

Guide for Turning Rough Transcripts into Essays

Part I.

A. Identify as many **key words** as possible that you should underline and possibly research. Remember, some may be misspelled and you might have to do a “google” search! Look up acronyms. Also use the military style sheet distributed earlier.

B. Make a “punch list” of terms to look up.

C. Figure out the **types of resources** that might help you (no, do not use a basic encyclopedia!). The veteran introduced next was sent to the ETO. When he mentions the Battle of the Bulge, where might you learn more about this? When he mentions airplane missions, where could you find more information?

D. **Make a research plan** – this will be due to me shortly. This may include biographies of famous people, such as Gen. George Patton, military history reference resources (in rm 229 and media center), selected websites, unit histories, personal letters, etc. You are the sleuth and need to find as much useful information as possible that will clarify your veteran’s story and add a richness of understanding to what they have related. Your final objective is to put the reader into the story-teller’s shoes – “You are there” type of scenario and you must document all your additional information, should another reader what to find out more about a specific person or event.



Sample interview materials – search these for crucial clues . . . what are your priorities for searching? What do you *need* to find out? Remember, when you find a resource, *document* this with the proper citation, so it can be found again later!!!

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AT: As far as your experience, . . . where did you go in Europe? And could you talk about your journey in different parts of Europe and where you went over the years?

JC: Well, my division sailed on a ship called the S.S. George Washington. This was a liner that had been captured from the Germans in WWI, and renamed the S. S. Washington, and when Woodrow Wilson went to the peace conference in 1919 in Europe, this was the ship he selected to go on because it was supposed to be a really, a very, very luxurious liner of its day, but when I got on it, all that stuff had been ripped out and about one third of the **83r Division** was on this ship and the division in those days had about 14,000 men. We docked at Liverpool after a fourteen-day voyage in which we had several submarine alerts. It was interesting, you know, not being in the navy, to watch what the navies did, when they had these sightings, but . . . I went there - to a place in Europe, in England called **'Keele Hall'**. This was a British estate, that had been converted into a British Army base. That was the headquarters of the 83r Division.... Then, I was sent to a school in Sunning Hill Farms, and eventually to the Royal Air Force School of Army Cooperation in Old Sarum. That's down west of London near Salisbury. And then when I graduated from that school, I came back to Keele Hall and was told I had to report to General Patton. He was up at Nutsford, and then I went there and I was sent on detached service, down to

what became known as "Buzz Bomb Alley," not too far from Dover, a little town near Ashford. I was attached at that point to the 36th Fighter Group and I was to be the ground officer for them. This group had been on active service for many years. It was a regular Army Air Corps group with a low number, thirty-six, and they'd been down guarding the Panama Canal. They had not been involved in anything in Europe at all, so it was all new to them, but they were a pretty gung ho group. My job was to make myself useful to them. The colonel who commanded this group was a fellow named W.L. Curry. He asked me a lot of questions when I arrived about the army and the ground organization and he told the personnel offices to put my cot right outside his door, so any time he had a question, I could answer it. So that assured me, I was accepted by this group and I stayed with them as we went through Europe until late in the Fall. I heard that this group was going to be transferred out of [the] Third Army, to the Ninth Army and I didn't want to go to the Ninth Army. They were brand new and I didn't know any of those people, and all my contacts were at Third Army, so I went to Nancy, [France] where the Third Army had its headquarters, and told Colonel Murray (this man that I met that first day). He said, "yes" he was going to send for me because he didn't want me to go up to the Ninth Army anyway. So then, I was transferred to Third Army headquarters and I joined them and stayed with them until, I guess it was about four weeks before the war was over.

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My . . . 83rd Division general was now commanding the XXI Army Corps and he wanted me to come down there and be the G-3 Air for his Army Corps. He had been trying to get me released for that, [but] I didn't know that at the time. But he called me on the phone one day and said, "What can I do to get you out of there? I want you down here with me." I said, "Well, the only person that could probably do that is General Patton." "Well," he says, "I know 'Georgie.' I've seen him many times, I'll call him." So, he called him on the army telephone and the first thing I knew I'm on my way down to join this General Milburn again down in Southern Germany, Achsenfurt, actually. And I went with them then to the end of the war, and on the V-E Day, I'm in Salzburg, which is part of Austria. I was all set to bomb Hitler's birthplace, if I could have got away with it, but they called off the war. I had the run all set (laughing). So, they had a big factory, in Linz, which was the town I was after, and so Linz was spared any problems from me as a result of the end of the war. But then, I was moved from where we finished the war, eventually to this German city called Shwabisch Gemund, which was in Württemberg and I stayed there with this XXI Corps until we were deactivated, and then I was transferred on deactivation to the 12th armored division in Heidenheim - that's in Germany, not too far away and I stayed with them until they redeployed in the States. So, I was in England, France, Belgium, Luxemburg, Germany, and a piece of Austria at the very end.

