

**Naval Historical Center  
Oral Interview Summary Form**

**Interviewers:**

CDR Rob Sawyer  
YNCS(AW) Kathleen Wright

**Interviewer's Organization:**

Navy Combat Documentation Det 206  
Navy Combat Documentation Det 206

**Interviewee:**

PH1 Kevin R. Rimrodt

**Current Address:**

HQMC Photo Lab (ARIF)



**Date of Interview:**

15 Feb 2002

**Place of Interview:**

Navy Annex

**Number of Cassettes:**

One

**Security Classification:**

Unclassified

**Name of Project:** Pentagon Terrorist Attack Incident

**Subject Terms/Key Words:** Pentagon; Terrorist Attack; 11 September 2001; triage; evacuation; lessons learned; Defense Protective Service; FBI; carnage; Navy Command Center; renovation

**Abstract of Interview:**

**Interviewee Information:**

Was born and grew up in Iowa. Since birth he had been very interested in all aspects of the military. All his family for several generations had been farmers so when he went into the Navy he broke the mold. He joined the Navy in October 1983. He wanted to travel and see the world. He started as an Instrumentman, a calibration technician. His first ship was the *USS Shennadoah* for four years and then he went to a C school. He was sent to the *USS Puget Sound*, then served four years with a SEAL team as a technician. He then taught the advance calibration technician course in Pensacola, then served on the *USS Emory S. Land* and then served on the *USS Roosevelt*.

The Instrumentman rate was going away so he chose to become a Photographersmate since he did photography as a hobby. He attended photographer's school and was detailed to Headquarters Marine Corps, at the Navy Annex. He has been at Headquarters for about 18 months.

**Topics Discusses:**

On Sept 11<sup>th</sup> it was a normal working day, he was working at the Navy Annex in the photo lab. He was doing a studio portrait of the Assistant Secretary of the Navy. When he was finishing the

Asst. Sec. of the Navy his aid came in and told them about the World Trade Center strike. He went to the other side of the Annex to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's (MCPON) office to watch the TV. As he was in the MCPON's office they heard a loud explosion and the MCPON's Senior Chief said he saw smoke coming from the Pentagon.

He proceeded back to the photo lab and told his staff about the attack on the World Trade Center and that they were probably under attack. He and two other members of the photo lab staff grabbed their cameras, they consider themselves combat photographers, so they ran towards the Pentagon. He could see the bellowing smoke from the Pentagon as they ran down the hill on Columbia Pike.

They began to take photos from Route 27, Washington Blvd. The first agent from the FBI was quickly on the scene and drafted him and Cpl Ingersoll to take photos of evidence. The FBI photographers had not yet arrived on scene. All of this was within 10-15 minutes of the initial crash. The FBI directed them as to what they wanted photos of. Cpl Ingersoll took photos of the light pole that the plane had knocked down just before it crashed into the Pentagon. After about 20 minutes things got more organized as more FBI agents got on scene. They were directed to take photos of wreckage outside of the building and of the impact area. At the impact area, which was around the first and second floors, there had been a fire ball but not a lot of structural damage. It took about 45 minutes of the intense heat from the fire before the building collapsed.

His observations were that the plane had skidded before it had gone into the building, the wings must have sheered off and that fuel exploded externally. As the plane hit the building the fuselage and nose tunneled into the building, the nose section sheered off and peeled away and left its debris. Then the next third of the plane sheered away. The rear section of the plane continued to tunnel into the building and at the crash site the tail section was all the way at the very end. Due to the design of the Pentagon it contained the explosion but the explosion and fireball went laterally down the corridors into spaces.

After taking photos of the debris outside of the building the FBI directed him to take photos of the crowds gathering around Route 27. The FBI thought associates of the terrorists would want to take an assessment of the damage they had done. After about an hour he stopped taking photos of the crowd because with the security being set up most of the people on Route 27 were military. Cpl Ingersoll was assigned by the FBI to take photos of the impact area and Sgt Paul was assigned to take aerial photos of the Pentagon from a helicopter. All the film they took up to this point the FBI made them turn in. The FBI also went around in the crowd taking film away from people who were taking photos. The only images they were able to keep were digital. The FBI is not capable to handle digital images as evidence.

During this timeframe they had three warnings that they had to evacuate the area due to inbound planes. One time the FBI asked him to continue to stand in the area, about 100 yards away, to take photos if the plane did come in and hit the Pentagon. In retrospect this was not a smart idea. No other plane came into the area. These continued air threats greatly hampered the fire fighting efforts.

