

# Lawrence J. Littel Oral History Interview

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Interviewed by Sherri Kiefner

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KIEFNER: My name is Sherri Kiefner, today is March 15th and I am at the Pritzker Military Library interviewing Lawrence J. Little of Evanston about his World War Two experiences. Welcome to the library Mr. Little.

LITTEL: Thank you for having me.

KIEFNER: I'd like to start out with a little background, tell me when and where you were born.

LITTEL: I was born in Evanston in 1925 at St. Francis Hospital. That's at the time the German nuns, from Germany come to start the hospital. That was way back in the beginning when they first started.

KIEFNER: Did you grow up in Evanston?

LITTEL: Yes, I was in Evanston all my life until the years I left for war and come home.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about your family.

LITTEL: My dad's family came from Alsace-Lorraine, France and my mother's family come from Belfast, Ireland. My folks lived to be, my mother 92, my dad lived to be 95.

KIEFNER: Did you have any siblings?

LITTEL: You mean children?

KIEFNER: Brothers and sisters?

LITTEL: Yes. I had one brother, my brother Ed.

KIEFNER: Tell me...

LITTEL: He was in the Marines for 31 years, at Glenview, in the Korean War he went to El Toro, California and he was fortunate, he stayed there and then he come back he stayed in the Marine Reserves for 31 years, but finally they kicked him out because the amount of money building on the retirement they said, "Hey, you better move it along."

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about your childhood.

LITTEL: I went to school in Evanston, I went on to Evanston High School and I was drafted out of high school in my junior year because in the beginning I started the school at the catholic schools and I didn't cut the mustard enough so my parents put me back in the, put me in the public schools which put me behind and my junior year I was 18, eligible for the draft, and I maybe add right in now, you see I was drafted and I was sent overseas, but right after that the mothers went to Washington and marched on Washington for their babies. See I was a baby, that 18 should get a year's training, but I was on the other side of the war and those days you didn't come back home until the war was over, and that's the way it worked.

KIEFNER: That was an organized group that she went to Washington with?

LITTEL: Yes.

KIEFNER: You were 16 years old when Pearl Harbor was bombed, do you recall what you were doing at the time?

LITTEL: Yes. At that time you could work before you were 18 and I was working at a gas station and I opened the gas station, the Shell gas station on Dempster Street in Evanston, I opened it at eight o'clock in the morning and I turned the radio on and about noon time it was coming on that they were bombing Pearl Harbor and this and that and then the boss, he showed up at one o'clock, he relieved me and I

went home. When I got home my parents didn't know anything about the war was even on, so we turned on the Filco Radio and we all listened to Pearl Harbor being bombed.

KIEFNER: What do you recall about the public's reaction to that event?

LITTEL: I fell that at that time you couldn't get room at the stations to sign up for the service, the line was so long. Everybody was, "We're going to get them for hitting us."

KIEFNER: Tell me then a little about the draft notification process at that time.

LITTEL: The drafts said, before the war started it was, men went away and the word was "I'll be home in a year, darling." They trained, they were up to the age of I believe 45. Then when the war started then they actually set up the draft and the draft was from 18 to 38 and that I was drafted because I'd come of age, I went up to Fort Sheridan there, took my physical and then went on for training.

KIEFNER: How did you feel about being drafted?

LITTEL: At 18, maybe I look at it at 87 I was probably silly, but you see all the guys in the neighborhood were going so I wanted to go too, so I really wanted to go.

KIEFNER: You mentioned a little about your mother going to Washington after you were already overseas, but what was your parents' and your brother's reaction to you being drafted into the army?

LITTEL: My mother, she was very worried, you know what I mean? But there was nothing really you could do, with the law you were drafted and that's it. Yeah.

KIEFNER: What about your father and your brother?

LITTEL: My father he drove me to the L station where I went down, I had tickets that they gave me to go to Camp Grant and he drove me to the L station and put his arms around and I noticed there was tears in his eyes, but you know men are tough, we don't, but it was hitting him.

KIEFNER: You mentioned friends, was anyone else drafted about the same time you were, anyone you were close to?

LITTEL: In the neighborhood one guy went into the Coast Guard and his brother, Bob, he was drafted and he went to Burma the other lad across the street, he was drafted, but he never went overseas. There was quite a few around through the neighborhood that I didn't really know close.

KIEFNER: Tell me about your basic training, was that at Camp Grant?

LITTE: No, no I went to Camp Grant at Rockford and there they issued clothing and I was there for two days and I got on a train and the train went down to Mineral Wells, Texas, which was Camp Walters. I went into Camp Walters and I trained for eight weeks, I was supposed to get something like 16 or 18 week's training, but one of the fellows said, you know, "We're supposed to get 16 week's training." The sergeant there, they were tough you know what I mean? He says, "You'll get it when you get over there." I went to Fort Ord where they issued all new clothing, was slightly worn, like shoes was just slightly just a little wear, they issued all new clothes because when they got over there was less shipping of supplies for clothing, not that we didn't get to replace them but it helped to fill the void. Then I went to Camp Stoneman, I was at Camp Stoneman for about two days and we didn't do any training there we didn't have any KP or nothing we just went to the show at night, the different shows, and then we got the word, we went down on the fairy down across Frisco, the bay, Pier 19 and we got on the Cruise, not a cruise ship, but a tanker, you know what I mean. And then we got pulled out at one o'clock in the morning and we headed for Noumea, New Caledonia and the first four days out, three or four days, three days at least, we had a blimp over us and the blimp was watching for Jap subs, but after the time was up in the morning there he rocked back and forth, which means he went back to the mainland and then we took off on our own. It was the *SS General Brooks* and had made a shake-down cruise to Hawaii and back and this was actually its first cruise overseas. At that time, normally, it took a ship 18 days,

but this was a brand new ship and fast, we made it in 14 days, a little thing there, you know.

KIEFNER: Tell me about the public at the time of your departure.

LITTEL: I would say the public was probably 99% that we had to go after them. There was probably a few, religious you know, that actually didn't have to go to war, conscientious objectors; they were respected.

KIEFNER: In your basic training, going back a little bit, what were you trained for during those eight weeks? Was there any specific weaponry you were being trained with?

LITTEL: Yes. I was trained as a rifleman and I was a rifleman clean through the war. I never got into anything else.

KIEFNER: Had they assigned your Military Occupation Specialty before you left?

LITTEL: They trained me as a rifleman, on the bazooka, you fired a bazooka, two rounds, and then we were on 30 caliber machineguns, we trained on those and then we was actually trained with the M1 on the rifle range. Quite a bit of training on the M1, and that's the weapon I carried through the war.

KIEFNER: Sorry about taking you back like that.

LITTEL: No, no.

KIEFNER: Were you assigned to your division before you left?

LITTEL: No, I went to Noumea, New Caledonia and there I was assigned into the 40th Division, Company B, [of the] 160th Infantry Regiment in the 40th Division which is California National Guard. They had went to Hawaii where they were trained and when I hooked up with them I didn't have any training, but I want to say, then we shipped and we went to Guadalcanal and I want to say that the Marines took Guadalcanal because, actually, we didn't have any army, we had this division and when I hooked up with them we had 56 men, supposed to have

187. There was no army really, because most of it was being concentrated on Europe, I don't want to get into that because I wasn't over there, but we finally raised up we got about 150 and then we got some more and we went to the island of New Britain, Rabal, which was a big shipping port of the Japs and there the 108th and 185th Regiment kept the Japs trapped up at Rabal and we were below that where we would go on patrols all over because some of them would slip by, the Japs, into the mountains and we would catch up with them. That, you know, wasn't much fighting there until, and now we'll move onto the Philippines.

KIEFNER: I'm going to take you backwards a little bit. Tell me a little more about the ship that took you over there, what were the ship conditions, what were the sleeping quarters, et cetera, on the ship that transported you from San Francisco.

LITTEL: The *SS General Brooks*, yes, they only had saltwater showers. That's it. They had one shower there that was locked, that was for the Navy personnel in the ship, they didn't have fresh water showers, so actually, salt water you wash between your legs it gets itchy, but actually we'd wait, sometimes they'd hit big storms and we'd go up on the deck with a bar of soap under our arms, splash between our legs and then the rain come down because that salt water is, it's not good. Especially when you get further over there, now you start getting jungle rot, maybe that will come up later, then the salt water really hurt.

KIEFNER: You were on the ship 14 days?

LITTEL: Fourteen days.

KIEFNER: What were you doing on this ship, were there duties?

LITTEL: The best job on the ship, if you happened to be lucky, to get to be KP and work there because you've got all the food and everything, not that they didn't feed us good, but no there was nothing, the only thing they used to get us out every morning and do exercises, take our blouse off and do exercises in the sun to keep you, you know 14 days doing nothing, but actually no training.

KIEFNER: Did you have any other experiences to share about the trip?

LITTEL: The only thing that was, is when we got about a day out of being in New Caledonia, a B-25 came out and they don't go in front of the ship but they come out, they come down low about ten feet off the water and then do, went around you know a few times, makes you feel good, "Hey we've got somebody here, you know, to protect us."

KIEFNER: Exactly.

LITTEL: But that was exciting, before you got to war.

KIEFNER: On Guadalcanal, when you got there you were there for a while training and combat patrolling then?

LITTEL: We went on a lot of patrols and when we weren't on patrols and another company or two went on patrol then we trained, every spare time we trained, there was no off days you know.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about Guadalcanal in particular, what were the conditions like, the weather, the terrain?

LITTEL: Guadalcanal was a mud-hole. Mostly, you might say, caused by us because what they did was, with the bulldozers, they made roads. Guadalcanal gets socked in with a lot of rain and that road would turn down and it wouldn't look like much, where the trucks would push it up you'd step and you'd go down up to your kneecaps in mud. But then it dried out too, it had dry days and this and that, but it was awful muddy and a lot of rain, and a lot of mosquitos, heavy with mosquitos. In the beginning of the war when they first hit Guadalcanal it didn't have anything, but they come out with Atabrine, and an officer would give you one Atabrine a day. You could still, you could say it was a female, the male could bite you, but the female, with the Atabrine, if she had malaria you got malaria in your system, with the Atabrine it didn't break out. Then after I got home, it broke out twice.

KIEFNER: What were the quartering conditions, what were your living quarters when you were on Guadalcanal, specifically?

LITTEL: We were in, not pup tents which you carried on your back; we were in regular tents that slept four men.

KIEFNER: What were meals like on Guadalcanal?

