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ORAL HISTORY TRANSCRIPT

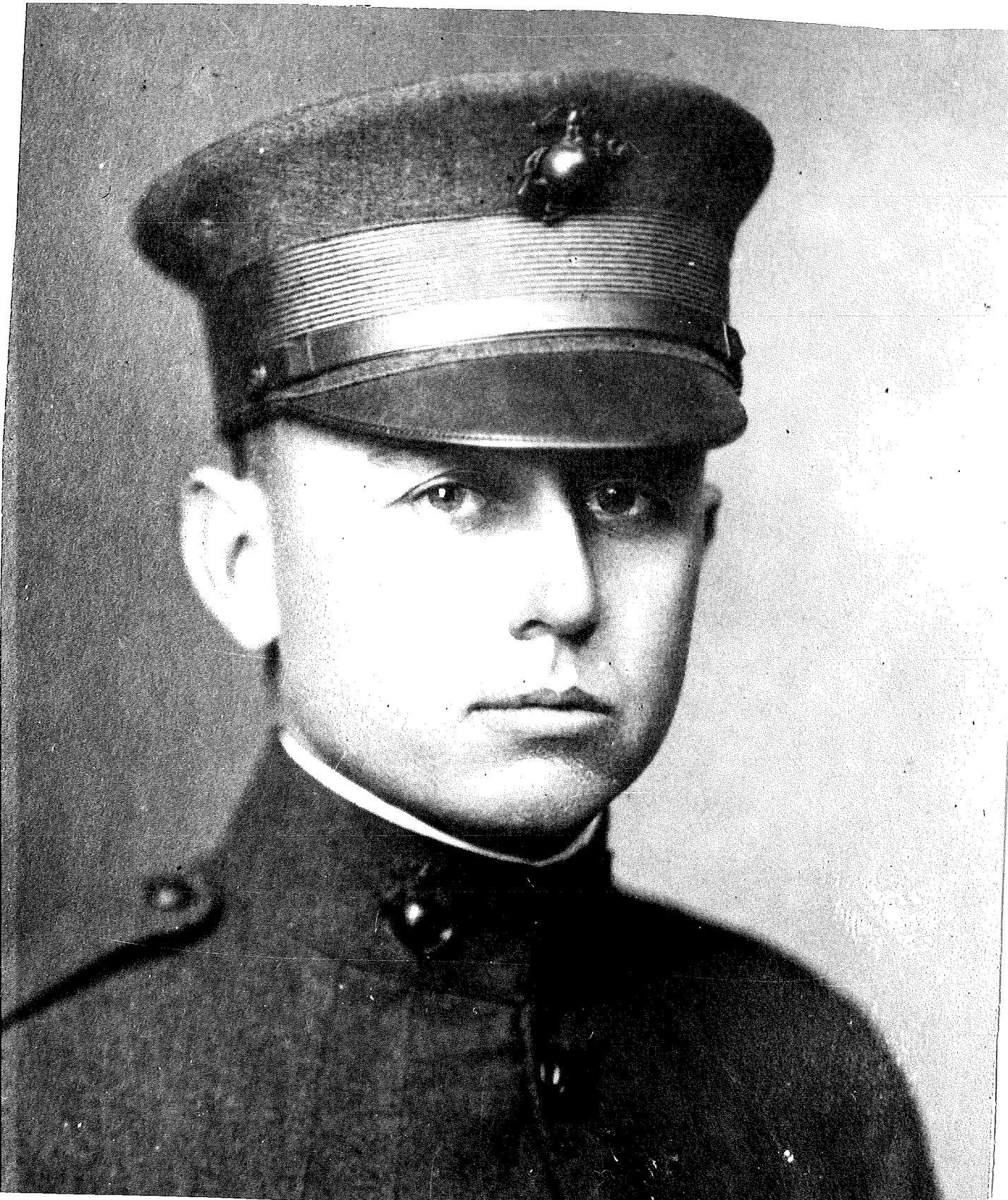
General
CLIFTON B. CATES
U.S. Marine Corps (Retired)



Mr. Benis M. Frank, Interviewer

**Historical Division, Headquarters, U.S. Marine Corps
Washington, D.C.**

1973



2d Lieutenant
CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC 1917



Surviving officers of 2d Battalion, 6th Regiment, 18 June 1918. Tentatively identified:
2d from left, 2d Lt Graves B. Erskine, 5th from left, 1st Lt Cates, 7th from left,
Major Thomas Holcomb



GENERAL
CLIFTON B. CATES

FOREWORD

This typescript, the transcribed memoir of General Clifton B. Cates, USMC (Retired) results from a series of tape-recorded interviews conducted with him at his home in Edgewater, Maryland during 28 March, 11 April, 2 May, 19 September, and 10 October 1967 for the Marine Corps Oral History Program. As one facet of the Marine Corps historical collection effort, this program obtains, by means of tape-recorded interviews, primary source material to augment documentary evidence.

Oral History is essentially spoken history, the oral recall of eyewitness impressions and observations recorded accurately on tape in the course of an interview conducted by an historian or an individual employing historical methodology and possibly the techniques of a journalist. The final product is a verbatim transcript containing historically valuable personal narratives relating to noteworthy professional experiences and observations from active duty, reserve, and retired distinguished Marines.

General Cates was able to edit only Sessions I and II of these memoirs before his death and made only minor corrections and emendations. All corrections in Sessions III-V, therefore, as well as those initially made in the first two sessions were made by the interviewer. The reader is asked to bear in mind, therefore, that he is reading a transcript of the spoken rather than the written word. General Cates has placed a restriction of OPEN on the use of both his interview tapes and transcript. This means that a potential user may read the transcript or audit the recording upon presentation of appropriate credentials.

Copies of this memoir are deposited in the Marine Corps Oral History Collection, Historical Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps, Washington, D. C.; Special Collections, Butler Library, Columbia University, New York, N. Y.; Oral History Collection, United States Naval Institute, Annapolis, Maryland; and the Manuscript Collection, Breckinridge Library, Marine Corps Development and Education Command, Quantico, Virginia.



E. H. SIMMONS

Brigadier General, U. S. Marine Corps (Retired)
Director of Marine Corps History and Museums

Signed:
26 April 1973

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC (RETIRED)

General Clifton Bledsoe Cates, one of the few officers of any service who have commanded a platoon, a company, a battalion, a regiment and a division under fire, served as the 19th Commandant of the Marine Corps from January, 1948, to January, 1952.

He retired on June 30, 1954, after two and a half years as Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico, Va.

A varsity man on both the baseball and football teams at the University of Tennessee, where he studied law, the future Marine general soon after graduation plunged into a career that took him through five major engagements in the first World War and another five in the second.

His service ranged from duty at sea to duty at the White House; from platoon leader to Commandant. During more than 37 years as a Marine, he was wounded several times and won nearly 30 decorations.

In World War II, after commanding the 1st Marine Regiment in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi landings and the capture and defense of Guadalcanal, the general fought as commander of the 4th Marine Division in the Marianas operation, the Tinian campaign and the seizure of Iwo Jima. He won the Legion of Merit with Combat "V" at Guadalcanal, the Distinguished Service Medal at Tinian and a Gold Star in lieu of a second Distinguished Service Medal at Iwo Jima. His Iwo Jima citation states in part:

"A bold tactician, he landed his force on the southeast shore of the island against heavy enemy resistance and, defying the terrific, continuous bombardment laid down by enemy guns located strategically on high ground which afforded direct observation and complete coverage of his entire zone of action, pushed his relentless advance...through the shifting volcanic sands.

"Repeatedly disregarding his own personal safety, (the then) Major General Cates traversed his own front lines daily to rally his tired, depleted units and by his undaunted valor, tenacious perseverance, and staunch leadership in the face of overwhelming odds, constantly inspired his stouthearted Marines to heroic effort during critical phases of the campaign."

As a young lieutenant with the 6th Marine Regiment in World War I, the general fought in the Verdun defensive sector, at Bouresches and Belleau Wood in the Aisne defensive, at Soissons in the Aisne-Marne offensive, in the

Marbache sector of the St. Mihiel offensive and in the Blanc Mont and Argonne Forest engagements of the Meuse-Argonne offensive. He won the Navy Cross, Army Distinguished Service Cross and an Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a second Distinguished Service Cross for heroism in the Bouresches and Belleau Wood fighting, where he was both gassed and wounded. He won the Silver Star Medal at Soissons, where he was wounded a second time, and an Oak Leaf Cluster in lieu of a second Silver Star Medal in the Blanc Mont fighting.

Apart from those decorations and the Purple Heart Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, which he received for wounds, the French Government recognized his heroism with the Legion of Honor and the Croix de Guerre with Gilt Star and two palms. He also was cited twice in the general orders of the 2nd Division, AEF, and once by the Commanding General, AEF, and is entitled to wear the Fourragere awarded the 6th Marines.

Son of the late Mr. and Mrs. Willis J. Cates, the general was born on August 31, 1893, at Tiptonville, Tenn. After elementary education in country schools, he became an honor student and a four-letter man in sports. His Bachelor of Laws degree was obtained at the University of Tennessee in 1916. On June 13, 1917, as a 2nd lieutenant in the reserves, he reported for active duty at the Marine Barracks, Port Royal, S. C., and sailed for France the following January.

After participating in the occupation of Germany, General Cates returned to the United States in September, 1919, and during the next year he served in Washington, D. C., as a White House aide and Aide-de-Camp to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. He then served at San Francisco, Calif., as Aide-de-Camp to the Commanding General, Department of the Pacific, from October, 1920, until June, 1923, when he began a tour of sea duty as commander of the Marine Detachment aboard the USS California. That assignment was completed in April, 1925. A month later he began a year of service with the 4th Marine Regiment of San Diego, Calif.

In March, 1928, after serving on recruiting duty at Spokane, Wash., and Omaha, Neb., the general was named a member of the American Battle Monuments Commission at Washington. He served in that capacity until May, 1929, then was ordered to Shanghai, China, where he rejoined the 4th Marines. Three years later he was detached from that regiment to return to Washington for study in the Army Industrial College.

Completing his course in June of 1933, General Cates reported the following month to Quantico, where he served

with the 7th Marines and completed the Senior Course in the Marine Corps Schools. He returned again to Washington in September, 1935, and was assigned to the War Plans Section of the Division of Operations and Training at Marine Corps Headquarters.

In August, 1937, the general sailed for Shanghai as a battalion commander with the 6th Marine Regiment, serving with that unit until he rejoined the 4th Marines in March, 1938. Again the following year he was brought back to Washington for instruction in the Army War College. That course was completed in June, 1940, and he reported the next month to the Philadelphia Navy Yard as director of the Marine Officers Basic School. By the time the United States entered World War II, the future Commandant was a colonel.

In May of 1942, General Cates took command of the 1st Marine Regiment, which, as part of the 1st Marine Division, he led at Guadalcanal. With the invaluable experience obtained in that campaign, he was returned to the United States the following March for his first tour of duty as Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools at Quantico. He continued in that capacity until June, 1944. The following month he took command of the 4th Marine Division, leading that organization in the Pacific theater until the end of the war. By that time he was a major general.

Ordered back to the United States in December of 1945, the general became President of the Marine Corps Equipment Board at Quantico, holding that position for six months before he was named Commanding General of the Marine Barracks, Quantico. He held that command until January 1, 1948, when he was advanced to the rank of General and sworn in as Commandant of the Marine Corps, succeeding General Alexander A. Vandegrift. When he completed his four-year term as Commandant, he reverted to the rank of lieutenant general and began his second tour as Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools. He was again promoted to general upon retirement.

In addition to the decorations already mentioned, General Cates' medals and decorations include the Presidential Unit Citation ribbon with three bronze stars (Guadalcanal, Tinian and Iwo Jima); the World War I Victory Medal with Aisne, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel, Meuse-Argonne and Defensive Sector clasps; the Army of Occupation of Germany Medal; the Expeditionary Medal (China-1929-31); the Yangtze Service Medal (Shanghai-1930-31); the China Service Medal (China-1937-39); the American Defense Service Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal with one silver star in lieu of five bronze stars; the American Area Campaign Medal; the World War II Victory Medal; the National Defense Service Medal and the Netherlands Order of the Orange

Nassau with crossed swords and rank of Grand Officer.

He also holds LL.D. degrees from the University of Tennessee and the University of Chattanooga.

General Cates died June 1970.

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MR. FRANK: Well, General, it's a real pleasure to speak to you under these circumstances and sit here and talk to you about your long and valuable and outstanding career in the Marine Corps. I'd like to talk to you, if I may, first about your early days, not in the Marine Corps but as a young boy.

You were born in Tennessee, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: That's correct.

MR. FRANK: Nashville?

GENERAL CATES: No, it's a little town -- Tiptonville, Tennessee, in the extreme northwest.

MR. FRANK: And what did your father do down there?

GENERAL CATES: He was principally a farmer but he had cotton gins. ^{also} [REDACTED]

MR. FRANK: Would you say that you were relatively well off, or medium class?

GENERAL CATES: No, medium class.

MR. FRANK: What size town was this down there, sir?

GENERAL CATES: The town itself was only about twelve hundred but we lived five miles out in the country from that.

MR. FRANK: So you would say that you had more or less a farm boy's life.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, definitely. In fact, I lived right on the Mississippi River.

MR. FRANK: What was the largest size "cat" you ever caught?

GENERAL CATES: You wouldn't believe it if I were to tell you.

Around 112 pounds.

MR. FRANK: 112 pounds!

GENERAL CATES: I didn't catch him. I was in the boat that caught him,
driving
what we called jugging. We were floating down the river with blocks and we had to shoot him twice before we got him out of the water.

MR. FRANK: My gosh, that's a pretty big cat.

GENERAL CATES: He was six feet two.

MR. FRANK: Pretty good eating?

GENERAL CATES: I'll say.

MR. FRANK: Now, you went to school in Tiptonville?

GENERAL CATES: No, I went to country schools about two miles from where I lived.

MR. FRANK: And then high school?

GENERAL CATES: No, I went off to school, *[redacted]* *[redacted] Hargrave and Hughes in [redacted]
[redacted] Spring Hill, Tennessee, [redacted] Later I went to the Missouri Military Academy in Mexico, Missouri, *[redacted]* *[redacted]* graduated. *[redacted]**

MR. FRANK: And of course that was quite a switch from VMI training of the Marine officers we had there for a while.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes.

MR. FRANK: When did you graduate from the Missouri Military Academy?

GENERAL CATES: 1910. But I went back and took the post-graduate course. I might say it wasn't much of a course -- I mostly loafed.

MR. FRANK: Was this college level?

GENERAL CATES: No, career prep school. And, of course, after that I went to the University of Tennessee.

MR. FRANK: And graduated from there?

GENERAL CATES: In 1916.

MR. FRANK: Did you go immediately into the Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: No. I went back the next year and took a refresher course in law and was preparing to take the state bar examination when I went into the Marine Corps.

MR. FRANK: This is very interesting. A number of your contemporaries and as a matter of fact a few after who were commissioned in the Marine Corps had a background in law. Did you find this extremely helpful or helpful to any degree?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes, there is no question about it. I mean it teaches you to look for fine print and be a little skeptical, you might say, of things.

MR. FRANK: What impelled you to join the Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: That's rather an odd story. As I said, I was getting ready to take the state bar examination and I happened to run into the son of the president of the

University. And I asked him, "Has your dad had any calls for people going into the service?" And he said, "Not that I know of." I said, "Well, if he does, put my name down."

About two weeks later I saw him and he said, "Dad has a letter from the Marine Corps wanting eight ^{1st} Second Lieutenant reserves. Do you want to apply?" And I said, "What in the hell is that outfit?" I really didn't know. And I said, "Yes, put my name down." And that's the way it started.

MR. FRANK: That's where it started. That's very unusual -- well, not so unusual because there were a number of people at that same time that came into the Marine Corps that had never heard about the Marine Corps.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Where did you go immediately after you were commissioned? This was when? 1917?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it was in May, 1917, and there's another kind of humorous story that I might tell. We were ordered to appear at the Marine Barracks in Washington for a physical examination on the 21st day of May. There were about, I'd say two hundred other college kids there, and we reported at nine o'clock. They said, come back this afternoon at one; come back tomorrow

morning at nine o'clock; come back in the afternoon at one o'clock. So that kept up for three days and we were all running out of money. In fact, we had run out and they appointed a committee of three to go in to see the Commanding Officer. At that time, he was Major Dick Williams and he was known as "Terrible Terry." So we went in and I explained to him -- I was the spokesman -- and I said, "Major, we've been here three days now and we're all running out of money and if we can't get examined, we're going back home tonight." And he pounded the desk and said, "What the hell is this? Insubordination before you get into the Marine Corps? Get out of here!"

So we got out but as I went out I said, "If we're not examined by this afternoon, we're going back." So we were examined that afternoon.

MR. FRANK: What did he say after the examination after you saw him?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think I saw him for a number of years and later he got to be a very close friend of ours.

MR. FRANK: He has quite a reputation, I think.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: He was one of the real characters of the Marine Corps.

GENERAL CATES: Good-looking chap, too.

MR. FRANK: Was he any relation to now-retired Bob Williams, the paratrooper?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so. We had lots of Williamses.

MR. FRANK: After you were examined, I assume that you passed your examination.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, and that was on the 24th as I remember, of May. Then we returned back home and ~~then~~ ^{soon after} we were ordered to report to duty at Parris Island. ^{B.S.} -- I say we were -- I was. I reported on the 13th of June 1917.

MR. FRANK: Why don't you just go ahead and tell about it in your own words without my asking what happened subsequently.

GENERAL CATES: ~~We were there~~ ^{while} at Parris Island. We took, of course, close order drill, bayonet and rifle range and, outside of the rifle range part of it, there wasn't any of it any good -- the training. No extended order or anything else. And then I think about the first of July, two weeks later, they gave us leave for five days and ~~then~~ ^{then} we were ordered to report in to Quantico, Va.

We reported in to the ^{Officer} school at Quantico. That lasted approximately two months and then on, I think it was, the 28th day of August 1917, I was ordered to

report to the 96th Company, Second Battalion, Sixth
Marines. The company was organized that day.

MR. FRANK: At Quantico?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Had you gotten your uniforms while you were down at
Parris Island?

GENERAL CATES: No, we hadn't. We ordered the uniforms when we took
our physical and passed. We had a few of them but
not many.

MR. FRANK: Had you been sworn in right after you passed your
physical?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: In other words, they knew immediately after they gave
you the physical whether or not you had passed.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes.

MR. FRANK: The Quantico was not much and was pretty rugged at
that time, ^{and} I guess it was ^{undergoing} better during the war-time
expansion. Is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, there was ~~practically~~ very little there. They
were building the wooden barracks. Of course, there
was lots of mud, and ~~anything else~~. We trained there
for approximately four months, and General Holcomb,
who was then a Major, was our Battalion Commander at
that time.

MR. FRANK: This is at Quantico?

GENERAL CATES: At Quantico. Then on, I think it was, the 18th day of January we departed for Philadelphia -- the Second Battalion -- and boarded the USS Henderson and sailed the next morning.

MR. FRANK: When you went through this officers' school up at Quantico before joining the 96th Marines, what did they teach you? What was part of the curriculum?

GENERAL CATES: I would say that at least half of it wasn't worth a hoot. For instance, I spent at least half of my time in trying to learn the Semaphore and the Morse code, and what good was that for a Second Lieutenant. And, of course, we had lots of close order drill. We had some extended order drill and we dug trenches and we drew dummy grenades, and some of the training was good but a lot of it wasn't worth a hoot, much.

MR. FRANK: Who were some of the people that were down there with you at that time? Who were some of the officers who later went on to some degree of prominence in the Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: *Col. Harry S. Torrey*, ~~was one~~. He had ~~one~~ of the battalions in this officers' school. *I declare,* I can't think of the others.

MR. FRANK: How about some of the lieutenants that were down there with you.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I think the world of those, I mean, people like General Shepherd, . . .

MR. FRANK: Wallace, Worton?

GENERAL CATES: Wallace, Worton, Erskine, Murray, Sellers, ^{Wheat})

MR. FRANK: Who was that, Charlie Murray?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: He was, later, Barnett's aide?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: There was no such thing as staff and command teaching or courses. Nothing in staff work.

GENERAL CATES: No. None at all.

MR. FRANK: Did you find ^{that} this, as you went on later in the Marine Corps, ~~that this~~ was something the Marine Corps lacked?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, definitely. I think with the training that a youngster gets these days that, if we had had that training during World War I, I don't believe we would have lost one-third of our men. There was very little team work. You usually just got up, rushed in, fired, and there wasn't any covering fire, any maneuvering, you just got up and went forward.

MR. FRANK: Well, how about the staff work out in the field? If

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an officer wanted a report, did he just march back to where the battalion headquarters was?

GENERAL CATES: We used runners mostly, which was very unreliable. And we had telephones that didn't work. But you relied mostly on runners and Semaphore. I must admit that we used quite a bit of Semaphore. But the Lieutenant didn't do the signalling, we had signalmen.

MR. FRANK: Did they use these heliographs too?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so. Not then.

MR. FRANK: What was the voyage overseas like? What was the transport -- the old Henderson?

GENERAL CATES: The old Henderson was rough as billy-hell. It was an exceedingly rough trip. I have a rather amusing story to me -- it might not be to anyone else. When we sailed from Philadelphia, we thought we were going direct to France and we woke up the next morning and we were in New York harbor. It was cold as Iceland -- gosh, it was cold -- January. And so they allowed the officers to go ashore that night with the understanding that they were to be back aboard ship the next morning at eight o'clock. So I went along with a crowd and we kind of did the town. Along about two o'clock that night though, I decided I had had enough. So I tried to get a taxi cab to get back down to the pier and

there was no such thing as getting a taxi cab. It was sleeting and snowing -- about ten inches of snow. So I went to a hotel and turned in and I left a call for six o'clock. I didn't even take my clothes off. I went to sleep. When I woke up the next morning, it was after nine o'clock and we had been ordered to be back aboard ship at eight, we were supposed to sail at nine. So I was frantic, of course, and I finally got down and cussed the man ^{as I} went out the door. I got a taxi and got down to the pier and I couldn't even see the old Henderson out there -- it was foggy and snowy. There was a British boat there and I asked them if they were going out in that direction and they said yes so I went out with them. The Henderson was still there.

Now I would have been court-martialed. There was no question about it for desertion if the Henderson had ~~sailed~~ ^{left} ~~on time~~. That night they allowed us to go ashore again and I said, "No, sir, not me! I'm not going."

MR. FRANK: The others got back on time o.k.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes.

MR. FRANK: I can imagine what a sinking feeling it must have been.
Did you get any reprimand or anything out of it?

*Now I would have been court-martialed for desertion
if the Henderson had sailed on time. There was no
question about it for desertion if the Henderson
had* ~~sailed~~ ^{left} ~~on time~~.

GENERAL CATES: Not at all.

MR. FRANK: The others had gotten back earlier?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, they had gotten back earlier. As far as I know, nobody knew when I came aboard.

MR. FRANK: How long a trip was it over to France?

GENERAL CATES: I think it took us ten days, if I remember.

MR. FRANK: What did you do aboard ship?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, stand watches -- submarine watches. And they had schools and things to kill time. They even tried to teach us French.

MR. FRANK: What kind of school did they have for the men and for the officers?

GENERAL CATES: Things like field fortifications, engineering.

MR. FRANK: When you were down at Quantico, were there any French instructors down there?

GENERAL CATES: I don't remember any French. We had some Scots.

MR. FRANK: You did have some Scots?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And Canadians, but I don't remember any French.

MR. FRANK: These were veterans who had fought in France?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. They had been in action and of course they scared us to death, particularly on the gas question. *They said,*
I think if you get one sniff of mustard gas, you'd die.

MR. FRANK: Was gas the main worry?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I believe it was.

MR. FRANK: Were you gassed?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. My company was wiped out with gas.

MR. FRANK: That's right. At Bouresches, wasn't it?

GENERAL CATES: No, it was a week later, near Bellay Woods.

MR. FRANK: A week later?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: That must have been something -- attacking in the midst of a gas attack.

GENERAL CATES: We actually didn't attack through it. What had happened . . . well, we're getting way ahead of ourselves here.

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir. We'll get to that later on.

GENERAL CATES: All right.

MR. FRANK: You landed where? St. Nazaire?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: And what happened then?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, we took box cars and went up to a town called Bleavincourt, France. There we billeted and we stayed there for a couple of months, I guess, and really learned French warfare.

MR. FRANK: Were you taught by the French this time or on your own?

GENERAL CATES: On our own.

MR. FRANK: The company commander was Duncan, was ^{he} not?

GENERAL CATES: Donald Duncan.

MR. FRANK: And who were some of the other platoon leaders?

GENERAL CATES: Oh we had a big rough-and-ready man named Robertson, who was a fine soldier, fine Marine, but the men hated his guts. He was a hard-boiled rascal. And then we had Lockhart, First Platoon; Brailsford, Second; Johnny Bowling, who lives over here in Marlboro, Maryland, Third; and I had the Fourth Platoon.

MR. FRANK: Was there such a thing as a Mortar Platoon or Mortar Section at that time?

GENERAL CATES: Not in the company, no.

MR. FRANK: That was battalion.

GENERAL CATES: We had rifles and bayonets, and I guess that was it, in the companies because the machine gun company was separate entirely. They had the Browning -- not the Browning, the Lewis machine gun.

MR. FRANK: They didn't have the Chauchats yet?

GENERAL CATES: No, that's a story in itself. We got over to France and we had these nice Lewis machine guns and we had to turn them in and they gave us those doggone Chauchats.

MR. FRANK: Why?

GENERAL CATES: Well, they claimed that they needed the Lewis machine guns from planes and Chauchat was the best thing they had which wasn't worth a hoorah.

MR. FRANK: The Lewis was a British, was it not? Or was it American?

GENERAL CATES: This was American, I think. I'm pretty sure.

MR. FRANK: That's the one with a drum on ~~the~~ side and the big flash?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: The mortar at that time was the Stokes mortar, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: The French mortar. No, It was the British ^{weapon}.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Now, what other kind of training did you undergo while at Bleavincourt?

GENERAL CATES: Well, as I said, mostly extended order and French warfare.

MR. FRANK: What about gas drill?

GENERAL CATES: We had a certain amount of gas drill, yes.

MR. FRANK: Was there any ease or any comfort with the gas mask that you had? Did you feel that these would have done the job?

GENERAL CATES: No, none at all. In fact, we had two gas masks. We had the old English respirator and then we had the French pan that really was just -- I don't know, it had some kind of chemical on it that wasn't any good.

MR. FRANK: So the gas mask in essence didn't work out at all.

GENERAL CATES: No. In fact, the respirators we had about half of them ^{were} ~~were~~ defective.

MR. FRANK: The first offensive that the battalion participated in was ~~near~~ Château Thierry, was that right?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we had had training up in the quiet sector at ~~near~~ Verdun -- the Toulons-Troyons section. That was good training, too, because we got in patrolling and we got ~~had~~ ^{the} baptism of artillery, fire, and we got plenty of it, too.

MR. FRANK: Was German artillery fire good?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, very accurate. As a matter of fact it would alienate one man. And up to the time we went up there it had been a quiet sector, but you know Americans. When they get in they get trigger happy and we started firing and they fired and they poured it on them.

MR. FRANK: Did you ever go out on any of these patrols?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes.

MR. FRANK: What was it like?

GENERAL CATES: I didn't like it, I can tell you that. We didn't do too much of it though. And there were whirls of barbed wire, ^{and} you were always getting tangled up in the ^{wireless} wire.

MR. FRANK: The place at Verdun had been pretty well chewed up. It

was a mess.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it was terrible.

MR. FRANK: And this was when?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, it was along in . . . you can look in my record there. I think it was in March and April.

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, March and April.

MR. FRANK: Now the big offensive that the Germans threw was later on. The drive to Paris was when the Belleau Woods ^{fight} began.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's right.

MR. FRANK: Actually, the Aisne-Marne and Chateau Thierry in June and July was just an offensive that the Allies had . . .

GENERAL CATES: Yes, you see the Germans drove down and they took southeast trenches over in the Verdun sector. In fact we had come out and were getting some more training and a little rest. And they needed us badly so they shoved us up. We went to the edge of Paris and on up and got up to a little town called Montreuil. We got out of the buses and started advancing and kept going until we made contact with the Germans that were advancing. So they stopped and we stopped and we dug in. That was on the 31st day of May or the first of June -- I've forgotten which. And we held those lines there and for ^{several} days.

they attacked not too heavily in those days. Then our battalion was taken out of the line, on the night of the fifth of June, and we had just gotten back in reserve and gotten trained up and when Major Holcomb got an order to attack at five o'clock -- it was then twenty minutes to five -- and we were a good kilometer from our jumping off place. So we double-timed part of the way and got into position, and actually we didn't actually know our objective or where we were going or what. We were deployed across this wheat field and taking very heavy fire -- my platoon was. We received word that Captain Duncan had been killed -- the company commander. So with that I yelled to this Lieutenant Robertson, I said, "Come on, Robertson, let's go." And with that we jumped up and swarmed across that wheat field into Bouresches and about two-thirds of the way down I caught one flush ^{towards} ~~one~~ ^{grazing on bullet} on the helmet, ^{it} It put a great big dent in my helmet and knocked me unconscious. So Robertson, with the remainder of my platoon, entered the west part of Bour- esches, and evidently I must have been out for five or ten minutes. When I came to, I remember trying to put my helmet on and the doggone thing wouldn't go on. There was a great big dent in it as big as your fist.

Bullets
The machine guns were hitting around and it looked like hail, hitting around so my first thought was to run to the rear. I hate to admit it, but that was it. Then I looked over to the right of the ravine and I saw four Marines in this ravine. So I went staggering over there -- I fell two or three times, so they told me -- and ran in and got these four Marines and then about that time I saw Lieutenant Robertson who, with the remainder of my platoon, was leaving the western end of the town. By that time, we were right on the edge of the center of town. So then I yelled at him and I blew my whistle and he came over and he said, "All right you take your platoon in and clean out the town and I'll get reinforcements," which I thought was a hell of a thing. Well, anyway we did. We went on in and after getting into the town, we took heavy fire going down the streets. In fact, one clipped through my helmet again and hit me in the shoulder. We cleaned out most of the town but by that time I had, I think it was twenty-one men left. So I just posted them in four different posts around the town and set up a kind of a Cossack post.^{EJ} Within an hour though, the 79th Company came in with Major Zane -- Captain Zane. From then on, there wasn't any question about

holding the town. I mean, in two or three hours we had enough men in there to hold a half a dozen towns.

MR. FRANK: Now, just to get the picture, Belleau Woods is . . .

GENERAL CATES: To the left of Bouresches.

MR. FRANK: To the left of Bouresches. The 96th Company, Second Battalion was on the right of the Fourth Brigade attack, is that right?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: In other words . . .

GENERAL CATES: ~~We were going up~~, I think it was with the 23rd Infantry. Yes, I know it was -- to the right. You see, the Fifth Regiment had attacked Belleau Woods at that time but we had no contact with them.

MR. FRANK: The woods ran sort of a ~~singularity~~, did it not?

GENERAL CATES: Northwest, southeast. Bouresches was more or less on the flank. I've often contended, and I'm firmly convinced, if we hadn't have gotten Bouresches, we wouldn't have had any chance in Belleau Woods because ~~entangled~~ Bouresches kind of flanked, ~~in~~ ^{entangled} Belleau Woods.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Were you able to use Bouresches as a base for ~~entangling~~ ^{entangled} ~~insulating~~ fire?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, to a certain extent. It was a good piece away though. You see, Bouresches and a little town called -- I've forgotten the name of the town up there now --

well, it doesn't make any difference.

MR. FRANK: How long did you have to hold Bouresches? How long were you there?

GENERAL CATES: We were there until the night of the tenth. But, you see, we were pretty badly chewed up and we took terrific fire while in Bouresches. I mean the Germans layed it on us. In fact, we had a mystery there that has never been cleared up. It was a twelve or fourteen inch gun that fired once every twenty minutes into the town. And the people in the rear swore and be-damned it was a German gun but there wasn't any question about it. I went way back down the ravine and I could hear the damned ~~thing~~ ^{shells} coming from the south and I'd watch it and hear it go right over and hit in the town. We understood it was one of the big railway guns -- naval guns. . .

MR. FRANK: One of ours.

GENERAL CATES: . . . that Admiral Plunkett had, I think. We never could verify that but we heard that was it.

MR. FRANK: There's one in every war. It's like the one at Guadacanal.

GENERAL CATES: Luckily the thing was hitting right in the center of the town and practically ninety per cent of our men were out on the perimeter. So it didn't do too much

damage except to morale.

MR. FRANK: To know that you were being shot, suspecting that you were being shot at . . .

GENERAL CATES: And we couldn't stop it. It kept up for thirteen hours. As I say, we actually didn't have a good counter attack along there. Luckily the Germans didn't counterattack. They put on a lot of smaller attacks and they'd fire and we'd fire. A rather amusing incident happened in one of these artillery fire fights that they had. I was behind this stone wall at night and all hell was going on. They thought we were attacking and we thought they were attacking, you see. A great big shell hit in a manure pile about twenty or thirty feet behind me and you can imagine the mess it made. It knocked everybody down. In fact, it killed my orderly standing beside me. He was standing there and a concussion got him.

But it must have been at least a six-inch gun.

MR. FRANK: It spread manure and shells and everything.

GENERAL CATES: It did. And we were taken out on the tenth or eleventh, I don't remember which now. Then about two days later we received word that the Germans were going to put on this attack up the northwest of Lucy. So they broke us out and took us up on the dead run.

MR. FRANK: To sort of out-flank and go behind the lines to hit the flank there?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. But anyway, we got up there and took up positions in the reserve and nothing materialized at all. They didn't attack. In fact, let me correct that. That was the morning of the thirteenth of June. About that time, Major Holcomb received word that the Germans had re-taken Bouresches. So he called me -- I don't know where Robertson ~~was~~ at that time. Anyway, he said, "Cates, can you take Bouresches again?" And I gulped and said, "Yes." And he said, "All right, ^{Zone's} take your company and the 79th, ~~the 80th~~ Company, and re-capture it."

So we started out and we were just south of Lucy. The Germans had about four observation balloons -- sausages -- and we knew that they were watching us. Just when we got to Lucy, we received word that the re-taking of Bouresches was false. So then we went into a kind of bivouac in a woods ravine near Lucy and stayed there all day long. In fact, I got out and spent the day going over the battle fields trying to find a friend of mine that was missing -- Lieutenant Brailsford. So that night along about eight o'clock we received word that we would make a relief of some

unit in Belleau Woods. So again Robertson left and went into the Woods and left the company with me and said "you bring the company in at midnight -- leave at midnight." So about five minutes to midnight, I passed the word along to everybody to saddle up, put on their equipment and stand by to hear for the ~~hill~~ ^{out in} the wheat field. Well, it was dark as pitch and I hadn't gotten fifteen feet from my hole when I heard this salvo of shells coming. I realized that they were no ordinary shells -- the gas shell makes a different whine to it. So they hit and there was no detonation so I knew it was gas, but I waited to smell. By that time, there were more salvos coming in. So I got the first whiff of gas and I yelled gas and everybody passed it along. And I reached for my gas mask and no gas mask. I had left it up at this hole about fifteen feet from where I was. I evidently became excited and tried to find my hole and couldn't, and by that time we were getting plenty of the shells, ~~explosives~~. I remembered seeing a red-headed kid ^{Named Hall who} ~~being~~ ^{this} ~~had~~ ^{was} ~~explosive~~ had picked up a German gas mask in Bouresches, and I yelled for him. I heard ^{this} voice way down underneath the hill in a hole saying, "Here I am. Here I am." So I stumbled down there and said, "Hall,

where's that gas mask -- the German gas mask." So he gave it to me and I put it on and wore that thing for five hours. It was so small I couldn't get it on entirely, but we made the mistake of staying there and taking that gas. We were not only getting gas, we were getting everything -- shrapnel and high explosives -- and we took terrific casualties. Finally, though, it got daylight and so I moved them out and went on into Belleau Woods. The first thing you should do after a gas attack, of course, is get rid of your clothing. We got into the Woods and it seems that one of the battalions from the Fifth Regiment had attacked that night and had severe casualties. So they took my company to carry the wounded out.

You can imagine what happened. Inside of an hour there wasn't a man left. The gas was in the clothing -- the ones that didn't get it in the lungs up on hill, got it from the clothing. I must admit I stripped off and beat my clothes and soaked up ^{but} and it turned out I was pretty badly burned around my legs and underneath my arms and my forehead -- around these places.

MR. FRANK: That's where gas went to, didn't it.

GENERAL CATES: Any place where it was wet from perspiration -- your

feet and underneath your legs and particularly between your legs.

MR. FRANK: What did they do for gas casualties? How did they treat them?

GENERAL CATES: You mean back in the hospitals?

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know. But I must admit I was pretty badly worried for a long time. So that is when I ~~served~~ started with another company. I was the only man ~~man~~ left out of the company.

MR. FRANK: You were the only man left out of that company?

GENERAL CATES: Out of the line company. We had some supply behind.

MR. FRANK: You were the only man left in the 96th Company?

GENERAL CATES: On the front lines.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any ointment or salve or anything?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we did ~~but~~ and the best first aid treatment was plain old lye soap.

MR. FRANK: Have you felt the effects of gas ever since then?

GENERAL CATES: Sometimes I think so but no, I don't really think so.

MR. FRANK: We used gas too, did we not?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Did it backfire often?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. Of course, gas not being as bad as people make out ~~like it is~~, we learned how to take care of

it. The respirator was good. In the later part of the war, it got so they used it for nuisance value. They threw just a few shells in to worry you, you know. We got so we ~~used~~ to just step^d around them and go up wind, you see.

MR. FRANK: Of course, you realize there is quite an argument going on today about the use of gas, that it is a lot more humane than having a piece of you ripped out by a shell.

GENERAL CATES: What could be -- I can't think of anything worse than flame-throwing.

MR. FRANK: Did you use flame in World War I?

GENERAL CATES: I don't remember. I don't remember it at all. That's a long time ago.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Now, what happened after this ^{After} Belleau Woods? Were you evacuated?

GENERAL CATES: We served off and on, made a couple of other tours in Belleau Woods. We got replacements -- an entire new company, and Captain Wethered Woodworth came in, and ^{He} had three or four Lieutenants with him and we served at the tip of Belleau Woods where it was a hell of a mess, I might say. We did a lot of putting up double apron barbed wire. Then I got a very lucky break there on about the second of July. We received orders

to select twenty men ^{from} each battalion, I guess it
was -- no, each company -- to go to Paris to parade
on the Fourth of July. And they drew lots to see who
would get these -- one Lieutenant from each battalion.
And they drew lots and it turned out to be a fellow
named Johnnie Overton, who was a very famous Yale run-
ner. He had just come to the battalion though. So
Major Holcomb said that wasn't fair so he appointed
me. So I took these eighty men to Paris and we
paraded there in the Fourth of July parade.

MR. FRANK: Was that when General Shepherd saw you when he was
wounded and he was on the side lines there?

GENERAL CATES: I guess so.

MR. FRANK: He remembered that he was in the hospital there and he
looked out to see the parade . . .

GENERAL CATES: I might say that I have been in as many big parades as
But this
anybody in this country. ~~And it~~ was the most wonderful
one I've ever seen. You see, we had been under fire
approximately a month then -- no bath, no nothing --
so we got to Paris and the men were given an hour to
clean up. They wouldn't let them go on liberty the
first night. In fact, we got in late. The next morning
we formed for the parade and had this wonderful parade.
And later they took the whole bunch out to a great big

ammunition depot where they employed 10,000 girls.

You can imagine the time these Marines had with these girls. [laughter]

Well, anyway, the men hadn't been paid for over two months. And at that time, I remember I had ninety-six hundred francs left. At that time ninety-six hundred was almost a thousand dollars. So I said to ~~a~~ ^{who} this Gunner Sergeant ~~that~~ was with me, "Ben, I know the men haven't got any money and they are going to give them liberty this afternoon and night." And I said, "Here's ~~six~~ francs for ~~every~~ ^{each} man." That was about nine dollars. I said, "Give each man ~~six~~ francs." Well, my reputation was made from then on, I can tell you that.

MR. FRANK: They remembered that.

GENERAL CATES: They never forgot it. ~~But that~~ gave them enough money to go out and have a good dinner, and go to a ~~or~~ ^{or} ~~such~~ ^{such} ~~woman~~, whatever ~~they wanted~~.

MR. FRANK: I keep hearing about World War I and all the wonderful liberties that were made in Paris. In my study of Marine history and talking to Marines that served in World War I, it doesn't appear that many Marines ever got to Paris. It was only the Army.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't think there was too much of any of it

really. The only Marines that got to Paris, to begin with, was when they put them on MP duty and that was one thing that caused so much friction between the Army and the Marines. The Army just got so they hated Marines. The Marines had a job to do as police men.

MR. FRANK: They used Marines rather than Army for MPs.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, to start with. They had to ~~do away~~ with it, it got so bad.

MR. FRANK: All you had back in Paris were the rear area troops, the supply troops, and so on.

GENERAL CATES: No, we had practically no supply troops there. Of course, General Butler had the Eleventh and Thirteenth Regiments down ^{They} there at Brest, which were two highly trained Regiments.

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: And they never got into action.

MR. FRANK: You never got any Marine artillery in France in action?

GENERAL CATES: No. That was probably the best group, physically and trained, of any Regiment in France and they were never employed.

MR. FRANK: Well, they were used to build up ~~barriers of defense~~ for the depot down ^{there}.

GENERAL CATES: There was a lot of jealousy in it.

