

Interview with Beverly ‘Scotty’ Bruce

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Interviewer: Mark DePue

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DePue: Today is Monday, May 17, 2010. My name is Mark DePue, and I’m the director of oral history at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. I’m here with Beverly Bruce. Beverly, you go by Scotty, though, don’t you?

Bruce: Yes. Can I tell you how I picked it up?

DePue: Well, yeah, we’ll get to that. Don’t worry.

Bruce: All right, go ahead.

DePue: We’re going to start at the very beginning, though.

Bruce: This is the very beginning. Go ahead.

DePue: We are here in your home in the west side of Springfield, and Edna Mae, his wife, is taking care of with some coffee and coffee cake—I

Bruce: And then duck.

DePue: —and then was wise enough to leave so you can talk to us in total freedom here and tell us about yourself. So let's start off with when and where you were born, Scotty.

Bruce: Chicago, Illinois, Douglas Park Hospital.

DePue: Okay, and what was the date?

Bruce: March 2, 1928.

DePue: Okay, tell us about how you got the name Scotty, then, because Beverly is not a typical name for a man.

Bruce: (laughs) I applied for a teaching job in Niantic, Illinois. I was just out of service, and I had called up and knew there was this job. I hitchhiked into town in a pair of khakis and an old shirt I'd worn in high school. I got there, and the superintendent and the principal I would be teaching under decided I needed to see the board. Well, the board met that night. I said, "I got no car." Well, the principal said, "I'll put you up and on the bus tomorrow morning back to Springfield." I was living in Macomb. In fact, that's where I grew up. But I went there, interviewed, they hired me—they were desperate. This was Tuesday night; school was starting the next Monday. They wanted me there for, you know, a show-and-tell for the other teachers on Friday. I said, "I got to go back home and buy clothes. I don't have any clothes, unless you want me up there in uniform."

So I came into town on Sunday. At that time, Niantic was off the highway, and the bus did not go in there. So they let me out at the road into Niantic, in the rain, and a car pulled up, window cracked down, and a lady said, "Are you the new teacher?" I said, "Yes, ma'am." That's how I met Helena Jones. (laughs) And I went into town with her. I had rented a place, after they decided to hire me, with Ellie Ward. She has a couple of rooms that she rented out; I got breakfast and supper and my room for twenty dollars a week. Of course, this was back in '53, so that wasn't bad.

The next day I walked in, walked up to the front of the classroom, and I said, "My name is Mr. Bruce, and I am twenty-one days out of the Marine Corps." And you could just (laughs)—(sighs). Oddly enough, one of my wife's nephews was in that class. I taught for the year. The next year, I was teaching there. Got renewed my contract, I don't know why. I wouldn't have if I'd have been the administrator, but they were desperate. At that time, teachers were hard to get. (clock chiming)

DePue: We don't worry about that, Scotty.

Bruce: I do, it bothers me. But I enjoy hearing it. That's why I let her give it to me for a Christmas present. Where was—oh. I introduced myself. I found out later this particular class in the sixth grade had tried to set fire to the school, (laughs) or part of them had. In the seventh grade, they had literally run one teacher out of the building. So, (laughs) there I am. And I told them, I said, "I am twenty-one days out of the Marine Corps. I think I'm right there. And I **will** run this class." And some kid said, "I don't know," and I walked back—he was sitting in a screwed-down desk—leaned on the desk, and I said, "Do you have an objection?" "No, sir." Got along well with that class. They were fine. When they graduated, they went up into high school in the same building, and they had all kinds of problems with them up there.

DePue: But Scotty, I'm losing where you got the nickname Scotty out of all of this.

Bruce: I'm sitting there in the board meeting and somebody says, "But Beverly?" "Well," I said, "I'm called Scotty sometimes," because a few people had done that. So, fine, I picked up Scotty, and that was it.

DePue: What did your fellow Marines call you?

Bruce: Some of them called me Scotty, some of them called me Bev, some of them called me "You **bonehead!**" (laughter)

DePue: Well, Scotty, we're going to jump back twenty-five years now to the time you were born and then grew up. Now, I know that you moved to Macomb when you were six years old. Can you tell us the circumstances there? Because yours isn't the typical story.

Bruce: No, I can't.

DePue: Okay.

Bruce: I was born in Douglas Park Hospital, and I lived there for five years, and then, you know, I was too big to have around. One day these three women showed up and looked me over. A couple of days later or a short time later, I'm on the train headed for Salt Lake City with the woman who raised me and going out to live with one of her sisters in Salt Lake.

DePue: This is the woman who had raised you from the time you were born to five years old, or...?

Bruce: The woman who raised me was the head nurse at the hospital, for the first five years. Which means she had all kinds of help. But I was getting big enough and I had to go to school. In fact, I put a year of kindergarten in at the Douglas Park Elementary.

DePue: Well, it's worth noting you're born in 1928. A year and a half later, the Depression starts, so this is at the pits of the Depression.

Bruce: Yeah. No money. Her sister was teaching in Salt Lake City, and we went out there. We had a Pullman, this woman who took me to raise. We spent the winter there in Salt Lake City in the earthquakes—two of them while I was there. In fact, I was eating breakfast one morning, and when the earthquake hit I'm on a what they call a youth chair at that time—that's a high chair—at the dining table. When the quake quit, I was over in the corner of the room, still on the chair. I went to kindergarten at the University of—I guess the University of Utah—for a year, came back to Davenport, and lived that summer with Ena, who's the woman that raised me, E-n-a.

DePue: What was her last name?

Bruce: I'd just as soon that didn't go in. But they moved us down to Macomb, partly because the teachers' college was there. And Ena had some farmland over in Iowa that she got income from, among other things; talked her sisters out of money, and her brother, who was farming the land. She knew pretty well what that land produced. My grandfather had come from Ireland, James Wilson. He did not like the British. During the First World War—this was told to me—he was raising mules, and the British buyers for mules came around and wanted to buy his mules. And he shot a price. (speaking in an Irish accent) "Well, just to keep the Krauts [the Germans] from getting it, will ya no lower the price a bit?" He said, "You ran me out of Ireland from my home in Limavady Valley. I'll no cut the price for you." And he didn't. I never met the man.

DePue: Now, you said your grandfather, but this would have been Ena's father?

Bruce: Father, yes.

DePue: So it was no direct relation.

Bruce: No relation at all.

DePue: Okay. Tell us. do you remember much about—you're awfully young here—but growing up during the Depression at all?

Bruce: No. But I can remember going to the corner grocery store with my little red wagon, and with a five dollar bill loading it.

DePue: Where did you attend school, then, in Macomb?

Bruce: I started first grade in, I guess it was the Adams School, public school. Didn't like it. Bawled. So they sent me to the lab school at the University—well, at that time it was the Normal School at Macomb.

DePue: Yeah, I guess that was a typical name they had for the teachers' colleges that were spread around the state.

Bruce: Yes.

DePue: It would later become Western Illinois University.

Bruce: Yeah. As I graduated. I went all twelve years there and graduated from there one day, got to go one day, my orders the next day.

DePue: Okay. We wanted to talk a little bit about—since you're of that age when you remember what was going on in World War II—you would have been old enough by that time—can you tell me about what happened Pearl Harbor day? Do you remember that?

Bruce: Yes, very vividly. At that time, I would get a dime and go to the movies for ten cents. It was lowered later to nine cents so they didn't have to pay tax. Henlein, who owned the movie theater, said that would have been nothing but a hassle. So I (pause) mind is slipping.

DePue: Pearl Harbor.

Bruce: Pearl Harbor. I came home **from the movies that day, turned on the radio, and they're bombing Pearl Harbor!** My mother looked at me with a look I'd very seldom seen on anybody. I found out later she sent two brothers into World War I, both of whom fought in the trenches. That's my memory of listening to that. I can remember taking my dimes to school so I could buy savings stamps. And when you got enough of them, you got a boutonniere that you could wear. But you had to buy savings stamps. We had a principal that was very, very hot to support the troops. Kat Thompson was her name. Interesting woman. She would give me fits. But the interesting thing, when I got into high school and she needed some work done around the house, her place, I was the person that got called. She told me later, "You do it right." When I came home from Korea, she had been after me. "Where is—I need my fence painted." She called up, "Can you come over and paint my fence?" I came over and I sat there and I painted her fence. And she said, "You learn to drink?" "Yes, ma'am. Whiskey." (laughter) We sat there and killed about half a bottle of whiskey, and my mother had a fit because she did not approve of alcohol.

DePue: Was there any stigma because your family situation wasn't normal?

Bruce: As far as I know, there was no stigma. Up to a couple, three years ago, I still kept in contact with some of the people up there. But I'm eighty-some years old, and most of them are dead.

DePue: Mm-hmm. Do you remember what it was like during World War II? Now, you would have been thirteen when Pearl Harbor happened.

Bruce: **Boy Scouts!**

DePue: Boy Scouts. Tell me about Boy Scouts.

Bruce: Saturday morning, pickup trucks, picking up tin cans; picking up grease, because that was collected to make munitions out of; picking up newspapers. We used to be nasty. We would load the truck with extra rock and then go sell the newspapers. For the Scouts. Okay, go ahead. You've got one.

DePue: Civil Air Patrol you mentioned earlier as well.

Bruce: Uh-huh. In high school, I joined the Civil Air Patrol. That's where I learned to drill, which came in very handy when I got into the Marine Corps, because I knew right face, left face... I knew my basic moves. I also knew enough to keep my mouth shut. Well, with the name of Beverly... The sergeant looked at me, "Beverly?" I said, "My friends call me Scotty." "I'm not your friend, Scotty." (laughter)

DePue: Did you and your buddies follow the war.

Bruce: Oh, yes. Yes. (pause)

DePue: Since the war started in the Pacific, were you following the Pacific, or did you pay attention to what was going on in Europe as well?

Bruce: My first real recognizance of the war was when the Scouts were called up in uniform to wave bye-bye to the National Guard. And they were called up in I think October. No, maybe a year earlier than that.

DePue: Yeah, the National Guard across the country was called up in 1940. Then right before Pearl Harbor Congress, by one vote, extended their service.

Bruce: Yes, yes. But we, we went to everything. They brought a demonstration unit into town one time; Boy Scouts had to go stand on the street corners to keep the people back as the tanks went through.

DePue: Were you wishing that maybe you were just a few years older so you could go? Yes?

Bruce: Mm-hmm. Yeah. And I got in a few years later. (laughter)

DePue: What happened in 1946; I know you graduated from high school. What did you do after that? The war's over by that time.

Bruce: Yeah. Went to college. It was down the block from me; I might as well go. It cost me twenty-five dollars a semester. A friend of mine, where we lived in the apartment house, the first floor, Mrs. Grigsby's son came back and he managed the upkeep for Western University—Western College at that time. And I would hit him in the fall of the year for a job, and he'd put me a place where I swept Simpson Hall. I swept that for four years. That paid my tuition. What else did it pay? I got three paychecks out of it. One paid for my books, one paid for my tuition, and one gave me twenty-five dollars for spending money, which had to go in the bank because I had to have it to pay other things.

DePue: I know that Western Illinois now has a very active ROTC [Reserve Officers Training Corps] program. Did they then, and were you involved?

Bruce: No.

DePue: No, they didn't have one?

Bruce: They did not have one. Had too many veterans there. And you tell these veterans to... Okay, can I digress for a minute?

DePue: Just a bit.

Bruce: When I got to the University of Illinois, I had completed my two years, taught for two years, was living in a dormitory that was a barracks, had been a barracks at Camp Ellis and hauled up there and divided up into bathrooms and two study carrels.

DePue: And we're talking about after your service.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Okay.

Bruce: And (laughs) I got a letter one day telling me to report to my—what is the Army training—I forget.

DePue: Report to the commander of the ROTC, or...?

Bruce: Yeah, ROTC. Report to ROTC. Well, I don't want to get in trouble. I go and I report. They were handing out M1s [rifles]. I picked mine up, and this kid standing next to me says, "You'll break it." (laughs) I looked at him. Let it go. Fall in out there, and here comes this ROTC second john [2nd lieutenant]. He comes up to me and he says, "Present"—they showed us how to present arms, or, you know, inspection arms. I brought my rifle up, slammed the bolt to the rear. And he moved his hand. Now, I knew I'm going to have a little fun. I

just let go, because in the Marine Corps, you were taught, you don't let that go, it's going to end up right here, and that's painful.

DePue: Right in your crotch.

