

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
HERBERT H. HANNEMAN
U. S. Army, World War II Prisoner of War,
Bataan Death March Survivor.

1999

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Hanneman, Herbert H., (1917 -), Oral History Interview, 1999.

User copy, 1 sound cassette (ca. 47 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master copy, 1 sound cassette (ca. 47 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

ABSTRACT

Herbert Hanneman, a Madison, Wis. native, discusses his World War II service clerical work in the 2nd Philippine Corps and his experiences as a Japanese prisoner of war on the Bataan Death March. Hanneman talks about his original enlistment in the Florida National Guard, discharge, enlistment in the Army, and assignment to administrative duty at General MacArthur's headquarters. He relates learning of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, being issued a weapon, and regrouping after the attack. He mentions clerical work at Corregidor, the experience of being constantly under attack, and transfer to the Bataan peninsula. Hanneman describes being captured by the Japanese, march to prison camp, feelings as the number of prisoners increased, receiving food from natives, and problems with drinking water on the march. He details the mental state of many prisoners, constant burial detail, trip on a prison ship to Japan, and labor in a Japanese steel mill. Hanneman discusses the rations, attempts to steal food, receiving Red Cross packages, and trading cigarettes for food. He comments on being told by the Japanese that there were women in the United States military and that Hiroshima had been bombed. Hanneman talks about the war's end including the prison guards fleeing the camp, breaking into the camp's pantry, and the reaction of Japanese villagers' to American soldiers, and liberation of the camp. He mentions the medical problems associated with life in the POW camp, emotions upon return to the United States, visiting his mother after discharge, and marrying his childhood sweetheart. Hanneman touches upon receiving items at no charge while in uniform, and his job for the City of Madison.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Hanneman (b. February 26, 1917) served as a clerical staff member with the 2nd Philippine Corps during World War II. He was taken prisoner in 1942 and held in prisoner of war camps in the Philippines and Japan until the war ended.

Interviewed by James F. McIntosh, M. D. Wisconsin Veterans Museum Volunteer, 1999.

Transcribed by John K. Driscoll, Wisconsin Veterans Museum Volunteer, 2002

Transcript edited by Abigail Miller, 2003.

Interview Transcript

Hanneman: — Ayer, Missouri. A-Y-E-R, Missouri.

McIntosh: In 19?

Hanneman: 1917, February 26.

McIntosh: Okay, how did you enter military service?

Hanneman: Okay, I was living in Madison, Wisconsin, at that time and a friend of mine and I decided that we were going to enlist in some form of service, because the draft was coming up. And so, what we did, we got in our little old Model A Ford and we went to Florida to have a good time before we got drafted. And while we were there, we ran out of money, so we enlisted in what was then the Florida National Guard. Which was being activated at that time.

McIntosh: Year?

Hanneman: What?

McIntosh: Year?

Hanneman: 1941.

McIntosh: Okay. Well, what did they do with you?

Hanneman: Well, I stayed with them long enough, six months, until I got my first furlough and Lee and I came north, and on our way back, we decided we didn't want to be in the Florida National Guard. We wanted to go overseas, so when we got back to our base, we said we'd like to take a discharge to go into the Regular Army. So we signed up with the Coast Guard.

McIntosh: Hold it just a second. [Background clatter.] So 1941, the Coast Guard?

Hanneman: So we signed up signed up with discharge, and reenlisted for foreign service in the Philippines. It wasn't the Coast Guard, it was the Army.

McIntosh: The Army. Okay, and so they put you in what outfit?

Hanneman: Well, when we got to Manila, they assigned myself to what they called the Detached Enlisted Men's List, and what I did was worked in an office, in General MacArthur's office, because I knew a little bit of shorthand and typing, and they were desperate for people like that.

McIntosh: So you became a clerk right off the bat?

Hanneman: So I became a clerk right off the bat, and that is really what I remained at until I

was captured.

McIntosh: And so this is 1941?

Hanneman: This is in December, you know.

McIntosh: Right. So, tell me about how that all of a sudden hit you.

Hanneman: Well, I got to Manila and was working in this office. We only worked half a day. We had the other half a day off. And we had native Filipinos who made our beds and swept our floors. Actually, they were almost servants to us. Of course, I was making \$21 a month.