LITTEL: The food was edible, it was good, but you couldn't think of big prime steaks, you know none of that, but the food was good. C-Rations, and of course in the C-Ration in the mess hall that you had there in your own company they actually delivered big number 10 cans, you leave little ones, unless you went out on patrol and then you carry three or four in your pack.

KIEFNER: What type of patrolling were you doing on Guadalcanal in particular, what were you patrolling for?

LITTEL: We used to patrol all the way up the pass up into the mountains and just all over wherever, any chance they could slip from the 185th and the 108th, actually there was, and this was on the Island of New Britain, there was a river that kind of supplied Rabal, now Rabal was one of their big navy bases and they kept them locked up there so they wouldn't get out of there, but the thing is they weren't all soldiers in the way, like rifle companies, a lot of them were sailors that when we landed on the island then they moved in and were like soldiers, the Japs made everybody's a soldier, you're all going to fight.

KIEFNER: Did you have any contact with the local people on Guadalcanal?

LITTEL: The local people were natives, actually with the bone in their hair, you know, and all that and the women there, the natives didn't wear nothing on the top. Just, once or twice, not many, but once or twice some guys went screwy and they went out and they lived and related with the natives, of course eventually they got them and cited and they were gone, I think, back to the States for court martial. That happened, but not 50 -100, just maybe you'd hear about it over in

another regiment like, you know, but it did happen. The strain of being there, that's...

KIEFNER: What do you remember most about Guadalcanal, does anything stand out in your mind, in particular?

LITTEL: No, mostly at Henderson field a lot of fighter planes coming in and out of there, things like that. And actually Henderson field was up this way, but I only went by it once because most of the time we went out on patrols we went the other way, but Henderson Field I went by it on a truck one time.

KIEFNER: When you left Guadalcanal you went to New Britain?

LITTEL: The Island of New Britain. Actually on Guadalcanal, at the end of the war, we had two cement pillars at Henderson field representing the men that had passed away, but the Japs come down there after the war, I shouldn't say Japs after, the Japanese come down there after the war and they built a museum for their dead, and later on we built a new Museum up on the hill overlooking the Coral Sea and here in 2001 I went back there on the World War Two thing, we went back to the island of New Britain also. But on the island of New Britain when we got there, we went back on the cruise ship, we couldn't get into Rabal. The reason we couldn't get into Rabal was because it had volcanoes and the dust, a lot of those islands have got volcanoes active, and it closed the city down they had six inches and so they shut the whole thing down, nobody to go in there, but then we got off and went to another town that was just small during the war, not much, but it's all growing up, they've got airplanes so you can fly to Australia, get the jet back home, international airport there and hotels, Shell Oil is very popular gas station, modern gas stations, so it's changed.

KIEFNER: A lot has changed. So when you get to New Britain, what was it like there as compared to Guadalcanal, what was the weather, the terrain?

LITTEL: Actually, there it kind of changed a little bit because again they plowed roads which are just dirt, jungles are dirt, once a day a lot of times they used to have

water trucks and they water them to keep the dust down . Well one time there the winds come up so heavy and it blew the dust that they ordered everybody out of the tents and they ordered us down to the ocean because the dust was, it would just like almost cut through you, so it got windy. Other than that it rained, but not like Guadalcanal, not as heavy, but it could be a little change of season there, I don't know.

KIEFNER: What do you remember most about New Britain and how was your time spent?

LITTEL: We went on patrol and we come back and when we come back we just hit it lucky because Jack Benny and Carol Landis and Martha Tilton, they showed up at their show and we just, the way were, dirty and everything, we went right down there to see it. You know they're all young men and they saw Martha Tilton, Carol Landis, a lot of whistles and they played with it, you know what I mean, like Martha Tilton said she was sorry she couldn't sing because she had a bad cold, but she stood on the stage right by the edge there and took the guys hands and some of them got a couple of kisses and it was great.

KIEFNER: You came right from patrol to that show?

LITTEL: We just happened to be lucky we got back in time, because we didn't know anything about it until we got back there, "Oh a big show." We rushed right over there and movies, every island, almost one of the first thing's they'd do is like the Seabees and everything put up a screen outside and we'd get movies from the States, but some of the movies I'd see like a hundred times, you'd go to the next place and you'd get the same movies back at you.

KIEFNER: You mention the Seabees, what was the role of the Seabees?

LITTEL: Actually the Seabees that build docks and everything because we were, a lot of our duties was when we weren't on patrols we didn't sit around because they'd take us down to the beach there and these ships would come in with supplies, ammo and like C-Rations, K-Rations and what they were doing that was, bringing more of that in than we really needed just for us, but they were building

it up for the next push going forward, each island they'd build up the supplies.

KIEFNER: Did you travel off-base at all when you were there in New Britain?

LITTEL: There's no traveling in war. That's one thing, I just want to say it lightly because I hear stuff in the movies and, you know, the war in Europe well they'd go to Paris, we didn't have a Paris, [and] you stayed right in the camp.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about the camp?

LITTEL: You'd sleep in these four-man tents and the officer's quarters were always off away from us and they had one of our guys, he used to all their laundry, he'd go down to the river and wash their laundry. We had to wash our own laundry, you'd go in the river and wash it all and scrub it, put it up there and then take a bath in the river, that was a good, clean bath, no salt water.

KIEFNER: Did you have any time for writing letters home at this time?

LITTEL: You always had, if you're really in the mood, but you always had, you could sandwich in letters back home.

KIEFNER: Did you have any free time at all when you were one New Britain?

LITTEL: No there's no free time, it was you either go on patrols or you're unloading ships, but some of the worst thing unloading ships is you take, five decks down, 55 gallons of gasoline and the fumes, because the big hatch was opened up above and you always wonder if one of them, that's it, it's over.

KIEFNER: How aware were you of what was going on in the European front while you were here, did you get a lot of information?

LITTEL: Yes we did. They used to have a like a newspaper, the division had, and they'd bring you up on the news. Yeah we were informed of everything, nothing was held back, and a lot of times in the movies we'd see the news and that would be loaded with Europe. I mean I don't want to knock it again, but the main push was in Europe and the Pacific we were short on this, short on that, but I want to say

that if I ever go to war again I'll go with McArthur, one of the finest men you ever wanted to meet. I met him once and maybe we'll get to the Philippines.

KIEFNER: Absolutely, in the Philippines. When you left New Britain, where were you headed?

LITTEL: On New Britain we got a lot of lectures about the next, we weren't told where we were going, we were told everything, what the beach was going to be like and everything, all the information and the different things we would have to do if we met it this way or met it that way and training, special training, and we trained in what they call, the nick name was the alligators, there were cogs on the side and it held like, about a platoon of men and they had one 30 caliber machinegun up there. Now we got on the LSTs and we went on the LSTs to Leyte, New Guinea where we practiced the landing with the alligator and the LSTs sit way out in the water and the alligators, they drop that front door, it comes down, alligators would drop and drop into the ocean, then we'd circle and wait for the other ones until the flag went to go to the beach, and we did a lot of that training.

KIEFNER: Landing practice?

LITTEL: Oh yes.

KIEFNER: Even though you didn't know where you were headed?

LITTEL: We didn't know until we got on the ship, "Well now I can tell you where we're going, we're going to Lingayen Gulf, Luzon." We were on the board ship 40 days. We had destroyers and that to protect us and we zigzagged all the way going up there and they were like this, went over there and zigzag and then we got up there with about, just Christmas Eve we hadn't reached our point yet, Christmas Eve an officer, LST officer that played the trumpet, he was in a big band in the states, I can't remember, but he played Silent Night off the back of the LST and something that shouldn't be done, but the LST behind her when he got done toot the horn twice that they heard Silent Night too. Then it was about

five days, we landed on in Lingayen Gulf January 9th, at 9:30 in the morning, 1945. Leyte had already been landed on.

KIEFNER: What was going through your mind on your way to Luzon? You spent, you said 40 days, on that ship, [and] after all of that landing training what was going through your mind?

LITTEL: You were just worried about the landing and when he played Silent Night there wasn't a lot of clapping, there was really more calm, guys sitting there some of them, a few had tears in their eyes and very quiet, very, very quiet. There wasn't any rip-roaring with him playing Silent Night was very...

KIEFNER: Did you feel like you were prepared for the assault, the landing?

LITTEL: I thought you had enough training, because we went over and over and over. Actually when we hit the beach I was in the first wave, Lingayen Gulf, first wave.

KIEFNER: Tell me about that first wave at Lingayen Gulf.

LITTEL: We actually hit it lucky, because you see, when we landed down the South Pacific you land on the beach it wasn't too far to the other side of the island so if the Japs are there you were... but now that all changed when we landed at Lingayen Gulf they had all the room to push back and go all the way down to Manila and when we landed on the beach the Japs had actually taken off and the next day we lost three men. Then later on then we pushed own, there was one main road going to Manila which went down to Clark Field and then Manila and we went down to Camp O'Donnell which had the nurses and the soldiers from Bataan there, we got them out of there. Then we pushed on to Tarlac and Tarlac was the original like the capital of the Philippines, many years before they'd made Manila the capital because it had the big port, ships could come in and, you know business, you had things going good for you then. Then we pushed on down to Clark Field, we pushed the Japs across Clark Field into the Zambales Mountains and we lost a lot, we lost around 35 men there, and then we were

relieved by the 43rd Division, we went back to Lingayen Gulf. We got back to Lingayen Gulf we had two weeks where we didn't really do anything, we got new supplies and then we got back on the LSTs with the alligators and we went down to the Visayas area, which, you've got Leyte, you've got Cebu, you got Negros and you got Panay, and Mindanao below that. We invaded Illoilo, Panay and again we keep chasing the Japs into the mountains because that's where they took off. Actually, all the time that they were around, three years, they trained and they had trenches and they had everything built, so they knew they were going to back up there, you know? We left part of the 85th there and went across the Negros, to Bacolod, Negros, and we invaded there. There again we lost a lot of men, and they actually brought in the 503rd Paratroopers to dig us out, because sometimes you don't win them all. The paratroopers had landed at Corregidor and they had that all finished and they sent them, they didn't parachute in, but they come down on ships.

KIEFNER: Let me go back to Lingayen and fill in some of the details, your landing at Lingayen Gulf; was there any air or naval support?