After the first hour the FBI figured that the people who could get out of the Pentagon were out of the building. Their focus shifted from rescue to preserving the evidence. They began a line sweep to the left of the impact area (as you look at the Pentagon) to collect plane parts, debris,

etc. They would note location of the debris, photograph it, and then bag the evidence. This was the first area to be swept so they could get more emergency trucks into the area without running over evidence. During the day they found metal parts from the size of a half-dollar to maybe a couple of feet. Nothing much larger than that. They found three shoes, bits of clothing, no human remains, wiring harnesses from the plane, and other small plane parts. When night came searching for evidence was discontinued due to the darkness.

Around noon of the 12<sup>th</sup> they began getting ready for body recovery. The initial efforts by a FEMA crew were to ensure the Pentagon was safe before body recovery would begin. The Pentagon wreckage was shifting and they were concerned it would collapse. Cpl Ingersall and him were in some of the first groups doing body recovery. The teams consisted of a FBI agent or someone from federal law enforcement, one person for documentation, a photographer and two people to handle putting the body into the body bag. They entered the Pentagon from the side of the building and went down hallway on the edge of the building (the E ring). In the hallway there was no light except the flashlight they carried, about 6 inches of standing water was on the floor, ceiling tiles had either collapsed to the floor or were hanging down from the ceiling. They came to some large heavy doors about two inches thick with cipher locks. They assumed this was the Navy Command Center. The doors were blown off their hinges and lay on the floor. As they entered the Command Center the destruction factor was totally different, everything was pitch black, and rubble was three feet thick, total destruction. It seemed the doors and walls of the Command Center had contained the blast from going out.

As they entered the FEMA teams would go in first, label anything they thought was a body and scout out a safe path through the three feet of rubble. It was very slow going, stone, rubble, sharp objects three feet deep. Each team would split up when they found a body, they went in only about 1/3 of the distance before they got to the collapsed sections. When they came upon a body he would take photographs, they would try to identify what they could (from uniform items or name tags) and then put the remains into a body bag. The Army had a team that would then take the bodies out of the building.

The first body he handled it was almost impossible to recognize anything due to the intense heat. It was estimated that the fire got up to about 2,500 to 3,000 degrees. Everything was coated with back soot. Everything was an intense black. The first body was stretched out on the floor face down. As they found a body he took photos of the initial scene, a wide angle and close up photos. Then they would remove the wreckage off the body and he would take another set of photos. Then the handling team would come in and remove the body. On the first body the backside was completely charred, when they lifted the body over on the front they found some remains of clothing. They thought it might be a female since they thought they saw parts of a bra. They would document what they saw and search the area for dog tags, nametags, ribbons, etc. or anything that would help identify the person they found. A lot of the bodies they found were face down.

In the Command Center area they found a lot of bodies. It was dangerous to move around very much due to the wreckage in the area. When a file cabinet accidentally opened the papers were still smoldering inside. He was not sure how the numbering system was developed for body location. He thought that FEMA had done the first attempt to develop a numbering scheme. They initially were on 12-hour shifts. The second and third days were very much like the first. They would wait until the building was declared safe to enter and then they would go in and

recover the bodies. He worked at the Pentagon for 10 days. About the 5 or 6<sup>th</sup> day they began rubble recovery, he went down to North Parking to take photos of plane parts and other debris being taken out of the Pentagon. At first they did not find any body parts. They were given a list of items to specifically look for (classified material). After a few days they began to see more personal items like passports, clothing, plane parts, remains.

About the 7<sup>th</sup> day he went to work at the temporary morgue. The morgue was set up at the shipping and receiving center for the Pentagon. The one-day he was at the temporary morgue was the day they found the most body parts. It seemed they had gotten into a section of the Pentagon where most the bodies of the plane passengers were located. He took over 400 photos, they had over 400 body parts alone and a couple of intact bodies. He took very close up photos (microphotography) of each body part. Each body part had a serial number and the body tag in the photo. It seemed it was non-stop all day. It seemed at the site of impact the bodies were quite charred, further away from the impact point it seemed the bodies were less charred and more intact. It seemed to him that further away from the impact the people might have died from smoke inhalation.

