

Hillard Dabbs

Interviewer: My name is Sarah Spencer and the date is March 9, 2005. What is your full name and where were you born?

Mr. Dabbs: Hillard B. Dabbs I was born down at Buffalo River down at Wayne County 1916.

Interviewer: Okay what branch of service did you serve in?

Mr. Dabbs: Second Marine Division 8th Marines I volunteered for the Marine Core here in Clarksville, Tennessee went to Nashville and from Nashville just over night went to San Diego California for boot camp went to boot camp out there. I volunteered for the Marine Core. When I got to boot camp in California I stayed there eight weeks training and after eight weeks we went up into the mountains called Camp Pendleton and stayed up there about four weeks then we shipped back to San Diego and they shipped me overseas. And had about 12 weeks training and you don't get 12 weeks training too fast but in that 12 weeks I lost 35 pounds of weight but the training was strict. I went through rifle training I was an expert rifleman I trained with an M1 rifle and BARs machine gun. And after we stayed there we went overseas we went to Hawaii just stopped there one day went to Marshall Islands one day then went to Teeny Island stayed there about two months then went over to Saipan which is about five mile apart stayed there about 15 months. So we did some training there too and all there in Saipan at the time all the buildings were destroyed. The only people I saw at the time we had an area we had about a mile square we could go in for us to live in we could train there so we trained there for just about everyday for years. And then we went to after Saipan went to Okinawa and stayed there just a short Okinawa just the engineers I was in the engineers at that time about 6 or 7 weeks. Then we came back we got orders to ship back to Saipan and we stayed there a few months then they dropped the bomb in Nagasaki Japan so we left Saipan went to Nagasaki right after they dropped the bomb and when stayed there when the radiation and everything had been spread so we didn't have any place really to sleep except outside there wasn't any bunks or anything there wasn't any buildings left. So we finally got some tents and after we got some tents we kindly repaired some of the old buildings where you could go back in spend the night. And so the radiation I got was just kind of scummy your body would break out you would have big boils and stuff like that and your body would break out all over and there's not much you can do for it cause they didn't have the experience as to what to do.

Interviewer: Wow

Mr. Dabbs At that time we didn't have any doctors just some first aid people and all they could do was give you a little ointment or something rub of course they broke out too.

Interviewer: Did you continue to have to work even after your body was broken out like that?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh it broke out all over you its real comes through like a good size hen egg you get boils like that. And some people didn't do it I did and we had guard duty and stuff there cause we were engineers we had to run some water lines to the radiation and junk like that and of course all the buildings was

just practically thrown down like a cyclone may have hit it just leveled them out. And so we stayed there and like I said stayed there five months and came back to the states after five months and but the.

Interviewer: How soon after the bomb had been dropped did you go to Nagasaki how long had it been?

Mr. Dabbs: What?

Interviewer: How long had it been since they had dropped the bomb when you went there?

Mr. Dabbs: We was there the first troops right after about ten days after they had dropped the bomb.

Interviewer: So it had just happened.

Mr. Dabbs: We were going there regardless if they had dropped the bomb we was all ready to go there. In Saipan we had to take a lot of treatments shots and stuff like that. And you wouldn't think so but they line you up kind of like a and you've got to guys one on each side give you a shot in the arm at the same time both of them. And I got about 12 shots and about three or four weeks we got ready to go to Japan they wanted to see our records. Well some how or another some of the records were misplaced they couldn't find my record so I had to take 12 shots over again. And typhoid and I don't know all the shots I had but I had a bunch of them. And while we was there we also got sprayed with DDT before we went to Japan that's the thing they spray animals with to kill them.

Interviewer: Yeh

Mr. Dabbs: Can't do it it's against the law now but they sprayed us. And this friend of mine out here he got sprayed and he can't hardly get around at all he's practically paralyzed it really affected him real bad. Then you go to try to go to medical places here in town or in Nashville and they don't have the experience they can't never give you much and you apply when you a little compensation kind of like a retirement but they the Corporal out their said I don't get that. So I don't get any retirement at all. In Saipan we was on Saipan Island we would have to train at night and anybody's that's ever been to Saipan knows it's a bluff over there you have to at night you ran this bluff at night and its so steep two guys would have to hold hands a train to keep from falling down and its kind of nerve racking.

Interviewer: What year did you enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: Pardon

Interviewer: What year did you enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: 44

Interviewer: Okay what caused you to want to enlist at that point? What caused you to want to enlist in 44?

