

# Paul Schneller

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U.S. Marine Corps

Parris Island

Weapons Training Command

1946-1948

Niles Public Library Veterans History Project Transcript

18 April 2006 Niles, IL

**Paul Schneller**  
**Veterans History Project Interview Transcript**  
**18 April 2006**  
**Interviewer Kate Wolicki**

**000: Introduction**

*This interview is being conducted on April 18, 2006, at Niles Public Library in Niles, Illinois. My name is Kate Wolicki. I'm speaking with Mr. Paul Schneller. Mr Schneller was born on August 17, 1927, in Calumet, Michigan, and now lives in Niles, Illinois. Mr. Schneller learned of the Veterans History Project through a visit to the library. He has kindly consented to be interviewed for the project. Here is his story.*

*So you can start wherever you want.*

First of all, I didn't realize I had forgotten so much. And then when I started thinking about it, I remembered more than I'd thought. So, it's a good thing for an old person to recall!

*Ancient.*

Right. I assume you will edit some of this because--

*Yeah, well, you know.*

Okay.

*If you don't want us to tell--*

Oh, no.

*Then we hide it. Yeah. Sssh, it's a secret.*

What I'm going to do is tell you what happened, and the influences it had on me directly, and on my children, and, then, since I became a teacher for most of my life, all of my teachers. And I'll end with the very interesting thing about Arlington Cemetery, and my first cousin who married a Marine. So, it will be washed in Marine Corps things!

**016: Enlistment as a Marine**

I enlisted. The war was over, but it was still on. And I was a senior in high school in 1948, so I enlisted because my person of interest was my cousin who married a Marine. And he was a big, tall Marine, about six foot five. And he's from the Mize family. And if you know your sports, his cousin was Johnny Mize, the first baseman on the New York Yankees, so that's kind of a connection.

Marines were being recruited still, for the cleaning up of the war, as you call a war of occupation. It's really the occupation always comes after. We are still in areas of occupation,

since I was in the Service. So, this is not a new idea. It's an old one. And it's because some of the losers are poor—they're poor sports. They will not accept that they lost. And they're opportunists that see a chance to blossom in a particular field.

**028: Parris Island Boot Camp: “an introduction to a life.”**

So, I was sent to Parris Island, South Carolina, to the boot camp. I passed my physical. And the first physical is in Chicago, if you're going east to Parris Island. If you're going west past the Mississippi, you go to San Diego.

And the word “boot” means a camp. So, when the Corps was founded, and when soldiers had to live in the fields, they wore boots. Leather ones, if they were high enough, or they were wrapped with various kinds of leathers, things like that to keep their feet. And in areas of what we call beach sand, to keep the beach sand out. And then if they rode horses, my dad-- just to reference this, I didn't bring pictures of him, he was a military policeman in the First World War. And I have a picture of him with a squad. And there he's standing on the end with the boots on. So, boot camp is an introduction to a life.

Okay, the first thing that I can talk about here, because it all fits, is orientation and de-orientation. And that's the first two weeks when you go down there. And the de-orientation is to separate all your family, and friends, and ideas, and behaviors, because you're going to become a Marine. And that's, for a lot of people, very difficult. More so, even today.

And it's the first week of training. And you have medical and dental exams. You have issued clothing and an M1 rifle which follows you everywhere, okay. And then you say a little prayer. I'll read that to you in a minute. And you form at that first period, two or three days, platoons. That's a platoon. This is my platoon. And you, then I suspect, are told, I don't know why I got the note, but that the British in 1948 were still rationing bread and they were still rationing clothes up until '49. So, while I didn't get into the fighting, (my mother said thank you,) I still got into the field.

*Yeah.*

Okay, and I had some interesting things. What we did in the first two weeks was we marched and drilled close order and what they call lank ones, two miles and three, and we had calisthenics every morning before breakfast on the main parade ground. And the Marine band was there to play live music. And a model stood up on a post and did all the exercises you had to do.

*How did they pick that person?*

I imagine he was a model of calisthenics. No doubt he's a professor of calisthenics. Because he had a natural-- he had the greatest moves from one to the next. So, I thought, well, another guy knows what he's doing.

And then we went marching and we would sing. And we would sing the Marine Corps hymn, and every Marine has to learn this by heart. And I will start my talk eventually on what I did, with the lines from here, because the Marines have an esprit de corps that changes them from the nice, comfortable life they went through to a terrible life, just dreadful, because that is not pleasant. And, you know, you got to go from my mother and her nice attitude, to my sergeant's saying you got to kill, this real dichotomy. So, we were told about the washouts, this is the first three days, that many of you will not make it even if you want to be in the Corps. The dropout rate is about 18 % of the recruits. And then I will tell you a story about one of them.

*So, where did they end up if they dropped out?*

Well, they were given a discharge based on medical advice from the doctors, psychiatrists, or the regular doctor. They found something wrong with the person, maybe one eye, or this, or something—ear. And he would be a danger to the squad if he's in need of supporting. The weakest link is the weakest link. And everybody in the military knows about it. So, it's nothing personal. It's got nothing to do with, what you would say, his political correctness or multiculturalism. It's survival of the fittest. So, they tell you about it, and they'll tell you why. It may be we cannot use you, you do not like it, or you failed. Something like, we have, I think I've got some of the marks somewhere, but on the cards, because they're watching you all the time.

#### **084: Training: "We're going to build muscles and confidence"**

And, so, they then say, alright, you're going in this platoon. And they say we're going to build muscles and confidence. Some days, confidence and muscles, but back and forth. And we build esprit de corps. We build into the training a spirit about comradeship, being a band of brothers. What does that really mean besides just talking? What does it mean when they are shooting at you? And things like that. Longer marches, they keep you crazy. And recruits must learn to sing and they're all singing there. Now, you see it in the movies, they have these little talking games like rapping. That's okay, and we did a lot of them, but that doesn't build esprit de corps. Then we had lectures.

*Only singing does that.*

Pardon?

*Only the singing does that, yeah.*

#### **098: Marines History**

Right. It does. Because, I'll tell you why-- but lectures about the Marines and the history. And, so, one of the things they very cleverly do, they weave in human values based on former Marines who did really interesting things. And they start that from the very beginning. And it gets them in a lot of trouble with newspaper people. The oldest Service-- we have a big, big birthday party every year, November the 10<sup>th</sup>, because it was the oldest Service, established in 1775.

Okay, now, I want to talk about the reference to the first two lines, so you get a little esprit de corps.

*This is very good, yeah.*

Yes.

“From the Halls of Montezuma to the Shores of Tripoli,” okay?

*Yeah.*

Are those just words?

*Of course--*

They're not. They are shores of Tripoli. So that's Libya today. So when Jefferson was president, this took place. And Jefferson is a little toward the left in terms of modern days, and no wars, no wars of aggression, no fighting, just talk and diplomatic. So when the Barbary pirates started taking our trade merchants and holding them for ransom, killing them when necessary, and making them slaves until you paid tribute, and the French sent a letter that, you know, we ought to do it too, that encouraged the Barbary pirates to do more. So, as you can imagine, Jefferson had to change his mind. So, he recommissioned ten ships that he had put in mothballs. And he was listening to people who were going to say this is what we can do about it.

Diplomacy wouldn't work. The man was the Shah of Tripoli, all he wanted was money, for his life. They don't have natural wealth in those countries. The ground is very inhospitable to farming, so steal and fight.