All body parts were photographed, logged, documented, re-bagged and then put into a refrigerator truck. The remains were taken from the temporary morgue and transported to Dover, Delaware where in-depth identification would take place. When any remains were moved a FBI agent rode along with the remains. No remains were ever unescorted. This was to have a "chain of custody" for the remains. All film, evidence logs and documents from remains recovery were given to the FBI at the end of each shift.

After about 9 or 10 days the recovery effort slowed down. Most of the rubble plies had been gone through, most remains had been recovered. There was still a lot of classified material that had to be recovered from the spaces.

His efforts after helping with body recovery consisted of taking overhead shots of the Pentagon. These photos were to show the overall progress of the recovery efforts. Most of these photos were used in military briefings. Also during this time he spoke with eyewitnesses who told him that the plane cleared the Navy Annex by about 20 feet and then went into the Pentagon. Just before hitting the Pentagon the plane clipped a light pole with its wing and the light pole then hit a taxi that had been driving on Route 27 (Washington Blvd.). (The photographers have a digital photo of the taxi).

As he would walk back to Henderson Hall to his barracks room in the evenings he started to see the memorials that civilians had started to set up. These were set up by the base of the Navy Annex and along the back wall of Arlington Cemetery. He was very touched by this. He also was surprised by the display of patriotism by Americans after the 9/11 terrorist strike. He was pleasantly surprised.

While he was helping with the body recovery he worked mostly in the Navy Command Center area. Others from his group worked other areas, but as he understood the largest concentration of bodies were found in the Navy Command Center.

During the first day he did not see any particular conflict between the FBI and the military. His observations were that most everyone understood that the FBI was in charge of the crime scene

at the Pentagon. There could have been conflicts but he did not see any issues. He was surprised by how fast the tent city was set up in south parking to assist in the recovery efforts.

He viewed his efforts with the body recovery as a profession job. He wanted to assist with getting the bodies out of the building. He did not feel he had emotional problems afterwards. Some individuals did have some problems with nightmares and not being able to sleep. When he gets out of the Navy he is hoping to get a job with the FBI as a photographer for them. His interest in working for the FBI was directly due to his contact with them during the 10 days he worked at the Pentagon.

He finds it ironic that he has become a witness to a historical event. He was very conscious to observe how things were done and the reactions of people.

He stated that there is film of the plane hitting the Pentagon from security cameras. He believes the FBI has the film in its custody. He does not know if the film will ever be released by the FBI.

Abstract by:  
YNCS Kathleen Wright  
22 Feb 2002

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**Transcript of Interview:**

**Interviewee Information:**

Was born and grew up in Iowa. Since birth he had been very interested in all aspects of the military. All his family for several generations had been farmers so when he went into the Navy he broke the mold. He joined the Navy in October 1983. He wanted to travel and see the world. He started as an Instrumentman, a calibration technician. His first ship was the *USS Shennadoah* for four years and then he went to a C school. He was sent to the *USS Puget Sound*, then served four years with a SEAL team as a technician. He then taught the advance calibration technician course in Pensacola, then served on the *USS Emory S. Land* and then served on the *USS Roosevelt*.

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**Topics Discusses:**

Q. (04:21) We're obviously interested in what basically happened on September 11<sup>th</sup>. Really describe your whole day. What happened and what you saw. That sort of thing.

Q. (another) Paint us a picture of that day.

A. I started off, I reside in the barracks at Henderson Hall right next to the Navy Annex. So it's about a fifteen minute walk to work for me. Started off as a normal morning. Came in. I wear a Marine Uniform type of cammies, because I'm assigned to the Marine Corps Headquarters with the Marines, Marine Photo lab. My assignment for that morning was an actual studio assignment. I had the Assistant Secretary of the Navy come in for a studio portrait. I was doing head and shoulders. He came in with his aide. I set the flags up. I was doing his studio portrait. At the end of the session, his aide came back in and said that a probably terrorist had hijacked an airliner and collided with the World Trade Center. So they got together and are getting out the door, I finished up the film and paperwork for the work request and set it down, and then I went down to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's office which is at the other end of the building on the same floor. The reason being was that I knew that they had a cable television hookup and would have CNN so I could get some more information on what was going on. Proceeded down to the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy's office and they already had the TV on and were watching. I'm assuming it was a taped loop where they talked about the impact and they showed the second plane going into the Sears Towers. At that time –

Q. (05:59) What time was that about do you figure?

A. I'll say approximately nine o'clock.

Q. OK.

A. Because like I said, the events of time that morning are a bit fuzzy at this late date. While in there it was no more than maybe three to five minutes worth of conversation about what was going on that we seen on the TV and I heard a large explosion. Rattled the windows in the Master Petty Officer of the Navy's office. Looked out and the Senior Chief in the office said he seen smoke coming out of the Pentagon, and to me from hearing that the probability it was hijackers hijacked an airliner and collided with the Towers, two different airliners, it only seemed the next logical step, they did the same thing with the Pentagon.