MR. FRANK: Do you remember the Floyd Gibbons' incident?

GENERAL CATES: Very well. He got to be a good friend of mine. In fact I just sent a photograph ^{and story} over to the Leatherneck about him out in Shanghai and China.

MR. FRANK: Oh yes, you were out there at that time. Well, was he wounded at Belleau Wood?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. He was hit in the eye and lost his eye.

MR. FRANK: And they released a story which, of course . . .

GENERAL CATES: I wouldn't say he slipped one over. He was lucky enough to get it out. They let it slip through the censors about that brigade, you see, and that touched off the thing.

MR. FRANK: And made the reputation of the Marines.

GENERAL CATES: The Fourth Brigade and that meant only two Regiments.

MR. FRANK: ~~inching our way~~ There were a couple of other offensives in which you participated. Soissons?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. We stayed in the Belleau Woods area, most of the time my outfit was back in reserve. In fact after we went from this parade in Paris, we were in reserve and I stayed there until the 17th of July. We thought we were going back to a rest area. We were still ~~on~~ ⁱⁿ the artillery range, you see. And we got orders to ~~weirdly mass~~ move out ^{and wake up} and there were lots of French ^{and when we}

camions. We knew the minute we saw those that it was bad news. You never ride to the rest area. So we loaded into these camions and had this forced march, you might call it, up west of Soissons. It was a forced march. The camions finally left us and we put ^{Ariste} on what you call the ~~Eighth Marne offense~~. The Fifth Regiment, of course, led the attack in our sector the first day, ^{18 July 1918} They caught the Germans by surprise and overran them, ^{General} ~~I think in about six or seven kilometers.~~ We were following up in reserve of the Sixth Regiment, and ~~that was on the 18th when they attacked.~~

The morning of the 19th we were attacked from a position just east of Vierzy. Major Holcomb's battalion had the left flank and the ~~First~~ Moroccans were supposed to have been on our left. But we formed for this attack -- I'm putting a hell of a lot of "I" in this --

MR. FRANK: This is ^{intended} ~~about~~ you, General.

GENERAL CATES: So we formed for the attack and we were supposed to have had, I think it was, eight little old French tanks. So there we stayed for an hour or an hour and a half waiting for these ~~little old~~ French tanks. ^{To cover} By that time, we were getting not only artillery fire but indirect machine gun fire. They were shooting indirect

coming over the hill. In fact, one hit the back of my
~~shell~~, shoulder. I thought somebody had hit me with a
rock. I finally pulled it out and it was a red hot
bullet. I went right on over to Major Holcomb and
yelled to him, "well, I got the first blesse. Here's
the first wound" and I handed him this bullet and he
dropped it, it was still hot.

Well, anyway we finally got under way and started
the attack with these little old tanks. By the way,
this artillery had killed ~~this~~ ^{the} runner, ~~Overton~~, ^{Johmey}
at that time while we were waiting. And the attack got
underway, and ^{the} it was a most beautiful attack that I have
ever seen. As far as you could see up to the right,
there were just waves and waves of men extending up
two miles, I guess. Of course, the other brigade was
over there and I think one other division was over
~~on their right~~ there. The Moroccans that were supposed to have
attack^d on our left didn't appear at all. So we broke
the first German lines without too much trouble. By
that time though we were catching billy-hell and I
don't mean maybe -- artillery fire and machine guns --
and about that time I had just remarked to this Ser-
geant of mine close to me, I ~~said~~, "Look at Captains
Woodward and Robertson getting right together there."

That's bad business." And I hadn't any more than said it when a shell hit close to them and they both went down. By that time, the other Lieutenants had all been wounded and I was the only one left out of the company, and I tried to take charge, but just about that time a whole bunch of Germans jumped up out of the trench and started running and our men went after them like a bunch of coyotes. And With that, it was bedlam. I was never able to organize them again. I kept the attack going for about a kilometer, I guess. By that time though, we were getting terrific fire from our left flank. So we finally -- the attack just petered out. We were up near an old sugar mill. And that's where I wrote that message, that you all have on file, to Major Holcomb. I think I said, "I have twenty men out of my company or out of my battalion and a few stranglers," and I wound up by saying, "I will hold."

By that time though, I had had a pretty bad wound across my knee. A shell had broken off to my right and cut my knee. In fact, it tore my trousers out. That's when, after that, they started to call me ^{"Kittie,"} ~~killy~~. But anyway, we tried -- I tried to form a line and as it turned out, I was one of two officers left out of the battalion on the front lines. One of them, Captain

Lloyd, was way off to the left front. He had gotten off out of position. In fact, there's a story to that. As long as I'm bragging, I might as well brag good. Anyway I was obsessed with the idea that I wanted to know where all our men were so I could establish a barrage line. A straggler told me, "I think Captain Lloyd with eight or ten men is out to our left front some place."

So I sent a couple of runners out to try to see if they could locate him and they never came back -- evidently casualties. So I decided, well, I was going to find out. So I took off my equipment, and I might say I had plenty of it on because I looked like a harness shop. I had two Sam ~~and~~ ^{Brown} belts and all kind of leather. But I took off my equipment and took my pistol in my pocket and I worked down the trench to this road to the left and then I got to the road. I walked straight into the German lines, walking alongside the road. And when I got down fairly close to this sugar mill, I could see ^{a couple of} ~~deck~~ ^{men} men -- I caught three kneeling down -- and I knew they had me covered. I was about 150 yards away. So I eased over the side of the road and I saw a little ditch just about eight inches deep and I made a dive for ~~that~~ just as they

cut loose at me. So I laid there and I didn't know what to do with those things clipping over me. There was a mound of earth over to the right and I got all set and made a dive up and over that and jumped on the other side of it. As I did, I went right square on some men. My first thought was that they were Germans. It turned out to be Captain Lloyd with the eight men that were in ~~this~~ ^{the} hole. So I said, "well, I've been trying to find you so I could establish a barrage line so ~~this~~ ^{our} artillery won't hit on you."

So then I had to get back to my hole which was about two hundred yards away and, I might say, I had a tough time getting there, too.

MR. FRANK: They had to cover you all the way.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, they were dusting me with everything. So we stayed there until that night and a bunch of French, I think Moroccans, I'm not sure, came in and relieved us. We lost approximately, I would say, two-thirds of the battalion in that attack. And it all came so suddenly, in about ~~an hour or an hour and a half.~~ ^{three}

MR. FRANK: After you made that good advance?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. You might say, though, that that ended the German offense of World War I. I mean, they immediately started withdrawing from out of Chateau Thierry salient, and they

never again assumed the offense on a major scale.

MR. FRANK: They were on defense from there on in.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Now bragging a little more -- I had a chance in that attack to do something that I would have given my shirt, if I could have. As I say, the Germans threw everything at us they could and they were flying the doggone planes and strafing us and the planes were not over a hundred feet in the air, if not fifty. So this one came right down ^{our} ~~out~~ line and I could see that gunner's eyes as clear as I can see yours. And he couldn't get his ~~doggone~~ gun depressed enough to get where we were. I fired three shots with my pistol while that bird was going by and I know I saw the fabric fly from his plane. ^{As} And I said, I would have given a million dollars if I could have downed that guy with my pistol. But there wasn't any question about it, I hit it -- I saw the fabric fly.

MR. FRANK: ~~How about that?~~ What was it like to watch these dog fights and watch these planes?

GENERAL CATES: Well, it was kind of nauseating really because the Germans were so good. Their planes were so far superior. They flew circles around ours.

MR. FRANK: I imagine there were quite a few of these air-to-air fights which you could see.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, but usually the Americans would do the best they could. They would come in and they would have dog fights and ^{it would} ~~they'd~~ end up by the Americans losing five planes and the Germans one and the Americans disappearing, and ~~you~~ you would never see them again.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any such thing as close air support in those days?

GENERAL CATES: No, none at all.

MR. FRANK: From Soissons you went to the Marbache sector.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that was just a quiet sector. We were relieved and went back to get replacements and rested and then we went up to Pont-à-Mousson in the Marbache sector. We were there for a while. I might say that was the best sector we ever struck as far as being peaceful and quiet. There was a little firing but not much. Then after that, of course, there was the St. Mihiel operation which was really a walk-away. I mean, there was comparatively little fighting ~~as~~ compared to what we had been through before.

MR. FRANK: Would you say then that the Belleau Woods then was probably the hardest fighting?

GENERAL CATES: Taken as a whole. But for the amount of casualties in a short period of time, Soissons was by far the worst. Because it all happened inside of two to two and a

half hours. I mean, our casualties.

MR. FRANK: It was a long time before Belleau Woods was finally neutralized, wasn't it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Of course, the Seventh Infantry came in there and attacked and didn't do anything. Then actually, I think we cleared the Woods in the latter part of June. You see, the Germans had a machine gun nest over in the rocky ~~craig~~^{were}s which was behind our lines. In fact, when I ~~served~~ started with this 80th Company, when my Company was wiped out, my hole was within forty to forty-five yards of the Germans. We looped around them in a kind of a fish-hook and when the Germans ~~firing~~ would start fighting across the way to -- I can't think of the name of that town -- Torche or something like that. -- And we'd start firing and the Germans behind us would start firing and we'd be in the middle, you see. We were getting fire from front and rear. We finally had sense enough, you might say, to withdraw the lines from where we were and made a terrific artillery bombardment on this machine-gun nest and it was captured, I think, by Major Shearer's battalion.

MR. FRANK: Was there a lot of bayonet work?

GENERAL CATES: Not too much, no. Some. You hear stories of that but why use a bayonet when you've got a bullet?

MR. FRANK: What were the German emplacements like in Belleau Woods? I heard that they had machine guns in the trees and in the rocks and everything.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, they had them in the rocks, yes, but I think that's a fallacy about the trees. But they had plenty of ~~them~~ ⁱⁿ there. I don't know how many machine guns ~~they took~~ ^{collected} out of that nest but it was some enormous amount. We attacked -- I say we -- my outfit never ~~was ever~~ ^{had been} ~~never~~ ^{ever} ~~but they~~ ^{did} But they attacked that thing day after day there and couldn't take it.

MR. FRANK: Of course, you were facing a crack German regiment there.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, and their morale was high at that time. Now, as I say, St. Mihiel wasn't much of an operation but it was the first American offense ^{IV} and it was done on a big scale.

MR. FRANK: Then after St. Mihiel they ^{went to the} ~~were to~~ Meuse-Argonne, Champagne?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, ~~you see~~, Champagne or Blanc-Mont as we called it, was not classified as a major operation. In fact, Belleau Woods was not a major operation. Did you know that?

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: The Aisne defensive . . .

MR. FRANK: Which was an Army offensive.

GENERAL CATES: Well, up to the 31st of May that was classified as a major offense. But Belleau Woods ^{Bouresches}, was not. And we lost something like -- in my company, I think we lost over a hundred per cent casualties. But we got replacements. Then we moved into Blanc-Mont which was really a good, clean fight and a hard fight. And again, my company advanced there and captured the heights of Blanc-Mont and with an open left flank again, we took terrific casualties.

MR. FRANK: Through the wheat fields and ^{of} several other periods of the fighting, you hear a lot about the Marine marksmanship.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it paid off. You see, I don't think the Germans had much respect for the French accuracy. In fact, the old Chauchat rifle was very ⁱⁿ accurate and they'd just lay down a volume of fire. I took great delight when I was in Belleau Woods and in Bouresches -- I'd get out and sit for an hour waiting for a pot shot at a German and we'd pick them off ^{down} at a thousand yards. They soon got to respect it.

MR. FRANK: It shook them up a bit, too.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. When we first took Belleau Woods there and went in there, the railroad embankment was about six

hundred yards away and there was a woods up behind that and they'd send men all day long up this railroad embankment out to the woods evidently ^{for} supplies, you see. We soon stopped that. We'd pick them off ^{at} six or eight hundred yards there. In fact, I got so I had three other good shots and we'd ~~lay~~ down and we'd fire everytime we'd see one man.

MR. FRANK: Was there no way to outflank Belleau Woods?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I guess you could have, yes, if you had been doing it today.

MR. FRANK: It was just a question of maneuvers at the time.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. We didn't maneuver much, I mean, we'd connect up and go forward.

MR. FRANK: You were through the Guadalcanal campaign and, of course, you were through the Iwo Jima campaign. I think you were at Kwajalein, too, weren't you?

GENERAL CATES: No. I was at Guadalcanal, Saipan, ~~Tinian~~ and Iwo Jima.

MR. FRANK: That's right. Now, how would you compare the personal reaction, not the nature of the fighting, of course, the amphibious warfare of World War II was obvious. But how would you compare from a personal point of view participating in World War I -- ^{the} fighting in World War I and ^{the} fighting in World War II.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't know whether I correctly understand you or not but I might say there was a lot of difference fighting as a Second Lieutenant and fighting as a Colonel and a Major General. In fact, in World War II I didn't have any close calls at all that I remember. There's no doubt about it, ~~I mean~~ troops in the Pacific didn't get one-fourth or one-fifth of the artillery fire that the Germans gave us in World War I.

MR. FRANK: The Japanese artillery fire was not too great anyway.

GENERAL CATES: To begin with they were short on supplies and they used very poor head work. The minute they'd fire a few shots and get registered in on a target ~~and things~~, then they'd stop. They had all kinds of chances. That doesn't answer your question but I don't quite understand . . .

MR. FRANK: Would you say the fighting was more rugged in World War I? The trench warfare?

GENERAL CATES: No, I wouldn't say it was more rugged. There is no question about it, thank God the Japs didn't have the German know-how and thank God the Germans didn't have the Jap's tenacity and fear to die. Because if you put them both together it would be bad. The Japanese had the courage. I must admit, it was dumb courage and the Germans had the know-how and the training.

But he would give up.

MR. FRANK: I was thinking of Iwo Jima, primarily. There was a rugged fight.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, there's no question about that. It was an entirely different type ~~at~~.

MR. FRANK: There's no comparison then, would you say? I mean it's like apples and oranges?

GENERAL CATES: ? Oh yes, You can't. I think probably Iwo Jima was probably tougher than any ^{of the} operations I was ever in.

/pause/ We cut off World War I after Blanc-Mont and of course, after that, we were in the Meuse offensive.

The Germans were actually licked by that time and we attacked there on the first day of November and you might say we had very little opposition, comparatively.

And again my company advanced with an open left flank there. It's unbelievable. And then, of course, it was climaxed by the crossing ~~of~~ the Meuse River on the morning of the eleventh. I was very glad not to cross the river, I can tell you that. And General Hunt Hobbs did an awful good job crossing ~~that~~ river.

MR. FRANK: That's a pretty hard operation -- a riverine operation.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. We would have had to cross on little foot bridges and the Germans were putting down heavy fire

Up bridge

and no more than the engineers would get them down
~~than~~ when the Germans would blow them up. Then when the men get on the bridge, you can imagine, it sank down, ~~you know~~ and ~~they~~ would flounder off in the water.

MR. FRANK: What about the supplies and the food you had in World War I?

GENERAL CATES: The supplies were very, very poor. Of course, we carried what was supposed to be four days emergency ration. It consisted of four boxes of hard tack, some bacon, I guess a pound of bacon, ^{or so} and coffee. To start with we had bully beef and then later ^{when} we couldn't get ~~regularly~~ ^{regularly} canned that we got that doggone Argentine beef that nobody could eat. They'd go hungry before they would eat it.

MR. FRANK: It was that bad?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, it was terrible. When we were in action, we'd never, at any time, get over one meal a day and we'd always get that at night. They'd bring it in under cover of darkness. Of course, we'd get that one meal -- the details would get pretty badly shot up bringing it in -- but we'd get it and it really would be pretty good. Mostly steak and mashed potatoes.

MR. FRANK: Oh really? Hot chow.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. That's when the line was stabilized. For instance, now at Belleau Woods there -- I'd say Bouresches

-- I don't think we got anything but emergency rations the first five days. *But* And then after we got stabilized though up in Belleau Woods, they'd come in. I remember one night they brought it in and they had some charcoal. I don't know why they brought charcoal in -- I guess it must have been to heat emergency rations on -- and a shell hit this charcoal, about four bags of charcoal, and we thought the worse *you know* *Attack* in the world was coming off because it was just all this cloud of dust, you know. And I might say it blew up that great big can of steak they had.

MR. FRANK: How about clothing and so on?

GENERAL CATES: It was in very poor supply.

MR. FRANK: You were in Army clothes at this time.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it started shifting by this time and we couldn't get much of that. And every time a person was killed, of course, they'd take his bed roll or his blanket roll. Or if it was an officer, I mean, *This* his trunk locker, *which* was well back of the line, of course. I can remember once that we got a report that an officer had been killed. In fact, it was Edgar Allen Poe. So I remember taking a camel's hair bath-robe and a brand new suit he had there. And after the war I found out that Edgar Allen Poe was as well

as I am. He had been wounded and so I didn't know what to do about it. I told the story so many times that finally ^{after the war} he wrote me a letter and said he'd like ^{the} ~~that~~ bathrobe back.

MR. FRANK: And you sent it to him, you still had it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I fixed it up the best I could. He said he wanted it because his mother had given it to him.

MR. FRANK: What were your thoughts, what was the reaction, how did you learn of the Armistice?

GENERAL CATES: Well, we were pretty sure it was bound to come. By that time, our company in the Meuse-Argonne had only ^{one} ~~one~~ men killed but for some reason we had a lot wounded. We had, as I remember it, thirty-six wounded. But ^{we} they were wet, cold and I don't think we had over thirty men in the company left at Armistice. I mean, cold, dysentery ~~and~~ ^{and} fly.

MR. FRANK: Had the flu epidemic hit the lines yet?

GENERAL CATES: Some. Not badly. It didn't hit the troops in the line as much as the ones that were housed.

(End Side One)

Tape One, Side Two

MR. FRANK: We were talking about the Armistice. You knew that

it was going to come?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we had a hunch that they couldn't last much longer. In fact, we knew it. So the night it came it was a beautiful sight, I can tell you that, because each side broke out and shot up a lot of their ammunition, shot off their flares, started bonfires as far as you could see in each direction. The Germans on the other side of the river and we were on ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~sorell~~ ^{other} this side. The men, you might say, thawed out for the first time.

We got ~~clean~~ clothing in and got cleaned up a little bit and then they started the hike into Germany. Our Marines first went up ^{there} to a little corner of Belgium and then into Luxembourg and then on up to the Rhine.

MR. FRANK: Had you gotten yourself a horse by now?

GENERAL CATES: Oh no. The Battalion Commander had gotten a horse and the executive -- we had a Colonel named Metcalfe, he wasn't a Colonel then, he was a Major.

MR. FRANK: Who was that? Clyde Metcalfe?

GENERAL CATES: Clyde Metcalfe. And he did something that I always appreciated very much. I was pretty well shot. I mean, I'd been sick with dysentery and a kind of flu and I didn't know whether I could make it or not. In

fact, I had turned in to a hospital for a couple of nights. So we started this hike and he would let me ride that horse for a half hour and he'd walk. I always appreciated a thing like that because I couldn't have made it otherwise, I don't think.

I always remember these amusing things. As I say, we went up into Luxembourg and we had a Battalion Commander, Ernest C. Williams, who earned the Medal of Honor, I think down in Haiti or San Domingo, anyhow I understand he earned it too. He had all the courage in the world but I wouldn't say he was the friendliest man in the world. But anyway, we got to this little town of Ettlebrück and we ~~had~~ hiked from the rear of the regiment to the point that day so we had had an unusually long hike. We got into this town and all these people met us with high silk hats on and one greeted me as I went in. A bartender opened the door and said, "Where have you been? We've been waiting for you for the last five years." I said, "Where are you from? Chicago?" And he said, "No, Newark."

Well, anyway they paraded us around the square. They had all kind of flowers and things they had loaded us down with and they took the officers into what corresponded to our Court House -- City Hall -- and

opened up champagne. As I say, Major Williams doesn't have too good a head work, so I think he must have snapped down two good bottles of champagne. All the time the men were standing outside waiting. So finally I said, "well, let's get these men billeted." So we went out and did. Then we went to where we were going to spend the night in a little old cafe. Williams by that time was feeling no pain. I probably shouldn't tell this because he's still alive. But anyway he said, "Well, let's have another drink." And there was a Lieutenant van Dorn, who was a lawyer in Washington -- he's dead -- and a fellow named ~~Haskill~~ Hawkins, an Intelligence Officer, and myself with Williams. So we sat down at ~~this~~ ^a table and ordered a brandy. Well, it wasn't any brandy at all, it was apple cider, or something like that. But about that time a Major General walked in -- an Army Major General. He said, "Who's in command here?" Williams looked up and said, "I am," and didn't get up. So we sat there too. And the Major General said, "Have you seen that all your men are billeted?" Williams said, "Nope." The General said, "Why not?" You just got in, [Williams] The General said, "Did you start washing your rolling stock?" [and socks?] "Nope." "Well, why haven't you?" You [Williams said,]

"Just got in." About that time, Williams got up and pointed to his stars. He said, "I can see that you're a Major General but who in the hell are you anyway?" With that, ~~this~~ Major General says, "Why, young man, I'm Major General Hines, your Corps Commander. You're under arrest, you're relieved." We made a bee line out the door and that's the last I've ever seen of Williams. *[laughter]*

He said, "I can see you're a Major General but who the hell are you?" *[Laughter]*

MR. FRANK: Talking about sitting down in the little cafes, you've seen a lot of war movies and so on of World War I, these little canteens of what have you. Did you ever -- is this true? Were these little inns and so on in these little towns like this?

GENERAL CATES: In some places, yes.

MR. FRANK: Where they had rooms and so on -- this is where you billeted the officers?

GENERAL CATES: It depends to start with -- the officers slept in the haylofts like anybody else until we first went over there for training in ~~Devonport~~ ^{Bleau Mont} and the men slept in barns and we finally got beds. It certainly was not like this last war.

Mr. FRANK: How long were you in Germany for?

Gen. GATES: About six months.

GENERAL CATES: Let's see, we arrived there on the first of December and I might say that it was quite an event. We reached the Rhine, we were in a nice little cafe. So we had always said we were going to celebrate the day when we could urinate in the Rhine. ^{and} So it was quite a cold day. All the officers went down to the Rhine and urinated. ~~both of them~~.

MR. FRANK: That's like Winston Churchill's plan ^{when} he crossed the Rhine in World War II.

GENERAL CATES: So the next day we crossed the ~~Rhine~~ river and we didn't realize that we were going to cross the river and stop and stay there. We thought it was just another stopping point and we would move on, but we crossed over into this little town called Rheinbrohl, which was a beautiful little town, and for some reason my billeted ^{my} non-com had missed his detail that morning and when we got over there, the other companies had gotten practically all the ~~good~~ other billets. So we finally found a pontoon factory down over the railroad dump that couldn't have been more ideal. It was just perfect. It had a ~~small~~ little club, ^{good} That's where they had bowling and billiards and tennis courts -- just a typical little club -- right on the Rhine -- and there we camped. We thought we were just going to

stay there ~~the~~ the night. We stayed there for -- let's see, January, February, March, April, May -- six months. About half a dozen Generals tried to kick me out of that billet -- I was a Captain by that time. But they never did. I had squatter's rights.

MR. FRANK: What was it like? Did you get good food and everything there.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, we got as good as you could expect.

MR. FRANK: That's right.

GENERAL CATES: And we ate plenty of it. And we trained very, very hard, too. I mean, it was done with a purpose, of course. You know how if you ease up on people after a war and ~~things like that~~, they soon go to pieces. We trained hard and we stayed there until I guess it was May. By that time, they ~~were~~ organized into a composite regiment which General Pershing used as his ~~guard of honor to start out with at Coblenz and then Paris, and then London, and back to Paris and then to New York and Washington. They selected one company out of each brigade of the first six divisions -- it didn't include say the 42nd and the rest of those -- First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Fifth and Sixth.~~ ~~carefully~~ ~~work~~ They selected a certain number of men, I guess, it was about twenty out of each company, and then they had

all kind of competition and drilled them and every-
thing. We had -- I think they selected two Captains
to compete. One was Gilder Jackson, you probably
know him, and myself. We had I think about twelve or
fourteen lieutenants and about 400 enlisted men that
were already hand-picked. The first requirement was
they had to be five feet ten inches tall and they had
to have been in operations and they had to be in good
shape physically and everything.

So we trained there for a month or two. It was [composed of]
hand-picked men to begin with and it gave us about
twice the number of men that we actually needed for
the company. So we weeded them out for a number of
weeks and finally got the company down to 250 men and
six officers. Then the regiment was actually formed
at Coblenz, Germany, and commanded by a Colonel Hunt.
After a week or two though for some reason Hunt was
relieved and Colonel Conrad S. Babcock took command of
the Regiment.

We paraded a few time in Coblenz with Pershing
and other parades and then we went to Paris where we
were, you might say, the guard of honor for the Allied
games, for all the dignitaries that came there. Then
in their big Fourth of July parade and the big victory

parade of [redacted] nineteen July, the French [redacted] parade.

GENERAL CATES: [redacted] And then we went to London and paraded there on -- oh, I don't know -- the latter part of 19 July, in their big victory parade. And then we returned to Paris where we spent another five or six weeks, still participating in the honors and things ~~ceremonies~~ at the Allied games. Then we went to Brest and embarked on the Leviathan with General Pershing and his staff and came to New York and paraded there in their victory parade in the early part of September. Then to Washington and the big parade there in Washington. Then the Regiment was disbanded, and my company was disbanded at the Marine Barracks, Washington, D. C.

MR. FRANK: I want to go back to a couple of things. You say that you were in competition with another Captain for . . .

GENERAL CATES: It was Gilder Jackson and they had a board of officers who decided who would be selected.

MR. FRANK: And you won out over the others.

GENERAL CATES: I was lucky enough to get it.

MR. FRANK: Also, you were talking about the maneuvers and the training that you conducted while at this pontoon factory in Rheinbrohl. What was the nature of this training? Did you utilize any lessons learned from

the warfare that you had participated in?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, we had lots of maneuvers and we actually, you might say, learned ~~fire~~ and ^{fire and} movement, which we hadn't received much of before that. We really learned the extended order and fire and movement.

MR. FRANK: How about the staff duties, staff action? You were forcibly inculcated with this, were you not?

GENERAL CATES: No, I didn't get much of that. Now let's see, I was a First Lieutenant at that time to begin with. I was a Captain but I hadn't been notified. You might say I had enough trouble taking care of the company and that without worrying about any staff work or anything else.

MR. FRANK: The personalities whose names arose in World War I in the Brigade, for instance, Ellis. Did you know him or of him?

GENERAL CATES: I knew him, yes, but not a close friend. He was quite senior to me. I'd see him and he was always very agreeable. He was a very brainy man, there's no question about that. He was way ahead of his time. I've often said, I think there are two men that I can think of who were way ahead of their times in the Marine Corps, one was Ellis and the other one was John Thomason.

MR. FRANK: How so Thomason?

GENERAL CATES: Well, because he just visualized -- he knew history, he knew strategy and he studied and he could tell you all about Napoleon's campaign and the maneuvering and he could tell you everything about the Civil War and things like that.

MR. FRANK: Were you a close friend of Thomason's?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, very.

MR. FRANK: Did you ever get any of his German ~~pictures~~ pictures?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I've got lots of them. I don't know where they are. Here's a picture right there of one of them. But I've got a lot of his drawings. I guess they're upstairs.

MR. FRANK: The original drawings?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. In fact, I've got two that one morning I went into the study about four o'clock in the morning and he was up -- he did most of his writing and his drawing at that time of the day -- and he had four of these great big enormous watercolors hanging on the mantle with thumb tacks and I said, "I like that one, John." He said, "I don't like it." And he grabbed it and tore it up. So I grabbed the other two off and I still have them.

MR. FRANK: The composite regiment in these parades -- What band

did you use? Was it an Army band? Was there any Marine band over there at the time? Did either one of the Regiments or the Brigade have any Marine musicians?

GENERAL CATES: We had an Army band, I think it was out of the First Division. I'm not sure. In fact, there's one of our parades -- see that picture there? That's the victory parade in Paris.

MR. FRANK: The Arc de Triomphe.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. ~~old~~ Senator ~~Freeland~~ ^{Phelan} sent me that.

MR. FRANK: Logan Freeland?

GENERAL CATES: No, Senator ~~Freeland~~ ^{Phelan} of California. Once I was down ~~at~~ his place down south of San Francisco and he had these two watercolors his nephews had sent him, and I said, "I'd like ~~that~~ ^{to have a copy of} that one because I was in it." In fact, my company is right behind those colors. And so two years later, he was over in Paris and he got ~~that~~ ^{it} and sent it to me.

MR. FRANK: That's really something. Those parades must have been something. They must have been exciting.

GENERAL CATES: They certainly were. Long. In a London parade I think that they estimated that over four million people saw that parade.

MR. FRANK: How was the conduct of the Marines who were in the

company.

GENERAL CATES: You can't believe how good it was because we never gave a court martial during the entire time. If the man got out of line, we just sent him back to his outfit and that was punishment enough because they were all so anxious to stay, you see.

MR. FRANK: They were all well-decorated Marines?

GENERAL CATES: Practically everyone of them.

MR. FRANK: Now, for the record, for the tape, talking about well-decorated Marines, you were awarded the Croix de Guerre with palm, was it?

GENERAL CATES: There are so many of them. I happen to have three Croix de Guerres.

MR. FRANK: Three Croix de Guerres.

GENERAL CATES: That's a lesser medal but I might say I ^{got} ~~got~~ the greatest kick out of that one because it was the first medal I ever received.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Who awarded that to you?

GENERAL CATES: You know, I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: Was it a French? . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, it wasn't delivered by a Frenchman at all. In fact, it might have been General Lejeune, I'm not sure.

MR. FRANK: How about when you were made Chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur? Was that at ?

GENERAL CATES: No, that was awarded -- there's a rather odd story connected with that, too. I received a French Legion of Honor award while I was up in Germany and then I had been home for about three or four months, I guess, when I got orders to go to Secretary Daniels' office and he presented me with another one. You can see the two there. There's no such thing as having two in this Society, you see? There were six of us in the Marine Corps that ~~they~~ received duplicates.

MR. FRANK: So that is quite an unusual honor. You also received the Distinguished Service Cross, which was an Army award.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I got the Distinguished Service Cross with an oak leaf, which is the second one. To save you the trouble there, I'll just name some.

MR. FRANK: All right, fine.

GENERAL CATES: The Navy Cross.

MR. FRANK: That's for World War I.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And then the Navy Distinguished Service Medal with a star, which is two. Then the Distinguished Service Cross, Army, with an oak leaf, which is two. Then the Silver Star with a star, which is two -- no, with an oak leaf. And then the Legion of Merit and Purple Heart with oak leaf, which is two. Plus the

others.

MR. FRANK: What is that award in the middle there, General?

GENERAL CATES: That's rather odd, you asked that. Somebody asked that yesterday -- a doctor -- someone who had been in here.

That's the only medal I received where I did nothing to get it. It's a ^{Dutch Award} Holland and it was presented to me because I was Commandant at a school that trained some ^{Hollanders}.

MR. FRANK: That's right, that was when you were Commandant of the Schools.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, you see I was Commandant of the ^{School}s on three occasions. They said twice but it used to be that the Commandant was not the Commanding General at Quantico and that's how I was Commandant in 1943 and later Commandant as Commanding General on two occasions.

MR. FRANK: You became Commandant of Marine Corps following a tour as Commandant of the Marine Corps. That's the Order of Orange-Nassau with crossed swords and ^{The Schools} rank of Grand Officer.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. I really figured I did something to deserve the others but not, with all due respect to the Government

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MR. FRANK: Skipping ahead, talking about this Dutch award. Who set up the -- was it during your tour as Commandant that we had a general officer over in The Netherlands?

GENERAL CATES: No, that was under General Shepherd.

MR. FRANK: General Shepherd set that up.

Well, now I think we've recorded pretty much of what we had set up in this session. We talked about going back to Washington where this composite company was demobilized and those who remained in were sent to regular duty stations, probably down to Santo Domingo or Haiti and the reserves sent home.

GENERAL CATES: You keep talking, brings back all these old memories. A rather odd thing happened the day after my company was demobilized there at the Marine Barracks. I had no idea -- I had never thought about staying in the Marine Corps. So I submitted my resignation and was at the Barracks that afternoon and I was walking around the compound when I saw General Barnett coming down the sidewalk. He was then Commandant. I looked for some place to duck, ~~really~~, but I couldn't. So I saluted and he returned the salute and he said, "Young man, I understand you are resigning." And I gulped a few times and said, "Yes, sir." He said, "How would you like to have two months' leave and then make your mind up?" And I said, "Well, that's certainly fair enough, General." He said, "All right. Withdraw your resignation, put your leave slip

in tomorrow morning." So I did. I hadn't been home ten days when I was ready to get back again.

MR. FRANK: Had you met the General before?

GENERAL CATES: No, it was the first time I ever saw him.

MR. FRANK: But he knew of you.

GENERAL CATES: Evidently.

MR. FRANK: You were his aide for a period of about six or seven months, is that right?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I was his aide and also aide at the White House to President Wilson. Then, as you know, General Lejeune came in as Commandant and Barnett was ordered out to the Department of the Pacific in San Francisco. I was appointed as Aide to the Commandant so I held over for maybe three or four weeks as Aide to General Lejeune. Then Barnett had taken leave in the meantime and so when he was ordered to the Department he asked if I would like to go with him as his aide ~~out there~~. I told him at the time I was planning on being married and I knew it wasn't the custom in those days to have married aides. And he said that would be fine. He said I know your wife-to-be. And he said, "I want you to get married and come out with me." I said I wasn't going to be married for about a couple of months. He said, "Why." I said, "Well, I don't have the money."

He said, "Hell, I'll lend you the money." So then I went out and I was aide to him for a year and a half out there.

MR. FRANK: He had two aides. Charlie Murray was the other aide?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, we had different times -- Charlie Murray and I went out with him. Then later ^{Gilder Jackson} George Axen was aide, Lewie Merritt was aide, and one other. Of course, while he was Commandant, we had three aides and Jack Woods -- Murray, Woods and myself were his aides.

MR. FRANK: There's a story which has been told about a confrontation between Lejeune and Barnett. Were you there?

GENERAL CATES: I was there and heard it.

MR. FRANK: Would you care to put that on tape.

GENERAL CATES: Well, maybe it's something that shouldn't be put on tape, but yes. As you know, at that time, Congressman Butler was head of the Armed Service Committee, the Naval Affairs Committee. Barnett, when he was re-appointed as Commandant, Secretary Daniels got him to sign a paper that it was subject to his approval at all times and he could ask for his resignation.

MR. FRANK: That's unusual, isn't it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And it seems that, with all due respect to General Butler whom I admire as a courageous young man, he worked with his dad to get General Lejeune to say

desire to
that he would be Commandant. And they expected Barnett to retire, which would make a vacancy for another ~~star~~ ^{major general} General Butler expected to get it. So the note that Secretary Daniels sent up to the Commandant -- in fact, I took it in to his office -- it was sent up by a Negro messenger. And it said in effect, "I hereby ask for your resignation as Commandant to take effect immediately. Let me know by return bearer whether you wish to remain on the active list as a Brigadier General or retire." So you can imagine the tailspin it threw General Barnett in. He yelled, "Get Charlie, Charlie McCawley. Get Long. Get so-and-so and so on. Get me ~~Barnett~~ on the phone." So there this Negro messenger stood ~~there and~~ waited. So after about fifteen or twenty minutes, General Barnett sent a note back and in effect it said, "I wish to remain on the active list subject to your orders."

Then there were all kind of conferences going on between Congressman Butler and Secretary Daniels and General Butler. For the next few days, we'd see them *come in* the office back and forth.

MR. FRANK: Where was Butler at this time?

GENERAL CATES: He was at Quantico, I think. He was there with Lejeune, *I think* -- I'm not sure. Anyway, General

Barnett by staying on the active list, you see, had a little too much political power to have Butler get the other star over him. So I don't know how many days it was until General Lejeune came up to relieve General Barnett. It was a very unofficial thing, it looked like. General Lejeune came in. I showed him in the office and he started to sit down. General Barnett said, "John, stand up there just a minute. We've been good friends all our lives -- close friends. Why didn't you let me know what was going on?"

General Lejeune replied, "George, my hands were tied." General Barnett said, "Don't you know that if I had been in your place, I would have come to you and told you exactly what was happening?" And General Lejeune said, "George, my hands were tied." General Barnett said, "All right. I stand relieved, you're the Commandant."

MR. FRANK: And that was it. Now, what do you think he meant by saying his hands were tied?

Well, now, what kind of a man was General Barnett?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I tell you, he's one of the finest. I wouldn't say he'd make the most courageous field Marine. He's more or less the polished type, I would think.

MR. FRANK: Well, he never had the opportunity really.

GENERAL CATES: No, he never did. And you take Lejeune, he's noted for his brains and ability.

MR. FRANK: Well, would you like to get on record or could I put words in your mouth to state that it was your feeling that Lejeune was not involved in any political machinations, that this was something that when he said his hands were tied, his hands were tied.

GENERAL CATES: Definitely. General Lejeune has the highest integrity, in my opinion.

MR. FRANK: This was just a circumstance that he was in.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course, Smedley Butler's reputation, I mean, he was a Marine one hundred per cent regardless of what he wanted to do, is this correct?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes, there's no question about that, and a most courageous one.

MR. FRANK: But he had his eyes set on the Commandant.

GENERAL CATES: I think so. It looked like he was going to get General Lejeune put in as Commandant and he'd get his other star and then when General Lejeune retired, he might ~~would~~ be appointed as Commandant. I think that was the time, when he didn't get his second star, that he went to Philadelphia as Commissioner of Public Safety, wasn't that? The case?

MR. FRANK: It may have been, I don't recall exactly, now, but about that time. But now, was General Barnett pretty bitter about this?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I think he was. I think he was more hurt than bitter and of course Mrs. Barnett -- oh, she was bitter.

MR. FRANK: Did this represent a break between Lejeune and Barnett?

GENERAL CATES: I would say yes. Of course, Barnett was on the West Coast and I might say that when the Department of the Pacific was organized that he had no authority whatsoever. He couldn't even transfer an enlisted man in the Department of the Pacific.

MR. FRANK: Really.

GENERAL CATES: It was just a figure head job. In fact, there were only about five of us out there. There was ~~old~~ Colonel McLemore, who was the Adjutant Inspector, and a Paymaster Wright, I think it was, and two aides.

MR. FRANK: Didn't McLemore die in about '25 when he was drinking or something and his car went into . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, that was Williams. That was Colonel Williams. McLemore died while we were there.

MR. FRANK: Was this Albert McLemore?

GENERAL CATES: Alec Williams. Oh, you're talking about McLemore.

MR. FRANK: Yes, his first name. Albert McLemore, was it?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know, I've forgotten.

MR. FRANK: No, Alec Williams, that's right.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, Alec Williams.

MR. FRANK: After you were married, you went out and were aide to General Barnett for a while. You said he was probably a little unhappy and somewhat bitter about this situation.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I wouldn't say he was bitter as much as he was quite hurt over it because he and General Lejeune were very close friends.

MR. FRANK: Was there any reconciliation between the two of them?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, they were always friendly after that, I mean, but there was a feeling there. Yes, I was aide for him for three years out there and I might say that it was three years wasted because we didn't have a thing to do.

MR. FRANK: Didn't have a thing to do.

GENERAL CATES: Not a thing.

MR. FRANK: Were you there in 1925?

GENERAL CATES: No, I went aboard ship, the USS California, in 1923 and then came ashore in 1925. Then I went to San Diego.

MR. FRANK: Well, let's see what else we have here. This might be a good place to end it because these '20s . . .

GENERAL CATES: There's not much to those '20s, I can tell you that.

MR. FRANK: Well, I'd like to talk a little about sea duty because certainly this is an aspect of Marine Corps life which has gone -- there's not much opportunity for a young officer or young Marine to be sea-going.

GENERAL CATES: No, because in those days, I mean, all the battleships had guards.

MR. FRANK: Yes, all capital ships, actually.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, yes. Well, I don't think they had them on the cruisers.

MR. FRANK: They didn't have them on the cruisers in those days?

GENERAL CATES: No, I think there were twelve battleships that we had guards on, but pretty big guards. For instance, mine was over a hundred.

MR. FRANK: I notice here in '22, you went out to Pearl Harbor for about a month.

GENERAL CATES: General Barnett made an inspection trip.

MR. FRANK: That was it entirely.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, and he and Mrs. Barnett and a girl named *Alicia Chase* Chase, who was famous, you might say, and has done as much to promote ballet as any person in this country. In fact, she is the big one.

MR. FRANK: *Alicia Chase?*

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: I think I've heard of her. What was life like out in San Francisco? This is not particularly a military town.

GENERAL CATES: Well, at that time, there was very little military there and of course a small Army detachment and the Navy headquarters, and then, of course, Mare Island ^{near} was up there. But, as I say, we had practically nothing to do and most social or maybe entertaining dignitaries that came in, ^A ^{remember when} ^{General Fache} came there.

MR. FRANK: You went down to the Fourth Regiment in San Diego in '25.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: And your duties were what when you were there?

GENERAL CATES: I had a company until I got mixed up in ^{the} ~~that~~ Butler-Williams court martial.

MR. FRANK: Then they sent you up to Spokane in a hurry. Did you maintain your Captaincy after World War I?

GENERAL CATES: No, I reverted back to First Lieutenant.

MR. FRANK: How long did it take you to get your Captaincy back?

GENERAL CATES: Well, as you probably know, at that time they had a board called the Neville Board.

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: And I was way down on the list -- I mean way down.