LITTEL: I think if we went into Japan it would have been the largest, but Lingayen Gulf, if I understand, got it right, was the largest invasion in the Pacific. There we had the Pennsylvania Battleship that was, our LSTs when we got out we went around the USS Pennsylvania because it was shelling the shores. Actually when we landed, before our artillery, you know to get that ashore takes two or three days, but they had to catch up to us, the Pennsylvania was shelling like almost 12 miles inland because when we'd see a group of Japs we'd call back for, in fact just me as a private first class, I was a first scout, and sometimes your company was the lead one and as a scout I'd be way out there, I couldn't hardly see my company back there, we had these walky-talkies at that time, and they were worth a plug nickel, you got over the hill they could hardly make out. Anyway, this time I could reach them and I told them there were lot of Japs up there, I don't know how many, and they actually called from there to the shore and the shore to the

ship and with my word going back there they started shelling it.

KIEFNER: Tell me about your first night at Luzon, at Lingayen Gulf. Where were you staying, how many men?

LITTEL: We had the whole company, we hadn't lost a man yet, but we went inland and they stopped us, because we radioed we were moving past because the Japs took off, like I told you they took off running, and we went so far now they wanted to build up and get things organized before we went on. We stopped and we stayed there for one day while everything got organized and then we took off from there. After we took off that day we got hit by, the Japs left about six Japs behind, but you didn't know they were there, we were walking on the road and they opened up with machine guns and they killed three men in our company and of course then we opened fire and they were killed, they never got back, the Japs never got back to their company, but then later on the action started more.

KIEFNER: You were headed to Manila?

LITTEL: No, our division was advanced going down the road and we went and took Clark Field and we got the people out of the Camp O'Donnell. Now when you talk about Manila, the 40th Division and the 37th Division hit the shores at Lingayen Gulf and we went in and we were assigned to go ahead, to get to Clark Field, the 37th come in, they did a little bit where they went over a little farther, some action, but then they took off and went on by us. McArthur's pride and joy, the 1st Cavalry, they come in also, and they went into Manila, the 1st Cavalry and the 37th Division went in and took Manila and quite a bit of action below Manila there too, they had a lot of action there.

KIEFNER: Tell me about Camp O'Donnell.

LITTEL: Camp O'Donnell was just nothing but straw huts, and the nurses their clothes were just like hanging on them and they had lost so much weight they were very, they needed good food and the soldiers also. Another thing, there was about 300 soldiers taken out of O'Donnell down to Subic Bay which was below Clark Field

over to the ocean to the west and they were taken on a ship to go to Japan for slave labor, they can't prove this, but the sad thing we were kind of told, that they took off, but then our bombers caught them and they sunk that ship, but I don't know how true, that's a story you hear.

KIEFNER: These prisoners at Camp O'Donnell, where did they come from?

LITTEL: Sure, the nurses, some of those nurses had been Manila, but some of those nurses were with the soldiers with Bataan and McArthur fought on Bataan and held and he was in Corregidor where his safe place was and then Roosevelt told him to go to Australia, which he's been blamed, Dig-Out-Doug or nicknames and stuff like that, but they actually took him out of there and took him to Australia. Then the Japs, our troops on Bataan run out of ammo, they run out of food, and there was nothing else for, what's his name, Stillwa... the General, there was nothing else for him to surrender. But, he thought they were going to get good care, because the rules of that you know, but they didn't, they marched them all the way from Bataan up there and the ones that couldn't make it on the road they shot them!

KIEFNER: How many Americans were being held prisoner at Camp O'Donnell, approximately? You mentioned there were nurses, there were soldiers.

LITTEL: Yes. I would say probably about 50 or 60 nurses.

KIEFNER: That's 50 or 60 nurses alone?

LITTEL: Yes and soldiers, there was quite a few, but I wouldn't want to put a count on it because there had already taken like 300 out of there, when we were actually landed they were grabbed.

KIEFNER: What was it like, did you liberate this camp or was this camp already liberated when you arrived?

LITTEL: No. We killed the Japs that had them there. A lot of the Japs there that were protecting that really took off and were running down the road so really some of them got out, but we probably got them at Clark Field and Manila. But I would

say that I could see there was about 10 or 15 Japs that were dead and there may have been some more because actually we fired at them, but we were sent like outside there to make sure there wasn't Japs going to come back in. Right away they, I don't know how they got there so fast but it was just like that, they had doctors come in to take care of those people, they were just, like they right behind us.

KIEFNER: What were the emotions arriving there, you talk about the nurses in their tattered clothes, and you're how old at this time?

LITTEL: I was pushing 19, getting pretty old.

KIEFNER: Pretty old?

LITTEL: If you get, it's a hard question to answer, the whole mind was on the war there was I think that, and that was all, and getting letters from home.

KIEFNER: After this you were still moving on to Clark Field so on...

LITTEL: That same day we were probably two miles, three miles, already. From Lingayen Gulf to Luzon was 80 miles, we walked all them 80 and we had a few tanks with us.

KIEFNER: What did it look like? What time of terrain were you travelling through this 80 miles, was it all on the road?

LITTEL: You take the Zambales Mountains when we were going down, going down to Clark Field or going down towards Manila and the right-hand side was the Zambales Mountains, they were all along. In fact we had some of the Japs that were up there they would fire down on us, but that wasn't many, but they did in some places and then the artillery would fire up there and wipe them out. Then on the left side I was funny, going all the way down there on the left-hand side if you talked to Filipino people, like I had, there was one mountain and it was high, actually they put RADAR up there after we were gone down south more, it was funny that one mountain, but nothing to the east like it went over to the ocean,

but to the right of us was the Zambales, and that's the Clark Field where we pushed them across Clark Field into the mountains. Most of them had left there was very few on Clark Field and a few of them put their hands up and surrendered. You see not many Japs surrendered because they were told that we were going to shoot them all, we never shot any, when they come out of the jungle in just their jockey shorts with their hands up, they were no problem, but if they come out of the jungle with their clothes on with their rifle with their hands up, one twitch they were dead before they hit the ground. Because you couldn't trust them, you didn't know whether one's behind them with a machinegun strapped to him.

KIEFNER: What were strategies used by the Japanese here in this area, what were some of their fighting strategies?

LITTEL: When they saw all those battlewagons and everything out in Lingayen Gulf they took off and their strategy, I think, was to get down to Manila and set up. After the war there's been a few things that the generals of the Japs knew really at that time they were losing the war, they figured they got all down there, they were going to keep us from taking Manila, they brought fighters in, the planes just another one of them little things, don't take it too far, you see there was no marines fought in the Philippines, but over in China before the war started they pulled a regiment of marines out of there because it was looking too bad to get them out of there and they come to Manila. In Manila you take the marines and actually they were the armed guard for the ambassador; protection. In World War Two when we landed in the Philippines it was strictly MacArthur and the Army, but the flat-tops, the flat-tops had a lot of marine fighter-pilots on the flat tops and a lot of those Marine fighter-pilots protected us, so it's a little story, a little story, but those marine fighter-pilots were top drawer.

KIEFNER: What were some of the biggest risks involved in this march to Clark Field? What were the biggest dangers you were encountering?

LITTEL: The biggest, see in the beginning when we landed Clark Field, the Japs still had some bombers on there, and we were about the fourth day inland and a Japanese bomber, when they would come, our bombers would be like "roar" one steady motor roar, but the Japs it would be like pulsating "hum-hum" and you knew they were Jap bombers. One morning they come, they had a new, they had the P-38s but they come with this P-61 that had RADAR but it had the two forks like the P-38 if you know it has two engines, and those P-61s they were up, we didn't even know they were up there, about 31,000 feet and then they come down and when they come down, the two of them, they open on the bombers it was just one burst, that was it, because they had the latest RADAR, the Air Corps was proving it because the Japs had us in the beginning with the Zeros. They were proven; they give them some good stuff.

KIEFNER: When you say with the Zeros you're referring to...

LITTEL: The Jap fighters.

KIEFNER: What were some of the strategies the US was using?

LITTEL: What do you mean?

KIEFNER: What techniques were you using for some of the Japanese were in the caves and the tunnels, what were some of yours strategies for finding...

LITTEL: They were in the tunnels and we had the tanks and the bulldozers they dug roads and they were able to get the tank up and when they got them up they were actually firing right across into the caves and actually when we got to some of the caves we didn't go actually into the caves because the Japs would set up booby-traps in there so actually we never went in, but then some, the one time that the tanks are firing and this Jap he comes right out to the edge, goes right to the edge goes down the mountain and the cave was, some of the caves they dug near the top they went right through and out the other side. In fact we spent a few nights in those after we pushed them we took over those there, but that tank was firing and this guy the Jap was there, they killed him and he went over and just

blasted him, but he was committing suicide. The Japs, a lot of them, were suicidal, when they would attack you it was suicidal they'd just run right into a mass of bullets. Of course that's another little side story, you know, you had a belt of 30 caliber bullets for your men on a belt and you carried two bandoliers and the thing is when I want to say, you control fired them, if they're just going to be firing them you wouldn't have any ammo so you had to control fire. You could still protect yourself until more ammo got up. There the Filipinos that we used to use them to haul ammo up, they carried the ammo up to the front, and some of them got killed too.

KIEFNER: What were your opinions of the medical personnel, some of the medical personnel, stretcher bearers, chaplains, et cetera that was there with you?

LITTEL: You couldn't find a finer bunch; a lot of them gave their lives. The paramedics would come up to help and they'd get shot to, so called, they had the red thing on their helmet. Actually the Japs would laugh at that, they didn't have any code of war, you know what I mean, I think over in Europe a few times the Germans slipped and didn't follow it either, but a high percentage I think they followed the law. The doctors, I was wounded on Negros and I got very good care, very good care.

KIEFNER: Did you have much contact with these people while you were at Lingayen Gulf or more so later?

LITTEL: You mean in touch with the doctors?

KIEFNER: Yes and the chaplains, et cetera.

LITTEL: Father O'Brian was with us constantly.

KIEFNER: He was with your unit in particular?

LITTEL: He was in the battalion, but if that company was moving up he was with it and the major in charge of the battalion he got on him several times he said, "You're not supposed to be up there, you're supposed to be here." But he ignored that.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about Father O'Brian.

LITTEL: Father O'Brian was a good man, he held mass whenever, one time we were holding mass on, it was Negros, we were holding mass on the hood of the jeep we set up the communion and the Japs had taken all their aircraft artillery, they had hauled it into the mountains so they were firing it down hitting here and there, but when he set up mass, funny thing, it looked like they went to mass too up there because they quit firing, it's unbelievable you know what I mean, they quit. Now Father O'Brian you see, I think in the Division they only had, for the Jewish they only had a couple of Rabbis, well a lot of times for service some of the Jewish boys, weren't Rabbis but they were pretty well trained in their religion, and they would hold their get together, but when I want to get back to Father O'Brian he took care of them too. When they had things on their mind and needed a grip, he was there. He was the bravest man I ever knew.