[Note, when done, compare this to the final version as used in *Words of War* (vol. 2) handout]



Question: what types of editing might you do in this particular transcript?

Interviewer: Where did you go in WWII?

Interviewee response:

In WWII, we sailed from San Francisco, on about the second of April on board the **President Monroe**, a troop ship. Well, it was a converted cruise ship that had been painted gray and set up and on board we had the 93rd Field Artillery regiment from Oregon. And this was a mule mountain. 75-millimeter mountain artillery unit. Normally, it would be drawn by mules or horses, but, they had harnesses made and the men could get into the harnesses and pull their cannon to where ever they wanted. They were on the ship and basically our ship it was an indication that we were going to go to the Philippines. But the Japanese were more than successful and they cut off the Philippines so that we couldn't get to the people that we thought we would be relieving. So, the first place we landed after leaving San Francisco, which was nineteen days later, was in **Numea**, New Caledonia. That was a French possession that had been in the hands of the Vichy French, but then the French forces with the help of US gathered up the Vichy sympathizers and when we had the **93rd artillery regiment** debark, we took these people that had been Vichy favored and took them to Australia where they were put in a camp to keep them from doing any harm. The 93rd regiment later provided support for the marines when they were invading in Guadalcanal. Our ship left Numea and we were to go to Sidney or Brisbane however, in the Australian fight, the Japanese submarine packs were active, and so we were rerouted to Melbourne Australia, where we landed, our first landing. When we left Numea there were fourteen officers and the crew of the President Monroe. The regiment just depleted everybody off the ship so there were only us. The cargo on that ship was 100 octane gasoline and sea mines.

Interviewer: Do you remember arriving and what was it like?

Response: Well, we were awful glad to get there (in Melbourne). When we arrived, there were very, very, very few American troops. After all, that's not where they were destined. As far as the Australians, Australia had drained themselves of its military and sent them to the Middle East and these were the rats of Tobruk and places like that in the Middle East. And then there were some that were up in Hong Kong and Singapore. And up in Malaysia, and Indo-China, - Indonesia, not Indo-China.

Part II.

Put yourself into their shoesread the background materials and generate short introductory paragraphs – do not give away the best stuff here, but let them tell the story in their own words. The following excerpts were included in the following account.

Captain John Temple, U.S. Air Corps, began serving on Mindanao, in the Philippine Islands in October 1941. During the Japanese occupation of the islands in 1942, he was held as a POW – first at the Davao prison camp and he was later transferred to infamous **Cabantuan prison camp** on Luzon. He reminisced about his war experiences in October 1945:

. . . We arrived on December 4 [at Del Monte field, on Mindanao], and a day later 400 tons of bombs arrived at the nearby port of Cagayan. They were placed in small piles throughout the airfield area.

We were still in the process of getting settled in neat vulnerable rows of pyramidal tents when "it" happened December 8 (December 7 in the States) – Pearl Harbor and Clark Field "got it." Luckily about half of our 33 B-17's, the only bombers in the Philippines, had been sent to safety at Del Monte, while those at Clark Field were pretty nearly knocked out on the ground. We sent a few B-17 missions out from Del Monte, but things were too hot for them too, to save what we had, they were sent south to Java and Australia, places already being threatened.

Temple and others aviators had hoped to evade capture and hold out against the Japanese, but this was not to be:

Fighting was hardly under way on the new fronts when Corregidor surrendered, followed by Mindanao on May 10, 1942. . . . [when] General Wainwright was forced to include us in the surrender. . . .

About 2000 Americans and 8000 Filipinos reported to the surrender area at Malaybalay. After five months about 1000 American technicians were shipped to Japan, and the rest of us Americans to Davao. Our treatment up to then had been excellent, – the Nip colonel in charge was quite a gentleman. The small group which surrendered at Lanoa, however, had a rough deal, three were shot as reprisal for escapes, and the rest were made to do a 43 kilometer walked wired together and with very little water – one died.

The complexion of our treatment changed at Davao. There we were joined by a woebegone lot of 1000, who had been shipped down from Luzon. While we at Malaybalay were being so well treated, about 5000 Americans and 27000 Filipinos on Luzon died as a result of the “death march, starvation, mistreatment and disease. These fellows were gaunt, haggard, swollen and ragged. . . .

Compare this draft with part of the final version in *Words of War* (vol. 2), on pp. 76-79.



Part III.

Completed essay . . . introductory paragraph has information about what prompted this veteran to go to enlist. What can we find out about your veteran based on the information in the their interview? Write your essay in the historical past tense – be consistent! Follow guidelines for working with ellipses and brackets. Remember, that “any abridged quotation must be faithful to the original, full quotation.” Marks of ellipses and brackets can be tricky to use faithfully. This veteran’s story is unique. Therefore, you wish to use quotations to support the story. But as much as you would like to quote Ranucci in full, you are writing a short essay, and a full quotation would take up too much space. For this reason, you may convey his main points by abridging his writing with marks of ellipses.