And they were meeting just at the time prior to General Barnett going out to San Francisco. I used to see General Neville and I'd keep saying, "General, what's the chance of being a Captain?" Just kidding him and he'd say, "I don't think you stand a chance." Well, anyway, we went out to San Francisco and about three or four months later they published a Board and I had jumped about three hundred and fifty numbers. General Hunt, who had been a high-ranking Major, was selected number one on the list and I was number two. But he had only jumped about three or four numbers and I had jumped close to four hundred numbers.

MR. FRANK: You remained a Captain ~~though~~ for about thirteen years though, didn't you?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: I noticed up on your shelf there a portrait of General Barnett by James Montgomery Flagg.

GENERAL CATES: That's a copy, but it's a good one.

MR. FRANK: Yes, and it was signed over to your wife to Jane Cates by General Barnett, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: He's a very distinguished looking officer.

GENERAL CATES: He certainly upheld the dignity of the office, I can tell you that.

MR. FRANK: What was it like up in Spokane?

GENERAL CATES: I loved it and my wife hated it. We were on our ~~own~~ recruiting
~~cruising~~ duty and at that time we were only allowed about ten recruits a month, I mean for the district, and I would have those on the first day or two. Then the rest of the time I didn't do anything. I spent most of my time hunting and fishing. I had a great big district. I had all of Montana and Idaho and eastern Washington, so I could travel any place I wanted to in those areas, write my own orders. So I'd do a little reserve recruiting and quite a bit of fishing.

MR. FRANK: The reserve program had begun, I think, in 1925.

That's why I asked this.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. They had started the -- I don't know when it was started but it was in effect -- the volunteer program and I started hitting these colleges and boy, I made a killing. I'd go in these colleges and sign up a hundred or a hundred and fifty of them.

MR. FRANK: Who were some of the potential officers you signed up at that time? Do you remember any of them?

GENERAL CATES: No, I swear I can't remember them now. But I remember I hit the University of Idaho and got the whole football team and the coach was very much upset because

he thought I was going to take his football team right out from under him. And the University of Montana and then later I went to Omaha, Nebraska, and I hit Nebraska. I do remember two noted ones there. One is Dailey, an aviator, and the other is Cue Ball ~~Wirsig~~ Something, but they were two good aviators.

MR. FRANK: I know Frank G. Dailey was the aviator . . .

GENERAL CATES: Wirsig. Wirsig was the other aviator.

MR. FRANK: Oh, Frank Wirsig.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Well, this duty lasted for about three years or two and a half years perhaps.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, no. Let's see, I was in Spokane about a year and a half, as I remember and then I was ordered . . .

MR. FRANK: To Omaha, rather.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I was ordered to Washington Headquarters and in the meantime, Nicaragua broke ^{out} and for some reason they wanted to take the officers at Omaha. So they changed my orders and sent me to Omaha and I was there for about a year, I guess.

MR. FRANK: And then you got on this American Battle Monuments Commission.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: What was that like? What did that duty involve?

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, General Pershing was the head of that and at time they were erecting these monuments in France and a fellow named Price was actually the working head -- a Major Price.

MR. FRANK: That's an Army Major.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I'm trying to think of the Marine I relieved. But anyway, there was no Marine that ever got over to France, I can tell you that. They thought that it was all an Army job and all we did was to write summaries of operations in World War I. We'd write these summaries and then mail them out to, to begin with, the Lieutenants and the Captains. We'd get their replies and then revise and send them out to the Regimental Commanders and revise and send them to the Generals. In fact, we just pushed pencils. At that same time, John Thomason was down with the Second Division writing the history of the Second Division. That's where I got to know him quite so well.

MR. FRANK: This duty lasted for about a year or so, did it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, a little over, I think.

MR. FRANK: March, '28, and in May you were detached to Headquarters Marine Corps.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I got out quick too because I got in a big argument.

MR. FRANK: Oh really?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Would you care to talk about that?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't mind. I'll talk about it. We had an Army chap down there named Cahill that was really a psychopathic ^(nyc) and when Price went to France, he put Cahill in charge of the office although two or three of us were seniors to him. And we fought and scrapped and things and finally it got down to a real good scrap and he went up and asked to have me relieved and I went up -- I've forgotten who was Commandant at that time -- anyway, then I sent a letter to General Pershing, who was over in Paris, and requested to be relieved at my request. So I think on my record today there's a telegram there requesting that I be relieved.

MR. FRANK: Did you get to know Pershing fairly well?

GENERAL CATES: Fairly well, yes.

MR. FRANK: What was he like?

GENERAL CATES: That's hard to describe. There's no doubt about it, he's a character. I wouldn't say cold-blooded but I mean he was all business.

MR. FRANK: He had some unfortunate situation with his family being killed in a . . .

GENERAL CATES: His wife I think was burned.

MR. FRANK: That's right, in a house. Didn't this affect him?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know, it may have. When we came home with the composite regiment, he had his son aboard with him, who was a young kid of about six, I would say, Warren. I used to take him around with me during the night when I was making inspections. Little Warren would tag along.

MR. FRANK: What was his attitude toward the Marines?

GENERAL CATES: I can't say, I don't really know. I had no contacts with him over in France there except just to see him. And, of course, we'd go to these receptions and things there in London and Paris but he was always with the, you might say, VIPs.

MR. FRANK: Yes. When you left the Battle Monuments Commission, you went to Headquarters, Marine Corps for a short period of time from May to June. Was that in between assignments?

GENERAL CATES: Let's see, I'm a little lost. What's the next assignment there?

MR. FRANK: Well, you left the Commission in May '29 and joined Headquarters, Marine Corps about first of May 1929 and were at Headquarters, Marine Corps until about June 20th.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, and that's . . .

MR. FRANK: Before going to China, with the Fourth Marines. The Headquarters, Marine Corps was just an interim assignment?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Well, I think, General, perhaps this would be a good place to stop for today.

Gen Cates: Roger!

Second Oral History Interview

with

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC (RETIRED)

11 April 1967
At the General's Home in Edgewater, Md.

By Mr. Benis M. Frank
Head, Oral History Unit, Historical Branch,
G-3 Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

For the Marine Corps Oral Program

MR. FRANK: As I recall, our last session ended with the battle
Monument, ^{Commemorial} and then you went with the Fourth Marines in
China, is that right, sir?

GENERAL CATES: That's right.

MR. FRANK: What was it like? What were the circumstances transfer?
^{of your}
^{a normal}
It was an oral transfer, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I was due for foreign duty and I was ordered to the
Far East and I expected to go to the Fourth Marines
Regiment. But upon arriving in Shanghai, I found
orders from the Fleet Admiral directing me to report
to the USS Pittsburgh upon her arrival in Shanghai.

At that time she was up at ^{Tsingtao} LingRao, I think. So I
served with the Fourth Regiment for a few days and I
reported aboard the USS Pittsburgh. ^{when I arrived in port} At that time,
General Lyman evidently -- or Colonel Lyman -- ^{suddenly} wanted
me particularly, not only as a Company Commander, but
as an athletic officer. So he went and saw the Admiral
and requested that I be reassigned to the Fourth Regi-
ment, which was approved. I only stayed aboard the
Pittsburgh about a week or ten days. And I might say
that when I left, I was very careful to get the Cap-
tain of the ship to make a notation on my fitness
report that I wasn't being relieved for some act, or
~~something~~ something. And for the next three years I was ⁱⁿ Company

Commander and athletic officer of the Fourth Regiment
in Shanghai.

MR. FRANK: What were the dates?

GENERAL CATES: That started out in the first part of August in 1929
and I remained there until the latter part of June,
1933. 1932

MR. FRANK: Now, of course, this was the heyday of Marine athletic
involvement in the International Settlement, was it
not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it certainly was.

MR. FRANK: With the Rugby teams and . . .

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we ~~saw~~ ^{stressed} athletics to a very high extent and we
were able to develop championship Rugby teams. They ~~were~~ ^{British}
brought teams from New Zealand, Australia and every
other place to play us. And, of course, in the other
~~games~~ ^{Sports} we were just as good.

MR. FRANK: I don't recall that in our previous discussion that
you had been too involved in athletics. Had you been
much of an athlete at college?

GENERAL CATES: Well, ^{you} I made my letter in football and baseball but I
was never a first-stringer. But I was always able to
make my letter. I was on the squad.

MR. FRANK: Well, why did Colonel Lyman want you as athletic offi-
cer then?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I really don't know but I was always very much interested in athletics. Even during World War I, I was very interested in it and then when I returned to this country I remained very active.

MR. FRANK: Of course, If I recall, I think you may have mentioned this -- if not, you showed me the pictures after our interview session of the teams that the Brigade had while in France. There was inter-regimental rivalry in football during the quiet periods and there were other teams and I imagine there was quite a stress on athletics while you were occupied in Germany.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, there were. Of course, the division was really the big teams though because ^{there} was a lot of competition in the different divisions, and I might say that the divisions had what I would classify double-A teams.

MR. FRANK: Well, you had quite a few college letter men.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, worlds of them.

MR. FRANK: Why ^{were} ~~were~~ athletics stressed so much out there in the garrison? Was it because of the fact that the garrison ^{life} ~~lives~~ crawled after a while and you had to have something to take the men's minds off ~~of~~ the flesh pots, etc.?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's true to a more or less extent but I've

always been a firm believer in athletics. I think unless a man is physically fit he is not able to do the job. And if you look at the records of the athletes and what they've done, I mean they know leadership, they know how to do things, and I'll get on later on to the Iwo Jima offensive and our Fourth Marine Division we had a football team that won the Pacific Championship and there wasn't a star on it. That football team went into Iwo Jima and I would say that eighty per cent of those people became casualties, ^{Up the beach during the attack} just because they were difficulty with the leaders. And I've always said that I don't care how good a man is, unless he is able to stand up under the strain physically he's not able to deliver.

MR. FRANK: What was life like in Shanghai at this time? What would be your normal . . .

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, our mission ~~our~~ there was to protect the International Settlement. At that time, we had all kinds of troops. We had British troops and French troops, even the Shanghai Volunteer Corps and a number of others. ^{Up & ready about} and our mission was to protect the settlement which was really the boundary of Woosung Creek. The living conditions were just ideal, I'd say. Very cheap and what you'd call good living, ^{comfortable} easy living.

For instance, we would go to work at seven o'clock of a morning and we'd knock off at one o'clock of an afternoon. We'd have the afternoons free to play golf or games or anything else. And I would say at that time the exchange was about three or four to one but it gradually went up. And I would say that you could live out in Shanghai for one dollar ^{Mex} ~~exchange~~ for what you live for in this country in one dollar gold.

MR. FRANK: Would you say that John Thomason's book and stories of duty in a China station are pretty accurate?

GENERAL CATES: Oh very.

MR. FRANK: That is, he gave a pretty good portrayal of life out there?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Were any foreign nationals recruited in the Marine Corps out there?

GENERAL CATES: None that I know of, ~~but possibly a few~~.

MR. FRANK: I was just wondering. I knew of some personally, I mean people who had been on a China station who still retained an accent ^{and} ~~that~~ had been in the Marine Corps for quite some time. I was wondering if any had been recruited out there.

GENERAL CATES: There might have been but I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: Was there any friction, was there any signs of the

coming conflicts during the early thirties when you were out there?

GENERAL CATES: You mean between the Japanese and the Chinese?

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, I think you could see it building up. And then of course when it started we had a grand-stand seat on the ~~highway~~ ^{highway} thing. We watched the battles going on across the creek, in fact, right across the creek.

MR. FRANK: You showed me a picture, as a matter of fact, of the aftermath of the Japanese bombing raids that you had taken.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I took quite a few pictures and of course we got a lot of stray shots ^{in our sector} over. I mean that the Japanese artillery and one or two bombs from airplanes dropped on us.

MR. FRANK: Was there any particular harassment of American troops or other nationals from the Japanese at this time?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Of course, we had strict instructions that the Japanese couldn't run their military convoys through the International Settlement and they attempted it a number of times, time after time, and we had quite a few little incidents. But at that time, we had strict instructions not to fire unless fired upon. And so that made it a little difficult. But I think we kept

most of them out.

MR. FRANK: Was there any provocation?

GENERAL CATES: No, not at this time. Later on in '38 there were.

MR. FRANK: Was the Fessenden Fifes still in existence at the time you got out there?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. That Shanghai Volunteer ~~Regiment~~ was one of the most colorful ~~regiments~~ ^{units} that I've ever seen because it was composed of about six or seven different nationalities and each one in their own uniform -- the Scots, and the British Light Horse Troop and the British Armored Troop and the Chinese company, and the Korean company, the American, ^{American} Filipino company -- and when they would turn out for a parade each one would be in their own uniform.

MR. FRANK: Do you have any pictures of them in the various uniforms?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't believe I do. I have a pamphlet on Shanghai that's showing it in black and white. I mean a book.

MR. FRANK: Very interesting.

GENERAL CATES: In fact, I might say just for the record, the man who was in charge of that is living right down here at ^{Tulip} Julep Hill, Maryland now -- Colonel Lewis Andrews -- and he was in command of the regiment, and was interned during this last war and stayed in ^W ~~prison camp~~ in

Shanghai. In fact he was in charge of this prison camp, in Shanghai. And his wife, who I'll take my hat off to, stayed with him all the time. She had a chance ^{on the Gripsholm}, to return trips home but she stayed right there the full three years of the war.

MR. FRANK: Was he an American?

GENERAL CATES: No, Britisher. He is now an American, he was naturalized and he has this famous old home down here at ^{Tulip} ~~Hill~~ Hill -- a most beautiful place.

MR. FRANK: It should be interesting to talk to him about the . . .

GENERAL CATES: I'm sure he'd be glad to talk to you.

MR. FRANK: And he was interned in Shanghai when the rest of the Americans, Gregon Williams and several others were interned. He probably was there when Devereaux arrived.

GENERAL CATES: He was there during the whole time.

MR. FRANK: What was unique or outstanding during your tour of duty with the Fourth Marines at this time?

GENERAL CATES: Well, there wasn't any particular thing unique. But I got a great kick out of developing athletic teams.

MR. FRANK: Did anything that was going on in the States at Quantico regarding development of the amphibious warfare doctrine reach you out in China?

GENERAL CATES: ^{more or less,} not much.

MR. FRANK: You weren't aware of any doctrine ^{or} of development?

GENERAL CATES: No, you kind of live in a small world, you know. You live in your own area.

MR. FRANK: You left China in '33.

GENERAL CATES: No, '32.

MR. FRANK: '32 to return to Headquarters, Marine Corps. Was that the time you went to the Army Industrial College?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: What was that like? What was the curriculum there like?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I must admit I didn't get too much out of it. Really, it looked like it was going to lead to me being in the Quartermaster Department. In fact, General ^{was} Matthews/ the one who got me assigned there. It would just tell you of what the country could produce, their strategic materials, and production and -- I don't know how to describe it. But it was really ^{mainly} just ~~on~~ supply.

MR. FRANK: Well, was there anything pertinent to the Marine Corps in the curriculum? Was there anything of particular interest?

GENERAL CATES: No, except in a general way.

MR. FRANK: This was the higher strategic, industrial development ^{course?} That course lasted how long?

GENERAL CATES: Approximately eleven months.

MR. FRANK: Who else was there that you recall who gained any

knew my name was on that list because I started folding up my books before he even mentioned my name. I was ordered to report to Second Battalion, Seventh Marines, which Colonel Jack Potts commanded. And we trained for a very short while and then I think it was the latter part of July we boarded a boat, went to Norfolk, and boarded the USS Wyoming, which was an old battleship that didn't have any guns on it, and we departed for the Caribbean Area. That was the time when Cuba was kicking out one president after another, ~~you remember~~ -- I think they had three or four in about five or six months. We proceeded to Guantanamo Bay and then for the next eight or nine months we cruised around the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico.

MR. FRANK: Did you make any landings?

GENERAL CATES: No. Our first trip to Havana, we went in and made plans to evacuate the American population if it was necessary. We, of course, had no trouble when we went ashore and ^{made} took our reconnaissance and prepared our landing place and notified the civilians where they were to congregate if an emergency arose. Then from there we went back up to Key West and then ~~we went~~ to Tampa, back to Guantanamo and back to Havana and we spent about twenty-six weeks of the year ~~in~~ Havana

Harbor. It was very good duty for the officers because ~~we~~ they allowed one-third of the officers to go ashore every night but not the enlisted men. The enlisted men never got ashore until the next to the last ^{two} nights we were there. So it was very easy living for the officers. In fact, several of the officers had their wives come down. They didn't pay any attention to the little sniping going on and ~~shooting~~ occasionally. It was very cheap living. There were no tourists whatsoever. No ships came in. And we, you might say, practically owned the town. We had courtesies with all the clubs so for the officers, it just couldn't have been better.

Then we went to Galveston and then back to Guan-
tanamo and back to Havana. We cruised around for a long time. And a rather amusing incident that I tell a lot of times to my fishing friends -- at one time we cruised just off the harbor just out of sight of land for about five or six days at two or three knots. Of course, going that slow, we fished. The only trouble was when we hooked into a big marlin or ^{other large fish} something the old battleship wouldn't stop. They would take all our tackle and everything else. But after that, we finally loaded on to the Antares, a dirty old ship, and went to Port Everglades, Florida, where we tied up and re-

mained there for about two and a half to three months.

While there, we cleared off this coral area and made it presentable and pitched tents out and lived in tents, which was very desirable duty.

MR. FRANK: It sounds like it was. This was about the time when you were taken out that certain staff members remained behind to work on what became FTP-167, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. I don't know ^{remember} too much about that. I don't know who was on it really.

MR. FRANK: You did not have anything to do with it then -- the writing of this doctrine?

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: Well, you were down at Quantico for approximately two ^{half of which} years after ^{which} was expeditionary duty?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: When you went back, did you finish up your Senior School?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. Very.

MR. FRANK: Well, after Quantico you went back to Headquarters, Marine Corps, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I was in War Plans.

MR. FRANK: What did your duties there entail?

GENERAL CATES: It entailed other than what you called operations. It ^{never} entailed ^{reviving} reviving war plans, writing tables of organiza-

tion, writing studies, etc.

MR. FRANK: *Toward* For what end? Just a general rewrite or were there any contingency plans . . .

GENERAL CATES: Well, as you well know, we had plans to take certain islands in the Pacific in the event we had war with Japan. One was -- which we worked on more than any other -- was Truk which never materialized. But we revised that. Saipan was one and I think Guam was one too. We assumed that it would be captured by the Japs but I remember Truk because we spent more time on that than any other one.

MR. FRANK: Well now, down at Quantico the advanced base problems and some of the school's problems were involved with the taking of these islands. Did your war plans and revisions of the TOs and TEs reflect what they were doing at Quantico or did they work on these plans and studies in response to what you were doing at Headquarters Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: We would work it together.

MR. FRANK: You did work together?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, sure. They would make their plans, submit them to us, we'd revise ^{them} and they would do the same.

MR. FRANK: In light of what went on later, do you think that your plans were valid?

GENERAL CATES: Oh very. Of course, there were mistakes in all of them. I mean for instance Truk. We assumed that that was going to be the one place that the Japanese would have that we had to have.

MR. FRANK: What size Marine Corps did you envision at this time should war break out?

GENERAL CATES: Oh I don't know. It was very small. I can't say.

MR. FRANK: Did you conceive of a division or a corps or a couple of corps?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, we did. I think we conceived of two divisions, as I remember.

MR. FRANK: Was there any concept or any thought about the use of the Marines in Europe should the war break out in Europe?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: That never came about. The Pacific was to be the area of our fighting according to the plan.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. It might have been but I don't remember anything at all of Europe.

MR. FRANK: At this time you were also a member of the Board to revise the training program, is that correct, sir?

GENERAL CATES: That is correct but I don't remember much about that. But I do remember that we had that training program revised and stepped up quite a bit.

MR. FRANK: Did the position or role of the reserves in the Marine Corps loom large? Was it a major consideration or just a contingency matter?

GENERAL CATES: No, it was a major consideration. As I remember at that time we were very much worried about what we called our volunteer reserve that took no training and had gotten old and just really would be no good if war broke out. And we had to get rid of a lot of those ~~them~~ and get it down to where the reserve was really a well-trained outfit.

MR. FRANK: Then at this time did they start training reserve officers at Quantico?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. ~~I remember~~.

MR. FRANK: In the history of the Marine Corps Reserve which you provided information for ^{and} which was recently published some mention was made about a lot of the political appointments. For instance, some of the political commissions in the Marine Corps Reserve in the Washington area. Was this changed about this time? Did they try to tighten up on the control?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, but you always have that obstacle. I mean, people in political life want to get a little rank and thing and you figure they can do the Marine Corps a lot of good. This might be a little -- should be off the record

-- but when I relieved General Vandegrift as Commandant, he told me, he said, "Cliff, I'm leaving you three problems." And one of the problems he mentioned was the fact that some of the reserves in a certain city had promised a very prominent man a reserve commission as lieutenant colonel. The man was deaf in one ear, had poor eye sight, had high blood pressure; he had been invited on one thing and I was the one that had to say "no commission." And, of course, he never got over it. And he's a very prominent man, too, in the newspaper world.

MR. FRANK: I'd like to talk about that when we get around to your -- that period when you were Commandant. I know that there were a good many problems. But at ^{this} the same time you were on the Equipment Board, I think as collateral duty, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes and there's not much that I can say about that. It was just testing equipment and things. And at that time, of course, it was different since we were testing what would be antiques now.

MR. FRANK: Was there much modern in the equipment that was being provided? I mean, we had to deal with the Navy, for instance, on small boats and landing craft. Were they coming up with anything new? Were they providing --

were they making any provisions or considering what
the fleet landing force was to be?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, they were trying to help out but I would say that their support was a little lukewarm. When they started talking about amphibious operations in the olden days ~~and things~~, people didn't think it could be done. They didn't visualize the support you would get from aviation and naval gunfire, ~~and things like that~~. They had an idea that a few machine guns could hold up a whole landing. And of course, when you think of those old landings ^{at Jelbo} that we made at Palagra down there in those old motor sailors and things, you can see why.

MR. FRANK: Over ~~they were~~ the gunnels with ⁶² the 60s, too.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, over and down you'd go most of the times.

MR. FRANK: At this time was there a tremendous inter-service fight for the defense dollar or military appropriations?

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course I was on -- I wasn't too high ranking at that time -- but I think there has always been a fight, and always will be. That's what the Department of Defense was supposed to have straightened out but they haven't done it and never will.

MR. FRANK: I think Walsh was head of the Naval Affairs Committee, was he not -- Senator Walsh of Massachusetts? Or was this later?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. *remember*.

MR. FRANK: I'm just trying to find out whether we had any friends in Congress, whether there was any . . .

GENERAL CATES: Well of course, you've got one of the strongest ones in there is old Uncle Carl Vinson.

MR. FRANK: He was there then at the time.

GENERAL CATES: I'm not sure at that time whether he was chairman or not but we had worlds of supporters in Congress. That saved the Marine Corps' life.

MR. FRANK: Now, how would you sum up this two year tour at Headquarters Marine Corps? Was it a period of ferment?

GENERAL CATES: Well, it's hard to say. There wasn't too much really going on. But it was just normal duty and there wasn't any particular thing to buoy it up and spur you on.

MR. FRANK: There was none of this anticipation, there were no signs of war clouds yet gathering or anything along this line.

GENERAL CATES: Well, there was talk of it, but I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: In '37 you went back to China with the Second Brigade, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Actually I went over with the Sixth Regiment, -- Second Battalion, Sixth Regiment. And we joined with the Fourth Regiment to make the Second Brigade.

MR. FRANK: And was it Shanghai again this time?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: What had changed?

GENERAL CATES: Not too much. The same conditions existed. We had the same mission at the settlement, we had the same run-ins with the Japs, and General Beaumont commanded the Brigade. Colonel Tommy Clark commanded the Sixth Regiment and Colonel Price had the Fourth.

MR. FRANK: Charles F. B. Price?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was General Greene out there at this time or did he come a little later?

GENERAL CATES: No, he was out there. In fact he was in my battalion. After the Sixth Regiment returned home, I was transferred to the Fourth and commanded the Second Battalion of the Fourth Regiment and Greene was one of my company commanders.

MR. FRANK: He wrote some time later -- I think in 1940 -- about the riot control company. About the organization of the company for riot control which some people have interpreted to contain the nucleus, ^{of} the concept of fire teams, of the fire control teams -- this forming organization. Do you recall any times that this was needed -- this riot control company was needed?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, on a few occasions. I have no specific one but a

number of times we would have to call them out to break up these riots and things, particularly the Chinese, you know. They go wild when they get some false report, or something. At that time, we had a gunner named Checker and he developed a ^(Checky Williams) ~~thing~~ ^{device} ~~that was~~ kind of like a I don't know what. He would load a muffler of a truck with minie balls and ^{back} start the truck and shoot these ^{things} ~~things~~ out of the muffler just like a machine gun. The idea was there wasn't too much force but they would certainly scatter them ^{way} off.

(Correct spelling?)

MR. FRANK: You had problems with them. Were these Japanese in-
~~cited~~ ^{sighted} riots?

GENERAL GATES: No. Mostly just Chinese. And of course, our main trouble was the refugee problem. Just hundreds of thousands of Chinese, you see, would swarm into the settlement when the Japs occupied the country outside ~~the settlement~~.

MR. FRANK: Things clouded up there didn't they -- a lot more harassment from the Japanese?

GENERAL GATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any personal encounter or personal involvement with the Japanese forces as a commander?

GENERAL GATES: Yes, I think I know what you're driving at. The Japs would run the small convoys from their part of the

Settlement over to the west ~~out beyond the settlement~~,
which was only a distance of four or five miles. They
would slip through on side streets and ~~things~~ before
we could stop them. We had quite a few incidents where
it almost came to gunfire. I would get ~~these~~ orders
from the Colonel saying the Admiral was raising hell
because we were letting these Japs go through and had
to stop it, and as I said we had instructions that we
couldn't fire unless fired upon. So one day I got
blasted pretty hard so I took my whole Battalion and
deployed them along the streets down on Bubbling Well
Road over by the race course. We had heard that a Jap
convoy of about six or eight trucks was coming through.
So we deployed there and I gave my company commander
I blew my whistle and waved,
instructions that if they *on the way* that
they would open fire. So along with an interpreter,
I met this convoy in the middle of the street at an
intersection and we had words, and I told them they
couldn't go through and they said that they were going
through and I said, "All right, we're going to open
fire if you do." So then I waved to the men to stand
up and they stood up, about a thousand of them, all
along -- some of them up in the hotels even. And ~~this~~
~~old~~ -- I think he was a major took a look at them and

barked out an order and the trucks turned around in a hurry and they got out fast. But I've often wondered what would have happened if they hadn't because I was going to open fire. And of course, I knew that I was in a tough spot. I was right in the middle of the street.

MR. FRANK: Were there any repercussions from this?

GENERAL CATES: None.

MR. FRANK: They never complained about it.

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: Always testing.)

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Under the diplomatic protocol, the position of the troops in the International Settlement was unique, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Was there anything that wasn't -- and Japan was a signatory to this protocol?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, there was an agreement the International Settlement would be neutral.

MR. FRANK: And yet they violated it left and right?

GENERAL CATES: Their claim was that we were there as an armed guard ~~and British and~~ and also the French and the others and they had the same right to run through if they wanted to.

MR. FRANK: You did not have a diplomatic staff though.

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. *Then why not*

MR. FRANK: Did you have any friendly relations with the Japanese?
Did you meet them socially?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, sure. And on the surface we would go to dinner
with them and we'd be aboard the Pittsburgh or the
British flagship or in the clubs ~~and things~~. We had
most elaborate dinners. In fact, I still have down in
my file there a seating arrangement of very swanky
dinner where Nomura and all the rest of those high
Japs were there.

MR. FRANK: Did any one of them with whom you were friendly indi-
cate what was coming or indicate that they were unhappy
with the situation?

GENERAL CATES: Oh no. But I tell you what we did find at this period.

~~The~~ *Army* and the Navy hate each other as much as anyone
could. In fact, at one time at Kiangwan during the
fighting out there a battalion of the Army and a company
of the Navy had a fire fight.

MR. FRANK: Oh really.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, an actual fight. They didn't like each other. The
Navy looked down on the Army.

MR. FRANK: And the Army resented it, of course.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: You stayed out in China this tour for how long?

GENERAL CATES: Well, approximately a year and ten months, I think it was. Altogether with my first cruise out there, I think it was five years altogether.

MR. FRANK: Five years. What was the effect of Marines' duty out there in China? On the Marine Corps and the Marines as a whole?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I think it was good for morale for one thing. Because the men liked it and it was easy living and cheap. We had ~~good~~ training. I mean, at that time, you know, there was no ~~service~~ disturbance going on any other place that I remember and we were able to train well, practice street riots, and even get down to little things like building bunkers and things like that.

MR. FRANK: Were the Marines prominent in the world because of their duty out in China at this time?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, I think so. Because they made a pretty good reputation out there. I mean they behaved themselves fairly well.

MR. FRANK: Did the Fifteenth Infantry go out there?

GENERAL CATES: No, not in Shanghai. In this second tour of duty out there in '38 and '39, the Thirty-first Infantry was there. They came in from the Philippines to augment the protection of the settlement.

MR. FRANK: Now you left China when?

GENERAL CATES: It was June '39.

MR. FRANK: By this time, was it apparent that there was going to be war with the United States to your mind?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so. But there was certainly a lot of ill feelings, hard feelings between us and the Japs.

MR. FRANK: Had any contingency plans been prepared for evacuation of the Marines?

GENERAL CATES: [✓] I'm sure there had been. I think there was.

MR. FRANK: But it didn't come down to . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, because for instance in '32 we didn't evacuate the civilians, as I remember, but in '38 and '39 we did most of them. Most of them moved out.

MR. FRANK: Where did they go? ~~home~~ or to the Philippines?

GENERAL CATES: Well, both. To Hong Kong, lots back to America and to the Philippines.

MR. FRANK: Did you get up to North China at all during the time you stayed there?

GENERAL CATES: [✓] Nope. People asked me where I had been in China, I'd say Shanghai with the exception of one trip. I went up the Yangtze River on one of the ~~old gun boats~~ for about five or six days and that was all. The rest of the time I was right in Shanghai.

MR. FRANK: What was the purpose of this? Just a pleasure ride?

GENERAL CATES: No. You see, at that time the Panay had just been sunk.

MR. FRANK: This was '38, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And so we ran these gunboats up there on patrols and the trip I made we went up to bring out -- we went to Wuhu to evacuate some nuns and priests that we got out. And I might say we had a hard time getting them out because the Japs didn't want to let them go at all. In fact, they forbid us to do it. And when we were actually bringing them down to the banks to put them in the little boats to go out to the -- ~~I've forgotten~~ the gunboat's name now -- the sentry worked his bolt on his rifle and I thought sure he was going to fire.

MR. FRANK: That could have been the start of something.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Why should it have been if the sinking of the Panay didn't do it?

GENERAL CATES: And of course at that time Nanking had been sacked and burned. We spent a few days in Nanking.

MR. FRANK: The story of Japanese aggression in China at this time was pretty well linked with atrocity stories -- they called it the rape of Nanking, I guess. To your knowledge did this actually occur or was it journalistic license? Did they over-blow it?

GENERAL CATES: You mean the atrocities?

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir.

GENERAL CATES: Oh no, they were as cruel as could be. We actually saw that in Shanghai. I mean, see them shoot civilians and run a bayonet through them.

MR. FRANK: Well, why?

GENERAL CATES: Don't ask me. But I might say that the Chinese were just as bad.

MR. FRANK: You've seen some of the ^{ix} headings of ^{and} the shootings in ^A your time.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. There's something about the Oriental mind that is not the same as ours.

MR. FRANK: ~~In '30~~ You left Shanghai in June of '39. Where did you go from there, sir?

GENERAL CATES: I came back to the Army War College, I think it was. Yes, in September '39.

MR. FRANK: You were a Lieutenant Colonel by now.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. In fact, I was promoted to Colonel while I was in the Army War College. And a rather ~~amusing~~ incident -- I got it on April Fool's Day and I invited all the members of the School and their wives to drop by the Club and have a drink with me. Two-thirds of them thought it was a joke, I think.

MR. FRANK: Well, you got off cheap on a wetting-down party.

GENERAL CATES: I did not. I had to replenish my liquor supply three

times. We stayed until ten o'clock that night.

MR. FRANK: Oh. What did you feel that you learned of importance at the Army War College? Was the curriculum up to date?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I was very much impressed with that. I mean it was tops. We had the best brains there -- General Marshall came down to lecture. We had people like Joe Collins, General Cowley, General Simpson and General ^{McAvoy} this and that -- ~~McCaulliff~~ -- and practically everyone of those people got to be a one or four-star rank.

MR. FRANK: Was there any other Marine officer attending school with you at this time?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Before you leave the War College, may I tell you a kind of a joke on me?

MR. FRANK: Yes, certainly.

GENERAL CATES: After we left there, a few months later I happened to be looking at my records and I saw my fitness report from the Army War College. It was most elaborate, boy they poured it on thick. So I was so proud of it that I had it photostated and I have one in my files today. Then I found out later that they had given the same kind of report almost identical to every other Marine officer that had been there. So I was a little deflated.

MR. FRANK: Now, the curriculum ~~that was stressed~~ dealt with strategy.

It was not industrial, it was purely military -- high level military school, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it took consideration of everything. It was a well-prepared course and money well spent.

MR. FRANK: How did the Marine Corps figure in the curriculum? What did they conceive of the Marine Corps as? Do you recall?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think there was any particular emphasis put on the Marine Corps. We were studying war plans. I remember the first time I ever heard of radar. General Marshall came down in a very hush-hush session and told us about this wonderful invention that we had now that was going to revolutionize the war and it was ultra-top-secret and two days later one of the members of the class came up with ^{an article} ~~a~~ thing that was published in Popular Mechanics about two years before on radar.

MR. FRANK: Of course, this was a British invention, was it not? Or did we develop ours on our own?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: The Navy had people attending this course too, did they not?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Did it deal with naval strategy?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it did. And they had a Navy captain on the staff.

I've forgotten his name now. And quite a few naval officers.

MR. FRANK: What about the role of aviation? What did they conceive of it being at this time?

GENERAL CATES: Well, there's no doubt about it, they realized the importance of aviation and at this time, during this period, is when the President, you know, made such a big grand-stand play to get so many thousand planes.

MR. FRANK: The B-17 program or something like that?

GENERAL CATES: I've forgotten what it was. It was some elaborate program that was unheard of at that time. But it was in preparation before the war, which hadn't started.

MR. FRANK: What about amphibious assault? Did they deal with these?

GENERAL CATES: Some, but not too much. No, they kind of hashed over that because they were thinking in terms of the Corps and Armies -- land warfare.

MR. FRANK: Well, how did they anticipate they were going to get the military forces to it?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. Maybe they thought they were going to fly them there. But that was another study we made, of course, about the flying, how much it would take to supply even one regiment in action there.

MR. FRANK: Now, the course lasted for one year, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Approximately, it was about ten months.

MR. FRANK: So we're getting into 1940 when you were with the Army War College. And what was your next assignment?

GENERAL CATES: I was assigned as Director of the Basic School at Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which at that time consisted of about only 140 young college boys, twenty-five from the Naval Academy. And that course lasted approximately eight months and then during the summer *of Indian River Bay, Va.* ^{and} we trained. *I don't know if it was reserves or PLCs.*

MR. FRANK: Of course, this was before the Basic School was transferred to Quantico.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Which must have happened shortly after that or did they knock the basic school off when the war began and went into the OC and ROC *program?*

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think they knocked it off. I was there until April of '42.

MR. FRANK: That's when you joined the *early entry* command of the First Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: I've heard said that there were many inbred problems in training at the basic school in Philadelphia. There was no land to maneuver and no place to take these young lieutenants around for their field training.

There was a skimpiness of weapons and they had the makee-changee type of things.

GENERAL CATES: I don't think that's quite true. There wasn't an area right by the school where you could fire but there was plenty of vacant territory where we'd hold maneuvers and things and then every summer we would go to Indian Town Gap. We had something like 30,000 acres up there with no one there. We were the only ones there. The Army, you see, had closed up the camps and we had wonderful accommodations, wonderful ranges, and you couldn't ask for better. We'd be there for -- as I remember we stayed there for eight weeks. So we got in a world of firing up there.

MR. FRANK: Who were some of your instructors on the staff? Who were some of the people that you had?

GENERAL CATES: I relieved Gilder Jackson, then my Executive Officer was Frank Goettge, who was killed on Guadalcanal. And I had Honsowetz, and ~~I had~~ Hochmuth and ~~I had~~ Masters Robertshaw, Sam Deller, Schol and others, and on, I don't know.

MR. FRANK: They all later became career men.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. Robertshaw. In fact, that class at the Basic School, the first one, turned out the best bunch of officers I've ever seen. But they were the ones that went right in to the beginning of the war. In fact,

in my regiment in Guadalcanal, fifty per cent of my officers were from the school that I was instructing.

MR. FRANK: How did the basic school curriculum change or how did things change with the outbreak of war?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't think it changed materially. I can remember a world of excitement on that Sunday, the seventh of December, because everybody around the Navy Yard there got all excited. They were scared they were going to be gassed or something and bombed and of course we took all kind of security measures. ^{In the school} But we stressed mostly ~~their~~ weapons. ~~The weapons~~ and the use of them. And I might say that the twenty-five boys from the Naval Academy didn't measure up to the others because they thought their education was over. They had just finished the Naval Academy and they were not up to the others when it came to weapons, and things like that. But they turned out all right but in the class standing they stood well down.

MR. FRANK: Talking about Naval Academy graduates, in your subsequent years as commander and commandant, what was your reaction to the boys from the Naval Academy?

GENERAL CATES: Oh I don't know that I saw any difference. I think that maybe actually we got our very best from the colleges -- I mean the honor graduates that we were

lucky enough to get ^{As platoon leaders} ~~and pick up two leaders~~ -- that ^{platoon} two leaders class that started way back -- oh say, we skipped that. I had that job at Quantico.

MR. FRANK: Oh, I meant to talk about that.

GENERAL CATES: I've forgotten when it was now but I had the first one. General Holcomb, of course, assigned me to it and I'll have to check that record a little bit. I think that was in '37?

MR. FRANK: It had to be '37 because Holcomb became Commandant in '36.

GENERAL CATES: No, 1935. June to August '35.

MR. FRANK: And this was the first one they ever had.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, the first one and then after that is when I went to the Senior Course at the Marine Corps Schools.

MR. FRANK: These were college boys that came down for the summer.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Recruited from different colleges. In fact, I recruited a lot of them myself.

MR. FRANK: You were telling me the last time when you were roaming the fields out there, you had recruiting duty in the '20s.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, and I ^{had a recruiting brief by} ~~had a summer thing at Center College~~ signed up most of the football team there ^{at} ~~at~~ Center ^{platoon} College for the ~~two leaders~~ class and the recruits ^{coach} almost went crazy.

MR. FRANK: Well, was there any kind of indication of from what

area of the country or what type of college would provide the best men of the officer caliber type individual?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, the two ^{platoon leaders} class originally all came from land grant colleges. For instance, I started out at Washington and Jefferson ^{up here} and Ohio U. and Miami University in Ohio ^{Vanderbilt} and the University of Mississippi, and other officers took different sections. Then at that time, the Army was taking practically none of their honor students from the ROTC and we got quite a few of them. We got some awfully good ones.

MR. FRANK: They were not picking the honor students.

GENERAL CATES: No, for some reason or other that was when the Army was cut back so that they . . .

MR. FRANK: Taking no ROTC students at all?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think they were taking any at that time. I'm not sure of that.

MR. FRANK: This is not always true but a land grant college did not have the prestige or the money type young men who came from the upper class, the higher class, so you had a pretty middle class type of individual.

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know exactly what the land grant colleges were. I know, of course, they were given a big grant but by whom I don't know.

MR. FRANK: Well, land grant under the Morrall Act I think is / 1857 /

they were state colleges or else agricultural colleges.

I know my own college was a land-grant college, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Tennessee might have been one.

GENERAL CATES: It was.

MR. FRANK: Well, this was it. It was a state agricultural college or state . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, it wasn't anything like the Ivy League there.

MR. FRANK: No, that's what I mean.

GENERAL CATES: Or the -- I don't know whether the Big Ten . . .

MR. FRANK: The Big Ten might have had some land grant colleges.

GENERAL CATES: Now that I remember it though, we did get one from USC.
Is that a land grant?

MR. FRANK: [REDACTED] No, Sir.

GENERAL CATES: We got one famous Olympic swimmer and I must say he soon busted out. He couldn't even do the arithmetic.

MR. FRANK: So it's not only the football players that get ~~to~~ good scholarships to colleges.

GENERAL CATES: *He was taken on an athletic scholarship,*
They usually take them for athletics on scholarships,
I guess.

MR. FRANK: The PLC at the time it was organized, was it conceived to be a two-summer course leading to a commission or just the one summer? Did you get juniors to be commissioned after graduation?

GENERAL CATES: The first year, of course, it was juniors and then after that they would have the junior and the senior.

MR. FRANK: To the first two six-week sessions or something like that.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Now, what was your attitude when the war broke out? *And get a command?* Were you raring to go *get your man?*

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. *I mean,* I think most of us were.

MR. FRANK: Well, I'm certain you were but . . .

GENERAL CATES: In fact, soon after -- I say soon after -- after the war broke out, General Holcomb was up at Indian Town Gap where we were in training the basic school and so I hit him then to be assigned to a regiment and he said, "Well, I'll see what I can do for you." So it wasn't but a week or ten days later I had my orders.

MR. FRANK: To the First Division.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Vandegrift was not yet . . .