So, a guy came in, and Eaton, his name is, and he was an Army officer. And he had this idea. Not too many people liked it, but he says, let him go over there and take some Marines with him. And he says, we'll recruit some other people. And he says, then, like Rommel, (well, he didn't, I said Rommel,) I'll march from Egypt along the North African coast to where the pirates are. And he collected Greek mercenaries, who are wonderful fighters, by the way, Hitler will tell you that, and some Arab cavalry who are not trained, but who see an opportunity to make some money, and these little Marines, you know, we had a couple of squads. And they went, and they went left, and when they got to the city of Darren, I think it was, here was the Shah. And he left for another place, and told his men to fight off the Americans. It didn't work. The Americans stormed the place. They had artillery, and the Navy bombed it. And everybody in the city ran. And they went in, and went out, and raised the flag on the shores of Tripoli. So the song now means something to every Marine, that they were real Marines, and they were in a real battle, and I even think I wrote down how many survived, they did a pretty good job, some numbers.

Let's see now, this is Montezuma. That's the next one coming up.

So, anyway, what happened was the Arabs were upset. They didn't know what to do. Jefferson sent a diplomat over there, and then he redid everything like it was before. That's the way it works. And, so, they decided not to pick on America any more, anyway.

### **151: Lectures, more history**

So that's, let's see, continue reducing civilian life things, and, so, you see in this first story, a difference. You see a president who is a wonderful person with a flaw, in the reality of leading and supporting the country. He's one of my favorite persons, but he was wrong on this. Okay, now, adding Marine philosophy and physical activities every day, so they're working on it. And, so then, we talk about that. And everybody-- we have what we call training sheds, and when the flag is up, and we can't drill, because it is too hot, then we go into the training sheds. And we hear different people talk. This is one of them that I heard.

Now, the next one was the "Halls of Montezuma." Where is the hall of Montezuma? Montezuma was the Aztec emperor, and he lived in this palace. And the Americans were being put in a very, very awkward position, because of the West picking away New Mexico and all of that. So, they sent Scott with the Army and a contingent of Marines; again, smallest, little group, but the best trained. So, off they go, and they get to Mexico City, and they attack this palace. And I wish I could pronounce it. What's it called? I've got it here, Katpultec, Katputatlic, I don't know. If I ever do it seriously, I'd better look it up. But, anyway, they landed on Veracruz. They went across the state of Florida. And when the castle fell, the insurrectionists ran. They took away, and the Americans put up the flag there, took Mexico City, and then eventually they left. They left. I got a little note here, they left, and they eventually went back into civilian life. So, that's the encounter with Mexico in that period.

There are others. The Marines have been involved in over a hundred and some landings like this. They're sort of the policemen of the world, for good or bad.

### **171: Training Schedule**

Now, let's see, we'll skip over here to the qualifying—oh, we had one more. I want to do this one later. Here are the training days for the Marines, okay, which I was an instructor eventually. And, so you go through the basics, mental, physical training schedule, hardness. Weeks one and two, you spend leaving part of yourself away and taking on a new self, okay. Then week three and four culminates in those first two weeks being put together, like if you were a dancer for a show. You actually do it, and practice it, and each time you do it, you had a burden on someone. And, so, by the end of the second week, certainly the third, 18% of the fellows are given a release. And they've had their heads all shaven, and they go home, and, to them, they're-- some like it. They didn't want go, even though they enlisted. They didn't know what they were getting into. Because the Marines are not drafting like the Army was. They were still getting people.

So, then, the mental tests came. I had one. I remember all the physical ones you had to do, so many sit-ups, you had to run this way, then you had to come in and take an IQ test.

*Did you have to do it all in the same day or in the--*

No, in the week. It was a week.

*A hard week.*

Oh, yeah, every week got tougher. And then weeks five and six, you went to the rifle range. That's where I ended up an instructor, but when we went through it, we had the thing that you call snapping in or grass period where you just use the rifle, you sleep with it at times, and you know how to put on the belts and all of that. And you'll see why in a minute. Then you actually go on a firing line. That's you use live ammunition. And on the last day of that, you fire for qualification. And if you don't qualify, you are never put in a platoon that's going to be involved in shooting.

*So, you have to be-- you have to be--*

Every Marine that's in is a marksman. And I am, too. And you could be counted on to protect other people. That's their philosophy. So, you could say the rifle is the dividing device of the Marines. So that-- we'll see later on.

*You could say that.*

Yeah. Yes, because I was there. I went through it and I taught it, so I did both.

So, week seven and eight is warrior week, and that's where you start getting into the actual physical dimensions of it. And you have the best equipment that you can do. You wear helmets and you do all that. And it's rough. And if you make it a game, that's the way you can get away. You can pretend you're playing basketball or something, you know. And then week seven and eight, that's warrior week, week nine and ten, return to the rifle range for advanced training, shooting at moving targets, shooting with limited lights, all of that. And then you get to expand your knowledge and, not skill, but awareness, of weapons. You get to fire a Browning Automatic Rifle, which is a machine gun, and you just square it, just to feel it, because you're not going to be trained for it, because you may be assigned to cook, so they're not going to waste that training. The basic training is bayonet and rifle. That's what you got to master. And then you got ready.

*Oh, this thing had a little bit of a problem.*

Okay, now.

*It's not nearly—running.*

### **227: Advanced Station: identifying Marines' skills**

What they're doing as they go ahead, and I got involved with some of it later, because of some of the things I would do, and by the 12<sup>th</sup> week, you are going to be sent to an advanced station. And, so, what the Marines tried to do is like a lot of colleges, tell you a little bit about chemistry,

tell you a little bit about biology, and you get an idea of what you might want to do. I ended up being a weapons specialist. I never had a weapon in my life. My mother wouldn't let me have a BB gun. So, this is, you see, so, and they stressed the family values in this last thing. And then they had, I wrote down some of the things I remember, pilots, technicians, military police, special forces, flame throwers, communication, that's the--

### **231: Flame Throwers**

*Flame throwers?*

Huh. Oh, yeah, they had.

*Flame throwers.*

When they got to Japan, the Japanese would not give up, and they'd stay buried in their -- the Marines would see "Are you there?" -- they'd get shot! So, they developed this machine that they carried, all the petroleum that was the mix for the flame, and then a big hose with a nozzle, and then they'd fire heavily. And then the guy would go up to them, and turn on the flame. And it did two things. It burned almost everybody to death and/or it withdrew all the oxygen. And they strangled. Because they were built that way, Japanese were dishonored to--

*Right.*

To--and, so, I figured I saw a movie, and maybe I saw this, I don't know.

### **237: Communication: Navajo code breakers, people who have a language**

And then communication, that's really kind of cute. Here, let me tell you this story. Now, this is the Navajo code breakers, so when they saw what they were dealing with with the Japanese, they made an adjustment. And they said go out and recruit. And so they all went out to the Window Rock Reservation. That's funny, I go back there forty years later as a consultant on reading. So, the Navajos had two conditions. They had to be healthy enough to become a Marine, and they had to know English and Navajo fluently. No time to write it down, they had to do instant translation. So, the Marines took these people, and I have a picture of them here. Here's basically, a code for the Marines was based on urgent message, could be sent and received without time-consuming process of encoding and decoding. Not only is that time-consuming, you got to be in perfect conditions, and you can misquote. And that's terrible. The Navajos simply read the message they got from a commanding officer. They read it in English and he listened, sent it--and then he'd go down and send it. And he'd translate on the machine, the radio, and the guy at the other end knew exactly what it meant. He didn't have to decode it. Isn't that fabulous! It saved so many lives you can't believe. And that's the code breaker.

So, people there who have a language are looked on as a valuable link in the Marine team. You know German. I can tell you a German thing. In the famous battle, a guy pulled a Sergeant York, because he spoke perfect German. And he got up there, and he yelled in German.

So everybody was identified for having skills, having things that the Marines could draw on, either in revolts and insurrections, or in war, whatever it was. And then it was-- there were classes when we started you back and forth and that.

