going in the Marines because I'm not going in the Army! Four months later, thank god, they finally allowed me, gave me the permission. I went down, signed up, April 8<sup>th</sup>, signed in the Marines, 1944. By the end of April, I was in San Diego, [California].

Cohen: Can we back up a little, can we back up a little bit?

Malham: Yes, am I too fast?

Cohen: No, you're good. I'm too slow! I'm wondering, could you talk a little bit about, what was it like growing up in Chicago at the time? Growing up in Chicago in the '30s, and so on.

### **[10:07 – Growing up in Chicago]**

Malham: Well, I was fascinated because there were all sorts of gangsters running around. I forget some of their names, and there was a big A&P store that was held up by one of them, and then there were the ones that were hiding out, that they went after. Their names...I knew, but I don't know, now. And I was very much involved with all kinds of boyish activities. Putting out programs with my sisters and so on for the neighbors, doing all of that, and beating up on the neighbor's boy, and their coming over and saying, "Tell your boy to keep his hands off us," and my mother saying, "Don't let us argue over our boys, let them be boys. Otherwise, we'll never be speaking to one another." Because my mother was very diplomatic. So, anyway, my brother at that time, being born in Marseilles, wasn't a citizen because my father hadn't become a citizen. So, he went to join the Air Force, and they said, "We can't accept you as a foreigner," and he said, "Great, I'll join the RAF, I'll go to Canada." They said, "Well, wait, let's talk about it." Well, somehow ... my dad became

naturalized, which allowed my brother to join the Air Force. So, he left...

Cohen: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

Malham: I had four [i.e., three] brothers--there were eight of us: four boys and four girls. The three of us who came, Josephine, Ronnie, and myself were followed by Ann, Helen, Genevieve, Nick, David. I lost David last year, who was the youngest of my brothers. And then I lost Genny, who was the youngest of the girls. So, I have, Helen and Ann still living in their seventies, and my sister Josephine in her nineties. And then I lost my brother to a heart attack, Ronnie. He never made it in the Air Force because they disbanded. They disbanded and grounded, Arnold had said that was it, because it was wrapping up the war, they didn't need any more pilots. At which point, I got excited about going, persuaded my family, got their permission. Does that fill the void?

Cohen: Just about. Did anybody else serve from your siblings--did anybody else of your siblings serve in the US military?

Malham: No, they were too young, my brother Nick, my brother David, they were all too young. They were all younger than me. My brother Nick is now seventy, I'm ninety-two. And when I was going at the age of seventeen, I picked him up and I put him on top of the table and I said, "Nick, you're the head man of the family, now, because I'm leaving," and he still remembers that and I remember that. And then, of course, there were the girls, so. I finally went off by myself. No parade, no nothing. My friend Danny, he's an orphan, got his permission with his sister, she was delighted, "Great, no problem." We go there, we're going through all the examinations. We've got the towels wrapped around us. I've passed the eye test, I've passed this test, I've passed that...I knew Danny had some problems because before we joined, we packed to go for a week at Fox Lake, to spend a week on a farm there. Like...settlers. He was wheezing and sneezing

all night. So, he had some kind of a problem, I forget exactly what. Asthma or something. And I said, "Danny, this is terrible!" and he says, "Howie, I can't make it, we have to go home." My mother had loaded us down with groceries for a week. So, we came back in two days. She says, "What happened?" I said, "Danny can't make it, he can't get through. I was cooking and he couldn't eat, he was wheezing and sneezing, couldn't sleep." So, we came back. That was a signal that Danny was not in good shape. So, halfway through the examinations, back at the Marine Corps on Plymouth Court, I'm in my towel, Danny comes running up to me, huffing and puffing, he says, "Howie, get out!" I said, "What are you talking about?" He says, "Get out! They're not gonna accept me because of my asthma! And I failed the eye test!" I said, "Well, what are you going to do?" and he said, "I'm going to join the Navy" I says, "Forget it! I can't handle water. Please, don't do this to me, we were supposed to be in this together!" He left, I passed, later found out the Navy turned him down because he had asthma. The Army turned him down because he had a heart murmur. He joined, God bless him. He was determined. He joined the Merchant Marines and made thousands of dollars. I was getting twenty dollars a month! Came back, he was rolling in money. But anyway, he did his job, he served. I passed. Couple of weeks later, left for San Diego on a train. Is that too fast, do I have to slow down?

Cohen: No, no, no, this is great!

CUT, mic malfunction [0:16:10-0:16:40]

Cohen: Okay, so, you went to San Diego. Is that where you did your basic training?

Malham: They sent me to San Diego and I loved it.

Cohen: What was it like?

Malham: They called me a Hollywood Marine, going to San Diego. We got there, I was, I got acquainted with all the troops on the train. I loved to sing, I entertained them.

Cohen: So, all the shows you did with your sisters to the neighbors...

Malham: Huh?

Cohen: All the shows that you and your sisters performed to the neighbors came in handy? Good training for entertaining the troops on the train?

Malham: Yeah, I was a natural entertainer. I just couldn't swim. So, anyway, I was gifted in speaking, I loved public speaking, and my career became all of that.

Cohen: Had you done public speaking when you were at Saint Mel's High School?

Malham: Yes! Yes, I was very much involved because they would ask me to get up and do little routines, and so on. I was just slow in English and arithmetic, and math. But otherwise, God gifted me with a brain and a mouth that allowed me to be very articulate, loved to speak, loved the English language, loved words. I play jumbo crosswords three times a day in my old age, I love it, the challenge, putting words together. But anyway, I took all of that talent with me and I entertained them on the train, we played, we laughed, we joked. The only thing was I didn't know cards. I didn't know anything about gambling with cards and that sort of thing because of my Catholic background. That was, you know, I was not associating with girls at school because it was an all-boys military school, and whatever arrangements they had with Providence High School, which was a couple of miles away, to bring us together and so on, but I never got involved with any girls.

Cohen: Was Providence High School the girls' high school?

Malham: Catholic.

Cohen: The girls' Catholic counterpart?

**[18:58 – Japanese store incident]**

Malham: Yes, the Catholic high school, which they used to get boys and girls together for various occasions, dances and so on. But for the most part, we were isolated with just the military training and then being very much aware of what was going on in Europe until--and then December 7<sup>th</sup>. A Japanese store across the street was blown up, and they were so conscious of Japanese neighbors and so on. And I was in Saint Michael's Parish.

Cohen: Yes.

Malham: There on North Avenue and Cleveland, which was a German Parish that we came to when we came to the United States, and it was a polyglot, I mean it was a mixture of nationalities, but predominantly German, but down on Madison Street, where St. Mel's was, at Kildare and Madison, I mean, the first sign of attacks on the Japanese in this country took place. But nothing on the Germans, which is so funny, except the two Germans that landed by submarine in New York and came to the United States. There was a street called Berlin three blocks away from us, three blocks west of us on Armitage. And then there was Larrabee, two blocks away was Berlin. Where do you think those two Germans from New York came? To Berlin! And they rounded them up—it was a dead giveaway!

Cohen: I guess that's true. But you say you saw a Japanese store that was attacked? Right near the school?

**[20:43 – Thoughts toward Japanese]**

Malham: Yes! It was bombed, about a block away from us, a Japanese store. It was an unpleasant thing. It was an unpleasant thing to learn because I had nothing against Japanese until they bombed Pearl Harbor. And

then, the motivation to get in and do something to serve the country, and then entertaining the troops, getting to San Diego. They put me on a block, and I sang a couple of the popular songs at that time. I learned songs very quickly. I loved dancing, I loved Artie Shaw, Glenn Miller, all of the big dance bands. I had all of their records.

Cohen: What was one of your favorite songs that you enjoyed singing to the troops?

Malham: Starry Night, "This is the Story of a Starry Night," was one of them. There were several of Frank Sinatra's that I loved and sang. Oh, that's terrible, because I still sing them, or hum them. [Malham later added that he sang Sinatras's "My Way" and "All or Nothing at All"]

Cohen: Oh, that's okay, I was just...

Malham: But it's a shame because...

Cohen: You can hum one of them.

Malham: I love songs and music, it was the things that I was interested in, besides swimming! So anyway, we get to boot camp and they ask me to get on the stage, during the period of our being acquainted. And I entertained them with a couple of the popular songs of the time. They thought I was going to become the entertainment of the San Diego boot camp. I was there to drill and to train, and so on. So, I got off the stage and the entertainment part of it and became part of the troop. And then three months later graduated, went home on liberty, came back, was sent to [Marine Corps Base] Camp Pendleton [in Oceanside, California,] for advanced training.

Cohen: So, what was the basic training like? What was the typical day of basic training?

Malham: Well, it was passing the swimming test.

Cohen: No, you couldn't avoid the swimming test?

Malham: Diving off the third level. I mean, diving off! I said, “You’ve got to be crazy!” They said, “Well, in case your ship is torpedoed,” I said, “I’ll shoot myself.” [Laughs] So, anyway, we went through all that exercise, and then the final test was swimming the Olympic pool--right?

Cohen: Right.

Malham: Prayed like crazy, struggled like crazy. Made it. I made it. But for the most part, it was all the usual--shooting, hand grenades, and then I thought I’d become a [M1918 Browning Automatic Rifle] man. So, when they introduced the BAR to our platoon, I said to our drill instructor, I said, who by the way, were tough, but I loved them, I loved the campaign hats that they wore...remember the campaign hats?

Cohen: No, but I’ll have to look them up—oh, yeah.

Malham: The brown campaign hats. I mean, they were death on guys. I mean, no nonsense. You’re caught smoking a cigarette without what they called “field stripping” it, field stripping, so, there’s no evidence, just tobacco, you get caught doing that? You sweep your barracks with a toothbrush.

Cohen: Oh, God.