GENERAL CATES: Yes, he had taken over from General Torrey when I arrived.

MR. FRANK: So you were not involved in any of the . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't know anything about that controversy at all, except what I've heard.

MR. FRANK: Who had the First Marines or did you form *from scratch?*

GENERAL CATES: No. There was a Colonel there for a short period of time that I relieved and I've forgotten his name. He kind of dropped out of the picture.

MR. FRANK: There was someone who had been giving everybody a hard time -- I don't know if this is the one.

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. I might say that when I took charge of this regiment, it was a bunch of men and I'd say ninety per cent of them had volunteered after Pearl Harbor, young men -- the average age wasn't twenty. And I would say that I had -- oh in the whole regiment I didn't have fifty experienced non-coms.-- all young men. And lieutenants were the same way. I was fortunate enough to have three good battalion commanders. I had Colonel Cresswell who was commander of the First Battalion, and Colonel ^{Pollack} ~~Puller~~ had the Second, and McKelvy the Third.

MR. FRANK: ^{Willing} Wayne McKelvy?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was his father a Marine officer also?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Wild Bill McKelvy, was it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Who was your Regimental Exec?

GENERAL CATES: He was a two-fisted bird, a good soldier named Frisbie.

MR. FRANK: Frisbie, who later became CO of the Fifth Marines during Okinawa, I think.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. He was a good hard task master and I must admit he kind of ran some of our lieutenants crazy. In fact, there's one now that's editor of Life, George Hunt, that I had to either get rid of Frisbie or George Hunt. And so I think Colonel Webb was the Seventh Regiment needed an Exec so we transferred him over there. And ~~I met Pollock like that. But he rode~~ George Hunt -- I thought he was going to drive him ~~crazy~~.

MR. FRANK: To talk about Frisbie again and talking about these battalion commanders, what was the average age of the battalion commanders? None of them were World War I veterans.

GENERAL CATES: Oh no.

MR. FRANK: Frisbie, I think, may have been.

GENERAL CATES: No, he wasn't. I don't know what the average age was. It was very young. I'd say thirty-two or thirty-four.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course, it's hard to conceive of what the age was. ~~And to my point of view they were pretty much~~ older from my point of view at the ^{time} ~~when~~ I was in the ^{war} ~~then~~

GENERAL CATES: Yes, when you stop to think that in the olden days -- let's see, I think I was a Captain for thirteen years.

I got my majority and after about seventeen years I think it was.

MR. FRANK: Now Frisbie I don't think was school-educated, was he?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think so. I think he came up the hard way through the ranks.

MR. FRANK: He had never gone to any schools.

GENERAL CATES: I don't know about that.

MR. FRANK: How about these other officers? What had been their experience?

GENERAL CATES: They had all been schooled. I mean Cresswell had graduated from ^{Mississippi Academy} Michigan AMAN, Pollock went to some school in South Carolina. I don't know whether it was Citadel or not. It was one of the others if not. I've forgotten about McKelvy.

MR. FRANK: Who was your Operations Officer?

GENERAL CATES: Pollock was after the first part of Guadalcanal and then later he became Exec. I'll have to check that record. ~~I don't know, I've forgotten.~~

MR. FRANK: What was it like when you took over the Regiment?

This was down at New River, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Well, conditions were not good. We were billeted well and as I say, the First Marines had just been organized. Colonel Hunt who had the Fifth Regiment had a bunch of old seasoned veterans. I mean, lots of

old non-coms. We'd kind of cry over our beer together and I'd say, "you've got old experienced men and good non-coms!" And he'd say, "Yes, but you've got good battalion commanders and good company commanders and I have some that are not so good," was the way he put it. We had normal training down there but as I wrote in my diary during Guadalcanal we never had a regimental CPX prior to sailing. In fact, the first regimental CPX we ever had was when we landed on Guadalcanal.

MR. FRANK: Well, did you think that you had considerable more time than you actually did?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, that's getting into the war more or less but we were supposed to be going to New Zealand for our training -- approximately six months' training. In fact, when we left to sail for San Francisco, I say in this diary here, kicked like hell about not having spare parts for the rifles and not having equipment. We had no sites for the amtracs /half-tracks/ and we cargo-loaded which I protested very severely. I said it's foolish to load ship when you're going to start out ^(AV) you don't know where you're going to end up. I said when you go you ought to be combat loaded and ready to be diverted to any place. And it was almost like that. Two days before we got to Wellington, New

Zealand, we got instructions to repack the best we could and be prepared for combat duty. And when we landed at Wellington, it was the damnedest sight that you can possibly imagine. There were ten or eleven ships unloaded -- all had to be unloaded. Most of the things were packed in paper cartons. It rained for nine solid days around the clock and we were all trying to get our equipment into shape and it finally got to be the biggest mess that God ever created on that pier. Everybody ^{just} got tearing open boxes and ~~the rain and stuff and we stole, and we~~ borrowed and begged to get equipment.

MR. FRANK: I've heard it said that when the division went to the states, the First Marine was in the best condition of all, in the best state of training.

GENERAL CATES: Oh no, I don't think so. I can't believe it because they hadn't had much training.

MR. FRANK: Yes, but you hadn't been cut up and not as many demands had been made upon your manpower than ³⁸ ~~farrixin~~ ~~stans~~ the Fifth and Seventh Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Well, that might be true but still the Fifth had ~~a~~ nuclei there of seasoned veterans.

MR. FRANK: You mean to say Hunt could let them go when the paratroopers were formed, when the raiders were formed?

GENERAL CATES: They had to go if they wanted to. Well, let's get out of the start of the war and then we will knock off, get up to Guadalcanal.

MR. FRANK: What was the nature of the training and preparations out at New River? Just what did you do? Where did you maneuver? What were some of the problems facing you at this time?

GENERAL CATES: We had the usual elementary training which they needed because they had to have it. I mean everything from squads right to extended order and then we maneuvered quite a bit out in the boon docks.

MR. FRANK: Of course, the First Marines did not participate in that major landing at ^{Okinaw} ~~Onglo~~ when the division came up from ~~Guadalcanal~~ ⁽²⁾ ~~Guantanamo~~. The Division was formed in February of '40 . . .

GENERAL CATES: You don't mean came up from Guadalcanal.

MR. FRANK: From Guantanamo.

GENERAL CATES: No. ^{Very} -

MR. FRANK: You only had the Fifth and Seventh Marines at that time, I believe.

GENERAL CATES: That's right.

MR. FRANK: The brigade became the division, I think, it was in '41.

GENERAL CATES: And I say, we had some battalion CPX~~S~~ and of course I

stretched communications as much as I could.

MR. FRANK: What was the nature of the communications? What kind of gear did you have and equipment?

GENERAL CATES: Well, telephone mostly. And of course we had walkie talkies that wouldn't work in the trees. They'd go out when it got good and damp.

MR. FRANK: Rig in the wire, of course. It was the old EE-8, wind-up type thing?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: That's pretty much the same thing that you had in World War I, didn't you?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Well, that's usually the way you start fighting the second war with ~~stuff~~ ^{gear} that you had at the end of the last war, ~~you know~~. It was hard to get appropriations.

MR. FRANK: Now, I want to ask you about the organization of the regiment. You had three infantry battalions?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: And you had a weapons company, did you not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Did the weapons company have the 37 mm. cannon?

GENERAL CATES: Yes and they had the half-tracks.

MR. FRANK: Half-tracks 75.

GENERAL CATES: But when we landed on Guadalcanal, we had two half-

tracks but didn't have the ~~sight~~ track for them.

MR. FRANK: Didn't have the ~~sights~~ for them? Actually we were talking about amtracs before, ^{we haven't half-tracks,} Didn't they take them away from you for beach defense and perimeter defense later?

GENERAL CATES: Not on Guadalcanal. We are getting into the war now but a rather amusing incident, about the second or third day we were there ^{on} ~~an old~~ submarine came up about four thousand yards off to our left and shelled us. And he got so he'd come up every afternoon about four o'clock and lob a few shells into us. So I told this Captain Hutchins -- I said, "Look, you take those half-tracks up there and bed them down and when he comes up, you open fire on him." He said, "We don't have any ^{sights} sites." I said, "That's all right. You can scare them to death." And so help me ^{Hannah}, he came up that afternoon and they fired two shots and one hit right on that sub's fantail. And a big black cloud of smoke came up and the sub went down and we don't know to this day what happened.

MR. FRANK: Who was this, Lyford Hutchins?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. But it's odd that out of two shots and no ^{sights} just direct aiming that they hit actually right on that bird's fantail.

MR. FRANK: That was very good shooting. What outfit was Lou Diamond in? Was he in First Marines?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, he was.

MR. FRANK: How did he get away with that goatee?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I don't know. He had all the courage in the world and was kind of dramatic. He would stand up when we were getting shelled and yell at the men, "what the hell are you scared of? Get up out of there, you can't get hit."

MR. FRANK: He was one of the real characters.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. He was one of the few that remain^{ed} in World War II.

MR. FRANK: We were talking about the maneuvers. Were there any landing exercises while you were at New River?

GENERAL CATES: No. The only landing exercises we had were after we left New Zealand going towards Guadalcanal. You are probably acquainted with that. Some where along the route were the Fiji Islands. So they picked out this island. I can't think of the name of it -- I will in a minute -- but where we were supposed to make the landing. And as had been planned for Guadalcanal, the Fifth Regiment was to land first. The island was named Koror. So it was a very rough day and Colonel Hunt's Fifth Regiment made the landing all right, without too much trouble. They lost a few boats but by

the time my regiment which was in support made the landing, the tide had dropped considerably and we hit coral and we lost boats and finally they called it off entirely. They called it off for all my regiment except myself and my orderly and I said to hell with it I'm going ashore. So I jumped overboard and waded in and spent the night. And of course, the ship departed that night and came back in the next day and we re-embarked. But that was the only practice landing that we had prior to Guadalcanal.

End of Side 1

Tape 1
Side 2, Interview Session II

MR. FRANK: What were your relationships with the division staff? Were the regimental commanders constantly scrambling to get the things they needed, to get the equipment, to get the men . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, there was a fight to get equipment. Of course, the staff was doing the best they could and they were fighting to get things and we'd hound them to death. But the answer was, it'll be there when you get there.

MR. FRANK: How about men? Were you filled up to strength when you left the United States?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we were fairly well off. I think we were filled up.

MR. FRANK: The equipment you had -- was there much new stuff?

GENERAL CATES: No, very little. I mean ¹⁰³ O-3 rifles, same . . .

MR. FRANK: Flat helmets?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: And you loaded out from where? Norfolk?

GENERAL CATES: No, we entrained at New River and went to San Francisco.

MR. FRANK: Oh, you went across country?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was it some of your regiment that ended up on the Ericsson?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. You mean the one that was so poor?

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, that was a lousy job, yes.

MR. FRANK: It is surprising from the reports afterwards that there wasn't a mutiny among the Marines on board there.

GENERAL CATES: Of course, at that time I didn't realize; we were maintaining radio silence, you know, on the way. I didn't know it until we got to New Zealand.

MR. FRANK: General Vandegrift would come down and inspect you once in a while to see what was going on.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: And the three of this division at this time was Thomas?

GENERAL CATES: That's right. Thomas. And Twining was the assistant.

MR. FRANK: Nimmer had been replaced some time before, I guess.

GENERAL CATES: He wasn't there, I don't know where he went.

MR. FRANK: Then Thomas was all over the place.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. Thomas was energetic and a good man. *C-4*

MR. FRANK: Who was your Four? Who was the head of Division Four,
do you remember?

GENERAL CATES: I was just trying to think. Was it Walter Rogers? No,
it wasn't Rogers.

MR. FRANK: Mahoney?

GENERAL CATES: No. *I've forgotten. (Thinking) was Capwell*

MR. FRANK: Were you satisfied when you left New River that you were
ready?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, no, far from it. As I wrote in that diary, we were
short of equipment and short on training. But as I said,
maybe we can make up in guts what we lacked otherwise.

MR. FRANK: How did you feel about the division being split up, not
going out as a unit? Did you feel that as plans were,
you were going to join up with them?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it wasn't split up actually. The Fifth Regiment
went first. I don't exactly know where the Seventh was --
in Samoa?

MR. FRANK: In Samoa.

GENERAL CATES: And we followed a few days after the Fifth. But the idea

✓egiments

was that all the divisions were supposed to get training at Wellington, near Wellington, except the Seventh which eventually would join us.

MR. FRANK: This is at Aotea Quay that you had all this trouble in tramp shipping and reloading the ships, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: It was right in Wellington.

MR. FRANK: It was at Wellington?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, right on the pier.

MR. FRANK: I thought the name of the pier was Aotea Quay.

GENERAL CATES: On, It might be, I don't know.

MR. FRANK: What were some of the lessons learned that you later put to rights when you became a division commander in the mounding out of the First Division?

GENERAL CATES: Well, in the first place, be fully equipped and supplied. The next was to be fully combat loaded so that you could get to the things that you needed. For instance, on Guadalcanal we never got ^a bale of barbed wire ashore. Of course, Pollock's transport, the Elliot I think it was, was sunk by torpedo and the others by the time they got down to the barbed wire and ready to unload it, the Navy had lost the four cruisers so they picked up the ~~ships~~ and left.

MR. FRANK: When we get to discussing Guadalcanal, I'm sure your ^{will be pertinent} comments are on what the Navy did and did not do ~~certainly~~.

GENERAL CATES: There's a lot to be considered on both sides. Of course, we consider our side but when you consider the Navy, they had an awful problem to decide whether to stay there and take their chance on losing all of ~~the ships~~ them or not.

MR. FRANK: I think we'll probably end this session now and pick up our next discussion with the Guadalcanal campaign which will probably take up a whole period of time, I should think.

Third Oral History Interview

with

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC (RETIRED)

2 May 1967
At the General's Home in Edgewater, Md.

By Mr. Benis M. Frank
Head, Oral History Unit, Historical Branch,
G-3 Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

For the Marine Corps Oral Program

MR. FRANK: As I said, our last discussion centered about preparations for and the deployment of the Division to ~~Sixth~~^{Relatively} ~~the~~ Fleet, First Marines to Wellington prior to the trip to the canal. What about the training -- I don't think we discussed this -- the training in New Zealand which was practically nothing, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Mr. Frank, may I first say that the memory of World War II is not near as clear as World War I because I was a young man then and you seem to remember things when you are younger and also I have had the privilege of writing the history of my old company during the war. So events and dates stand out very clearly ~~in~~ in World War I. And in World War II, of course I remember worlds of it but if I'm wrong on any dates or any segment, I hope that it will be corrected.

Now in answer to your question, there was no training whatsoever of my regiment in New Zealand, because just prior to landing we received orders to be prepared to unload and to combat load for a future operation. So the nine or ten days we were there we spent -- and I might say that they were the most hectic I've ever seen -- we spent trying to prepare to get combat loaded and get spare parts for weapons etc. And we had no training whatsoever.

- From*
- MR. FRANK: When the Division mounted out ~~to~~ the United States and specifically those regiments from the East Coast, *This occurred* I imagine they served similarly with those regiments which left the West Coast. You had no combat rations, so to speak. The rations you had were all commercial-type cans, were they not? Commercial-type packages?
- GENERAL CATES: As far as I remember, that is correct.
- MR. FRANK: In other words, instead of the contents being printed on the can they had a paper label.
- GENERAL CATES: No, I don't remember that we had any emergency rations at all.
- MR. FRANK: I was projecting to the time when you combat loaded down in Wellington and it rained and the cartons disappeared and the labels disappeared so you didn't have the faintest idea what the cans contained.
- GENERAL CATES: That's correct. The cartons and I might say that we -- I think we stated previously that we begged and borrowed and stole and we just got things the best we could.
- MR. FRANK: What was the result when you got to the 'canal, I mean when you unloaded these rations and had these unmarked cans? There must have been some pretty ridiculous menus as a result.
- GENERAL CATES: Well, of course soon after we arrived there, we went on a strict diet you might say of where we had one day

of American rations and then we lived off the Japanese rations that we had captured, I think it was three days. I think it was one and three and of course it was ^a very poor ration. I mean mostly rice and dried fish and things like that. And I might say here that luckily my headquarters -- regimental headquarters -- was in a lime grove which was a big help because I covered all this Jap food with lime juice. As you know, after the Battle of Savo, the transports got under way and I think we ~~had~~ unloaded something like twenty to twenty-five per cent of our stores and as a result, of course, we were short. We were particularly short of things like barbed wire and heavy equipment and we also made the mistake, ~~which~~ you can always be a Monday morning quarterback, of unloading well outside of our perimeter. As a result, when the ships departed we had to sacrifice worlds of our supplies. We just went off and left them. We moved them the best we could. If we had unloaded in our perimeter -- the Lunga area or Kokum, I think we called it -- well, we could have saved a lot of it. But it was a grand mess and of course we knew we were on our own for a number of weeks.

MR. FRANK: Let's advance this situation ~~when these~~ conditions on a couple of years beyond when you had the Fourth Division.

The
Did your lessons you learned as far as logistics are concerned affect your planning for your operations on Saipan and later in Iwo?

GENERAL CATES: Oh definitely and of course you always learn from prior operations. As I remember, of course I wasn't ^{at the} landing at Saipan but Tinian and Iwo Jima, I mean we were well supplied.

MR. FRANK: And the landing of supplies went pro forma?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, except at Iwo Jima and that wasn't the result of the supply system. After the first day, we had about three or four days of ^{ablowing storm} boilling where it was the biggest mess you've ever seen. Just worlds of boats wrecked and the beach was cluttered with broken boats and you just couldn't land.

MR. FRANK: We discussed earlier about the development of amphibious ^{Amphibious} warfare doctrine and I think we mentioned that we talked about the fleet landing exercises in the '30s and I believe you were involved with a couple of them ^{These which had} based on the landing force manual which was developed in '33 and the FTP-167. It seems to me as a historian having studied this, that the logistics aspects of this amphibious warfare planning always seems to have taken a back seat or shoved ^{fun} it aside as though either the problems which came up to the planners were insoluble

or they considered the things so easy that they didn't feel that that much time ought to have been put into working on it.

GENERAL CATES: Well, that's true, there's no doubt about that. We were thinking about the strategy and the tactics. Prior to World War II we always figured the Marines would get by somehow.

MR. FRANK: This perhaps is the reason that Guadalcanal was called Operation Shoestring.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I guess it is.

MR. FRANK: Now, what about the intelligence that you as a regimental commander received of the target area.

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course it was very poor. As I remember, General Twining flew over in a B-24 I guess it was and made a reconnaissance and then he tried to get information from the Australians and he did get a little. We were fortunate enough to have a few Australians with us who had been on Guadalcanal. In fact, *[Redacted]* I had one -- a Major Withee. He was able to give me a lot of good dope that helped me. Then of course we had a very poor aerial photograph of just *The WING* ~~along the~~ beach area and that's all. I think after our landing we were off that map within twenty or thirty minutes and we didn't have any maps whatsoever. We didn't

realize the rivers and streams, how they zigzagged back and forth and as a result -- this is getting a little far -- but as a result Colonel Pollock's battalion -- the Second Battalion, First -- in heading for Grassy Knoll, I think he crossed the Ilu River about three or four times because it wound around. The information that we received, you might say, was practically nil -- intelligence information.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any idea of in what strength the Japanese were situated on the ~~U~~canal?

GENERAL CATES: They had a fair estimate of that. I don't know where they got it but they thought they had more military there than they did. I've forgotten what the figures are now but it was two or three hundred military and quite a few civilian workers.

MR. FRANK: Now the Grassy Knoll you spoke of just a second ago was the Division objective, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, and I might say kind of a silly one too because it was about five miles inland and it had no particular value as far as securing a perimeter and securing the airfield. But that was my objective and so I had to more or less have my three battalions operating independently. We started out in the initial attack with them echeloned. General Pollock had the mission

of securing that Knoll and after about two or three days I finally received a message -- I hadn't received one for quite some time -- stating that he was on the slopes of Grassy Knoll but he never did get to the top of that, as you know.

MR. FRANK: The Grassy Knoll in effect was Mount Austin, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, Mount Austin.

MR. FRANK: Which was considerably further inland than had been anticipated?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. We couldn't have held it. It was way out there and of course the Japs after naval gunfire took off to the boon docks and disappeared entirely. So actually we landed unopposed. There wasn't any opposition at all. Of course, if you look back on it now, you can see that we should have landed right square at the mouth of the Ilu River.

MR. FRANK: What happened after you landed?

GENERAL CATES: We passed through the Fifth Regiment who established a beachhead about less than a thousand yards inland and then the division evidently received word that the airfield had been evacuated entirely so they diverted my first battalion, which was commanded by Colonel Cresswell, up the beach to take the airfield,

which he did with no trouble whatsoever. Then my third battalion was holding on the left and Pollock had disappeared entirely in the jungle, cutting his way through the jungle trying to get to Grassy Knoll. As soon as we got the airfield, I finally got in touch with Pollock after a lot of difficulty because I couldn't reach him on the radio and told him to back-track, *To do so, he had to* *to back*, *which he had to do to*, cut trails and come into the perimeter. Then of course the Fifth had moved up and we occupied this perimeter which is history, with the First Marines on the right and the Fifth Marines on the left with the artillery south of the airfield. We didn't have the troops to make a complete cordon defense of the perimeter and so you might say the artillery was in the front line too.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Of course the division was spread out so thin at that point.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: When you went in you knew what your objectives were. Did you have the idea at that time, do you recall, that the Division was to remain there or whether it was to be relieved?

GENERAL CATES: Of course we thought that we would stay there some time but would be relieved by some Army units. We

didn't realize that we were going to be there four and a half months, which my regiment was to the day.

MR. FRANK: When did things start getting heated up there?

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, the first engagement was a battle which was misnamed. They called it the Battle of Tenaru. I think the first real contact with any force was when Charlie Brush, Captain Brush, was on a reconnaissance and he ran into a bunch of Japs up near where we had unloaded. He had quite a bit of skirmish. I remember that was on the twentieth of August. So that forewarned us that there were some troops up there and so we did everything we could to prepare Pollock's outfit for defense. I mean we took barbed wire off fences where we could find it and we strung it across the sand pit there at the mouth of the Tenaru. Sure enough the next night the Ichiki Battalion hit pretty hard. Approximately, I think he had a little less than a thousand men and he attacked in force, I might say, and then after Pollock finally stopped them, they did overrun a few of Pollock's positions but it didn't last long. He drove them out and as soon as we stopped the attack, I received orders from the Division to have my first battalion which was in the Division reserve make a sweeping movement down through the jungles and

out beyond Block Four to cut them off. Of course, the thing that worried me at the time, we knew that we stopped the force there at Pollock's but we had no idea what was beyond Block Four, whether they had a battalion or a regiment or what. So I ordered Cresswell to go down through this jungle area and cross the river and send one company out to the Block to the right and also another one around Block Four. Then he made a sweep and as soon as he got up to the beach, we had this Jap bunch surrounded. Then I had four little tanks -- so I ordered these four little tanks across the sand pit to go into action, which they did. It was a regular cat and dog fight. We, I think, lost one tank temporarily -- it had the treads blown off. But after so long, I ordered the tanks to withdraw. One message I got was rather funny. It said, "Leave us alone. We're too darn busy killing Japs."

So after Pollock cut them off, it was a regular movie scene really. You could sit there at Pollock's which I did, and you could see the First Battalion down through these coconut trees very clearly and the Japs firing and we were firing and finally after about an hour of this fight, the Japs finally broke. About two hundred or two hundred fifty of them ran and jumped

in the ocean. It was just like shooting fish.

MR. FRANK: That was one of the first major engagements?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: At what time or at any time did you become worried regarding Japanese ~~strength~~, ^{or} what you didn't know?

GENERAL CATES: You mean in that battle or later on?

MR. FRANK: Later, subsequently.

GENERAL CATES: Well, that's the funny thing about it. We were not particularly worried. I guess maybe some of the higher ups were but for instance now, the Battle of Savo Island on the eighth of August -- it was a week before I even knew that we lost four cruisers and we didn't get the information. In fact, there's one thing that I'd like to say here. It was very galling to us to sit on Guadalcanal and listen to the radio at night. As I've said before I think on a tape, I ^{had a} ~~Zenith~~ ^[radio] had a ~~Venus~~ portable and I could tune in San Francisco at night time. I'd get the programs. We would sit there and listen to these people make a statement, well, they hoped we could hold Guadalcanal. One Army Air Force General even said it was foolish to try to hold Guadalcanal. And then ^{The men} they just gave the horse-laugh. We never had any idea that we were not going to hold it.

MR. FRANK: You were optimistic -- everyone in the Division,
weren't you?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. But of course, they were all sick and tired. I
mean malaria was very prevalent and dysentery. But as
I look back on it, there wasn't any feeling at all about
not being able to hold it.

MR. FRANK: *Monday Morning*
You were talking about quarterbacking before. Quarter-
backing the conduct of the Guadalcanal campaign -- and
or to question
this is not to be meant as any criticism of the way
General Vandegrift handled it -- was there any alterna-
tive to the way that we could have run it? I mean,
could we have been more aggressive or under the cir-
cumstances because of our lack of strength we were
committed to a defense perimeter type of thing with
active patrolling?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think there's any. I think the only big
mistake we made was in the initial landing and landing
the supplies outside of our perimeter. No, as far as
the set-up, perimeter defense with the men and equip-
ment we had available, I don't think it could have been
any better.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any knowledge of the conflict between Kelly
Turner and General Vandegrift?

GENERAL CATES: Oh more or less, not much. But they'd always fight and
scrap but they were always friends.

MR. FRANK: I'm thinking primarily in terms of this command matter.
Who was to command once the landing forces landed.

GENERAL CATES: Of course, we knew that there was something there but
that's a matter of history. Somebody else will have to
give that because I certainly didn't get in on that.

MR. FRANK: What do you think was learned as a result of Guadal-
canal? Or what were some of the lessons learned by
the Marine Corps after that?

GENERAL CATES: I think probably the biggest one was the supply set-up.

MR. FRANK: How about weapons?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, that goes without saying. But when I say
supply I mean having adequate weapons, spare parts.

MR. FRANK: I think primarily now the paratroopers ~~had~~ have this Reising
gun. A few people ~~had~~ ^{had} ~~had~~ ^{light} machine gun
type thing. Was there anything learned along these
lines? Which type of weapon acted primarily better in
comparison with the other weapons in the jungle?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think I am capable of answering that. You
better get some weapons expert on that.

MR. FRANK: Your regiment was hit and hit pretty hard. They were
pretty active during the whole course of the campaign.
What percentage of the original complement did you
have at the end?

GENERAL CATES: Actually we lost very few compared to the other operations.

I've forgotten what our figures were but they were very light when compared with others. But our attrition was pretty heavy on account of malaria.

MR. FRANK: Which you got yourself?

GENERAL GATES: No, I didn't get it at all. Of course, actually my outfit only had you might say three good engagements. One was the Tenaru and then McKelvy's outfit got hit pretty hard in the battle of the Ridge to the left over there and then -- no, McKelvy was down at Matanikau. Then at the battle of the Ridge we had a pretty good strong attack. But those were the three where we were actually heavily engaged.

MR. FRANK: Of course, that battle of the Ridge was something up ^{to} ~~at that~~ point where the division could have been thrown back into the States.

GENERAL GATES: Yes, if it had been coordinated, if the Japs had coordinated it right, we would have been.

MR. FRANK: Talking about this Battle of the Ridge ^{and} how serious it could have been had the Japanese been able to mount a coordinated attack.

GENERAL GATES: I don't believe -- I know good and well they couldn't have driven us off but they could have penetrated and it would have been an awful mess. But the size of the Japanese force wasn't enough to lick Edson's outfit and

mine and the rest of them. But later on that ~~far - pronged~~ attack that the Japs prepared and executed piece-meal could have been really serious. I'd like to state here what I just told you about General Vandegrift's Headquarters which is more or less amusing in a way. His CP first at the end of the airfield and we were getting bombed every day at noon by usually 26 bombers. Every time I went up there I would say to him, "Why do you stay in a dump like this?" It was a dump too. I said, "You're right here by the airfield where you are bound to get bombed. Why don't you get a decent CP?" So he had an engineer prepare this CP down south of the airfield and the day he moved the Japs attacked that night and that was the Battle of the Ridge. And they practically surrounded the division CP. The next morning I wandered up there in my jeep and when I got up there, everybody was running around holding their pistol out and the weapons at the ready and they yelled at me to get down, there were Japs all around. Then I found out that just about two minutes before Japs had come charging out and ran a sword or a bayonet through a Sergeant right by General Vandegrift's CP. So General Vandegrift decided that that spot was a little too hot so he immediately moved back to his old CP and I think

he stayed there the rest of the time he was there.

MR. FRANK: I was told that he didn't like the bombing. He was very disturbed by the bombing. The bombing bothered him. This I can understand.

GENERAL CATES: Well, it bothers anybody but it's not effective against ground troops. Speaking of bombing, I'd like to record a rather amusing story. I think maybe it might be in the records but it's late in the operation, along in October I think it was. I drove up to Division Headquarters and ran into Colonel del Valle so I said, "Let's go in and see the old man." So we went in and sitting there was the island governor, the British island governor all dressed up in white shorts, white socks and shirt and very immaculate. General Vandegrift introduced him to us. And about that time Colonel Twining came in and General Vandegrift said, "Sir Percy, this is Colonel Twining." And Sir Percy, who was a good looking Englishman, put his monocle in his eye and took a look at Twining and said, "Twining, Twining. That's a very good English name. You know, we have a big tea concern, Twining." He said, "Were your ancestors ever interested in tea?" And Twining, who is ordinarily not a facetious man at all, replied, "No, sir, not since the Boston Tea Party." With that the monocle dropped

out of Sir Percy's eye and there was a lull of about thirty seconds. Finally, General Vandegrift looked out and said, "Gee, we've been lucky today. We haven't been bombed." Everybody laughed.

MR. FRANK: The Britisher didn't have that much of a sense of humor. /laughter/ That's very funny.

The Battle of the Ridge, of course, is one that is certain to stand out in ~~a history of the Guadalcanal operation.~~ contacts on the canal of ~~certain set battles~~. And of course, the battle of the Ridge, Bloody Ridge or Edson's Ridge whatever they call it, was one of the most outstanding.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I guess you would consider that the most outstanding. The Tenaru, of course, was the first and I doubt if there were more casualties in the Ridge than there ^{etc} was in Tenaru.

MR. FRANK: How about the Battle of Matanikau?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't think the casualties were as heavy there but of course we knocked out I think it was ten tanks -- ten or eleven tanks.

MR. FRANK: The reason I ask about the Ridge, you had one of your battalions at ~~battle~~ ^{on the flank} ~~link~~ and Edson's Raiders was maintaining the best part of the Ridge itself. I'd like to talk about the ~~maid~~ ^{Raiders} and talk about Edson for a minute. You had known him for quite some time, I

think.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: From China?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: How did you feel, what was your attitude about this Raider concept when they formed the Raiders? Did they take in any of your people when you were down at New River?

GENERAL CATES: Not from the First, that I remember. They took them from the Fifth and the Seventh. But I think the Raiders were formed just about the time that the First was formed so naturally they wouldn't take any. There's no doubt about it. The training that the Raiders received was a little more strenuous and it gave them a little esprit. It was good but as a whole, I think the idea was good because I think you ought to strive for perfection whether it is Raiders or anyone else.

MR. FRANK: Well, did the . . .

GENERAL CATES: And of course, I might say here one of the saddest mistakes that we ever made in the Battle of Guadalcanal was in our paratroopers in the landing on ^{Tulagi,} ~~Tarawa~~. Here these people had been trained as paratroopers and they used them as just ordinary infantrymen and they got slaughtered.

MR. FRANK: Well, they all were Marines and all received the same basic infantry training at one time. Would you attribute it to the fact that they were hit so heavily or to the fact that they did not have the heavier infantry weapons?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't believe that's true. They just ran up against a stronger force because the Japs on ^{Tulagi} ~~Tulagi~~ fought where ~~on~~ ⁱⁿ ~~Tanau~~ ^{at} they didn't at the initial landing.

MR. FRANK: ^{I mean later,} How many ~~were~~ primarily there when Liversedge's force went up to New Georgia on that, 43rd Infantry Division, which was a bad show. One of the problems that they had there was that they had nothing heavier than a 60mm mortar.

GENERAL CATES: Well, that's true.

MR. FRANK: No heavy weapons at all.

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, what I know of that is very little and just hearsay.

MR. FRANK: This is what I was wondering, based on your experience at Basic School and based on your overall infantry experience, how you equated this Raider concept with the general Marine Corps infantry.

GENERAL CATES: Well, in general I would say that it didn't work out too well because, although they were fine troops -- as I say, being in the Raiders gave them a lift and esprit

that the others maybe didn't have. But I still think you should give the companies and battalions the same training that you give more or less to Raiders.

MR. FRANK: Didn't they also denude many of the regular outfits?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's true.

MR. FRANK: How would you compare the First Raider Battalion with the Second Raider Battalion?

GENERAL CATES: I haven't the least idea.

MR. FRANK: Or Edson's ³Raiders with Carlton's Raiders.

GENERAL CATES: I haven't the least idea.

MR. FRANK: Now when you left the 'canal -- I was just trying to think if there is anything before we leave the 'canal that we haven't covered. Air support.

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, it was the greatest thrill in the world to see our air come into Guadalcanal on the 20th of August and I mean thrill because I saw tears running down men's faces, jumping up and shouting and yelling because we had been there for two weeks, you see, with no air support whatsoever. We were getting bombed every day; heck, they could just fire at us at will and we couldn't do anything about it. I might say that the air on Guadalcanal did one of the most difficult jobs on a shoe string that I've ever seen or ever will see. They practically used baling wire

to keep those planes flying.

Speaking of air, I think maybe I've told this before. But as you know two of our famous aviators were Foss and Schmidt. I was watching a dog fight that Schmidt was in -- I didn't know it was Schmidt at the time -- with the Judos when he was shot down. I noted where I thought he had come down. By that time, we had some maps and it was about maybe a couple of thousand yards outside of my perimeter. It was late in the afternoon so I got my chauffeur, Sergeant Strunk, and went down through the jungle and went out -- there weren't any Japs in there at all -- I went out probably 500 yards out beyond our wire until I got to a stream. I said now if I was Schmidt I would take this course coming in and I hadn't been there fifteen minutes until I saw Schmidt flying across this field. He still had on his yellow Mae West and I yelled at him. When I yelled at him he immediately ducked. He thought I was a Jap or something so I yelled again and blew my whistle and waved him to come on in. So he came on in and he was pretty badly shaken up. So I had a little miniature bottle of brandy. I gave him that and we got in the jeep and he started worrying. He had left his baseball cap in his plane and he wanted that baseball cap. I

asked him, "Did you destroy your plane?" He said, "No, I didn't." And I said, "Well, did you get all the documents out of it -- codes and things?" He didn't quite remember. But anyway, I had a patrol out in that area so I was able to contact them and I had them find his plane and burn it. So that's how ^{With} Schmidt was rescued.

MR. FRANK: Did he get his baseball cap back?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Oh I got his baseball cap back. I told the patrols particularly to get that baseball cap.

MR. FRANK: Did he ride the plane down?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: He did ride the plane down.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, he rode it down but he crashed when he landed.

MR. FRANK: Didn't Martin Clemens first come through your lines?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. I've forgotten the day but we received word by radio that he was coming in that night. So he came in through Pollock's battalion down by the Tenaru and I think I may have told you that he and this fellow [Whittee] Wittee that I had were great friends. They worked for Lever Brothers. And they sat up all night long drinking and getting tight as a hoot owl. But I'll tell you one thing. That fellow Clemens deserves everything that he ever received. And of course Sergeant Major

Vouza

~~Bonuka~~ is a real character and what he did is history.

MR. FRANK: Did Vouza come through with them?

GENERAL GATES: I'm not sure whether Vouza did or not. Of course you know he'd been strung up to a tree and bayonets run through him and I don't know whether he came in with Clemens or not. But within a few days he was there.

MR. FRANK: When you were on the 'canal, you received no replacements at all, is that right?

GENERAL GATES: None.

MR. FRANK: You fought with what you had?

GENERAL GATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: What about evacuations? Were you able to evacuate the wounded?

GENERAL GATES: The plane service was pretty fair. I mean they evacuated the wounded. I don't know whether they took them to Noumea or ^{where} ~~Porter~~. But I might say the transports had a pretty hard time getting in and out of that field loaded. I might say here that an incident in regard to Admiral Nimitz. He came in in an old Army ^{plane} [] -- I don't know if it was a ^{B-17} seventeen or not -- but anyway he landed and just barely made the landing. This is typical of the Army but they should be criticized. They sent him in with a pilot that had never been in there before and I think he was a second lieutenant

pilot at that. When Nimitz got on his plane leaving, it bounced down that runway and we thought it was going to crash at the end but in the final second it pulled up and got in the air and I remember General Vandegrift saying, "Thank God he's gone."

MR. FRANK: I think General Twining told me that one of the recon flights that he took ^{before} ~~for~~ the landings. They had no maps, no specific maps of the area and they ~~found~~ ^{had} finally wound up using the National Geographic map of the Pacific.

GENERAL CATES: I think that's it. The one I have in my file there.

MR. FRANK: What was the situation and the condition of your regiment about the time you were evacuated?

GENERAL CATES: They were the funniest looking bunch of men I've ever seen in my life. Honest to God, some of them -- the final bunch aboard the transport on the 22nd of December was the most raggedy-assed Marines on parade. Gosh, some in sneakers, some in shorts, some in Jap clothes, everything that you can possibly imagine.

MR. FRANK: What was the morale?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, tops, ^{they} were leaving. Well it was good all the time they were there.

MR. FRANK: Their health?

GENERAL CATES: Health? Oh very poor. I don't know what per cent we

had of malaria but it was very high and lots of dysentry. I think that the doctors reported that the average weight loss was something like thirty pounds per man or close to it.

MR. FRANK: Had you lost weight too?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: What percentage attrition did your regiment suffer?
Could you say off-hand?

GENERAL CATES: You mean casualties?

MR. FRANK: That's right.

GENERAL CATES: I think we lost 102 men. I think that's the figure.

MR. FRANK: That's less than one per cent.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. As I say, the fighting was very light compared with other operations.

MR. FRANK: How would you recap your experience in Guadalcanal?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I'd recap it first by saying that I think the lessons we learned there were of the biggest benefit to us for future operations. I think that you might say that Guadalcanal and Tarawa were the training grounds for our amphibious operations. Tarawa was probably more so in a way because the fighting was so heavy there.

MR. FRANK: How long did you spend in Australia?

GENERAL CATES: Oh a very short time. We left Guadalcanal the 22nd

of December. We were on some little island on Christmas Day, I've forgotten the name of the island now. We first went to Brisbane where they expected to put the Division.

MR. FRANK: Do you know the story of that?

GENERAL CATES: I know some of it. I think General Vandegrift did a swell job there because they had us located out from Brisbane in a swamp. I mean a swamp because the day I went out to make a reconnaissance, my tent had six inches of water in it. They had already put up tents and things. A kangaroo had just busted through a part of the tent and knocked down one corner of it. We were way out in the wilds and that's where they were expecting to put a malaria bunch of men.

MR. FRANK: Whose fault was that?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know.

MR. FRANK: Do you think they did it purposely or . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, it was just poor staff work. And as I understand it, General Vandegrift protested vigorously, I mean very strongly. So then they sent us to Melbourne which couldn't have been a better place. In fact, my regiment was quartered in the stadium where later they held their Allied games right in the middle of Melbourne. So we had wonderful facilities.

MR. FRANK: That's the Olympic Games?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: That was the old soccer or football field.

GENERAL CATES: It was right down town though.

MR. FRANK: In Melbourne Cricket grounds, cricket.

GENERAL CATES: Cricket and where they played rugby.

MR. FRANK: Well at Melbourne of course you had that complete hospital that was there too.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. We had good club facilities. Some of the other regiments didn't fare quite so well. They were out some under tents and things but we were all under cover with good club facilities, recreation facilities.

MR. FRANK: Was it much of a disciplinary problem when the Division got to Australia?

GENERAL CATES: No. Well, getting back to your question, which I never answered. As I say, I didn't stay long. I was only there for a little over two weeks. We arrived there and of course the men hadn't been paid for months.

They had ^a world of money. So I think the first time they paid them I allowed the paymaster to ~~only~~ pay them ^{only} two weeks pay because I knew what was going to happen the first time they went on liberty not realizing what a sixpence or a pound was. As an illustration, the second day there I heard an old mess sergeant just

raising billyhell because he had tipped the taxicab man a ten pound note and he didn't realize how much ten pounds was. But anyway, then we gave them their money and of course we started training immediately because you have to do that because you can't let the men get too wild. I left Melbourne I think it was on the 13th day of February.

MR. FRANK: Let's see, you were detached on the 10th of February.

GENERAL CATES: The 10th of February.

MR. FRANK: It took five days to get back to the Coast.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. We flew back on an old B-24. And I might say that of all the trips I have taken, it was the worst because there wasn't a seat on the plane. There were little transom seats for five people. You couldn't sit down. And we had something like thirty-five or forty people on it.

MR. FRANK: Could you stretch out at all?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, you could stretch out on your backs. It was cold though. I put my bedding roll down back in the fantail and it was cold as billyhell.

MR. FRANK: Had you come down with malaria yet?

GENERAL CATES: No, no. I never had malaria. I had malaria when I was a kid and I had it so heavy I guess I must have been immune to it.

MR. FRANK: You didn't have it when you came back to the States?

GENERAL CATES: No, I didn't have it at all. In fact I wouldn't take the doggone atabrine. I took it for a number of days and every time I'd take it, it would make me violently sick. I'd get nauseated. So I quit taking it and my regimental sergeant used to give me hell.