KIEFNER: What was your motivation through this, what was your inspiration, your motivation to keep going?

LITTEL: You always had a thing to keep going because the war may end tomorrow. I'm here today because they dropped the two bombs, and when I hear some people talk about they shouldn't have dropped the bombs I only say, "Well now you sound like you were there. Oh, no."

KIEFNER: From Lingayen Gulf, you were relieved from Lingayen, from there...

LITTEL: Went down to Illoilo, Panay.

KIEFNER: To where? I'm sorry.

LITTEL: Illoilo, Panay.

KIEFNER: And that was for a little bit of a break after...

LITTEL: No. (Laughs)

KIEFNER: No, no break? (Laughs)

LITTEL: We had two weeks off when we went up to Luzon, you know, to Lingayen Gulf because that's where we had to load back onto the LSTs and then they had the alligators that we had, it wasn't the same crew, but they were, you know.

KIEFNER: Let me go back here then, you had mentioned sending some letters were you receiving any letters or packages from home?

LITTEL: Yes every once in a while you'd get a package, now my dad he broke the law, you see you're not supposed to send any soldiers, see it's different they cleaned this one kid with this and made me drunk. You weren't allowed to send any soldiers any liquor, well we got four cans of beer a month when they could get it to us, you see, four cans a month when we could get it. What did my dad do? He took a loaf of bread and he carved it out on the inside, because I grew up on port wine, French, he put a pint of port wine in there and wrapped it up and sent it over, when I got over there I couldn't eat the bread but I could drink the wine.

KIEFNER: So from...

LITTEL: Of course they had the V-mail, whatever it was, they used to have a name, but you couldn't get much on that I just wrote a record letter, not much, things are going along.

KIEFNER: Most of your letters were going to your...

LITTEL: They'd go to the Army Post Office, APO, our address over there was APO 40 which was the 40th division, just send your name and everything and the regiment it was on and it would go into the mail in the division and bang it would go out, I imagine that's how it worked and I'm sure it did.

KIEFNER: Most of the letters you were sending out, who were they going to?

LITTEL: To my mom and dad, when I left at 18, in those days at 18 you were slow moving around the girls, not like the problems we have today, so I didn't have a girlfriend.

KIEFNER: How much did you tell them about what was going on?

LITTEL: That's a simple, because we couldn't, all our mail was censored by our officer, censored. If you put anything you're wasting, because they'd just cut it out with a razor blade.

KIEFNER: From Lingayen Gulf you had another landing at Panay?

LITTEL: Yes, Iloilo, it's a town.

KIEFNER: Iloilo. Tell me about that landing, now this would be your second landing?

LITTEL: Yes. That landing we shelled them and we went ashore and they were hesitating and actually in town, but you can't call it a town they were grass huts, stucco buildings, really not much, but I could turn around and say the Philippines today is beautiful, but at that time that's all there was. The Japanese had their hospital there and that was a stucco building and in that hospital they had about 40 patients, well when they took out of town the ones that could get up and walk they took with them, but the other ones that couldn't walk they poured gas around the building and started it on fire and burned them up. That's the way they operated. As far as in Panay there, in Luzon we were moving so fast I didn't get with the civilians, but we got involved with the civilians there and the daughters and the wives and everything they were raped and actually some of the pregnant women that were raped and then they took their bayoneted and slit their stomachs and let the baby die, fall out, I mean and these are true stories! There were, Tojo, that's jumping way ahead, McArthur did the right thing, he hung him, because he was the leader of all that. I'm going to get back later on to the emperor. Tojo was the leader of all this action, you know what I mean, drumming up the war.

KIEFNER: There was a quite a path of destruction where the Japanese went through the Philippines?

LITTEL: Oh sure, yes. They'd kill their caribou, just they were going to the mountains, and

they even killed the Japanese, I mean the Filipino people on the ground, 10, 15 of them, women, children, on their way.

KIEFNER: What was the attitude of the locals, the Filipinos, towards the American soldiers?

LITTEL: Very friendly. No problem. Now there were a few Filipinos that played ball with the Japs and I felt bad for them because the other Filipinos, the good Filipinos, kind of got rid of them fast, they paid their dues.

KIEFNER: Right. Were there any guerillas that joined you, Filipino guerillas?

LITTEL: Yes, in Panay, like up in Luzon we were moving so fast, I know guerillas come out of the mountains, they went in the mountains because there was no strength until we got there, and they went down to Lingayen Gulf and there MacArthur, they had the old 03' Bolt Action, MacArthur what I understand issued them, all of them he could, was brand new M-1s and with the ammo and they did go up into near Baguio with the 33rd Division that went north to Baguio and Baguio was the place where the Jap generals would go there because it was up in the mountains, because in those days there was no air conditions and they would go there because it was cool and rest and they'd have their Philippine girls that were forced, you know the whole deal.

KIEFNER: MacArthur actually armed these Philippine guerillas...

LITTEL: Yes.

KIEFNER: What about POWs, were there any POWs ran into on Panay, civilians taken prisoner or anything?

LITTEL: Yes, you see before the war the good Japanese people come down to Panay actually to teach the people there how to fish in the ocean, netting, because there was you might say special something, Japan they did a lot of netting of the fish. Now these people, good people, good Japanese people come down there, they lived with them and they got the fishing going and the market going and they intermarried, but when the Japs got there and then the general of that island, and

I think he was taken back and hung too in Japan, I'm not sure but that's the way it sounded when they hauled him out of there, but he just killed those people because they associated with the Philippines. He killed the Japanese, not Japs, Japanese, there's a difference.

KIEFNER: I have noticed that you refer to the Japs and the Japanese.

LITTEL: Today I think the world of Japanese and when we got to Korea, [and] then there'll be other things.

KIEFNER: From Panay, next you went to another landing, a third landing...

LITTEL: Yes, Bacolod, Negros, and actually from Panay you could almost see it over there on clear days, it was close, and we invaded there and like I say I got, we lost our lieutenant, another story, we lost our lieutenant he got killed and he, Lieutenant Collins, funny story too, good story, he was in the Navy. In the Navy he was a boxing champ of the Pacific, well now about two years before the war he had six years, whatever it was, he left the Navy and then the war broke out and then he joined the Army and he went to OCS school, become an officer. In the morning you'd be dug in, but the Japs had a tendency, they'd move up close, see, and they'd wait in the morning out in the jungle, as soon as he got up, enough got up, and then they'd start firing when they had good shots, they killed 5-10-15 men. You always had somebody that had to get up and go out first to kind of look and he always, he got up and went out, he went out to look around and on the way coming back the Japs shot him in the back and he was killed. Go further on with the story, when we got on Negros we didn't have no lieutenant so a lieutenant showed up, he had just come from the States, from OCS, heck of a nice young man, and he come in at dusk at night, now I didn't even know his name and the next morning we went out on patrol and was supposed to be a simple one but we hit the main force, he was killed and three others and I want to get his parents back home, were probably, "That can't be him, he's only been gone four weeks, it can't be." He got killed and three other men and we had a...

they always say you leave nobody behind, it's good tough talk, but the thing is our paramedics checked and they were dead, well for us to carry them when the Japs are firing at us and the bullets were hitting all over, we knew they were dead, we didn't leave them if they were alive we would have dragged, and then we left and we went back in the next day and the Japs stole his shoes because they were brand new he's just come from the states, and they stole some of his clothes, and they were stealing clothes it was quite often they would steal because their clothes were worn, shoes, that's just some stories.

KIEFNER: On that Negros beach landing, was that an opposed landing?

LITTEL: No, because I think they moved off the beach too their because the navy we had a lot of destroyers were really firing in there and they knew there was no sense staying, but they took off to the mountains too and then we went around, our battalion we went around this way and the other ones went up this way and part of the 185th come with us before it was left behind and another thing, the 108th now, funny, and this is what kind of hurt us, they were sent to Leyte because Leyte wasn't over yet. They went on the west side and they had a little action there and then that finally came to an end, and not Mindanao and they were taken to invade Mindanao. Well, I'm saying that the generals or anything made a mistake because you never know how it's going to turn out, but the point is, we should have had that regiment because we got shot up, and I'm not blaming our officers because sometimes it just don't work the way they planned. That's when the 503rd Paratroopers came into help us, and we lost a lot of men there, a lot. At the end of the war of 187 we finally organized down in Guadalcanal before we went to the Philippines there was only 11 of us alive.

KIEFNER: That was from your regiment?

LITTEL: No, the company.

KIEFNER: From your company, from 187 to 11?

LITTEL: [Out of] 187, there were only 11 of us alive. Now many replacements, man, but I

didn't even know their name. I don't know what the count on the replacement, but you could count them in as dead out of our company too.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about the replacements, how they were received and how much training they had when they arrived.

LITTEL: I think they had their total training, but actually, we were in training now we actually went to Negros and then we went back to Panay and we trained with the Alligator over and over about 40, because we were going into Kyushu, Japan, lower island there, and our job was to go in there, like they say in November we were going to invade, we were going in at the end of October, you don't hear much, we were going at the end of October to Kyushu because they wanted to get that airplane field there. Which, they get more planes there with the B-29s to soften up Tokyo and the other main part of Japan.

KIEFNER: But you never did do that invasion of Japan, but that was your objective, that was one of the things you thought you were...

LITTEL: We were going. The date and everything was set. That's what I wanted to say, we were going in there to get that airfield, but then when we actually, another part of the story, we got to Korea, our officers got information, whether it was the truth or not, if we would have went into Kyushu we would have been wiped out, because they had brought a lot of Japs from Manchuria. Another one of the things you can't blame that the generals didn't have a handle, but more there than what they figured and we would have been wiped, we wouldn't have got off shore! What they estimate, we wouldn't have got off the shore.

KIEFNER: How well supplied were you on Panay and Negros, as far as food, clothing, and ammunition?

LITTEL: Never, I never felt that we were, the only thing, on Luzon we started pushing so far ahead that the food couldn't catch up with us. So, they grew a lot of sugar cane there, walk in the water and the sugar cane and all that, well we got to this one place where they made it into brown sugar and chunks like that you know, so

we got talking with them, we've got no food, so the Filipinos they gave us some of that and we ate that. Now that was caused because they couldn't get it down to us fast enough, I'm not blaming them we didn't get food, it's just one of those things. But as far as the food, (Laughs) and Spam, which, oh yes.