Bruce: Uh-huh. But I let it go, and it dropped, and he said, "Pick that up." "I didn't drop it, sir." And, oh, he's about to... This major comes along, and he says, "He's right. You dropped it. Pick it up and hand it to him." He picked it up; it's dirty. "It's dirty." I said, "It wasn't dirty before you dropped it. **Sir.**" Well, (laughs) next thing I know, I'm out of the ROTC. But later that fall, I'm walking across Hupp Hall, which is up—I don't know if it's up there anymore—but it was the drill area. In fact, it was at one time where the horses practiced. This major that had told the guy to pick it up and hand the rifle back to me, he said—and I had a utility jacket on. He said, "You were in the Marines." I said, "Yes, sir." He's a major. "Sir?" (just automatic). He said, "Would you like to make five dollars a night?" At that time, five dollars was what I was **eating** on for a week. I went in there, and he hired me one night a week to drill the Pershing rifles. At that time, that was the drill unit out of the University of Illinois. Which was fine with me, but that little second lieutenant or whatever he was, every time he saw me coming, he ducked.

DePue: You started in 1946 in college. Did you graduate in 1950, then?

Bruce: Fifty-one.

DePue: Fifty-one?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Okay.

Bruce: I had to take a year out.

DePue: You dropped out of school for a year, is that what you're saying?

Bruce: I was forced out because my grades were so lousy. I went through high school very easy, you know, (makes noise) and I got there, and **boom**. It's rougher in college. So I'm out.

DePue: Since you graduated in 1951, that means you were still in college—and maybe the spring semester had just finished in June of 1950 when the Korean War started.

Bruce: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: You're of draftable age at that time. What were you thinking at that time?

Bruce: I said, "Oh God, I'm gone." I knew I was gone. In fact, I got called up before. I said, "I would like to finish my degree." Since they had plenty of draftees, they said fine. But as quick as I got my diploma in one hand and my orders in the other, I was gone. There were thirty of us that were supposed to go up on this particular draft call.

DePue: This would have been August of 1951, now?

Bruce: Sixth.

DePue: Okay.

Bruce: And (laughs) I had another guy went up, because all had, you know, reasons that they couldn't go. One guy had just gotten married, and his wife was pregnant, so he couldn't go. The next time he got called, he was building a house and couldn't go. I don't know about anything after that. But my wife, after we were married, was downtown and bought a pair of shoes in this guy's dad's, store, Gumba. No, I couldn't give you the name. Came home and said she didn't like them, but she didn't know about taking them back. I said, "Give them to me; I'll take them back." I said, "Here, she doesn't want..." "Well, Beverly, it's so nice to see you." By that time, I was thoroughly used to 'Scotty.' I looked at him and I said, "You don't know me well enough to call me that."

DePue: In August of 1951, though, you're single, right?

Bruce: Mm-hmm.

DePue: You don't have any of those excuses these other guys do.

Bruce: No, I had no excuse. In fact they were giving me a delay. I said, "Take me. I can't find a job, and I need some money. Take me." They did.

DePue: Okay, here's the crucial question.

Bruce: How'd I end up in the Marine Corps?

DePue: Yeah. You're wearing the shirt; you've got the belt buckle; all over the house is Marine Corps. How'd you end up in the Marine Corps.

Bruce: If you'll shut up I'll tell you. (laughter) Got up to Chicago, went to a physical. I'm standing out there, and standing right next to me is a little short guy. I think he's fat. I found out later he wasn't. Blond, curly hair. All right. They start down the list of names. Now, you may say Army or Marines, whichever you want. And it came to me, "Bruce, Beverly." "Army." I'd seen enough movies and seen enough war films that I didn't want anything to do with the

Marine Corps. I figured that's a good way to get killed. Well, they said, "These people will be in the Marines. Fall out over there. Bruce, Beverly." You know my comment? "Oh, shit." (laughs) I had tried to call my mother—or the woman that raised me—but couldn't get a hold of her. So I sent a telegram: "Grabbed by the Marines. Headed for San Diego." Albert Tide went with me.

DePue: Do you remember any stories about basic training, then, in San Diego?

Bruce: Oh, yeah. Lots of fun. The Grinder was the drill field at San Diego, blacktopped, and hot. In fact, they tried to run classes in the middle of the day and drill areas early and late because it was so hot. August the seventh is when I went in, and that's hot.

DePue: Do you remember any of the instructors that you had while you were there?

Bruce: To visualize. No names. There was Cookie. Cookie was a corporal, but he was a pretty decent guy. There was another one that—no, I couldn't put a name to them.

DePue: Seeing some of the same movies that you're talking about, basic training was pretty rough, especially physically rough. Were you in shape when you went there?

Bruce: I had been in the corn field for about a month and a half. You don't know what I'm talking about. At that period of time, when they were raising seed corn, you had to get the tassels off so you'd get—[appropriate hybrids]

DePue: I've done that.

Bruce: You've done that?

DePue: Mm-hmm.

Bruce: But you didn't do it the way I did it.

DePue: Probably not.

Bruce: You rode a machine.

male: Most of the time. I did walk, though.

Bruce: Oh, okay.

DePue: Scotty, I got to tell you, you and I are having the conversation here, so...

Bruce: Yeah, that's right. We don't want to louse the...

DePue: Yeah.

Bruce: But I had been in the corn field, so I knew that it was work, and...

DePue: Well, that gets your upper arm strength going, doesn't it?

Bruce: Not particularly. It gets the leg strength, yeah. All right, go ahead. Ask your question.

DePue: Okay. What did you do, then, after basic training?

Bruce: Basic training, I got a leave, then went to [Camp] Pendleton for infantry. Got pulled out of there and sent down to Mainside, and who do I run into but half a dozen of the guys that are in here. We were going to Fort Riley, Kansas.

DePue: Fort Riley is an Army post.

Bruce: Yeah. I'm glad you caught that. (DePue laughs) Army Intelligence School at Patton Hall. There were probably, oh, I'd say, two hundred in my class, and about twenty Marines. And we were there to take training. I'm going to be honest with you, I never used any of that training; what we were doing was trained to observe. Sit up on a hill with spyglasses, not to go out and snoop and poop. That means to go out and locate the enemy and hopefully destroy him.

DePue: Mm-hmm. You would have been doing this in the fall of 1951. By the fall of '51, there's pretty stable lines in Korea.

Bruce: Yes, yes. The last big push was in the spring of '51, I believe. And the Chinese—by this time, the Army had shaped up. The Koreans were in most cases—they flanked us with the Korean Marine Corps, which is one bunch of tough cookies I did not want to mess with. They were tough, nasty, and they hated the North Koreans.

DePue: After you finished this Army Intelligence Training, then did you head back to San Diego?

Bruce: Went back to Pendleton, went through fighting training, got on a ship, came over. Some of the guys got pulled out and sent into "2" sections. Every battalion had a "2" section, every regiment had a "2" section, every division had a '2' section.

DePue: "2 section" meaning the intelligence section.

- Bruce: Intelligence, yeah. I went to the (laughs) recon company.
- DePue: Okay. Before we get to that point, do you remember anything about the trip overseas on that ship?
- Bruce: Crowded. I learned how to clean my clothes. You take a nice, stout piece of string, you drop them over the side of the ship and let them tow for about fifteen, twenty minutes, and pull them in then. But you had to watch out because some deck aid would come along with his pocketknife or with his knife and cut the string because we were slowing the ship down.
- DePue: Was this just your average troop ship you were on?
- Bruce: Yeah.
- DePue: Not the most comfortable thing, is it?
- Bruce: (laughs) I slept with the guy above me's butt right about here. (DePue laughs) It was a pipe frame with a canvas laced around. That was your bed. Of course, we went on board, we had our own blankets and that type of gear, and we had everything that we needed. We had our socks, our extra boots, our bayonets, our belts, ammo belts, helmets, everything, in that bunk with us. You didn't put it down on the deck because somebody would come along and fall over it and cuss the hell out of you.
- DePue: Did you have any weapons on board ship, or did you get those issued once you got there?
- Bruce: No. We had already fired and zeroed our rifles. Every rifle will have a different point of impact out there, so you have to work with it to find out what your best point of impact on that rifle is. You have on the rifle a front sight, which you don't screw with. The back, rear sight on the M1 could be moved left, right, up, and down; supposedly you had it zeroed. We got overseas, we zeroed them again, because they get bumped.
- DePue: Well, it's certainly part of the Marine tradition that they take their marksmanship very seriously.
- Bruce: Thank goodness.
- DePue: Mm-hmm. You're going to learn the value of that once you got to Korea, aren't you?
- Bruce: Yeah.
- DePue: Where did you land? Did you land in Pusan or Inchon?

Bruce: No, Inchon.

DePue: Did you stop off in Japan on the way?

Bruce: Yeah. Put on our greens [dress uniforms] and stopped off in Japan. We won't mention what happens there.

DePue: Well, let me ask you this, because this is a point in contrast. What were your impressions of Japan? This would have been 1952, early 1952, when you got there. This is seven years after the end of the war. What was the condition of Japan when you got there?

Bruce: Walk down the street, and here's a building up; here's a vacant lot. Here's people living in... It had pretty well recovered. Of course, where we were was a big naval base, and there were a lot of American money coming in there to help these people.

DePue: Now, contrast that to your impressions of Korea, (Bruce laughs) Inchon and Seoul.

Bruce: Went through Seoul twice—at least twice. No, going up and coming back when we came home. The change in it in a year when we were coming back was quite interesting. Of course, we weren't looking too much; we were just trying to get out and hoping to find some beer and...

DePue: You remember your first impressions landing in Korea, the sights and the smells of the country?

Bruce: You **smell** the country six miles out to **sea**. I landed there at night from a tank carry ship, a ship that was set up to hold a tank.

DePue: A Landing Ship, Tank, LST?

Bruce: Mm-hmm. They had about half the crew on board. And from there, we got—why, they were standing there yelling, Fifth Marines, First Marines, whatever they want, artillery, into headquarters battalion, which is where we were told to go. Went there, and there they split us up into groups. We got on a train. It was something like you see in old Westerns. And we got on there. I had a .38 that I had gotten on—well, actually, I had had my mother buy it for me at Gumbart's in Macomb and ship it through the Red Cross to me. I had that and got on the train. These lieutenants came through and said, "All right, if the train gets ambushed, all of you with no ammunition get off on the left side of the train. You guys with personal weapons load up and get off on the right side of the train." I loaded up right then. (laughter)

DePue: What was your unit of assignment, then?

Bruce: First Division, Headquarters Battalion, Recon Company.

DePue: What was the size of the recon company, do you know?

Bruce: A hundred and twenty men.

DePue: And tell us a little bit about what the specific mission of this recon company is.

Bruce: To go out, find the Chinese, and report where they were. Don't go out to fight. We were not supposed to, in the early days, to fight. We were there to snoop and poop.

DePue: Okay. What I've got here—and you were looking at these earlier—some maps of Korea. Tell us exactly, when you first went up to the front lines, was your company on the front lines at the time?

Bruce: No.

DePue: Where did you go?

Bruce: In fact, we were far—we were back in Munsani.

DePue: Was that still north of Seoul, though?

Bruce: Mm-hmm. I'm trying...

DePue: From what I understand from talking earlier, you guys were basically north and a little bit west, perhaps, of Seoul itself, where the Marines ended up stationed.

Bruce: What's that? I can't read it.

DePue: That's Munsani, very good.

Bruce: That's exactly where we were, a little north—right...

DePue: That would have been just on the other side of the Imjin River, then, looks like.

Bruce: I said we were just on this side of the Imjin, because we didn't want to get overrun.

DePue: Were there elements of the Marines that were on the front lines at the time?

- Bruce: Oh, yeah. The division was on—in fact, the whole time I was there, the division was on lines.
- DePue: How close was this area, then, to Panmunjom, where the armistice talks were going on?
- Bruce: All right, we patrolled right up through that area. In fact, we would use the road up to Panmunjom—we could walk right up through the Chinese lines or wherever they were. Actually, they were there watching us, but they couldn't fire on us because we were in the truce zone.
- DePue: Here's one of the things I'm curious about, Scotty. There was heated combat going along the entire front, but there's got to be an assumption that in the area of Panmunjom—
- Bruce: Nobody fought.
- DePue: And you can't be moving the line back and forth either, right?
- Bruce: No. That's the reason the Marines were there, because the Marines—I'm going to brag—were better disciplined and would not start any—or were not supposed to start anything. We had some nasty donnybrooks at—let's see if we can—I'm looking here. (pause)
- DePue: Well, I assume that not all of your patrols were right across from Panmunjom.
- Bruce: No, no, no. We patrolled with the whole division front. In fact, a couple, three times, we went out through the British lines. While I was there, the division stayed on lines, but the other divisions that flanked us would be relieved by another group, and we would sometimes go out through their lines. We went out one night, and we got a call. There was a division had lost a patrol out there—a British division had lost a patrol. The guy was lost. (laughs) The lieutenant says, "Tell them to take a look for the Panmunjom light." There was a searchlight there in Panmunjom that was pointed straight up; that was to keep aircraft out of the area. It was very handy for us because then we could orient on that, you know. And he—where was I? I'm lost.
- DePue: Well, we were talking about going out in that British zone.
- Bruce: We might go out through the British zone, come over, and hook over and come back through Panmunjom. If we could get in there, why, we could walk out and whistle a merry little tune. Not really, but...
- DePue: Let me ask you this. Do you remember your first patrol you went on?