Malham: I mean sweep it. Or that’s it. Or run with your rifle for a mile, back and forth. Five times, ten times, huffing and puffing. Out of step. Being...falling, getting up late when they’re calling you for morning reveille. Anybody being late, the entire platoon was punished by filling their buckets with water and marching them, with buckets full of water. To the rear, march. To the rear, march. To the rear, march. I mean, back, forth, soaking wet, one thing or another. One of them was not responding to the first bugle call to get up—bucket of water in your face. I mean a bucket of water. All kinds of things like that. And then how to address them, “Private Malham requesting

permission to speak to the drill instructor.” If you didn’t get it, you turned around, saluted and went out, you know?

Cohen: So, you wanted to be a drill instructor?

Malham: Huh?

Cohen: You wanted to be a drill instructor?

### **[26:02 – Introduction of BAR]**

Malham: No! I wanted to be a Marine. I wanted to be a BAR man. I forgot, they introduced the BAR in the field where we were practicing with our rifles: field stripping them, putting them back together, timing, making sure you can do it blind, sighting, all of that. And then they brought the BAR, and a guy showed it to us, and so on. And said, and I said, I says, “Sir, may I use that BAR? Can I use that?” and he said, “I was just going to call on you people to see who wanted to do it, but you come on up.” So, he allowed me to take the BAR. He had instructed us how to use it-. I mean, it’s a heavy piece of equipment with a tripod, you know, that you have to set to be able to maneuver it, but I held it against my...I wish you were there to take a picture...I held it against my side, I mean, and it just rattled away, I mean, you can, there were like about thirty, forty bullets in that thing shooting away like crazy! I says, “I love it, I think this is great!” He says, “You’ve got a lot of guts,” he says, “You may be interested in being a BAR man.” Fade to black, fast-forward, I’m on sweeping duty in the halls of Montezuma show for Carlson’s Raiders, right? Remember Carlson’s Raiders? They did the movie. That’s where they were formed, that’s where they were organized. And I’m on sweeping duty, and I’m sweeping among the guests that are sitting in the hall. The movie star, damn it, he played in Gilda...Glen Ford! I said, “Sir, would you mind moving your feet?” He says, “What are you doing? What? There’s no dirt here!” I said, “I’m required to sweep the floor whether it has no dirt or not, so if you want your shoes swept I’ll

sweep them.” So, he put his feet up. I said, okay. I missed Tyrone Power, he was there too when I was there. But anyway, I was on that kind of training duty. So we went through out, I don’t know there was a point I was going to make about that...so, I got fascinated with all of the different troops that were coming in from the battlefields. And there was a rugged outfit, I forget what outfit they were with, and we were not really allowed to mingle with them. [Malham later added that they were returning from Saipan].

Cohen: Why not?

Malham: Because some of them were shell-shocked and all that stuff. And you might say the wrong thing and end up being strangled.

Cohen: Yeah.

Malham: You understand what I mean? Be a little cocky and come to them and say, “Well, you guys look kinda tough,” and he says, “Yeah, I’ll show ya,” and he grabs you by the throat, ready to throw you over their shoulder. So, I got close to one of them. He says, “So, what do you wanna be here?” I says, “Do you know what? I’m fascinated with the BAR.” He says, “Stay out of it.” He says, “You’re the first one they get. The BAR man is the first one they get because he’s got the most ammunition. Stick with the rifle, and don’t play big guy.” Isn’t that funny?

Cohen: It is funny. It’s like fortuitous advice.

Malham: Experienced, this was a very experienced--a lot of experience. I was so grateful for his advice. I don’t know if I was really ready to take it, but he says, “Take my advice, the BAR men are the folks we lose right away because they come right after them, with swords and hand grenades.” So, speaking of hand grenades, then was the time when we learned how to throw a hand grenade. And the drill instructor that’s in the pit with you, I mean you can’t get out, you’re almost eye-level with the surface of the ground, you’re so deep. Then he

says, “Just be calm, okay. We’ve done this many, many times. Just remember: you pull the pin and you throw the pin, and then you throw the hand grenades. Don’t get confused, okay? Don’t get confused.” So I mean, they, it’s a risk to their lives, right?”

Cohen: Right, just the training itself.

Malham: I mean, if you lose control of the thing...So, I grab that baby—and what confuses me now, oh, you hold it in your right hand, pull the pin with your left, you pull the pin with your left. And he says, “Remember, that’s the pin, don’t throw the pin and hold the grenade.” You see what I mean? “Don’t get confused.” You pull the pin and you think, no! You pull the pin and throw the grenade. Well, we got through that. And then we got through crawling under machine-gun fire. I mean seriously, crawling on your stomach, eating a little dirt doing it, and just crawling with the rifle. And keeping it up so you don’t get mud in the muzzle. And if you put your head up, you lose it. Real machine gun fire. So, we get through all of that, and then up the ropes, and over the...what do you call those big, those big walls, the wooden walls that they make? Where you have to jump up, grab the rope, climb up and over, run to the other one. So, we got through all of those exercises, and then the running, twenty miles marches in the morning, running back, forth, climbing all of that, graduation: You’re out. You get a couple of week’s liberty, took the picture, came home. Went back.

Cohen: So, when you went back, was that to do the advanced training at Camp Pendleton?

### **[0:33:04 – Training at Camp Pendleton]**

Malham: That’s where they went. We were assigned to Camp Pendleton. We trained there for about three months and then, I think it was October, we got shipping orders. At that point they said, “No correspondence. No mention of where you’re at. No mention of

where you're going, or what's going on because all of it will be censored, anyway." So it's best not to write any letters until we get settled. So, we made it at the, at the docks, early in the morning, full field pack, sixty-five pounds, full field pack. I mean, everything. Carried that, oh, by the way, we used that to jump. It was just like being aboard a ship, and you have to swim with it on. Okay, so we've got our full field packs, sixty-five pounds with a shovel and an axe for the holes that you're going to dig when you get there. And I don't know if there were some rations in there or what. But anyway, we get to the port, there was a band playing, you board the ship, it's called a Snortin'-Norton' [0:34:23] and I felt for a moment, like I don't know... like...who are some of the famous movie stars, the one with "Mutiny on the Bounty?" Who was the star on "Mutiny on the Bounty?"

Malham, Jr. Clark Gable? Charles?

Malham: Clark Gable, I felt like Clark Gable coming up there. Like a veteran. And I thought, "Oh, my God." I checked into my bunk, it was a four-stack bunk.

Cohen: Four?

Malham: Four stacked, and I think I got the second one, rather than the lower one. So, I went out to the bow and put my foot like this, and I says, "When are we going to pull out?" [Laughter] We were in the harbor! By the time we passed out of the harbor I was throwing up, rushing to the john, and bumping into sailors, who were throwing up ahead of me. Their heads in the latrine! And I'm thinking to myself, "I'm not the sailor and I'm just as sick as they are! I can't believe this, how the hell are we going to do this trip?" Destination unknown until they told us we were headed to Hawaii. So, I did not make it. I was like my mother, all the way, to Hawaii. I was in my bunk. They said, "Howie, you've got to eat, you have to have some food," because after the first day of going to the mess hall, and the ship is like this, you know,

it was a huge transport, it's like this, and as I'm going up the stairs, I'm looking like, east or west, and I see the horizon like this. And I'm thinking, I can't make it, I'm not gonna make it. So, I'd get to the mess hall, and my coffee is going like this, okay. And I couldn't keep food down. So, they got me back to bunk where I stayed, I swear, unless I had to go the john, all the way to Hawaii. And then I got my sea legs. I got my sea legs in Hawaii, and I did guard duty aboard the ship.

Cohen: So, what type of ship was it?

Malham: It was a troop transport called a "Snortin' Norton." I mean, it was...it was a battle ship for all practical purposes, to protect us even though we were trained with life-savers and everything else in case we had to abandon ship. And then at night, I would come out at night when it was still, and you could see some of the fish flying out over the water. I don't...it wasn't a convoy, I think it was just our ship that was headed out to Hawaii [with a destroyer escort, as Malham later clarified]. And fortunately, we didn't have any storms or anything else because they would have had to shoot me. So, we made it there, got acquainted with some of the guards that came aboard ship. We never were allowed any liberty to go off, so, we stayed and chatted, talked, while I did some guard duty aboard ship. And for the most part it was a very silent, not much excitement going on, until we lifted, weighed anchor, and took off. And then we found out we were headed to Guadalcanal.

Cohen: So, when did you get your MOS, like, when were you trained as a rifle marksman? Was it back in California?

Malham: It was at boot camp.

Cohen: Okay, right at the beginning, basically?

Malham: Yeah, it was all the way, during that BAR period and the hand-grenade period and everything else period.

Cohen: Gotcha.

Malham: So, anyway, we got through that, all of that experience. Camp Pendleton was exciting. Lot of advanced training, lot of twisting, turning, lots of ups and downs, doing everything that humanly...that could humanly happen to you. Like learning how to thrust, putting a bayonet on your rifle, right? And it was the thrust, and then pulling it out of the guy's stomach and this sort of thing. And of course, you were using bags. Sand bags, to stick your rifle in and pull it out. Thrust, back. It was very rhythmic to get all of that. And the jumping and the climbing and the swimming, well, not any swimming at Pendleton. So, we went through all of that, and by the time we got to Guadalcanal--great big ceremony, by the way, crossing the equator. Throwing some marines overboard to celebrate going across the equator. If they threw me overboard, I wouldn't be here! I thought, how gutsy! But I'm sure those guys that they threw in knew what they were going to do, go through because the ship didn't stop, the ship was still moving, so that was crossing the equator. And I loved the southern sky, the stars in the Southern Cross, you saw the Southern Cross, and the sky was beautiful... So, we land at Guadalcanal. And there, under, I think [Major] General [Lemuel C.] Shepherd [Jr.] is the one who was appointed to form the 6th Marine Division. The only Marine division formed overseas. The only Marine division disbanded overseas.

Cohen: So, when they formed the 6<sup>th</sup> Division of the Marines, were you aware at the time that you would be—that you were planning for the Battle of Okinawa?