KIEFNER: When you were talking about the shelling before your landing at Negros, was that shelling from the air or from the ships?

LITTEL: Both. The destroyers and that, we were at a part you couldn't see them but we knew, we could hear it, the firing, they were around the islands around a little bit in the ships, and the planes, a lot of strafing there. In fact I think there were a couple of B-25s that were shot down, landed in the mountains.

KIEFNER: What were the conditions of these Jungles were there any risks associated just simply with the situation you were in being in the jungle outside of the enemy itself?

LITTEL: What do you mean, as far as fighting that...?

KIEFNER: No, as far as just were there any inherent risks just of being in the jungle, outside of the enemy, jus the location that you were at and the conditions?

LITTEL: Living in the jungle there and sweating where your clothes would sweat totally, unbelievable, all the way down, you broke out in, they had names for it, we nicknamed it jungle rot, under your arms and the calamine lotion they would pour like gallons, painted white, but it never helped. They used to give us Sulphaguanine for the diarrhea, you'd get diarrhea so bad it was just like water. Now they gave us Halazone pills to put in our canteen where we'd get the water out of the streams, but in the Philippines some of the fertilizer in there was human waste and where you'd get the human waste and where you'd get it in and you'd be so thirsty sometimes you wouldn't wait long enough for the Halazone pills to work. You were supposed to put them in there and wait and I'll tell you something when you're about to faint from the lack of moisture in your body and then you cheated a little bit and then the diarrhea come.

KIEFNER: Tell me about your combat experience in Negros.

LITTEL: I got short about two weeks of combat there because I was wounded and went back further back in the hospital there which was nothing but tents and the operating room when they put you in there that was nothing but a dirt floor and the surgeon there, I think we were watching there that he had operated for so many hours that they had like two guys holding him up under his arms so he could operate.

KIEFNER: How were you wounded?

LITTEL: When we went back, see when we pulled out of there we went up on high ground, we had one tank with us and he fired all in there and then the darn Jap head guy, whatever rating he was, he actually come out in the clear there with a sword, like that, but our officer said, "Let's sit tight." He had radioed for the main body to come up and they come up, but before that there were knee mortars, the Japs had knee mortars, and they fired those knee mortars out around us and were pretty accurate landing here and there, but then I caught it in my leg.

KIEFNER: Tell me what a knee mortar is, describe it.

LITTEL: It's, we have hand grenades we throw them, there's would be a like a knee mortar and rifle company, we also had, the first platoon, the second and the third were rifleman, the fourth platoon was 30 caliber machineguns and 60[mm] mortars, let me think; 60mm mortars. They had one, D Company, they had A, B and C were rifle, but D company were heavy weapons, they had water-cooled 30 caliber machineguns and they had 80mm mortars, some of them were heavier, and they would back up you, they would not really be on the line but would be back far enough that you could call for that firepower.

KIEFNER: When you were hit with this knee mortar how far were you then from medical care? What was your first medical care?

LITTEL: The paramedic, he was right there, but then they took me back a little bit and I

laid there, there was another fellow that was shot pretty bad and I think he died by morning, but they couldn't get me out 'til the next day, so the next day then the stretchers, they picked me up in the stretchers and took me on down to what they called the "Meat Wagon," the ambulance. Got aboard there and I went back in town where they had taken over a nice kind of a building there with beds and things, it wasn't a big operation, but they did knock me out and then they dug it out, you know, and then I was there two weeks and I was well enough, so called, I was well enough, I was still limping, but you see the limp didn't keep me from saying, "I've got to go back."

KIEFNER: You wanted to go back?

LITTEL: No.

KIEFNER: They said you were going back?

LITTEL: Yes.

KIEFNER: You stayed that one night in the field with that injury?

LITTEL: Yes.

KIEFNER: What did the medic do to hold you until you could get to a hospital?

LITTEL: On your ammo belt you carried a pouch there that had a bandage in it, but it also had sulfa and all he did was sprinkle the sulfa all over it which helped to prevent infection from starting up, you better get better care, but it's just temporary. Then in the hospital I got penicillin shots and that's another story there, the penicillin I think 1920-something they had it and they actually, penicillin didn't really role until World War Two they sent it overseas and found it's such a wonderful drug. Then in this hospital I was in some of the medics that were working in the hospital well it just sounded like that was the cure for anything and they injected, but the allergies, a lot of people can't take the penicillin and some of them just got themselves in big trouble, and it's just talk around the hospital I can't prove none of that.

KIEFNER: Did you have anything for pain?

LITTEL: Yes, but I really didn't take any, they have it like if you need it then he was allowed to give it to you.

KIEFNER: While you were waiting in the field you didn't have anything you had a bandage and sulfa sprinkled on?

LITTEL: That's all.

KIEFNER: The 37th field hospital where you were treated was that in a field, was that actually in a building?

LITTEL: It was in a building, but it was the front line. You've got the paramedics, then you go back to a field hospital and that was field hospital. Then if you get send to the Hawaiian islands, all the nice girls there you know, and you hate to say too bad, from the Hawaiian Islands you'd be flown back to the States, but you would be without a leg, pretty bad.

KIEFNER: Tell me about after you returned to Negros after your injury.

LITTEL: I got up to the front line and fortunately enough, with the paratroopers and everything, we had pushed the Japs so far back, with the lack of food, because the few prisoners, they were starving and this and that, that at a certain point the generals look at it that they're inoperable, they're useless, they've got no strength, they can't do anything and they had them pinned up there. That really ended there and the paratroopers were left there and we went back to Panay, like I say, start training for Japan. We were scheduled to go.

KIEFNER: Tell me, you were awarded the Bronze Star medal...

LITTEL: Yes.

KIEFNER: Tell me the circumstances to lead to receiving that award.

LITTEL: The Bronze Star, we actually got it for where I got wounded, because we actually

claimed that we held the main body in the jungle in the towns like that in the village, you had towns, you had coconut trees, it's like a clump, once you left that then it was open field and they felt that we held them there and three of us got the Bronze Star and for the Bronze Star you have to have certain people that were there, has to write up what you did and then that's turned in and then it's cleared. You don't really get it easy, a lot of red tape before it actually goes into effect.

KIEFNER: When did you receive that, were you still there when you received it?

LITTEL: No, the only thing that I got there was, I hate to say it, sometimes back at the battalions and that, a little playing on the purple heart, but I got my purple heart in the 37th field hospital where those doctors didn't play games. I shouldn't say what I just said, but that happened. Now somebody once in headquarters had to go out with the rifle company, got wounded, they were entitled to it, but then there was a lot of funny business.

KIEFNER: At the time, going back to the Bronze Star, when you were awarded the Bronze Star, did you think anything of that action at the time when it was happening, that that was something that would be...

LITTEL: No, it just came about. Now the hospital gave me the Purple Heart and I sent it home to my folks, but the Bronze Star and all that other stuff, I really didn't get it back until I got back home. When I got back home I found all the records, in St. Louis there was a big fire and they were all burnt up, now, it's lucky, they went back to the, which the 40th Division had returned to the States, going back as the national guard, and they still had all the records and they've got all that records there. Like the Philippines I got a medal from the Philippine government for fighting there, another one for occupation, and then they have another one that these soldiers that fought over there and were caught there, they're entitled, none of us, but those ones that were actually on Bataan and everything there's a medal form there. Then also a medal from the Solomon Islands, Solomon Islands gave

us a medal too, but I didn't get any until I got back home. When I come home, Camp McCoy that's another story that I got a uniform to wear into the Union Station to meet my folks and the pants didn't fit me and I didn't have my hat on, but one thing I did have was you got that they were discharged, I used to have a nickname, but anyway I got stopped walking with my folks because I didn't have a hat on and the MP and then when I turned around , because I had nothing just hat thing there, he says, "Oh, thank you." We went home, put the uniform away.

KIEFNER: Where were you when Hiroshima was bombed?

LITTEL: I was on Panay training for we're going to go, but the two bombs, I wouldn't be here. You only can dodge the bullet so long, and some of that when we landed there was more troopers there than they estimated, they didn't know until after the war.

KIEFNER: What was your reaction when you heard about the bombing?

LITTEL: That's another good story. I didn't hear about it for five days, why I didn't hear about it, because we were out on patrol, now the thing is there we were lucky all of us went on the patrol and come back, but I could have got killed out there five days after, three days, two days after the war ended. I mean that's something I think about sometimes.

KIEFNER: Was there any way that they could have contacted you while you were out on patrol?

LITTEL: Those walkie-talkies didn't go far. They may have tried, but we never had word until we walked into camp and then they told us the war's over.

KIEFNER: What was your opinion of Major General Rapp Brush, the commander of the 40th? Did you have much contact or attitude or feelings about him?

LITTEL: After the war B Company, we didn't have any get-togethers because there wasn't enough of us, we kind of, some in California, but D Company the heavy weapons, they had about 85 of their guys left, they lost men too but because they

were always back just a little farther, but they had get-togethers and I saw it in the legion magazine that they were having a meeting in Chicago, D Company of the 40th Division, 106th, "Oh Jesus, is that right?" So I went on down there and who do I walk in when I walk in the room and he gave me a big hug and I hugged him with tears in my eyes, it was Father O'Brian, and then I says, "Father" I says, "I saw it in the paper and I come down." I got talking, they have one guy who's kind of in charge of their parties, they had it in a hotel down there and they were going around seeing the city that was part of the deal, and he says, "You were in the 40th Division, you're with us." I attended the meetings for years after, and now they're all passed away and there may be, I don't even think there's one or two even left, but you see they were all old men when I was with them they were 36 and 29 years old, see, so right now you see they're 94.

KIEFNER: Did you stay in contact with those remaining 11 from your company at all.

LITTEL: No, no. Because they scattered I wouldn't even know where they, I don't even know where they were, no.

KIEFNER: What do you credit with your survival?

LITTEL: Praying to god. Many nights I laid there looking up out of that hole asking god to protect me, and getting impure thoughts in my mind as a Catholic boy, going to confession with Father O'Brian many times, maybe that did help me.

KIEFNER: After the bombing, you went to Seoul, Korea; tell me about going to Seoul.