McIntosh: Can't beat it. [Laughter]

Hanneman: And I think we were paying them \$3 or \$4 a month, you know, to do all that. And I worked there until that fateful morning when we, and this is how we heard about the war beginning. Came down for breakfast, and they were hawking newspapers: "Pearl Harbor had been bombed!" That's how we found out about it.

McIntosh: I can't believe that.

Hanneman: We could not do anything. We couldn't do anything.

McIntosh: Nothing

Hanneman: Nothing had been posed to us. I am assuming that our superiors knew about it but they had not told us.

McIntosh: But you were in MacArthur's office?

Hanneman: Yea. Crazy. Crazy, isn't it?

McIntosh: What did he tell you?

Hanneman: Well, I can't exactly remember how we did it, but we all got excited and we rushed to our posts, and, lo and behold, they started issuing us side arms, you know, guns and so forth. But, still, it really wasn't very well organized. So a couple of us went downtown in the afternoon and, while we were down there, they bombed Nickels Field, in Manila. And that is when we rushed back to the barracks, and then they really got serious with us. Took us in, and about three or four days later, they shipped us over to Corregidor. Because Manila was going to be bombed, and they had no use for us there, so we went to Corregidor. On a ship. I think that was on a Christmas Eve, as I recall. In fact, I know it was. And when we got over to Corregidor, I was still doing clerical work, more or less. And one

day while I was there, they bombed the barracks we were working in. Dropped bombs there, so everybody was running out. I remember running out of the building. One bomb, which did not explode, however it went through three floors, but never exploded, which probably saved our lives. And I was running out of there, and I could see planes coming that were doing some strafing. So I crawled into a culvert along a little road there. Couldn't quite get all the way in, so my head was sticking out and my head and face got covered with some of the stones that the strafers were hitting. But I got out of that. And then I went back again when it was all over with. And that night they put a whole slew of us on a barge and pulled it out in the open, and aimed us toward Bataan, which is the mainland of the Philippine Islands there.

McIntosh: How big? The outfit?

Hanneman: I can't remember, but there were probably fifty or sixty of us, something like that. And when we got over there, why, then, they set up some headquarters there. With the people who were, with the infantry, which was already over there. And I can't remember how long that lasted, but we didn't have much of any facilities for bathing. We didn't get food, we must have had food, all right. I don't even remember the kitchens. But I remember that several of us, four or five of us, went down to a stream near there and wanted to take a good bath. So we undressed and while we were undressed, all of a sudden we looked up and we were surrounded by Japanese soldiers.

McIntosh: Bad timing.

Hanneman: Bad timing. Very bad timing. They did allow us to put our clothes on, but they took our wrist watches, checking our rings, you know.

McIntosh: Was that in —

Hanneman: With a little prodding, they got us to go to meet larger groups, and eventually, we were in a huge group.

McIntosh: Was that a surprise to them?

Hanneman: Oh, very much a surprise. Although we sort of suspected something was going to happen. But we didn't know what.

McIntosh: I mean, you knew things weren't going really well.

Hanneman: We knew that we were not winning.

McIntosh: But did you know that they were that close to you?

Hanneman: No, no. We had no idea they were that close. At least, I didn't. Maybe somebody

else did. And when they got us into this huge group, that was the beginning of what now is called the Bataan Death March. And they kept marching us. We had no idea where we were going.

McIntosh: Did you start right away, or did they keep you there for a while?

Hanneman: No, no. More or less, they started almost right away. It seemed like we'd get larger groups, the first day. Maybe two or three. We didn't go very far. They just kept bringing people together. And —

McIntosh: Did you stop at night?

Hanneman: We usually stopped at night, yea. Because I don't think they wanted to march at night.

McIntosh: And then what did you do?

Hanneman: Any food we got, we got it from the natives, but as we would go through, the natives would occasionally bring us food. But the second or third day, they started giving us a little bit of food at night, when we'd stop.

McIntosh: What food?

Hanneman: Rice, primarily. Just bowls of rice. And water, we had a heck of a time getting water. That's when we all became rather ill, because we couldn't get decent water. We'd drink out of carabao wallows, or anything that was liquid. And I think we all had diarrhea, of some kind. As a matter of fact, I'm sure we did. And eventually, I don't know how long this lasted. Forgive me, I just don't know. But, eventually, those of us who were still living, because they bayoneted the people who--

McIntosh: Fell by the wayside?