### **267: Other Marine jobs**

Divisions on land and sea, second Marine division, you can go into the amphibian group. You can be a guard for the consulates and the embassies. You can do daily duty on a Naval vessel, on a carrier. They're all Marines.

I've got a picture in my archives of the USS Gearhart in the Civil war with the Union Services. And here's a picture of the twelve Marines that were assigned to that ship. Now, where I lived in upper Michigan, and I go through Gearhart, there's a ship there called the USS Gearhart. And it was built by the Works Project Administration in the '30s. Yes, it's crazy.

Then armored vehicles and tanks, all of it. That's-- those are where you go to—

### **276: Shirley Temple & China: Consulate duty**

Now, one of the talks I got to tell you a little bit about-- Sergeant Neely had been in China maybe eight years in the '30s. And China duty was among the best, was the best in a way. People liked the Marines. They respected them. They had great horses. They looked great. They had their boots polished, and they would change the guard like the British. And in Peking, the capital, they were noted for their ponies. They were so well groomed and all of that. So, he said how much he enjoyed it. He taught me about the Chinese people. I was in the group, you know. And then the thing that was interesting, he told me about Shirley Temple. Now, Shirley Temple was the biggest box office attraction in Hollywood in the thirties, and when her movie played anyplace, Shanghai, Peking, Tianjin, a line would form up all away around the block. This is what he told me. He said they were mesmerized by Shirley Temple. And I said-- I talked to him. I said, "But they threw their girl babies in the river!" He said, "Not a girl like Shirley Temple!" Because they were throwing the ones, the girls that were no good, had no value, and I said--

*If they could tap dance--*

I said-- That's your trick. But she could sing, she could tap dance. She had a great thing. They used to have people translate, you know, in the movies, so I always thought about that.

So that's consulate duty. And some of them liked that, they go into consulate work. They're all over the world. And they're bodyguards.

And my Uncle Mac, he was a bodyguard for Roosevelt on the last tour that Roosevelt took in the, what, the western part of the country.

### **303: Last training week: Assignments**

Okay, now, the last week in the Marines. And then we'll get into what I did. Our platoon assembled for the last time, began telling the recruits their new assignment. That's a big thing. So, you do whatever you do, and then, late in the day, you assemble at the main barracks here. And they say, alright, so and so, and so and so, and they may call off fifteen - twenty names, and you are to report. So and so, here's your furlough. And now you will report when you come back. I had a ten day furlough or something to this. And they give them an address, each one, and off they go.

And, then, I, because I could type, they had me typing in the day at the headquarters. And that's the first time I saw a woman Marine-- was there, they were in the headquarters.

So, I came in and typed. Then I did-- that second night, we all gathered again. Line up, calls off another group, and they go two places, Cherry Point, North Carolina, which was air, and then went to Georgia and worked with Rangers. They were Army units that they worked with, and some went to that part.

### **322: "What, they don't want me?": Parris Island Weapon Training Command**

Third night, there was seven of us left. And I figured, well, tonight, I'll be going now. And they called everybody else. And there I am standing. What, they don't want me! What is it? And I said, and I remember I talked to the guy, "When will I get my orders, Sir?" "You won't. You're staying here, Parris Island. You've been assigned to Parris Island's Weapon Training Command." That was it. So, I got the furlough. I went home. And then I came back, and then began my work with them. It was interesting.

*So, it's still 1946, huh?*

Still just the fall.

*Yeah.*

This picture was taken in '46.

*Oh, yeah, October.*

But, anyway, when I tell you about my duties, and what I did, and you'll have a chance to reflect back on the boot camp, because they're all tied together, because I think, when I finish today, you'll have a different understanding of a rifle, okay?

*I'm all for a different understanding of a rifle.*

You don't have to have it. You just have to understand the thing--

*Yeah, I know.*

and support people who have to use it.

### **338: Rifle Range instructor**

Alright, then we have grass week and this leads, of course, to the rifle range. So rifle range, this would be after you come back from your furlough now, and you've gone-- you've made it. You're going to be a Marine. You've got a thing on your head, and you're now--

*You've got a thing on your head?*

Yeah, right, the insignia of the Marines.

*Ah.*

The globe, okay, so--

*The thing on your head.*

They won't let you have it-- they won't let you have it, until you get one-- that means they put those on for the picture and took them off after the picture, because you're still a recruit. You may not be a Marine. You don't get to wear that until you're a Marine. They had all of these little things.

So, anyway, hours of instruction began in the first week with the weapon. And I'm going to read a little thing they put on you, all the recruits. I'm now an instructor. I came back from my furlough and here I am. And I'm basically an apprentice. I'm going through what an experienced instructor or coach, one of the two—"My rifle" and then we have to say it. We say it, and then we sing it. "This is my rifle. There are many like it, but this one is mine. My rifle is my best friend. It is my life. I must master it, as I master my life. My rifle, without me, is useless. Without my rifle, I am useless. I must fire my rifle true. If I shoot him, before he shoots me" --I changed that to "enemy." I didn't like the way it was, and we all had that option to make changes. "So I must shoot my enemy before he shoots me." So, we tried to say this rifle is different. And it's an M1. And it's capable of firing-- I think the one I had-- was about 7 bullets, 30 caliber.

### **372: Green Week: Snapping In**

Alright. So the first thing we do, we get them on what we call the green week. And the green week is in front of the big rifle range. It's all grass. And it's called snapping in, where we try to get them to be as comfortable with a rifle as they are at anything they'll ever have in their life. And, so, we take out the firing pin in case they accidentally get a bullet and it fires. Never been a Marine killed in the history of the rifle range. That's another interesting thing. So weapon handling, that's the first thing, how to treat weapons.

Treat weapons as if they were loaded. So, I still do it. I say treat it as if it's loaded. You won't fool around. Keep your fingers off the trigger. Keep your weapons on safety. There's a safety button. And never point a weapon unless you intend to use it. And every Marine's got to master

that. And if we see one being violated, he's got to duck walk. He got to do, you know, until he learns that he can never do it. They'll say ha ha ha and--

*Duck walk?*

That's you walk like a duck.

*How do you walk like a duck?*

I can't do it anymore. I can't get down like that.

*And you have to walk--*

Oh, yeah.

*Oh, that would hurt.*

So, that's one of the punishments. There's all kinds.

*Yeah.*

### **388: Marine marksmanship: how to**

Then you have an introduction to Marine marksmanship. Now, the first time I did it, another guy did it, because I'm just learning. And then there's an introduction to the fundamentals of marksmanship. And what's interesting, we had these sheds like this. They were open air on three sides. They had a back, and a bulletin board, and just tiers of steps. And there's no back, so you had to sit and pay attention. Introductory positions, you had sitting, you had to sit and shoot, you had kneeling and shooting, standing, and prone. We had four positions. Every Marine has to learn how to shoot as a marksman at all those things and the common elements. And we would. And then you know this goes on and on day after day, and then relaxing your muscles. If you're going to fire, you had to learn to relax your muscles.

*How come?*

Like athletes do today. You see them. There are ways of doing it. Use the bones of your body to support your body and your rifle, not your muscles. So, I am being taught at the same time they're telling the people that if you let a guy using his muscles that's not what you're doing, you're using the bones in here to support that weapon, okay. So, and your people don't know that. You have to say here, and move them physically. And in the beginning, we have two coaches. I'm sorry, we have one coach for every two students the first week.

*Wow.*

That's how tough it is firing. And your body then, firing at the natural point of an aim, so you're aiming, and how do you aim, and the position where the rifle sight comes into focus with your

eye and the target, and you got to-- you practice to do that. We've got guys shooting with the wrong eye. And, you know, so it's a lot of work. It's one week of just doing that.