**[40:50 – Code for Okinawa]**

Malham: No, hush, hush. It was a code. "Operation Iceberg" was the code for Okinawa, but there was no mention of it because there was still correspondence going on, in and out, even though they were going to...what do you call it? What's the word they use for making sure

nothing gets through? I mean, when they check the letters, what do they do?

Cohen: Censorship?

Malham Jr: Encrypt? Code? Censor? Redact?

Malham: Yeah, they just, they check everything going out. So anyway, I was assigned to the 22<sup>nd</sup>, which I'm so proud of because they had a great record, the 22<sup>nd</sup> Marine Regiment. I have the 6<sup>th</sup> Marine history division book, and it begins with all of the platoons and regiments that formed, came to...the 6<sup>th</sup> Marine Division. And they had a tremendous record: Peleliu, The Solomon Islands, Guadalcanal... unbelievable. I was so proud to be a part of it. So, we moved into their, we moved into their section. I'm sorry, I didn't bring you pictures of the tents we were living in, but you're up on a hill, looking at the Pacific Ocean down below, and it was a lovely sight, and there in the base, at the base of the hill, right there at the beach was the Kananga Maru, which was the Japanese ship that was ditched-- beached. And we think there were still Japs, dead on it. But in a desperate attempt to hold the island, when the Marines took it, they beached their ship, left it there, and many of us used--except me-- many of us used it as a diving board. But we had to be careful, because there were sharks in those waters. So, we had guys that would stand on the beach to watch for the fins coming because a lot of them were still searching for I guess bodies in the ship. So anyway, that went on. And then I had the...I lived kind of dangerously because there was a mail boat that went to Tulagi where they kept all the women so the guys would not go crazy. So, I volunteered to go because I wanted to go and see what Tulagi was like. And so, you know, it was like about an hour ride because they would take mail there and bring mail back. We went and then they would use sharks for...practice, taking sharks out. So, we went, we'd go and come back. As I said, I got my sea legs, and I was grateful for that because I

couldn't have made it otherwise because there was a hell of a lot more in store for us, so I went to...

Cohen: Could you explain to me, what does it mean to get sea legs?

Malham: Huh?

Cohen: Okay, pardon my ignorance, but what does it mean to get the sea legs?

Malham: Well, the sea legs, I could walk aboard ship without...without any problem. You go with the sway of it, up and down, without getting...sea sick.

Cohen: Okay, gotcha.

Malham: Your legs somehow or other get adjusted to going; when the ship goes up you go up you go up with it, and when it goes down... and when the cups go this way, it doesn't bother you anymore. It's like your mind is balanced for all of this twisting and turning and up and around. It's almost like doing a tango, once you get the hang of it, you don't trip and fall. But nobody asked me to do a tango. So, anyway, we got there, we're getting settled in, see the Kananga Maru, get acquainted with the mess. And the mess, I forget the guy's name, is the son of a famous movie producer, damn it...Joseph would know, and I got acquainted with him. But anyway, in a couple of weeks I was assigned guard duty. We had...we had hundred-gallon tanks of gasoline at the base of the hill right there in front of the bush where many Japanese were still hiding out because they didn't know the war was over. And they would occasionally come out to steal food or something. Okay? So, I was on guard duty, by the gallons, and they're on these horses... what do you call them? Horses? Where you put the tanks on. Okay, so the tanks are above, like this, so that if you want oil, you just open them up, right? Anyway, they form this, a square, the back of which is against the bush. Now, here's where I would have given a million dollars for a

camera: I'm doing guard duty: it's night. I think my assignment is about, 12:00 to 3:00 [am] or something. Beautiful moon, beautiful sky. The sea is very quiet, you can hear the waves coming in and out. And as I'm walking around, as I was instructed to do, to make sure nobody gets in by those tanks to do whatever they want to do, I'm at this side facing the end of the tanks, with my rifle on my shoulder, and I hear: Shhhhewww, whhhssswwhh...I says, "What the hell, is that swishing?" Something is moving out of the bush. Did you ever hear, well, let me tell you. I look. I don't move. I don't even take my rifle out. I'm like frozen because I don't want to betray my being there. And I look, and I can make out, a five foot [animal] sitting on his hind legs, huffing and puffing with his tail going like this: A Komodo dragon. Unbelievable, because they came all the way from the Komodo Islands. But they can fly and they can jump and they can swim, and they can, they gobbled up little kids on the Komodo Islands--they have to make sure the kids aren't out in the field because they drag them, they come in and drag the kids off. They bite them, and the poison kills them and they come back several days later to feed on them...with animals primarily. I look, and I'm staring, and I can make out the Komodo dragon. I don't know a Komodo dragon, and I've never seen one before-- big paws. He crawls...like...he's not like a lion, he's got a huge tail, right. So, when he stands he's almost standing on his tail, and he's looking like this, and swishing his tail. He disappears back in the bush. I'm off duty, I run up, report to my superiors, and then I see the guy who's the son of one of the movie directors, and I says, I told him, I says, "You're not gonna believe it, I saw this huge black dark animal, swishing its tail and standing up." He says, "You saw a Komodo dragon?" I says, "What the hell is that?" He says, "They could chew you up, but they don't, they bite you and inject you with your poison or whatever, and then come back and eat you up." Komodo dragon. I've seen pictures of Komodos. We went to Washington. My wife and I visited there,

went to the zoo, and I said, “Do you have Komodos?” and they said, “Yes! They’re back over there.” I went there...

Cohen: Not the Komodos that you had seen?

Malham: I says, “Where are the parents?” He says, “Oh, we’re not that lucky. We’re hoping to get them, maybe from the Cleveland Zoo.” I say, “This is your Komodo dragon? That’s a baby!” He said, “That’s all we’ve got! You didn’t ask what size! You said, ‘Do we have Komodo dragons?’ That’s a Komodo dragon!” I says, “I’m sorry but the last one I saw was taller than you.” Well, “You should have brought it! We could’ve used it!” So anyway, that took care of that, and then we’re all training, practicing, back and forth, one thing and another, taking crabs out from under our bed, we’re sleeping inside of nets so that crabs don’t crawl in, and these crabs are the ones that look at you, run forwards, backwards, sideways, anyway! And they, you know, some guys would get them and cook them, all kinds of things. The biggest thing was to guard against snakes crawling into your bed, and what have you.

So, we did that, and we were like about...oh, maybe a couple of miles from Henderson Field, where they had a Catholic chapel, where we celebrated Christmas, and...I think the guys wanted to adopt a movie star, one of those young girls, very popular. I forget her name right now but she played Judy Garland’s daughter [Margaret O’Brien] .... But anyway, he says, “Why don’t you write her and tell her we want to adopt her as our mascot for the 22<sup>nd</sup>,” So I wrote and you know, whatever. And then there was some, I don’t think we had any entertainment to be honest with you. But going to Mass was great at the chapel at Henderson Field where for the most part we had to walk, or if we’re lucky get a lift from a jeep. The Marines were tough to one another, you know? “Hey, Mack. How do you like walking? Great, because that’s what you’re going to do.” He says, “Stop thumbing and start walking.”

Cohen: No finesse?

Malham: Yeah. So, anyway, we went and we sang Christmas carols for Mass, one thing or another.

Cohen: I think you mentioned in the questionnaire, that you also helped the Chaplains do Mass, as well?

Malham: I did, I served Mass. I was walking, delivering a message through a field, and I ran across a priest who was saying a Mass all by himself at an altar. And I stood by and assisted him, you know with the water and one thing or another. And he had a board on two tanks, two drums, to say his Mass and so on. So anyway, we didn't really have a chance to get too close to the priests because we weren't near them, they were at the chapel. But the chapel was lovely, and then at the Solomon Islands were lovely people. Except we never saw the women because they were all virtually naked, which was their style. And it was good because there were a lot of guys that would go crazy at that, and I'm not accusing anybody of anything, I mean none of us is perfect, but a lot of them want to get married. And that's not why we're here! Imagine what your mother would say to come home with a... he says, "She's a human being!" I said, "Good luck!" So, anyway, we get through all that, then the word comes down- we're shoving out!

Cohen: Oh, my.

Malham: Right. Where are we going? We don't know, it's called Operation Iceberg. So, we get aboard a troop transport.

Cohen: Before leaving, I have two questions. One of them was, did you personally ever come across a Japanese who was still hiding in Guadalcanal?

Malham: Never saw one until I was wounded and got to Saipan in the hospital. They would come out of the bushes, dressed like marines to steal

food, and they were wasted right there. And they would take them on a stretcher past my bed, and I'd say, "Is that what all the shooting was about?" and they would say, "Yeah, a couple of Japs dressed like Marines trying to steal food." You know, how sad, how pathetic. But they, like the ones on Guadalcanal, either they didn't know the war was over or they refused to give up. And they, you know, the Bushido code was: Take it to the end. That's what was so rough at Okinawa. They just wouldn't quit, they just kept coming at you. Does that answer your question?

Cohen: It does, absolutely. The other thing I was just wondering about, when you were at the Guadalcanal, did you meet other Marines who had fought previously in the operation to gain it?

Malham: The 22<sup>nd</sup> Regiment was full of heroes [of past major campaigns]. I read their history. These were the survivors of major battles, Taiwan...I forget all the names they were in [Malham later added Maui, Eniwetok, Guadalcanal, Samoa], but I was so proud to be...

Cohen: I see, part of them.

Malham: I mean, I was a babe in the woods next to these guys who knew how to throw flamethrowers and machine guns and BARs and knives, how to stab, how to thrust bayonets: The whole nine yards. So, I was proud to be a part of them, you know. So, we all got together, and finally the word came down: We're shoving out. Pull together, six in the morning, board ship. "Where are we going?" "You'll find out when we get there." So, we're aboard ship, and you know, I see guys playing with little monkeys that they brought from different parts. Mascots...they had them trained to do strange things. So, anyway, we're aboard ship, we're going, and then halfway to our destination, we had to stop, we're in a convoy, there's a destroyer escort...fortunately there were no planes around to take us out. Iwo Jima fighting is...going on...[as we sail past]. Okay.