Hanneman: Fell by the wayside. And also there was a, they had a cavalry outfit, in Japan, I don't know how big it was. Maybe they got horses from the Philippines, for all I know. But they enjoyed riding into a bunch of us with their swords slashing. There were quite a few people killed that way. And--

McIntosh: That was just for fun?

Hanneman: That was just their method of thinking it was fun, I guess. I don't know. They must have, they didn't think like we did, that's for sure. And, eventually, I guess,

we got to Cabanatuan, which is an old fort of the Philippine Army. They had decent barracks, but had bamboo barracks. At least we had, as I recall, they must have given us some sort of blankets to lie on, or something. And I think they tried to feed us a little bit. But it was really poor, and haphazard. And, again, the bathing thing was, I remember going down to a little, tiny stream near there and trying to wash myself off, and I said a whole lot of prayers, you know. Saying, "If you ever let me get out of this, I'll be a good boy." Which I forgot, of course, immediately after I got back. And then, when they got this all settled, I think after a period of time, and I just don't remember how long a time it was, they allowed us to raise vegetables. They set up a little garden spot there. We didn't have many tools, but they gave us a few tools, and we started to raise vegetables. And then the ones that were able to would go out and work on these vegetable farms, and those of us who were able also buried the dead. Who were dying, you know, quite —

McIntosh: Were they dying of disease, or starvation?

Hanneman: Starvation, disease, and just absolutely giving up, you know.

McIntosh: That seemed to be important?

Hanneman: That seemed to be very important. They just gave up. They couldn't take it. They couldn't see the end of the line and, I admit, I had thoughts of doing that. But decided that was, no way. The burial details, in the morning, they'd come and get us, those of us who were able, they'd say, "Come on." They didn't understand our language, but we knew what they wanted with the bayonet. We'd go out and they'd drag the bodies through a field, and we'd attempt to dig a hole big enough to bury them, and throw them in there. And if they didn't fit, we'd take a shovel and break an arm or a leg, and fit them in there.

McIntosh: [Unintelligible.]

Hanneman: Yea. We were a little like animals. We lived like animals.

McIntosh: [Unintelligible.]

Hanneman: Eventually, of course, that stopped and they threw those of us who were able enough to get into the back end of a truck, they fitted us in like sardines, and they drove us into Manila. And that is where we got on a ship, prisoner of war ship. They had, well, we knew it was a prisoner of war ship, that is all that was on there, except for the crew. But they had a Red Cross flag draped across the top of the ship, figuring, I suppose, that the Americans would never bomb a Red Cross ship. We started out on that ship and I have no idea how big it was. We were all down in the hold, down there.

McIntosh: Do you recall how soon that was in relation to when you were captured?

Hanneman: No.

McIntosh: Six months?

Hanneman: It must have been six months, or more. I can't just remember it. We had, as I recall, we had one Army doctor there, but he had not much of any medicine that I recall. We all had some form of beri-beri, or dysentery, or —

McIntosh: Tuberculosis?

Hanneman: I don't know if that was actually called tuberculosis, but we might have had some of that, too.

McIntosh: It ran about seventy-five percent of the troops.

Hanneman: We had a couple of people who were operated on by this doctor, and all he had was a razor blade. He took an appendix out of one man with a razor blade.

McIntosh: Without an anesthesia?

Hanneman: And I understand he lived. No, I didn't see him after we got off the boat. Somewhere I sort of remember hearing that he actually lived through all of that. And then when we got to Japan, well, first an American plane flew over. Did not bomb us. But they immediately shifted their boats and we went into Formosa. And we were in the dock in Formosa for at least two or three days. They did allow us to get out of the hold, down in there that we were in, so we could see. And we got just a little bit of fresh air, anyhow. But then, quite soon, then they took us the rest of the way to Japan. I can't remember exactly where we docked. Wherever it was, they took us out of there and we went into barracks that they had apparently built for us.

McIntosh: This was in the southern part of Japan, I assume.

Hanneman: It was in the southern part of Japan. I think, if I recall correctly, it was south of Osaka.

McIntosh: Oh, not down near Sasebo, then?