Mr. Dabbs: Okay what we did when the war was going on we went to Saipan we went to and a lot of people of course was killed so many people were killed on the beach that these small bulldoziers couldn't go ashore because there was so many bodies paying on top of each other you had to they

finally had to get a bulldozer to push them out you know get a way to get the machinery in there. And like I said there wasn't any buildings there all the buildings town down. And we didn't have any tents for sometime we had to sleep out in the open and the hills up in this certain sections there was bombing going on the hills were rocky you couldn't hardly build a fox hole you just barley enough to lay down in it. There wasn't enough to lay down in it you had to lay down on top and after I was there we just stayed there and trained and got ready for Japan. And of course

Interviewer: So how long were you in the Pacific total?

Mr. Dabbs: I was in there 21 months.

Interviewer: Okay

Mr. Dabbs: I came back let's see I volunteered went over there and came back I didn't want to stay in the Marine Core in California we can back into California you could sign up if you wanted to but I didn't want to because at that time the service people didn't get much money at all like an enlisted man he got about \$50 a month. And if he and his wife was if he had a wife you go 80 a month and so you got see you didn't have the money to live on really but you had to get by the best you could. And

Interviewer: Were you married at the time?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh I had a little girl two years old. I shouldn't have volunteered but I did. Well I felt like it was my time to go so I just wanted you to do it. And when I was recruited in sworn in two or three people came by my brother came by and my older brother he said what are you doing and I said well I've already done it.

Interviewer: What made you want to enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: Huh

Interviewer: What made you want to enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: I don't know I just felt like I needed to do my part. And so I did the best I could and he came by and he said brother what are you doing going in the Marine Core said I said well I just figure everyone tried their best and I was going in the CBs so I turned the CBs down and went in the Marine Core. But CBs I'd have got a better rank and more money but I didn't want to do that I want to go in the Marines.

Interviewer: Was your job in the Marines related to your job in the civilian world?

Mr. Dabbs: When you first go in just about everybody's in infantry at that time. Then we went to Japan I'd been used to work in the steel mills years ago and at engineer training we went in that's when they put them in to run water lines Japan after we got over there. I figured I knew something about that I did know something about it and so we did that and

Interviewer: What was correspondence with your wife like did you get to write her often or get letters from her often?

Mr. Dabbs: I can't hear you.

Interviewer: What was correspondence with your wife like during that period?

Mr. Dabbs: You can't believe this I left California my wife got in the car her and her dad and her sister got in the car my little girl did drove from here to California at that time there wasn't any air conditioning in the car and she got to California and she had a sister out there she stayed about two months out there and then came back home. Then I tried to get information to her kindly where I was located and I'd write out a little statement radio gram and send it then the first information she got from me was a letter like that had her name up there and my name down at the bottom and that's all there was to it. She didn't get any information at all six months before she heard from me and the way I heard form her then I got one of these radio grams about as big as that book there and I put in there said I said Jenny you know my grandmothers name last name and that's all I put. And then of course her name was Marshal and I'd been on the Marshal Islands.

Interviewer: Oh clever

Mr. Dabbs: About nine months before she really knew where I was but she had that Marshal on that letter that's all it had left and my brother in law was a retired Navy man and they gathers and penned I was in the Marshal Islands so. It was about before I got anything from her she sent me a little box of candy and it had nuts in it and I got the candy and of course it had bugs in it. But I took that little box of candy you couldn't get any candy at that time I took that little box of candy hid it under my blanket and I'd eat a little piece at night. I didn't pass it around I ate the bugs and all. So we had to sleep in tents the whole time I was in there we didn't have any barracks or didn't have a PX there wasn't no there at the last I don't agree but there at the last they was giving guys a bottle of beer a day the guys that wanted it. I didn't take any of course I didn't drink. These guys would get about six cans drink it all at one time and get feeling pretty good. I didn't do that.

Interviewer: What were your what were your missions like when you were on the islands like what were you guys doing?

Mr. Dabbs: Well thank goodness if you can image fast up about a mile square you trained in that one mile and that's all we were allowed to go at that time we were restricted. See there was some other guys on the other side we couldn't go over there. Then I think sometimes a ship would come in on the other side later on and start bringing stuff in but we weren't allowed to go over there we had to stay in this same so we just stayed there and trained and couldn't do much in a mile square but

Interviewer: Were you ever actually in combat?

Mr. Dabbs: Pardon

Interviewer: Were you ever actually in combat?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh in Saipan Teeny and Okinawa didn't stay there but six weeks. Came back to Saipan and of course we had to guard yourself in Japan there we still had trouble with the Japs. They weren't fighting just they weren't happy to see us.