- Bruce: Yeah, I remember cleaning my pants afterwards. No, not really. (laughs) Yeah. What I do. We had trained in the States, but patrols were nothing like the training. We were told one thing: most important thing, is use your nose. Want to tell me why?
- DePue: I'm waiting.
- Bruce: Because the Chinese and the Koreans both ate garlic, and you would smell that.
- DePue: Were there any ROKs assigned to your unit, Republic of Korea soldiers?
- Bruce: Working parties. We had some assigned permanently to us. They did a lot of the grunt work.
- DePue: But they wouldn't be on combat patrols or in military positions?
- Bruce: Sometimes we would work with Korean Marines, and we liked working with them because they were good. Sometimes they would send us some American infantry. We got one patrol; they was going to send four men out with us, and they showed up, *clink, clink, clink, clink*, carrying I don't know what, but they were making all kinds of noise. Our lieutenant refused to take them out, and this Army major said, "Why? You can't refuse that." Becker said, "Jump up and down." The major realized he couldn't send them out, because they'd take a step, *clink, clink*.
- DePue: It sounds like, then, most of the patrols you're going on, maybe the vast majority, are night patrols?
- Bruce: Made one daylight patrol. They had this area in front of—I don't know how big an area it was—and they wanted to know what was out there, so they sent us out to entryport spaced at about a quarter of a mile apart out in front to look and see what there was. And when the—and some—oh, smoke rockets. When the smoke rockets were fired, we were supposed to turn around and come back. In broad daylight! (laughs) Yeah.
- DePue: What was your specific assignment?
- Bruce: When?
- DePue: When you were doing these patrols. Did you have a specific job within that patrol?
- Bruce: Depended on the patrol. In some cases, I was point man; in other cases I was rear guard. I really preferred the rear guard because I could walk that with a

Thompson submachine gun, point it up, the safety off, with my finger on the trigger.

DePue: Were there booby traps that you might trigger as the point man?

Bruce: Yeah. Point men were specialists. If you got a good point man, that's what he did. You covered him. In fact, point men, particularly at some times of the year, would roll their sleeves up and then walk along like this.

DePue: With their arms kind of out?

Bruce: Mm-hmm, down, looking for trip wires.

DePue: In other words, you got to be a little bit different or special.

Bruce: They were a little different.

DePue: Now, you mentioned, when we talked earlier, you also sometimes had a BAR out on these patrols, a B-A-R. [Browning Automatic Rifle]

Bruce: BAR? Oh, regularly. You had firepower. When you went out, generally you had four, five men in a patrol. You would have at least one BAR, maybe a couple of Thompsons, automatic carbines—as much firepower as you could get.

DePue: These are small patrols you're on, then, mostly.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: What would be the rank of the leader?

Bruce: The best man. Didn't matter what rank he had. He was the best man.

DePue: Typically not an officer?

Bruce: Typically not. We had one guy come, was going to his first patrol. He had never been on patrol. He had been there for almost six months; he'd never been on patrol, and he was taking this patrol out. We left him in the truck; he was drunk. He was out of that company. We took him back. And what we didn't know was that the company commander we were going out to, had realized why we dumped him, called our commander. When we got back and we got off the truck, and he's still staggering. The company commander says, "Pack your gear, you're going back to headquarters." We got rid of him. Oddly enough, (laughs) I was at his wedding. He was from Milwaukee.

DePue: As far as you guys were concerned, was it better to go out in a night when the moon is full or when it's overcast?

Bruce: I liked to work with the moon. Other guys liked to work with it overcast.

DePue: It does make a difference, though, doesn't it, out there?

Bruce: Mm-hmm.

DePue: I want you to take a little time and describe the terrain, so paint us a picture of what the terrain was like and what the front line was like as well.

Bruce: The terrain varied, but mostly what we tried to do was set up on hills. Down in the bottom, we stayed out of that; it was too easy to booby trap. I'm going back fifty years.

DePue: I know so much of Korea, especially once the line stabilized in the center of the country, was incredibly rugged, mountainous terrain.

Bruce: Mm-hmm, yeah.

DePue: But my understanding is that the western portion where the Marines were was a little bit flatter.

Bruce: Yes. That was part of the reason we went where we were. I don't know how much you've read on Korean history—we were put right across the invasion route from North Korea. The Chinese had come down through there; the North Koreans did come down. Anybody that wanted to, came down the west side it rather than the east side. The east side went straight up, at least that's what the guys that were there told me.

DePue: Was the front line—I think I know the answer, but was the front line like this classic picture we have of World War I, where there's one continuous trench line?

Bruce: You went from strong point to strong point, and maybe there would be a connection trench, and maybe there wouldn't.

DePue: So it would be easy, then, or it would be possible, for the enemy to infiltrate between these strong points, would it not?

Bruce: No, because you had listening posts scattered all the way through there.

DePue: What you're doing, then, is the enemy's got the same kind of system set up, and you're constantly probing and seeking out their side?

Bruce: Probing, seeking, yeah. Interestingly enough, we found a couple of spots that we could actually walk into their lines. One night it was snowing, (laughs) and our patrol leader got lost. We walked right through a Chinese system, all set up. I don't think they ever knew we were there. I don't think they cared. For one thing, their clothing was such that they preferred to stay warm.

DePue: What I'd like to do here next is, I've got a series of questions, but in the process of asking the questions, I'd like to have you walk us through a typical patrol from the point where you get the mission and you get the inspection, and then let's pick it up from that point.

Bruce: A new patrol or one that we had run before?

DePue: Let's say one that you'd run before.

Bruce: Okay. In that case, if we had a patrol that knew what he was doing, he would say, We need such-and—and we'd say that we will do this. Patrol would take a point man. Probably right back of the point man would be the patrol leader. Then somebody—I would call him a guard because he was over the patrol leader, radio man or telephone man. Sometimes we ran a telephone out there, and what we'd do is simply cut it and leave it. And then the guard would be with a BAR, although one guy (laughs) always wanted to carry a light machine gun—too much weight. And then however many more men we had.

DePue: What was it like, then, at the point where you passed through, went forward of the American lines? Was there a specific spot that you did—

Bruce: Yeah, there were specific gates that you went through; they counted you out and then they counted you back in, because the Chinese loved to grab the last man in a patrol. That's why if I walked a patrol, I told the guys "Don't get in front of me," then they'd go on, because I walked with the weapon, safety off and full automatic, because I think I shaking straightened that hand enough, somebody would know I'd been grabbed.

DePue: Did you go in and come back in on the same point?

Bruce: Sometimes. Depended. Depended on the patrol, depended on the terrain and how well we knew it. A couple of the guys would **never** come back on the same route because they say the Chinese would lay for you.

DePue: Was there a typical time that you would start the patrols and finish the patrols?

Bruce: You started a patrol at dark, maybe a couple hours after dark, things settled down, and then you would come back in just shortly before daylight.

DePue: In other words, you're out in what we would call no-man's land for the entire night.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: And most of that time you're just laying and waiting and watching?

Bruce: No, most of the time you were moving, because you laid out there, you were easier to get caught. One of our problems was tobacco. The Chinese would smell the tobacco. So you're going on patrol tonight, no smoking.

DePue: That's a long time out in no-man's land. What's the distance, normally, between American lines and the Chinese lines?

Bruce: Dependent on how high the hills were.

DePue: The higher the hills, the closer the lines?

Bruce: Yeah, because it was too much trouble to get across. I'm not doing well.

DePue: Oh, you're doing fine. I want you to maybe talk us through what you had to go through, then, to come back into American lines. That's got to be a pretty nervous experience.

Bruce: Not if you were working with an experienced outfit. We always wanted to know who's on the gate or what's on the gate. We preferred an experienced man, particularly a man who'd been on patrols himself. We came back in one patrol and about got the daylights shot out of us. Luckily the point man realized what was happening and he called "down," and then everybody hit the ground, and this **idiot** that was up in the bunker started spraying the whole area. Needless to say, we went over to the bunker and spoke to the gentleman. And the thing was, he was an experienced man. He'd been on lines for about six months.

DePue: Well, something obviously spooked him that night.

Bruce: Yeah. Somebody said that they shot a rat in the bunker, and that's what spooked him. I don't know. But I know they got us out of there before we massacred the entire company.

DePue: Now, you just mentioned something here that triggered a question. This is in the point in the war where people serve a one-year tour and then they rotate out. So there was a point in time when you first got there you're considered the new guy. What was that experience like as the new guy? How did they treat you?

Bruce: Coming on any other post.

DePue: You're in a dangerous business, though. Did somebody take you under the wing and kind of teach you the ropes?

Bruce: Uh-uh. They may have, but I don't remember that. I took one kid under my wing, Bobby Bush. You want to know where his name is, it's on the Marine Corps monument out here.

DePue: So he died there.

Bruce: Yeah. The day after I got home somebody knocked on my front door. I answered it, and it's this little, this woman, said, "Are you Beverly?" "Yes, ma'am." "Did you know Bobby?" I says, "You're Bobby Bush's mother?" "Yeah." I invited her in. I've seen her several times since then. In fact, after the monument got built, a friend of them brought them down and I met them out here at the cemetery. I've got a brick in the walk up there, you know, Corporal Robert Bush. He was killed in action over there. What ticks me off is one of these draft-dodging gentlemen from here in town, politician, who didn't go to Korea, or just long enough to be there and come back, has got a brick in there too, right next to...

DePue: Do you know how he died?

Bruce: Yeah, shot to death. I was not with him.

DePue: So you don't know the particulars too well.

Bruce: No.

DePue: Well, that illustrates, though, a point here. You've been talking about all these patrols, and the idea is to watch the enemy but not to engage in combat. It didn't always work that way, though, did it?

Bruce: No. Sometimes you ran into one. Sometimes you hit a situation where you had to fire.

DePue: Are there any particular patrols that you particularly remember?

Bruce: Yeah, but I don't want it to go into this.

DePue: Okay.

Bruce: We were supposed to pick up a line-crosser. This would be a Chinese or a Korean spy. Now, I'm serious, I don't want this to get out, because if it gets out, there are men in service who could still be in trouble.

DePue: Well, then we probably can't put it in the recording, then.

Bruce: Okay. You want to hear it, but you got to—no, we don't need...

DePue: What we can do is redact this portion if you want, and then cut it out of the recording if you want to do it that way.

Bruce: I would rather not do it, period.

DePue: Okay, okay. Sometimes you went on recon patrols. Were there times when your unit went on ambush patrols?

Bruce: As a unit?

DePue: Yeah, your particular—

Bruce: The whole company? No. The only time the whole company went on patrol was in broad daylight. We were spaced out going out in front of the MLR [main line of resistance] to see what's out there and destroy anything that the Chinese might be able to use. For example, the Chinese were quite good at digging caves in piles of dirt; we were supposed to destroy those. We went out, the whole bunch of us, spaced out. I had quite an argument with one guy that was staying to the rear, because he had to have his Thompson. [machine gun] I told him, "Nero, you're not anyplace close to the lines. You can take a rifle." He was a little mad at me. But then the major got onto my case when I came back. When we went out, each of us was carrying a satchel charge or a blasting charge. This is broad daylight. I came back in, I was still carrying the satchel charge. He says, "Bruce, what about that satchel charge?" I said, "I've got it." "Why didn't you use it?" I said, "There wasn't anything worth blowing up." He said, "Well, you are one cheap little son of...aren't you?" (laughter) Major McDonald, C.O Company.

DePue: Now, before when we met, you were talking about a large patrol in February of 1953. Was this the one that you're just talking about?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: That was especially memorable?

Bruce: It was broad daylight. That's what—we didn't know what to do. We can see!

DePue: And they can see you.

Bruce: Yeah, unfortunately. There was one patrol off to our right that ran into a machine gun nest, and they had quite a little scrap. Nobody got hurt, but they managed to wipe out the setup, the bunkers that are up there.

DePue: I know that for a regular line unit, your Marine line companies, they would be sending out patrols as well, but oftentimes the purpose of those patrols would be quite different from yours, wouldn't it?

Bruce: Those were combat patrols. They were out there to find it and get in a fight. We were out there for intelligence; don't get in a fight.

DePue: Were there actions, though, when you went out and you took casualties on your patrol?

Bruce: We never lost a man, but the one I was telling you about. I was not on a patrol that got hit. I was considered lucky.

DePue: Well, then, what was the feeling you had for the first few patrols you went out there, when you're still the green guy? (Bruce laughs) What's going through your brain then?

Bruce: What the hell am I doing here? They used to tell us—we'd have a meal before we'd go—"Don't smoke. Don't smoke." "Yeah, why? Cigarettes are free. Why not?" "Don't smoke because it cuts your sense of smell." I found that out one night, went out there, and my sense of smell picked up the garlic; it was a Chinese group coming down a streambed. We laid there and counted them. There were five of us; there were over fifty of them, including two machine guns on sleds that they could carry. And that would have been lively to have run into. Okay.