*Shooting with the wrong eye?*

That's right. When here's nod and a jerk, it's time to relax, warm up.

So, if we can't get a guy to understand what we're trying to get him to do, then we make him run or duck walk to get the blood going through.

And when you're shooting, you can't even use candy bars, because of the sugar rush. But you could see why in a minute. Then we have zeroing in, and that's where you get ready to get your rifle to be as accurate as you can. And this adjusting the rifle for all of those positions. Now, how do you do that? You have straps, leather straps, on the rifle. And when you're going to sit down and fire, then you put your leg here, like this, and you put your hand here. And you put the strap, the belt, around here. You got to measure the distance here, and then the belt, and then when you go by them, I—just, he's aiming there, and I go like that, and he moves. That means he's wired up right, not the muscles, the bones. You got to keep doing that and doing that. It's interesting. So, anyway, adjusting the rifle to the individual recruit's arm length, arm strength, and hand strength, he's got three things there that contribute to that perfect shooting.

Adjusting for wind and sun, weather, rain, comes later. And that's, of course, I had a wind chart. I don't have it anymore, but on the end of the rifle range, when the flags are blowing, you got to take the angle and figure out how much you have to change the rifle for five hundred yards, because if you don't, you don't compensate for the wind, you won't hit your target, even if you're a marksman.

So, we have a thing we called BRASS. And that means you breathe-- so we teach breathing, okay. And then relax, and you get your breath in there, and then you start to let the tension come out of your hands or whatever it is, like you see them shooting basketball, and it's all the same thing, ballerinas, you know. Aim, you aim, and, you know, there's a way of aiming. You have to know what you're shooting at, and you shoot, you stop, and then you squeeze the trigger. You never pull the trigger. You squeeze it, and, so as the coach, you watch each recruit, and they'll make mistakes left and right. And, so, you got to just keep doing it.

And then if they're wrong, we got to have them miss a day. And if they miss more than three, they've got to go to another platoon that's coming, because they need more practice. So the Marines taught me as a teacher, and that's holding kids back, recycling them, okay, because they could be recycled.

And then the thing was a follow-through that I thought was the hardest thing to teach. And the follow-through is the speed of the bullet coming out of the barrel of the rifle is known, and if you don't follow through so you fire, and it goes fff, and you, as that bullet leaves, it's influenced to go in a little different direction, and, so, you got to watch. That's the hardest thing to detect, because it tackles like that. So, I got to the point I started putting my finger like the guy in tennis when he puts his finger on the net, because he's wired up so he can—he's tired up, you know,

because we wouldn't get there-- now, here's the rifle range. They fire five rounds at a target of forty feet, before they start the shooting of the real thing. And that is to get them just to be like in this room here, to get live ammunition.

And then this is the last thing we have them understand, how they can understand themselves, because they're not going to have a coach in the field. So, we teach them to study the scatter. The scatter means you have ten, I don't know-- what I don't know, how many they are doing now-- on this target, and if they're all in the black, oh, beautiful. If there's one here, and there's a bullet here, and there's a bullet here, and there's a bullet missing, we got a problem. This guy's all over the place. He hasn't learned what he was supposed to learn. So, if the guy shoots and he hits everything, but it's a cluster down here [not near the center of the target], that's beautiful. He's got a problem orienting himself to the target, but his mechanics are beautiful. So, see how much there is to this.

*Really!*

Uh huh.

### **503: Logbooks: "How did I get this job?"**

So, let's see, the thing you ought to know about what I had to do there, we had to keep these logbooks. And the logbook, you know, just had the card-- the guy's card, so how did he do here, how did he do here, and they're checking them off. And nobody's looked at more carefully than a Marine Corps rifle range people. God, they really do. And when I went through as a recruit, I was very good. And when I got sent to the school, I said to the fellow, when I could talk, I was a Marine, you can't talk until you're a Marine, you just can't ever talk--

*You can't talk at all, or you just can't talk to somebody ahead of you, or what?*

You just don't talk.

*Like a monk then.*

That's right, a monk. And when you get your Marine Corps thing, then you can talk. I can go up to you and say, "Sir, how did I—"

*I don't think you should go up to me and say Sir.*

"How did I get this job?" And he said, "Oh, you were easy." I said, "I was?" He said, "We looked at all your records." I'm talking about a record now. And he said, "You did everything the way the Marine Corps teaches." He says, "That means you don't have one bad habit, and that's the kind of people we want using rifles." Isn't that interesting? So, anyway--

*That's how you ended up there, not having any bad habits?*

I didn't have any habits. My mother wouldn't let me use a gun.

*So you ended up teaching people because you had never known before--*

I never knew. Isn't that crazy!

*Yeah.*

But then you think about it, you say the guy's right.

*Yeah.*

The guy's right.

So, anyway, now, they are required to keep their own records. The coaches keep records, and that is shared with the drill instructors. And we have records on sitting, on kneeling, standing, and prone, and those are all different lengths. In other words, you-- a guy can be very good up close, but I think I have the distances here. Oh, yeah, here shooting at 200 yards, sitting, standing, kneeling at 200 yards, standing at 200 yards, sitting at 300 yards, prone at 300, and then prone at 500 yards. And Marines are the only soldiers in the world that require their soldiers to shoot and pass marksmanship at 500 yards. Nobody else. It's unique. And that's a quarter of a mile and that-- you've got to have all the parts working right, I'm telling you! And, of course, the targets are marked, so that when you do shoot, I wonder if I go into that here, so, anyway, here we are now on the rifle range, and those are the distances.

### **558: First Recruit**

And my first recruit, first one, I remember this day, and he comes in and we got fifty positions at the first burn. The burn is the land that they put up so the bullets will never hit men in the trenches. And then they run the targets. So, I put them up, and my coach is right next to me, and I say, "Begin shooting." And every time he shoots, the Maggie's Bloomer showed. That's a red thing that shows got nothing. And they wave it back and forth and this little-- and then the guy that is my supervisor comes over. He says, "Stop him a minute and watch him." So, then, I figured I would see if he was breathing right, you know, the steps.

*Yeah.*

And I thought I got it straight. And I put him there and he did another set, and he hit the target. Now, that's big problem, so I looked for something else. And he had another problem. And when I was done, he got all his bullets on the target. And I saw the guy who was watching me go, hey, my first one! So I took a guy who couldn't hit the target, that's my first one, and I got him to hit it. And then, of course, then we walk. And that means do this again with him next time he's here. That would be the next day, so you see how the charts worked back and forth.

### **597: Marines in WWI**

So, anyway, let's go back to this, and I'll tell you a story about marksmanship and the Marines. This is a sad story to tell, because so many people were killed, but it's an important story, if you're an instructor, to know the Marines in 1917 were sent to France, but Marshal Foch, the supreme general, did not feel confident with them. They had no background. He didn't know about their training, so he put them in a position of what they call the Reserve, and the real people up ahead, where the French had been fighting for three years in the trenches. And Ludendorff, the German general, knew that if he's going to win the war, he had to do it now, before these millions of Americans come.

And then he really believed it after this battle. So, this battle of Belleau Wood was getting—Bella, you pronounce it Bella if you're Anglican, Bellow if you're French, so there's two. And that's a town and, right off the town, is a front, but there's a woods, Belleau Woods, and beautiful trees. You ought to see the before and after pictures on that place.