Interviewer: Did you feel prepared when you were in combat was it any different from what you were expecting or?

Mr. Dabbs: Well I didn't get much training to start with in California but I got 8 weeks training up in Camp Pendleton some of the training there we'd have to go up take a 15 mile hike at night take your bag and of course some of those guys see I was older than most of those guys I was 27 years old. And some of those guys 18, 19 and some of them never had any kinds of experience they couldn't take that 15 mile walk they had to have a jeep come pick them up and take them back. I had been training through the steel company I was in pretty good shape except I was a little on the heavy side but I lost that 35 pounds I could do as much as those young guys. They couldn't out do me then of course we had to take rifle range rifle range training over in the rifle range. And so I used to make back when I was a boy I used to go squirrel hunting and stuff like that so I could shoot that rifle I made expert rifle in the marine core. And out of 70 something only 4 made it but I knew I could do it cause I had been used to hunting when I was a boy I could shoot the rifle. There was boy that done everything that your talking about this friend I would hunt was bout 50 years old so we'd take the training that time at the prison so we could buy 22 shells and go squirrel hunting got our training there. When we got to the marine core in California our rifle range I was coming down the line of course you had to sink or swim you had to swim two laps in the swimming pool. If you couldn't swim you stayed there until you did swim you had to stay there. They was real strict on that.

Interviewer: What were your recollections of the NCOs or the Officers?

Mr. Dabbs: I was enlisted I was a Corporal

Interviewer: Were you? What were the leaders who were leading you like did you feel like you were in good hands or

Mr. Dabbs: Like rough hands yeh they tried to give you they treated you rough. This friend of mine well we was kind of friends but they don't want you to be friends they want to keep you mad over there the Marine Core does. They don't want you to be friends. But they have inspection in the of course the big men in front and come on down to the little men but they had these helmets on and these helmets had the Marine Core rim on it and I've seen a guy one of the big guys up front ask a guy a question who didn't know the answer to it and he pushed the guy pushed his helmet back and the guy slapped him like that and his helmet come down and cut his head right there. He went on down the line and came back of course it was bleeding where he was treating him and he grabbed him by the collar and said what's that running down your face? I couldn't understand what the guy said he couldn't say nothing really but it was pretty strenuous. But he was good at the end the strict training really paid off. I'd say if anybody's going in afraid to go volunteer you get all that training you can because that's just rough training but you just have to do the best you can.

Interviewer: What was your first combat experience like?

Mr. Dabbs: I can't explain that. Its well it's just you walk when your island you try to you know the island the Japs over there they've got the advantage over you. And of course we had to unload on a ship get onto a barge to come into at that time everybody had bags on their bags on their back but they the barge is when it's so far in shallow water they drop you down and you have to go out there to wade in. You had these bags on your back about the time you hit that water they did away with these bags cause some of them would go under and could drown. And one did drown when he got to shore he didn't have the bag just stripped everything off just its kind of hard to tell how you feel you feel like you can't tell how you feel you feel kindly crazy I guess. Of course the Japs had the advantage they were already stationed on the mountain we were trying to get in then. We got in alright but we lost a lot of marines.

Interviewer: Were any of your friends wounded?

Mr. Dabbs: Hum

Interviewer: Were any of your friends wounded or killed any of the men that you were with?

Mr. Dabbs: I didn't hear that.

Interviewer: Were any of your friends wounded?

Mr. Dabbs: Oh yeh a lot of them wounded yeh a lot wounded yeh a lot wounded. They did the best they could to get them out and take them back to the ship if we could. A lot of them got killed there for a while they couldn't do anything with them except push them aside cause there wasn't any place to put them cemeteries or anything like that. It was hard to bury anybody anyway what they were trying to do was save their own life but they had there was a small machine there would be so many people on the ground one of these machines would have to come back and push them out the men the water is kind of like ice just kind of solid then.

Interviewer: When you were in the field did you get hot food or C-rations what was your food like?

Mr. Dabbs: Oh lordy did you ever see C-rations?

Interviewer: I've heard of them.