Cohen: Yeah.

Malham: So, we're leaving at the end of March. Iwo is mopping up. Flag is already flying. We're travelling, and then halfway there, the ship casts a buoy over to the destroyer. I think we stopped enough for them to get the buoy in which the priest that was aboard our ship was being sent by this buoy and rope between two ships and waves coming down and up. He makes it, he gets to the other side. We are without benefit of a priest because of a very serious situation aboard the destroyer that needed a priest. Okay. We never got him back. So, beyond that...

Cohen: Had the ship been hit? Had the other ship been attacked?

Malham: No ships were attacked.

Cohen: So, why did the other ship need the priest from your ship?

Malham: Because one of the sailors probably had appendicitis or something. [Or someone needed the last rites].

Cohen: Oh, I see.

**[57:56 – Revealed that he is going to Okinawa]**

Malham: He was not wounded, he was just sick from something that needed a priest for absolution at the last minute and such. So, God willing, he made it and it was nothing serious, we don't know, the only thing I know is that we did not get him back because we were arriving on Easter Sunday, April 1<sup>st</sup>, without benefit of a priest for Mass for Easter, which was unbelievable. The Episcopalian was kind enough to make an announcement. He says, "I know I can't hear your confessions...but if you're comfortable with just coming to see me and talk about anything that would make you comfortable before you hit the island, I'd be happy to hear you." Nobody went. He can't bless me. He can't give me absolution, which is kinda dumb. But it was a generous act on his part. So, we all did in our own way, what

we thought we could do. Said our prayers, did the rosary, and so on. Individually, no big deal. But no Mass. No farewell. And that's the way we arrived when they told us, and revealed, and let it all hang out. Where we're going—it's an island, loaded with poisonous snakes. It's called Okinawa. We're gonna hit the Japanese 350 miles from their home base. We're taking the northern section of it, which is the closest to Japan, so that we can take over Yontan Airfield. It may take us a couple of weeks to do that. But anyway, we want Yontan Airfield to be a departure point for our B-25's to bomb Japan. Great, watch out for this, don't eat the food because they use human secretion for...to feed the crops, the foods that they're raising.

Cohen: Fertilizing? Yeah?

### **[1:00:02 – Approaching Okinawa]**

Malham: Fertilizer. They use it as fertilizer. So, anyway, we arrive...fortunately, I mean, there are over a thousand ships out there. And as you know the story, the kamikazes took the Navy out, the kamikazes destroyed more sailors, more ships, because that to them was the object, not the troops on the ground they had already built in five years before at Naha like it was a hotel. Fifty to a hundred feet below ground. Tunnels, toilets, kitchens--everything. They were built to stay. They came there five years before. So, they were prepared for us. And the amazing thing is, it's the only island we hit that was not preventing us from landing, like Tarawa, like Guadalcanal, where they were waiting for you on the beach. Cannons, guns, machine guns, wiping them out as they're wading through the water, coming off the Higgins boats that are unloading them. Wiping them all out, and you see bodies floating around. It's the only one where we walked in like it was Michigan Avenue. Unbelievable. We came down the side with our field packs, sixty-five [pounds], making sure we don't step in the hands of the guy below us and making sure our hands didn't get stepped on, and making sure that you didn't slip and fall and get

crushed between the Higgins boats and the ships because they're both rocking, And we lost a guy that way because they do fall. We're not experts in going down the rope ladders of a ship, especially when it's rocking and rolling and all of that.

Cohen: Can you describe the Higgins boats? Like...what did a Higgins boat look like?

Malham: I think they take like about fifty people in there where the front drops, and you run off. Great, it's a great boat. It's really a great boat. And of course, the sides come up to where you look so you're protected from machine gun fire as you go in. That's the famous one that you see [Gen. Douglas] MacArthur coming off of all the time. And then he decided to go back on and come back because he didn't like the shot that they were getting. That's a fact. Yeah. He wanted to get his shoes shined, wading through the water, God bless him, I wish I had met him. What a guy. He disobeyed [President Harry] Truman and was kicked out of the [fight on Korea]... Remember Korea? He crossed the line. "Follow instructions", Truman said. And you know what he said? That's a shame, he was great. But anyway, we land...

Cohen: Did the 22<sup>nd</sup> land on what was called the Green Beach, a bit more to the north [on Okinawa]? ...

Malham: [Yes]...the 1<sup>st</sup> Division was afloat as a standby. The 6<sup>th</sup> Division together with some branch or division of the Army hit the northern section of Okinawa. ...they predicted that it would take at least a couple of weeks to take Yontan, which was at ... a couple of miles from the beach. We were taking prisoner of Japs landing in Yontan not knowing that we had already taken Yontan. I mean, they would come out like going to the canteen, putting up they're hair. We said, "You made a mistake." We didn't take prisoners. We had no place to put them. No place to feed them. We had to take care of ourselves. So the first night we're there, we're under tables because there was a bombing of the island that came because the planes were the most

active. Lost a lot of sailors, lost a lot of ships. We had two British ships out there, I forget their names, but there were over all one-thousand ships. The tragedy of it all is unbelievable. I mean there were nineteen-thousand wounded by the time we secured the island. And about ten-thousand dead.

Cohen: It's horrendous.

Malham: But about one-hundred-thousand Japs were all wiped out. But anyway, before we get to that part, we take the island. We secure it in fifteen days. The famous [reporter Ernie Pyle] ...and they made a movie of them...who traveled with the Marines...they made a movie of him traveling with the Marines, he's from Indianapolis. Famous movie stars played him... he was with our outfit. I never met him personally, but he was with the 6<sup>th</sup> Marines and the 22<sup>nd</sup>. I never met him personally, but he went with the Army to a small island adjacent to Okinawa called Ie Shima and a mean mortar took him out and killed him. Come on people, help me out... [i.e., Ernie Pyle; brief discussion on who he might be was omitted].

Malham: Ernie Pyle! What a guy. Like I said, I never met him, I wish I had. But anyway, he goes to Ie Shima to be with the Army there, and they no sooner land. And the mean mortar that they used took him out. And I often wonder if he's still buried there or if they moved him back to Indianapolis. I'm sure they sent him back, I'm sure they have a monument there for him, or buried him.

Cohen: I think so.

Malham: Fifteen days we secured the island. We secured it in fifteen! They said we wouldn't be able to take Yontan in two weeks! We get through, I forget again, I don't know why, all of these names were so prominent in my mind, but we get to the end of our objective on the northern end of the island. And we bypass all the major cities, the big tombs that they have where people are buried in barrels like this, in

shellshock. Split the barrels and you can see the bodies sitting there. And they were great places for shelter, in case of bombings, and that sort of thing. So with all those twists and turns we move fast, we knew we were bypassing...Japs, who are forming behind us.

Cohen: So, what was your role in this? Like, the Army is moving north, they're conquering...

Malham: Marksman. Well, I'm a rifleman.

Cohen: So, basically, if you would see a Japanese, you would be obliged to shoot, basically?

#### **[1:09:04 – Duties on Okinawa]**

Malham: Yes, and see their bodies that we would walk over. But there's nothing you could do for them. You know? Flies gathering on them and everything else. So, anyway, I mean, that wasn't our, we weren't there to attend for burial services. I wasn't with the burial division. And I don't think we were buried any of them. All we were told is if you ever catch any marine going through the body of another marine, you're authorized to kill him. You know, some guys wore some beautiful expensive jewelry. Rings, gold, whatever. See them go through and get they're wallet. Kill them. Don't let them rip off a dead marine, okay. So, we secured the island, the flag goes up, big ceremony. Not like Iwo Jima. Iwo Jima, by the way, we passed heading for Okinawa. And they secured it, put the flag up, Mt. Suribachi, the whole nine yards, great ceremony, you know? A lot of history, a lot of tradition as you know. So, anyway, we get there, we secure it, we put the flag up, fifteen days. And we are assigned to what you call a mopping up operation. Mopping up means you go back and check out who did we not get. I mean, the bushes, hiding, rivers, one thing or another. And for the most part we're traveling along the China Sea coast, not too far from Japan, as I said. So we're moving along and...you know, we're loaded. We don't have any

flamethrowers or anything. And the most powerful equipment that I was with, I was with my squad, and I had a great, great platoon leader that was with us... I really...a Jewish fellow, super guy. Came to visit him here in Chicago when I was released. And he got shell shock, and was left over there. But anyway, because he had been through five campaigns, four campaigns? That was my first.

### **[1:11:31 – Close calls and Japanese attacks]**

So anyway, we're cleaning mess, going through, we stop, I relieve, head of our squad secures us, to put us at this base, dig a foxhole, don't take your shoes off, sleep with your rifle next to you, you Malham, do guard duty until three in the morning, no you go on at, I think... I think it was from twelve to five or something? I says, "Okay," but he said, "Remember, stay alert, don't take your shoes off, Sirovski! That goes for you!" And he was the one who took his shoes off and so when the Japs attacked us that night, while we were secured there, coming from the bushes as I'm guarding it, I see movement, I see traffic, I see something is happening. So, I go to Ira and I tell him, I says, "Ira, Sir, I think we've got some company coming at us through the bush." He says, "Get all the guys up, get your rifles, take secure," and then the mortars start falling and the bullets start flying. He says, "Hit the deck, and crawl out on your stomachs," all the things we learned, okay? And he says, there's a ledge that was protecting the farmers from the ocean that would come in and wipe their places out, so, we get over that ledge, drop down. He separates us. Seven this way, seven the other. Break it up. We take off, nobody is hurt. Sirovski is not with his shoes. I meet him in Klamath Falls, Oregon, six months later, with bloody feet all patched up because he had to run barefooted over all the shells that were in the area. Orders are orders. You could lose your life. Anyway, we finally get across, we're going along, we hit a beach. We hit a river, and this small inlet. He says, "Let's cross. Put your rifles up." He goes first to

make sure you don't have to swim it. And it's just, like, right to his neck.