Q. (06:45) Did you hear the plane go over the Navy Annex?

A. I did not at that end. Later when I talked to the people back in the photolab, they heard the plane go over which is at the other end of the building. Since we're at this end of the building where we're being interviewed right now.

I proceeded from his of-, the MCPONs office back to the photolab, and when I reached there explained that the terrorists hijacked an airliner, which I was talking a bit fast, they may not have caught everything, and that we were most likely under a terrorist attack; that there was a large explosion in the Pentagon.

So first instincts for all of us, because we like to classify ourselves as combat photographers, first instinct is to grab a camera and run toward the situation. There was three of us in there at the time. There was the GUNNERY SERGEANT MORRIS and CORPORAL INGERSALL, and myself. They grabbed their cameras and I wanted to get the heavier duty one so I started to grab one and I was the last one out the door.



Going down the hill I could see the billowing smoke coming out. I was quite weighted down with all the camera equipment I had, going down to the, from out our end of the building, which I have to get my directions now which one that is. I think it's the south end.

Q. (08:05) The Columbia Pike side?

A. Columbia Pike side. Went out the door on Columbia Pike side and proceeded out the security gate down around the fence around our perimeter, and down the sloping embankment and up to the hill where they have 27, which is the highway that divides the Navy Annex and the Pentagon. The road that divides between the two. Went to the center of that and started setting up and doing photographs at that point and taking pictures. Police were, at that point, starting to secure the area. I continued taking pictures. They started pushing people away. My being military I was left there while other civilians were being pushed away at the point and they were getting ready to clear everybody out when an FBI agent came up. A tall, thin individual, don't recall his name at the moment. He was, I believe, the first agent on the scene. He was actually driving in the area when the airplane hit. So he was just within blocks. So he just was there.

He asked myself to come in. He had also drafted CORPORAL INGERSALL to start taking pictures for them because being the first ones on the scene they had no photographers, and they wanted to start initially documenting evidence right away. So at the point I stopped taking pictures, set up and went with them and at their direction started taking further photographs. This probably took place within ten to fifteen minutes of the initial—he was there and then drafted us to start taking pictures for him.

First assignments he wanted was to do evidence of the scene which was, I believe it was the Corporal that got the assignment to start taking pictures of a light pole. The plane came in so low

that it clipped a light pole and wanted to take pictures of that and other wreckage in the flight path itself.

So I was going over and taking pictures. We continued to do pictures upon direction around the scene and there was quite a bit of turmoil so there wasn't a real organization yet. Emergency workers going in, getting people out. So that was the primary order. So it wasn't handled as a crime scene yet. It was handled as an emergency, assisting people, and the FBI was just trying to get documentation as it would go on.

Thinking back, within I'd say twenty minutes it became more organized. Some more agents starting showing up. Then we started getting actual assignments, what to do. We took some pictures of the impact site itself, as initially had it happened. The Corporal started doing more of that. One thing I did notice was that the impact where it was at, about the first and second floor, there was a large fireball, but not much structural damage at that point. The fire was raging hot. It took about forty-five minutes to an hour with the intense heat and that third and fourth floor collapsed at that point.

So initially they were intact and talking to people that helped the survivors out, even on the, I believe it's the third floor, there was no actual damage to the point where somebody that was actually standing almost over the impact site was saved due to the construction design of the Pentagon itself. The blast as it went in, the plane must have almost skidded at the ground level when it first enter, entering at the first level. When it went in, the fuselage went in, the wings appeared to have been sheared off at that point and whatever fuel they had was contained at that point and exploded on the outside and the fuselage which was the rest of the fuel actually tunneled its way in. What became apparent from later on was that when the nose hit it sheared away that sheet metal at that point and then the next one-third of the aircraft went in and then it

sheared away and as it would go tunneling its way through the building, the front section of the airplane peeled away and left its debris there and the rear section continued on through. So actually in the crash site what became evident later on in further days is that the nose of the aircraft, the impact part, the tail section was actually all the way in at the very end. As the front peeled away to let the rest of the aircraft go in. The fuel section exploded within the section at that point, in the Pentagon, first floor and to a certain extent the second.