Mr. Dabbs: Well they'll go for a long time just a can you got a can of C-rations and a little cracker we didn't get any sweets though no candy didn't have any. And it was I don't know how long before we started getting some food from the ships that come in on the other side of the island then they'd have to bring it across. We had spam loved the spam of course that's but the C-rations you got two cans of C-rations that's your dinner and breakfast too. And understand you got used to it you didn't like it but you had to eat it. Saipan some guy on the island we run out of food they had a cow potato like a sweet potato planted so you could pull that sweet potato up eat it that sometime it would kind of give you a little sweet taste. Then you would have to go back to ole C-rations again.

Interviewer: What would you do in your free time if you had any? Did you guys have free time? What would you do if you did?

Mr. Dabbs: We didn't have any free time we stayed in the one mile and you didn't go anywhere you had there's no like I said there's no grocery store no snack bar well everything was destroyed all of the buildings. Wasn't any PX no PX all the time I was in the Marine Core I never went into a PX never got to it. See I stayed there and went overseas and came back and stayed in California and was discharged.

Interviewer: Did the enlisted men with you did you feel a certain bond did you feel close to one another?

Mr. Dabbs: Well maybe two or three they don't want you to feel to close that's one of the things in the way. The battery you have to really like it of course if the guys mad he's going to fight then they don't like you to be close friends. I had a couple of guys I was pretty close to we just kind of buddied. But when you work with them there's no place to go it's kind of just like a big football field.

Interviewer: Now do you remember the Peal Harbor attack?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh

Interviewer: What were your memories of that day?

Mr. Dabbs: I wasn't there I was here then.

Interviewer: Right but what are your memories on the state side?

Mr. Dabbs: Of course I saw where they dropped the bomb when I was over there. Well that got me up set that I've got to check in but I waited awhile before I volunteered. Its kind of hard to explain that next day of Pearl Harbor I've been back there a many times stayed three or four weeks at Pearl Harbor. It's a bad thing some people lost some people their loved ones. It's so hard to explain what it's like of course I wasn't there.

Interviewer: Right what were your memories of the depression of the great depression?

Mr. Dabbs: Of what?

Interviewer: What were your memories of the great depression?

Mr. Dabbs: The great depression, oh honey. Is your daddy living was he in the depression?

Interviewer: No my grandparents were.

Mr. Dabbs: Oh Lord honey you didn't have nothing really it got down to where you didn't nobody had a job just kind of had to live off the fat of the land more or less. You didn't have what you call a lot to eat didn't have of course the depression was kind of like rations in WWII you were rationed you could only get certain things. But you can get them now but the depression it got down to where you could hardly get anything. A lot of people worked for 50 cents a day.

Interviewer: Were you unemployed at that time?

Mr. Dabbs: I was 17 then I was a boy I worked I worked at the saw mill at 17 years old. But they didn't pay you in money you had to take it all in groceries when you got paid. Of course they some clothing and food that's all you had to get in the depression. A lot of people older people killed their self at that time we lived on a farm Buffalo River a man up next to us had all he could take and hung his self. But a lot of people killed their self.

Interviewer: So do you remember things improving economically with the war at the beginning of the war?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh and when Roosevelt came in as President he changed everything around and made the WP working and was giving money that way and just well just you couldn't go down and buy what you want you just bought what you could get. You just you couldn't go down and say give me a bag of sugar it wasn't there.

Interviewer: How did you feel about Roosevelt's policies during the depression and the war?

Mr. Dabbs: I think he did a good job. Of course that one I really liked was Truman he's the one that dropped the bomb. If he hadn't dropped the bomb I wouldn't be here now because we went in there we was going to try and go like two mountains in between Japan and that's the way we was going in just when they dropped the bomb we was going to try and go in there anyway. So we never could go of course they guns all over the hills where you had to go in so it would have been kind of like suicide really the way I feel about it.

Interviewer: So did you guys feel a sine of relief when you found out the bomb had been dropped?

Mr. Dabbs: They dropped the bomb of course we felt good at the time but we didn't know what was going to happen. And see when they the plane that took off of Saipan with the bomb that was just five miles from where I was stationed. And when they dropped the bomb airplane policy inspectors came over to inspect the planes and this friend of mine we were on Saipan we knew this guy from Nashville was coming there with as an inspector of the planes. So we as soon as we could we went over the hill to see him we got over there he was inspecting this plane and I said of course we friends and we got to talking to him and he was from Nashville and I was from here we talked kind of friendly. He said I'm inspecting this plane so I'm going to fly it up you want to go with me? I said this other guy we'll do anything to get off that island we got on that plane and flew over another island and they were shooting at us and he got on up where so high there was ice on the wings of the plane and he brought us back brought us back to the airport. Some guy in charge saw us getting off so he didn't court marshal us but he gave us a good talking we got out of there and went back over the hill to the island where we were staying and we didn't go back over there again. I don't know whether that was the plane that dropped the bomb or not I think it was. But he said I've got a special meeting he was just checking the plane he didn't know where he was going. The way I understand it they didn't know where the plane was going until they got up in the air and I guess they were almost to Nagasaki until most of them knew where they was going.