MR. FRANK: Coming back to your paymaster, wasn't that Henry Heming?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Your assignment when you got back to the states was as Assistant Commandant for Marine Corps Schools.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. It was Commandant of Marine Corps Schools because at that time the Commanding General at Quantico was not the Commandant of the schools.

MR. FRANK: Did you get your star when you came back?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: In other words, you were a Brigadier General by the time you arrived back in the States.

GENERAL CATES: Soon after. Then I relieved General Sammy Harrington.

MR. FRANK: Oh yes. He was an old-timer, was he not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: ^{when} That they had brought back on active duty there?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think so. I think he had been in all the time.

MR. FRANK: I mean he was one of those they kept there.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Had he become senile in any way? Had he become debilitated?

GENERAL CATES: I'd rather not comment on that. He was pretty soft and easy-going though.

MR. FRANK: You were at Marine Corps Schools for a period of a year or more. Right?

GENERAL CATES: Less than a year.

MR. FRANK: What did you do for the most part?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I just continued the policies and training programs set by Headquarters Marine Corps and of course tried to give them what lessons I had learned.

MR. FRANK: You had been CO of the Basic School just before joining the Division, now you go back to the Marine Corps Schools and of course you had the ROC and the OCS.

GENERAL CATES: Well of course the Basic School was elementary and the Marine Corps Schools was -- of course they had lots of schools. I mean you had the Commanding Staff Schools senior and junior and then you had your Ordnance School and you had your . . .

MR. FRANK: You had Fire Control School there, didn't you?

GENERAL CATES: Oh we had everything. I think it was about eight or ten different kinds of schools.

MR. FRANK: You had responsibility for all of them, not only the . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. But of course that's just being the Head of it.

You don't get involved in you might say the working arrangements of it.

MR. FRANK: Was there anything unusual that occurred there at that time?

GENERAL CATES: No, nothing except we did have quite a few Hollanders there. We had . . .

MR. FRANK: The Royal Dutch Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we had the Dutch Marines there but we had a lot of enlisted men from The Netherlands.

MR. FRANK: As well as Dutch Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: In other words you had both Dutch soldiers and . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh no, they were all Marines.

MR. FRANK: They were all Dutch.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Where had they come from?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know. I kind of think they had come from the Indies.

MR. FRANK: They had been saved and brought back.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. There wasn't anything particular that happened during that period there. General Phil Torrey was Commander of the base.

MR. FRANK: No problems with him.

GENERAL CATES: Our relations were very smooth. In fact, we were very

good friends. He was noted as a pretty tough hombre. I might state just these little things. Outside once I had a second lieutenant that practically tore a wash room apart one night. He got tight in uniform and raised billyhell, and fought a policeman. I recommended him for general court-martial which of course General Torrey had to approve. The old man had this second lieutenant over and gave him billyhell and says, "All right, that's all." So I was mad as hell and I went over to his office. I said, "General, you are noted as being a hard-boiled person and here the man has disgraced the Marine Corps and you let him off with just a simple reprimand." And I said, "You're getting soft in your old days." And he said, "Yes, Cliff, I guess I am." But he said, "You know I used to do those things myself."

MR. FRANK: Well, you know, I think you got to talked to later on too because I recall when you were Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools, after your tenure as Commandant of the Marine Corps there was a Marine officer -- this may be one of those stories that are apocryphal, that may never have happened. You got in some trouble in Washington and you had to write a 50,000 word essay on how a young lieutenant acts on liberty in Washington,

he said.

GENERAL CATES: I've forgotten that.

MR. FRANK: This was in '52.

GENERAL CATES: I've heard a lot of these stories that I've never heard.
They might be true, I won't deny them.

MR. FRANK: What time did you have an idea that you were going to
get your second star in the Division?

GENERAL CATES: It was along in June when General Holcomb told me that
he was going to send me to take the Fourth Division. I
think the latter part of June.

MR. FRANK: It was June 23rd exactly when you were appointed.

GD But had you any inkling before that?

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: It was a big surprise?

GENERAL CATES: It was a surprise.

MR. FRANK: Now, the Fourth Division had been formed already.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it had been formed and had been in Roi Namur,
for the island of Saipan,
Kwajalein, and then it had gone back ~~down~~ ~~on~~ Iwo Jima,
and then had gone into the Battle of Saipan.

MR. FRANK: And you relieved whom?

GENERAL CATES: General Harry Schmidt. I flew out and arrived in
Saipan on the fourth of July and I think I relieved
him about eight days later, I think it was the twelfth
of July after the operation was over.

MR. FRANK: What condition was the Division in at this time?

GENERAL CATES: The Division was in pretty fair shape. Of course, it had suffered terrific casualties, there's no question about that. They had been in a hard fight there for weeks. But the morale was, I think, way above average.

MR. FRANK: Did you take any people out with you?

GENERAL CATES: Nope.

MR. FRANK: Did you ask for anyone specifically?

GENERAL CATES: Only one man, my chauffeur, who arrived a few weeks later. Chauffeur and orderly.

MR. FRANK: Who was that?

GENERAL CATES: A fellow named Sergeant Strunk.

MR. FRANK: Oh Strunk, yes. You kept him around for quite a while.

GENERAL CATES: Oh I did, he was my right hand power. Getting back to Guadalcanal and Strunk -- the afternoon of the battle of the Ridge, somehow I had gotten some Scotch whiskey. Somebody had brought it in, I've forgotten who. So I took a bottle up to Edson and I finally found him way down in this ravine up there and gave him this bottle of Scotch. And that night the Battle of the Ridge started and Edson started yelling for more machine gun belts. So there was no one in my outfit who knew where Edson was except Sergeant Strunk. So all hell was

popping. So we loaded these machine gun belts on a truck and Sergeant Strunk was the guide. So he got up on the Ridge and Strunk said it got so hot from machine gun fire that the truck driver took off. So Strunk took the truck and went on up and delivered the machine gun belts to Edson. He knew where he was. I think Strunk got a silver star for that.

And I might say that Edson the next day left his CP. I think he fell back a little bit but anyway when I went up there he was bemoaning the fact that he had lost his bottle of Scotch and he hadn't even had a drink.

MR. FRANK: Oh gosh. And that Scotch ^{was} ~~is~~ a premium too. How long did you have to reconstitute your Division before preparing for your next operation?

GENERAL GATES: Tinian? Well, that was the 12th. What was the exact date for the beginning of Tinian?

MR. FRANK: 20 June. Correct that. 25 July was the D-Day for Tinian.

GENERAL GATES: That's right. So actually we had over a month, you see, to prepare for it.

MR. FRANK: Then the Division went back to Maui in August. Now what did you do when you got back to Maui?

GENERAL GATES: Well, of course we immediately -- first thing was

recreation. And then we started heavy training again.

MR. FRANK: Recreation for you meant getting a Division football and baseball team.

GENERAL GATES: Oh yes, we stressed athletics quite a bit. But we were, as I said before, the most fortunate division in the world to have good training area and good recreational facilities. You see, as I've said before, after Roi Namur the Division went to ^{Maui} ~~Kamak~~ where they had to prepare a temporary camp from scratch.

MR. FRANK: They built their own camp?

GENERAL GATES: Yes. So they were there approximately two or three months before Saipan. Then Tinian, then we went back to Maui and we were there for a few months before going into Iwo Jima. And then after Iwo Jima we went back to Maui and stayed something like nine or ten months. So I doubt if there has ever been a Division that had as good a training area and as good recreation facilities as we had on Maui. And the people couldn't have been more hospitable. In fact, they claimed us as their own. They called us "Maui's own."

MR. FRANK: Twining designed the First Division patch. Who designed the Fourth Division patch, do you know?

GENERAL GATES: I understand -- this is just hearsay -- but I understand that they had all kind of patches submitted

I mean designed for them and that Harry Schmidt finally got mad and said to hell with it, we'll have a plain 4. That's just hearsay.

MR. FRANK: And as a result, the Fourth Division has the plainest patch of the six Marine divisions. Did you wear both your Fourth and your First?

GENERAL CATES: Oh no, just the Fourth.

MR. FRANK: What is your attitude about the wearing of patches in the Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I think it's a good thing. It's a morale builder. You can see somebody and say you're from the Fourth, I had a brother there.

MR. FRANK: Of course, General Vandegrift had quite a time after the war to get rid of them and get back to one patch for the Marine Corps.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. I don't believe in patches in peace time. No I don't.

MR. FRANK: When were you alerted to Iwo Jima? Do you recall off-hand?

GENERAL CATES: Off-hand, I don't but we had plenty of time. Are you to going/skip Tinian?

MR. FRANK: No, let's talk about Tinian. I don't know why I bypassed it. Let's talk about the operation.

GENERAL CATES: Well, as you said, we landed there and started the

operation on the 25th of July. Tinian, I think, had gone down in history as more or less the model amphibious operation. Although it was small compared with others. Tinian had a lot of firsts. To begin with, it is probably the only island or battle, you might say, where the captains and battalions commanders, regimental and even division commander made an aerial reconnaissance of the island.

MR. FRANK: All of them.

GENERAL CATES: All of them -- everyone of them. We not only flew once, twice, flew around it and down through the middle and everything else and it gave us a pretty good idea -- of course, you can tell from a map but having a first hand view. As far as I know, we didn't have a shot fired at us all the time. In fact, when we first flew over at something like 2,000 feet finally I had this pilot of mine bring me down and we weren't a hundred feet above beach. And I couldn't see a living thing on the island. I circled it twice and cut down through it twice, through the middle. Really I knew it couldn't be but I^{had about}/decided the Japs had gotten off there some how. But anyway, that is one of the firsts.

I think it is the first place we had tactical

SURPRISE.

~~spies~~. I can't think of any other and I don't believe there was any other because the Japs thought sure we were going to land at Tinian City and we landed on the northern beaches there that measure the two of them together just a little over two hundred feet -- two hundred yards -- I think it was 235 yards.

Also it was the first time that the operation was supported by land-based artillery from Saipan.

MR. FRANK: Yes. ~~got as far as Saipan~~

GENERAL CATES: And that was one of the arguments that stressed when we were considering whether we were going to attack. The Navy wanted to land at Tinian City with good beaches and everything and it turned out where the Japs had all their defenses, every bit of it. But I said it was so foolish to forego your land-based artillery from Saipan. So that was the first, I think, in that. And I think -- I'm pretty positive -- it's the first time napalm was ever used in an operation.

MR. FRANK: That's true.

GENERAL CATES: There were one or two other firsts. Oh, I think it was one of the first times that we had Japs appealing to their men to surrender.

MR. FRANK: Any results?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. We had a mill owner and his wife, he was a

very high class man, and he became very interested in doing it. So the final day -- the Japs had retreated gradually down below the cliffs of the southern part of the island. So the morning we were going to have the final mop-up, I went up and I might say that it was a hell of a hazardous trip too because the roads were a solid layer of mines that had been taken up and were laying on the side. So we went up and this mill owner appealed to them in my name to surrender. He talked and pleaded with them and his wife and talked. And a lot of them -- I say lot, quite a few of them came in. Others would start in and then they would blow themselves up with mines. Others jumped over the cliff. They threw their babies over the cliff.

MR. FRANK: Yes, that was something.

GENERAL CATES: So after delaying the attack -- I had the attack scheduled for nine o'clock, I think it was -- and after delaying it for an hour and a half and appealing and appealing, finally I gave the word to go ahead and I just turned and left and they opened up with everything they had and swept down in the operation.

MR. FRANK: The Marine casualties were pretty small on Tinian, were they not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, comparatively. Well, the Japs had taken an awful

beating there for a long time. They had been pounded day after day with air, you know. I think they had something like 10,000 troops there and getting back to the tactical surprise, the Japs had all their reserves down at that end of the island. When we made this landing on the northern beaches and obtained a little beachhead -- and I might say this -- one time that I was bragging a little bit and was dead right. I stopped the advance, in fact had planned to stop it. Stopped it at four o'clock and set up wire and prepared a perimeter of defense and told them to stand by as the counterattack was bound to come. And sure enough it came. These reserves had been marched from Tinian City down that area with their tanks and along about midnight the tanks were heard and all hell broke loose and they slaughtered about twelve or fifteen hundred of them. That was practically the end of the operation.

MR. FRANK: Another first I think in Tinian was the fact that it was one of the first island-to-island operations. In other words you loaded on landing craft on Saipan.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we went over on the LSTs. In fact, it was very interesting in lots of ways. For instance, my CP was on an LST and I went right in close to the shore and was able to have communication with all my battalion

commanders by radio.

MR. FRANK: Radios had improved somewhat between Guadalcanal and Tinian.

GENERAL CATES: Well, we used the radios in the jeeps. And of course after we made our landing, then the Second Division came in on our left and we took the right side of the island. And as I say, the fighting wasn't much until we got down to the end of the island and then the Second Division ran up against a little trouble there. We marched across the air field they were preparing and took Tinian City and I might say that the Navy pulled the best fight that was ever pulled. We boated as I remember our regiment, a whole regiment out of the Second Division and they had them deployed off Tinian City. The battleship, it was the old Colorado that got hit so hard, bombarded the tar out of Tinian City and this regiment advanced to the beach, near the beach until they got under fire and the Japs thought sure the attack was coming down there. In fact, they shifted their reserves down there. So then this regiment withdrew and we made our landing up the north. And I might say, speaking of the battleship, the old Colorado evidently got in very close to shore, I think about a thousand yards out -- and it happened

to get in the arc of fire of a six-inch Jap gun that was imbedded back in a tunnel. And they say the thing only had an arc of fire something like thirty degrees, but the Colorado got in their ^{sights} ~~sites~~ and I think they killed something like two hundred men on the Colorado.

MR. FRANK: Yes, the Colorado got hit very bad at the Tinian landing. All in all Tinian was a success. It was only . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes and one thing, I spurred the men on. I said, "Now, look here, men, the ^{island of} ~~island of~~ Maui is waiting for us. See those ships out there? The quicker you get this over with, the quicker we'll be back there." They almost ran over that island.

MR. FRANK: Had the Divisions been hit pretty bad on Saipan?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, they took heavy casualties there. They had hard fighting.

MR. FRANK: Did anything develop particularly in this campaign? Combat developments?

GENERAL CATES: Well, as I said, the only thing new there was napalm. I received word one day that they were going to drop it up just east of Tinian City and so I went up with a sergeant of mine and was up there in the line and they flew over and I must admit I was kind of nervous myself because I thought those planes came down and they weren't over six feet in the air right over us

and released it just after they passed over us. In fact, the first bomb that went out looked like it was right over my head and then it went out three or four hundred yards before it exploded and burned.

MR. FRANK: Pretty awesome.

GENERAL CATES: It was. And of course, at that time we were trying to burn the cane fields and things.

MR. FRANK: Did it do the job?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it burned the cane fields all right. But of course they didn't drop too many there. It was mostly experimental.

MR. FRANK: Yes.

Fourth Oral History Interview

with

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC (RETIRED)

19 September 1967
At the General's Home in Edgewater, Md.

By Mr. Benis M. Frank
Head, Oral History Unit, Historical Branch,
G-3 Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

For the Marine Corps Oral Program

MR. FRANK: When we ended our last interview session, General, we were talking about Saipan and Tinian. Now, the Tinian operation was unusual for many reasons, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I think it will go down in history as being probably the model amphibious operation because everything seemed to work perfectly and of course there were a lot of firsts in it. Actually, it was a shore to shore operation but still all amphibious operations are in a way shore to shore, some time or the other. Because the Divisions had to be boated just exactly like they were going a thousand or more miles. And as I said, there were a lot of firsts in it and there are probably a lot I don't even remember.

But first of all, before we attacked the island, we had all the company commanders, battalion commanders, regimental commanders, the division staff and even the division commanders make a full reconnaissance of the island by air. And when I say close, I mean close because we came right down on top of them. It was rather a surprise to me in flying over that I couldn't see a living person on it. And I couldn't believe that it had been evacuated, in fact I knew they hadn't but evidently they just holed up when the planes were overhead and as far as I know we drew no fire. We flew

around the island a couple of times and slipped right down through the middle of it, down as low as sometimes a thousand feet. Of course, that aerial reconnaissance, although we had good maps and things, gave the commanders an excellent idea of the terrain and what they were up against.

Then of course another first was that we were supported by our Corps artillery from Saipan. And most important of all, I think that the one thing that we had was tactical surprise. In fact I think it was about the only time during the war where we did really have tactical surprise.

MR. FRANK: That was unusual because of the fact that enemy on Tinian must have known that they were going to be invaded.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, they knew it but they were firmly convinced that the attack was coming down Tinian City and of course the feints that were pulled down there ^{WERC} ~~was a~~ masterpiece, because the Japanese thought that they had really repelled the invasion when that regiment, I think it was a regiment, reinforced, went in close to shore and withdrew.

MR. FRANK: Of course, that was very much like the feint landing on Okinawa, the southeastern coast of Okinawa, when

the Second Division went in.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, but I'm not acquainted with that though. One of the things that you might say broke the back of the Japanese on Tinian, we G-2d the situation correctly and after making the landing we had ordered the troops to dig in, stopped the advance, I think it was four p.m., ~~And~~ to dig in and reinforce the front line with everything they possibly could and to stand by for the counterattack. And the counterattack came just as planned and although they penetrated between two of our regiments a little, we knocked their tanks out and broke the back of the resistance at Tinian that first night.

MR. FRANK: And it was just a matter of mopping up afterwards.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, of course there was a lot of fighting but it was -- the fighting was different from most any that we had experienced because it was good terrain -- good rolling terrain, most of it in cultivation. There were very few hills, you might say. There were some but it was a good clean operation and I think the men really enjoyed it.

MR. FRANK: Well then the terrain didn't favor the defenders to any great extent?

GENERAL CATES: No, not to any great extent although they were well dug in, there's no question about that. Of course there were a lot of bluffs particularly at the south end of the island. And of course, another first was the use of napalm.

MR. FRANK: Yes, that was used by the Air Force planes, I believe.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was the napalm effective?

GENERAL CATES: We couldn't tell. Of course one thing it did was to burn off the cane fields. It seemed very effective for me because the first morning they put it down I went up to the front line and those planes came in over our heads it seemed like to me about a hundred feet in the air. Of course, they were higher and let go their napalm bombs right over our heads and which hit out maybe two or three hundred yards in front of us. It was a very devastating thing and particularly to the morale of the Japanese.

MR. FRANK: Of course, the early days in the use of napalm, there were some problems with fusing and getting the napalm tanks to explode and to burn. There were some problems, I believe, in getting the correct mixture of gasoline for the napalm.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I understand that. And I might say that I didn't

feel too comfortable sitting up there seeing those things right overhead. I figured that some of them might drop short.

MR. FRANK: Now during the Saipan operation and the Tinian operation, what about Marine aviation in close support? It wasn't until much later, I would say 'til Okinawa, that Marine close air support came into its own.

GENERAL CATES: I think that's true. Of course, they helped considerably but they didn't have the pinpoint bombing like they developed later.

MR. FRANK: Well, did you get as much close support that you wanted and did it come from Navy or the Marine planes?

GENERAL CATES: Well, both actually. As far as I know -- I'm not firm on that.

MR. FRANK: Now you were in of course on the first operations that the Marines ever made, as a matter of fact the first extensive operation in the Pacific was Guadalcanal. How would you compare the conduct of the Marines operations and the Marines themselves for the two campaigns?

GENERAL CATES: Well there's no question about that. Of course the operation at Tinian was far superior as far as the actual team work was concerned because when we went on Guadalcanal as I told you, we were just partly trained. We didn't have much team work and of course

the operation was entirely different. Guadalcanal, except for the initial landing and you might say walking in, it was all defensive. And in Saipan and Tinian it was just the opposite.

MR. FRANK: How about the Japanese? How did they differ on the two islands?

GENERAL CATES: On Guadalcanal there were very few Japanese soldiers to begin with. Then of course they kept reinforcing, making piecemeal attacks and in fact you might say, they were awfully dumb on Guadalcanal. In Tinian they knew that they were licked but they followed just a defensive operation and did the best they could. And they gained in experience as we did.

MR. FRANK: Of course, the Japanese tactics as the war went on changed considerably and I think by the time of the Central Pacific campaigns, the Japanese had a defense plan wherein they would defend at the beaches and reinforce the beaches to try to throw the landing force, assault force refusing the beachhead.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's true to a certain extent. But now you take Iwo Jima, of course, they defended the beaches because the island was so small they had to. But they in general fought a defensive action and they just made their minds up that they were going to sell themselves

as dearly as possible.

MR. FRANK: Of course, I think documents show that Japanese defensive tactics had changed by Iwo Jima and we penetrated the inner defense ring around the empire. As a matter of fact, the same thing occurred on Okinawa later.

Now how about intelligence matters? We'll go down ^{AS} ~~the~~ staff session. How was Marine intelligence? Were you getting the documents? Were you getting the prisoners they wanted on Saipan and Tinian?

GENERAL CATES: We were not getting the prisoners we wanted but we got some. Of course, we actually didn't start getting a bunch of them until Iwo Jima. We got, I think in general, very little information.

MR. FRANK: None surrendered?

GENERAL CATES: Oh a few. Not many. Not many, no.

MR. FRANK: You of course had the Fourth Division for the Saipan and Tinian operations.

GENERAL CATES: For Tinian. I took charge after the Saipan operation was over.

MR. FRANK: You relieved General Schmidt?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Casualties were high, low, negligible?

GENERAL CATES: On Saipan, of course, casualties were heavy. There wasn't any question about that. But on Tinian they

were comparatively very light. After that first counterattack, I mean we had very little opposition.

MR. FRANK: I've just recently done some research on combat correspondence^{Marine Corps} and I saw a letter from a civilian correspondent back to ^{the} ^A editor and publisher of some trade newspaper. He was giving the editors in the United States the devil for not giving ample coverage to Saipan and not playing it up as much as it should have been. He said the fighting was the hardest perhaps to that -- and longer -- than any in the Pacific to that date as far as the Marines were concerned.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I think that's true. Well, you look back at Peleliu, I mean there was very little coverage on Peleliu. I don't know what General MacArthur was doing at that time, I've forgotten. But I think he was getting most of the publicity.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course, this was June '44 with D-day in Europe.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's true.

MR. FRANK: And also, the Republican convention was going on at that time and I think that perusal of American newspapers at that time will show that this was taking the front pages.

GENERAL CATES: I knew there was something that took away from it and

as you say it was the invasion of Europe.

MR. FRANK: When Tinian was secured, the Fourth Division of course went back to Maui.

GENERAL GATES: Yes, that's one of the incentives that the men had. I kept telling them I'd get this doggone island cleaned up and we'd head back to Maui, come on let's go. And they were all for that.

MR. FRANK: Maui was a good training and *stationary*? ^{stationary area?}

GENERAL GATES: It couldn't have been better. The Fourth Division was by far the luckiest division in the war, I think. Because they went into Roi Namur and then they went to Maui to regroup and to retrain and of course there was no camp there at that time. But there was excellent terrain. I mean, a very large artillery range and all kinds of you might say mountains, cliffs, and bluffs. And they trained for a couple months I think it was and then went into Saipan. Then we had Tinian and we went back to Maui. And by that time we were getting kind of -- not a semi-permanent camp -- but getting things in good shape and by the time that we went into Iwo Jima, we had a most excellent camp with good facilities, good training area, good recreation areas, and of course Maui was a very wonderful spot for you might say tourists and gals and everything else. So the men thoroughly

enjoyed it.

MR. FRANK: There was civilization on that island?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. In fact, right now it is one of the resorts in the Hawaiian Islands and was then.

MR. FRANK: Well, you of course were more fortunate than the old First Division. We didn't . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh the First Division suffered. My gosh, every place they went they had to dig in the ^{the} jingle you might say to make a camp and they had no recreational facilities. I mean no liberty area. I think on Maui we even sent men to Honolulu on liberty.

MR. FRANK: The morale was pretty high then you would say.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, very high.

MR. FRANK: You returned to Maui when from Tinian?

GENERAL CATES: I've forgotten the exact date. It was in August there.

MR. FRANK: Let's see, maybe I have it here.

GENERAL CATES: I used to be able to remember all those dates accurately. I think it was about the middle of August or a little after the middle of August.

MR. FRANK: Yes, that's right. You arrived on the 24th at Maui. How soon after -- I would assume that your replacements came in and you regrouped. How soon after did you begin your training cycle again?

GENERAL CATES: Oh practically immediately.

MR. FRANK: Had you received your warning order already for Iwo?

GENERAL CATES: No, not at that time. But we soon had it and we started preparing for it. And as I said, the terrain on Maui is just ideally suited for training and particularly for Iwo Jima because there were all kind of mountains and bluffs and caves. We had jungle training and we even put up, as I remember, 200-target range, 200 targets. The machine gun range was perfect. I might say for the record that we did something on Maui there that was a great booster for morale for the Division. When we returned from Tinian, Pat Hanley, football coach, got me to let him enter a team in the Pacific -- well you might say the Pacific Championship. Although we had been playing regimental, inter-regimental football, when he asked me to let him enter this team over in Honolulu, I said to him, "Pat, we can't hold a candle to the Air Corps and the Navy and the Army. They've got All-Americans on their team. We have a bunch of college boys but very few of those." But he talked me into it. So he went over to the meeting and they practically laughed at him. They said, "You can't stand up against these other teams." So they finally agreed to let us play in the league but the games were not to count in the championship.

We started the season and the first game was a scoreless tie. The next game we won 13-6. The next one twenty-something to nothing; the next one thirty-something to nothing; and the next one forty-something to nothing; and the next one fifty-something to nothing; and they still wouldn't give us the cup to be the champions of the Pacific.

MR. FRANK: Well, I'll be darned.

GENERAL CATES: We had one touchdown scored against us all during the season.

MR. FRANK: That was great. What was he, your special services officer?

GENERAL CATES: He was in it. I've forgotten his exact -- he wasn't in charge of it, he was coach I think at one of the Indiana Universities. I don't know whether it was the University of Indiana or not.

MR. FRANK: Well, this of course was a morale booster. Where were the games played? In Honolulu?

GENERAL CATES: We played, I think, two of them in Maui and the other five, I think it was, over in Honolulu. But we were playing against professionals. One Air Force team had five professionals on it.

MR. FRANK: *This was* Of course, that was the early days of pro football in a way.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Do you recall about what time you got your warning order for Iwo?

GENERAL CATES: No I don't. I'm really sorry, I've forgotten when we did get it. But the records would tell you.

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir. What was your impression when you received your copy of the operation order -- operation plan?

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, I must say that I misjudged it in a way because after studying the thing, knowing what they had there, I figured we could take the island in a couple of weeks or three at the most. And I must admit that General Smith felt just the opposite and he knew it was going to be a tough^{er} operation than I thought it was going to be. Of course, by that time, our men were beautifully trained and when we boated out of Maui, we first went to Pearl Harbor and then we boated and made a practice landing back on Maui -- on the west coast of Maui. In other words, tried to make everything just as near like Iwo Jima as we possibly could.

MR. FRANK: What was the basis for General Smith's belief that it was going to be more difficult an operation?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: He didn't rationalize his . . .

GENERAL CATES: Well, he may have, I've forgotten. But I tell you one

thing. He G-2d the situation on a heck of a lot of operations. You take that Alaska operation. He kept telling the Army that there was nobody there -- what was it? Attu?

MR. FRANK: Attu and Kiska.

GENERAL CATES: But the island that they attacked, and there wasn't any Japs, that was . . .

MR. FRANK: Attu.

GENERAL CATES: Attu, was it?

MR. FRANK: That was Buckner's outfit.

GENERAL CATES: Because up there, he even said, "Hell, there's nobody on that island. Can't you see those pictures? Those trucks haven't moved in ten days." He said, "I'll take a boat and go in there with a corporal." They wouldn't let him do it.

MR. FRANK: What special preparations did you make for the Iwo operation?

GENERAL CATES: Actually none in particular. There was one that we made that Admiral Harry Schmidt still laughs about. It seems that I think we put a lot of concrete on our tanks to reinforce the armament on it. When it came time to load them on the LSTs, Harry Hill says, "Hell, if you loaded those tanks on there and we got in heavy seas, the LSTs would have gone right to the

bottom."

MR. FRANK: You reinforced your tanks with concrete?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Wasn't there some reinforcement done on heavy planking?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we did that but that wasn't too heavy. In fact, when we took the concrete off, we put the planks on.

MR. FRANK: Of course, ^{when} _A that planking gets a direct hit, it would be much like the old days of wooden ships and sails where the men around there would be killed by splinters.

GENERAL CATES: Well, you'd get that even if it hit the armament.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Of course, now tank-infantry tactics became very important at this time, did it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it did. We needed to learn how to operate with the tanks and how, you might say, take cover with the tanks and follow them.

MR. FRANK: Of course, the Marines had to provide cover for the tanks as well and protect them.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Because the Japs were quite at good at laying low and then running and planting a mine on tanks.

MR. FRANK: Yes. The volcanic ash of Iwo. Was it known to the G-2 people?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think it was because, as I told you the other day, the underwater demolition people or frogmen only made a reconnaissance you might say to the water's

edge. They didn't get up where the sand was dry.

They didn't realize that you'd bog down in it so.

MR. FRANK: I imagine if someone had brought back a bunch of that ash it would have changed things drastically.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't know what you could have done about it really. We had matting. But it came as a complete surprise, there's no doubt about that.

MR. FRANK: Would you tell for the record that situation wherein the picture of the profile of the island appeared in the Honolulu newspapers and shook everybody up?

GENERAL CATES: I've forgotten what . . .

MR. FRANK: You remember how someone got a picture of a map of the Marine's next objective or the picture of the terrain model that appeared in the newspaper?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, but I don't think I know anything about that. I remember it now.

MR. FRANK: It created quite an intelligence ~~fly~~¹⁴⁸ up I think.

GENERAL CATES: Well, it's hard to camouflage an operation like that. Of course, by the time we had gotten to Saipan where we stayed quite a few days. I mean, the commander on Iwo knew that we were coming. There wasn't any question about that. We might as well have written him a letter.

MR. FRANK: You were probably as well prepared for Iwo as possible.⁹

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I think so, with the possible exception as you said

the other day about the naval gunfire. And as I said, naval gunfire in my opinion against personnel is ~~mainly~~ ^{great} overrated. It does practically very little damage except it's demoralizing. But of course against targets above ground and guns and tanks or whatever you have, it is effective more or less. And cutting down our naval gunfire there by two or three days whatever it was, it cost us a lot. Although the Japs had their guns pretty well dug in, some of them back in caves and things, there were quite a few that could have been reached with more naval gunfire.

MR. FRANK: At what point did you realize that the taking of Iwo was not going to be as easy as you first believed?

GENERAL CATES: Well after the, you might say, first day.

MR. FRANK: When did you go ashore yourself?

GENERAL CATES: I didn't go ashore until D plus 4. I intended to go on D plus 1 and then that blow came up and there weren't any boats going in at all. I could have gone personally but I couldn't have gotten my staff in, you might say, ^{with} the communications set-up.

MR. FRANK: This blow-up, this having winds and waves -- did that create quite a problem for the troops already ashore?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, in a way because the beach was just a mass of boats broken and sunk. In fact, for I think two days

they didn't allow any boats to land at all. I mean they couldn't clear the beach. And of course, it came as a complete surprise to the Navy as they thought the prevailing wind would be from the south, southwest. That's why they wanted to make a landing on the east coast. As it turned out, as I told you the other day, the landing on the west would have been much easier and better terrain and we wouldn't have been flanked on each side. The Navy, of course, turned it down for a perfectly good reason because there is a lot of foul ground on the west coast and their ships couldn't have operated close in.

MR. FRANK: It would be quite a problem to transfer from landing craft to amtracs and so on.

GENERAL GATES: Yes, but it would have worked much better. And I suggested it at one meeting, I think it was in Pearl well before the operation and I was more or less laughed down, you might say. They said it couldn't be done and besides the prevailing wind was from the west, it would be more difficult. But I didn't like the idea of landing in a ~~bite~~^{right}, you might say, where you were flanked on both sides.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course this was the problem with Surabachi on one flank and the high ground on the right.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: How well did the Japanese have this alternate area that you recommended defended?

GENERAL CATES: They had it defended but it wasn't defended -- I would say it wasn't defended half as much as the east coast because the terrain over there was not as suited to defense like that right flank of ours up there on that bluff and all the way up Hill 382.

MR. FRANK: Of course, when you landed it was two Divisions abreast, the Fifth Division on the left and the Fourth on the right.

GENERAL CATES: And it didn't end that way because the Third Division had most of their division in the center.

MR. FRANK: Well, the Third came in later although they were . . .

GENERAL CATES: One regiment came in and was attached to me for about three or four days.

MR. FRANK: 21st Marines, wasn't it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: And part of the Ninth and the Third Marines never landed.

GENERAL CATES: Never.

MR. FRANK: Except I think parts of them did. What were some of your thoughts as the operation unfolded? What were some of your problems?

GENERAL GATES: Well of course, our problem was taking the old 382 and the "Meat Grinder" as they called it. Then we had to execute a complete change of direction. We went in advancing almost west and we turned north and then had to turn back and come down east. Of course, the terrain was the factor of this, it affected us mostly. We got down to our last little group of Japanese -- I estimate that there ~~were~~ probably three or four hundred of them -- and we had them surrounded completely. In fact, we were so close to them that we couldn't use our artillery and mortars were not effective. Finally we had to withdraw three or four hundred yards so that we could lay artillery on them and ~~Langdon's~~ ^{hanigan's} outfit finally wiped them out.

MR. FRANK: You were telling us the other day about General Smith observing the operation from the ship and seeing your troops there ^{lugs} ~~were~~ rather unhappy.

GENERAL GATES: Yes, he was on a -- I think he was on an LST as I remember it at that time and he was very close in shore. They were drawing no fire and he was probably a thousand yards out. He could see our men standing up on these rocky ridges on the coast there and they were not moving and then he came ashore and gave me billyhell for not advancing on that right flank. I explained to him that

we just couldn't do it, that there were crevices there twenty to thirty feet deep and that we'd have to go from one to the other. I tried my best to get him to go with me and let me show him but he had business some other place.

MR. FRANK: The operation on Iwo took approximately how long?

More than double your estimate?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, definitely. I'd say altogether -- of course we were the first out. After we cleaned up our sector we bolted and returned to Maui. The Fifth and the Third Division remained there for I guess two or three weeks after we left. I think it took approximately six weeks after we were ashore, of course.

MR. FRANK: Which division sustained the heaviest casualties?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, we did.

MR. FRANK: Fourth Division?

GENERAL CATES: Yes. That right flank was a bitch if there ever was one.

MR. FRANK: Of course, once Surabachi was secured, the ~~fliers~~ coming down from there were neutralized.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And they didn't put too much on Surabachi. It was fortified but nothing like that rig up there on Hill 382, and that area.

MR. FRANK: Do you think they should have fortified Surabachi to a

greater extent?

GENERAL CATES: No I don't think so because they knew it was apt to be more or less isolated or taken. Their main defensive line was in the northern sector out there where the terrain was much better for defense.

MR. FRANK: A lot of vegetation?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, quite a bit to start with.

MR. FRANK: Scrub vegetation?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: *provided good concealment.*
It was a lot -- it did conceal them.

GENERAL CATES: Well of course, *there were* rocks and crevices.

MR. FRANK: How badly was your division hit, do you remember off hand?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, the records would show, I've forgotten it now.

MR. FRANK: You went back, of course, in March, near the end of March to Maui. Did you immediately replenish your personnel?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. Then, of course, we stayed there a considerable time, about five months. I might say for the records that except for the period just before the Japanese surrendered which was described to me, one day I received a despatch from General Geiger to proceed to Pearl with any members of my staff who I desired to bring on a certain date. So when we were leaving, we

were wondering what was coming off because we thought we were preparing for the invasion of Japan at that time. And the morning that we were leaving, I was sitting at the breakfast table and Colonel Pollock came in and said "I wonder what this is all about." I said, "I have a hunch he is going to have us take Wake Island." The staff looked at me and thought I was crazy and went on over and walked in and General Geiger greeted us and he said, "Cates, I have a directive here from the Navy to have your Division plan to take Wake Island." And everybody looked at me and my staff thought my gosh, you are crazy or something. But anyway, he out of a clear sky said, "What do you think you can take it with?" And I said, "Well, General I don't know until I get more dope and data." I said, "Of course, I know that they have a lot of troops there but they are in pretty bad shape physically and morally and mentally and every other way." So after the G2ing, ^{G-2 briefing} he said, "Well, what do you think?" And I said, "Well, General, I don't know. I never like to send a boy to do a man's work and I really think I could take with a reinforced regiment." "But," I said, "I would like to boat my whole division and have them available if it develops

into a big operation. Besides, it would be good training anyway to boat the whole division." So he said, "All right, go ahead and prepare your plans to take Wake Island." And it was only about a week after that that the Japanese surrendered.

MR. FRANK: The Fourth Division was part of VAC was alerted for this operation against Japan on the Tokyo Plain, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: You never got a warning order for the invasion of Japan?

GENERAL CATES: No, not as far as I know.

MR. FRANK: What did you do all the rest of the time at Maui? Your regular training cycle?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, we had very heavy training cycle. And as I said before, the morale was very high but there's no reason why it shouldn't have been because the people on Maui just took these people into their homes and did everything in the world you could think of. We built clubs, officers' club, NCOs and staff, and we had more or less a permanent theatre and believe it or not, we actually got thirty-one Red Cross girls assigned to us.

MR. FRANK: Tell me, after Iwo Jima did you ^{get} a directive, an official one or otherwise, requiring you to submit more recom-

mendations for awards and so on?

GENERAL CATES: Not that I can remember. But there was one thing that I criticized very severely and maybe I shouldn't, but we had a colonel in charge of the awards -- I say we did, FMF -- and he had an idea of more or less balance of decorations between units, which I fought very strenuously. I said why should the Fourth Division get more than the Fifth or vice versa, I mean why it should be equal. But he had an idea that he ought to equalize things.

MR. FRANK: In other words, if Fifth Division got six Medals of Honor, the Fourth should get six.

GENERAL CATES: The Fourth should get six and so on.

MR. FRANK: Isn't it a fact that whether or not a recommendation for award was approved depended on how the recommendation and citation was written?

GENERAL CATES: Oh definitely, yes. The ones that used the most beautiful language were the ones that got the most.

MR. FRANK: Wasn't there a point where you had to use some of the combat correspondents, the writers and so on, to help write citations?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know whether Colonel McCormick did that or not.

MR. FRANK: Was McCormick your G-1?

GENERAL CATES: No. At that time, let's see -- I've forgotten who was

G-1 at that time. Look back to the record.

MR. FRANK: You had Krulewitch, of course.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, we had Krulewitch but he was more or less my handyman. I might say one thing about Krulewitch for the records. Once on Iwo Jima when things were in pretty bad shape and we were trying to take that area around what we called the Meat-Grinder and we organized a battalion from the Headquarters troops and put Krulewitch in charge of it and he really did a good job.

MR. FRANK: Of course, he had been a World War I enlisted man, had he not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: After the surrender, VJ Day, what did you do? Increase the educational training?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, and we kept up our training. In fact, we stressed it a little more because you know how to keep men out of trouble was to work them. Because if they get too idle they go to pieces very easily.

MR. FRANK: We never had any of the so-called ¹²⁵rallies to send the boys home. There was nothing that occurred in the Marines such as occurred in other services, was there?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so. And there's one thing that I would like to comment on in a way. Of course, just

before Iwo Jima we were having quite a bit of this what they call battle fatigue. So we held numerous classes and devoted hours in other words in trying to combat that. We just put it up to the men -- there were very few cases of battle fatigue. Of course, everybody was tired. But the battle fatigue cases were the ones that were just yellow. If you look at the records of ours on Iwo Jima, you will find that they are very, very low.

MR. FRANK: How would you evaluate Iwo Jima? Was it necessary that it be taken?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, undoubtedly, because it saved thousands of lives as well as planes because the Air Corps returning from bombing Japan, if there were damages at all, they couldn't get back to their bases at Saipan or Tinian. The crippled ones were just lost. As it was, I've forgotten what the figure is but it was something enormous, about the crippled planes that landed on Iwo Jima.

MR. FRANK: A B-29 landed there while the battle was still going on, didn't it?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I'll say it did. It went right into the end of the runway, *in fact*, where it ended up it was only about six or eight hundred yards from the Japanese

lines. It went right into it.

MR. FRANK: When did you get word that the ~~force~~ was to be disbanded?

GENERAL CATES: I think it was along ~~in~~ September.

MR. FRANK: You still had command of the Division?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, and of course we returned piecemeal from the islands and started to send them back in October, as I remember it, and then the last was in November. We came home mostly on the baby carriers.

MR. FRANK: The Magic Carpet.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. Then we went to Pendleton, of course, and were demobilized from Pendleton.

MR. FRANK: And you received your orders to Quantico then.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was there any concern after the war the Commandant convened a board for selecting out general officers, do you recall?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I remember something about it but I don't know the details.

MR. FRANK: Well, you would have been considered, I assume that all general officers came up before the Board to be considered for retention or selecting out.

GENERAL CATES: I'm not really acquainted with that. I remember something about it but sure I guess I would have been.

MR. FRANK: Then if you had no knowledge of it, there wouldn't have been any matter of being concerned about it.

GENERAL CATES: No, it never entered my mind.

MR. FRANK: Do you recall those who were kept and those who left, though?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. The ones that were kept.