Hanneman: No, no. Not that far south. Because on a clear day, they told us that was Osaka that we were looking at. But we sort of doubted it, but it was quite a ways away. And after a couple of days of getting organized there, why, they started us marching into the steel mill. And we were working in the steel mill as long as we were able.

McIntosh: Doing what?

Hanneman: We unloaded iron ore, and we unloaded black sand. And we worked in the yards out there, carrying stuff from here to there. And met a few guards who could speak English. Some of these guards, as a matter of fact, one of them that we got to know pretty well, had gotten his education out on the West Coast.

McIntosh: UCLA?

Hanneman: No, I think it was the University of Washington. But he had come back home to see his parents, and they never let him go back. So, obviously, he was in the service. There were not many of them we could ever talk to. And I guess, it must have been, well, I think I was in the Philippines a year and a half, total, and two years in Japan, total, before I was liberated. And so I must have worked in that steel mill every day that we were able. It seemed that we never got any time off. Once, in a great while, they would take a day off and we would march to a stream, and I don't remember how far away it was. I would guess a half mile, or so. And we would wash clothes and take a bath. We had water in our barracks but they kind of frowned on using too much of it. And they, of course, fed us rice and fish heads. And occasionally, a little bit of fish.

McIntosh: Any vegetables?

Hanneman: We must have had some vegetables, but I don't recall what they were. If they were, they were greens of some kind. I don't remember what they were. But they had cooks there. Fed us, and they even had a ration of cigarettes, too. They'd give us cigarettes.

McIntosh: [Unintelligible.]

Hanneman: And I smoked, before I went in to the service. But I was wise enough not to smoke there. I traded my cigarettes for food. With my own countrymen, which was a horrible thing to do. But I took advantage of somebody who had a weakness.

McIntosh: Oh, I don't think it was.

Hanneman: It was every man for himself.

McIntosh: Right.

Hanneman: So I traded my cigarettes for food. And that probably helped me, somewhat. How much longer do you want to go here?

McIntosh: Oh, I'm in no hurry at all.

Hanneman: You're in no hurry. Okay. Well, we worked in this steel mill. And then I remember we started to hear rumors that America was fairly close, although we never had any information, legitimate information, from anyone.

McIntosh: You never saw the Red Cross?

Hanneman: We didn't have anything from the Red Cross, except we did get a few packages while we were in there. Most of the packages were stripped of some of the goods. Not all of them. Sometimes we'd get lucky and get a small package that had decent food, chocolate, coffee, and candy bars. I can't remember. K-rations. We didn't even know what K-rations were when we went in.

McIntosh: That's right. Those were invented after you were taken prisoner.

Hanneman: I think that is right. I think that is right. They invented that afterwards. Most of us got sick after we got a package.

McIntosh: The food was too rich.

Hanneman: The food was too rich. And then we heard rumors, of what they called the atomic bomb, and Hiroshima. But we couldn't believe the guards that were telling us that because we were sure that wasn't so. And then they also were telling us that the Americans had women in the service. We didn't believe that, either, because there were no women when we went in the service. Except for the nurses, of course. And the last day that we worked at that steel mill, the guards kind of left us alone, and we didn't really do much of any work. But all the little, what we called guard shacks, where the guards would report for their duty, I assume. And their overseers, were all listening to it. We knew that the emperor must have been talking or some high mucky-muck must have been talking. And they were all sitting, or standing at attention when they were listening radios. But eventually, they took us back to the barracks that night. Incidentally, while we were in there, and walking back and forth from the barracks to the steel mill, it was pretty tough walking, especially in the cold because the only shoes we had were what they called "tabis," over there. They are like a, you know what I mean, with a little string between the big toe.

McIntosh: Oh, yea. I brought some home for my kids.

Hanneman: Okay. And, so when we got back, enough of them had heard from enough guards and so forth, that they had bombed Hiroshima with a huge bomb and that the emperor had been talking about possibly giving up. And so the next morning, they got us all up at the same time, same procedure, and marched us out of the barracks and on up the road. And just before we started out walking back to the steel mill, the interpreter, the only interpreter they had, came out and, in broken English, told

us that this steel mill was taking a vacation.

McIntosh: Was it a euphemism?