Interviewer: Were you impressed with qualities of the enemy with their leadership or their ability to fight?

Mr. Dabbs: Their leadership?

Interviewer: Or their ability to fight their skills were you impressed by them at all?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh in Saipan yeh of course we had we didn't have a lot of well we had the training we knew what we were supposed to do and where we was going. But you just have to do the best you could kindly. It's kind of hard to explain all you had to do its so fast you had to and like I say their up on the hill shooting and your down on the ground. A lot of Americans got killed there a lot of Japs got killed too of course they killed so many they kindly piled them up like a wood pile. You had to get a machine to push them out before you could get through there. And I don't know how they where they buried them all or what they did I guess they went up there and buried them. I didn't see what they did with them after they pushed them out.

Interviewer: When you got to Nagasaki after they dropped the bomb what were you doing there what did they have you do?

Mr. Dabbs: When they dropped the bomb?

Interviewer: After they dropped the bomb and you got to Nagasaki what were you guys doing in Nagasaki?

Mr. Dabbs: We were kind of taking control of it more or less. We was kind of taking over Nagasaki that was our job then we were in charge of it. A lot of guys wasn't too many got shot there, there was several got in fights with the Japs. It was kind of funny you walk on a little bridge that little bridge and they'd meet up on the bridge and a lot of guys would knock the Japs off the bridge into the creek and do that and they got control of it alright. But after that a couple of months it kind of calmed down and we didn't have too much trouble.

Interviewer: Once you got to Nagasaki did you have barracks to sleep on or once you had been there awhile did you still have to sleep in tents?

Mr. Dabbs: Well see when we went there the Japs were supposed to be finished fighting they weren't supposed to fight anymore. We got control of it every now and then some Jap found fly in and kill and American but not too many they kindly acted like they was kind of glad to get it over with and I can see why they would be. I guess they were free men too. But it's hard to its kind of hard to find a Jap friend I don't friend them too much even now. Of courser the young ones they didn't do anything but the old ones they mistreated some of my friends were captured in the Philippians. They were captured treated real bad the Japs would beat them and wouldn't feed them and this Colonel friend of mine I think he's in Florida right now was captured by the Japs and the way they treated him they starved him to death. He weighted about 110 pounds but my part when I got to California I decided to just come home. You won't believe this but that that train in Nashville and we didn't have a place to lay down there wasn't a bed on that train and we went on Norma Beach California it took us 4 days and nights to get out there. And of

course people walking in the train I kept my shoes on some others kept their shoes on slept with their shoes on. Of course they didn't realize and I didn't either if you kept them on so long your feet get large when we got to California we couldn't hardly walk because our feet had got big. And of course they wouldn't put you on larger shoes but they made army shoes too big. Had to slim them down.

Interviewer: Were you ever promoted during your time in the Marines?

Mr. Dabbs: Yeh from a private to a corporal that's a big jump in the marine world. You don't see many go up they don't promote them too fast. Of course when I come up I was a rifleman expert rifle man and they had two rifles the M1 and the BARs they called it. Well the BR was kind of an automatic it had you was supposed to shoot it all the time shoot minutes and stuff like that well I practiced with that thing a lot I was pretty good at that. So if you was if you was a corporal a BR expert they're not going to promote you because when you go to the next rank you go out of that rifle into the M1. If you were good at that BARs there were about 6 of us when we got there they didn't want us to go any higher cause that BARs you had to get ride of that and get the M1 rifle. So that's why we stayed.

Interviewer: Now before Pearl Harbor were you aware at all of the threat of Nazi Germany or Militarist Japan?

Mr. Dabbs: Before the war I worked overseas for the steel company I worked for Michelin Steel one morning I got a cable gram from a guy from England right before the war started they built a steel mill in England when I went to the steel mill I worked hard and tried to get ahead so I got to know my job pretty good. I got this radio gram from England to come to England to work. Back then you didn't have telephones you had to use the best you could. So it kindly surprised me when I got that because when I got it the morning the guy knocked on the door I was working pretty well 12 at night to 8 in the morning and this guy he knocked on the door about 8 o'clock 8:30 and he had a uniform on. The place where I was rooming she went over and unlocked the door and said there's a policeman here to see you. It wasn't a policeman it was the guy with the radio gram so that's when I got started an why I went to England I started over there until they dropped they started the war in 39. The war was September 3, 39 when they started the war with Germany and England

Interviewer: You were there in England?