MR. FRANK: When you were back at Quantico, you were there for approximately a full three years almost, plus two weeks, you were President of the Marine Corps Equipment Board and Commandant of the Marine Corps Schools.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. That President of the Equipment Board was just a makeshift job until General Torrey retired. In fact, I wasn't qualified to be head of that at all. I'm not mechanically minded, I knew very little about weapons or anything like that and I was just a figure head.

MR. FRANK: What was the nature of your duties down there? Was it primarily a rebuilding job?

GENERAL CATES: You mean on the Equipment Board?

MR. FRANK: In Quantico at the Schools.

GENERAL CATES: Oh ^{Aye} Yes. As you know, there's all kinds of schools there -- the Staff School, the Base School, the Ordnance School, Equipment and so on, all kinds. And I was just the Head of it -- ^{the} administrative ^{Job} you might say.

MR. FRANK: There was nothing unusual then in this two years --
this two year period as far as your career goes?

GENERAL CATES: No, except of course Quantico has always been a place
for visitors from Washington, official visitors, and
we had to wine and dine them and of course, Secretary
Wilson, later after I was Commandant, had his Joint
Civilian Orientation groups down and he had the con-
ference of Admirals and Generals including from the
President on down -- President Eisenhower and Nixon
and the different secretaries, Defense, ^{and} Humphrey Lovensbury Jr.

MR. FRANK: Of course, this was later.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, this was after I was Commandant.

MR. FRANK: I think maybe Eisenhower was the last President who
ever visited Quantico.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I guess so. He came down on two occasions. I
was trying to wrack my brain -- I think those Joint
Civilian Orientation groups started when I was there
the first time. They'd have all these heads of the
different corporations down.

MR. FRANK: I remember, I was an ~~officer~~ guide for one when
you were at Quantico. JCOC, they used to call them.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: When did you first know that you were going to be
appointed as Commandant?

GENERAL CATES: It was actually when President Truman told me because I can say with all honesty that I never considered being Commandant. I never thought about being Commandant. It never entered my mind.

MR. FRANK: There's always this element in the Marine Corps, I imagine, since the first time that the Marine Corps was founded. Always some kind of an anchor pool, people trying to G-2 the situation, who's going to be the next Commandant.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, there's always a lot of guessing but they're usually wrong.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Well, it must have been at that time when General Vandegrift was due to retire. Did you have any estimate or had you made some guesses as to who you thought was going to make it?

GENERAL CATES: As I remember, I really didn't give it too much consideration. Of course, with all due respect to General Vandegrift, who I think is a close friend of mine -- I know I am to him -- I don't think that he recommended me or Shepherd either. I'm not sure of that but I'm pretty sure that he was for General Turnage.

MR. FRANK: Of course, President Truman was not¹⁴ very much Marine Corps oriented and was not particularly friendly to the Marine Corps. His comment about getting all the

Admirals out of the White House, I think is fairly well known, after he took over. Therefore, it would seem that it is rather unusual that he did not accept the Commandant's recommendation.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I actually do not know whether General Vandegrift ever contacted the President on it. At that time, the Secretary of the Navy was really a most important job and you might say that he carried a lot of weight, in fact in my opinion, practically all the weight. So one day I received a call from Secretary Sullivan to be at his office at four o'clock on a certain date -- I've forgotten when. When I appeared there, General Shepherd was there also. I said, "Lem, what's this all about?" And he said, "I don't know." So we waited fifteen or twenty minutes and finally Secretary Sullivan burst out of his office in a hurry and said, "Come on, come on. Let's go, let's go." And he went out the door and we followed and got down to the car and I said, "Mr. Secretary, what is this?" He said, "We're going over to see President Truman and we're late now." He said, "He's going to decide who's going to be Commandant. One of you is going to be Commandant." So that's the first we knew of it. We went over and we first went in Charlie Ross's office and sat there for

ten or fifteen minutes and finally some staff member of the President came out and asked Mr. Sullivan to go in. He went in and talked to the President for about ten or fifteen minutes. Then he came out and said, "Cates, the President wants to see you." So I went in and he talked to me for a long time. He in effect said that I have to make the appointment as Commandant and he said, "I really don't know anything about either of you but your records are practically identically the same. You both have been in World War I and World War II." And he said, "It's up to me to make the decision." He said, "I've had a lot of political pressure brought to bear on me to appoint a certain officer and I don't like it." I said, "Mr. ^APresident, kind of insult your intelligence, don't they?" And he said, "They sure do."

So then after he dismissed me then Shepherd went in. He talked to him for quite a long time. Shepherd came out and Secretary Sullivan went back in. I said to Lem as we sat there, I said, "Lem, this is like a dog show. We're waiting to see who's going to get the prize." So after a few minutes we both went in and the President looked over at Lem and he said, "General," -- and I was just ready to reach out and shake Lem's

hand, really I thought he was going to say you're going to be Commandant -- he said, "It's up to me to make the decision." He said, "It's all even practically. You're younger than he. Cates is senior to you on the seniority list." And he said, "You'll have your chance later." And he turned to me and said, "You're going to be Commandant." That's the way . . .

MR. FRANK: What was your reaction?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know. I know by the time I got back to Quantico and told my wife, I was doing a lot of thinking though and wondering if I really wanted it.

MR. FRANK: How long after -- did any of this leak out, do you think?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, I'm sure it did. I've forgotten though. I think it was released right away as I remember it.

MR. FRANK: Of course, in the history of our Corps each Commandant has put his own personal stamp on the Corps whether it's been in the way of uniforms or ceremonies or conduct of Staff activities at Headquarters, many things. There are many things within the context or framework which go on regardless. But there are many others with the stamp of his personality. How would you characterize your tour as Commandant?

GENERAL CATES: I'd hesitate to even try to do it. It's up to other people to do that. All I can say is I was damned lucky.

I had an excellent staff -- and I mean a good staff.

You take from my Assistant Commandant down. And of course as you know, we were battling for our lives at that time.

MR. FRANK: Yes, I'm going to talk about that. You were appointed for two or four years?

GENERAL GATES: Four years. In fact, the law reads the Commandant of the Marine Corps shall be appointed for four years. It doesn't say will be.

MR. FRANK: Why do you suppose that later on Pate only got it for two years?

GENERAL GATES: I think it was just a mistake. I think that's why he was reappointed.

MR. FRANK: You don't think there was any plot on the part of the Administration and the Secretary of Defense at this time?

GENERAL GATES: I don't know. No, I wouldn't say there was any plot. I think that maybe he was following the Navy custom of the CNO.

MR. FRANK: Well now, wouldn't it appear that such a gross error as that should have been caught by Pate's staff or someone else who had been appointed after the Secretary?

GENERAL GATES: Yes, I think so and I think maybe it was. I'm not sure, but I think maybe it was because when Pate's two years was up, I really didn't think he would be re-appointed.

And I was pulling very strongly for General Pollock at that time. Either General Pollock or General Jerome. I recommended both of them.

MR. FRANK: That would have been the first aviation Commandant.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Do you think an aviator has a chance of becoming Commandant?

GENERAL CATES: Oh some day, yes. But of course, the ground troops dominate, you might say, I mean a larger percentage...
Yes, I think some day you'll definitely have one.

MR. FRANK: You are aware, General, of the fact that there is great controversy despite all the lip service given to the close air support -- Marine air-ground team concept. Yet there is this chasm, this schism between Marine ground personnel and Marine aviation personnel.

GENERAL CATES: Oh I think that's overrated. *Let's cut here for a minute.*

MR. FRANK: *We were* Talking about the situation going into New Zealand before Guadalcanal.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, as you know, we boated out of San Francisco and headed to New Zealand with the expectation of being there for probably six months of training. A day or two prior to our arriving at Wellington, we received word to prepare to disembark *unloaded* on ~~lowland~~ and combat load ships for an operation. So the minute we hit

there the Fifth Marines had arrived there considerably before that. They had already started combat loading. The day we arrived, it started raining and for nine solid days it poured rain and we had to unload every ship and reload. And of all the messes you've ever seen on that dock because most of the things were packed in paper cartons and we were shy on everything. I mean, spare parts -- I would say that we were at least twenty per cent shy on spare parts or equipment or arms in my regiment. For instance, we didn't have ^{sights} ~~sights~~ for our half-tracks and things like that. So we worked twenty-four hours a day around the clock in driving rain trying to reload, but of all the messes I've ever seen this was the worst. Prior to going there, we had received word, of course, that liquor was very short in New Zealand. In fact, it was almost impossible to get. So we carried a considerable amount of liquor. About the second day there, I sent my paymaster Heming up to one of the clubs and asked him if he could make arrangements where we could make use of the club for the next few days, knowing that we were going to be there just a few days. They were only too glad to grant us the courtesy. They set aside some rooms for us and so we took our liquor up there and

every afternoon the officers in relays would go up and have a little. We would ask the New Zealanders to have a drink with us and they refused. It became very embarrassing in a way and finally I said to one of these chaps, "Listen, tell me, are you all mad at us? Why won't you drink with us?" So the man told me very plainly, he said, "Well, Colonel, the reason we won't do it is we can't reciprocate. And we hesitate to drink your liquor." And I said, "Listen, you're furnishing us, giving us the courtesy of your club, which we appreciate greatly and certainly we would like to buy you a drink or two." So after that we became very good friends.

MR. FRANK: *Herring was* with your paymaster, you brought all this liquor in from the States. That transfer of the rations and the combat loading at Aotea Quay, I think it was, in New Zealand; was it Wellington?

GENERAL CATES: Wellington.

MR. FRANK: Wellington, yes -- was probably one of the messiest situations that ever occurred.

GENERAL CATES: You mean the loading and unloading.

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes. There was no excuse for that whatsoever. As you read in my diary written at the time, I think a day

or two after we left San Francisco, I commented in this diary that this was the biggest boo-boo in the world not to combat load before you start any place because I don't care what the future plan is, it always can be changed.

MR. FRANK: And it was.

GENERAL CATES: And it was changed. It would have saved us a lot of misery and we would have been in much better shape.

MR. FRANK: We'll get back to later days. We were talking about when you were appointed Commandant. Now, did you make many changes? Certainly the nature of post-war operations and the post-war position of the Marine Corps had been changed. The Marine Corps had been cut down with demobilization and everything else and certainly you had to change the pace of the Marine Corps activities from what it had been during the War and under General Vandegrift. This was pro forma. What else changed? I mean what other things?

GENERAL CATES: There wasn't any material change that I know of. Of course, it was gradual and I would say that probably the biggest one was the development of the helicopter. Because there's no question about it, the Marines were responsible for the development of the helicopter. The Army was lukewarm to it, the Navy didn't want any part

of it. We started out there at Quantico with these helicopters and as I remember, the old Piasecki, the old flying banana, was the first. It shook like it had DTs. And that actually started the helicopter. As you say, we were being cut to the bone gradually and being strangled to death, as somebody put it. We tried to maintain our skeleton organization of two divisions. In fact, every time any member of the Congress would more or less hop on Secretary Johnson, he'd say they have two divisions. Well, hell, they were just a skeleton -- each one was a skeleton division. Probably there may be a good regiment in each one.

MR. FRANK: What do you think Johnson's motives were? I mean he's been characterized many ways and certainly . . .

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. We were just up against an obstacle there and as you say President Truman didn't have any love for us but still he was fair and square, he was honest in it. And as you say, he said we should be the Navy police force.

MR. FRANK: He meant it.

GENERAL CATES: And that was it. And Johnson disliked us very much and of course there was a group in the Army with thumbs down on us and they made all kind of plans to absorb us.

MR. FRANK: Forrest Sherman, ^{The} our CNO, certainly was no friend of ours.

GENERAL CATES: No, he wasn't. And for the record I would like to say something in regard~~s~~ to him. When they were going to make the appointment, Secretary Matthews and I would talk and I was recommending Radford very strongly at that time. In fact, the day that Forrest Sherman was appointed, I sat next to the Secretary in a briefing of some kind and I showed him an article that was in the Christian Science Monitor that more or less attacked Forrest Sherman. And I said, "That's the way I feel about him." So he read the thing at this conference, turned it over and looked at it and handed it back to me. That afternoon Forrest Sherman was appointed. So as soon as he came in, I went over and paid a call on him and I told him, "Admiral, I want to tell you very plainly, you were not my candidate for CNO." And I said, "I know that you have been more or less thumbs down on the Marines. I don't know why. But I want to tell you that I'll support you." And he said, "Well, I'll support you too." And he did.

MR. FRANK: He did?

GENERAL CATES: He did, you know. After that, he was kind of luke-warm but I must say that as far as I know, he played

fair and square. But I think actually me telling him very plainly that he was not my candidate and I wasn't for him might have had some effect.

MR. FRANK: Of course, his brother was in the Marine Corps -- Paul Sherman.

GENERAL CATES: I really think that's where it dates back to. He thought that Paul got a raw deal.

MR. FRANK: Really.

GENERAL CATES: That's just guessing.

MR. FRANK: That's when Paul lost his flight orders?

GENRAL CATES: I don't know.

MR. FRANK: He had been an aviator earlier?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Someone else said that and that's possible. Of course, ^{Horton} he and ~~McCollum~~ who knew each other from way back didn't get along too well either.

GENERAL CATES: No, that's true.

MR. FRANK: When did you first become aware of this plot against the Marine Corps? I don't think it's dramatizing to call it a plot.

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't know whether you should call it a plot or just maybe it was an honest opinion of the group of officers and, with all due respect to my close friend Joe Collins, he was behind a good part of it -- the

Collins *B* plan. And of course, Bradley didn't like us either.

MR. FRANK: This goes back to Guadalcanal days, *almost* though.

GENERAL GATES: It actually stems back to World War I. The Army had never forgiven the publicity that the Marines got at Belleau Woods.

MR. FRANK: Do you think it is *as* minor a basis as that?

GENERAL GATES: Yes, I do. General MacArthur didn't like it. And it all was based on the fact that that first despatch came out by Floyd Gibbons told about the Marines at Chateau Thierry. And of course, Belleau Woods is very close to it and he was speaking of the town closest to to it and the Sixth Machine Gun Battalion -- I think it was the Sixth -- out of the Third Division was the one that actually was in Chateau Thierry, and stopped the advance across that bridge. It was a very small outfit but they always thought they got the dirty end of the deal. And a lot of jealousy developed during the war. In fact, after the war we had a knock-down drag-out fight in cafes and things up in Germany and in Paris between the Army and the Marines.

MR. FRANK: Well, I think Twining told me that after the Guadalcanal campaign was over before you went to Australia or some period in there at that time, he paid a visit

to his brother, Nate Twining, who was out in the Pacific at one of the bomber commands or what have you. And he visited him and also a group~~d~~ of other Army officers, among whom was Collins, and they were at a club-type atmosphere and they had been down in ~~Nowmey~~ some place. And there was precious little said in the way of congratulations about the job that the First Division had done on Guadalcanal. As a matter of fact, as the evening grew later and waxed warmer, the first threatening note -- Collins and a few others -- against the Marine Corps had been stated. This was 1943. So it goes back that far. Now we could talk about the concept, the high strategic level of the tri-elemental theory and everything else that Heinl has written about and what the Army believes its role was and all this other high-faluting theory but according to you, evidently it was just on a small petty . . .

GENERAL CATES: There was a gradual build-up. I mean they've always objected to the publicity that the Marines have gotten and of course we go in for publicity. I mean, it's good for morale. And I think there's been a certain amount of jealousy.

MR. FRANK: Well of course, the Marine Corps is in a way an elite

organization.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: It's unique, if nothing else. When you gave your speech, your State of the Union address so to speak setting forth your policy after you were sworn in -- I believe the Commandant generally does this within the first few weeks in January -- what were some of the elements, some of the factors that you spoke about.

GENERAL CATES: You know, when I actually look back on that I can't think that I even made one. I really don't. I know that General Vandegrift, after I was appointed, -- no, it was when I was taking over -- that he had a conference of newspaper people and there wasn't much brought up. This fellow, Norris, is it? -- in the Washington Post?

MR. FRANK: Yes.

GENERAL CATES: He shot some pretty tough questions at me and I more or less dodged them. I mean, it was about the Army of course. And he didn't like that and I must admit that I didn't like it either. But there wasn't any particular State of the Union message that I made.

Fifth Oral History Interview

with

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES, USMC (RETIRED)

10 October 1967

At the General's Home in Edgewater, Md.

By Mr. Benis M. Frank
Head, Oral History Unit, Historical Branch,
G-3 Division, Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps

For the Marine Corps Oral Program

MR. FRANK: We ended last time, General, we talked about your selection for the Commandancy. I think you said that you had no inkling that you were in the running, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: That is correct. I can honestly say that I never even considered it.

MR. FRANK: And also you told us about the time that President Truman took you and General Shepherd in and explained what the circumstances were. Now, your selection was for a four-year tour, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I think the law states emphatically that the Commandant of the Marine Corps shall be appointed for a period of four years.

MR. FRANK: There's never been any problem about the Commandant getting that full four-year tour, has ^{there?} ~~it~~

GENERAL CATES: Well of course, General Pate's first appointment was for two years which I really couldn't account for and then later he was appointed for another two years.

MR. FRANK: What did you envision as being your job before you as Commandant? What faced you?

GENERAL CATES: Well, at that time, it was a question of the existence of the Marine Corps. That was the biggest one question. I think when General Vandegrift turned it over to me, he said, "I have three problems." The first, of course,

is the fight that some people are making to cut the Marine Corps to the bone and the other one was in regard to the publication of General Holland "Mad" Smith's book, and the other one was kind of a political appointment that had been offered a pretty big man -- a commission rather to a very big man -- that had quite a bit of influence and he wasn't qualified physically at all. General Vandegrift left it in my lap to disapprove.

MR. FRANK: The reverberation from that could be quite costly, couldn't it have?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it could have.

MR. FRANK: Was it?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think really. And I might state here that later on he was given a commission in the Navy, I think as a Commander, I'm not sure.

MR. FRANK: Let's take the minor things first -- relatively, that is and talk about "Coral and High Brass" /"Coral and Brass"/ by Holland Smith. How was that going to affect the Marine Corps?

GENERAL CATES: It actually didn't affect the Marine Corps. It irritated, I think, a lot of people in the Navy because he was quite critical.

MR. FRANK: The Army rather.

GENERAL CATES: No, the Navy. Well, both the Army and the Navy. The Army combat thing of Saipan was Schmidt versus Smith, but he was also critical of some of the doings of the Navy Admirals.

MR. FRANK: I understand he wrote it with Percy Finch. Wasn't he a retired Sergeant who had been in the publicity bureau in Philadelphia for a long time?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: I think he was. Well, did you have any personal contacts or conversations with General Smith over the book?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, quite a few. In fact, I wrote him a number of times and finally, I don't know whether I ordered him to Washington or whether he came on his own accord, but he came to Washington and came to my office and we discussed the book and I urged him not to have it published. In fact, he was going to give the go-ahead sign the next day. After talking at some length, he still said he was going to publish it and I finally said to him, "General, Geiger was a good friend of yours, wasn't he? One of your best." He said, "Yes, he was." I said, "Well, if he was alive today, he wouldn't want you to publish that book." And with that, the tears started coming down General Smith's cheeks and he

looked at me and all of a sudden he jumped at me and I thought he was going to hit me. He said, "Goddamn it, don't hit me below the belt." I said, "All right, go ahead and publish it."

MR. FRANK: Why were General Vandegrift and why were you so sensitive or the Marine Corps so sensitive about having the book published? Was it because of the nature of the times as far as the Marine Corps was concerned?

GENERAL CATES: Well, we figured it was more or less past history and we didn't want to bring up old sores and also create well, you might say, more ill feeling towards the Marine Corps.

MR. FRANK: But all things considered, the points he made were quite valid, weren't they?

GENERAL CATES: I think so. I think they were all perfectly honest.

MR. FRANK: What was his axe to grind, do you have any idea?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think it was an axe to grind as it was just to, you might say, set the records straight.

MR. FRANK: Of course, he suffered a great many frustrations being out there as FMFPac head. Certainly the Marine Corps did not have its way all the time in the Pacific.

GENERAL CATES: No, he had battle after battle. In fact, he had a lot that we didn't even know about.

MR. FRANK: I think the records indicate that -- that he suffered

in silence with great forbearance on his part which you can see in his letters to General Vandegrift.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: He didn't want to do anything that would embarrass General Vandegrift or the Marine Corps but he had a great cross to bear out there.

GENERAL CATES: And as I stated previously, I think his nickname of "Howling Mad" is a misnomer because he wasn't as near tough as people thought he was.

MR. FRANK: Well, it was good for the other services to feel that he was.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: I think that anybody that did serve with him or was on his staff knew him to be quite gentle and a very feeling man. What was the reaction when the book was published?

GENERAL CATES: Practically none. I don't think it really did any harm and I don't think it did any particular good except just to complete the records.

MR. FRANK: It was published in serial form in the Saturday Evening Post, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: I really have forgotten.

MR. FRANK: And I think the Army was unhappy. There was tremendous reaction on the way he presented the Saipan conflict.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: But with the Marine Corps you didn't feel any reverberations in your office.

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: Now what were your relations with President Truman? How were they? Was it close or did you get to see him and work with him at all?

GENERAL CATES: I would say it was fairly close. I saw him a number of times. Of course, he was down at Quantico and as I've said before, I really admire the man. I think that maybe his statements really did us more good than any other one thing.

MR. FRANK: Although he didn't intend to do it that way.

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so but . . .

MR. FRANK: Just a real common -- and I say common not in a disparaging sense -- but he was an honest man just striking back to what he thought ^{were} ~~was~~ too many blows from Congress.

GENERAL CATES: He certainly was. And when he made the statement that we had a propaganda machine almost equal to that of Stalin, he really had something because we did. There wasn't any question about that. We did everything in the world to get our friends behind us. And the former Marines and friends that had served with the Marine Corps -- correspondents and things -- they poured it on Congress and on the White House -- letters and tele-

grams.

MR. FRANK: Well, talking about friends, a lot of it was not directed from Headquarters though. I think we ought to get this straight for the record. Was it?

GENERAL CATES: Oh, worlds of it wasn't but some was. I mean we all did because when you're fighting for your life, naturally you're going to do everything you can.

MR. FRANK: Well, you had the reservists behind -- actually you had tremendous shackles put on you by Louie Johnson, didn't you not?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, but he couldn't stop that.

MR. FRANK: You mean he couldn't stop the reservists or the . . .

GENERAL CATES: No, the Marine Corps League, our reserves, and everyone that had ever served with us. It crystallized you might say the support of the Marine Corps.

MR. FRANK: Talking about the Marine Corps League, that's been an embarrassment to the Marine Corps over the years at various times, has it not?

GENERAL CATES: At some periods, yes.

MR. FRANK: I think in 1949, the Marine Corps League made a presentation of their Non Sibi Sed Patria award to Senator McCarthy. Was there much fall-out from that?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: Did you have any problems with McCarthy or any relations

with him at all?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, we had very close relations with him and he really did us a lot of good. He worked for us and as you know we had at that time quite a few members in Congress and they supported us loyally. We had Senator Douglas and McCarthy and then we had Mansfield and a world of others.

MR. FRANK: In view of his controversial image in other areas, did his association prove an embarrassment at all?

GENERAL CATES: No, I don't think so at all.

MR. FRANK: Why do you think that the Marine Corps was having such a rough time?

GENERAL CATES: Well, it's hard to figure out exactly why. I think that maybe some of the Army generals thought by reducing the Marine Corps they would get a little more for the Army and, I don't think there is any question about it, that a lot of it was jealousy and a lot of it dated back to World War I when we got a little more publicity than they did.

MR. FRANK: The records show that the Marine Corps was not getting the kind of support it should have from the Navy though.

GENERAL CATES: No, we got lukewarm support and of course, with all due respect to Secretary Johnson, he was thumbs down on us, there wasn't any question about that.

MR. FRANK: Why was he thumbs down?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know.

MR. FRANK: How about Forrestal? What kind of support did we get from Forrestal?

GENERAL CATES: I would say fair. At times he supported us and I might say this, I think he was perfectly honest in his views. I mean, it's what he thought and, as I told you before, after he got in there as CNO, he supported me pretty well.

MR. FRANK: Not Sherman, I'm talking about . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I'm sorry, I'm all . . .

MR. FRANK: No, we talked about Forrest Sherman before.

GENERAL CATES: I didn't have too close contact with him. Of course, he'd come down to Quantico there when I was there and I saw quite a bit of him. Then when they had the Key West Conference when they were writing the missions, I tried to get in on it.

MR. FRANK: You were kept outside of that, weren't you?

GENERAL CATES: I was kept outside entirely. I didn't get to sit in on any of it -- any of the conferences.

MR. FRANK: This was a real ^{shock in the face} shock of fate to the Marine Corps, was it not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it was.

MR. FRANK: They just had you sitting out there cooling your heels

like a messenger boy.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I didn't get to Key West.

MR. FRANK: You didn't get to Key West.

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: Was there any Marine Corps representation down there at all?

GENERAL CATES: Yes and I've forgotten who it was. I don't know whether it was Silverthorn or not. Enter that in the record, will you? Find out who it was and place it in here. [Ed. Note: ~~Cates~~ ^{Wharton} ~~Silverthorn~~]

MR. FRANK: Would it have been the Marine Corps liaison officer on the CNO's staff? The position that ^{Wharton} ~~Wharton~~ had or the position that ^{Wharton} ~~Wharton~~ was supposed to have and someone else took it over.

GENERAL CATES: I don't know. But I might say one thing, I'd like to say one thing for the record. At the conference where I did sit in with the CNO, with Secretary Forrestal, I heard him make the assertion very plainly that the Department of Defense was purely an advisory and a coordinating agency and that he could never visualize the Department of Defense being over three hundred personnel. Look at it now.

MR. FRANK: Forrestal though, as Secretary of the Navy was a very strong booster of the Marine Corps -- a very strong

booster of the Navy too,

GENERAL CATES: Well, I think he was.

MR. FRANK: Do you think he became a captive of the JCS and the Department of Defense?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I think it was just a question of maybe having to let his staff make decisions. He usually got it by their recommendations.

MR. FRANK: Oh course, he became sick.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, just about that time too.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Well, it must have been an immense pressure and weight on his shoulders, bearing on him all the time. Of course, from the time that Louie Johnson came, you had nothing but trouble.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't know whether you'd call it trouble or not -- frustration because he would appear before committees and things and make the assertion that the Marines had two divisions and they didn't need any more when he well knew the two divisions were almost paper divisions, I mean skeletons.

MR. FRANK: Now, the Edson Committee existed under General Vandegrift's incumbency, is that correct?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: And he more or less disbanded that before he left?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, it wasn't in existence when I came in.

MR. FRANK: What was in existence to provide you with position papers and so on?

GENERAL CATES: Well, nothing except just the ordinary staff.

MR. FRANK: What was this group that the Navy had there?

GENERAL CATES: Op-31 I think they called it.

MR. FRANK: The revolt of the flat-top Admirals?

GENERAL CATES: No, we didn't have any such organization.

MR. FRANK: Was there not a think group down at Quantico?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: Was this the group that Krulak and Gayle and Heinl and Twining and a few others were involved in?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Was there some resistance on the part of senior officers to this type of activity?

GENERAL CATES: What do you mean, us having . . .

MR. FRANK: Well, on the part of Marine senior officers /blank spot in tape/ part of it and certain other officers.

GENERAL CATES: He may have, but I didn't know it.

MR. FRANK: As far as you were concerned ^{we're} all the senior Marine Corps ~~officers~~ ^A generals, senior officers were fully in support of any ammunition we could get to fight this battle we had?

GENERAL CATES: /blank in tape/

MR. FRANK: Well, but what happened thereafter -- many of the

people that were involved in this unification fight, many of the people -- and it was a small group -- admittedly were providing these background papers and providing the writing of speeches and supporting your positions and appearances before the committee. Many of them never made general officer rank. Now all things being equal, records and individual personalities and so on, take that aside and forget about that, I think the record will show that many of them found an end to their career in the rank of colonel.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, but that goes for all the rest of them. A certain amount are selected. I don't believe it was held against them.

MR. FRANK: You don't think this was held against them?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: The only reason I ask is because I've heard it said that it was and that there is a certain pattern, like Murray and Schatzel and well, Heinl perhaps.

GENERAL CATES: It's true they were very good officers but I can't believe it was held against them. It might have been later.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course, in the General Officers Selection Board, it's a knock-down, drag-out fight for individual officers, is it not?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, the higher you go in rank, the tougher it gets, the attrition is bound to be greater. And the selection boards -- you know how they work. I mean maybe one man on the selection board will know something about an officer that is not even on his record and if he can verify it and prove it, it has a great influence.

MR. FRANK: If it's not on the record and it's a matter of personal knowledge, is that brought up before the board?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, most boards.

MR. FRANK: They feel that what they have to do is too important to keep personal knowledge a secret.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Now, '48, '49, and '50 were difficult years as far as the Marine Corps was concerned -- getting funds and everything else. What was your most important mission during this period, aside from this unification fight?

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, Korea. But the unification fight, you might say, was the top priority because they were trying to cut us/six BLT's and six squadrons, which really would have just made us what President Truman said, a police force.

MR. FRANK: Was there any preparation for Korea before June of

1950? Was there inkling? Did you have any intelligence?

GENERAL CATES: Of the War starting in Korea?

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir.

GENERAL CATES: None whatsoever that I know of.

MR. FRANK: Do you remember the exact circumstances and where you were at the time that you received this information?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I can remember when it first broke. I was there at Headquarters and for some reason Secretary Matthews cancelled his daily conferences and when he did have them, for some reason I was excluded. After about four days I went over and kind of forced my way in and at that time I saw Forrest Sherman and I told him, I said, "Forrest, it looks like the Army's 24th Division is in a pretty bad spot over there." And I said, "We can furnish a brigade by draining our two divisions." He said, "How soon could you have them ready?" I said, "We can have them ready as quickly as the Navy gets the ships." He said, "All right. I'm going to send a blue flag." (And I still don't know exactly what a blue flag was) to Admiral Joy and tell him that he can inform MacArthur that the Marines can send a brigade and an air group." So after a few days MacArthur requested the JCS to send a Marine division, not a brigade.

And when I saw Forrest Sherman I asked him, "How did you put this over?" And he said, "Well, from Gates to Sherman to Joy to MacArthur to the JCS." Within a few days we had the request to send a brigade. So we immediately took the ones from Camp Lejeune and Camp Pendleton. We took the ones from Lejeune and ordered them to Pendleton and organized a brigade and within about four or five more days they were boated in San Diego under the command of General Craig.

MR. FRANK: Now Shepherd was out in the Far East at this time, was he not?

GENERAL CATES: Yes, he was FMFPac.

MR. FRANK: Do you think he had any influence on the MacArthur decision?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know, but I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: This was quite a switch that MacArthur -- based on what has been told about MacArthur's attitude regarding the Marines, this is either false or he must have been in bad shape to have to call on the Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I think there are two sides to General MacArthur and his decision about the Marines. In fact, on one of my trips to Korea when I went through Tokyo -- in fact, my first trip to Inchon landing -- I asked him very plainly. I said, "General, why are you so down

on the Marines?" He said, "I'm not down on the Marines." He said, "The Marines are the best outfit I had in World War II." And he said it very plainly. He said, "When I want anything done, I know I can get it done by the Marines."

MR. FRANK: It is unusual that he should have chosen an Army officer to be the landing force commander for the Inchon assault, considering it was an all-Marine show and it was an amphibious assault.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, that's true. I don't know why.

MR. FRANK: Were there any hard feelings from the fact that they chose Army to be the commander?

GENERAL CATES: I really don't know.

MR. FRANK: What were you doing back here at Headquarters during the time that the fighting was going on for the rest of your period as Commandant?

GENERAL CATES: Well, just routine work as Commandant. We were, of course, still fighting for our existence at that time.

MR. FRANK: Even with our involvement in Inchon.

GENERAL CATES: Yes. And of course that was one of the fortunate things to happen to the Marine Corps. I mean we gained a lot of support from the Congress and everyone else.

MR. FRANK: Then finally the Douglas bill was passed?

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Which made you a member of the JCS.

GENERAL CATES: No, it didn't make me because it wasn't passed until I -- we laid the ground work while I was Commandant, my staff. And then it was passed when General Shepherd came in. Now wait a minute, I'm getting all mixed up.

MR. FRANK: Did your four years as Commandant go pretty quickly as far as you were concerned?

GENERAL CATES: I would say the first three years went quickly and the fourth year dragged.

MR. FRANK: Were you consulted for your successor -- saying who your successor was to be?

GENERAL CATES: No, but it was almost a foregone conclusion that General Shepherd would get it. President Truman had said to him, "Well, you'll have your chance later." He didn't say definitely he would be but he implied that.

MR. FRANK: There was no guarantee that he was going to live up to it though?

GENERAL CATES: No.

MR. FRANK: Why did the fourth year drag so slowly?

GENERAL CATES: Well, it was just the grind. I mean you go steadily, you know, with these long office hours and a certain amount of social -- some of it you can't get away from.

MR. FRANK: It was very social for you when you were Commandant, wasn't it?

GENERAL CATES: No, not near as much as some of the other people because I just wouldn't do it.

MR. FRANK: You were able to turn it down,[?]

GENERAL CATES: I didn't get mixed up with the embassy crowd. When you start going to the embassy parties, you're on the list and I must admit I went to three or four.

MR. FRANK: Did you and Mrs. Cates do anything unusual ~~through~~ to the Commandant's quarters? Change anything or redecorate?

GENERAL CATES: No, because when we took over, there was no doubt about it, Mrs. Vandegrift had done a wonderful job with the house. And, of course, it was repainted in spots but as far as decoration was concerned, we practically did nothing.

MR. FRANK: Did you have many parties over there?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, sir, you had to have parties.

MR. FRANK: Of course, the Friday night parade was pro forma.

GENERAL CATES: Well, we didn't have the parades at night. In fact, our parade at that time amounted to practically nothing. I mean we wouldn't turn out two or three hundred people to a parade.

MR. FRANK: Friday afternoons I think they were.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: When did they start becoming the big things they are

now?

GENERAL CATES: I think General Shepherd -- in fact, I know he really started it.

MR. FRANK: It is a real big production now.

GENERAL CATES: I don't know whether he started the night parades or not -- I don't believe he did. But he started doing it in a big way and then they just gradually got better and better.

MR. FRANK: Well, the last one I was at, President Johnson put in an appearance to see his son-in-law who was Parade Adjutant.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I see where President Johnson was over here at the Navy Chapel last week.

MR. FRANK: Yes. Well now, you knew at the time when General Shepherd was coming in that you could not then retire.

GENERAL CATES: I could have retired in about three ways. One was physical -- I mean if I had been physically disabled -- and the second one was for the best interest of the service, and I've forgotten the other stipulation but anyway it tied me down and I couldn't retire until I was 62. That law was made -- in fact it was a rider attached to a bill by Representative Van Zandt of Pennsylvania and I later gave him hell. I said he put me in a tough spot. He said, "Well, I wasn't

thinking of you people who had served thirty or thirty-five years but I was thinking of those people that were getting out on twenty years service about forty or forty-two years of age.

MR. FRANK: Do you think it was a good bill for that purpose he stated?

GENERAL GATES: Yes, I think there should have been an age limit there. Of course, a person who served thirty years I think should have been allowed to retire. But I didn't mind.
MR. FRANK: Well, Quantico was sort of a breeze for you thereafter,[?]
GENERAL GATES: Oh yes. It wasn't a breeze because at that time we were having a world of visitors -- I mean foreign visitors and of course Secretary Wilson had his conferences down there and he had the President Eisenhower and the Vice President and members of the cabinet down for the *JCO C.* *Hickock.*

MR. FRANK: Oh yes. Did that get out of hand a bit?

GENERAL GATES: No, I don't think so.

MR. FRANK: You didn't have any off-the-record problems?

GENERAL GATES: Well, they did but I mean most of it was just briefings and I think I told you previously the story of President Eisenhower coming down and us missing him at the gate.

MR. FRANK: No, I don't think so.

GENERAL GATES: Well, that's one for the record. The President first regretted and said he wouldn't come down and the day it started, at lunch I said to Mrs. Gates, "I've got a hunch the President's coming down." She said, "Well, what makes you think that?" I said, "I don't know." And I hadn't any more than gotten back at my office, when I had a call from the White House wanting to know if the President could change his mind and come down. In fact, we had invited him, of course, to stay at our home. So we made the arrangements. So along about three o'clock we went out to ~~the~~ triangle at the entrance to meet him and we had Secretary Wilson, and Vice President Nixon and Humphrey and all the JCS members and everything and waited about thirty minutes and finally a secret service man came over from across the street who had telephone communication with the White House and said the President's been delayed and won't be down for about an hour and a half. So Secretary Wilson said, "Well, what do you think we should do?" I said, "Well, let's go back to my home and sit down and have a drink." Which we did and some started playing bridge. And after about forty-five minutes I decided that we had better get out to ~~the~~ triangle, he might come early. So we had just loaded in about

ten or twelve cars and started down the hill when we heard the sirens of the MPs coming up the hill. And you know how narrow those streets are. We were going down and they were coming up and they went hell-bent for election right to my Quarters and we couldn't turn around until we got down to Barnhardt Avenue. And by the time we got back, the driveway was so congested with the reporters following the President that we couldn't get our cars up to our house which is, as you know, on the hill. When the President walked in our house this Negro steward, Sergeant Sam Lawson, met him at the door and stuck our his hand and said, "Welcome to Quantico, Mr. President. My name is Sam Lawson. Come right in and make yourself at home." *[Laughter]* The President said, "Well, Sam I'm glad to know you." And that was the way the President was greeted at Quantico. We had to run up that doggone hill about seventy-five yards straight up the hill and by the time we were all up there we were all out of breath, of course. But it is very seldom that a Negro sergeant ever welcomed a President to a post.

MR. FRANK: Did the President kid you about that?

GENERAL CATES: I said to him, "Well, that's twice that we missed the

boat, Mr. President." He said, "Oh, don't mind that.
It's all right."

MR. FRANK: Quantico, of course, was quite busy. As a matter of fact, I was down there at the time. I was one of your officer guides for one of the JCCGs, I think this guy a man by the name of Meyers was there and John Kieran. This was in May '51 or '52, May 30 '52. But as I recall, you really enjoyed being out there and briefing these people in the helicopter vertical development thing and . . .

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it's always a lot of pleasure.

MR. FRANK: Well, when the time came for you to retire, what were your feelings that now you were approaching thirty-seven years?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I don't know. Of course, I might have made a mistake in not getting out and getting a job and earning a little more money but at that time I thought I had enough to live on comfortably and I thought I'd spend a lot of time fishing and shooting and trapping.

MR. FRANK: Well, of course, you became quite involved in the USO among other things.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, I was National Campaign Chairman for a couple years and it was a job too, I might say.

MR. FRANK: Overcoming American apathy?

GENERAL CATES: No, it was the strain of traveling. When Secretary Sullivan, who was former-Secretary Sullivan, called me and said, "Cliff, I've got a job for you." And I said to him, "I don't want a job." He said, "Oh, this is not a paying job. It's just a figurehead job. They need a National Campaign Chairman for the USO." He said, "You don't have to make but about four trips a year." He said, "You go to New York once and here in Washington and then you make one or two other trips." And he talked me into it. So to make a long story short, I visited that year I think it was 28 cities from Seattle to Los Angeles to Miami to all the way north and every place I went I would have about six or eight or ten engagements a day, either making talks at luncheon or dinner or radio or TV and I've never worked so hard in my life. Then, of course, all you got out of it was expense money.

MR. FRANK: ... And heartburn from lousy dinners.

GENERAL CATES: Then Joe Collins, General Collins, had agreed to take over for me in one year and then when the time came, he said he couldn't do it so they talked me into taking another year. But I must admit I didn't work as hard the second year as I did the first.

MR. FRANK: I want to ask you a couple of things. First of all,

you served in the Marine Corps before the new ~~promotion~~
^{selection} system went into effect, I think it was in '33,
was it not, or '31?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes.

MR. FRANK: And of course, it was rougher under the old situation where it was just a matter of seniority. The Selection Board was an improvement. There has been considerable talk recently about the fact that the real bright and sharp young officers are stymied somewhat. As a matter of fact, there is quite a problem, as you realize, in ~~officer~~ resignations of outstanding individuals, those ^{officers} that feel frustrated and stymied. Do you think that there is any way that this can be overcome?

GENERAL CATES: I don't know how it can be, no. Of course, the old ^{The} system was ~~debunk~~, there's no question about that. If you stayed in long enough, you had to get up there. There wasn't any incentive. I think the system now is about as good as you can get.

MR. FRANK: What happens to real bright boys and real sharp ones who are perhaps more competent than some of their seniors? Should they go below the zone to pick them up? Or should there be pre-selection? Or should some of these people be ear-marked for certain assignments?

GENERAL CATES: I think they are. I mean, they go below the zone now.

MR. FRANK: Well, just recently.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: That's been within the last couple of years then.

GENERAL CATES: Of course, the Navy goes well down and I think all in all, a man gets credit for his ability.

MR. FRANK: Several months ago, Marine Corps Gazette had one of Lejeune forums articles on problems facing the officer corps in the Marine Corps, the fact that some of the good men were resigning. Of course, as General Krulak once told me, he said it all depends on how badly you want to be ^a in the Marines, whether or not you are going to stay in, what your choice is going to be. But do you think it has to be more than that or is that sufficient?

GENERAL CATES: I think it's sufficient. And of course, a lot depends on conditions outside in civilian, ^{life,} I mean a lot of these people are being given very wonderful jobs with big salaries and that has a lot to do with it. You'd have a recession in this country and it was going to be a little tougher on the outside, you wouldn't have as many resignations or retirements.