So, I've got the date down here somewhere. And I may be able to-- it doesn't really matter-- it was June. And there's a road going from the battleground area in the woods right to Paris. First of all, the Marines were told to go up there and fill in the breakthrough. That's the thing you really are always afraid of. So, the French general says, "That's all I got. Send them up." And the Marine force brigade goes up, and as they're going, they see all the refugees coming back, then the French soldiers that are wounded and being taken off the field. So, they have this thing, and the French general sends, "We're retreating. Come and retreat." And the guys say, "Hell, that's not why we came here," you know, "We're going to fight." I mean, that's a famous quote that this guy made. And they had one skill that they're the only ones that had, and the rifle they had was a Springfield, the most accurate rifle, 1903, for shooting at a distance. And they were all marksmen, every one--or they wouldn't be there. And, so, they were told to align themselves along the ridge of the road up ahead with the turn. So, if they could see the Germans coming, they could start sniping at them.

Now, nobody in warfare up to then used any guns beyond 200 yards. And what you did was you aimed at a point, and you sent rockets. And what we eventually came to call a bazooka, rocket devices on a rifle, and mortar, you had mortar, and you pulverized an area. We call it saturation bombing now, where nothing is left. There is not a tree standing. And the American guy said, "This is not what we are doing."

So, he gave them the order to shoot. So, the Germans are coming. They know the Americans are way-- couple a miles down or something. At 800 yards, the American marines start firing now. That's a problem even hearing the bullet. And as the Germans are walking along, a guy goes down. Then a guy drops over here. And then another one drops over here. And the Marines are picking them off at 800 yards. That's over a quarter of a mile. And the runner goes back, and he tells the commanding officer, he says, "They must have-- everybody must have a machine gun over there. And they're making these lucky--" You know, you hold it up, and shoot it. Wasn't that-- it was a straight line bullet. And the Germans thought, so that's the first time. And then they stop. And, what you do, when a group stops, you try to counterattack. And so the Marines did a counter attack, but they were stopped then. They did it again, and they broke through. So, they broke through and went all the way through the woods.

And a reporter from the *Chicago Tribune* went with them, and he got wounded, and he wrote up a communiqué that the censors didn't censor. And this is the beginning of the hostility between the Marines and everybody else. He wrote it as if the Marines were the only people in the battle, and the French said, "We're over here!" They were supporting, and the British, not the British, but the American Army, these were all supporting. The Marines were the ones that had the long rifles and go across first. So, that's the beginning of some of the natural dislike that the branches have for each other. So, I got the quote from, let's see, the Major General Foch when he said this battle, Belleau Wood, is the cradle of the success and the victory, because it started the countermovement that everybody then got involved in. And the Marines on their base, let me pick this [map] up and show you, Belleau Wood Drive, so that is, in a sense, the biggest battle for its day. Now, there were other ones, Iwo Jima, and that-- but the point is, they named the road after it. And this is the training base where I worked. And so there it is. It's there. It's in the history books.

*Yeah.*

See how we're doing? Okay?

So, we tell that story, and we tell them how important the rifle is. And the people that are anti-rifle in this environment are wrong. And we have a story to tell about changing a war, not in the dramatic terms of the news media, but simply in the standards of war. The Americans that were shooting at 800 yards were the first people in history to shoot beyond 200 yards. That's quite a feat! So, they were in prone position with the belt here like this, and then the thing in here, and that rifle did not move. And all the guy had to do is just keep looking until someone walked into his rifle range, and then he squeezed the trigger. In other words, you don't do that, you just keep watching them, and then, later on, I'll tell you about how we get then a promotion shooting and all of that. But that's an example that drives home a position of marksmanship that you might not want to agree with. You might be a deer hunter. Well, that's okay. This is not-- these are human beings who will shoot right back at you and they're coming to kill you. So, that's the part I don't like.

So, we got all the recruits. Then qualification day is Friday, and then they have to go out, and you can't help them at all. You just stand there. And they're your little babies, and they're shooting, and that's going to qualify them for what they can do as a Marine and what they can't do.

### **698: Marines work as a team**

And they cannot go, for example, I saw a clip in the news from Iraq, and there were six Marines on top of a building and, you know, they not supposed to be there. They're supposed to be on the shores but, anyway, they're very well trained. And there's a guy in another place shooting. So, he says, "Okay, sight him." And the guy goes over there, and one guy watches, and another guy is telling another one this. And then he's telling another one that-- they work as a team. It's not, oh, there's a guy, I'm mad at him. It has nothing to do with that. It's "Here's somebody that is shooting at us. How can we eliminate him?" And then each guy has a role to play, and then they execute. And that's where I mention the fact if you can't, say, shoot at 800 yards, why would you

be in that field, because you're just giving away your position and it would cost you your life. And that's basically what it is.

So, that was my little thing that I did. And I did it over two days. And I had guys come up and read that. Alright, that's the end of that. And we'll go to the next thing.

### **707: Firing in difficult situations**

Week nine, week nine in the training, was on the rifle range yet. And, so, they're recruits now in their ninth week. Now, they're pretty good, by now, they're really coming. So, they march to the rifle range, and they learn to fire at moving targets.

And they had a plane come down to cause confusion. And, so, they'd walk at the plane.

You'd wear and try to fire using gas masks, because the Germans used mustard gas in the First World War, so you had to use your gas masks and still look through the window and shoot. So, they had that training. That was scary, couldn't breathe, and the glass would fog up.

And fire at limited light level, so it might be dawn, or it might be in the night. When they were carrying the wounded off, they didn't do it in the day, because the Germans would shoot at the Corpsmen trying to get the people back to the hospital. So, they had to do it at night and, at night, some Marines would go along to protect them with their rifles.

### **722: Obstacle course; the BAR; Hand grenades**

Let's see, return and complete obstacle course, that was-- you had to come back. See, they had a time on you when you did it originally. And that's in this area here. So, you have time here. Now, the course is out here, but it doesn't matter. That's where it was. And, so, they got a before and after time. They got to go over the things, and under the things, and over the things. And you had, in one place, live ammunition being shot at you. There's a machine gun in a crib, so it can't go up and down. And you get, you know, what it means to go below fire. You had to do that. That's called psychology!

And then we had them work with the BAR, and that was not to become skilled, but the BAR had three people. It was an automatic machine gun with this leg like that. One guy carried the ammunition, one guy did the sighting and the firing, and the, another guy--who was the other? The three on the BAR team, the shooter, oh, the fellow that put the bullets in and all of that. They came in boxes, and you had to put them in.

And then you worked with the hand grenades. You keep a safety ring on them, and they would keep their safety ring on as a sign of graduation. I want to say something about this. That was very scary. And you have live grenades which you are now going to learn how to throw, because Marines don't tell you anything they don't make you do. So, you get the grenades. You have this box of grenades. They're all live, but they got the safety in. So, you have the recruit pick it up, and then go over here, and then when you say throw it, you tell them, but before you told them-- this is interesting. Movie versions of grenades roll on the floor. And very often people pick them

up and throw them back. Now way back when I was training people, we say throw it in a room or an area where it can bounce or wiggle off someplace, or it would go behind a corner or something, so it can't be picked up and thrown back. They experimented with shorter film, not film, I can't think of the word, with shorter power things, but ten seconds was about the best. And then what most of us did, we always said keep it in your hand longer after you pull the fuse. If you can't work up to that, so you pull it, and then you got ten seconds, or you can do 1-1000, 2-1000, 3-1000, throw, then by the time it gets—it's only five-- he can't pick it up and throw it back. It would blow up.

So that's what the training does. It takes every one of these things that you issued, and you have people go out there, and go through it.

### **757: Marine philosophy & culture**

So, now, let's see, I told you about how are we doing. We got—okay, let me tell you about some of the things that relate to the culture. The Marines work on philosophy every day and psychology, just like they do on [?], which is interesting. And they try to bring what we call esprit de corps, the attitude of a family in love with what they do. And it's a trick when you think you're killing people. And, so, you have to take exceptional pride and devotion to being good at whatever you do. You can always be good. You can always be a good risk or a good bet, and you got to find a way of doing that. And a Marine does that. And, so, the philosophy here is family and culture, Marine culture.