DePue: But you got out of that one.

Bruce: We just stayed very, very quiet.

DePue: The patrol then got very good at moving at night and keeping completely silent?

Bruce: Oh, yeah, oh, yeah. I still move at night (pause) around the house. It used to disturb my kids because I could move... They'd be playing outside at night and I'd be moving out there. You get a feel. I don't get that feel anymore; I'm getting too old.

DePue: Tell us a little bit about your impressions of the enemy you faced; I understand it was both the Chinese and sometimes North Korean.

Bruce: Yeah. We preferred the Chinese because they were a little bit more professional. The North Koreans, you didn't know what they were going to do. We laid out there one night and watched this North Korean—we were sure they were going to go by us—and we knew where they were headed: they were headed to cut us off. I think they had timed our patrols, and they were

running just a little earlier than they had before. They were getting out there, getting set up to nail us. So we simply went around the other way and called in an artillery barrage. That was nasty. We shouldn't have done that. (laughs)

DePue: Well, that's the way the game is played, though, isn't it?

Bruce: Yeah. And that was the thing, too. You had to look on it as a game. You either win or lose.

DePue: With the stakes being your lives.

Bruce: Uh-huh.

DePue: Did you ever get to the point where you didn't get that knot in your gut or a little bit keyed up before going on a patrol?

Bruce: Getting teed up, yeah. You got to the point where it was a job, you know. You come to work in the morning and go home in the evening. You come to work at dark and come back in at daylight.

DePue: So you're sleeping in the daytime, aren't you?

Bruce: Uh-huh.

DePue: Okay. Did you ever have a patrol where you were told, Go out and capture some prisoners?

Bruce: Oh, yeah. That was standard. Go get the prisoners.

DePue: To me, that's got to be (laughs) a delicate mission.

Bruce: Hairy, hairy is the word you want.

DePue: Well, how did that patrol differ from your regular recon patrols, then?

Bruce: We left them alone. It was invariably the Army that wanted people caught, and we simply did not do that. We would if we had to, but the patrols we took ran five, six men. Now, I went out on one where we actually went out and grabbed a prisoner. General Cooke was a second lieutenant at the time, and he had the patrol. He had 3rd Platoon, and he needed some extra bodies, so he grabbed a couple of us out of the 1st. "Part of the reason," he said, "I wanted you is because you guys are more experienced than my 3rd Platoon." For some reason our COs liked the 1st Platoon. They liked the 1st Platoon working, because we got out and worked and we didn't get caught, we didn't get shot up, but we could get the information we needed. We had one where they wanted to know what kind of dirt this particular hill was on, so we had to

go out there and dig some up. I think we could have dug it up anyplace, but then you don't argue with the colonel. Got a good one on that, if you're interested.

DePue: Well, tell me more about this patrol, though, where you got the prisoner. How did they actually capture this guy?

Bruce: Walked into his hooch and grabbed him.

DePue: So he was out there all by himself?

Bruce: No. There were two or three others, and they killed them. He was scared stiff he was being taken back to be roasted and eaten.

DePue: Probably because that's what they were told.

Bruce: That's what they were told.

DePue: Well, I know, meeting you before, you wanted me to pursue this political aspect of this. This was at a time when the political war was being fought at Panmunjom every day, and you guys were in the midst of this as well.

Bruce: Uh-huh, yeah.

DePue: Tell me a little bit about the politics that was going on. How did that manifest itself?

Bruce: Well, every time that our people got a point, the Chinese would throw it out. The Chinese were not ready to settle. Why Panmunjom was—well, the reason that Panmunjom was there was because the same reason the First Marine Division was where it was: the Panmunjom was a truce zone where their people could, you know, converse with ours, and they could go out on the others... What am I trying to say? They kept us busy. I'll tell you what I think was the reason they wanted Panmunjom there, was for the same reason we did, because that was the natural attack route. On the other coast, the coastline was so narrow you couldn't build a major attack down. Through Wonsan?

DePue: Yeah.

Bruce: Yeah. You couldn't build a major attack down through... Although the first troops to reach Wonsan were South Korean regulars who got up there before the Marines got in there. (laughter)

DePue: In some of the pictures you see and the stories you hear are things like loudspeakers that would be on the front lines that the Chinese would have and kind of broadcast messages to you.

Bruce: Yeah, yeah. Well, we did the same thing to them.

DePue: What was the messages that they broadcast that you guys heard?

Bruce: "The war is being fought for the rich men. The Chinese do not want to fight. Come over, we will treat you, we will find you places to live." You know, usual line of propaganda.

DePue: What did you guys think when you heard that stuff?

Bruce: We said (laughs)—tried to get them to change the record. Put some music on.

DePue: Did they play music sometimes?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: What kind of music?

Bruce: Chinese. (imitates it)

DePue: Were they playing this sometimes at night?

Bruce: No, oddly enough. I think probably because their people that would be broadcasting that were afraid they'd get some artillery dropped in on them.

DePue: Now, you said the Americans were doing the same thing?

Bruce: Uh-huh.

DePue: What would we be broadcasting to them?

Bruce: I don't know; I didn't understand it. (laughs)

DePue: Oh, that's right. OK. Were we playing music?

Bruce: I don't remember.

DePue: Did you ever encounter any propaganda leaflets that were dropped over the line?

Bruce: Oh, yeah. In fact, I used to have a couple, three of them.

DePue: Same kind of message, then?

Bruce: Probably.

DePue: Do you think any of this propaganda was effective to the Americans?

Bruce: I don't know. On the Americans?

DePue: Yeah.

Bruce: Yeah, we lost a few. There were two or three that went out there and surrendered and then were used as propaganda.

DePue: Members of your unit?

Bruce: The Army.

DePue: The Army side?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Okay. So you're not talking about the—

Bruce: And the British.

DePue: Okay. It still had to be a pretty rare occasion.

Bruce: Very rare.

DePue: Were there North Koreans or Chinese that tried to—

Bruce: If you were going to get caught, you wanted to get caught by the Chinese, not the North Koreans; the North Koreans were just plain vicious.

DePue: Those are the kind of stories that filter around pretty quickly. How about Chinese and North Koreans who voluntarily surrendered to the Americans?

Bruce: I don't know because I wasn't in on that. I might as well be honest with you on it.

DePue: Now, you talked a little bit about Panmunjom. Were you guys hearing stories about the treatment of the American prisoners in the North at all?

Bruce: Yes.

DePue: What were you guys hearing about that?

Bruce: It was very rough, very rugged. They were short of food. Of course, that was understandable. North Korea was short of food. They were short of food, clothing. One of the first things that would happen was an American grabbed,

they'd strip him and give his clothes to their own people and then maybe find him something.

DePue: So he'd end up wearing Chinese uniform just as likely as American, huh?

Bruce: Yeah, or rags. At least that's what I was told. OK? Let's be honest, I don't know what they...

DePue: Well, I guess that's the nature of my question. You guys come back to friendly lines; these are the things that sometimes soldiers talk about and Marines talk about.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Did hearing those kinds of stories steel your resolve, so to speak?

Bruce: Steel my resolve? They ain't going to catch me. That's a cute little gadget you've got there. (DePue laughs)

DePue: I wanted to ask you some other questions. Now, your recon company is quite different from being a line company, but were there times in your sector, in the Marines—you know, it's a pretty wide sector—where the Chinese or the North Koreans would attack?

Bruce: Yes. Oh, yeah.

DePue: Were you involved in any of those actions at all?

Bruce: Pork Chop Hill. There were several times we were sent up on lines to reinforce the line companies. We got sent up one time and they split us up into small patrols. I went out with one fellow by the name of John Deaner. Now, John was born in East Germany, has served in the Ukrainian Army, had been captured by the Russians and escaped, came to this country. He had served in the Austrian Army, he was Austrian.

DePue: You've got a notebook here with some of these names in there, don't you?

Bruce: Yeah. Girsch. There's Davenport. De Mitchell, I don't remember.

DePue: These are Marines that you served with, then?

Bruce: Yeah. These are members of the company. (pause)

DePue: Okay. I'm going to pause for a bit so you can find this name if that's okay.

(pause in recording)

DePue: Okay, so go ahead and start again here, then?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Okay, Scotty, you say you couldn't find his name in there.

Bruce: No. John Deaner, the last I heard, was living in Ohio. But he was Austrian, served three years on the Russian front in the Austrian Army. Very tough little—I didn't want to mess with him. I saw him one day with his shirt off. He had muscles on muscles, you know what I mean. But he was with one of the groups that went out in front of the lines when we were up there, running extensive patrols off of Pork Chop. He was called in to see the colonel; the colonel was giving him a hard time, and he reached in underneath his coat and took out a coil of wire. "Oh, what's that?" He said, "Russian wire." "How would you know?" He says, "I was there." And he found out that John had served three years in the Austrian Army, then come to this country and got drafted in the Marine Corps.

DePue: Yeah, that's one of the ironies of the Korean War especially. That's not a unique story; there's quite a few of those.

Bruce: Oh, yeah. Almost a third of my company was foreign-born.

DePue: How often did you get to spend some time in the reserves, then, where you came off the front line and had a chance to rest and recuperate?

Bruce: We worked the lines continually from the time I got there until the time I came home. How about my Spanish bullfighter?

DePue: Yeah, go ahead and tell us.

Bruce: Alvarez Sarmiento Miguel. Lives in Alhambra, California. He went to Fort Riley Intelligence School, went over on the *Pope* with us and came home on the *Walker*. Got drafted in the Marine Corps.

DePue: Most of these would not have been American citizens at the time they were drafted.

Bruce: No, they weren't. Chin, Edward. Born in this country. C-h-i-n-n. No, C-h-i-n, Edward. He was born in this country, sent back by his folks to a Chinese university, barely got out of China when the war started, got drafted out of New York, ended up in the Marine Corps. Did not tell them that he spoke four languages, four dialects of Chinese. Very nice guy.

DePue: Why didn't he want to tell them he spoke Chinese?

- Bruce: Because he didn't want to be in intelligence.
- DePue: Well, he would have been incredibly lucky, because of course the Communists defeated the Nationalists just months before they came into Korea.
- Bruce: Yeah.
- DePue: Wow.
- Bruce: Yeah, I'm still trying to find somebody else.
- DePue: You looking for your Polish friend, perhaps?
- Bruce: He's not in here. I was looking for him a little while ago. Girsch.
- DePue: Go ahead.
- Bruce: No, I'm still looking.
- DePue: While you were there, were you given an R&R, an opportunity to...?
- Bruce: Yeah, I went to Japan.
- DePue: How long were you in Japan for that? Four months—four weeks?
- Bruce: Five days.
- DePue: Five days.
- Bruce: Fly me over and sober me up and fly me back. (laughs)
- DePue: Where in Japan did you go?
- Bruce: Well, when I went over, we landed in Kyoto. I went to Kobe, and when I came home, they stopped at Sasebo for eight hours, just long enough to—not even long enough to get good and drunk, because I had to get back on board because I had to guard. Got out on the guard on the back of the ship, here comes some **idiot** crawling up the hawser, trying to get around the rat guard, the big—you know what I'm familiar with?
- DePue: I'm afraid I don't.
- Bruce: All right. A hawser—the way to keep rats off of the ship was to put these rat guards on, which looked like an oversized coffee can, lid, just fitted right around the hawser. That's to keep the rats off the ship.

- DePue: You're talking about the ropes that would be lashed?
- Bruce: The ropes, yeah. Excuse me, I forgot you're not...
- DePue: I'm Army, I'm afraid, so I don't know this Navy lingo.
- Bruce: But—where was I? I was lost.
- DePue: Well, we were talking about during the time you were in Japan on your R&R.
- Bruce: Yeah. First time in Japan I got off—I was still on the ship—get off the ship a couple times and ate a little food and drank a little beer and learned to appreciate Japanese beer. It's a rice beer. And then when I was in Kyoto, I got a hotel room and food and did some shopping and one thing and another.
- DePue: But you didn't spend very much time there, obviously.
- Bruce: Five days.
- DePue: How often did you have an opportunity to get a shower?
- Bruce: In the camp?
- DePue: In Korea.
- Bruce: In Korea? As long as we had the 'edewa' boys to fill the tire [50 gallon drum], we had showers all the time.¹ And when they'd bring the people off lines, maybe they'd just bring a small group off lines, they ran them through the shower. See, we were in a permanent status, so these showers could be built.
- DePue: Well, that strikes me too, then, that your experience doing these recon patrols, you might go out night after night, but when you come back in, you're going far enough behind the lines to get a little bit more creature comforts than perhaps some of the guys in the bunkers.
- Bruce: Oh, very definitely. (laughs) We were the soft boys. Although the funny thing was, the line troops did not object. They figured we go out there in front of the lines regularly; they might get pulled out once a month or once every two weeks to take a patrol, but we were out there all the time.
- DePue: In their mind it's a fair tradeoff.