LITTEL: We were, after they dropped that bomb we were loaded up real fast. We went up through the Yellow Sea and Incheon, we landed at Incheon, I was the first 40 guys to go ashore at Incheon, and Seoul is inland 15 miles or so, 20, whatever it is. When we landed there we landed with full armor and hand grenades, full weapons, because we didn't know what we were going to expect. Then when we went ashore there, there was no problem and the Japs were told stay in their barracks, but a captain showed up, he was a captain and he was a lawyer, he knew all the surrender terms and he just sat and talked to my captain, I was right,

my captain says, "Go with him." I went and I found out that he was going around all the airfields to accept the surrender terms from the Jap officials of those airfields. We started out, we had a jeep and we picked up a Japanese lieutenant that was in the Japanese Army for interpreter and we went on to the airfields, first one there and I went in and I stood next to him and they talked and he interpreted and on the way coming out going to the jeep I told the captain, I said, "I don't know what the heck I'm doing." He said, "Keep your mouth shut, I don't either." He was a draftee, he did a good job. The next day or that afternoon I said to the Jap lieutenant, now we were told to go there, he's an officer, I could have spit in his face or felt that way or this and that, you know the war, guys getting, but I told him I said, "Lieutenant, you speak better English than me." He said, "Well maybe I should, I graduated from the University of California." I said, "Well how the heck did you get caught into this deal?" He says he was in Japan, his dad was a businessman and he had taken him, he had graduated from college, and he had taken him with him to learn the business, I don't know what business they were doing, but anyway they had a business, well the war broke out and it was either go into the Japanese army or he was going to be locked up. He went into the Japanese Army and he went to Korea, Manchuria and that's how he got caught over there.

KIEFNER: What were some of the challenges of your time spent in Korea?

LITTEL: We went around all those airfields and the last airfield we had the general in charge of the airfield, I said he was a general, I don't know, he was up pretty high in the ranks, and he wanted to take us around. We went out in the jeep, we went around to the ocean there and the temple and took a look over there, we climbed all the steps and he was proud of it and he gave me a feeling he was glad the war was over, didn't really care how it went, but he's glad it was over. The next day we were riding along and a B-17 come over and rocked it's wings and he continued on up across the 38 parallel, now the 38th parallel, I didn't even know what it was until the Korean War, then they went to get it, but now this Jap

General the day before he wouldn't, said, "No you can't go any farther." That B-17 went over and the Russians shot him down, but I'm saying the Cold War started right there. Right there.

KIEFNER: Very interesting.

LITTEL: Maybe they shouldn't have been up there, there was side talk that you see, the Japs was going for the atomic bomb and one place up there along the ocean there was a plant, there were, some talk that that B-17 may have, because the B-17 didn't have armament, machineguns, none of that, but they may have been up there to take pictures because from the pictures they could say, "Well they're this far." They could figure it out. That was just kind of loose talk, but the Russians shot him down. I come back to my outfit in Incheon and there we went on, the Japanese soldiers and everything we had no problem with, they stayed in their barracks, no problem with them, and actually we used some of their higher officers to help us set up police action, because our main job at this state, was to set up, because there was no police department. Women were being raped, the whole gauntlet, you know what I mean, so we're setting up the police and they actually helped us to do it. And then I was only in Korea for four weeks, maybe close to five, and actually one ribbon I got for Korea, for occupying Korea, we got one ribbon for that. We just went out and one night we were out and it was starting to get cold and we had all our old clothes on from the Philippines, fatigues, we didn't have any heavy clothes like OODs, what they call, it was cold so we built a little fire next to this building that was stucco and not noticing much there with the Japanese, see the Japanese people and soldiers were all being brought down to Incheon and sent back to Japan, and when they got to Incheon they took their money away, Korean money, and gave them Japanese money, but only at a certain level, and some of the women were hiding the money, we had Korean money, we didn't touch the women but they examined them to make sure there's no money in the guys and then we took care of them, but that's how clean it was. The building started on fire because of the stucco and

was wooden lattice beneath, down comes the Korean fire department and the point I want to get, the Japs never did anything with that country but rape their women and run it down, the people were using the street for toilettes, all that mechanism, sewers were all, it was just a mess, well here comes the Korean fire department, they come up, they hook up the hose, they turn on the water and the hose you thought it was a lawn soaker, it has holes and all run down, nothing, so the building burnt down, but we got out of there before they could question too many people.

KIEFNER: Tell me a little about the civilians in Korea and the Japanese, what was going on there with some of the unrest?

LITTEL: To get to the point, we had no problems, the Japanese people or the Japanese soldiers, they were well trained men, they stayed in their barracks and when we used to go around the airfields you'd see them pull the curtain, peeking out, but we had no problems with them. The Korean people, generally were no problems, they were glad the war was over too, but you had a certain fraction of the younger ones that were actually shooting and killing the Japanese civilians and soldiers because of what they went through, the raping of their women and everything like that, it was turnaround time, and that's where the law and order had to set in. I know one night we were on patrol, the streets we had to patrol the streets and we heard a guy screaming and yelling. We went down this alley and we went in this building there, opened the door and went in and here the guy sitting behind the desk in all black clothes, a type of organization or whatever it was, and they had this other guy down there kneeling and they were beating him, so I grabbed the guy behind the desk and I grabbed him and pulled him over the desk, they were short guys, and he got up and run outside and I tackled him there and we got him and the other two guys and the guy they were beating up and they took them over to the MPs and whatever happened after that, but it was organizations of the Koreans, a small amount like that, and they were killing the Jap people when they could. But that was our police action to get law and order

back in the country.

KIEFNER: The war was over but your job was not finished?

LITTEL: Oh no.

KIEFNER: What was the Korean attitude toward the US Army?

LITTEL: When you say the war is over, the war is never over. When I came home and stop that Atabrine I broke out with malaria. I had malaria in '64 then I had one year before that because you see you stop taking Atabrine, well you go along pretty good, but I was working six and seven days a week and I was hitting a little harder and then bang it broke open. After that and what happened to me they took the main valve of my heart out, because my heart was no problem when I was in the service and 15 years ago they opened my chest up and went in and stopped my heart and put a St. Jude mechanical valve in it, now I carry a St. Jude pacemaker. I had to take Atabrine for it and the combination of another medicine it hit my system and that's why I needed the pacemaker, because my pulse was going below 45, 40 you can pass out. I guess what I'm saying, the war kind of never ends, because I'm in good shape, my heart now, they took my left kidney out about five years ago was cancerous, but I'm doing real well.

KIEFNER: Excellent. What was the Korean attitude towards the US Army patrolling after the war?

LITTEL: The General, the Korean people were glad to see us, oh no, no, they were, you see actually down at Pusan they set up the ships, some soldiers they would bring down whatever they had on hand and the civilians, the Japanese civilians, because they're all being sent back to Japan, and when they went back there on them, ships then those ships loaded up with the Korean that were taken over there for slave labor and they were bringing them back to Korea, so everybody as kind of in a friendly, you know, things were working out.

KIEFNER: When were you notified that you were going home?

LITTEL: That really came up as a surprise because we were hearing they were going to rotate, start rotating and all of the sudden we start getting more troops form home. I finally met up with those 18 and 19 years old because they were coming in, and they were coming in, but the hard thing on them is they were relieving me. Another little trouble we had, you see when they brought back these 18s, 19s, 20s and, "Let me at them Japs." Down on the pier we never had any problems, but one time they told us that they wanted to move a group of Japanese people from this area and when it rained they were all out in the rain 24 hours until they got out of the ships, well they wanted them moved over to there to another spot, so I went over there in the monsoon and they told me in my language that I have to move, they knew that I was signaling and this one man he come and (mumbles) and he's just like "come with me" so I went with him and they had a little temporary tent there and he pulled it back and here his wife was pregnant but ready to have the baby so I got him and I took him, I got him some fresh water, took him back there and I told him to stay, well I went back over into the guardhouse they kind of had there and about five minutes we looked over there, all them Japanese people had left, went to the other part where I was trying to tell them to go, in the little tent there with his wife and I hope the baby, I never found later whatever happened. We had no trouble with the Japanese people.

KIEFNER: What was it like to turn in your rifle?

LITTEL: What was that like? Alright now we got up outside of Seoul, I never really got into Seoul, never, but anyway we got up there and we went to a camp there and they told us if you take any Japanese revolvers, because a lot of the guys these Japs they'd get into these barracks where they'd take their revolvers, whatever, said you get back to the states and they find you with that you're coming back over. That put the fear of god, so we touched that and then we turned in the M1 and then the next day we were going to board ship already, and then that was on the SS Oskaloosa, it was a town in Iowa, these liberty ships were named off

towns in their names, you know what I mean? So we got on that, now that ship had been over there all during the whole war, and we got where we could, coming from Korea we come down we got off where we could see the lights of Japan, we knew it was Japan, but we weren't going in there, the boiler goes out. Now they welded all night on the boiler, they got that boiler room and finally got it started again, but you figure, "Jesus, how week is this thing? We're going to get half way out on the way home and..." We took off. Now this was setting in like the end of October and you think up around Alaska there which we, when we left Japan we run close around and storms and actually they took that liberty ship and they wouldn't let us on the deck, but that ship went over 36% and the captain was up all night for two days and that ship went down when you looked up, you could look up and see like two ships of water up, they weren't waves they were swells, up and down, we finally got loosened up and went along pretty good and then we thought we were going to Frisco, said no we were going to Ft. Lewis, Washington. We pulled into Puget Sound there and in those days you had to have tugs take you in, you know it was nothing like the cruise ships today, the tugs, so we laid off there, right, and on the road was going along there and I saw the greyhound bus, said, "I'm home!" Greyhound bus going along. We didn't dock into the dock, they didn't get us in there about 6:30, 7 o'clock at night and they load us in on ships, now on the ship itself they weren't planning on sitting for supper, we had lunch, we had breakfast, but supper was out because the ship was going into dry dock see, so we had nothing to eat. They got us aboard the trucks and they got into Ft. Lewis, Washington and right away they took us over to the mess hall there and who would know, behind the counter, were German prisoners, they did the cooking and they did all that, we were shaking hands. But they told us around there they never had any guards because the Germans were enjoying themselves so much, they couldn't get out anyway, they'd get to Mexico, you know it ain't like they were in France they could get home or something, so they just sat back and enjoyed themselves, so that's how that went.

KIEFNER: What were some of your first experiences of being back on US soil?