Hanneman: Euphemism or some damn thing but is sure as hell wasn't a vacation. Anyhow we went back into the barracks, and some of us got together. We were all yak-yak-yaking all the time. And we didn't know what the hell was going on. And we got back into the barracks and we thought maybe we could get a little more food if we went in their pantry, and so we kind of half-way rushed the guard. And they threw down their guns and ran. We could have all been killed. It was the most foolish thing we could have done. But, anyhow, they threw down their guns and ran, and so we broke open the storeroom and got out all the rice and fish heads and vegetables they had, and our own cooks at least prepared enough so we had food. And I believe it was that same afternoon or the next day, that the first American plane came over. It was a small plane, apparently from an aircraft carrier. And he dropped a few boxes. And all the few boxes had were magazines. What did they publish then? Stars and Stripes, or whatever it was. And a few goodies. And a flag that they wanted us to put on top of the building. With a note. I'm not being specific, because I can't remember. But anyhow, we put the Red Cross flag up there and we devoured those magazines and what little food there was there. We tried to dish them out so everybody would get their share. We didn't pay much attention to protocol, you know. By that time, I was a staff sergeant, but I had no more right to anything good than a private.

McIntosh: Whatever.

Hanneman: And the next day, a few of us went to the nearest village, which was, you know, almost the same distance as the docks. Like, if we were here and the ships were here and the village was here. We went down to the village and some of the Japanese would smile at us, attempt to talk to us. Some would run away from us. I assume they thought we were the killers from America, you know. But nobody got in trouble, thank goodness, because we tried to emphasize to everyone, don't get in trouble, you know. The following day, I'm sure it was the next day, some what we called at the time B-47s, they were cargo planes, came over. And they came pretty low, and they dropped fifty gallon drums strapped end to end, with parachutes. And this had a lot of food in it. So, like dummies, we ran out there to get it. We could have been killed again, you know. Wind could have taken that thing, killed us all. Anyhow, then we really had a lot of food but we did get quite sick. And I think it was either the following day or the next day that the first Jeep drove into our barracks. And I can't recall exactly who they were, but they were representatives of the U. S. and the Swiss Red Cross.

McIntosh: So then you got official information.

Hanneman: Then we got some official information. And we also had our first sight of a white

woman for about three years. We thought they were ill, they were so pale.

McIntosh: [Laughing]

Hanneman: But, that is the way it was. Anyhow, to make a long story short, in a few days they arranged for us to all get on a train, and we went north to Osaka.

McIntosh: I want to go back, before we leave that. How many were in the barracks? Roughly. Maybe a hundred?

Hanneman: There must have been a hundred of us there.

McIntosh: Every time you went to work, what time did they get you up? Six?

Hanneman: I don't remember any time. Nobody had any watches. But went to daylight, daylight, of course.

McIntosh: Did they feed you during the day, at the factory?

Hanneman: Let's see. How did they do that? They either sent lunch with us or the ship, if we were unloading the ship, the ship would feed us. And that was another thing, to back up a little bit. When we were unloading ships, one of us who had the chance, and occasionally, some of us had the chance, to steal a little bit from the ship cooks, or bakery, or what have you. We'd try to hide it in our clothes some way and take it back. Ninety-times out of a hundred, it didn't work because they'd find out about it before we got back to the barracks. And those nights that that occurred, they'd get us up in the middle of the night, make us strip down. I don't know what we were wearing. It sure as hell wasn't pajamas, or anything like that. And make us strip down, and they had a watering trough out there. I don't know what they used it for. But, anyhow, they'd march us up to the watering trough, we got to jump in the water and get out on the other side, and come around and do that until we dropped, or were all tired out, or else they were tired of watching us do that. And then they let us go back to sleep. But that was their method of punishment. I am sure that were a lot of us died of that.

McIntosh: You say it was cold.

Hanneman: Oh, sure, it was cold.

McIntosh: They didn't give you no clothes?

Hanneman: Their weather, we found out afterwards would be similar to about half-way between here and Florida.

McIntosh: St. Louis.

Hanneman: And Tokyo, that is where Osaka is, a little bit south of Tokyo, so it would be something like that, yes.

McIntosh: That was my experience.

Hanneman: We had ice on our water in the mornings, in winter time.

McIntosh: They gave you no over-clothing? For night?