Cohen: Yeah.

Malham: Okay, so they go across one by one. And I'm seventh, and I bring up the rear. And I get to the end—just as I get to the end—bullets start coming at me. So, I...he says, "Howie," what's the word for snakes?

Malham Jr: Serpentine?

**[1:14:20 – Hit by a 'spinner.' Bullet permanently stuck in body]**

Malham: Serpentine. He says, "Keep moving left and right, don't let them sight in on you!" A sniper has picked me out...because there was nobody out there, so it had to be a sniper, and they were great at that, up in the trees or whatever. But anyway, we're on the other side of this small river, and I'm counting as I'm running serpentine, and I get to the ledge, and here's where they're at, here's the ocean, here's the ground they're on. I fly as I reach this point and go over. I'm at like about, forty-five degrees. I catch what they call a spinner. A spinner from the sniper is the bullet that hits another object before it hits you. So, when it does that, it's spinning around. Okay? That bullet came like directly above my belt line, on the left side of my body and spiraled itself, tearing my insides out, and lodged itself right next to my heart where it still is. They never took it out...When MRIs were introduced, "No MRIs." I've got everything but tattooed on me. So, that if I'm unconscious, they'll know, God willing, they'll check it. But I found out from going to hospitals that they don't check as closely as they should. I have to tell them, no MRIs, like they wanted to do a couple of months ago. Then they found out they can't do MRIs. So, anyway, I fell, he caught me. Ira caught me. And I maybe started to say, the act of contrition, like I was going, okay, because I didn't know I was going to make it. So, it was the usual, I confessed to the almighty God, Blessed Mary the Virgin and everything else, so on and

so forth. He says, "Howie, you're gonna be all right, trust me. You're gonna be okay." So, I landed in their laps and they said, "Give him a cigarette, it'll help him." I almost gagged! I almost gagged, and then he says, "Don't give him a cigarette! His lungs are punctured!" Okay, so, there we are, out in an open field, no medication, no medic, no corpsman. No...we have what they call a... [field] medical base at the edge of the water, where they set up a medical base...right...

Cohen: Right.

### **[1:17:06 – Treatment and medical attention for bullet wound]**

Malham: So, he says, "Let's just hope we get somebody going by," and lo and behold, God is good, there is a corpsman driving around like he's on a vacation. And they called him, and yell, and he comes driving up. They says, "Boy are we glad that you're here" and "Why?" he says, "Can I help?" And they say, "We have a wounded marine." He says, "Great let's see him." He sees me, he says, "Oh my god, I could take him to the... field base...he says, "I could take him there," and he looks at him, at Ira, and he says, "Could I take his shoes? I need a pair of shoes." Ira says, "You can have his shoes, but that's all you get." So, they took my shoes. And oh, that's okay, I don't need them, I'm not going to be walking around. So, anyway, he gets my shoes, they fit, they take it. I carried my rosary with me since 1941, and I say, "Look, I've got my rosary on me and I don't want to lose my rosary," and I don't have the same one, I have a different one, because my son took the one that I had ... since '41 till '45 when I got wounded. And he came to me a couple months ago, and he said, "Dad, I lost my rosary." My oldest son. And I said, "Great, you can have mine, because I got a different one." He says, "This is the one from Okinawa?" I says, "Yeah, from 1941, from military school, from grade school, from all of that!" It's got all the medals on it...religious medals. So, anyway they...take everything, well we're not gonna undress you. I said, "Just make sure that nothing is removed from my

pocket, like my rosary. You can take my watch and everything else.” They said no, they’re not allowed to take anything. So they put me in the jeep. Drive me off. I don’t know if it’s the next day or what. I wake up, in a tent. I noticed some covered with blankets, some sitting there. So dead or alive they’re there. And the priest is giving me what they call extreme unction—the final blessing. And I says, “Father,” I was wicked enough to ask him, I says, “Father, is it that serious?” He said, “No, it’s not that,” and I ask, “Why the extreme unction?” It’s the final...he says- this is beautiful, I’ll never forget it- he says, “It’s as good for the soul as it is for the body.” I says, “I’ll take it,” I don’t think I said anything. So, I pass out again, so I was passing in and out because...and I ended up getting a thoracotomy because everything, my whole chest had to be opened up. Put things together, I mean, things had spun around. But it [i.e. the bullet] lodged just about an inch away from my heart. So, during a heart bypass, quadruple bypass in 2008, they got near it, and the doctor doing the operating told my primary, he says, “I saw it,” He said, “Why didn’t you take it out?” he says, “That wasn’t my job.” Thank God. Because they told me at I must never let them try. So anyway,

Cohen: Just to...so...they operated on you at the base hospital at the coast? Did they do the operations at that base hospital? What was the trajectory?

Malham: No. what they did was, they transported me from that field hospital, put me on a stretcher, lifted me up. I said, “Make sure the rosary is on the stretcher next to me please.” So, I didn’t have any clothes on, I had a blanket or something, so, I sensed this when I came to, I sensed I was being lifted up and it was so funny, it was like going up to the sky, I saw everything but angels. So, they transported me aboard the Good Samaritan Hospital ship [i.e. the USS Samaritan] with the big cross on it, so that the Japanese would know this was a hospital ship. The one before it was already bombed.

Cohen: So, where did the Good Samaritan Hospital ship take you?

Malham: They put me aboard, and my sense says, once I was put in my room, they came and took me to be operated on, to patch me up, and to remove the bullet, and when I woke up the next day, I think we're already...we were heading for Guam. But they got word that there were Japanese submarines in the waters, so they went to Saipan, which was a very big battle at Saipan because I met some of the Saipan boys at... remember, at Camp Pendleton....

Cohen: Yes, yeah.

Malham: Took a real beating there. Some of them were already... [shell] shocked... So, anyway, I woke up the next morning and I asked the nurse--they had great nurses, "How was it? Was it okay?" She said, "No, they couldn't take it out, but we're going to Saipan where I think we can do better there at a medical hospital. It's okay." So, I survived, or whatever. The bullet. They didn't open me up on the side because the thoracotomy is a very open [operation] where they laid everything out, practically. The lungs and everything. So, we get to Saipan and we're unloaded, like about midnight, and put in ambulances, and I wake up the next morning. When the field surgeon is...checking all the patients that were brought in at midnight, and he comes to my bed, and he looks at me, and he says, "What part of you are we going to amputate?" I say, "I don't know, I'm not aware of any amputation. All I know is that I got a bullet in me." He says, "Get this man out of the amputation ward! Put him where he belongs!" Lot of mistakes that happened.

Malham Jr: You forgot to mention that it was the eve of your eighteenth birthday?

Malham: Huh?

Malham Jr: Did we cover this?

Cohen: Well, I know that he entered at seventeen, and this is only less than a year later.

Malham Jr: Correct, but, he took the bullet on the 17<sup>th</sup> of April, which is the day before his eighteenth birthday.

Malham: Oh, I forgot! I forgot, that when I took the bullet it was on the eve of my eighteenth birthday, April 18. We landed April 1<sup>st</sup>, by eighteen, they're shipping me out. Naha was the terrible battle afterwards. I followed all the news reports. And then of course, everybody knew that we were headed for China after Okinawa. I was to go to Ching Tao, China, and I'm sorry I didn't make it because I think that would've been great. But anyway, the troops went there for R&R, after Okinawa. But...three months later the bombs were dropped and it was all over. The atom bombs.

Cohen: So, you were in the hospital in Saipan? You're in the hospital?

### **[1:25:20 – Treatment at Saipan hospital]**

Malham: I'm in the hospital aboard the ship going to Saipan. We arrived in Saipan, and they're examining me, and the doctor gets me out of the amputation ward, puts me in the regular ward. I've got a beautiful Puerto Rican doctor, who is responsible for me, and after a couple of days there, he sits me up, and he takes his finger around from where the heart is, and comes like this and comes around, he says, "You're lucky." He says, "That bullet could have gone right through your heart." But he says, "We're gonna take care of you, don't worry." I says, "That's good news! What else have you got?" So they take me in, open me up, laid me out, I was the first one...before that they told me in Saipan that all thoracotomies [were] performed, with a horizontal cut on the body and lifted up this way. I was the first one where they decided to avoid the surgical markings on a body like when you go swimming or something, people don't stare at you...like where were you burned? They opened me, slit me down the side this

way, so if I'm like this, you wouldn't know. But if I'm like this you can see the scar that goes all the way down my body. So, they performed that operation, do what they have to do. If you see, I got pictures of a thoracotomy—they take everything, inside out. Lungs and all. It's just unbelievable, just near your heart.

Cohen: It is.

Malham: So, anyway, not to be overly dramatic about it. I'm examined a couple of days later, and that surgeon is coming by, he says, "You look great compared to what you looked like inside out!" I says, "What?" He says, "I was fortunate enough to make my rounds when they had you opened up on the operating table, and I stood there as an observer." He says, "You've got a hell of an inside." Did you say inside or insight?

Cohen: That's great.

Malham: So, anyway, I stayed there a couple of months. My cousin, who was flying and got in before my brother did, got permission to fly to Saipan when he heard that I was there, landed, but I was already moved out. My cousin, Paul Abraham, who came to visit me there. Before all of that, I'm lying in bed, I haven't been able to get up and move around yet, so I'm confined to the bed. So, I see them one afternoon bring in a couple of patients in on stretchers. I say, "Where the hell are they coming from?" He says, "Those are Japs, dressed like us, sneaking out to get food. Got in the mess line." I mean, war is war, right? What are you going to do? Go into survival, one way or another. So anyway, I'm glad you reminded me about the birthday, I completely forgot it because I thought that was the hallmark of my being there.

**[1:29:09-1:29:50 CUT – Interruption for break]**

Cohen: I'm very, we're very lucky to have somebody as articulate as you to tell the story that can give a vivid description...