LITTEL: The first thing, we were supposed to go into Ft. Sheridan which meant we could be close to home which meant our parents could jump on the L, North Shore, and get up there and see us because we were supposed to get a physical and some shots and everything they could discharge, supposed to get a shirt, a pair of pants and all that blue tape, but we got into Wisconsin, we didn't know at the time, but anyway and the train started backing up, so alright we said to the conductor, and we were the only ones on the trains and the conductor says, "Well we're going to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin." I said, "No, you ain't going to." They backed into Camp McCoy, and I'll tell you something, these guys forgot all military rules. During the war they did everything "Yes Sir, no Sir," up, down, this way and that way, but they were really hot that they, I just kept my mouth shut I went along with the crowd, but they got us into the mess hall again. Of course they bring a familiar guy, can help with everything, they bring the chaplain, and they also brought up a full bird, a colonel, and the chaplain says, "Fort Sheridan was loaded, we couldn't get, so we're here." He said, "We're going to do everything." He turned it over to the colonel and he said, "We're going to do everything we can to get you out of here as quick of possible and we're starting tomorrow." We were there a day and a half, they gave us, you've to laugh at the physical (makes swishing sound) right through. Then they gave us some clothes, marched up on the stage and they gave us our discharge paper and then you saluted the officer for the last time and he wished you good luck. We get on train and I had called my folks of course, that was another thing, you had to wait, I got through to my folks at 2 o'clock in the morning because you had to wait in line, phones weren't fast like today. [I] call home I said, "I'm on my way home, meet me at the Union Station tomorrow." They got there, I wasn't on the train but then my dad had worked for the railroad a bit in his younger days he said, "Sometimes they have a second." He checked and he said, "Yeah there's another one." When I got in I got off the, come down the thing there, my mother gave her a big hug and she was crying and my dad and my uncle happened to be with them, he was staying at our house, my aunt had passed away so that's why he was living with us. I went

on home and then when I got home I got discharged in December, '45 which is some of the ones in the States that are going to be pilots so they discharged them right away, but coming from overseas I was sort of like the first to get home, I had no job, this and that, my dad knew somebody in the city in the electrical union you had to be the son of an electrician, for years, but the en the electrical union in Chicago said, "We'll allow so many veterans, their dads don't have to be electricians." Through this fellow at the city hall my dad knew, because he was in charge of all the streets and lining and this electric contractor took care of that through them, anyway I got in the electrical union, I had the GI Bill, I went to school in the union one day every week which I didn't get paid for and I was making a lot of money I was making 55 cents an hour, I didn't get paid for the day I went so school. With the GI Bill I went to Coyne Electrical, on top I used to go to the union school and that, go on over the Coyne Electrical School and go there, well by the time I got out and got on the train coming home at midnight, so I went to night school. The union had where you had numbers for the years you were in, well I didn't have any time in, I was like being the first ones being laid off all the time, then you have to wait and try to get another, so what happened there is I had an opportunity from another friend of my dads who was a painter at Kraft Foods and he had a personal friend at Kraft Foods was up in charge of engineering so they got me into Kraft because they were moving plants form Green Bay, Wisconsin, Illinois, they were moving them to Chicago and Sacramento Boulevard and actually there I got a job and I went to work there and it was all union so our union was in there too and I just worked a lot of overtime, in fact I wired up the first machines to make the sliced cheese, you know the eats slices? Of course all that packaging's been changed but at that time I worked on all that equipment, then eventually Kraft says they're moving out of town which left me, so I called the union and they said, "Well do you want to stay there?" I said, "Yeah." They made me a pretty good officer, it wasn't, but it was a good offer plus I got paid holidays, at that time the union didn't have holidays, eventually they all got it now, so I stayed there. Then they turned that into

warehousing, then they sent me to welding school and I welded on all the electric trucks and actually the over-road trucks so I was doing pretty good I held on, but finally they shut that down, but they opened up the new corporate headquarters in Glenview and they transferred me out there and I was in charge of maintenance, now I had two guys up above, the Sup. Codes up above and I was down in the boiler room and I just enjoyed my work at Kraft and I used to drink coffee with Mr. Kraft, he died in 1953 he was about '68, his wife lived to be 103, he was very good to us I got good hospitalization; I owe it all to him. Then I worked with a lot of his brothers and nephews, the kids you know worked with a lot of the family and just were good years. Something flashed through my mind here a little bit ago. Any one of those invasions, now our officers, captains bars, silver, first lieutenant, gold, second lieutenant, now the day before on the LST they had a meeting and their captain bars, all their bars on, but when we got off that ship in the morning in them alligators none of those bars were on, but we were well trained and we knew they were our officers because if the Jap would catch an officer with the bars on, they would torture them and then kill them anyway, but they'd torture them to get the information out of them, they'd kill them. An enlisted man probably they'd torture them too, but officers they'd kill them, and so they were all like all of us, if we did get captured and they also told us not to set up where you're talking to one guy like him because they'll eventually, "Hey this guys' under cover." I wanted to bring that point, never had their, and another thing, each platoon had an officer but they were all, practically all of them were 90 day wonders and we all laughed at them, the 90 day wonders, a big joke, but I'll tell you something; we lost all of them, and they were good officers, they were good men.

KIEFNER: Someone had to take charge.

LITTEL: That's it.

KIEFNER: Going back to returning home, was there anything in particular that you were looking forward to being home, was there anything that you specifically missed

while you were gone that was the most rewarding when you got home?

LITTEL: Yes, easy one, hanging out with the girls.

KIEFNER: (Laughs) You were how old when you returned?

LITTEL: I was just right around 21, coming close to 22, but you see when I come home my brother he was chasing around and going to the dances at The Y and actually he taught me how to dance and my cousin she really taught me I practiced and I used to go with them to the Y and these were, you had to be a senior in high school for these dances on Friday night see, and I went there and I was 22 years old, but I learned how to dance pretty good and I hit the dances at St. Henry's Church on Rich Avenue there which was all just, all Vets, the girls had to be 18 and also there you could buy a bottle of beer, no hard liquor. I used to go there and meet the girls and one night a girl sitting over, at that time you know the girls they wore longer skirts, but they had that where there was like a slit in them. I'm looking over there and here's this girl sitting there and the kneecap was showing and that was big-time in those days so I went over there and danced with her, I took her home, I tell you something I've been putting up with her for 62 years, we've been married, we had four children, two of my kids are CPAs with their masters and the other one has got a good job at the phone company and my daughter she's out of Loyola School of Nursing a degree and 37 years at the intensive care unit at Good Shepherd, I'm very proud of her. That wound up, I have 10 grandchildren, hang onto that chair, I've got 11 great, the baby in the great is just around two years right now and god has been good to me.

KIEFNER: That sounds wonderful, that sounds wonderful. Tell me a little about your sharing your experiences, have you always shared your experiences in World War Two and what has that involved?

LITTEL: Sharing my experience in World War Two, I think a little earlier I might have gave you a little bit, nobody knew anything about it. Not my family or my brother, my brother was over there, but we started up this round table at the

Willamette Library where like I say they make coffee and the guys they bring a coffee cake in every third Wednesday of the month, that broke the thing, and from there I used to, I don't know if I told you, before I went to Loyola University and for about five years I gave Professor Kline, history class, we gave lectures to the kids, there was two sailors from the Pacific and me, we gave a talk on World War Two in the Pacific, tell them all the stuff that I knew and they didn't know anything about it, they said, "World War One and World War Two, I had an uncle or somebody..." Vaguely, but I'll tell you something they listened, they paid good attention, and they asked good questions and the reward to us and to me was I think I've done some good, they hung on, a lot of men died or the Japs would have had Loyola University and you'd be teaching what they want you to teach, or learn.

KIEFNER: Absolutely. Have you had much experience with younger groups, like younger students?

LITTEL: Yes, I've been a few times out of the round table to Willamette schools and the last one that was fourth grade and it was kind of comical because them kids they're wide eyed and I tell you, against the Loyola kids and these, these kids asked, we were supposed to be there just a certain time, an hour after it was really over with , these kids I'll tell you something they had questions, but the funny thing about it, there was one little girl there and she'd come after me, "I don't know about this and that." After it was over I went up, took her and I patted her on the head I said, "I tell you something, you go home and you study a little bit about it and you come back and we'll talk again." I was proud of her, she was a scrapper. So that's with the kids.

KIEFNER: Do you belong to any military veterans' organizations; you mentioned you meet with that round table...

LITTEL: Yes. I went into the American Legion in 1945, after 50 years you don't have to pay dues anymore so I got what about, 68 years in the American Legion. After

World War One, my dad was in World War One and him and his friend Erve Hunsiger and a few more of them, they actually started Post 42 in Evanston and my dad was quite involved in his younger days, so when I come home he put the heat on, "You've got to join!" "Oh I don't want to be bothered." I went with him, the first night I was there with myself, of course my uniforms are all put away and all like that, of course they're interested in hearing some little story like I just sitting around I told them in what we had a sailor kid there that was actually in his uniform and he was going to go back and be discharged the next day, he hadn't officially been discharged but he was going to, there was only two of us, but then later on in about February well there was quite a few, 50 -60 guys around, in fact they really those kept the Legion going because the World War Two were fading away, in fact the World War Two 1,200 to 2,000 a day, not a month or a year, they are passing away, there ain't many of us. I don't know if we've mentioned or if you're interested, but I was on the Honor Flight out of...

KIEFNER: Tell me about that Honor Flight, what year was that?

LITTEL: That was a year ago in May, it was, see in the wintertime they stop them because some of these guys, 50%, are in wheelchairs, it's too cold and so they stop in November and they open up in April. There was one group in April went and I was in the second group. Midway we take off from and we had to be down at Midway at 4 o'clock in the morning, I was down there a quarter after three in the morning and they were sweeping the floors, I was supposed to go to pier one and they said, "Oh yes you wait around here." Eventually a couple of guys come in with uniforms on, the jungle suit you know what I mean, they said, "Well, wait here." I got in the first group, got on the plane and we took off, we landed in Washington. There were about 800 people at the airport, children and women shaking our hands the women with tears in their eyes, probably lost somebody, gave us hugs. Then we went out and got on the, we had four buses and we went around all the monuments and out to the Enola Gay at the museum where the Enola Gay is, and that is the original plane, that's no fake. Then we went all

through that and we come back and we got to the airport and we waited right by the gate, then they fed us, they fed us four times in the day, they fit us because the plane wasn't going to take off for an hour and a half. Another thing I want to bring up, when we got to Washington, for each two of us we had a bodyguard, us we happened to have a woman and she was in the service and discharged, her husband is in the service at one of the military hospitals, he's a doctor, anyway she was with us, stayed with us, made sure we didn't get lost because some of them were, you get lost at this age. We got back on the plane and on the plane there they fed us again and then we got in Indiana and it was raining in Chicago so we had a bypass down a little bit, but the rain ended, but they routed the plane around, we landed at Midway at 9:30 at night and I tell you, it was over 2,000 people greeted us, again shaking hands and the little kids with the hands, you know. Then the people were all in one thing to welcome us back, nothing else, no politics, nothing.