Hanneman: No. We had blankets.

McIntosh: Yea. Another person I talked to said they gave them one blanket, but it wasn't much.

Hanneman: Oh, it wasn't much. That is another thing. If a guy would die during the night, somebody got his blanket.

McIntosh: Oh, of course.

Hanneman: Immediately.

McIntosh: Oh, you wouldn't want to waste it.

Hanneman: I should say not, and you know, again living like animals.

McIntosh: Right.

Hanneman: It wasn't human. So, then to go back to the train again, the train went up to Osaka, then. I guess it was Osaka. It was a huge place out there that they must of had set up with tents and doctors and culverts, and what have you. First thing they did, they made us strip, because most of us had lice and bed-lice, or something wrong with us. Gave us a good bath, and issued us some clothing, most of which did not fit. But who the hell cares? You know. And then they started getting names and numbers. If we remembered our rank and serial numbers, and all that stuff. And eventually we got on a ship that took us to Manila. And there we stayed in what they called a hospital-camp, I guess that is the best word I can think of. A hospital-camp. And there the mess hall was open twenty-four hours a day. And you could come and go as you pleased. And they kept interviewing us. And I believe they even issued us a little better fitting clothes, if they had it. And eventually, some people flew back, but a lot of us came back on a ship, again. Those were what they called the little Kaiser ships.

[End of Side A of Tape 1.]

McIntosh: Victory ships.

Hanneman: Victory ships, or whatever they were. They weren't, not compared to the President Coolidge, or anything like that. But they were good. And I met one of the crew members of that ship, was from Madison, Wisconsin. And I had known his parents before. So that was kind of interesting. So I got a little bit of news from back home. At that time, we had not been allowed to contact anybody at home. Incidentally, while we were in that prison camp, I have to regress again because I keep thinking of it. We did get some mail from home. Very little, but we did get some. And we were allowed to send a card. They were cards which were printed out, "I am good - well - excellent. I am fed good - well - excellent." Lo and behold, your card never got sent back unless you reported either good or excellent. We knew that. We found that out. And there was always room for a little message there. Most of us would say, "Love to all," or something line that. That's all. And the letters from home that we got, were so blacked out that most of us had to read between the lines to find out what it really said. And sometimes we could figure it out, and sometimes we couldn't. We didn't get all that much. And, let's see. Where am I now? On the ship coming back?

McIntosh: Um-huh.

Hanneman: That was a strange thing when we got back to the States. We were in a convoy of ships then. I think our ship was the only one that had prisoners of war on it. And when we came under the Golden Gate bridge, all of the other ships, they were making all kinds of noise, throwing their hats up in the air, you know, happy to be home. There wasn't a sound on our ship. Tears.

McIntosh: Sure.

Hanneman: We didn't think we would be in that position, you know. Then, eventually, when we got off, we were to Letterman General Hospital, in San Francisco. That is when we could first make our first contact with people. Those calls came in, get us, phone calls. Letters we could write. I think I wrote to my mother. I had, I was not then married then, so, I can't remember then. Oh, yes, I did call her. But I called her in Hollywood, where I believed her, at that time. But she had left for Iowa prior to that, so I couldn't get ahold of her. So, again to make a long story short, they, you know, the doctors were looking us all over.

McIntosh: How was your health? How did they pronounce you? Fit?

Hanneman: No.

McIntosh: No?

Hanneman: I wasn't fit. I weighed, as I recall, they told me the first time they weighed me, I

weighed ninety pounds. By the time I got to Letterman General Hospital, I think I was almost up to two hundred pounds.

McIntosh: Wow.

Hanneman: But it was puffy fat, you know. I was not in shape, at all. Eventually I went back to about a hundred and seventy, where I belonged.

McIntosh: Stopped eating with both hands?

Hanneman: Stopped eating with both hands. That is exactly right. Then, from San Francisco, they started breaking us up and sending us back to our home area, or home town. The group that I was in, and I think it was one railroad car, and I can't remember how many people there were there. I would guess, one thirty. We were shipped to Galesburg, Illinois. I think they call that Mayo General Service Hospital, in Galesburg, Illinois. And we got in, that train got in in the middle of the night, and the person in charge of our car was a white woman a lieutenant I think a nurse, I think, and we talked her into allowing us to go downtown, in Galesburg, Illinois. And she even called some taxis for us. Oh, incidentally, we didn't have any money yet. They hadn't issued us any money. So the taxi driver took us down to a couple of bars and we all got drunk on the drinks that people were giving us.