¹ 'Edewa' was American G.I. slang for the Koreans who often hung around the American units to perform odd jobs and thus scrape out a living. The soldiers would typically provide them with food, a place to stay, and occasionally, some money. In Korean, edewa meant 'come here.'

- Bruce: I guess. I don't know. I would have hated to have lived in those bunkers. Bunkers and the rats.
- DePue: You were also there in the wintertime. What was it like to go on patrols in the winter?
- Bruce: **C o l d.** Bitter cold. And this was on the east coast, which was warmer than the west coast. No, the other way around.
- DePue: Yeah, you were on the west coast.
- Bruce: I was on the west, which was warmer than the East Coast. Our tents were set up in a row. We could put a full squad in one tent and have plenty of room. We had three of those set up in a row for the 1st Platoon. The snow got so deep we had to go from our platoon tent through the 2nd Platoon tent, through the 3rd Platoon tent, then over the hill to the mess hall. **Yeah.** We actually roofed the passages in between the two tents.
- DePue: Do you know if the men who were in the bunkers on the front lines, would they have a stove in their bunkers?
- Bruce: I don't know. If they could get the fuel for it, one of these little Coleman cooker stoves, and if they kept it plugged up, that would keep it warm. But the thing is, you got used to the cold. I did not buy an overcoat till after I had been married for at least two years. Now, that meant I came home, started teaching. I would walk over to the school where I was teaching, briefcase, coat, and hat.
- DePue: A suit coat.
- Bruce: Yeah, a suit coat. And that was it. The reason I had the suit coat was because I was expected to wear it. I don't know, I mean even now, I will get out in the cold—not since this backside went out on me.
- DePue: Boots would have been very important. Did you have the cold-weather boots?
- Bruce: Thermal boots, yeah. Didn't like them. They were awkward. They were clumsy. But if you were going on a sit-down patrol, you wore thermal boots. If you were going on a moving patrol, leather.
- DePue: And I would imagine you much preferred to keep moving in that cold.
- Bruce: Oh, yes, yes. You didn't want to sit. Bless the corpsman and his little medicine bottle. But that may hold three ounces. One drop of wintergreen and grain alcohol.
- DePue: (laughs) I'm sure that wasn't part of our authorized issue.

Bruce: Oh, yes it was.

DePue: Oh, it was?

Bruce: Uh-huh. In fact, Captain Cooke came down one day—we were getting ready to go out on a winter patrol—and he asked, “Where’s your bottle?” And somebody said, “What bottle?” He turned around and he had the corpsman, he had the corpsman by the—“mmm. Have you not issued those?” “Well, they don’t need them. Besides, that is against regulations.” But you were very careful on how much of that stuff you nipped, because if you nipped a little too much...

DePue: Yeah, you don’t want to be dulling your senses doing the job you were doing.

Bruce: We went up on one patrol one time—and this is in warm weather—we got out of the truck, and the sergeant that was taking us got out of the front, and he (grunts). We looked at him and said, “Are you...?” He was drunk. It was the first patrol he’d ever gone on. He’d been the mail orderly. He’d run messages and drove the company commander, but he was a sergeant, and they decided he needed to take a patrol out. We finally dumped him in the back of the truck and took the patrol out ourselves.

DePue: In other words, it’s the kind of business, you’re not going to take chances on an amateur who might put your life on the line.

Bruce: You’re not going to take chances on a drunk.

DePue: You mentioned the corpsmen. Those were Navy corpsmen who were basically the medics? Did they oftentimes go on the patrols with you?

Bruce: Depends on the size of the patrol.

DePue: How big a patrol would it take to have a corpsman go with you?

Bruce: Big enough that you had to carry a stretcher. They were set up—I think it was ten men on a patrol, you had to carry a stretcher.

DePue: Well, now, why would some of the patrols be larger like that?

Bruce: Depends on what you were looking for. If you were looking for the wrong thing, you...

DePue: In other words, more dangerous missions?

Bruce: Yeah. When you’re going to run into a firefight.

DePue: Can you tell us about any of the patrols that you went on that you did get into a firefight? You remember any particular?

Bruce: Not particularly. I remember one we got into. We had a tech sergeant who was a real—but he used to like to take potato peelings, put them in a Korean pot, and if he could get some sugar, he'd put that in, and yeast, and let it work. But he drank it. He—where was I?

DePue: Well, we were talking about going on patrols where you ended up getting in a firefight.

Bruce: He went out there, and he actually got into a fire. He brought it on himself. The only thing was that there were only about four of the Chinese, and we had ten men along. But the thing was, once we started firing, that meant the Chinese came out of their positions because they realized it was a small patrol. It was not one coming up to assault them. We (laughs) grabbed our gear and ran.

DePue: Did you take any mortar fire anytime that you were on patrol?

Bruce: No. I took mortar fire when we were up on lines. When we first got over there, the recon held or kept lines, listening posts, every two or three hundred yards. We had to man those, but we manned those at night, four-man fire team, one man on watch, the other three sleeping, and then you trade off. And when it starts to get daylight, you rolled up your blanket or whatever you were sleeping in and headed back up into the hill.

DePue: You normally had landline run out to those positions?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Okay. Did you ever get injured personally?

Bruce: No.

DePue: Any of the patrols you were on where anybody got injured?

Bruce: Yes.

DePue: Can you tell us about some of that?

Bruce: You dumped them on a stretcher and shagged ass.

DePue: Well, you mentioned that the patrols you went on, nobody was killed in action.

Bruce: Well, if I got into a bigger one, we had the stretchers, because somebody back at division decided we ought to have stretchers out there. We might use it twice.

DePue: Is there any particular patrol you went on there was somebody injured that you particularly remember today?

Bruce: Well, if you promise not to put it in this report.

DePue: Well, I think we're probably at the same incident you didn't want to talk about before, so...

Bruce: Which one was that?

DePue: Well, that was some time ago. Did you receive any medals while you were here?

Bruce: Only standard medals that—

DePue: Service medals?

Bruce: Yeah. I've got one back there that I might get out.

DePue: Yeah, we would like to see that once we're done.

Bruce: Okay.

DePue: What do you think was the toughest part of serving in Korea?

Bruce: Lonesome. These guys; you realize that I love these guys still, but I wanted my own people around me.

DePue: Did you have somebody who you were writing, corresponding with back and forth?

Bruce: No.

DePue: No girlfriend or...?

Bruce: Oh, I had a girl in North Carolina, but she was looking for a husband. This Davenport got some letters. He was from—I can't even remember—at that time. She was an older woman, she was divorced, and she was looking for a husband. In fact, she tracked me down to Lejeune. No, no, to...

DePue: Well, you mentioned Pendleton before.

Bruce: No, no. Great Lakes. Great Lakes. I came here, went to Great Lakes, and got discharged out of there. That was a barracks and a half. We made our bunks, kept it clean, and stayed out of the way, because they couldn't do anything with us. We had a couple of incidences when some of these stay-at-home Marines, as we called them—they were going to cooks' and bakers' school up at Great Lakes, and they thought they were hot stuff. They decided they didn't want anything to do with that barracks. The night the truce was signed, the word got to the barracks; we marched on the slop chute [beer joint] in column of fours, walked in there, took anybody that wasn't wearing ribbons up here, and threw them out, and started to drink the place dry. (laughs) This lieutenant commander was OD, [Officer of the Day] Naval OD, he came over and said, "We've got to shut this down." The chief boatswain was in charge of the shore patrol, and he said, "I'm going to have to call in a company of boots, then, to corral that. There's two hundred of them," he said, "and they're all..." Well, about twelve o'clock, somebody stood up and said, "Bar is secured, clean the place up, let's go," and we did, and we went back. That was it. The next day, the company's first sergeant came around and said, "Okay, ante up." We got a two-hundred-dollar bar bill. We paid it.

DePue: You're talking about being back at Great Lakes probably about two months after you—

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: And that's when the war ended, then.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: I got a few more questions about your service while you were there. You were there at a time when the military had recently integrated, so were there black troops that were serving in your unit as well?

Bruce: We had one big-mouth—well, let me put it this way—big-mouthed nigger, who was a drafted postman from Detroit. His favorite stunt was to go around and overawe the young boots and drink their beer. He came in to drink my beer one time; I looked at him and I said, "Not unless you're going to replace it." (laughs) And that's when I slid that—. He said, "You wouldn't use that on me, would you?" I said, "Yes, I would." Of course, he was from Detroit; he was not from the South.

DePue: But there were others that you served with as well, I would guess?

Bruce: Yeah. I had Ester in my platoon and Aster in another platoon. Ester and Aster were twins. Neither one of them was old enough to be in service, but they were there. In fact, I think they were discharged on graduation day and sent home.

DePue: How would you describe the race relations? Were there tensions in the unit?

Bruce: In our unit?

DePue: Yeah.

Bruce: No. There weren't. This big blowhard was the only black in the unit. When I would report into the company, another guy who was black, reported in, and asked for a transfer out. He wanted out of it. Marines were taking anybody they could get to fill in their troops if they passed the physicals. Today you go onto a Marine base, you can see all ranks, from general on down.

DePue: Mm-hmm. Did you have an opportunity to deal with Korean civilians very much?

Bruce: No.

DePue: Just these work parties that were...?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Well, your impression of them?

Bruce: They were so happy to be there, because if they weren't there, they were up on lines. But I used to feel... I'd see these sixty- and seventy-year-old men out there working on the roads and wonder about it. But they were actually part of the Army.

DePue: Well, that illustrates just how desperate many of them would have been, then.

Bruce: Yeah, because they got food. They got food.

DePue: Well, let's talk a little bit about food. What was your food like? Were you Asian rations?

Bruce: Standard rations, and it was all right. We had a cook. We had one cook that decided the only time you get any coffee or anything to eat was during mess hours, you know, when it was supposed to be served. Well, I had been on patrol for three, four nights running, and the only thing I got, if I got up in time, was breakfast. Eat lunch. Evening chow was at five o'clock; patrols left at four, so you didn't get any evening chow. This goes on for about a week. He won't feed anybody. I go in there to get fed one night. "No, you can't... No." I said, "Either I get fed, or nobody's going to get fed," and I hold back the bolt on my Thompson, (laughs) and I've got it pointed right at... About that time, the first sergeant comes in. "What's going on?" I said, "I've been on patrol for five days. I've had one meal a day." "Well, you get up and go to

breakfast.” “When I come in at 4:00 in the morning I should get up and go to breakfast?” The first sergeant turned around and looks at him, said, “Feed the man. As of now, this mess hall is open twenty-four hours a day.” That sergeant didn’t like me at all. (DePue laughs) I suggested that he go on a couple of patrols. Boy, he really didn’t like me then.

DePue: Did you normally get a couple of hot meals a day?

Bruce: Yeah. Well, see, we come in at nights, they’d cook for us. In fact, we’d eat better coming in at night. (laughs) Had one place, went up to—we’d gone through a patrol, come back, and the company commander said, “You guys got out before chow last night, didn’t you?” “Yes, sir.” “Go on down at the mess hall; I’ll call down and tell them to feed you.” That was pretty decent. So we go down there, and he’s going to feed us. He says, “Here, I’ve got some fish here. You can have that.” He fries it up. He says, “You want a little sauce on that?” “Yeah.” He puts it—I reach out and I taste the sauce. I look at him and, “You black son-of-a-bitch, you’re no Southern nigger than I am.” “What you mean, white boy?” Great big son of a gun. I said, “The only place I have tasted any sauce like that is Mammy Lou’s at Keokuk, Iowa.” He says, “That’s my grandmother!” He said, “How would you like some steak?” (laughter) He pulls out a—you know how a filet mignon comes? You know how it comes? He pulls out some—chunk, chunk, chunk—throws them on the grill. (laughs) No, we used to sell her catfish. (DePue laughs) We had a boat that we could row, and we’d row it up under the dam, at Keokuk and put out a line and catch catfish. Then we’d take them over to Mammy Lou’s and sell them.

DePue: And you’d get that special fish sauce, huh?

Bruce: Oh, that was good sauce.

DePue: Was there any particular C-Ration that you remember that you really liked and—

Bruce: I liked beans.

DePue: Beans?

Bruce: Mm-hmm.

DePue: Beans and franks?

Bruce: No.

DePue: Just beans.

Bruce: Just the beans.

DePue: Any particular C-Ration you really **didn't** like to see?

Bruce: (laughs) Generally we could trade around so that you got what you wanted.

DePue: Okay. Just a few other questions here. I think I know the general answer that you're going to give on these. I want you to talk a little bit about how you would characterize the morale of the unit you served with.

Bruce: Good. You mean the one I was with overseas?

DePue: Yes, your recon.

Bruce: Good. Yes. We hated to see the experienced guys leave because that meant we had to break in the kids.

DePue: When you got close to the end of your tour, were you one of those guys counting the days down?