Malham: I'm really blessed with an ability. That's why I was so fortunate as I said, I love public speaking. I didn't tell you that when I was in grade school, they had picked me to represent the school at the annual American Legion oratory contest that was held at the Lyric Opera [of Chicago]. And I was on the stage there in my eighth year.

Cohen: Wow.

Malham: And delivered the Gettysburg address. And I got an award for it.

Cohen: So, it sounds like something that was in you from a young age onward.

Malham: Once I got rid of the Spanish, and Castro. And I loved, I fell in love with the English language. I really fell in love with it. Like I said, I play crosswords, jumbo crosswords three times a day. My daughter got me that big jumbo crossword book, and I'm on page sixty-five right now.

Cohen: I'm also a person who was fascinated by words, not so much numbers but words. I remember even being a kid at the dentist's office, and seeing the signs and playing word games in my mind, what can I make out of the letters I see here.

Malham: Right. And the amazing thing I've discovered...I'm a bear. I don't give up, even though I've got a sixty-minute timer so I don't spend all night if I can't come to the answer. I've got to get those four words and then take the circled ones and find out what the answer is. And I'll tell you, I'm amazed that I've run into three words that are not in the dictionary that they used in jumbo crosswords. What is a macron?

Cohen: Macron? I would think it's a very small measure?

Malham: A macron is that little small line that goes over a vowel.

Cohen: Right, right. That one.

Malham: A macron. I thought it was macaroni.

**[1:32:34-1:33:13 CUT – Interruption]**

Cohen: So, before we go to the medals, like just to get the chronology right, in the questionnaire, you mentioned that you were in five hospitals. So, so far, I'm counting three--so what happened? Where were you after Saipan?

Malham: Well, after the hospital ship, after the field hospital.

Cohen: Yes.

Malham: After the SS Samaritan.

Cohen: Yes.

Malham: After Saipan, they flew me out to Hawaii.

Cohen: Okay.

Malham: And we're on the main island in Hawaii, [Honolulu] near Pearl Harbor. Aiea Heights, great, great [naval] hospital. Went there in 2000 to visit it with my wife, closed, gone. And it was the most magnificent...palatial! Nurses in white uniforms, starched. Doctors all over. I mean, we had nurses at Saipan, but they were Army nurses. I mean, they were all lovely and they were all dedicated and all wonderful, but there's nothing like white starched uniforms.

Cohen: That's true.

Malham: Parading around, wheeling you in a wheelchair...visiting, talking, everything except dancing, you know? So, Aiea Heights was gone... [In] Honoulu ... So, we're there, and it's there where they brought me the announcement of... [receiving] a field commission to private first class. From private they promoted me to first class, which was a field commission. For action on the field. Isn't that cute? And then they awarded me in a very ceremonial way, two Marine officers

representing the commandant of the Marine Corps and the president of the United States with a Purple Heart.

Cohen: So maybe we can talk now about the medals?

Malham: We're not ready for that.

Cohen: Oh, I'm sorry!

Malham: No, because we weren't collecting medals. It was just the award of the Purple Heart [of which I was aware]. I was not aware of being awarded the Asiatic Pacific Campaign, with a star [nor the Navy Unit Commendation Award with a star], nor the ... American Campaign [Medal] ...nor [the] World War II [Victory Medal]. I was not aware of those medals that I had earned. [Malham subsequently clarified medals. He was also issued the Honorable Service Lapel Pin – the "Ruptured Duck"; all in all a total of five medals.]

Cohen: Okay, so, you were aware at this point that you had been awarded the Purple Cross, but not...

Malham: I didn't wear the Purple Heart. I never wore the Purple Heart. It's too showy.

Cohen: Could we show it here? Could I open up the box here, nonetheless? Could we show it, just for the...?

Malham: I don't even wear the bar. But you see the small one? You see the small one? The real one?

Cohen: Do you mean the little?

Malham: Looks like a half inch.

Cohen: Yes. Over here?

Malham: Yes. I wear that on my hat. Not this one. My daughter just sent me this for the summer. But the fall cap, the Marine cap that I have, has that little Purple Heart on it.

Cohen: Okay, so more...discrete.

Malham: But nobody hardly notices it. I was at the Memorial Mass at the cemetery yesterday. Nobody notices anything. Well, I wasn't wearing the medals...and they're all more or less inconspicuous because people, for one thing, I'm amazed that people think I'm too young to be in WWII.

Cohen: Well, thank God! Thank God.

Malham: They say, "You fought in World War II. How old are you?" I say, "Ninety-two." She says, "I thought you were seventy-five, seventy-eight!" I'm not boasting, I mean, I'm just quoting...I mean, I just say, "I don't know, I mean, my beautician does a hell of a job," So, anyway, we fly to Hawaii, great staff, great medical corps, great treatment, one thing or another. I'm still not able to walk, I'm still in a wheelchair or lying in bed. I get my medal, that's fine. All the ceremony is completed. And then, it's time to leave, they're sending me to San Francisco Hospital, which is very nice because I had family in San Francisco and Twiloop. And they know that I'm there, and they come to visit me, in San Francisco, which is great. Then I'm there for, I don't know how many months. Then they ship me from there ... [to] the naval hospital in Iowa. They sent me to the hospital in Iowa, and then they put me through whatever they're putting me through. I think I'm getting my sea legs now. I think I'm getting up and out of bed without attendants. And then from there, to Klamath Falls, Oregon, which was in the early stages of the war, an elephantiasis Marine camp, for marines that caught elephantiasis. You know what elephantiasis is? Where the body, including your genitals, grow enormously. And you can't walk. It's a disease that inflates you, just unbelievable. Thank God they got rid of that. So, I'm at Klamath Falls

and getting acquainted with people, communicating by letter with family. There are different songs on the jukebox by...[Perry Como, as supplement later by Malham.] Very popular... Oh, back in Hollywood, when I was there, we used to go to movie star homes! On liberty, when I was on liberty at San Diego boot camp.

Cohen: Right, right

Malham: We met...[James Gleason at the Hollywood Center] there, and I [was invited to] his home and taught us throwing--how they threw the can, you know? How they throw that thing that sails, what do you call that? What do you call that thing? Howie?

Malham Jr: Frisbee

Malham: Frisbee. They used tin cans that they get the films in, and they were throwing it back and forth...[He] wanted us to come and swim in his pool, and had a great time. And then there were several other movie stars that we would see coming up and down the street, and they were talking to them. But anyway, back in San Francisco and Klamath Falls. We're walking around, we're talking, and suddenly, the head surgeon, dressed in his naval uniform, wants an appointment with me. So, we get together, and he says how about taking a walk, have a cigarette, whatever I says, "Oh that's fine." I says, "Why? What's cooking?" He says, "Well there's some things we want to talk about." He says, "How do you feel?" I says, "Oh, I feel fine. I think the guys have done a great job. I haven't looked inside my body lately, I don't know what the story is." I know the bullet is there. "The bullet is there," he said. "But I want to guarantee you one thing—first of all, don't let anybody touch it. If it could be removed, we would have removed it. Let it stay. Don't let anybody think they can outsmart us—okay? It's nothing to play with. And nobody can make points by taking it out, because it will take you with it." Fine. He didn't know about MRI at that time, but when we got MRI, they said, no MRI. Now, he says, "You're a..." well, he says, "You know the [atom]

bombs have been dropped and the war is ending and Japan surrendered and all that?" I said, "Yeah." He says, "We want to send you home. Are you up to that?" I says, "If you can't use me, I might as well go home." He says, "We think it would be better if you went home." I says, "You mean you're discharging me?" December 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945, on a train...going home. Got settled, took me about two years to get adjusted because I was on...what was that medicine? That was so common in WWII... I had to get up in the middle of the night to go for a walk... it was a post-traumatic something or other, I don't know. Getting adjusted, talking...dealing with people, which I couldn't deal with. Talking is okay now, but I wasn't very talkative. I just, I don't know, I was just spinning around...

Cohen: Were you living at your parents' home?

Malham: Yes. And they were kind of shook up when they got the letter, about my being wounded. I said to my sisters, "Did you ever save that letter?" She says, "Are you kidding? Why would I want to save that it almost killed all of us when we got the letter?" I says, "What a souvenir it would have been." I said, "How did it read?" She said, "You don't want to know. They can't tell you where you're at, all they can say is, "Your son has been wounded, but we'll keep you posted". Oh, brilliant. That's very good. They hadn't told my dad anything about it. He couldn't handle it. My dad didn't know until we went to Mass one day, and somebody said, "Howell! I can't believe that it's you! I hear you were shot!" My dad, he says, "No!" He says, "I'll see you later." We got home, he said to my mother, "What happened to Howell? That they said he was...?" and then they told him, and he was... well, we got past that stage, and I was still on this medication... I wish that they knew, it was a very popular name that they use for people in my condition. So anyway...I was spending all my time in Chicago because that's where all my friends were because my family had moved to Indiana to be with my sister during the war. So I would go back and forth on the South Shore. And then I met

Martha. And that was 1947. I met her in '45 when I came back at the end of December. End of '45... '46, '47, we got acquainted. Her parents found out I was Catholic and resented the fact I was Catholic, so... we got over all of that--twists and turns--by meeting secretly, telephoning secretly. And do you want to hear the rest of it?

Cohen: Sure! Sure!

Malham: So, I said, "You know, I don't know anybody else I really... I think I really would like to be with you the rest of my life," I says, "How would you like to walk with me for the rest of my life?" She says, "When do we start?"

Cohen: Wow.