MR. FRANK: Well, there's another problem facing the Marine Corps or facing all officers but the Marine Corps particularly. Its officer corps is not so large that it can afford

to allow say an Academy graduate to take a Rhodes Scholarship and get out of the Corps for three years while he studies over in England. Do you think the Marine Corps makes provision for advanced education for its officers and insures that they will be promoted in time?

GENERAL CATES: I'm ^a ~~very~~ ^{NOT qualified} ~~not~~ ^{anymore} qualified to answer that.

MR. FRANK: It's iffy.

GENERAL CATES: I know it. No I don't believe so. I think you can get enough education in the Marine Corps after you ^{have} completed your college or the Academy.

MR. FRANK: Of course, you know that the Air Force, for instance, earmarks certain outstanding Air Force Academy graduates who are allowed to get their flight training and allowed to get PhDs and there's a sort of pre-selection in a sense that they are keyed for certain jobs. The Army has also done this sort of thing for selection of appointments of officers for the General Staff.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I think part of that is sales talk just to get people in.

MR. FRANK: It's an incentive, in other words.

GENERAL CATES: Yes.

MR. FRANK: Now, how would you sum up your thirty-seven year career

with the Marine Corps, General?

GENERAL CATES: Well, what do you mean exactly?

MR. FRANK: Well, it must have been satisfying; otherwise you wouldn't have stayed.

GENERAL CATES: Well, I'd say it was damn lucky, is all I've got to say. That's the truth too.

MR. FRANK: The changes were many?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, lots of them. Of course, I mean when I came into the Corps, I had no idea of staying in whatsoever. In fact, when I came in the Corps, I didn't know really what the Marine Corps was.

MR. FRANK: Yes, I recall that you said that. What were some of the outstanding changes you can pinpoint in that time?

GENERAL CATES: Well of course, the main thing was its change in tactics, you might say -- in training. Because we were used to fighting you might say bush warfare and in World War I we depended upon, you might say, just firepower with practically no maneuverability whatsoever and no teamwork of squads or platoons or anything else -- or a limited amount anyway.

MR. FRANK: The development of amphibious doctrine in the early '30s was a real boost to the Marines.

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, that was probably the biggest improvement that was ever made in the Marine Corps.

MR. FRANK: Was it difficult for the Marines to change their concepts and to adapt themselves to this?

GENERAL CATES: Oh yes, it was done gradually. You know how we used to start out amphibious operation, we'd land in old motor sailors and jump over the side and wade ashore. Well, it developed to the present with the helicopter.

MR. FRANK: Were there real growing pains involved in the development of tactics and techniques?

GENERAL CATES: Well, I'm sure there were. But at that time, when it was going on, I was on the West Coast and in China most of the time and I really didn't see much of it.

MR. FRANK: We talked about China and the fact that what was going on in the States didn't affect, had no impression on you people out in China at all.

GENERAL CATES: No, because our mission out there was entirely different. We were defending Shanghai, you might say -- the International Settlement in Shanghai.

MR. FRANK: Was there much resistance or was there any degree of resistance or a great degree of resistance on the part of more senior officers or even the field grade officers to this new emphasis on this amphibious warfare?

GENERAL CATES: There may have been some but nothing that I can pinpoint.

MR. FRANK: You kept up pretty well, within limitations of course, with what ~~was~~ is going on in the Marine Corps now.

And you've spoken to General Greene I am sure. What
you
do ^Aenvision for the future of the Corps?

GENERAL CATES: I would hesitate to even answer that question. But I don't think there is any question about the Marine Corps' existing and being the lead outfit that it is right now. And whether other people think so or not, it is.

MR. FRANK: There's no problem about its existence in the future, then?

GENERAL CATES: No, I can't see any whatsoever.

MR. FRANK: Well, is there any problem of its being absorbed into one big unified Department of Defense?

GENERAL CATES: I don't think so at the present time.

MR. FRANK: I mean we have gone by the herring-bone twill dungarees are out. Men on active duty wear black leather shoes and gloves and cap bills instead of the old cordovan.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, things like that, I mean and down to the belt buckle and everything else which God knows I can't see why the Department of Defense is butting in on little details like that. For instance, post tags. You can't have your own post tags, you've got to have some damned little stickers on there. There's too much interference by the Department of Defense in, you might say, the administration of the Corps and of posts.

MR. FRANK: Well now, one of the criticisms of what happened to the Marines in Korea was that it became involved with a static trench-type warfare. This was the nature of the fighting in Korea and it I think pretty well proves that it has just had a pretty bad effect on some of these people involved, certainly some of the junior officers. They didn't know amphibious warfare. This was all that they knew. I think the Marine Corps after Korea had a problem of getting back to its amphibious role.

GENERAL CATES: Well, in any war you have to adjust your tactics to the situation and actually, I mean, it wasn't trench warfare, it was what I would call kind of fox hole warfare.

MR. FRANK: Fox holes, static . . .

GENERAL CATES: Well no, because Inchon was certainly an offense and when they took that march up from Wonsan up there at the last -- I mean that was certainly no trench warfare there.

MR. FRANK: I'm talking about after the fighting in '51 and then the re-deployment to the West Coast ^{with} in the establishment of the Eighth Army line, the positions the Marines and the rest of the Eighth Army held until the truce went into effect. Now, there has been some criticism

that the Marine Corps is facing the same situation today. That is, they are fighting land warfare instead of using the amphibious tactics which ^{come} under the functions assigned by JCS.

GENERAL CATES: Well, of course, they are restricted over there in Vietnam now. I mean they have made a few amphibious landings but as long as you won't let them go into North Vietnam there ^{are} no amphibious operations that are worthwhile really.

MR. FRANK: Well, what are your prognostications, or how do you feel, what do you feel should take place there?

GENERAL CATES: In Vietnam?

MR. FRANK: Yes, sir.

GENERAL CATES: God only knows. I've changed my opinion two or three times and right now . . .

MR. FRANK: I'm not trying to pin you down.

GENERAL CATES: I know. I would say right now we are mired down so we have to fight it out. But I don't believe that we certainly should be restricted ^{as} ~~if~~ we are in regard~~s~~ to targets or what the local commanders do.

MR. FRANK: Well, it's really a real sticky thing and as I say, I'm not trying to put you on the spot.

GENERAL CATES: Oh, I guess one guess is as good as another. I mean but definitely if you are going to fight a war, you

shouldn't be tied down with one arm behind your back or restricted to what you use.

MR. FRANK: Well, this is much the same position, it's an analogy to what you faced or what President Truman faced in '51 and '50 up at the reservoir where MacArthur wanted to go across all the way to the border and cross over for fear of losing whatever allies he had and for fear of drawing Russia or Red China into the war. Isn't this the same situation?

GENERAL CATES: The same -- almost identical.

MR. FRANK: And of course, I don't think anybody wants to be responsible for starting what might be a third World War.

GENERAL CATES: No, but in any operation you are bound to take the calculated risk.

MR. FRANK: Of course, no one really knows an estimation of the possibilities.

GENERAL CATES: Yes, there's a possibility of China, Russia.

MR. FRANK: Well, I think we've pretty well exhausted -- I don't think we've exhausted every possibility as far as interviewing you, General. There are many questions probably left unanswered but on behalf of the Historical Branch and certainly General Greene, I want to thank you for participating in this.

GENERAL CATES: Well, thank you and I'm only too glad to do it. It's kind of mixed up and I wish the person who is to write it up would write it correctly grammatically and with common sense.

MR. FRANK: Well, this is the essence of the program and it's a verbatim record of reminiscences and ~~recollection~~ of your career.

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GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES
U. S. MARINE CORPS (RET.)
EDgewater, MD. 21037

29 November 1967

TO FORMER MEMBERS OF THE 96th CO, 2d BN, 6th MARINES.

With the compliments of the U. S. Marine Corps.

We are very much indebted to Doctor (former Gunnery Sergeant) and Mrs. Willard I. Morrey for the many years of research and the hundreds of hours they spent in preparing this history for publication. To both, our most sincere thanks.

Also, our appreciation to members of the Historical Branch, USMC., for the valuable assistance they gave in making the publication possible.

The old lieutenant wishes each of you much good cheer for Christmas, and may the New Year bring you good health and happiness--for years to come.

G. B. Gates





DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20380

IN REPLY REFER TO
DGK-1-ep
16 May 1967

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The records show the following information concerning promotions in the case of General Clifton Bledsoe CATES, 0155, U. S. Marine Corps, Retired:

<u>RANK</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>ORGANIZATION</u>
Second Lieutenant	24 May 1917	Marine Barracks Washington, D.C.
First Lieutenant	28 Aug 1918	96th Company, 6th Marines, 2d Division
Captain	5 Mar 1919	96th Company, 6th Marines, 2d Division
First Lieutenant	25 Sep 1919	Marine Barracks Washington, D.C.
Captain	21 Mar 1921	Department of Pacific, San Francisco, California
Major	27 Feb 1932	Headquarters Company, 4th Regiment
Lieutenant Colonel	26 Jul 1935	Marine Barracks Quantico, Virginia
Colonel	11 Apr 1940	Army War College Washington, D.C.
Brigadier General	3 Apr 1943	Marine Barracks Quantico, Virginia
Major General	23 Jun 1944	Marine Barracks Quantico, Virginia
General (Commandant of the Marine Corps)	1 Jan 1948	Headquarters Marine Corps, Washington, D. C.

GENERAL CLIFTON B. CATES.

Clifton B. Cates was born on August 31, 1893, at Tiptonville, Tennessee. After graduation from the University of Tennessee, he reported for duty in the Marine Corps as a second lieutenant on June 13, 1917.

He sailed for France in January, 1918. He served with the 6th. Marine Regiment, Second Division, in the Aisne Defensive, Belleau Woods, Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel-Blanc Mont (Champagne) and Meuse-Argonne campaigns. He was twice wounded in action and received the following decorations: Navy Cross, the Distinguished Service Cross, with Oak Leaf Cluster, French Legion of Honor, Croix de Guerre, with two palms and a gold star. He was cited twice in division orders and once by the Commanding General, A. E. F.

He served with the Army of Occupation in Germany, returning to the United States in September, 1918.

Between 1919 and 1941 General Cates saw service as aide to the Commandant of the Corps, as aide to the President, and as aide to the Commanding General, Department of the Pacific. He had two tours of duty with the Marines in China, amounting to five years in all.

In World War II he took part in the first great offensive action of the war, leading the First Marine Regiment ashore at Guadalcanal, where he won the Legion of Merit. As Commanding General of the Fourth Marine Division, he led this organization in the difficult operations on Tinian Island in the Marianas, receiving the D. S. M. for his leadership in this campaign.

CITATIONS

CATES, CLIFTON B.

(ARMY)
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS

1st Leut. Co. H. 6th Regt,
GOWD #81, page 7, 1919

"For extraordinary heroism in action near Chateau-Thierry, France June 6, 1918, while advancing his company on the town of Bouresches their progress was greatly hindered by withering machine guns and artillery fire of the enemy, which caused many casualties, one of whom was his commanding officer. Taking command Lieutenant Gates led them on to the objective, despite the fact that he was rendered temporarily unconscious by a bullet striking his helmet and that this was his first engagement. Exposing himself to extreme hazard, he reorganized his position with but a handful of men."

Cross delivered March 14 1919.

Oak Leaf Cluster.

"For the following act of extraordinary heroism in action near Bois-de Belleau, France, June 13-14-1918. Lieutenant Gates is awarded an Oak Leaf Cluster, to be worn with the Distinguished Service Cross. During the night a severe gas attack made it necessary to evacuate practically the entire personnel of two companies, including officers. Lieutenant Gates suffering painfully from wounds, refused evacuation remaining and rendering valuable assistance to another company."

Oak Leaf Cluster delivered 29 March, 1919

Legion D'Honneur

Decree of May 14, 1919

"Altho hit by a shell fragment he replaced his wounded Major and personally exposed himself in order to reorganize the resistance with the few men who remained with him."

(C de G) (GS)

6-6-18 Bouresches 1st Lt. French 11,400-D

"With the most absolute contempt for danger he continued to direct his platoon under most deadly fire during a violent enemy attack."

Page #3

CATES, G.B.

No. 3

(*) 7-19-18 Soissons 1st Lt. GO 2nd Div. #88 page 99

"At Soissons on July 19, 1918, he was wounded, but would not leave the field of battle."

JOHN A. LEJEUNE,
Major General, U.S.M.C.
Commanding

Awarded December 31, 1918.

No. 4

(*) 10-3-18 Blanc Mont 1st Lt. GO 2nd Div. #88, page 99

"He pressed forward gallantly at the head of his men and by his gallantry contributed largely to the success of the operations. His example of fearlessness and devotion to duty have always been an inspiration to his men."

JOHN A. LEJEUNE,
Major General, U.S.M.C.,
Commanding.

Awarded December 31, 1918

No. 5 A.E.F.

10-2 x 8- 18 Somme-Py 1st.Lt. AEF Co #1, page 41

"For gallantry near Somme-Py, France, Oct 2-9, 1918. And for his brilliant leadership in leading his company."

JOHN J. PERSHING
General, U.S.A.

(NAVY)
NAVY CROSS

Citation;

"While advancing with his company on the town of Bouresches their progress was greatly hindered by withering machine-gun and a artillery fire from the enemy, which caused many casualties, one of whom was the commanding officer. Taking command, Lieutenant Oates led them on to the objective, despite the fact that he was rendered temporarily unconscious by a bullet striking his helmet and that this was his first engagement. Exposing himself to extreme hazard, he reorganized his position with but a handful of men."

THE FLORIDA TIMES --UNION, JACKSONVILLE, SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1947

NEW CHIEF OF MARINE CORPS FAMED FOR SERVICE IN COMBAT.

Washington, Dec 13 (AP) Clifton B. Cates, had never heard of the U.S. Marines when he joined up. But he's doing OK--on New Year's day he will be sworn in as Commandant, with seven rows of ribbons on the left side of his impeccably pressed green blouse. Back in 1917, on the campus of the University of Tennessee, a friend suggested to Cates that they enlist in the Marines as a quick way to get into World War I. Game for anything, Cates said, "Let's go." He got hit in that war seven times, once by a near-miss shellburst that left him standing nude as a plucked chicken, but he came out on his feet. Today, as a Major General, Cates says that if there is another war "both sides will lose--there will be no winner," but feels nevertheless that it's his duty to do his part in keeping the U.S. Military establishment highly organized and ready for any emergency. He believes that atomic and other destructive weapons could easily destroy the economic power of all who take part in another war.

NINETEENTH COMMANDANT

Cates, 54, will be sworn in as the nineteenth Commandant with the rank of General. General Alexander A. Vandegrift, present Commandant, will retire to the inactive list, move to his farm near Lynchburg, Virginia, and will "become a country squire, suh!!" The wounds Cates suffered as a second lieutenant, and other fortunes of war, won him two purple hearts, a Navy cross and a Distinguished Service Cross with oak leaf cluster in World War I. "He earned his way from a platoon commander through the company and field grades," General Vandegrift says of his successor in a brief review of Cates' years as a leatherneck.

"It was the character and force of his personality that was successful at the battle for Iwo Jima. I have watched him lead a regiment and a division. And when, after the second war, he was put in charge at Quantico, our cultural center, if you please (almost all Marine Corps schools are at Quantico, Va.) he quickly rid it of the disrupting element it acquired after the war from the hundreds of Marine officers and men who were there just waiting to get discharged.

GOOD MORALE BUILDER

"He can build morale as quickly as any officer I know and he soon got Quantico back to its normal productive basis." Cates believes his new job will be a tough one. "filling the shoes of General Vandegrift and his predecessor (General Thomas Holcomb), both of whom I served under in combat."

There may be doubt in Cates' mind of his ability to fill Vandegrift's shoes, but he has been groomed for the job, it would seem from talking with his fellow marines, with a careful and discriminating eye over a long period of time.

ST.LOUIS POST DISPATCH
Thursday, July 1, 1954

Gen.Cates Retires from Marines.

Lt.Gen.Clifton B.Cates gets back the fourth star,which he gave up in 1952,at retirement ceremonies yesterday at Quantico, Va.Pining the stars on his shoulders are Mrs Cates and General Lemuel O.Sheperd Jr.,who succeeded Cates as Marine Corps Commandant two years ago,at the time Cates became Commandant of the Marine Corps schools. Cates,who is 60 years old,spent 37 years in service.He wears 10 battle stars and 27 ribbons and decorations.

ARMY NAVY AIR FORCE JOURNAL 19 JUNE 1954

L.T.GEN.CATES HEADS USMC RETIREMENT LIST WHICH INCLUDES 58 REGULAR RESERVE OFFICERS.

Lt.Gen.Clifton B.Cates,U.S.M.C.,and Lt.Gen.Merwin H.Silverthorn, USMC,head a list of 58 Regular and Reserve Marine Officers who are retiring after distinguished military careers. Both generals will leave active service on 1-July. Also on the retirement list are five colonels,eight lieutenant-colonels,16 majors,seven captains,three first lieutenants,eight 2nd lieutenants, and nine chief warrent officers.

General Cates,Commandant,Marine Corps Schools,Quantico,Va., will retire with the four-star rank he held as the 19th Commandant of the U.S.Marine Corps from January 1948 until January 1952.

A graduate of the Missouri Military Academy, he reported for active duty in the Marine Corps in June 1917, and sailed for France the following January. As a lieutenant in W.W.I, he participated in five major engagements.

During W.W.II,after commanding the 1st Marine Regiment in the Guadalcanal-Tulagi landings and the capture and defense of Guadalcanal,he fought as commander of the 4th Marine Division in the Marianas operation, the Tinian campaign and the seizure of Iwo Jima.

General Cates is one of the few officers in any service who has commanded a platoon,a company,a battalion,a regiment, and a division in combat.

He is the holder of some 40 medals for valor and exceptional service.

The General is married to the former Jane McIlhenny, of Washington,They have a daughter,Ann Cates Hilbush, and a son, LCDR.Clifton B.Cates,Jr.USN.

Retirement ceremonies for the distinguished general will be held at the Marine Corps Schools,Quantico,Va.,on June 30,1954.

L.T.GEN.CATES, LEGENDARY MARINE CORPS HERO, READY TO STEP DOWN AFTER 37 YEARS,

Quantico, Va. June 29, 1954. - After 37 years of climbing in and out of foxholes, Lt. Gen. Clifton Bledsoe Cates is ready to moth-ball his guns and swagger stick.

The chain smoking, 60-year-old former Marine Corps commandant retires tomorrow. He stayed in the corps after his term as commandant expired in 1952 to become head of its schools here at lesser rank. When Cates, who wears 10 battle stars from two World Wars and 27 ribbons and decorations, steps down, a little bit of Marine legend will go with him.

The Marines remember Cates for many things, not all of them found in training manuals and history books.

LEAVES MANY MEMORIES.

There was the time in July, 1918, for example, when his troops fresh from battle and unpaid for two months, were considering the tragic prospect of liberty in Paris with no money.

Lt. Cates lent each of his men, a skeleton company of 100 - 50 francs, or roughly \$9, and they had a real wing-ding party. It was the last for many. Within 24 hours they were back in combat.

Just five days after the Paris party Cates made Marine history in a wheatfield near Soissons.

He sent back a message: "I am in an old abandoned French Trench... I have only two men left out of my company and 20 out of other companies... I have no one on my left and only a few on my right. I will hold." When a relief outfit crawled in through the wire and shell holes the next day it found Cates clad chiefly in helmet and pistol. His pants had been blown off.

WOUNDED SIX TIMES.

Before World War I ended Cates had been wounded six times and gassed once, though he bothered to report only two of the wounds. For Marines of another generation there are memories of Cates as a fighting officer at Guadalcanal, Tinian and Iwo Jima. There are recollections too, of Cates, by then commandant of the Corps, stalking the front lines of Korea, in a helmet and old leather flight jacket. The trim, crisp and sometimes irascible General was born Aug. 31, 1893, on a cotton plantation near Tiptonville, Tenn., about 100 miles north of Memphis on the Mississippi River. He went through the first six grades at a little country school nearby and at 12 was packed off to a military academy at Mexico, Missouri. After graduating, he entered the University of Tennessee at Knoxville, where he played baseball and football, and gained an abiding interest in physical fitness and sports. Fishing and golf are two of his favorites today.

LAW SCHOOL GRADUATE.

Graduated from law school in 1917, he set out to take his bar examination. He never finished. On the day of the exam, came word that his application for a Marine Corps commission was approved. He walked out of the hall and never went back. After World War I, Cates went through the usual schools for professional officers, and met and married Jane McIlhenny of Washington. They have two children, a son, Clifton B. Cates Jr., who is Lieutenant Commander in the Navy, and a daughter, Anne, wife of Marine Lt. Joseph M. Hilbush Jr.

CAPTAIN DONALD FRANCIS DUNCAN

Donald Francis Duncan, was born in Kansas City in 1883. Moved to St. Joseph, Missouri, while a small boy. Educated in St. Joseph public schools and attended Central High school and later Culver Military Academy, Culver, Indiana. Upon completion of his courses in Culver, he was commissioned a 2nd Lieutenant in the marines, 6 January 1909. During his service had been stationed at various points in the United States, in Nicaragua, Guam, Panama, and off the coast of Mexico. He saw active service when the Marines were landed to restore order during the Nicaraguan revolution, and while trouble was brewing with Mexico, he was on board a vessel just off the Mexican coast. It was while stationed in Guam about 1916, that he was advanced to rank of Captain.



C O P Y

FRIEND TELLS HOW
CAPT. DUNCAN DIED

Sergt. A. Sheridan, Local Boy, Was
Wounded Trying to Save Him.

How Capt. Donald F. Duncan fell in battle, and how he was wounded trying to save him, is told in a letter from Sergt.

Aloysius Sheridan. 416 South Twelfth Street. Sheridan was one of a party which carried the wounded captain off the field, only to be killed by a shell from the Boche guns. Sheridan was the only one who escaped, and he was overcome by gas fumes, and was blind for seventy-two hours, also losing the use of his voice temporarily. Duncan was the son of Capt. and Mrs. John A. Duncan, 1027 Messanie Street.

The Ninety-sixth company of the Sixth Marines, led by Capt. Duncan, went "over the top" June 6, says Sheridan in his letter, written from a hospital behind the lines. Captain Duncan, smoking a pipe with marked coolness under fire, was cheering his men forward, when several yards from the trenches he fell, his abdomen pierced by a rifle ball.

Sergeant Sheridan, another sergeant, a doctor and a member of the field hospital staff, carried the captain from the field into a wood, which was immediately located by the Germans, who turned their eight-inch guns on it. A shell exploded within a few feet of the party, killing all but Sheridan.

News of Captain Duncan's death came here through an Associated Press dispatch about ten days after his death. Later Duncan's chief wired his condolences to the captain's family, praising Duncan's intrepidity. Duncan was in line for promotion at the

C O P Y

THE SHOCK OF WAR IN ST. JOSEPH.

The death of Capt. Donald F. Duncan, who is reported to have been killed in action in today's casualty list of marines in France, is the most conspicuous shock of war that St. Joseph has had up to this time. Captain Duncan belonged to a distinguished St. Joseph family. His grandfather, Frederick W. Smith, was associated with Joseph Robidoux in fashioning the primitive outlines of the present city of St. Joseph and was the original town's first postmaster. Captain Duncan was a particularly high type of young man--earnest, modest, brave and chivalrous, and entirely devoted in his profession. His name will be distinguished upon the pages of history that records the glorious performances of the American marines in France.

The death of Captain Duncan, as the death or wounding of every other man who has gone from this community into his country's service, no matter in what degree, brings home the grim actuality of the war. And we must steel ourselves to expect these things. We cannot hope to escape the sorrows that are inevitable in a great adventure like this. We must learn to give courageous sympathy to each other, for there are few indeed who are without kinsmen or close friends in the service, and bad news may come to any and to all of us at any moment. But patriotic pride of those who yield their lives upon the field of honor, and determination to support the war at home, must master tenderness, for we are face to face with a condition that demands heroic fortitude.

21

The "Vedette" is the Culver Academy newspaper--a weekly.

Vedette, July 13, 1918.

DUNCAN, C. M. A. '07, DIES IN SERVICE

Captain Donald F. Duncan, U.S.M.C. was reported killed in action in the casualty lists given out on June 15. The same list announced the serious wounding of C. I. Murray, first lieutenant U.S.M.C. and the best known member of the class of 1917.

Duncan was the captain of D Company in his last year at Culver and his nickname of "Napoleon" bore witness to his success as a strategist in the mimic battles which the battalion of that year waged over the hills and in the woods about Lake Maxinkuckee. The following account of his career is taken from the News-Press of his home city, St. Joseph, Mo.:

Capt. Duncan's unit went into action ten days ago, the family believes, on the Chateau Thierry front. A young lieutenant known to be serving in the same unit was mentioned in dispatches a little more than a week ago, and the family since then had been anxiously waiting news of the battle from Paris.

The last message received from Capt. Duncan was a service postcard which came early this week, marked to show that he was well at that time and had received the letter of recent date from home.

The marines have been brilliantly distinguishing the service before Paris since American forces went into action, and numerous tales of individual heroism have been passed by the censors.

July 3rd, 1918.

Mr. J. A. Duncan,
715 Edmonds St.,
St. Joseph, Mo.

My dear Mr. Duncan:

The Army and Navy Journal of June 29th mentions that Donald was seriously wounded in a recent engagement. I have other official notices that Donald died as a result of these wounds. The statement in the Army and Navy Journal says, "He showed great courage and leadership against tremendous odds and though he was shot through the arms, one arm being broken, gained his objective."

The above notation is characteristic of the Donald Duncan whom we knew and loved. His memory at Culver has been kept more alive than the average cadet because of the esteem in which he was held here and also because his old roommate, Captain Elliott, had spoken very often of Donald.

I am writing to express the deep sympathy that all of us feel for the household of Donald.

Sincerely yours,

Acting Superintendent.

excerpt from

Capt. Duncan's year book, the Roll Call.

Donald Francis Duncan, St. Joseph, Mo. "Dunk"
"So over violent, or over civil,
That every man with him was God or Devil."

OUR FIRST GOLD STAR.

*Capt. F. S. DUNCAN
Lieut. J. C. WARD
Lieut. J. C. HERRIOTT
Lieut. J. C. SWARZ*
Weedon E. Osborne, Dental Surgeon
United States Navy.

Date of Birth—Chicago, Ill., November
13, 1892.

Permanent Residence—29 South La-
Salle Street, Chicago, Ill., care A. M.
Johnson.

Name and address of nearest relative
or friend—Elizabeth Osborne, sister,
4427 Racine Avenue, Chicago, Ill.; Wheaton
College, Wheaton, Ill.

Dental College—Northwestern University,
Class 1915.

Examined at the National Medical
School, April 23, 1917.

Commissioned—May 8, 1917. (47. N. 6)

Duties—Navy Yard, Boston, Mass.,
June 5, 1917, to December 13, 1917, U. S.
S. Alabama, Dec. 13, 1917, to March 30,
1918. March 30, 1918, ordered to report
to the commanding officer of the 6th Regi-
ment of Marines, with the American Ex-
peditionary Force in France, and was serv-
ing with this regiment at the time of
his death, June 6, 1918.

Osborne, who had been with the mar-
ines at the front only a few days when
the action at Bourresches took place, went
into the zone of fire time and again to
rescue wounded. He went to the aid of
and helped to carry Captain Donald F.
Duncan to a place of safety, when that
officer was wounded, and had almost
reached it when a shell struck, killing

both Osborne and the officer. In report-
ing his death, his commanding officer and

wrote:

"Having joined this regiment but a
few days before, and new to the service,
he displayed heroism worthy of its best
traditions."

The distinguished service was posthu-
mously awarded Dental Surgeon Weedon E.
Osborne by the Commander in Chief
of the Expeditionary Forces in France
with the following notation in official
orders:

"Dental Surgeon Weedon E. Osborne,
United States Navy, during the advance
on Bourresches, France, on June 6, 1918,
at great risk of life, performed heroic
deeds in aiding the wounded. He was
struck by a shell while carrying an
officer to a place of safety."

Dr. Osborne was the first officer of the
Navy Dental Corps to be killed in action.
Just previous to his joining the Navy as
a dental officer, he had been connected
with the teaching staff of the Denver
University, Denver, Colo. He was of
slight build, nervous temperament,
bright, forceful, energetic and of sympa-
thetic and lovable disposition.

Casualty Cablegram 185, July 9, 1918.

Osborne, Weedon E. Dental Surgeon,
U. S. Navy, Attached 6th Regiment of
Marines, Killed in action June 6, 1918.

Respectfully submitted,

EMORY A. BRYANT, Committee.

988

*Competitive Exam
with final marks
of 1st in his class
of 24*
96 2^d Co. 2^d B.A.T.

Journal National Dental Association (now American
Dental Association) Vol. 5 Page 988 Sept., 1918.

27

GEORGE B. LOCKHART

First Lieutenant 96th Company, 6th Regiment, 2nd Division
From Glenn Allen, Virginia

29

EVANS SPALDING.

Born, Brookline, Mass. January 2, 1893. Son of Francis Rollin Spalding and Mary Evans Spalding.

Prepared at: Noble & Greenough school, Boston, Mass., Harvard University 1911-1914.

Married Marion Hubbard Holt, Lake Forest, Ill. Sept 11, 1926.

World War I: 2nd Lieutenant to Captain

Re-commissioned Captain in W.W.2, February 1942 and shortly after promoted to Major. 1943--45 C.O. of Sgt's school Marine Aviation in Toledo and San Diego. C.O. of Marine Air warning group 2, San Diego. Held the rank of Lt. Colonel when he died, December 15, 1957. He suffered a heart attack while playing badminton.

Transferred out of the 96th Company before embarkation.

X Killed or died of wounds - 52
/ Wounded or gassed- 188, 52 wounded twice.
-- Not wounded or gassed -15.

96th Company, 6th Regiment.

1 February 1918

The original Company

Captain.

Duncan, Donald F. X

First Lieutenants

Robertson, James F. //
Lockhart, George B.

Second Lieutenants

Cates, Clifton B. //
Brailsford, Thomas R. X
Bowling, John D. //

First Sergeant

Sissler, Joseph A. X

Gunnery Sergeants

Cornelius, Richard /
Fowler, Edward C. --
Morrey, Willard I. //
Stockham, Fred W. X

Sergeants.

Anderson, Harry W. X
Athenour, Aime, P. /
Barnett, Maurice E. Jr. / X
Edwards, Claude O. /
Johanningmeier, Ollie H. X
Kelly, John H. /
Langston, Irby F. /
Miller, Harry / X
Ojeholm, Eric W. --
Sanfberg, Carl G. /
Seibert, William R. Jr. /
Sheridan, Aloysius P. /
Strand, Walter H. X
White, George L. //
Wolf, Ernest W. //

Corporals.

Babcock, Samuel B. /
Brooks, Girard /
Cale, Harrison /
Call, George / X

Corporals (cont'd.)

Christensen, George G. X
Cook, Fred O. /
Dorrell, John L. / X
Dowling, Edward P. /
Finn, James M. X
Fleischer, George //
Gardner, James E. /
Hansen, Hans --
Hodges, Robert R. X
Iotte, Charles V. /
Kelly, William A. /
McKendry, Harry I //
Moore, Noyes V. /
Moreland, Oscar E. //
Orgo, Thomas --
Powell, Harold /
Price, Arlynn M. /
Steinberg, Julius //
Stephenson, Lyle G. /
Stites, Joseph G. /
Sublette, Sherman T. /
Thomas, Robert F. /
Tooper, Ben A. / X
Tubb, Reagan /
Ward, Peter C. //
Wilband, Seward E. /
Williams, Stanley R. //
Witzig, John J. /
Worth, Harry A. /

Trumpeter.

Oce, Charles C. X

Privates.

Adams, Monroe B. //
Akers, Homer J. //
Anderson, Earle O. /
Armstead, Earl A. /
Arnesen, Arthur E. //
Bailey, Larkin --
Baker, Glen W. B. /
Baker, John L. /

ORIGINAL COMPANY CONT'D

Marshall, Ashley R. /
Martin, Patrick J. /
Mason, Leo W. /
Mattingly, Barak T. //
Matthews, John Y. Jr. //
McArthur, George //
McCabe, Vincent //
McCrumb, Earl E. //
McGinnis, James H. /
McGrath, John J. X
McIntosh, Sidney X
McKinney, James A. /
McMullin, William R. /
Metcalfe, James H. X
Miller, John T. /
Miller, Roy M. /
Morrison, Chauncey F. /
Mott, Richard J. /
Parham, Philip T. //
Parker, George T. //
Patton, Robert G. /
Penny, John F. /
Peterson, Lawrence O. / X
Petri, Charles E. /
Phalen, James E. / X
Phoenix, James W. /
Pickel, Edward C. /
Proost, James J. /
Pruitt, Walter A. /
Radcliffe, William A. X
Raymond, Harry F. X
Read, Bridges A. /
Reichenberger, Peter J. --
Rice, Albert R. /
Robakowski, Stanley S. /
Roll, Matthias J. //
Romans, Alvin T. //
Ross, Raymond /
Sarver, Lee R. X
Schettler, Lawrence /
Schwepe, Joseph H. /
Scott, Harry B. Jr. /
Searfoss, Lloyd A. //
Seik, Edgar A. //
Sellards, Carl M. /
Shan, Joe B. /
Shaw, Ivan W. //

Sherman, Anthony M. X
Siegfried, Frank E. --
Sokoll, Irwin W. /
Steele, John M. /
Steup, Walter F. /
Stewart, Thomas L. /
Stinson, John W. /
Streeter, Ray --
Sullivan, Charles /
Sutton, William A. //
Thorpe, Ola A. /
Tilling, Clarence M. /
Turner, Ben T. //
Turngren, Gust A. Jr. X
Wade, Mark W. /
Walburn, Alfred C. / X
Walne, Ratcliff W. /
Waples, Gerald V. /
Waters, Frank H. //
Webber, Richard R. /
Wehrle, Walter /
Weismantel, Clarence /
Welbon, James M. /
Wendel, Harry A. X
Wilson, William /
Wiltshire, George --
Woods, Wilbur A. /
Wuetterich, Albert /
Yockey, Floyd L. /
Zacheisz, Dillman W. /

OFFICERS OF THE 96th COMPANY
SIXTH REGIMENT, MARINES.
A.E.F.

OFFICERS DURING THE PERIOD
5 Feb. 1918 - 11 Nov. 1918

Captains

Gates, Clifton B. **//
Duncan, Donald F. X
Greene, Kirt X
Woodworth, Wethered ** //

First Lieutenants

Bowling, John D. ** //
Dugne, Robert L * /
Kilduff, David R. X
Lockhart, George B. 4/
Robertson, James P. **//

Second Lieutenants

Barnett, Maurice M. % * / X
Brailsford, Thomas R. X
Crandall, Jesse L.
Dalton, Charles F. * /
Fritz, Bernard L. * /
Goede, Henly M.
Grayson, Joseph O. ** //
Hayson, Herbert
Kane, Barney J. * /
McClelland, James J.
Ogden, Paul J.
Seherry, Alfred J. % /
Strand, Walter H. % X
Taylor, Ben L. % * /
Thoma, Charles G.
Wingo, Douglas P.
Worth, Harry A. % * /

Army Officers Attached to 96th Company.

Second Lieutenants.

Harris, Edward R.
Johnson, Wm. P.
Price, O.S.
Page, Donald D. * /

Catts, Calvin L. X

Additional Officers in 96th Company. After the Armistice.

Captain

Adams, James P. *

Second Lieutenants.

Day, Richard R.
Driver, Garston W.
Lacey, Joseph
Ojerholm, Erick W. %
Orgo, Thomas %
Satterfield, James H.
Sayers, Harold J.
Stewart, John A.
Turpin, Chas. S. * /
Wert, Thos. R. * /

Total: 42 -- 7 Killed -- 22 Wounded (6 wounded twice)

* = Wounded in action

X = Killed in action or died of wounds.

% = Served in 96th Company as enlisted men, during 5 Feb. -- 11 Nov.

Enlisted men of the 96th Co., 6th Marines. 5 Feb. - 11 Nov. 1918.

Daniel, Frank I.	
Darden, Andrew E.	
Daugherty, Clarence E.	/
Daugherty, Frank M.	/
Davezac, Alexander S.	
Davidson, Ephriam H.	
Davis, Teasley	X
Davis, Troy	/
Dean, James L.	X
Deaton, McKinley	X
Decker, Edgar A.	/
Decker, Peter G.	/
Deenn, Edward N.	
DeSouza, Louis Edward	X
Devault, Cecil M.	/
Devereux, William S.	/
Devine, John R.	/
DeVos, Burnell H.	/
Dickson, George H.	/
Dickstein, Jacob	
Dodd, Ward D.	/
Doremus, Tom. O.	
Dorrall, John L.	X
Douglass, Clarence H.	/
Dowling, Edward P.	/
Drexler, John J.	
Duhig, Harold B.	/
Dunlavey, Herbert D.	X
Dunn, Ed. M.	/
Dunn, Glenn O.	
Dunton, Harold C.	/
Dunton, Orley M.	/
Durbin, Raymond L.	
Durwin, John F.	
Eames, Raymond R.	X
East, Cheetie B.	X
Edlander, Charles	
Edwards, Claude G.	/
Erdman, Ford E.	X
Ertman, Vincent A.	
Feltz, Thomas	
Fesenfeldt, Roger J.	/
Finn, James M.	X
Flite, Robert P.	
Fleischer, George	/
Flynn, Nicholas C.	
Forney, Thaddeus, e.	/
Forrest, John L.	
Foster, Forrest	/
Fowler, Edward C.	/
Fox, William J.	
Frederick, William L.	
Freiman, Curtis H.	/
French, Adolphus B.	
Garrison, Ben Jamin B.	
Gardner, James E.	/
Garrett, Thomas E. Jr.	X
Garvey, James O.	
Gerhard, Fred. J.	/
Gerhard, Ernest J.	X
Gleason, John W. Jr.	X
Glenn, Thomas W.	/
Gleudeman, George L.	
Glunz, Frank T.	
Gonz, Joseph H. Jr.	/
Gorrell, Charles	/
Gezesky, Anthony J.	/
Graham, Charles D.	X
Graham, Paul E.	/
Gregg, John	
Greenburg, Joseph S.	/
Grober, Edward A.	X
Grimes, Oscar	
Guerry, Theodore L.	X
Guthrie, John B. Jr.	/
Haas, Erie E.	
Hale, Arthur L.	
Hall, Hugh H.	
Hall, Virgil W.	/
Hammon, Aubry A.	X
Hansen, Hans	/
Hanson, Raymond	
Hanson, Raymond W.	/
Hardin, Maurice S.	/
Harper, Milton J.	X
Harrington, George D.	
Hartzell, Omar	
Haws, Edward H.	/
Hayes, Clemence	
Hehl, Lambert L.	/
Heidelberg, James S.	
Heinemann, William E.	/
Hendley, Joseph R.	
Henretty, Arthur L.	
Henry, Cecil E. G.	X
Hensley, John W.	
Hess, Harry J.	X
Hilgendorf, Robert A.	
Hines, Oliver C.	
Hodges, Robert R.	X
Hoffman, Arthur P.	
Hogwood, Jessie J.	
Holdman, John	X
Holm, Enoch	
Holzheimer, August W.	
Hooton, Peter J.	
Hopkins, Edward C.	/
Hoppins, William W.	/
Hoppkins, Archie	
Horn, Louis	
Howard, Max R.	
Hubbell, Fred D.	

Enlisted men of the 96th Co., 6th Marines. 5 Feb--11 Nov. 1918

Moreland, Oscar E. /
 Morrey, Willard I. //
 Morrison, Chauncey F.
 Mott, Richard James //
 Murray, Edward R. X
 Nalley, Roscoe E.
 Neary, Raymond J. /
 Neavill, Champ C.
 Needham, William H.
 Neilson, John W.T.
 Neumann, Lawrence M.
 Newton, Watson P.
 Night, John.
 Nippell, George D. /
 Norman, Edward O.
 Novak, Stanley T.
 Nutting, Lester H. X
 O'brien, James A. X
 Ojerholm, Eric W. /
 Oliver, Edward M.
 Orgo, Thomas
 Osborn, Homer B.
 Oster, Edgar A. /
 Ottesen, Theodore W.
 Palmer, Robert S.
 Parham, Philip T.
 Parker, George T. /
 Parks, Charles E.
 Parkton, Otis H. X
 Parson, Nels B.
 Patton, Robert G. /
 Pearcey, Luther E.
 Penney, John Joseph /
 Perry, Carl J.
 Peters, Robert H.
 Peterson, Lawrence O X
 Peterson, Martin X
 Peterson, Swen H. /
 Petri, Charles E. /
 Phalen, James E. X
 Phoenix, James W. /
 Pickard, Henry R.
 Pickel, Edward C. /
 Pinchard, Paul M.
 Powell, Harold /
 Preston, George D.
 Price, Alfred W. /
 Pfeifer, Albert M. //
 Price, Arlynn M.
 Prchaska, Frank B. X
 Preost, James J. /
 Pruitt, Walter A /
 Puckett, Milburne G.
 Pummill, William E. X
 Quirk, Edwin T.
 Radcliffe, William H. X
 Reddel, William H.