That means you're free to change any word if you don't like it. So, let me read Shakespeare. This is one little passage: "We few, we happy few, we band of brothers", that's all we are together, "for he today that sheds his blood with me shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile," and that's so unwanted, so unloved, so living for no purpose, so I know how bad it can be to be nobody, that's what Shakespeare master at—"this day shall gentle his condition, and gentlemen in England now a-bed," sleeping Englishmen, who are gentlemen, see, "shall think themselves accursed they were not here." So, you say, alright, change a word, "discipline," and then you know when you do it, you say is that something Shakespeare would do? He says, well, he says, it's a problem today. You can't discipline anybody. You've got all this multicultural stuff. So the point is here's Shakespeare. And what I do is simply let them tell me, could you change the word "vile"? And I wrote down some of the things to make sure. And then they all they say, "Yeah, homeless people, ignoble people," let's see what I got, "poor, loathsome, unpleasant, could be stinky." Today you're going to be somebody. Maybe you have to give your blood. But it's a way of making people think about actions that they have never thought about before. They say, for example, that most people that are bad, that get bad, are never aware of, when what they are doing is so good and exciting, the consequences.

*So did you think that because you were teaching people, were you teaching both things at the same time?*

Yeah.

### **798: Drill Instructors**

*That you were teaching people rifles, you were teaching them the ideas behind the Marines?*

Yeah, the students. Well, you had to. It would be hard to justify -- you had to, for example, take the questions that they would say. "Well, how come you guys are better than the DIs?" The DIs got a tougher job. They yell and scream, "What do you mean! Go over there!" We never do, in coaching. They've got all they can do to handle the weapons and all that.

And if we have somebody that starts acting up, guess who we tell! The drill instructor. "Recruit number so and so, what's your act? Alright, go here." And the favorite word we used was "now." "Now, listen:" whatever it was. And, so, the drill instructors, some of the better ones, would come to, part of the day, see what they're doing, is they're getting up with their recruits at the weapons command, which is where I work. And they're saying, "Oh man, I got all this bookkeeping and whatever is it, I'm not going to go." He'll march them out and he'll come up. And here will be an instructor, could be anybody, me, any one of them, and salute, and say, "I'll give you platoon 283 for weapons," and pick up a chart. And you go from there, so you act as a DI, but you're not. And one of the things, we never yell like that.

That was my nature. I never knew I would like teaching, but they taught me I did like it. I was very good at it.

#### **816: "We worked on character a lot."**

And, well, let's see, that's the philosophy of, psychologies, both. And the training was, also, I wrote down there, character. Boy, we worked on character a lot. Family values, we worked on that, and the family was the Corps, the squad, the platoon. It's us against them you know, like the syndicate. The Corps values were honor, you should not dishonor something that we honored, should have courage even if you don't have the feeling that goes with it, you're scared, and then commitment.

#### **822: A recruit breaks down**

Now, let me tell you about that. One day I was in boot camp, and we had one, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight [beds] and then three down the middle, because the potbellied stove was there, and we got out the bugle, "Everybody up!" They've got sayings. Some you can say. Some you can't. So, I got up, and, as I look across, and here's my friend, I've been with him for a little over two weeks. And he's like this, sitting on the bed. He was-- couldn't take anymore. He was shaking so much. And we all could remember they told us that guys would break down. Some will just walk away and they got to be-- military police have to take them away. And this guy is shaking. And I tried to talk to him. I don't remember what his name was. And I couldn't get through, so I told another fellow, I said, "Run out and get the sergeant." He came running in. He says, "Okay, call the clinic." Nursing, whatever it was, and they came in an ambulance and took him away. We never saw him again. So, I'm assuming that's where he snapped. He washed out. His nerves had reached the point where you couldn't-- they gave him a tranquilizer, as far as I remember. That would have only masked the problem. He was shaking terrible. I felt so sorry for him. So, if we didn't tell him—see, friends are usually people who share similar traits regarding

moral values and similar work ethic, and etc., and that was an effect on that talk on washouts. If you didn't have the background, if you didn't have whatever, the family, we can't blame you. We just can't use you. And that's unfortunate, but it's necessary. And you should be in the Marines to experience it, so you can critique it, and talk about it. And I did that.

#### **847: Social Life: USO**

Now, let's talk about the social life. Want to do that for a minute?

Why did I stay there? I only had a two year enlistment. So USO is a United Service Organization run by the people that live in the community to help the boys, young boys, I was 18, who are living in this difficult environment. One you can honor and respect, but it takes it. USO, had USO in the community, so when I was a coach, then I was able to leave the base and go to Beauford. This is actually the way it is situated in reality, and Beauford is up here.

*Mmm hmm.*

And, so, they had Marine buses that would go, if enough people signed up, pretty much on a regular route to take you in for five or six, and they'd come back and get you around nine or so. You had an evening at the USO, or you could walk around, and some guys would try to pick up girls. And you could whatever--

*You would never do that.*

No. But, anyway, so, there was a music quiz, I'll tell about that in a minute, a photo department, I learned to take pictures in the dark. Dances. There were sing-alongs. They used to have this movie, and the bouncing ball would go, and we'd all sing along. I don't know if they do any of that today. They had holiday dinners when they had a thing, and it might be one of the churches would help and volunteer. They had games and activities, shuffleboard, and all of that. Free rides, free tickets, like when I went to New York later, I got tickets to Broadway. And they were really great with the Servicemen.

#### **869: USO Musical Quiz**

Now one night, I went with a friend of mine, and this is cute. It was Friday night, and they were having their musical quiz, you know, little one—so, you'd take a seat and they'd give you a little pad. And, so, you'd number one to ten. And then you'd sit there, and then the girl would come up to you. And she'd say, "Alright, first quiz question. What is the name of that song?" What orchestra's playing it, who is the performer, and then one other question was—let's see, the name of the song, the name of the performer, and...maybe it will come to me when I do this. So, I go and-- "The winner tonight is Private Schneller. He got them all right." So, I got them all right. And, so, I went up, and I got my prize. I don't remember what it was, but great honor. And then I went back, and we did other things. I went next week, Friday night. I thought, ooh, this is fun. I'll do it again. I did it. I won again. And I was having a good laugh and enjoying it. And this girl came over, and she said, "Private Schneller?" "Yes?" She said, "We were just thinking, you winning all the time takes all the fun out of it." She says, "How can you get all those songs

and the singers?" I said, "My mother used to give me *Blue Note*, the magazine that came out on popular music." Do you remember that? *Blue Note*, and they had-- if you read that, you knew all of this. You know Jimmy Dorsey Band. Oh, that was what it was. The band. It was the name of the song, Tangerine, the name of the singer, Helen O'Connell, and the band was Jimmy Dorsey. Yes, that was the three, and it was like falling off a roof, because I had *Blue Note* from the day I was showing signs of interest in music. My aunt, a schoolteacher, brought the thing for me, so that my little --

*Who knew it was going to come in useful?*

Yeah. Whatever it was, it did. So, anyway, I gave up.

### **899: Marine Funeral**

### **899: Marine Family: Verna Mize, "First Lady of Lake Superior"**

And, then, let's see, culture and change in my own family. My cousin, Verna Mize is my first cousin, and she—so, I want to show you how this goes around in a circle, my Marine training. This is Verna. She's a Marine wife. Her husband was a warrant officer and one of my heroes. He's the one who talked me into going into the Marines. And Verna had the bad experience of her husband dying from lung cancer, earlier than she wanted to. We all went to-- he was well known. This is his coffin. Here is the parade.