Due to the design of the Pentagon—it had heavy concrete type floors which contained the explosion from putting it out laterally—so most of the actual fireball was contained within the first floor and went out laterally to whatever spaces were in there. There was, at the corner sections of the Pentagon there appeared to be the fire doors which contained pretty much of the blast, which I'll get in to describing, how it seemed to be charred from that section to the corner section where the fire door was, and then the rest wasn't.

Going back, my assignment within that first half-hour, my assigned was to start, as directed by the FBI agent, to after taking some plane parts of the initial area was to start going around and take pictures of the crowd. They felt that the terrorists or associates of the terrorists may want to show up and see the damage first hand to assess the damage. So they wanted to take a possible chance of seeing if somebody did show up. So I started taking photographs of the crowd that started forming up along 27 and started photographing through that section and I spent approximately a half hour taking crowd shots.

I did not venture to that further post, farther out, which is beyond 27. As it developed within the first hour, pretty much they had the security zone developed at highway 27 so that it would become more military personnel and emergency workers within that boundary. So at that point I stopped taking the pictures. During my assignment, the - CORPORAL INGERSALL, his

assignment was to take pictures of the impact site itself as the firemen continued to do fire fighting. SERGEANT PAULL who was also from Marine Corps headquarters just not working in the lab with us, his assignment came to go into a helicopter with an Army intelligence, or it's like their policy. The Army's version of NIS, can't remember what their – but he became, an individual came on the scene who was a Reservist. Was on active duty at the time in the area. So he became involved. He went up with SERGEANT PAULL in the helo taking aerial photographs of the initial scene. Within that hour then we're all called back in, given various assignments and turning our film in to that point.

Also the FBI as I recall was going around and anybody with a camera, they were confiscating the film and all of our film was turned in at that point that we had. Digital images they were not prepared yet to really handle, so they weren't necessarily confiscating all the digital images.

They were not, I guess not used to using digital images as evidence at this point yet. So they're still use to using film. So they were taking all the film. As I recall there was a civilian reporter that happened to be in the area that got overlooked and there was a discussion about trying to get his film and his right to take pictures. I don't exactly know how that all ended, but within I'd say an hour, they had the security zone up so that pretty much all non-emergency workers and non-military involved with emergency work were already cordoned out of the area.

During the first hour there was always continued interruptions. At the point where I was taking the photographs of the crowd and came back to the center, there was a report and some of these events might be out of order, because I loose the order.

Q. (16:20) (everyone laughs) No problem.

A. But I recall one of the things that stopped us at that point and changed everything was they had an unknown aircraft also inbound and they had a possible target further impact so they would sound, believe it was the fire engine sirens and they had an alarm that they would sound and it cleared everybody out. It seemed pretty jittery at the moment, whenever they had anything, unidentified aircraft in the area. I believe it happened a total of three times. About an aircraft unknown in the area and they evacuated.

The one time when I guess they thought it was the most credible, the FBI agent that initially talked to me asked me if I would be willing to stand on the concrete divide area, which is a little bit higher ground from the Pentagon and maybe about two, three hundred yards away. Not that far. And asked, if there was another aircraft coming in if I would take pictures of it on its way in. So as everybody else pretty much went back beyond Highway 27 and back down to the other end of the highway, down in protective berm area, I stayed within the close vicinity.

(everyone laughs)

I guess they wanted a close end view. I don't know if that was the smartest thing I did at the time there.

Q. Sight the camera on a smart bomb. (laughter)

A. Everybody else hides behind the concrete and I'm standing out there waiting for this plane. I don't know if that was a smart thing, but I was waiting and fortunately no one ever, aircraft ever showed up.

After a while when they declared it all clear, they sounded another siren, I believe it was a siren, and then they called everybody back in to continue on with the emergency work.

I'd say as far as fighting the fire and any emergency work that'd probably hamper at the most was the possibility of future air attacks. That they'd have to continually stop, have people go out and within the first two hours, we had, I think a total of three, average of three. I can't remember exactly.