Master Sergeant Ric Ranucci Fourth Marine Division *Island Hopping: Roi-Namur, Saipan & Iwo Jima*

Ric Ranucci did not wait for the draft board to call him after, “I enlisted. I was in my senior year of high school, then I quit school and I enlisted in December of 1942. I enlisted in the Marine Corps.” His training for the Marine Corps began on January 9, 1943, in Parris Island, North Carolina. From there, he was sent to Camp Lejeune, North Carolina to train as a telephone operator and later to Camp Pendleton, California, where he became part of the Fourth Marine Division, specifically used to string telephone lines.

On January 2, 1944, the Fourth Marine Division shipped out of San Diego, California. From there, Ranucci says, "we made a beach head in the Kwajalein Atoll: namely, Roi-Namur in the Marshall Islands. We were one of the first divisions ever that went directly from our native country into combat. That operation on Roi-Namur lasted approximately a period of four to five days, and it was the first taste of combat for all of us, most of us. We had some veterans in our organization from Midway and Guadalcanal. They formed a nucleus of our veterans, and they trained us and took care of us until we got our feet wet in combat" Although the period of combat for the Fourth Marine Division was short, it was their duty to clean up the island. We "had bulldozers that dug out great holes in the sand. We would throw two, three, four hundred dead bodies of Japanese in them and we would cover them up. It was unpleasant duty, but we were evacuated from that island and the day we evacuated, that night we were hit by a Japanese air raid . . . it was a horrible experience. Believe me, there's nothing like being bombed from the air when you can't do nothing about it."

Compare this account with the final version in *Words of War* (vol. 2), p. 134-136.



Part IV. Comparison of early transcript account and final published pages. What has been kept, what has been rearranged? What are the key terms you might select? How might you find out *when* he was in Korea? Once this has been determined, where might you find additional historical information?

Murray Freed's Korean War interview:

When we were on line, we had, we had, we lived in bunkers. They were holes in the ground, sometimes there was a roof over them, and you had a bunker where you could get some sleep, called sleeping bunker. We also had fighting bunkers, those were on the face of the mountain, facing the North Koreans or the Chinese. And they had a roof, a log, maybe wood and sandbags. You know we used to throw rocks, we used to put our ponchos, which is a rain garment on top of the bunker roof and puts rocks on top of that. You would throw rocks on top of it so it would cheat mortars. They had mortars. Then the mortar rounds wouldn't come through. When I first got to Korea, I was an ammo bearer on a three man machine gun crew. And that was for four days and the assistant gunner was killed. (Crying.) Bear with me. (Crying.) I became an assistant and an ammo bearer because we didn't get a replacement. And we had a machine gun in a bunker and you'd sit facing the other hill.

...
We'd be in there twenty-four hours a day. At night we would stand out in the trench, we had guard duty, everybody had to be on day duty, and we, one man from the bunker at a time would stay out in the trench and listen and watch. And then when your time was up, you would wake

your replacement up. You would go down in the bunker and wake him up and he'd come out and he'd stand there. And it was very cold. And it was just terrible cold. And they used to bring food up to us twice a day.

And they'd bring hot meals. They had, we used to call them "chogi trains". They had chogi boys. They were Korean service corps workers. They were actually Koreans who were not physically able to be in the Korean army. You have to understand the Korean army was there also. So were the Greeks and the French and the English and the Canadians. It was a lot of, it was the United Nations.

They would bring breakfast up in the morning in a can called a vermite can which was an insulated can. And we would eat hot food. And they'd also bring us, at that time, they would bring us something called C-rations which was canned food, and that was our lunch. We used to heat 'em up over fires. And late in the afternoon they'd bring up dinner for us. It was, it was edible. That's all you can say for it. I preferred to eat the C-rations because they were just tastier and we could heat them up and enjoy them. Coffee.

And during the day, we would constantly be working on our fighting positions. Putting sandbags, you know, filling sandbags with sand and making them more secure. And then at night, and sometimes during the day, we had to go out on patrol. That was loading up with ammo and taking your weapon and putting your helmet on. And then we used to wear an armor vest too. And at night you'd go out on anywhere from two men in a patrol to maybe a squad of eight men. And when I was on machine gun crew, we'd take a, you know we'd have to take the gun along with us. And after about six or seven weeks on machine gun, I told the squad leader that I didn't want to be on the machine gun crew any more, I just wanted to be a rifleman. So I became a rifleman.

Compare this last example draft with the final version of Freed's story in *Words of War* (vol. 2), pp. 281-283.