*Wow.*

Marines' dress blue in Arlington Cemetery. Here is the caisson here. But they had a horse and one take part of the trip in the caisson and no Marine in the saddle, because the Marine is dead. And, so, they had this.

And this was-- she is still alive. I talk to her every once in a while on the phone. She is going to be buried, I think, here. He's already buried, but they didn't have the grave. And she's going to be buried with him.

So, she's a Marine Corps wife. She had all of her medicine taken care of by the Navy Department, and she's a very, very sharp lady. This is her, Verna Mize, and I want to say something about her that portrays-- there is a park named after her now in Michigan. This is the park. And, see if I've got the article, I wrote this article. And I wrote four versions of it, because it is going up on the placard. So, she did this, and let me just say, Verna Mize, this is my cousin in the Marines, okay, "Verna Mize will be forever remembered as the lady who saved Lake Superior. It was being polluted by industry. She turned her thirteen year battle, a labor of love. She never gave up. Without funding, without lobbyists, without demonstrations in the street and signs, or clashes with the law, as a private citizen, defeated a multimillion dollar corporation and moved a lumbering giant, (our American government), to move a lumbering giant to action."

Governors of three states gave-- three Great Lakes states, recognized her work. And the Michigan governor titled her the First Lady of Lake Superior. And when they began the trial, it's the biggest environmental pollution trial in history. And my little cousin, all by herself, did it. So,

she proved that you could work within the government and get what you think ought to be done, if you're smart.

*Time Magazine* came down to interview her one day. And she's outside the Pentagon. That's where she worked-- worked for Admiral Ramsey among others. But he says, "How you-- this is you, and this is it." "Yes, I'm the movement." And he says, "Well, how do you do that?" And she says, well, she reached in her purse and took out a little vial. And she shook it, and she said-- the waters turned to mud to pollution with a cancer producing element. She said--"I went"-- she got the stuff bottled it herself. Mac was helping her. And then she goes into the Pentagon. She goes into Admiral so and so's office. "Hi, Mel, would you put this as a weight on your desk? When everybody asks, you tell them." And the *Time* reporter said, "Well, you got the best source to do anything. The executive secretaries of the Pentagon, they're among the most powerful people in the world." Isn't that crazy?

*That is!*

So, anyway, she's in a home now, and she'll probably not last too much longer. But that's a wife of a Marine, dedicated to all her values. And she hates Bush and everything, but she loves America, and she loves the Marine Corps, and that's what counts. She told me, if Bush won the election, "I'm going to move to Canada." So, after he won again, I said, "Verna." She said, "Don't ask me!" "Are you going to move?" "No."

Change in group awareness, yeah, the thing that I saw in Verna and myself and the people I'm talking about, in general, is that we were all easily identified by a group, but a different way of looking at a group. And when you would say, "Well, what's different about the society of 1948 and the society of 2000?" Well, the difference is the loss of esprit de corps with a group. And the stressing of the rights of individuals, it's now "What are you going to do for me?" And Kennedy said we should not do that. But nobody listened. So, we have a culture of what-- selfishness and undiscipline. But as long as it is produced by those people, the Marines will go on, the Army will go on, the pilots flying the planes at O'Hare will go on. Did you ever see them when they go on strike? How they walk?

*No.*

They're on strike, okay, got their uniforms on, airline pilots, and they go--

*[Marching]*

They're still remembering what they were taught in the military.

*Yeah, they all march.*

Huh?

*Yeah.*

Isn't that interesting?

*Yeah.*

Now, to understand Marines and what I was talking about, just understand that is operating all of the time in most of the people who have a sense of discipline and who have a purpose, and I suspect a good family background. Terrible people can make great things, but it's better if you have family support. And I thought I might end with that. And I thought today when they have three drill instructors, they've had to do that because of this lawyer thing of suing and that, and the interest people have in rights. "I have a right to this. I have a right to that." I don't know where it comes from. I do, but I cannot talk about that now. So, I think unless you have specific questions--

*Some questions.*

#### **1014: After the Marines: College**

Yeah. I was very proud to be a Marine. I didn't stay because I had a two year enlistment and the alternative was to go-- I was offered a scholarship to go to the University of Wisconsin for the ROTC, you know, and that was four years at Wisconsin, and then four years commitment. That would be eight years of my life. And I would be missing whatever it is that you have to have when you're young, to see things you want to do. And, so then, I got the GI bill and went to college and then--

*So where did you go?*

Aquinas, Loyola, DePaul, Chicago, but what's interesting is this-- and this maybe would sum it up in a sense. I never met a professor who didn't say to me when we got to the point, "The very best students we ever had were the veterans of the Second World War." I haven't heard anybody—now, they're all younger now, but this goes back, and back, and back. They said they were the most disciplined. They were the hardest working. They were the most generous. And they had no nonsense.

#### **1036: Why the Marines in 1946?**

*So do you think that you became a Marine because you were interested in it, because of your cousin's husband? Do you think that people become Marines--*

Well that's a hard question.

*Do you think people become Marines because, you know, is there--*

I respected him an awful lot. He was a real John Wayne type of guy. He was so strong. I was visiting him one time, and Verna and we went out to dinner. I loved going out with them. We just had more fun. And Verna says, "How much longer can I work in the kitchen?" He says, "Well, I got to see the end of *The Lone Ranger*." It's on television. No, it wasn't. It was on radio,

didn't have television then. And I sat there with him, and we listened to *The Lone Ranger*. You find me anybody that will say that to anybody. You won't. They're ashamed to think they watch a juvenile program. But you never said anything to Mac! That happened another time. I just thought, Well this is something! People I know I never watch that stuff. I don't listen to that. He says, "I'm going to watch the Lone Ranger, and if you don't like it, well, you can say it." No.

*So, you joined up right out of high school?*

Yes. I graduated in 1946, and the draft was still on. It was on for a couple more years yet, right after Korea.

*Yeah.*

And I had to decide whether I was going to join a Service. You see, I think maybe you're closer on that question than what I said. I would have to do something. I could be drafted probably, but my uncle said, "You ought to join the Marines. It's great training," and all. Yeah, so I did. So, it might have been I was going to be drafted. I don't know. But I knew, he also said, "You know you can get free college when you go to Service." And I got my degree for nothing, free, because of that. That's cloudy. I can't tell you for sure. I think it's because I thought so much of him and he wouldn't mislead me. And I didn't know about that other stuff. And I really didn't.

*So, how did you keep in touch with your family? They were in Michigan, you were in--*

Well, they came up to our cottage sometimes and stayed there.

*But when you were in the Service did you -- did you*

**1077: Furlough: home via weather plane, \$1/parachute**

Oh, I went back home. I went to furlough.

*Took the train back and forth?*

Yeah, you took the train. The first plane ride I had was when I went on Delta. And that was in '40, in '90, no, it wasn't--in '48. But I took the train in the Gulf and in, then Atlanta. We changed to Chicago and took the Milwaukee Road back.

And then I got to fly on the weather plane from Washington to Chicago. Every night before radar and all, they had a weather plane that ran from Andrews Air Force Base to Chicago. No matter if any other plane was up, this one was up. And they were giving a weather report through the electronics to anybody who wanted it. All the radio stations listened to it and all of that. And all we had-- we paid a dollar to get a parachute, and then if we got to Chicago--

*That must have been very comforting!*

We gave-- I know, but I had so much confidence in the military, you know, and when we got there, we flew into Dayton, Ohio, come to think of it, and then they gave us the dollar back.