McIntosh: [Laughing.]

Hanneman: The taxis brought us back. The next morning they got us out of that car that brought us into Galesburg hospital and the doctors said, "These guys are all drunk!" [Laughter] You know. They couldn't examine us very well until later in the day. But they put us to bed, sobered us up, and the next day we started being interviewed again, getting all the information. There, again, I was able to call people. And I don't remember how long we stayed in Galesburg, Illinois. But, eventually, I got back to Madison. That is where my sisters lived. My mother lived in Iowa at that time. So I stayed with my sisters for a few days and incidentally, bought an old second-hand car while I was there.

McIntosh: They paid you in Galesburg?

Hanneman: They had paid me by that time in Galesburg. They finally gave us some money.

McIntosh: Do you recall how much was owed you at this time? After not paying you for two years?

Hanneman: I cannot remember. It wasn't really all that much, but I think it was around \$3,000.

McIntosh: Well, around \$3,000.

Hanneman: Something like that.

McIntosh: Must be. At \$21 a month, multiply it.

Hanneman: And, of course, I was making way more than that as a staff sergeant. I must have been making \$36 a month, or something like that. Who knows? Anyhow, I bought this old car. I tell you, it was a real clunker. But I think, no, I don't know if I drove that out to Iowa when I came out to Iowa, or not. Oh, I know what happened there. I was able to get rid of that old clunker, sell it to someone else, some unsuspecting person. Because it was a clunker. And I bought another car from a shirt-tail relative of mine. Let's see, that would be my sister's husband's nephew, that had a car that was in pretty good shape. A new Pontiac. I don't remember the year any more. I called it Patty's Pontiac. It was the first decent car that I had. And that I drove out to Iowa. And that is when I saw my mother for the first time for a long time. And I went to the neighboring town. That was in Cresco, Iowa. I went to the neighboring town of Ridgely, Iowa, to look up my sweetheart. She hadn't been married yet.

McIntosh: Oh, you lucked out.

Hanneman: I lucked out. Boy, was I lucky. And then I stayed around there. I forget. I think I was on a ninety day furlough, but before that ninety day furlough as over, I was called over, I guess we all were but I know I was, to come back to Chicago, to go through the formality of discharge, and having all my records brought up to date, pay, and so forth, and so on. And when we were liberated from there, I call it liberated, but when we were released, they gave us a choice of three cities and several hotels, in which we could spend thirty days, two weeks, in a hotel of our choice, in a city of our choice, with all expenses paid, except for liquor. And, to make a long story short, I proposed to, and was accepted by, my wonderful, wonderful wife, and we chose the Stevens Hotel, which is now the Conrad Hilton, and so we went to the Conrad Hilton for two weeks. I remember that the room number was 1510. And that was my entire bill for two weeks for liquor. Because, again, I had my uniforms by then on with the staff sergeant, and all this crap on the shoulders. You couldn't buy a drink. You know, people would, strangers would just come along. And we had a wonderful, wonderful time there, didn't we?

And from there we came home [Blast of static on the tape.] We were going to come to Wisconsin because that's where I had been when I went in the service. Came back to Wisconsin and I started school, at the university.

McIntosh: GI Bill

Hanneman: Part-time. I only went to the university on a job-training, journalism. So I worked

in the university news bureau, and went to school part-time. And that didn't last too long, because I really did not feel I was made out to be a journalist. There were all kinds of job vacancies at that time. Not all the servicemen had come back. So I went to work for the city of Madison in the engineering department. And to make a long story short, I started at the very bottom, as a ditch digger. That would have been in 1946. And again, to make a long, long story short, when I retired twenty-some years later, I was police superintendent, here in Madison.

McIntosh: I remember that.