Bruce: No, because I knew if the shit hit the fan, I was going back up. But luckily it didn't, so I didn't go back up.

DePue: Now, you left when, was it April or May of '53?

Bruce: April, I think.

DePue: That was a timeframe when the action at the front was getting a little bit hotter, wasn't it?

Bruce: Yeah, because both sides were trying to adjust the lines so they were in a better position.

DePue: At the peace talks.

Bruce: No. As I said, the shit hit the fan. They could hit harder and do more damage, particularly if the Chinese decided to roll us out. I'll give you one. I talked about making this patrol out in front of the lines in broad daylight? The Chinese got up on their radios and were broadcasting in the **clear** that we were attacking and to pull out and move back. (laughs) We thought it was funny.

DePue: Were you on the line at that time?

Bruce: We would have been on the line. Actually, when I got over there, I was never on line. For one place we went up to reinforce one company, but we were never on... We reinforced one company and made patrols.

- DePue: What was the impression you had of the sergeants and the officers that you served with?
- Bruce: Very good. Had only one chicken-shit officer. He was a captain, and he came in and reported to the company. At that time, if you had beer, you kept it under your cot; if you had whiskey, you kept it hidden. (laughs) And nobody drank before five o'clock in the afternoon. Well, he decided he's going to dry the company out, we drank too much. A week goes by, you got all your beer drunk. Another week goes by, you got nothing to drink. You know, we were irritated. And I forget exactly what happened, but the major got mad. No, no, he was inspecting, and, "Oh, Bruce"—no, it was somebody else he was talking to—"got a beer? Where's your beer?" "There's no beer in this tent, sir. There's no beer in the platoons." This guy was an old line buck sergeant, and he'd been up and down the ranks several times. "Oh?" Walked out of there and said, "Captain"—he was the major—"there's no beer here." "No, sir, I'm drying the company out." "Oh." Next morning, formation. "There will be a beer run this afternoon. Any man may buy as much beer as he's got money for." Sent two trucks (laughs) down to the beer dump, came back with it. And, oh, our captain was mad. He didn't last long. We didn't like him.
- DePue: But he was the exception, and the rule was you had good officers and good NCOs? [non-commissioned officers]
- Bruce: Yeah. If you had bad NCOs, they didn't last long.
- DePue: Well, what do you mean they didn't last long?
- Bruce: They got told, There may be an accident if you don't transfer out of here.
- DePue: And the commander would allow them to transfer out of the unit?
- Bruce: Volunteer unit.
- DePue: The recon company was?
- Bruce: Yeah.
- DePue: So they'd probably end up going down to a line company someplace?
- Bruce: Probably.
- DePue: Well, that's interesting. Do you remember having volunteered for the recon company?
- Bruce: No. (laughs) **No.** I did not volunteer for it. In fact, I'd been there, oh, a month, and they were checking, "Bruce, you didn't volunteer for this company."

Would you like to transfer out?" I said, "No, sir." "Why not?" I said, "My bed's made." (laughs) Not in that tone. I said, "No," I said, "I've got friends here."

DePue: When you first got drafted, you told me at the beginning of this interview, you didn't want to go in the Marines.

Bruce: **Right! Them people are crazy!**

DePue: Somewhere in the process you decided—

Bruce: I got crazy. Okay? (pause)

DePue: Did that process start in boot camp, that they really trained you to take pride in being a Marine?

Bruce: I think it was when I went to Fort Riley, Kansas, because we could go into a restaurant there, and there would be Army waiting to get a place to sit down. They'd pull the Marines out, give us a place to go.

DePue: Okay. I think we've been at this a little over two hours. This might be a good time to kind of stop and pick it up in our next session, if you don't mind here, Scotty.

Bruce: No, I don't mind at all.

DePue: We've got you pretty much through the end of your time, and we'll start with you coming back to the States the next time we get together.

Bruce: Oh. (laughs)

DePue: Okay. But it's been fascinating. Thank you very much.

Bruce: Yeah. I'm going to give you this.

DePue: Okay, and I'll stop it right now. Thank you.

(end of interview #1, #2 continues)

Interview with Beverly 'Scotty' Bruce

VRK-A-L-2010-021.02

Interview # 2: May 26, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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A Note to the Reader

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DePue: Today is Wednesday, May 26, 2010. My name is Mark DePue. I'm the director of oral history at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. Today I have my second session with Scotty Bruce. Good afternoon, Scotty. Third session. Well, the first session we just got acquainted that day.

Bruce: Okay, all right.

DePue: So this is the second session we've had a recording. A hot day in May. I bet you had a few hot days over in Korea.

Bruce: Yes. Very thankful to be living in a tent then, but not during wintertime, when we had snow up the gumbachi [butt]. All right.

DePue: Would it be true to say that you've never been colder than what you experienced in Korea?

- Bruce: No. You would go out on patrol... Well, I lived in a tent. I spent five days sleeping in a civilized environment in Japan. The rest of the time I lived in a tent with (laughs)—well, we started out with a tent with a fire team—six guys—and then we were going to be a permanent structure, so we went into a squad tent, which was supposed to hold twenty men. Actually, we had eleven in there, which was comfortable. One stove, and sometimes two. In the wintertime when it was real cold they said at night, “Shut your stoves off so we conserve oil.” Yeah, we shut the... (laughs) Somebody tried to turn that stove off, he’d have got shot. (DePue laughs) No, I mean it. At night, the tent would ice up inside; the bunker stoves would be red-hot. All right.
- DePue: Would it also be true that you’ve never been hotter in your life than you were when you were in Korea?
- Bruce: Yes, I have had a few days in an Illinois corn field when it was a little hotter than that. (laughs)
- DePue: Okay. But maybe you had an opportunity at the end of the day in the corn fields to get a shower or something.
- Bruce: Yeah, you got on the school bus and came home, came back.
- DePue: Well, as we finished off last time, we were basically done talking about your experiences in Korea, so where I wanted to pick up the story today is, you tell us about the experience of coming home. Roughly what month was it that you came back to the States?
- Bruce: (sighs) I got it around here someplace.
- DePue: My timeline suggests that it was before the end of the war.
- Bruce: Yeah. I came home, and the day the war ended I was at Great Lakes, up there awaiting discharge at the Naval. That night the word came that the war was over, we were in a casual company, two hundred in a two-story barracks, about two hundred of us. Quite frankly, we marched on the slop chute, the beer joint, threw anybody out who wasn’t wearing ribbons, and proceeded to drink the place dry. And the next day, the first sergeant came around and said we got a two-hundred-dollar—I think he said two-hundred-dollar—beer bill. We ponied up and paid it. But it was strange. They came around in the middle of the night and they wanted to shut us down, this JG, lieutenant grade ensign, wanted to shut us down. And the old boatswain said, “Well, if you do,” he said, “I’ll have to send for at least two companies of boots to throw those guys out. (laughs) Just leave them alone. When they get done, they’ll go home.” And we did. And we coughed up the money to pay the beer bill.

DePue: You'd spent many, many patrols walking between those two lines, between the Chinese and the American lines.

Bruce: Yes. I have no idea how many. Some weeks we would be out five out of seven nights; other times we might go two weeks without a patrol. It depended a lot on how active the Chinese were and what the phase of the moon was.

DePue: During a full moon were they more active? Less active?

Bruce: Less active. **We** were less active. You never knew when they were going to be active.

DePue: I think we mentioned last time that towards the end of the war, the combat actions, the patrolling, seemed to pick up a little bit, because the Chinese and the—

Bruce: We wanted more land. They wanted more land; we wanted more land.

DePue: What did you and your buddies think, then, when this war ended with an armistice, with **not peace**, but just an agreement to stop shooting at each other?

Bruce: What the hell are we doing here? It's over. Basically that was it: it's over; we're going home. We went back to Korea, and I think I gave you the dates when we went, and it had changed so much. I went through Seoul the first night I was in Korea. We got on a train, and the cars were older, were more Civil War cars, American Civil War. As we're going, the lieutenants in charge of the group came through, he says, "All right, all you men that have personal weapons"—because when we got off the ship, they simply put us on these trains and ran us up to the line—"that have personal weapons, load them. If the shit hits the fan, the guys with weapons get off on the side we're getting fired on; the other ones get off on the other side and take off for the hills."

DePue: Yeah, I want to finish up today—

Bruce: Go ahead.

DePue: —by talking about that trip in 1999, but let's get you back when you first got back. What did you have planned for, now that you were no longer in Korea? Become a civilian as quick as possible?

Bruce: To get out, find a job, and settle down to a normal life. Well, I was trained as a schoolteacher, and I applied for a job several places, wrote letters, got invited to come over to Niantic, Illinois, which is west of Decatur, fourteen miles. And (laughs) I have no clothes. My mother had given away my two suits that I had. I guess she thought I was never coming back. I hitchhiked, because there

was no bus service into Niantic. The Illinois Terminal Train went by there, but it didn't stop. So I had to go over on a bus on, I think it's Route 36, runs between Springfield and Decatur. I got off and walked into town, went into the school, and introduced myself to the secretary, and I said, "I'd like to talk to the superintendent." Well, he came out, I talked to him, the superintendent, and another man came out, , the principal, M. Owen Mowen. No, that wasn't Mowen, it was Keith Miligan. My wife's neighbor lived across the street from her [Mowen], and she just left, so, "Well, would you stay and talk to the school board tonight?" I said, "I've got no decent clothes." The shirt I wore in high school and the pants are a pair of khaki pants I got issued. So (laughs) What am I going to... He said, "I'll put you up and you put on the bus back to Springfield." All right. I go in there to stay, taken in. My first name is Beverly, and they said, "Beverly for a schoolteacher?" "Well," I said, "I've been called Scotty." "All right, then, you'll be Scotty Bruce." That's the way I picked the name up. And I interviewed, spent the night.

This was on Tuesday night. Wednesday morning I went back to Springfield. But they wanted me to be back Thursday to be at school Friday to meet the other teachers. I said, "I've got to go home. I've got to go buy clothes." The only thing I had was the Marine Corps uniform. I said, "You want me to be up here in uniform?" They decided that wouldn't be a good idea. (laughter)

So Sunday night I take the bus from Springfield to Decatur. I get off on the Niantic road, and it's starting to rain like everything. Several cars go by, and this one pulled up, little woman cranks down, "Are you the new schoolteacher?" That's the way I met Helena Jones. Helena was another teacher in the junior high, and she's the one who broke me in, actually. I said yes, so she took me up to Miligan's, where I was staying the night. I got to back up. When the school hired me, Keith Milligan was putting me up for the night, and he said, "Well, we've got to find a place for you to stay." Took me over to a woman by the name of Ward, Ellie Ward, and she agreed to put me up, breakfast, and supper, for twenty dollars a month, which wasn't bad with the money I was making. That got me started.

DePue: I wanted to ask you a question here. In Korea, you're going out on patrols, as you so very well described to us, at night, and every one of your senses has to be sharpened to a fine point, and a mistake might end up with your death.

Bruce: Everybody with you, too.

DePue: Then you come back to the United States. Did you find it difficult? Did anything strike you coming back to the United States about the difference in the environment?

Bruce: I remember I hadn't been home too long and I walked down to the movie. We didn't have a car. And I was coming back, some smart-ass kids go by—I'm in

uniform because (laughs) that's the only decent clothes I had—go by and throw firecrackers out of the window of a car and thought that was so funny, drove off just laughing their head off when I walked by. I walked by and reached in the window and grabbed the driver, and about that time the police came along. "He assaulted..." The guy was the same fellow who had taken me to the train the morning I got drafted. He says, "You're damn lucky he didn't kill you. Now, get your ass out of town." Just a reaction.

DePue: Yeah. Without even thinking, probably.

Bruce: No.

DePue: In our pre-interview, you mentioned another incident in Niantic. Was this the same one?

Bruce: What? Which one?

DePue: Well, were there more incidents in terms of adjusting and the difficulties you had in adjusting?

Bruce: Not really. Niantic was a very laid-back little town. I was the local schoolteacher, and they left me alone.

DePue: Well, that might have had a reputation: Don't mess with that guy, he's just back from Korea.

Bruce: I walked into the classroom the first day, took off—country school—type desks all the way back—and the kids were seated at desks. I took off my coat and I said, "My name is Bruce, Mr. Bruce to you; I'm"—what was it I said?—"I'm thirteen days out of the Marine Corps, and I **will** run this classroom." I thought they were a good bunch of kids. Found out later when they were in the sixth grade they tried to burn the school down; when they were in the seventh grade, they ran one teacher out of the building. I thought they were a good bunch of kids. My wife's oldest nephew was in the class, in fact.

DePue: Well, this is probably the appropriate time to tell us how you met your wife.