KIEFNER: That's fabulous. You mentioned last weekend you were at a Blackhawks game, tell me what that was about, other than going to watch the Blackhawks play.

LITTEL: I don't know if they got my name from that Honor Flight or if they got my name from the library of congress, but anyway, they contacted me and said, "We have a veteran and we have an active veteran that's actually in the service on the red carpet at the Blackhawk game." I said, "Well, I'll go." They said I cannot drive myself so my son in law, he took charge from there on and he talked to this woman on the phone and with the email because we were supposed to be there at 2 o'clock, then she contacted and they cancelled it to 11, then they cancelled it 11:30. Under all the people there and us we were supposed to be on TV, that's my understanding, didn't know anything about it and I'll get back to that. He drove me down, we got free parking, they gave us a slip for free parking and where to park and also the gate to go to, special gate because we went in ahead of time and I had the letter with me and everything saying that's what I was there for, went to the desk, the guys said, "Well, you wait right here." He called this

woman, this girl, and then showed up right at that time, too at the table, was a marine that was just back home from Afghanistan and we got talking and he says, "Yeah I'm supposed to stand on the red carpet." He was the active duty. We all got checked in there and then they took us up to just outside of where the penalty gate for the Blackhawks. They said, "Wait right here." They had the steps going down there but they didn't have any banisters, you had to put your hand on people. I'm not too good, but that girl said, "I don't know, I get dizzy." She got her arm under me and her and me went down there and first of all when we went down people, they asked us to wear these ribbons we had so I had another jacket and put them on, I had them on and people probably didn't know what was going on. We went down and we went to the front row there, we went over to the penalty box, she sat with us in there and finally the lad that sings the national anthem, he showed up and you wouldn't want to meet a finer man, he was just down to earth, figure well's a big guy, he was just down chatting. All of the sudden they took us out on the red carpet and the pictures I showed you there, they sang the national anthem and then we went back into the penalty box and we went into the penalty box, the first time the Blackhawks would get a penalty, then we would leave. Sure enough, after a bit, you can get out the side way and going up the steps she helped me too and the shaking of the hands, they're all, I kind of got tears in my eyes and one woman she was in about two spots in come out and put her hug around me, just beautiful people, beautiful. Then they took us up in the stands on the corner where you looked across at the two penalties and you can see all up there, sometimes I think if you're in the center you only see, and then they had the cameras on us and they had us on up there in the TV they had up. But the point is, when I got home to Lake Zurich my where my son in law and my daughter live I said, "Did you get the pictures?" He said, "What pictures?" I thought they were pulling my leg and it got down where NBC cancelled the Blackhawks, they got the two games in the East, so we weren't on TV, but I don't need the TV because the people were so beautiful, you couldn't meet a finer, bigger crowd of people.

KIEFNER: Is there anything else that you would like to share, is there anything that maybe you expected me to ask that I didn't?

LITTEL: No I think we covered it pretty good.

KIEFNER: How's your military experience applied to your civilian life?

LITTEL: I think it applied to my work. When they shut up a plant downtown I was in charge of maintenance, we had a bad thing there because these guys, of course they were transferred out you see, Kraft didn't like to lay anybody off, they were transferred, I was really a little overloaded but I tried to keep them all busy moving around. Some of them would come in and this or that, they'd get down by the carts with their elbow here just beating the breeze, "Get out of here! Jesus, go to the washroom or something!" I tried to keep them busy. The company moved in, brought some outfit from Texas, a little marijuana-y floating around. It just happened that this particular gang was involved in it, plus some on the dock, and they brought a guy in to work on the dock, I tell you, you take a look at him you say, "That guy's a marijuana-y smoker." Because he had the long hair. Smart lad because later on I mentioned to him, he talked to me, he got them all down and they got them all and fired them out of there, and that's something you feel good about it because I was there 41 years.

KIEFNER: You returned to the South Pacific many years ago, tell me about that trip you took.

LITTEL: Yes, [in] 2001 the Princess line, actually the Princess Cruise Line, their headquarters is in Australia, but this is like another outlet up here, the ships that sail out of the United States, but they own them. They wanted to get the Star Princess back down to Australia because they were setting up to take cruises out of Australia to Hong Kong, Japan, the Philippines and they wanted to get that program started. They didn't want to deadhead down there and burn all that fuel with nothing. How they got the idea, it was a good idea, they got a World War Two or Veterans, all Veterans could go on it, to take Veterans down to Australia.

Well, now, we went from here, the total cost I'll give it to you but this was covered under the total cost. Got on the plane at O'Hare, flew to Frisco, got on a bus, went up the river a little bit there, got on the cruise ship and we sailed out the next day and we went on to the Hawaii, went to Oahu and we had time there to take some of the rides where you can go around to see the battleships and stuff. Then we went, from there we went down to Oahu, or no, Maui and we tendered, we parked out in the ocean, tendered in, we had the day there. Me and my wife we had been there before so we went on the buggy wagon there and took the ride, everything, we got back then we got aboard the ship again, because they said, "Be back on time very sharp because when we pull out we're pulling out." From there we went to Guam, Saipan and we didn't get to Tinian because some, the rules, some of the guys on the ship that were in the Air Corps, a lot of B-29 pilots, they wanted to rent a plane and fly from there to Tinian because that's where they took off from with the B-29s. We got out of there and we went to a couple of more islands, we went down to the island of New Britain and Rabaul there, we didn't get in town there like I told you before because they had a volcano that erupted, six inches of that stuff all over the whole town. They took us in one like that during the war was nothing, but it was, like I told you it was all big hotels, like three hotels, that are quite a bit in that area. The gas stations, Shell and Texaco, they were in town, nice gas station. Then the plane you could get on the international airport there, you get on the plane, fly to Australia, you get the big plane to the states. From there we went to Guadalcanal and at Guadalcanal 15-18-20 years ago the Japs built a Museum there for their dead, and now when we went there the Americans they built, up on the plateau overlooking the coral sea, they built a beautiful monument there for our men that were lost on Guadalcanal and also, the point is, that the Japanese officials come from Japan when we had the grand opening of that there, Japanese officials were there and were glad to see it. From there we pulled out and we went down to Brisbane, went to MacArthur's headquarters, it's a museum now where he was when he took off from the Philippines. We got back on the ship and then we

went down to Sydney, we got off the ship, took our groups and went into a hotel there, we had three days and four nights there and they took us all out, the sheering of the sheep. Took us down to the beach and then the dome over the opera, the thing we went there and seen quite a bit, they took us all over. At the hotel we had two meals, but the noon meal we didn't because most of us were out anyway, went to the big expensive restaurant they had quite a big expensive restaurant there, it's got yellow arches...

KIEFNER: (Laughs)

LITTEL: McDonald's. My wife and I whenever we go there, you can relax and stay as long as you want up in Lake Zurich. So anyway we stayed there, then we went out to the airport, the fourth day we got on the plane and flew into Frisco and Frisco when we were real close, about a half hour, go on the plane into O'Hare and my family met us there. To get back, all that was paid for, we paid for wife and me \$9,800. That thing would have cost you today about \$25-30,000. \$9,800, they wanted to get a ship over there and they did something good.

KIEFNER: You touched on, one more time, you mentioned MacArthur and we were going to talk a little more about him, just tell me some of your feelings about MacArthur.

LITTEL: Like I told you earlier we went down, we went across Clark Field and the Zambales Mountains and when we got up there they sent eight of us back down across, because on the other side there's a river, you had to go through the river and that river was up to here, we could walk across it, and anyway your rifle's all wet so you've got to clean that out. It's on the end of this town, across Clark Field right off the road, it's a two-lane road that comes from Lingayen Gulf and goes all the way down to Manila. They brought us down there because they were afraid that the Japs are going to land at Subic Bay which is around on the other side of the mountains, in fact we had a big base there all during the Cold War. We stayed there because we were threatened that the Japs, if they come, we'd be

early warning we could tell them that, "Hey, action coming, behind here." Six o'clock in the morning, now the Japs had taken all the anti-aircraft equipment off the airfield and taken it into the mountains and they were shelling down on us, but really over there, not very close, but if it landed and hit you well then you...

KIEFNER: That would have been close!

LITTEL: Yes! Four jeeps pull off the road and it was funny because these guys were all dressed in sun-tans, sun-tans is the summer uniform. I walked over to the first jeep in front there and it turns out he's a second lieutenant. During the war and this and that you don't say lieutenant or nothing, you just talk, again what I told you back if the Japs caught him they'd torture him to death, so once you hit that you don't. Actually I talked to him but I was concentrating more on him, I said, "Sir, you better get out of here because they've been shelling us up there." I happen to look over next to him and here it's MacArthur, now MacArthur I didn't see him or nothing, he gave me a low half salute and smiled at me and that's all we got, a smile, and they got back up on the road because see MacArthur said he was going back to Manila, and he was right behind his old buddy, the 1st Cavalry, 37th Division, they had already been in town and did quite a shooting up down there, but he was right in there right after. And I'll tell you something, I never made a landing that MacArthur wasn't behind, he didn't come into the shore and say, "How are they doing up there?" He'd come into the shore and went up there, because two days later at these other islands, Luzon it was five days before he came ashore because they just don't know, for safety, for him, but then he come ashore and set up his office and that's where he left shortly after to come right down to Manila, 80 miles to Clark Field, probably that's about 125-28 miles. I tell you if they went... He's a good man.

KIEFNER: Sounds very hands on.

LITTEL: A lot of the, it wasn't his trouble because he never let it bother him, the Pentagon used to try to catch up to him. One time it was rumored that the Pentagon called

like his office, they said, "Well we can't get ahold of him right now, he's at the front lines, as soon as he gets back we'll have him give you a call." Nimitz was in Hawaii, never seen much of him over there. The Pentagon tried to take some of the glory or slow him up, "You're taking our glory now it's our glory that you've done all this good work!" I can't prove, but I think he outsmarted them.

KIEFNER: Mr. Littell, thank you for sharing your experiences today.

LITTEL: It's been a pleasure.

KIEFNER: Thank you for your service to our country.

LITTEL: Thank you very much.