Hanneman: And, incidentally, going back to working in the steel mill, one Japanese, well, there were several Japanese who I don't know. I don't know their names, and could care less about them, except they saved my life there. Because we were unloading a ship of black sand. I think they call that magnesium that goes into iron ore. And, what you do, you, it's caked in there, and the cranes come down and scoop it up. And it was our job as prisoners of war to loosen this so that it would slide down so the cranes could pick it up. So they didn't have to throw their cranes into the, they could leave their cranes in the center. And one time we were digging away, and a whole bunch of it came down, like it does when you're working in sand, and all that. It let loose and it pinned me so that I couldn't move. And the crane was coming down. And thank goodness, the Japanese down below hollered to the crane operator up above, and they stopped the crane before it came down on my noggin. Or else I would have been long gone. So, they saved my life. And then they dug me out of there before the crane came down. So, there had to be some good people there. There had to be some good people.

McIntosh: Now, this original group that you were with, I mean, was mainly MacArthur's office. Did you ever see them again?

Hanneman: I have no idea where they are.

McIntosh: They didn't go with you to —

Hanneman: Not a one of them. Because we got separated both in Corregidor, we got separated on Bataan, we got separated in that march, we got separated going from Manila to Formosa, to Japan. And some of the people that I was with in Japan, and that prisoner of war camp, they had come from Guam, from Wake, from all over. And I have no idea how or why they were there. I got a whole bunch of names in this little book, here. And there haven't been any of them that I have been able to contact, with the exception of two. And both of them are deceased.

McIntosh: Still, did you make an attempt to contact them?

Hanneman: I made an attempt to contact some of them. There was one who was a friend of mine, who went to, early in the game, went to Florida with us. Did not sign up to

go into the service while he was there. And he was working there. And then, later on, of course, he had to go in the service, anyhow. But he was a navigator and flew with the pilots that, they used to call it, “over the hump.”

McIntosh: Oh, yea. In China, Burma, India.

Hanneman: Yea, okay.

McIntosh: CBI.

Hanneman: Anyhow, he wound up, when he came back, he wound up out in California, was married. And Edna and I visited him once when we came through there. Charles Bellows. In fact, he had gone to school with my wife’s sister, at Upper Iowa University. So we visited him, and he visited us, came to Madison and visited us. With his family. But he is now deceased.

McIntosh: Did they award you any decorations? For being a POW [Unintelligible]

Hanneman: They came out with a POW medal.

McIntosh: Right.

Hanneman: I think I am quoted in one of those newspaper articles as saying I had a Purple Heart, but I did not get the Purple Heart. I felt badly that it got in the papers that way, because some people asked me about it and I said, “I didn’t say that.” But that was it.

McIntosh: And, you said before, you joined the VFW for a while and then you sort of forgot about it.

Hanneman: I became disenchanted with what I felt were people who were a little bit on the greedy side. I don’t mean that all veterans are greedy. Of course, they are not. Most veterans are wonderful, except like these two firemen who got caught with cocaine. Most firemen were wonderful people but it’s always the few that get everybody else in trouble. But, anyhow, I’m not a joining kind, particularly, anyhow.

McIntosh: Well, you used your GI Bill wisely, and got an education?

Hanneman: Oh, yes, I did. I got an education out of it and it got me a job. And, of course, I’m still getting prisoner of war benefits. Ten percent, but so what?

McIntosh: Ten percent was just based on being a prisoner of war?

Hanneman: I guess so. It started out as —

McIntosh: But yet you say you had no disability.

Hanneman: Not particularly. Not particularly. I can't remember what I got the first time. \$20 a month, or something. It's up to \$90 now. I don't ever, I have never contacted them and said "I'm in terrible shape. I need more." I've never contacted them and said, "Keep it, I don't need it." I just kept taking the checks and forget about it.

McIntosh: That's right. Do you report it on your income tax. Probably not.

Hanneman: No. It's not —

McIntosh: That's not taxable.

Hanneman: That's right. That's what I understand.

McIntosh: Well, that's wonderful. Well, it's really more than \$90, when you think about it. Absolutely. Plus, it's a shame it can't be more. I mean, you know.
[Unintelligible.]

Hanneman: I think prisoners of war, as a whole, were treated very, very well.

McIntosh: All right. I can't think of anything else. Anything that occurs to you that we passed up on? Any incident, or anything?

Hanneman: I'm not going to contact you, to talk some more. I can assure you.

McIntosh: No, I mean now.

Hanneman: Oh, now? No.

McIntosh: No, I understand that.

[End of Interview.]