Bruce: The principal walked in one day and said, "This is Miss Riley. She is here from Normal University, and her advisor wants her to see what a school looks like." That's where I met her. Her mother ran the local restaurant in town. I went down there that night for a cup of coffee, and being a wise-ass Marine, I gave her a hard time, and she ran me **out** of the place. (DePue laughs) But we didn't start going together until, I don't know, maybe April of the next year.

DePue: You're old enough to remember at the end of World War II when the country really celebrated at the end of the war and those soldiers coming back.

Bruce: Oh, yeah.

DePue: Was your experience coming back home to the United States anything like the World War II generation?

Bruce: No. We did get welcomed by the ship. In fact, my ex-minister from Macomb was now an Air Force chaplain, and he was serving one of the airfields around San Francisco. The next day, I called him up. He said, "If I'd known you were coming in, we'd have met you at the ship." He was very upset. His wife wasn't; she didn't like me. (laughs) She and her boy, their son, we grew up together, and we used to get into a great deal of trouble. Buddy could dream up ideas, and I'd figure out how to do them.

DePue: Did it bother you that you didn't get the same kind of reception?

Bruce: No, it didn't bother me a bit. I was home. I didn't give a damn. (laughs) The only thing I wish I could have done was come off that train, grabbed another train, and headed for Macomb. About the first stop I had was at the PX, and I bought a B-4 bag. You know what I mean?

DePue: A B-4 bag?

Bruce: Yeah. One of these... Pilots carry them; they zip and open up. So I could have something to... I came home with my sea bag and what I was wearing, and I needed a B-4. Well, the other stuff was all in... I heard it.

DePue: A little bit of thunder in the background. Well, it's that type of year for Illinois.

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: I lost track here. Oh. Shortly after you got back, it sounds like you got a teaching job almost immediately.

Bruce: I got out of the Marine Corps the sixth of August, started teaching the thirtieth.

DePue: Mm-hmm. But while you're teaching, there are some things that are still happening in Korea. I guess the questions here lead to how much you were paying attention to things like the prisoners being exchanged at Panmunjom.

Bruce: They had been exchanged. In fact, I was on lines when part of the prisoners came back.

DePue: That would have been Operation Little Switch when the—

Bruce: Yeah. Two of our fellows that had been captured quite late in the war were in that switch, and they wouldn't let us go up and see them. They told us, No, there will be no authorized travel. They didn't want any problems. Because if we'd gone up and found our friends and they'd been mistreated, I don't know what we would have done.

DePue: When did you hear about the horrendous treatment that these prisoners had gotten?

Bruce: We already knew about it, that there were problems there. We weren't happy, but what can you do? The officers were doing their jobs and sitting on us, and that was it.

DePue: What did you think about the twenty-one Americans who decided to stay in the North?

Bruce: (laughs) To hell with them. If they had come back, I don't think they would have survived, because the other prisoners would have taken care of that.

DePue: Did you understand why there might have been some who stayed in the North?

Bruce: No, no, not after—okay, best example I can give you. We had some Korean dogs that got attached to the company. They were the best guards we had. They hated the other—even the Koreans that worked for us, they hated them, because I think they realized to the Koreans, they were lunch.

DePue: And that's kind of how you looked at the twenty-one Americans who stayed in the North?

Bruce: Exactly. We couldn't understand why they stayed. In fact, I didn't even know there were that many of them.

DePue: Well, over the years they eventually made their way back to the United States or other places.

Bruce: Yeah, through Germany, through Russia, through Germany.

DePue: Right. There were also some Americans who did return, some POWs who did return, that the Army court-martialed. Did you understand that?

Bruce: Yes. If they buddy-buddied with and particularly if they gave away the plans that the people had. They were lucky they didn't get beaten to death in the camps.

DePue: So it would be accurate to say you didn't have any sympathy for them either.

Bruce: Absolutely no sympathy.

DePue: Did you take advantage of the GI Bill when you came back?

Bruce: Yeah. I went to school—well, when I went directly into the university to get my Master's, I immediately signed up. I drew a year's there, and I drew two summers, and I drew another year. I drew altogether probably... Then we got married, and I got married allowance then. I probably drew two and a half years.

DePue: So you really took advantage of it.

Bruce: Yes. I'm a Scotchman.

DePue: (laughs) Well, and being an educator, there's no shortage of a need to get more schooling for yourself.

Bruce: Yeah, yeah.

DePue: Here's what I was thinking. Maybe I'm confusing this, but I thought you had mentioned another story with a landlady that you had in Niantic.

Bruce: Oh, Ellie, Ellie Ward? Yeah. You mean about coming in with the blanket?

DePue: Perhaps that's it. Can you tell us that story?

Bruce: I guess I wasn't feeling too well one night, and I went back and I laid down on my bed. All of a sudden I'm up. Ellie never came in to the—she came in with a blanket to cover me, thought I was going to get cold, and she said, "I never saw anybody move like that." It scared the hell out of her. (laughs)

DePue: It's pure instincts on your part.

Bruce: Even now—well, not now; it's been too long. But I would be over at one side of the room and something would be going on on the other side of the room, and I'm over there. Problems? There were some kids that did not like me because they said (laughs)—one of them told me—well, one of my wife's nephews, one of her nephews, actually, said that, "You could be up on top of us before we knew what was going on." The second year I was there, the principal walked in and said, "I'm taking the eighth-grade boys for shop; you're taking the seventh-grade boys for shop." I looked at him, said, "I can't drive a nail straight." But the first day of shop, these kids are (makes yakking noises), you know. I pick up a board—I don't know how big it was, maybe inch—you know, good solid board. (noise in background)

DePue: Go ahead.

Bruce: I don't know what she's doing. I laid it between two workbenches, and **crunch**. No problem with the shop. (laughs)

DePue: What, you give it a karate chop, did you? (laughs)

Bruce: It didn't even break my hand.

DePue: I know you made some very strong relationships while you were in the Marine Corps. Did you keep track of those guys after you came back home?

Bruce: Oh, yeah. I could show you the pictures for some of them.

DePue: A couple of them especially you were able to keep close tabs with?

Bruce: Chuck Burrow. Yeah. Let me get into here; I can actually show you their pictures.

DePue: Okay. We're looking at his scrapbook here of the war. It looks like you've done a pretty good job of keeping this straight.

Bruce: Well, you might as well do it. This is what I lived in at Pendleton.

DePue: Quonset huts?

Bruce: Quonset huts, yeah. In fact, they're still there. The last time I was out there in San Diego, they were still there. They don't live in them now.

Fort Riley Kansas, Army Intelligence School. I'm going... I don't turn this stuff too well.

DePue: Did you start attending reunions?

Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: About what time did you start doing that?

Bruce: I don't really remember.

DePue: You showed me patches before. This is a patch of 1st Marine Division Recon Company: Swift, Silent, Deadly.

Bruce: Uh-huh. That is sewn on; the other one was for—

DePue: A decal, it looks like.

Bruce: To put on a truck, stick on a window. Oh, there's your tents.

DePue: Yeah, after we get done with the interview we're going to go ahead and take a look at these pictures and select some of them so we can incorporate it as part of your interview, if you don't mind.

Bruce: You mean I got to take part of them out?

DePue: Well, we can talk about how we want to do that, because I know that's something that you guys... These are very important to you, so we appreciate that.

Bruce: Wasn't I a sweet-looking little boy? (DePue laughs) But if you will notice something here; now, these were in the camp, but the rest of these, notice the weapons. Always.

DePue: Always had the weapons with you?

Bruce: About the only place we didn't carry them was to the mess hall.

DePue: How tall were you at the time, there, Scotty?

Bruce: About the same height I am now, five-five—five-five, five-six.

DePue: But you had a barrel chest, it looks like.

Bruce: Well, I was in a little better shape than I am now.

DePue: That's that Marine training.

Bruce: Yeah. Kept me in the Marine Corps.

DePue: Did you join VFWs or AmVets or anything like that?

Bruce: I was in the American Legion in Virden—in fact, I still am a member there—after we moved there. In fact, my principal said it'd be a good idea “because we need a connection, and you're about the only serviceman that we've got.”

DePue: I'm wondering if you can tell us, then, about going back to Korea. I think it was 1999, you said, that you went back.

Bruce: Yeah. Are you going to take this with you?

DePue: Well, let's talk about that after we get done with the interview, about how we want to do that.

Bruce: Yeah, because this is from *Stars and Stripes*, “The Little Foreign Legion,” which will give you—

DePue: Okay. This is an article, it looks like, from *Stars and Stripes* from back then.

Bruce: Yes. Haverco was—

DePue: Michael Haverco.

Bruce: Yes. Soznick was born in this country, raised in Russia and Persia, came back to this country, and ended up in the Marine Corps. Michael Haverco, he's in here. This is Sarmiento. Sarmiento was an Hispanic who has been born in Spain during the civil war, had been raised in Tangiers, gone back to Spain to learn to be a bullfighter, sailed out in the Spanish Marine Navy, ended up in the Marine Corps. Got drafted. Here's more information on these guys. Tyde was Polish; Sprokus was Latvian. Chin, from Washington, D.C., was sent back to China for education in Chinese, almost got drafted in the Red Army. I still see him at reunions. This is Sarmiento, Miguel Sarmiento, the bullfighter. I still communicate with him. Tyde died of a blood clot.

DePue: Well, illustrates a couple things. We talked about it last time, how diverse the group you were—how many were foreign born—but also it illustrates how tight-knit group that you—

Bruce: Yes, very tight-knit. Here's Sarmiento again. I don't know who these guys are.

DePue: Okay, again, let's go ahead and look at that when we get done with the interview. But I wanted to have you tell me more about that trip you made in 1999, I believe.

Bruce: You ought to get the wife. She's the one that can tell you.

DePue: Well, would you like to stop and we can—well, the problem is I only got two microphones, so we'd have to have just her talking then if that was the case.

Bruce: Why don't I go get her.

DePue: If you're willing to hand over the reins here, but make sure you take the mic off. Here, I'm going to stop for a second.

(pause to change narrators)

(end of interview #2, #3 continues)

Interview with Beverly 'Scotty' Bruce

VRK-A-L-2010-021.03

Interview # 3: May 26, 2010

Interviewer: Mark DePue

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A Note to the Reader

This transcript is based on an interview recorded by the ALPL Oral History Program. Readers are reminded that the interview of record is the original video or audio file, and are encouraged to listen to portions of the original recording to get a better sense of the interviewee's personality and state of mind. The interview has been transcribed in near-verbatim format, then edited for clarity and readability, and reviewed by the interviewee. For many interviews, the ALPL Oral History Program retains substantial files with further information about the interviewee and the interview itself. Please contact us for information about accessing these materials.

DePue: This is Mark DePue. Were back, and this time we've got Ednamae Bruce to talk about some of her experiences. You guys got married in 1956, does that sound right?

E. Bruce: That's right.

DePue: But we're going to jump way ahead, because I was talking to Scotty, and we'd gotten to the point of taking the trip back to Korea in 1999. He thought it would be best that you kind of take over the discussion from here. My first question then: had you ever been to Korea before this?

E. Bruce: No, never had.

DePue: In terms of your relationship with Scotty and his experiences during the Korean War, how much did you know about his experiences in Korea? Was he the kind of husband that told you about a lot of the details?

E. Bruce: Not details; general information, but not much of the, you know, what actually went on.

- DePue: Did you go to some of the reunions together?
- E. Bruce: Yes, we went to the reunions, and again, if the guys were discussing the details of what went on, I wasn't involved in those conversations. I just, you know, was off gossiping with women I guess. I don't know.
- DePue: What was the impression you had of how important it was for Scotty to go to these reunions and how important these relationships were to him?
- E. Bruce: It was more or less if he wanted to go and enjoyed, being with the guys, that was fine with me and I went along. It wouldn't have been something I would have gone on myself. Now we have a number of the men who have passed away, and their wives, a few of them, still come to the reunions. I don't know, if I were in that situation, if I would continue going. Probably not. But many of them do.
- DePue: You think it was important for Scotty to get back to these?
- E. Bruce: I think so. I think so. It gave an opportunity for him to—
- S. Bruce: To lie a lot(??). (laughter)
- E. Bruce: —to see if it really was the way he remembered it, I think.
- DePue: Well, let's talk about 1999, then, that trip to Korea. What brought about the trip in the first place?
- E. Bruce: One of the men in the company, Howard Davenport, had made two or three trips over. He did business over there with them. He had the information, and he just—he's (laughs)—he's kind of a nagger. He just keeps at you until you do something that he wants you to do. So he kept after several of the men in the unit to go on back because this is a great opportunity to see how things are now as compared to how they were and so on. So we really went because Howard kept insisting.
- DePue: Did you think it was a good idea?
- E. Bruce: Yeah, yeah. I think so.
- DePue: Were you excited about the opportunity?
- E. Bruce: I was excited everything except the plane ride over there. (laughs) It's too long to be on one plane.
- DePue: How about hearing about the food?
- E. Bruce: I was satisfied with the food.
- S. Bruce: She liked kimchi.
- E. Bruce: It didn't—you know, I thought it was adequate. I mean...
- DePue: Okay. Tell me your impressions, then, landing on the ground there. And I assume it was Kimpo Airport, Seoul?
- E. Bruce: Yes. I think I expected a larger airport, a larger terminal. It was kind of more or less on a par here with Capital Airport. The one thing I do recall about this

is that one of our group's luggage had gotten misplaced, and we spent a lot of time there trying to locate their luggage. But yeah.