*That's good, because you didn't need it.*

**1114: Other ways of ending up in the military**

**1120: Changes in society**

So, anyway, then I took a train from there to Chicago, and from Chicago to upper Michigan. And I only took a couple of furloughs. I was happy with it. I would say that you could get away with all the other junk. It has to do with-- a thing they did in the '30s you might be interested in knowing, and you got to remember I had a different mindset than you young people do, when you was growing up like I was in the '30s, and you did something wrong, and you went before the judge, the judge would say, "Alright, sir, what can we do to help you grow up here?" You know, "Oh, my mother," and all this stuff. He'd say, "I know. I'll give you," and he had this all rehearsed, "I got two choices here. I can sentence you to two or three years in prison" at so and so. "Or," he says, "I could sentence you to joining one of the Services for a couple of years." Everybody took the Service, because [then] they were still free. You couldn't do that today. They had a choice and they all took-- people went to the Navy. And some liked it. Some hated it, and some ran away. I suppose, do a book on it. But that's a significant change from group to individual interests, from responsibilities and that, to not caring, and wanting your rights. I'd say that's the biggest change that happened. And it's probably hardest on the people least prepared to deal with it, you know.

**1130: Life effects from serving in the military**

*So did you-- having experience in the military, did it change your opinion about anything, about the military, about war in general?*

It reinforced all my values, and I found out that discipline isn't a dirty word, and that those people were very, very--see, I listened to a lot of music and bands. I used to play in-- I had my own-- and, boy, it's a different lifestyle! And I was able to see that these middle class people, you know, for example, the college people, do their share of helping the country. You can read the studies on it. Two people that went to MIT went into the Army, six of these -- so I met another, what would you say, type of alternative lifestyle that was different, but it was not threatening. Matter of fact, I thought the music people threatened you more in their lifestyle than the Marines did. One left you alone. The other always wanted you to sink down with them, you know.

So, I can't say that it would happen for everybody. People washed out all the time.

But did you ever study, when you were in college, the Gaussian curve, the standard curve of deviation? Standard curve of deviation, most of whatever is-- whatever is 64 %. IQ, or whatever it is.

*Mmm hmm.*

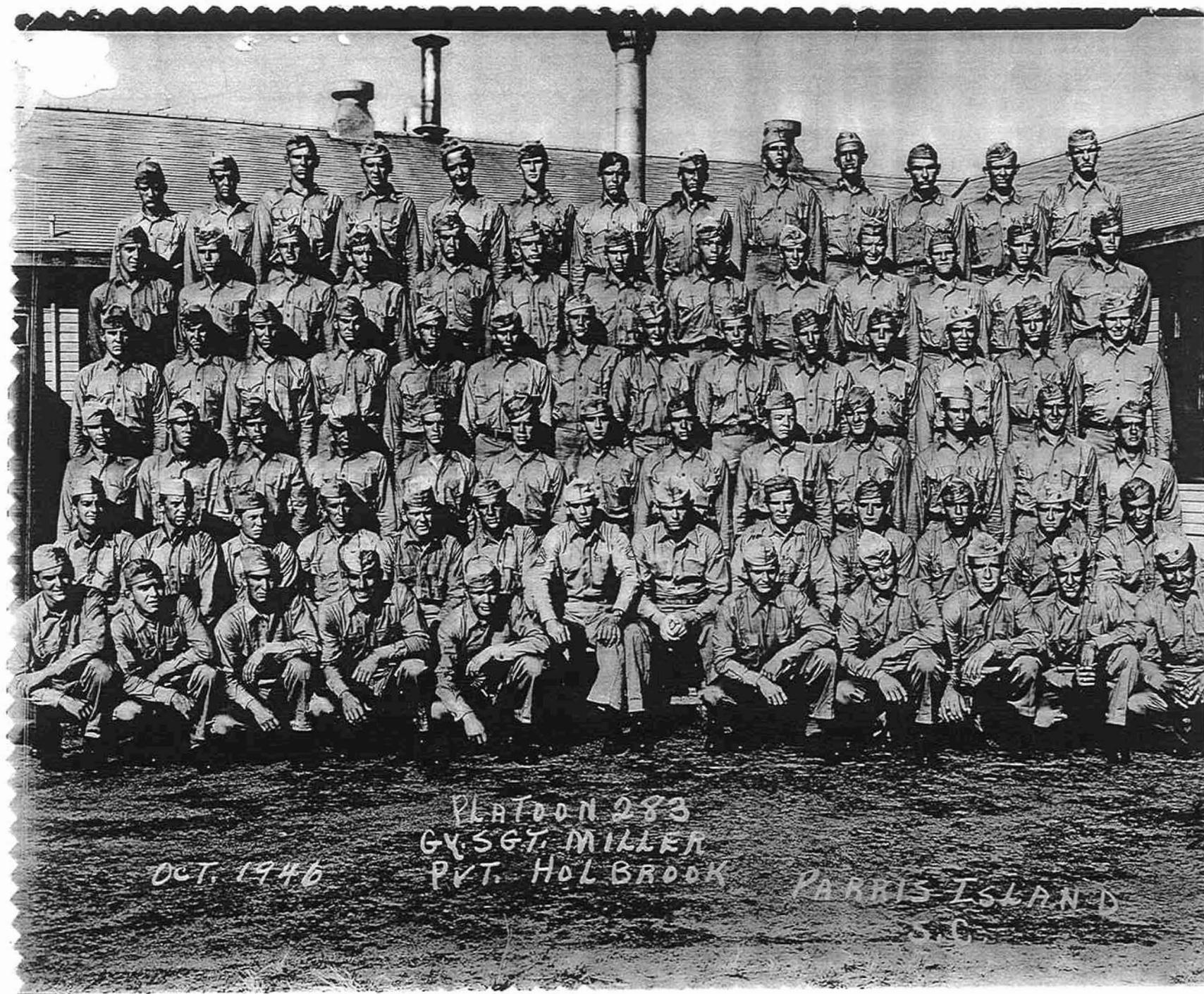
And I grew up in a little mining town, and I had a wonderful mother who was the happiest person I'd ever knew. Never saw anybody happier than her. And I grew up in a rural value system here. But we weren't over here, and the Marines helped me go from a mining company environment like Pennsylvania, people who have coal to get out of, and I ended up here. But I found they got more problems and a tougher row to hoe because other people expect them to do these things. These people, they don't expect you to do anything, so you wrestle with that. And I think all of that can work together, because I joined the Marines.

And I got to say the thing that I had was my background that my dad and mother gave me. See, my first hero was a member of Charlemagne's rear guard that protected the major army. And I read that story over and over again. And then my dad gave me a book, a series of seven books. It's called *A Great Source*--, no, *The Great War Sourcebook*. You don't have it in this library. Hardly anybody has it. And it's seven volumes. And my dad had my name engraved in it, and it said "To Paul, my young son, in memory of our gift of living in America." But I started to read, and this is one of the stories that in every battle in the First World War the highest ranking officer wrote what he thought. It was the highest ranking Axis, usually a German, wrote his side of it and a neutral Swiss, Swedish, who wasn't a participant, wrote a third. And I learned and I'm --really I'm saying, I really learned to appreciate this, and that. And then the third one was usually the weakest, because he didn't have his heart and soul into it. So, I found out the perfect mixture is not just intelligence. It's intelligence with the feelings that drive the intelligence. So, I thought that was interesting.

My oldest son works in the defense industry, high tech, very secretive, and he was at a meeting, and people couldn't get over this, because he was fairly young, how he didn't get upset like in the movies, all of that. But he has a right to—A right to be nasty is not a moral obligation. So, anyway, he had to go back and prepare for the next day and all the people that came. So, he didn't go out to dinner, but the people at the dinner were talking about him. They said how can he take that? He says, well, you know his dad is a philosopher, and he gave me this book on Marcus Aurelius. And he says he learned it. Now, Marcus Aurelius was a poet. He was the highest ranked good emperor of the decrepit Roman Empire.

**1249: END**





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