Malham: Great title. I've got five chapters already for that. So, her family found out that I had been wounded and thought that I was shot in the head instead of shot in the chest. Her uncle ... [was a tyrant],

Malham Jr: **[Interruption 1:47:10]**

Malham: So anyway, they did everything to avoid my seeing her. One night she came, huffing and puffing, and she says, "Howie, they're gonna send me to California because they're afraid we're gonna do something foolish." I said, "Like what? Getting married?" I said, "How do you feel about that?" She says, "When do we start?" I said, let me make a few phone calls. Fortunately... I [had] worked...when I was in high school [for Bob Fills], the head of the National Tea Company in Chicago, you're probably too young to remember National Tea. They were very prominent. And they were on Larrabee St, near Montgomery Ward. And I used to work for him, and it was great, I got to know him, so we became great friends and I became like an adopted son to him. And so... [when] I joined to the service [Marines] and came back, he... [had arrived] at Port Huron, [Michigan], with his wife and they're right across from a church called St. Joseph's... So when my wife came, I said they want to send

her away, I said, "Go home, be relaxed, and wait for my call. I have to make a few calls." So, I called him, I said, "Bob, I have a situation here. Blah, blah, blah. I'm in love with her, they won't let me marry her." He says, "How can I help?" I says, "I'd like to bring her to Port Huron where she has agreed to investigate, at least, the possibility of becoming a Catholic. And if she doesn't want it, that's fine! At least give her a chance because she's Greek, and she says 'it's all Greek to me! I don't understand any of it.'" I said, "Great, let's give it a shot." And then he said, "Howie, bring her out here, we've got a nice home for girls, religious, Catholic, what have you. They would take good care of her, you can stay with us right across from the church where she would go for her lessons!" I said, "Perfect!" He said, "Before you go, I have to ask you," I said, "What about?" He says, "Do you have to marry her?" I say, "What the hell does that mean?" He says, "You know what I mean." I says, "I don't even know her! If you mean sleeping with her, and having a... I don't even know her! And I'm sure her family thinks she's already pregnant!" [Anyway] bottom line...I said to her, I called [Bob], we made arrangements, two days later I said, "Look, [go to] the Van Buren [Train] Station."... [It] is across the street, the south street station on Van Buren is across the street from a nice Chinese food restaurant. And I've eaten there often. "Here's the game plan," I think it was a Tuesday.

Cohen: It was an escape?

Malham: We can meet there at 6:30. I'll be there at 6:30, can you arrange to leave your home, which is a two-story home in the west part of Gary, [Indiana], by the big high school...[Horace Mann], that they have there... I say, "Can you, without being seen, make it? Can you arrange to leave?" She says, "Leave it to me, if it's meant to be, I'll be there." I'm there, waiting, praying, hoping. Suddenly she walks in, and I said, "Oh my God, I didn't think you'd do it!" And she said, "Let me tell you," she said, "A very prominent friend of the family, Mrs. Kelley," ... lovely woman, I got to know her later, came to visit, her husband

owned all the gas stations in Gary. And she says, "You know how our home is, the second floor leads down the stairs into the corridor here where the door leads out, but as you come down, everybody in the living room can see you coming down. So, as I came down, I saw her, I said, 'I'm so glad to see you! How nice, but she says, you know, I'd like to go out and get a Coke, but she says, I think I'll go in and get something to wear.'" So, she goes back up, packs all her stuff, takes the curtains, ties the sheets, ties them, lowers the suitcase out the window...because she couldn't carry it down the stairs without being seen. And then comes bouncing down saying, "I'll see you a little later! I'm just going to go and have a coke or something. I'll be back." She didn't see them for six months later.

She walked in, I says, "I can't believe it." She says, "Well, the amazing thing, I walked out of that heavily populated area by the school, where people would walk around in the evening because it had a pond with ducks and everything. Not a body near the house. Nobody, and we knew practically everybody there. I was able to go get a cab, get on the south shore station, arrive in Chicago, grab a cab, and here I am. And we board [at 9 pm], and we arrive the next morning. And Bob is unloading our bags, and falls and breaks his ankle because it was February and there was some ice or something. So, we get through all of that, she says, "Everything is set." Her family does everything to prevent us from getting married...thinking she's pregnant. Found out where she was, they sent a Greek bishop from Detroit to persuade her, "She's a disgrace to the family." We get through all that, we're [rehearsing] marching down the aisle. And the priest says, "Do you have anybody who is going to be your best man and to be her...?" What is it?

Cohen: Bridesmaid?

Malham: Bridesmaid. I says, "We really don't." He says, "Great, because I know a great Lebanese family here that is in business and is very

prominent.” So, I met David, and I met Mary, and I’m in the shadows of the church June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1947, and this man walks up and he says, “Are you the groom?” I said, “Yes.” He says, “I’m David, your best man.” I said, “Hi.” His wife does the same thing to Specky. Two months after I married her I called her Specky, which was a diminutive of spectacular. Her dad wanted to know why I called her Specky, so I told him, he says, “Oh, that’s nice.” So, anyway, she does the same, goes up to Specky, says, “Are you the bride?” She says, “Yes,” “I’m your bridesmaid.” We got to know them for sixty years until they both passed away. So, we got married, went down the aisle. Her dad said, “Look, get smart, come home, we can do it big style, family, everybody at the Gary hotel.” She says, “Dad, we’re walking down the aisle. Why do I want to go home?” So, we got married. [After seventy years, seven children, six grandchildren and five great grandchildren, on April 26<sup>th</sup>, [2017], she passed away after falling and breaking her...breaking her hip on 1/26/2017. [Malham later clarified the dates]. And she cheated me. It was supposed to be the end of my life, not the end of her life. Great trooper. Great lady. Really wonderful.

Cohen: Yeah, she sounds like a great lady.

Malham: Five boys and two girls. Five loves and two fishes. The youngest one is in Seattle. She’s taking me to celebrate D-Day at the great museum in New Orleans, [Louisiana], where she’s got me involved in all of the different programs that they’re going to have. So, God willing, we’ll be able to go. We leave June 3<sup>rd</sup>. Day after..., what would have been our 71<sup>st</sup> anniversary.

Cohen: Oh, my goodness.

Malham: I don’t know. Does that wrap it all up?

Cohen: It depends on you. I always have more questions. Where are you at, enough?

Malham: Well, can I just tell you, how did I get employed, and what was I employed in. That's the most exciting part of my life because everything I was trained to do, public speaking, came naturally. When I ended up going to work for United States Steel, and the Department of Industrial Nations, I stayed until 1945... I'm sorry... I got out in '45... I was married in '47... About 1950 or so, I went to work for United States Steel industrial relations because I—oh—I had quit high school. So, I took my... [GED]...test?

Cohen: The high school leaving-

Malham: Yeah! To wrap up my high school, the [GED test] ...?

**[1:56:44]**

Malham Jr: GED, I believe.

Malham: Yeah, to make up for my high school. Transferred, went to DePaul University [in Chicago]. Graduated there in sociology, thinking I would be able to work with people and so on and so forth, but took courses in public relations and German and everything else. And public speaking, and I loved it. I would entertain all of the classes with my public speaking, picking subjects about taking care of the babies, changing their diapers, waking up at night...holding him when he was a baby, falling asleep and he rolls down my legs. She comes in, she says, "How's Howie?" I says, "Fine," she says, "Where is he?" She comes in and she says, "He's on the floor and you're sleeping!" I says, "He rolled down, I didn't have anything to do with it! He didn't want to stay in my lap." I mean, those were the sort of experiences we had.

Well, anyway, I stayed, and then that celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United States Steel., gave me an opportunity to be appointed ... to be the chairman of the queen contest, to be in charge of thirty women who would compete to be the queen of the jubilee of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of United States Steel. And so, I was in charge

of that, rode around in a jeep, had pictures taken, front page, Howell Malham. I became a member of the Junior Chamber of Commerce. I became an organizer.

I organized what they call the Christ Child Festival and brought all of the churches that weren't talking together: talking to one another, brought them together to participate in the memorial auditorium space, for each of the different [religions], and then we had about thirty-five different religions involved. Said they had never spoken to one another because of their pride in being independent. And being the ones that were really with God, nobody else was. So, we got them all together in the memorial auditorium, had the director of the... [Gary] Symphony, conduct a symphony to open up the Christ Child Festival, where all of these people were gathered. It was a tremendous success.

And US Steel then said, "Because of your popularity and so...we'd like you to be the head of the chairman of the queen contest to organize them and protect them and everything else." And so, Tom Harmon, the famous football player, came and escorted the queen that was selected to the field in Gary, Indiana. The memorial field that they had. And we took pictures, and my son, number one son, took pictures with Tommy Harmon and the queen, and that was elected.

And after that, the head of the jubilee came to me and said, [i.e. they were] the professional people that sat up at the jubilee, came to me and said, "What do you do, when this is all over?" I says, "Well, you know, to be honest with you, the idea of going back to industrial relations, compared to all of this, is not very challenging because they'll all sitting back with their pipes and so on." ...He says, "I've got a suggestion: Why don't you go and check out CBS in Milwaukee, and tell them I sent you. There's an opportunity in TV and Radio." Well, there wasn't much TV in '50, I mean they had about a thousand homes with television. And so, I went with my wife and [they] said,

“You’re a natural, but you don’t have to come to Milwaukee to get a job with us. Chicago is loaded. I said, “Well, there’s a radio station in Gary, where I’ve been offered an opportunity to work--WWCA.” So, I went to work for them. after I had already interviewed for a job with a national [radio and] TV representative two thousand [radio] stations in the country, called John Blair, we don’t have an opening now, but keep in touch.

Two years later I come home from my job at the radio station...you know. I’m doing card tricks, practically, you know...jiving like crazy, loving every minute of it calling on people. I come home and she says, “Howie, you’ve got to call John Blair.” Went to see them— [they] hired me. Fifty-two people had applied for the job, I got. I was fifty-three. I don’t even feel old... the funniest thing was, I never told him about the bullet, I never told him about the Purple heart, I never told him about... I look back at my curricula vitae, and, I said to myself, “Why didn’t I ever mention it? Why didn’t I ever talk about it?” It wasn’t like I was trying to parade myself, you know?

Cohen: Right, but it was kept back?

Malham Jr: Did you want to ask some more questions that were germane...

Cohen: Yeah, yeah, so I was wondering...

Malham: Can I just finish about that?

Cohen: Oh, sure. Sorry.