Mr. Dabbs: I was in England with the steel company. So I had already been there a while and after they started dropping they didn't drop a bomb on the steel mill of course they would recapture that. But when they started flying over right over at that time England where we were at this friend of mine we had a rooming house in one of these hotels up there. And when the plane came over he was heavier than I was I jumped under the bed and he tried to but he got hung he was too big for the bed the other bed. They were bombing they didn't drop the bomb but we didn't know. I stayed there they started the war in September and I came home in December finally got the last ship out of England coming home.

Interviewer: Did you fear that Americans would become involved?

Mr. Dabbs: Do what

Interviewer: Did you think that America might become involved in the war?

Mr. Dabbs: No I didn't no see we were afraid that at the time the Germans come to England and start dropping these bombs a friend of mine he stayed there he had a girl friend and he said I think I'll stay another two or three months. That was the last year he had to stay there four years before he could ever get out. And he married the girl and after the war was over he came home. But he stayed in England the whole time. But England when they started the war after the war was started we had a little car and that little car you had to close all the front headlights you had a little place about an inch wide you could see to drive at night. And over there all the people that time was walking just about so you couldn't drive maybe 5 or 10 miles an hour just you'd bump into people. We got to where we lived about two miles from work and we would walk they blacked all the windows out in the steel mill where you couldn't see at night so we had to work at nighttime. I got a chance to come home I could have come home early but I stayed. I decided in September I would come home. I mean September is when it started I came home in December.

Interviewer: What was your job in the steel mill?

Mr. Dabbs: They had never had a tin plate steel mill in England before and that was my I was the first guy to start there. And I came back after well it wasn't anything to do with this what we're talking about. But after I came back from the Marine Core I went back and I got a call to go to France for a steel company I stayed over there four years and came back here to the states after that right after I got a chance to go to Australia stayed down there for a year and a half. Came back and went to Turkey and stayed there for three years in Turkey at a steel company. And I came back here decided to stay here for a while and I got a job and started working in real estate about 45 years ago. I've been at it ever since.

Interviewer: So you knew about the war going on in Germany or in Europe but you never thought American would really get involved?

Mr. Dabbs: I didn't of courser didn't know it was a surprise you didn't know what was going to happen. So after they rationed in England I got a ration from England they started rationing stuff out you couldn't get some things there in two months you couldn't get hardly any meat and sugar things like that you had to cook the best you could. I decided to come home I got home.

Interviewer: Did you ever have a sense of the big picture meaning what was going on overall what your unit was doing in regards to the larger purpose of the war?

Mr. Dabbs: I didn't have no idea things were going on until they dropped the bomb on Hawaii and when they started that I heard at the time that they some Japs were out towards Californian but the didn't come ashore after they dropped the bomb. But when they dropped that I figured there was really going to be trouble which there was. But I waited a while before I volunteered. Somebody said my brother said you're crazy for going into the Marine Core you've got a little girl two years old. I said I know it I've got sometime I when I was overseas in that fox hole I figured he was right. Anyway I decided to do that.

Interviewer: Now once you got to Nagasaki once the war was sort of over did communication with your family become any better or did you still

Mr. Dabbs: I guess I got maybe two or three letter from my wife in 18 months. We didn't have communication I got that little box of candy I was crazy about getting that man. But the mail just didn't go through and then of course before they dropped the bomb you couldn't hardly get any mail at all they just wouldn't let you they wasn't supposed to know where you are.

Interviewer: Did you write letter a lot?

Mr. Dabbs: No they wouldn't let you send them out. Like I say I got I guess I sent her three or four in a year and a half I was reading this one the other day like I said got her name up here and my name up there and this all cut out in the middle. It's at the house somewhere I'm going to try and find it.

Interviewer: That's neat. If you had it to do over again do you think you would enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: What

Interviewer: If you had it to do over again do you think you would still enlist?

Mr. Dabbs: Well I'd have to think about leaving my family just to volunteer and go. I'd think about it I'm glad I went on and got it over with. I fell like I did what little I could. For my country I just did yeh I guess I would do it again I still think instead of sending those young guys they should send guys with more experience. They could be but that's not the way they do it.

Interviewer: Well thank you for your time.