DePue: I'll get to you in a second, here, Scotty.

E. Bruce: It was also well arranged. The thing that impressed me was how they just kind of took over. They said, "Here, this is your tour guide for the time that you're here," and she introduced herself, a lovely young woman, and introduced herself and just led us through wherever we were going.

DePue: You were the guests, then, of the Korean government?

E. Bruce: Absolutely, yes.

DePue: Okay. What I'd like to have you do now is to hand the microphone over to Scotty here. Scotty, just kind of hold it in your hand and keep it steady. I want to get your impressions, Scotty, of what you saw of Korea going back after, what, fifty-plus years that you were there?

S. Bruce: It was a shock. You know, I was expecting to see the shacks. We went up to the Demarcation Line, and you see these farms, nice houses, well built. I was used to seeing a rice-straw roof about four feet thick, and if you went into one of them for some reason, you wanted to be a little careful because mice or a rat might drop out of the thatch. The airport? Okay. What else?

DePue: How about Seoul itself? How much had Seoul changed?

S. Bruce: The first time I went through Seoul was in the pitch black at night. The second time, coming back, it was still black. Seoul itself was pretty well rebuilt—buildings, beautiful streets. Riots down at the university. Yeah, they were having a—what was it? They were having a riot about something, and they were keeping us... I was interested in the Korean police. Their clubs were about five foot long.

DePue: Oh, their billy clubs?

S. Bruce: Yes.

DePue: How busy were the streets? (Ednamae laughs)

S. Bruce: Very.

E. Bruce: Well—

S. Bruce: She's the driver.

DePue: Okay, why don't you go ahead and pass it back to Ednamae here?

E. Bruce: One thing, that we were in a taxi, and we'd gone out to—well, I think we had gone to see the Presbyterian Church of Korea and that complex there. Coming back, we got to an intersection, and it was a traffic jam. It was just—I mean, there were cars all over, and nobody was moving. I thought, Oh my gosh, we're going to be here for the next two hours, you know. It was the strangest thing. You know, in this country when you get into a traffic jam, you'd hear car horns beep. I mean, there wasn't a horn, no noise, not at all. Just slowly, these cars just inched up and inched through the intersection, and all of a

sudden we were out of there. It was so different than a traffic jam that we get into here. But it didn't seem to be out of patience. I mean, our taxicab driver wasn't mouthing obscenities or anything.

S. Bruce: He may have been, but...

E. Bruce: No, we wouldn't have known. (laughs) But anyway, it was just interesting to see how they just worked their way out of this. But the traffic was terrific.

DePue: Okay, I want you to hand that over to Scotty here again. Scotty, you spent—

S. Bruce: I got to add one thing.

DePue: Okay.

S. Bruce: We went over to the Presbyterian mission. As we were wandering around, we came across a kindergarten class—I think they were kindergarten—that was breaking up. One little guy was just raising Cain. And I'm sitting there looking, and I have got a piece of candy. I looked over at the teacher—this was the teacher in me that did this. And I had it in my hand and I held it up so the teacher could see it and pointed towards the kid. She nodded her head, and I held it out to him. (laughs) He came over and got it and thanked me, you know, very nicely, just straightened out like—and I don't know why. Okay, we can give it back to you.

DePue: How about other Korean people? Were they respectful?

S. Bruce: Very.

E. Bruce: Very respectful.

S. Bruce: We would walk down the street, and the older people, "Thank you, thank you."

E. Bruce: Well, when they recognized that you were a veteran.

S. Bruce: Yeah. I wore a Marine Corps belt buckle.

DePue: How about the younger people? Would they also recognize you as a veteran and respectful?

S. Bruce: They would recognize, but, you know, they didn't—

E. Bruce: Well, not so much.

S. Bruce: Not so much.

DePue: Okay.

S. Bruce: The young lady we had with us was very nice.

DePue: I wanted to ask you about going back to Panmunjom, because I think you went back to Peace Village. You spent so much of your time close to that. Either one of you, talk about that experience.

E. Bruce: I'm trying to think where—we're in the room where they did the negotiations. They said this half of the room was North Korean and this half of the room was South Korean, and would I please move over just a little bit because I was

standing in North Korea? And (unintelligible) they didn't want to... The height of the security there was something, too, because they said, If you stand here and you look, standing right at the edge of that building over across the DMZ on the North Korean side there is a security guard. He is standing, and he's standing motionless, but he's looking over here. And he said, "And over here on our side, we have one who also is standing quietly, looking over there." They will change security guards every two or three hours, but that vigilance is kept up twenty-four hours a day.

DePue: Were there negotiations going on at the time?

S. Bruce: No.

E. Bruce: No, no, nothing. Things were pretty peaceful at that time. It was not like what's going on now, but things were pretty peaceful.

DePue: Well, you mentioned about what's going on right now. I don't know that we had mentioned it before in the interview. But as we speak, on this day, the twenty-sixth of May 2010, about a month ago, a South Korean ship that was patrolling off the coast of North Korea sank; just within the last week, they released the findings that said it looks like it was a North Korean torpedo that sank it. So this is suddenly very relevant again, to be talking about what's going on in Korea. Anything else that the two of you want to mention about that trip in 1999?

E. Bruce: Driving through Seoul, you see the old city and you see the new city. I mean, the construction there—they have built high-rise apartment buildings just one after another after another. The young lady, our tour guide, said that her brother or sister, somebody, was getting married, but they couldn't get married until they had an apartment, because they didn't want anybody living out on the streets, I guess. So they had to have a place to live, to move into, before the government would allow them to get married. You would be driving along, and all of a sudden you're back down in the old city—the little old shops and the narrow streets and the people going back and forth. But across the street, why, then you'd be in a new area of the city. We did go by the Olympic Village for—what was that, the year? It was...

DePue: It was '98, was it?

E. Bruce: Something like that. Anyway, we went by that, and that area was all built up. We went into a museum that was attached to a shopping mall and an amusement park kind of thing, and that area was full of children. It was their day off school, a field trip or something or other. I thought it was amusing because apparently they had been there to go through the museum, but after the museum then they got to go through the amusement park, so they went through that museum very fast. (Scotty makes zooming noise; laughter) These kids. And I laughed at that, and I said, "Having been on some field trips with school-aged children, they reacted just like our kids here would: Okay, I've got to go through this. I will, and then I'll go to the amusement park." So.

DePue: Maybe a little bit refreshing that it's so darn normal, it's just like here.

- E. Bruce: Oh, it was, yeah, yeah. The little—
- S. Bruce: The little boy who came over to get the candy, and he was very proper, very nice. "Thank you." Did he say thank you? He said something. I don't remember.
- DePue: *Kamsahamnida*, maybe.
- S. Bruce: Yeah, could be. You speak more Korean than I do. DePue: What I'd like to do here is go ahead and pause for a second. I'm going to hook you up, and then we'll finish this interview up, if that's okay. Ednamae, thank you very much. I know why he brought you in on this part of the discussion now.
- S. Bruce: Because she tells the truth.
- E. Bruce: (laughs) Yeah.
- DePue: Hold on, hold on. Okay, we're back on again here, Scotty.
- S. Bruce: Okay. To give you an idea how many foreign-born, figure the company at 120 men. Those (pointing to a picture) were the foreign born.
- DePue: It looks like there's at least twenty-five to thirty men in that group.
- S. Bruce: Thirty—at least thirty there.
- DePue: Now, that wasn't typical of most of the Marine Corps, was it?
- S. Bruce: No, that was typical. These were the language people. All of them spoke at least one language besides English; some of them spoke four or five.
- DePue: In other words, being part of this recon patrol where your job is to go between lines and listen, that comes in handy, then.
- S. Bruce: I guess, (laughs) I don't know.
- DePue: Or just the guys who are used to taking some chances, their whole lives had been experiences of chances, I would guess. I want to wrap things up here, and we had just talked about what had happened here recently in Korea with the sinking of this ship. Looking back at your experiences and knowing what's happened to Korea afterwards, going back and seeing how much improvement had gone on in those fifty years, do you think your sacrifices was worth it?
- S. Bruce: I don't know. I would hope so.
- DePue: Did you ever have a point in your life where you said, You know, I wish we'd just finished the thing and gone ahead and conquered the North?
- S. Bruce: Yes, then we would have liked to have finished it. If they had decided to do it, we would probably happily have gone north. But the thing is, our intelligence sources at that time spoke of how many thousands of Chinese were right across that river, the—
- DePue: Yalu? Not the Yalu.
- S. Bruce: Yeah, yeah. The Yalu was the dividing line.

- DePue: Between China and North Korea.
- S. Bruce: Yeah.
- DePue: How did this experience of going to Korea change you, or did it?
- S. Bruce: It made me a better teacher, because I was then stubborn enough that I was going to run the show, and I did.
- DePue: Looking back, do you have any regrets about going?
- S. Bruce: Yes. I had too many that (pause)—in this group, there were five of them that were buried.
- DePue: Now, which picture are you looking at here? This color photo?
- S. Bruce: Uh-huh.
- DePue: There's only eight of them in that picture, and five of them died over there?
- S. Bruce: Well, at least—I think five of them. Bush is from Illinois, Bob Bush. His name's out on the monument. Frank Beninati from New York. The Russian, Thomas, from—I don't know which ones are dead now, but several of them.
- DePue: Several of them never left Korea, then.
- S. Bruce: Yeah. Or if they did, they left in a box.
- DePue: Mm-hmm. Again, this many years removed—now we're talking sixty years, practically—what would you want the American people to know, to understand about Korea and about what you went through?
- S. Bruce: I don't know what I would want them to know. I know I would not want them to have to go through another war. But if they're going to do it, let's do it completely, let's **finish** the job. That's what we felt. There were times we felt we should have gone north, gone clear up to the Yalu. Well, when they're sitting there with twice as many men as we've got, just sitting there beyond that river, waiting for us to come... I don't know.
- DePue: Any words of wisdom that you'd want to pass on to the next generation here as we close up the interview.
- S. Bruce: Stay out of war. But don't back down.
- DePue: You had how many children?
- S. Bruce: Three.
- DePue: How many boys?
- S. Bruce: Two.
- DePue: Either one of those saw any military service?
- S. Bruce: David put eleven years in the Army and Navy; T.J. did a hitch in the Marines.
- DePue: Did any of them see any service in war? (thunder)
- S. Bruce: No.

DePue: Boy, Scotty, I tell you, there's quite a percussion going on behind us here as the thunderstorm's rolling through.

S. Bruce: You want to move inside?

DePue: No, we're just about done. Maybe we can imagine we're in the trenches and we're hearing the artillery in the background or something. I've got a poem here that one of your sons, I guess David, wrote. Would you like to read this, or would you like me to read this?

S. Bruce: You read it.

DePue: Okay. This is a poem. I guess you're the inspiration for this poem.

S. Bruce: I guess. (laughs) I don't know.

DePue: The title of the poem: *And Then We Came*.

"When the world needed a peacemaker then we came. When the world was in need of a rescuer then we came. Whenever the need was there, near or far, physically or financially, then we came. We are the Americans, the ones much maligned, but when the call for help was played out, that is when we came. And now after being assaulted, a pain felt by a world, the entire world is wondering, Could they be down for good? The sleeping giant has been aroused again after over fifty years of sleep, with a deafening roar like no other, with vengeance crying so deep. Now we look towards our leaders to find the culprit so plain, so when they gaze into their heavens, and here we come again."

By David Bruce, September 2001.

S. Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: Right after 9/11.

S. Bruce: Yeah. Here's something. (thunder) This man, Lieutenant General Day, I flanked him as we withdrew one night. We had gone out and grabbed prisoners. I was on the right flank, he was in the middle, and Chuck Burrill was on the other flank, covering him as he pulled out with prisoners.

DePue: And what I'm looking at here: "Medal of Honor presented to retired Major General Jim Day." It's a picture with him shaking the hand of President Bill Clinton.

S. Bruce: Yeah.

DePue: I assume it was not that particular action that he won the Medal of Honor for.

S. Bruce: No, no.

DePue: Okay. Well, we want to include this. We can scan this into the collection as well, then. Okay, let's go ahead and conclude this, and we'll start looking at these pictures we have, which is going to be important addition to this. Any final words for us, then, Scotty?

S. Bruce: If you're going to fight, fight to win, don't do it halfway. It's not worth it to lose men over nothing.

DePue: I think that's a good way of finishing up. I want to thank you. This has been a lot of fun and a lot of education for me as well, Scotty. Thank you.

(end of interview #3)