**[2:02:02 – TV awards]**

Malham: So, I went to work for Blair, and I stayed fifteen years... [After my first year] with John Blair as their national TV, it was radio when I started, I got the broadcast award from the Chicago Broadcast Association. And it made the front page in *Variety*. Howie Malham, awarded. Okay? That’s not a boast. I didn’t go there for awards, I went and did something I enjoyed, and I was standing on my head doing it. I fell in

love with all the clients, the stations, traveled, WABC New York, KGO San Francisco, WHB Boston, WABC New York--I mean all this stuff— WLS Chicago is one of our stations.

So...after fifteen years...[I hooked up with an old friend and] started a company called “Back Rack” ...???? books... [2:03:06] but I thought it would be an opportune time together with a great Irishman, who was an editor of books, so we formed the company in Houston. That lasted for a short while. Went back to Chicago because the family wanted to go back and went back to another radio TV representative. Stayed with them for a couple of years, and then ended up with Katz, which was the giant of Radio/TV companies, and they are now taken over by Channel 1 out of New York. And so, I stayed with them for fifteen years.

And at seventy, my wife started to develop some issues with her throat... [so I called the president of Katz in N.Y. and informed him that, “I don’t think I can really stay on any longer.” He says, “Howie, you’re doing great! We don’t want to lose you. What can we do?” I says, “Well, I’d like to leave, October 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1969” because that’s the Feast of the Guardian Angels. Well, he says, “Howie, let’s talk about it... [Take her] ...to the hospital in Cleveland, check it out, come back... Mr. Bellianas, great president of the company said, “We’ll do anything you need [i.e., want].” I said, “YoU know, I’m approaching seventy, and I think she needs me.” Okay, he says, “We’re gonna have a big party for you because you have a lot of friends, people you’ve made, station managers, and that sort.” I says, “No parties. I worked, you paid. We had a great relationship. October 2<sup>nd</sup>, three o’clock, I’m going home.” “Howie,” he says, “What the hell is the matter with you? Nobody leaves the business without a party!” My favorite buyers and clients at Jr. Walter Thompson, Foot, Coen and Belding, BBDNO [i.e. a big agency] and called me later and said, “What the hell is the matter with you? The party isn’t for you, the

party is for all of your friends!” Patty Garon was one of them from BBDNO and I’m gonna have lunch with her in a couple of months if she’s free. And so, he [i.e., the president] sends me a check for twenty-five thousand dollars extra because I spared them the expense of coming into Chicago. Stayed with them, stayed with her, and I’ve done all sorts of things for our church. For St. Mary of the Angels... I helped them raise a million dollars after... [Cardinal Bernardin approved the transfer to Opus Dei, as supplemented by Malham.]

Malham Jr: Bernadin?

Malham: Bernadin. He gave them the church at St. Mary, and I went to work for them and raised a million dollars to restore it, and that’s the end of my story.

Cohen: Oh, wow. It seems like your faith was always and important part of your life and you feel like it helped you when you were in the Marines?

Malham: It was the anchor. It was the anchor that held me up. I’m not a religious nut. I was just, I was very close to Our Lady and got acquainted with her at the alter at St. Michael’s where I used to visit in the grade school, the alter of... [The Mother] of Perpetual Help. ...I’ve got her picture at home, and I thank her for my early formation as a teenager.

Cohen: Would you like to talk about the medals over here?

Malham: Well, I didn’t know I was entitled to these medals until I was contacted by some outfit in St. Louis that said, “As a veteran of World War II, you’re entitled to medals. Could you fill out the forms that we’ll be sending you, and tell us where you served, how you served, etc.? And we’ll do the rest of the research. And just send us copies of your discharge paper, and anything to authenticate your marks of being of where you were.” Because the discharge, on a Marine’s

discharge, both sides list everything. Plus, I had the copy of the Marine Commandant, who was kind enough to send me a birthday greeting on my 75<sup>th</sup> birthday. So, I included that, and then they informed the Naval Department that's in Tennessee, who sent me these medals. And if you see the list, they checked off, no, it's in the box, there's a piece of paper--see it?

Cohen: Okay, we have one for WWII, and also,

Malham: There's, that's the form they sent me.

Cohen: The Asiatic Pacific,

Malham: Here. There's the official form, notifying me of the medals.

Cohen: The American Campaign.

Malham: Do you see it? Show her the form.

Cohen: One moment.

Malham: WWII Victory medal, Purple Heart, American Campaign Medal, Asiatic Pacific Campaign Medal,

Malham: But look at all the medals that are available to those who have served.

UTP: Available for issuance to the branch of the Navy Personnel Command

Malham: And then the one with the bronze star!

UTP: Yep, all the ones that were checked are the ones that were issued to him.

Malham: Do you see the little Xs.

Cohen: Yeah. I do.

Malham: So, that's how I got them! There's no state ceremony. It was just, and I haven't bothered to open them up, I just carry them.

Cohen: So, what would you like the younger generation to learn about your service? Like...what are the teachable moments?

Malham: Huh?

Cohen: What would you like the younger generation to learn from your service in World War II?

**[2:09:25 – Final thoughts. Takeaways]**

Malham: Well, you have to appreciate the history of the United States. You can't love a country without knowing the history of it. The sacrifices that were made. The people who died to give us what we've got, and the biggest shame and disgrace is what's going on, now. Where people are tugging and pulling in opposite directions, not realizing that we are one great people that have made this country and it won't survive unless we continue to be one great people. But that isn't based on ignorance, it's based on knowledge. It's like knowing the history of your family. You've got to know it to love it. You've got to know the sacrifices in it. I mean, you can't go off on some wild... well, I'm anti-this and I'm for that, which means I don't like you and I like you, so get the hell out of here! I mean, they're pushing and shoving one another! Attacking one another, going so far as to destroy the very basic foundations of our country, to be united. We can have opinions. What's wrong with having different opinions? We don't have to kill over it. We've sacrificed so much! We've sacrificed so much, and I don't know if there's another war, you know, it would be like, what was it...? Vietnam. Hell no, I won't go. I don't know if you remember that.

Cohen: I do remember that, yeah.

Malham: So anyway, I've raised seven children. And I'm proud to tell ya, that their roots are: love of country, faith, however you practice it, and I don't mean you have to be Catholic because I'm Catholic. My daughter who is taking me to...

Cohen: New Orleans?

Malham: The anniversary of D-Day...[My daughter] married a Jewish fellow. My son, Mark, ended up meeting him as an instructor when he was in the ROTC at [the University of Illinois in Springfield]. Her future husband, David, was a Colonel in the Army from Springfield, teaching at Illinois University, where my son went to school. And was in the ROTC. And ended up introducing David to my daughter. He's Jewish, she became Jewish, and they got married, and they got my approval. And that's fine. And I, I'm for whatever they're for, as long as its rooted in a basic belief, firm, love, no nonsense because there's no second chance. Everything else after that is like riding a freight car. You know? You're not first class anymore.

Cohen: Yeah.

Malham: So, anyway, my first son is now running an eight room Victorian bed and breakfast in Bloomington, Indiana, just two miles away from the university. He's about forty years old. He got married there with his girlfriend who went to Indiana [University], forty years later they left Denver, came back looking for a bed and breakfast. Found this place, Victorian, owned by a family that had been three generations. And is now running, humming like a World War II plane plant. And we're looking forward to go visit them. The other one is building baseball fields and football fields for a company that he built and is the president of, in Arizona [called Site Works].

Cohen: They're all very capable.

Malham: Right. And then of course, there's Mark, who was the officer that introduced my daughter to David. He retired as a major from the Army after twenty years of service. And is now head of public education in Port Saint Lucie, [Florida]. And then we finally get down to Joseph, who is the fourth of five sons, and he is very active as an iconographer in the diocese of Chicago, and well known throughout

the country for his iconography. And he does icons, I wish I could have brought you samples, I mean, awesome, unbelievable, great. And all the bishops, heads of the churches in Chicago, well acquainted with his work. And then finally, this guy who is running circles around all of us [i.e., Howell Malham Jr.] Both he and my son Joseph that I just spoke of, have written books. And he's written one that you may want to pick up, which is great, it's been used as a result of his experiences making presentations to the universities, Forbes, the State Department, and the other one down in...I'm trying to think of it...

Malham Jr: It's okay. It's not important. This is your story.

Malham: They made such a great success of their work. Well, he wrote the book called, well you have a...

Malham Jr: "I have a Strategy, No, You Don't."

Cohen: It's a great title. It's a catchy title.

Malham: It's a great book, I mean...classic?

Cohen: Catchy.

Malham Jr: Yeah, catchy.

Malham: Oh, yeah, I love it. I've got it on my piano. So anyway, they did so good. That the government of Britain invited them to go to, well, Huties and the Gutsies were eating one another up.

Malham Jr: Hutu and Tutsi, Rwanda, Kigali Genocide Memorial.

Malham: Yes. They went there and helped them bury the hatchet. And they did such a tremendous job. I mean of burying it, out of extreme love for all, for one another, to the point now where they are happy and glad, and they were recently asked to go back and tie it up in a ribbon.

Cohen: Wow. Amen.

Malham: Okay? Amen. I mean, I'm so sorry, I bounced around and hit around...

Cohen: Well, you know, this is a conversation, it's not going to be...

Malham: And the song I liked, was Sinatra's "My Way."

Cohen: Okay. [Laughs]

Malham: I did it, and I did it, "My Way." [Hums]

Cohen: That's great. That's great.

Malham Jr: We want to make sure you get what you need before we go, though.

Cohen: I was just going to ask you, are there any questions about the war or your service that I did not ask that you would like to talk about? Is there something, is there a question that I did not ask...a topic that you would like to cover that we did not cover yet, regarding World War II and your service?

Malham Jr: Anything that you wished you were ask? That you're compelled to share.

Malham: I honestly don't think so. I'd be embarrassed to think that, being so eloquent, I would forget to cover all of the bases. No, I'm serious. [Laughter]

Cohen: This was wonderful. Thank you.