Ramage, William H.
 Ravance, Sigvart F.
 Raymond, Harry F. X
 Read, Bridges A.
 Reagan, James F. //
 Redd, Hoit C.
 Reeves, John L.
 Reeves, Roy W. /
 Reeves, Walter F.
 Reichenberger, Peter J. /
 Rhodes, Robert M.
 Rice, Albert R. //
 Rice, Thomas L.
 Richards, Harry G.
 Rike, William C.
 Robakowski, Stanley S. /
 Roberts, Claude A. X
 Robinson, Richard L.
 Robinson, Tonie L. X
 Rolf, Irvin H.
 Roll, Matthias J. /
 Romans, Alvin T.
 Roscoe, Henry K.
 Rosic, William J.
 Roskind, David /
 Ross, Raymond /
 Rott, Charles R.
 Rourke, Joseph A.
 Rowland, William G.
 Roy, Charles H.
 Rush, John A.
 Sacks, William L. /
 Sandmeyer, Paul O.
 Sangberg, Carl G. /
 Sarter, Edward A.
 Sarver, Lee R. X
 Satterfield, James H. /
 Savage, Joseph M.
 Sayers, Harold J.
 Schad, Leon G.
 Schaefer, Roy J. X
 Schaffer, Edward F.
 Schettler, Lawrence /
 Schindley, Kenneth J.
 Schlimme, Thomas
 Schrier, Oscar T.
 Schuermann, Harry W.
 Schutte, Fred G.
 Schwepe, Joseph H.
 Schwing, Adrian W.
 Scott, Ernest C.
 Scott, Harry B. Jr. /
 Scott, Gerald O.
 Seabright, Frederick G.
 Searfoss, Lloyd A. /
 Seibert, William R. Jr. /
 Seik, Edgar C. /

Enlisted men of the 96th Co. 6th Marines 5 Feb - 11 Nov 1918

Vale, Archie N.
 VanCleve, Andrew J. X
 VanSkiver, George O.
 Vanwey, Roy E.
 VanZandt, Roy P.
 Vaughan, Eugene R. X
 Vegel, James X
 Videan, Clarence W.
 VanDaacke, Fred J. /
 VonGlahn, Herman X
 Wade, Mark W. /
 Waering, Henry G.
 Wagner, Frank H.
 Wagner, Paul E.
 Wagoner, Darwin E.
 Walburn, Alfred C. X
 Waldron, Leo E.
 Walls, Howard J.
 Walne, Ratliff W.
 Walter, Elmo J.
 Wampach, Wilfred A.
 Waples, Gerald /
 Ward, Peter C. /
 Washington, George T. Jr. X
 Waters, Frank /
 Watson, John H. X
 Watts, Cyril J.
 Weatherred, Jerome
 Weaver, Clarence H.
 Weaver, William A.
 Webber, Richard R. /
 Webster, Charles A. X
 Wedell, George M.
 Wehrle, Walter /
 Weismantel, Clarence G. /
 Weitz, John C. X
 Welbon, James M. /
 Weldon, Roy L. X
 Welter, Clayton W.
 Wendel, Harry A. X
 Werden, Edmond C.
 Weston, Albert W. /
 Wheeler, Charles H.
 Whipple, Thomas
 White, Carl F.
 White, George L. /
 White, Gerald J.
 White, Orville D.
 White, Walter W.
 Wiggins, John D.
 Wilband, Seward E. /
 Wilczewski, Joseph J.
 Williams, Carl O. X
 Williams, Charles F. X
 Williams, Claude C.
 Williams, Everett
 Williams, Jack
 Williams, Jessie M.
 Williams, John R.
 Williams, Lee T. /
 Williams, Stanley R. /
 Williamson, Elmer A.
 Wilson, William /
 Wiltshire, George /
 Witzig, John J. /
 Wojchowski, Peter B.
 Wolf, Ernest W.
 Wolf, Frank L.
 Woodhouse, Charles
 Woodman, Dexter E. X
 Woodman, Philip E.
 Woods, Wilbur A. /
 Wringer, Jerome J.
 Worth, Harry A. /
 Wuetterich, Albert /
 Yockey, Floyd L. /
 Young, John A.
 Zacheisz, Dillman W. /
 Zeigler, DeWitt
 Zimmer, William A.
 Zimmerman, John
 Zinkiewich, Joseph W.

Personnel who were members of the 96th Company, Sixth Regiment, Marines, prior to the Company's Embarkation for France.

Lst. Lieut. Spaulding, Evans
Ashton, Bayard
Barton, William L.
Besch, Frank W.
Bradley, Daniel A.
Brown, Glenn W.
Budde, Harry H.
Burton, Charles E.
Chandler, Wendell F.
Condit, Charles P.
Conrad, Amos A.
Corbet, John F. Jr.
Craig, Robert E.
Daniels, Ernest B.
Davis, Carlton B.
Eagleston, Luther
Foxworthy, Paul
Fulcord, Robert G.
Gaebe, Theodore W.
Gaston, Benjamin H.
Gibbs, Ardell
Hamill, William N.
Hayes, Daniel W.

Henning, Oren J.
Hobbs, James W.
Holden, Harold O.
Jayko, Anthony A.
Kopp, Otto O.
Lankins, Carroll A.
Luther, Sam C.
Marron, Theodore G.
McConnell, Gus R.
Mooney, Clarence E.
Peeno, Harvie L.
Poulsen, Christen
Saunders, Albert G.
Schneider, Leo D.
Seasengood, John Charles
Sprague, Louis M.
Stafford, Joseph
Toole, James W.
Vitatoe, Robert
Walters, Lawrence P.
Wiest, William P.
Wilson, Grady P.

Personnel who were members of the 96th Company, Sixth Regiment, Marines after the Armistice.

Akers, Bruce F.
Allen, Clarence E.
Alsworth, Charles W.
Altorfer, Edward
Anderson, Bernard
Avrick, Max W.
Bell, Roy E.
Bobbs, Jennings B.
Born, Albert M.
Brownfield, Okey B.
Calhoun, Fred J.
Carter, Charlie E.
Cathcart, Melville J.J.
Church, Milan D.
Coffman, Howard G.
Cross, Delmer H.
Crockett, William E.
Cronin, Michael F.
Davenport, George
Day, Roy A.
Dibble, Emerson P.
Donlon, Elmer P.
Emmett, Cornelius
Etzcom, George J.

Feilding, George F.
Fiddyment, Benjamin C.
Field, John A.
Frier, Challis B.
Gent, Oliver O.
Graham, Frederick M.
Grapentrin, Harry L.
Gross, Carl R.
Hardy, Elby R.
Harting, Henry W.
Heiney, Harvey H.
Hendrickson, Dale M.
Herdle, Albert E.
Holmes, Joseph O.
Hooser, William E.
Houser, Bernard F.
Howser, Claude M.
Houser, Edwin R.
Hubbell, Fred D.
Hughes, John E.
Huna, Anthony
Inch, Richard A.
Jackson, Russell H.
James, George F.

THE 96th COMPANY HAS MADE A RECORD SECOND TO NONE IN THE AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES. SIXTY FIVE (65) DECORATIONS WERE AWARDED BY THE AMERICANS AND FRENCH TO ITS MEMBERS. NUMEROUS FEATS OF EXTRAORDINARY HEROISM WERE PERFORMED WHICH WERE NEVER RECOGNIZED BY AWARDS OR CITATION. THE 6th REGIMENT RECEIVED THREE (3) CITATIONS IN FRENCH ARMY ORDERS, WHICH ENTITLED EACH MAN WHO PARTICIPATED IN ANY TWO OF THESE OPERATIONS TO WEAR THE FRENCH FOURAGERRE IN THE COLORS OF THE CROIX -DE-GUERRE.

THE COMPANY LOST ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY ONE (131) MEN KILLED OR DIED OF WOUNDS, AND FOUR HUNDRED AND NINETY ONE (491) WOUNDED AND GASSED IN ACTION - OVER THREE HUNDRED (300) PERCENT OF THE COMBAT STRENGTH OF THE COMPANY.

IT HAD ITS PART, AND A GLORIOUS PART IT WAS. THERE IS GLORY ENOUGH FOR ALL, AND EACH MEMBER CAN ALWAYS KNOW THAT HE BELONGED TO ONE OF THE BEST COMPANIES IN FRANCE; AND NO GREATER COMPLIMENT CAN BE PAID THAN TO SAY TO EACH MAN OF THE 96th. COMPANY,

"WELL DONE"

HISTORY
OF THE
96th COMPANY, 2nd BATTALION, 6th REGIMENT.
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS.
A.E.F.

August 28th 1917.

Organized at U.S. Marine Corps Barracks, Quantico, Virginia. The following named officers were assigned: Captain Donald F. Duncan, commanding officer; 1st Lieutenants James F. Robertson, George D. Lockhart, 2nd. Lieutenants Evans S. Spaulding, Clifton B. Gates and John D. Bowling. Prior to departure over-seas 2nd.Lieut. Evans Spaulding was transferred to another company and 2nd.Lieut. Thomas R. Brailsford was assigned to fill the vacancy.

August 29th 1917, to January 18, 1918:

The task of organizing, equipping and training the company was undertaken. Non-commissioned officers were appointed, arms and equipment were drawn and issued and a through training was given in close order drill, manual of arms, extended order, machine gun instruction, bayonet drill, dummy hand grenades, rifle range practice, trench digging, trench warfare, combat drills and the basic principles and fundamentals of modern warfare. A very cold and severe winter was overcome and an intensive training program was completed.

January 19th, 1918:

Boarded trains for Philadelphia, Pa., where the 2nd Battalion, 6th Regiment, embarked on board the U.S.S. Henderson.

January 20th to February 5th, 1918:

Sailed from Philadelphia on the 20th of January and proceeded to Staten Island, near New York City, where the convoy was assembled, sailed from there on January 24th, in convoy with four other transports and one battleship. Eight destroyers met the convoy outside of the submarine zone and escorted it into St. Nazaire, France, arriving the morning of February 5th. With the exception of routine drills, submarine watches, and a very rough voyage the trip was uneventful. On arriving in France, the 2nd Battalion was assigned to the 4th Brigade.

February 8th to 10th, 1918:

Disembarked on February 8th and entrained for the Vosges, a training area, arriving at Damblain on February 10th. Upon arriving in France the 96th Company, 2nd Battalion, 6th Regiment, U.S.M.C., was assigned to the 4th Brigade, 2nd Division, A.E.F.

February 11 to March 16th 1918:

Hiked to training area at Bleavincourt on the 11th, where further training was received in modern trench warfare. Helmets, gas masks and combat equipment issued.

June 1 to 5 con't.; morning the 96th company was relieved by two companies of the 1st Battalion, 23rd Infantry.

June 6 to 9: The morning of the 6th, the 96th company moved to a position in the northwest corner of the Bois des Clerembouts, near la Cense Farm, in a close support position, relieving the 1st. Battalion-6th Reg. During the day the members of the company constructed rustic crosses and fences around the graves of the men who had made the supreme sacrifice.

The 96th company received orders about 4:30 P.M. that an attack was to begin at 5:00 P.M. on Belleau Woods and Bouresches. The 3rd Battalion, 6th Regiment, was to attack on the right and the 2nd Battalion was to conform to their movements. Later the above order was modified and it stated that if necessary the left Companies of the 2nd Battalion would be used. The 96th Company was assigned as the left flank company of the Battalion, as the leading company. The company immediately moved into position and the advance started. Soon after the attack was begun, Captain Duncan and 1st Sergeant Sissler were killed and Lieutenant Bowling was wounded; casualties among the men were very heavy. Lieutenant Brailsford, who was on detached duty as a liaison officer with the 6th Machine Gun Battalion, was also killed soon after the attack started. 1st Lieutenant Robertson taking command continued the advance with the company toward Bouresches. The organization (3rd Battalion) that was supposed to take the town failed to do so; the 96th Company therefore attacked and captured it. (caught them right at meal time) The attack was made over an open wheat field with no connections on either flank. Terrific machine gun fire from Belleau Woods and Bouresches caused the company over fifty percent casualties.

Lieutenant Gates was knocked unconscious by a machine-gun bullet hitting him on the helmet. (Jack Sheridan doused him with a bottle of champayne, that he had carried for so long) but later continued on into town with a few men. Soon afterwards, contact was made with Lieutenant Robertson, who had entered the western part of town, and he turned the few men that he had left over to Lieutenant Gates, who proceeded to clean out the town, while 1st Lieutenant Robertson went to the rear to get reinforcements. After the town was completely mopped up, only twenty-one (21) men remained to hold it.

Luckily, no counter attack was made before reinforcements arrived. At 1:45 A.M. a few 2nd Division Engineers came in. One prisoner and one machine gun was captured in Bouresches. It was for the capture and holding of the town of Bouresches by the 96th Company, that the 4th Brigade was cited by the French and American in General Orders. Bouresches had been captured from the French on June 2 by the 10th German I.D. one of the German's finest divisions, and it was defended by the 7th and 8th Companies, 398th German Regiment. Many acts of heroism were recorded this day, and numerous Croix-de-Guerre and Distinguished Service Crosses were awarded to the men and officers of the 96th Company, for this operation. While in Bouresches, the 96th Company lost its only prisoner of war, an ambulance containing Private A. Cunningham became lost and drove into the enemy's lines. On June 8th replacements were sent into Bouresches to strengthen the badly depleted company. Soon after they arrived a strong enemy attack was broken up. The 96th Company was relieved the night of June 9-10 by a unit of the 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment and it marched to a support position in the woods south of Rue Gobert at La Mon Blanche.

June 27 to July 9, 1918 (con't)

a position east of Bapaume le Guery and occupied a defensive line in the second position until the night of the 9/10. On July 9, the command of the 2nd Division area passed to the 26th Division, the 2nd Division being held in reserve by the French, as the new enemy offensive was expected at any time.

CITED IN ARMY ORDERS.

The 4th American Brigade under command of
Brigadier General James G. Harbord, composed of;

The 5th Regt. of Marines under command of
Colonel Wendell C. Neville;

The 6th Regt. of Marines under command of
Colonel Albertus W. Catlin;

The 6th Machine Gun Battalion under command of
Major Edward W. Cole;

Was thrown in full battle on a front violently attacked by the enemy. Immediately asserted itself as a unit of first order. On its very entry on the fighting line, broke down, together with the French troops, a violent attack by the enemy on an important part of the position, and began on its own account, a series of offensive operations, thanks to the brilliant courage, the vigor, spirit and tenacity of its men who overcame all hardships and losses; thanks to the activity and energy of its officers, and thanks also to the personal action of its chief, General J. Harbord, the 4th Brigade found its efforts crowned with success. In well co-ordinated action its 2 regiments and machine gun battalion realized, after 12 days of incessant fighting (from the 2nd to the 13th of June 1918) on a very difficult terrain, an advance varying from 1200 to 2000 metres, on a front of 4 kilometers, capturing a large amount of material, taking more than 500 prisoners, inflicting on the enemy considerable losses, and capturing 2 objectives of first importance; the village of Bouresches and Belleau Wood.

(Order no. 10805 "D")

At Great General Headquarters, October 22, 1918.

The Commanding General-in-Chief

(Signed) Petain

At Great General Headquarters, Oct. 25, 1918.

The Commanding General-in-Chief

(Signed) PETAIN.

July 20 to Aug 8 1918: After being relieved the night of July 19/20, the company marched through Vierzy, which had been heavily shelled with mustard gas, then on to a position in support in the woods near Greenleaf Farm. The next day another move to the rear was made in order to escape the falling limbs from the trees that had been badly shot to pieces by the American and enemy artillery. After resting in the woods for three days, the company began a hike to the rear on the morning of July 24, and four days later, at Nanteuil-le-Houdain, entrained for Nancy. Another hike was made, to Chavigny, where the company remained from August 1 to 5.

Some of the old men who had been wounded returned to the company and replacements also joined at Chavigny. New officers, who had been former non-commissioned officers of the battalion, returned from school. The time was spent in resting, reorganizing and cleaning up. Orders were received to stand-by to move, and at 2:00 P.M. on the 5th of August a hike was started to Liverdun, where the company stayed that night and the next day. On the night of the 6th it moved to Dieulouard, remaining there until the night of August 7/8. A reconnaissance party was sent into Pont-a-Mousson late in the afternoon of the 7th, and the company was ordered to relieve a company of the 340th French Regiment the night of the 8/9; these orders were carried out without incident.

Aug. 9 to 16 1918: A support position was taken up by the company in Pont-a-Mousson until the night of August 16/17. There was practically no activity or firing, and the tour of line duty was thoroughly enjoyed.

Sept 12 to 15: Field order #27 of the 2nd Division, dated Sept. 10, 1918, Described the attack for Sept 12. The 4th Brigade was to support the attack of the 3rd Brigade. Zero hour was set at 5:00 A.M., the barrage to start at 1:00 A.M. The final objective was a line north of Thiaccourt, the high ground between Jaulny and Xammes; this was to be reached in two days.

In a driving rain the company marched from Bois de la Raffe and took up its position south of Limey and jumped off in reserve. The advance was rapid and by late afternoon the 2nd Division had reached its objective in one day. The 96th company advanced beyond Thiaccourt about 4:00 P.M. and dug in.

On the afternoon of the 13th, the company moved in to a support position, relieving a company of the 23rd Infantry. This relief was effected by infiltration with harassing enemy fire, but there were only a few casualties. At 4:00 A.M. on the 14th, the 4th Brigade relieved the 3rd Brigade, and on the night of the 14th the 96th company took up a position vacated by the 3rd Battalion, 6th Regiment.

At 3:00 A.M. on the 15th, orders were received to take up a position on the line from the Xammes-Charrey Road eastward to the Bois-de-la-Montague, then to hill 231-5.

The barrage started exactly at 5:50 A.M. on October 3, but the company had received no orders to attack. At 6:00 A.M. a message from 2nd Battalion Headquarters ordered the attack, and stated that further instructions would follow. The company immediately began the advance, but the French on the left, did not move forward, and the fire was terrific from the left flank (The Hook). The barrage was soon caught up with, and the men hugged it closely even ignoring one gun which was firing shells that hit within the company. The company advanced through Bois de Somme-Py and on over the crest of Blanc Mont to the road north of it. Many prisoners, machine-guns, artillery, anti-tank rifles and much equipment were captured, and a three kilometer advance was made.

After forming a line north of the Medeah Farm-Blanc Mont Road, the company had to turn its left flank and face west, as enemy troops could be seen moving in behind the left rear. The French had not advanced, and thus the flank was left open. Counter attacks were driven off with the assistance of one pounders and two French tanks. The company had suffered casualties totaling more than one hundred (100) men and three (3) officers within three hours. A line was finally established just west of the crest of Blanc Mont, running from the road north of it to a point about three hundred yards south. This position was held until the night of October 4/5, when the lines were withdrawn about one hundred yards, so as to allow the artillery to lay a barrage on enemy strong points on the western edge of Blanc Mont.

Early in the morning of October 5, the 3rd Battalion, 6th Regiment, attacked through the company and advanced down the slope without firing a shot or having a casualty. The 5th Regiment had passed through the 6th Regiment on the morning of the 4th, and had proceeded northward toward St. Etienne.

The 6th Regiment received orders to advance through the 5th Regiment at 4:30 P.M. on October 5. The 2nd Battalion was to lead, and the 96th Company advanced to support of the 78th Company. Setting out from a position just south of the road on Blanc Mont, due north across the St. Etienne-Somme Py Road, an advance of twelve hundred (1200) meters was made. The two companies consolidated and formed a line in the trenches approximately two kilometers northeast of the crest of Blanc Mont. Heavy machine -gun fire had reduced the two companies to less than eighty (80) men combined.

Early in the morning of Oct. 6, the 3rd Battalion of the 6th Regiment passed through the 2nd Battalion, and the 96th Company withdrew to its former position on the crest of Blanc Mont, where it remained in support until relieved by a battalion of the 36th Division on the night of the 10/10. It then hiked to the rear and bivouacked south of Somme Py for one day, in reserve.

TRANSLATION FROM OFFICIAL GERMAN WAR DAIRY.

CAUROY.

October 3-1918.

8th Day of the Defense.

The night passed quietly with the exception of several searching shots scattered over the entire divisional area; some machine gun fire. Own artillery delivered harrassing fire on recognized traffic, roads of approach, village of Souain, Jonchery, St. Hilalaire etc., and successfully engaged two Revolver cannon within Map Square 2048.

Group Order for counter attack group 149th Inf. Regt., annex 754.

At 5:45 A.M. the divisional observation post on the Sattelberg reports: A most severe bombardment on the entire front.

8:15 A.M. 1st Lieut. Richert reports: (he is now in the dugout of the former divisional command post on the Blanc Mont) The enemy is now sitting on top of the Blanc Mont. I can hear them talk. IA (Operation Officer) answers: Hold on as long as possible.

8:28 A.M. IA reports to Group Py: Enemy now settled down on the Blanc Mont. All attacks on our front have been repelled. No communication at present with the Jager Brigade, seems that they have withdrawn, (anyway, they have been in a second line dugout on the Mont Blanc)

8:30 A.M. 1st Lieut. Richert reports: Americans are now sitting on top of the command post dugout, they have led off about one third of our men as prisoners. It is said that right now now they again moved off.

(translators note: there follows various unimportant reports, ending off with the report that Lieutenant Richert, all Staffs of the Long and Close range groups, one scout officer, 1 Pioneer officer, a number of telephone and wireless operators, Uhlans (which were used as runners) etc., have fallen in the hands of the Americans. The Staff of the Jager Brigade was fortunate in being able to make its escape at the last moment.)

SYNOPSIS OF THE MEUSE ARGONNE OFFENSIVE.

The 2nd Division attacked and gained thirty (30) kilometers, leading all other divisions each day. It executed two daring feats of warfare: the infantry regiments marched in a column into the enemy's lines on the night of November 2/3, deployed, cut off and captured enemy troops in rear, and thus completely demoralized the enemy's rear guard action; and on the night of November 10/11, the Meuse River was crossed by the 5th Marines on foot bridges laid by the engineers, and a line north of the river was established. Much material and artillery and many machine-guns and prisoners were captured.

The 96th Company had very few casualties compared to those suffered in other operations: three (3) men were killed and forty (40) wounded, but at the time hostilities ceased only thirty-four (34) men of the company remained. One officer, Lieutenant Grayson, was slightly wounded. On the night of November 1, it began to rain, and for the rest of the time the men suffered from the rain and cold; little food was gotten up and it was usually cold. Over one hundred (100) men from the company were evacuated from sickness caused by exposure and physical exhaustion. With the exception of fighting the weather, however, this was the easiest operation in which the 96th Company had engaged.

Nov 12 to Dec 13, 1918: The Company remained in the woods near Yoncq until the morning of November 16. During this period the company rested, and was outfitted with new clothing and equipment, and was gradually filled up with men returning from field hospitals.

The 2nd Division was ordered to proceed to a bridge head on the Rhine River at Coblenz, where it was to form part of the Army of Occupation in Germany.

The hike began on the morning of Nov. 10, and the company was the point of the 2nd Battalion, which was the advance guard of the 2nd Division in that sector.

The hike was made through France, Belgium, Luxembourg and Germany, with stops at the following places: La Ferte, Tintigny, Tontelange, Pratz, Ettlebruck, Reisdorf, Beiglebach, Emmelbaum, Pintesfield, Gondesbret, Gondelsheim, Hillesheim, Dollendorf, Winneraf, Limesdorf, Niederbreisig, and Rheinbrohl.

The Rhine River was crossed on the morning of Dec. 13 and the 96th Company went into billets at Rheinbrohl.

Dec. 14, 1918 to July 16th, 1919: For the first three weeks the company rested, deloused and reorganized. After the first of the year (1919), an extensive training program was carried out, with long daily drills and manoeuvres. Leave was granted to visit England, France, Italy and towns within the American area.

The company was soon filled to overstrength, because of the officers and men who had been wounded returned from the hospitals. In March a detachment of about thirty was returned to the United States.

On May 2, 1919 Captain Gates was assigned to command the Marine Company of the Composite Regiment, which was General Pershing's guard of honor in parades in Paris, London, New York and Washington. Captain James P. Adams was ordered to take command of the 96th company. A detachment of thirteen (13) men was also assigned to the Composite Regiment.

OFFICIAL OPERATIONS AND CASUALTIES REPORT
Of The
96th COMPANY, 2nd BATTALION, 6th REGIMENT, U.S.M.C.
IN FRANCE, 1918.

Operation	Dates	Casualties	
		Killed	Wounded
Toulon Sector (Defensive Sector near Verdun)	March 28-April 30	5	12
Aisne Defensive (Near Chateau Thierry) ¹	June 1-5	3	7
Chateau Thierry Sector (Bouresches and Belleau Wood) ²	June 6-July 9	39	269
Aisne-Marne Offensive (near Soissons) ¹	July 18-19	26	56
Marbaché Sector (Pont-a-Mousson) ¹	August 9-16	0	0
St. Mihiel Offensive (near Thiaccourt) ¹	September 12-16	9	27
Champagne Offensive (Blanc Mont) ²	October 1-10	38	80
Meuse-Argonne Offensive	November 1-11	<u>3</u>	<u>40</u>
	Total.....	123	491

1---Major operations

2---Note: The two largest operations of the 2nd Division are not
recognized as major operations.

French Croix-de-guerre (continued)

Corporal Harold C.Cronk	(BS)
Corporal Harold C.Cronk	(GS)
Corporal John L.Dorrell	(BS)
Corporal James O.Garvey	(BS)
Private Edward H.Haws	(SS)
Private Max R.Howard	(BS)
Private Frank R.Jacot	(SS)
Corporal Frederick C.Ladd	(BS)
Private Lewis B.Malugan	(BS)
Corporal Oscar E.Moreland	(GS)
Private Philip T.Parham	(BS)
Private Oscar O.Patten	(BS)
Corporal Harold Powell	(BS)
Corporal Roy W.Reeves	(GS)
Corporal Alvin T.Romans	(BS)
Corporal Alvin T.Romans	(GS)
Private Raymond Ross	(GS)
Private Carl M.Sellards	(BS)
Sergeant Aloysius P.Sheridan	(SS)
Gunnery Sergeant Fred W.Stockham	(GS)
Private Ola A.Thorpe	(BS)
Corporal Ben A.Tooper	(SS)
Private Fred J.Von Daacke	(GS)
Private Roy L.Weldon	(SS)

* * * * *

SAVING OF PARIS AT CHATEAU-THIERRY HOTLY DEBATED.

Newporter says Regular Army did the trick.

"Who saved Paris?" is a question which has started the first redhot after-the-war controversy. Boston has been acclaiming General Edwards, Twenty-sixth Division as the saviors. Corporal Clark wrote a letter the other day telling of the large played by the 101st Infantry, in a fight at Chateau Thierry.

Now comes Howland A.Gibson of Newport declaring that this version is misleading because "there were others there," and "prior to the Twenty-sixth" Mr Gibson says:

"During the high tide of the German advances a certain division was rushed in trucks around through the outskirts of Paris and along the road to Chateau-Thierry. Passing through Meaux they began to meet refugees crowding the roads and the French territorials, who had been giving away slowly but steadily. This division was thrown into the gap on June 1st, directly across the Paris-Metz Highway, where the Germans were nearest Paris.

TRANSLATION OF A GERMAN DOCUMENT.

EXTRACTS FROM AN INTERROGSTORY BY THE INTELLIGENCE
OFFICER OF GENERAL HEADQUARTERS OF THE 7th ARMY OF
AMERICAN PRISIONERS CAPTURED IN THE SECTOR BOURESCHES
FROM 6th to 14th JUNE 1918.

Number 3528
COMBATIVE VALUE:

The 2nd American Division must be considered a very good division; even an attack division.

The different attacks of the two regiments on the BOIS-de-BELLEAU were executed with courage and dash. The moral effect of our fire could not seriously stop the advance of the infantry; the morale of the Americans has not yet been sufficiently tried.

The personnel of the troops must be regarded as remarkable. They are very healthy men, physically well built, from 18 to 28 years of age, who at the present time lack only proper training to make them very serious adversaries.

The esprit of the troops is fresh and naively confident. The statement of one prisoner is characteristic: "We kill or we are killed."

METHOD OF ATTACK:

The two attacks on the Bois de Belleau, executed by one or two battalions, were made according to the following method: 3 or 4 lines of riflemen at about an interval of 30 to 50 paces; rather close behind them shock troops, isolated, or in column of platoons. The troops are well supplied with automatic rifles and grenades. The shock troops brought forward machine guns. They had orders to penetrate deep into the German positions at a weak point; to converge on the hill and attack the stronger points from the rear.

EFFECTIVE STRENGTH OF COMPANIES:

Total effectives - 5 officers and 250 to 260 men.
Trench effectives - 4 officers and 220 to 230 men.

DETAILS AS TO POSITION:

Impossible to obtain any information.
The prisoners could hardly indicate the line which they held.

MORALE:

In general the prisoners made a good impression; they have a wide-awake air.

For the moment they still consider the war from the point of

Copies from Le Figaro, Paris, August 27, 1918:

"CRACK AMERICAN TROOPS."
"THE MARINE CORPS."

London knows our "Zouaves" and New York our "Chasseurs". Paris does not know as yet the "Marine" shooters of the U.S. The "Marine Corps" or simply the "Marines" who made themselves popular between Meaux and Chateau-Thierry.

If you see on an American soldier's uniform an insignia representing a globe crossed by an anchor and surmounted by an eagle, you can give that soldier a most respectful and sympathetic regard. He belongs to a heroic brigade, he is a "Marine."

She had her part—and a beautiful part; that brigade in the break of the "German" advance on Paris and in the offensive of July 18, 1918. The mayor of Meaux thanked her for having protected his town; Foch and Pétain congratulated her.

The "Marines" are very proud, and await with impatience the next moment to give, and to give themselves. They give themselves completely, with spirit, with enthusiasm, with pride, and their motto is "We kill or get killed."

The enemy saw it at Belleau Woods. The heroism manifested by the "Marines" was such that our G.H.Q. wants the souvenir perpetuated, and decided that "Belleau Woods" be called there-after "Woods of the Brigade of American Marines."

The "Germans" surnamed them "Devil Dogs" and the "Marines" accepted that word where entered hatred, respect and fear. We must not be surprised if on their return to their country, they keep that surname as a glorious souvenir to add to those which they already possess.

For the "Marines" in that country on the other side of the water where everything is so young, are old, very old, for they date since 1775. They took part in the "War of Independence," the other, the one of one hundred and forty years ago. They have already fought side by side with our soldiers for an identical cause. They took part in the "Civil War"; the "Mexican War"; they were the first to enter into "Mexico"; they fought the "Boxers" in Peking, and we saw them "First to land, first to fight" in France, in Panama, in Havana, in the Philippines, etc.

They were the first American soldiers to touch French soil on June 27, 1917.

The "esprit de corps" is developed with them as much as it can be in our "Elite Armies". It pleases them to fight, to abandon their coat, to lose their hat and meet the enemy with sleeves rolled up. It happened that a French doctor asked a wounded man "you are an American Soldier?" "Hell no." he answered "I am a Marine."

(signed) BRIEUX OF THE FRENCH ACADEMY.

The First Division had taken Cantigny and the Second was about to go in to the line when the Germans changed our plans by driving southward from the Chemin des Dames and reaching Chateau-Thierry in the early days of June. The Second Division was put into camions and rushed into the battle here, where the Germans threatened Paris as they had not threatened the French capital since the dark days of the fall of 1914.

Just west of Chateau-Thierry on June 1 the Second was thrown into the line across the Paris-Metz highway where the Germans were nearest Paris. There in Belleau Wood the Fifth and Sixth Arines won undying fame when they stopped the Boche rush. On the first day they had no artillery because the guns had not been able to get up. They had no food except emergency rations and their ammunition was not all it might have been. But they stopped the Germans at Bois Belleau and fought eleven days against repeated German attempts to drive them back.

On the last day of May the Third Division machine gunners, rushing into Chateau-Thierry, after a sixty hour trip in camions, stopped the Germans there. The Second Division held the barrier all through June and on the last day of the month the Ninth and Twenty-third Infantry won glory by capturing Vaux and gaining, with the Marines, a line which greatly bettered allied prospects.

The 2nd was then taken out for a well earned rest. Nothing was heard of it until the morning of July 18, when Marshal Foch electrified the world by his brilliant blow at the Chateau-Thierry salient, which history will record as the turning point in the war. The most important blow, indeed the vital blow, in this offensive, was hit just south of Soissons and by the 1st and 2nd Divisions, with the famed French Moroccan Division between them. It was an advance of eight kilometers, on the first day by this trio of divisions, which made possible the eventful reduction of the salient menacing Paris.

The 2nd Division had suffered very heavy casualties and had to have many replacements to retain its power. It was withdrawn from the battle area and took up the task of training its raw replacements.

Then General Pershing started his drive for the reduction of the St.Mihiel salient on Sept 12 the 2nd Division had its place in the hardest fighting along the southern side of the salient where the heaviest German resistance was expected. Again it made good, smashing through in record time.

After the St.Mihiel battle the now famed shock troops of the 2nd Division disappeared from the battle-line to reappear on October 2nd where least expected--over in the Champagne with General Gouraud's Fourth Army, which drove north to free Rheims and break the Boche hold on that region. On the first day in the region of Somme-Py the 2nd broke through the German line for a gain of six kilometers, leading every other division in the attack. In the succeeding days the 2nd pressed forward, and greatly aided General Gouraud's army in breaking the german hold on the hills of Champagne and liberating the martyred city of Rheims, for which the Kaiser's heart had bled so freely.

FLOYD GIBBONS

FROM CHICAGO TRIBUNE.
contributed by John Hayes.

Floyd Gibbons was born in Washington, D.C. He died at the age of 52 suddenly - heart condition - on September 24, 1939 - at his Cherry valley farm near Stroudsburg, Pa. His death came as he was completing plans to return to active newspaper work on the then new French-German front. He had been ailing but his condition was not considered serious. During the war and for years following, Gibbons, for whom personal danger was part of the job, appeared where ever there was action. During the war 1914-1918 as a correspondant for the Chicago Tribune he became famous. In 1917 he was ordered to England to cover the war front. He sailed on the Cunard Liner Laconia and was aboard it when it was torpedoed by a U Boat 150 miles off the coast of Ireland on February 25, 1917. Twelve persons perished. Gibbons story was a masterpiece of thrills of submarine warfare perils. Gibbons didn't get his stories behind the lines - he went where shells were bursting. His left eye was shot out and his left arm drilled twice by German bullets in June of 1918, in Belleau Woods at Chateau-Thierry. He was awarded the French and Italian Croix de guerre with Palm.

This copy was sent in by Bayard Ashton

HEADQUARTERS, SECOND DIVISION,
AMERICAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

Germany, January 1, 1919

SPECIAL ORDER)

No. 1.)

TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE SECOND DIVISION.

1. The year that has just ended has been the most momentous of the Century. A year ago the military situation was ominous. Russia and Roumania had been crushed, and the enemy was able to mass a greatly superior force on the Western Front. In March, April and May, he struck powerful and victorious blows in Picardy, Belgium and the Chemin de Dames. At this critical hour, the American forces were placed in the battle lines, and on November 11th., after an offensive campaign by the Allies' Commander in Chief, conducted with consummate skill and characterized by a continuous battle of unparralled activity and violence, the enemy was defeated and the victory was won.

2. The Second Division played a part of great military and historic importance in this tremendous engagement. It fought five pitched battles or series of battles, always defeating the enemy, and it has won the right to have inscribed on its banners the names of the brilliant victories won by it, at Chateau Thierry, Soissons, St.Mihiel, Salient, Blanc Mont, and Argonne-Meuse. Its casualties were 732 Officers and 23,653 Men, a total of 24,385. This was about ten percent of the total casualties of the A.E.F. It captured 12,025 Prisoners, over one quarter of the total number captured by the A.E.F. It captured 343 cannon, about one quarter of the total number captured by the A.E.F.

3. The Officers and men of the Division have earned, by their valor, their skill, and their victories, the admiration and gratitude of our Allies and our Countrymen.

4. That the New Year be a happy one for all members of the Division, their families, and their friends is my most earnest wish.

John A. Lejeune,
Major General, U.S.M.C.
Commanding.

9. In this great struggle many of our comrades have made the supreme sacrifice for our country but their heroic spirit dwells in the hearts of the Officers and the men of the Second Division.

JOHN A. LEJEUNE,
Major General, U.S.M.C.
Commanding.

KEY SHEET

CITATION (*) Entities man to wear "SILVER STAR" on Victory Medal and Bar.

AUTH.CARD. Authorization card for wearing "Fourragere"

DOW Duration of War.

AEF. American Expeditionary Forces.

GO.2-DIV. General Orders, 2-Division, Nos. 35, 44, 47A, 53, 64 and 88.

AGO. Decorations furnished by Adjutant General of State.

C de G (BS) Croix de Guerre; Bronze Star Regimental or Brigade Citation.

C de G. (SS) Croix de Guerre; Silver Star Divisional Citation.

C de G. (GS) Croix de Guerre; Gold Star Army Corps Citation.

C de G. (P) Croix de Guerre; Palm Army Citation.

GOWD. General Order; War Department.

GOND. General Order; Navy Department.

Note: Men decorated and cited in orders with the wording of their Citations are arranged alphabetically following this sheet.

ALL OFFICERS AND MEN THAT WERE CITED FOR BRAVERY IN ACTION IN AN ARMY ORDER ARE ENTITLED TO THE "SILVER STAR MEDAL."

81

ADAMS, JAMES P.

1st.Leiut.78th Co.,6th Regt.
GOWD #35,page 27,1919

(Army)
Distinguished Service Cross

"For extraordinary heroism near Blanc Mont, October 3, 1918. Voluntarily leading four soldiers thru heavy barrage, he attacked and killed a machine gun crew which was enfilading his company's first line. His willingness, fearlessness and great courage made possible the cleaning out of many more machine guns which were holding up the advances of his company."

Cross delivered January 4, 1919

(NAVY)
Navy Cross

Same citation as given for the Distinguished Service Cross.

(C de G) (GS)

6-6-18 Belleau Wood 2nd Lt.French.

"Altho gassed he retained command of his platoon with admirable zeal, leading his men into combat."

(C de G) (GS)

10-3-18 Blanc Mont 1st.Lt.French.

"He went out with four men thru our own artillery barrage and killed the crew of a machine gun nest. Displayed remarkable courage and great initiative in leading his men."

(Second Division Citation)

(*) 6-6-18 Belleau Wood 2nd Lt.GO 2nd Div.#40

"Suffering from gas poisoning, he continued to command his platoon with fine devotion to duty during the remainder of the operations. This on the 6th of June, 1918."

(Second Division Citation.)

(*) 10-3-18 Blanc Mont 1st Lt.GO 2nd Div.#88

"He led four men out in advance of his company in a barrage of our own artillery fire and killed the crew of a machine gun nest which was enfilading the first line of his company. Throughout the attack he displayed absolute fearlessness and great initiative. Leading his men into attacks on machine gun nests and cleaning out strong points."

This at Blanc Mont, October 3, 1918

ANDERSON, THEODORE B.

(Ode G) (BS)

7-19-18 Vierzy Private GO 2nd Div., #53 page 35. French 11,037D

"On July 19, 1918, near Vierzy he volunteered for important and perilous missions, and also administered aid to the wounded."

(SECOND DIVISION CITATION)

7-19-18 Vierzy Private GO 2nd Div. #53, page 35

"After his company had suffered extremely severe losses he made three trips to the rear under deadly fire on important missions. And was active in bringing in wounded and supplying water to the wounded between the lines."

JOHN A. LEJEUNE,
Major General U.S.M.C.
Commanding

Awarded September 12, 1918.

ARNESEN, ARTHUR E.

(SECOND DIVISION CITATION)

9-15-18 Thiaccourt Corporal GO 2nd Div. #1, page 6

"The above named man killed four men of an enemy machine gun nest, capturing two machine guns and destroying two others. This nest was firing on our lines with deadly effect at the time."

(A.E.F.CITATION)

9-15-18 Thiaccourt Corporal A.E.F.GO #1, Page 6.

"For gallantry in action near Thiaucourt, France, September 15, 1918, in attacking, with four other men, an enemy machine gun nest."

JOHN J. PERSHING
General, U.S. Army.

BELFRY, EARL
(ARMY)
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS (POSTHUMOUS)

6-6-18 Bouresches private GOWD #132 page 11.

"He showed exceptional courage in the capture of Bouresches, France, on June 6, 1918, entering the town after being wounded and taking a leading part in forcing the machine guns of the enemy to evacuate."

(SECOND DIVISION CITATION)
"Displayed great courage in the capture of a town on the 6th of June, entering the town after being wounded and taking a leading part on causing the machine guns of the enemy to evacuate."

Awarded July 5, 1918

OMAR BUNDY
Major General, U.S.A.,
Commanding.

(NAVY)
NAVY CROSS

6-6-18 Bouresches Private.

"He showed exceptional courage in the capture of Bouresches, France, on June 6, 1918, entering the town after being wounded and taking a leading part in forcing the machine guns of the enemy to evacuate."

BLINE, RAY N.
(SECOND DIVISION CITATION)

6-6-18 Bouresches Sergeant GO 2nd Div. #64, page 14.

The above named man is cited for gallantry in action against the enemy in

BOURESCHES

Awarded June 25, 1918

JOHN A LEJEUNE,
Major general, U.S.M.C.
Commanding

CARTER, JAMES

(ARMY)

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE CROSS.

Private Co. H. 6th Regt.
GOWD #119, page 3, 1919

"After having been wounded in the capture of Bouresches, France on June 6, 1918, he displayed remarkable energy and courage in fearlessly attacking superior numbers of the enemy and materially aiding in their defeat."

(SECOND DIVISION CITATION)

(*) 6-6-18 Bouresches Private GO 2nd Div. #49, page 37

"The above named man assisted in the capture of a town on June 6th after being wounded, and displayed remarkable energy and courage against superior numbers of the enemy. He engaged in street fighting and was of material assistance in driving out the enemy."

Awarded July 5, 1918

OMAR BUNDY,
Major General, U.S.A.
Commanding