Q. We've heard three before.

A. And so after each time, after when they'd consider it, find out it's safe, then we'd go back in and one of the times there was an aircraft but then it didn't last long. It was Air Force, was on the scene. I believe I'd seen one to two F-16s I think it was fly over at that point.

Continuing on with the emergency work at that point, once we got back in after these emergency aircraft notices flying out and going back in, after I think the final one we started to get organized, because they had enough FBI agents and emergency personnel and law enforcement on the scene that their main focus then was, they figured within the first hour everybody that was pretty much savable was gotten out. And at that point there didn't seem to be as much to be saved. As the chance of that started to go down there, it was preserving the area for evidence. So we started a line sweep. Which was—at the impact sight they had grid names, which I don't recall at all now—Zone A and they'd developed these zones. From facing the impact area to the left of the area, we started to sweep there. Every kind of law enforcement agent and whatever photographer was available, which was only us military photographers at the time, formed up a line and started to sweep the line. If they found plane parts, they would note where they found it. Put it in the bag and if it had something with a serial number on it, something recognizable, a part number serial number that could be used for further identification, was instructed to put something down next to it for scale. Being that this was all a rush situation, I could either use a

battery or something because we had no scales at the time. So I'd set down like a battery or something as keys as a scale reference next to the part. Take a picture in reference of the part location to the building. Kind of a wide-angle shot. Then do a zoom in shot of the part and then, so we'd do approximately two photographs per part. They would bag the evidence up. So we'd go through the area. It was felt that that area wanted to be done first, because as the emergency started to pull in they would trample most of the evidence. So we swept through that area as much as possible first, allowing more room for the emergency vehicles and then we started with other zones with which was away from right next to the building, to the left. Farther away, next to 27, then we started on to the right section eventually. That occupied most of our time for the morning was the evidence part.

Q. Was there anything recognizable of the airplane? What were some of the items that you were seeing and taking photographs of?

A. Most of them were metal parts that we picked up on the initial sweep. Size was varying from about the size of a half-dollar for the smallest pieces. The largest chunks initially was only maybe a couple of feet in size, so there was not much large pieces blown back out from the initial area.

Q. They went internal?

A. Stayed within close, the heavier part, seemed to stay a little closer. On the second sweep, because that was an initial to make, to try and get as much evidence as possible for the emergency vehicles. When they went in later on into the day, we continued on with the evidence where emergency vehicles were moved away so we could do another further sweep, because the

initial one was rather trying to get room for them to go in further. So they wanted to do an additional one to make sure we didn't miss anything and on the second one we started follow up smaller pieces that was in between the grass and might have been overlooked the first time. On that sweep that went into the afternoon, started to pick up more smaller items that wasn't noticeable before. I think a total of three shoes were picked up. A man's shoe, a couple of ladies' shoes. Some bits of clothing, other parts. To my knowledge I don't recall a human remains being found within the outside area. Some personal effects, and plane parts. Some wiring harnesses, sections of parts with numbers on them. I could see a metal, which appeared to be a type of aluminum with a kind of a yellowish-green primer on them, which were apparent, quite apparent plane parts. That continued on through the afternoon.

Within hours emergency vehicles from the FBI started showing up. They had mobile command units. They started pulling into that area. As we'd sweep away the evidence to try and make room for them, they'd pull in, and into the afternoon it started to become more organized. Emergency vehicles coming on the scene and we continued on with the evidence, as the fire raged on. During that time, pretty much that was it.

(sounds like starting to record again, but no verbal indication of a break was made)

So we continued on with the plane evidence. Toward the evening the evidence recovery ceased. The emergency personnel were given notice to, some were going to stay, some would come back in the morning to start the effort when we actually had light again, and emergency workers continued to fight the fire.

At that point, our job which we had been doing evidence, when it got into the nighttime became reduced. All we could do. I stayed on that evening in case they needed a photographer. In the



afternoon time they had an additional, I believe, some other military photographers and an FBI photographer showed up.

I stayed in a kind of a pop-up tent that they had there. I stayed the night and the next morning continued on with the renewed efforts. At that point it was another sweep around to see if there was any left over evidence they missed the first day, and at that point then it became, well, at what point will we do the body recovery.

The exact time of the day that we actually started the initial recovery, I'm not exactly sure. I think it was toward the noon before it was settled enough. The emergency workers, which I believe were Tennessee, as far as the FEMA group, I think they were from Tennessee, they went in and would be fighting the fire and doing the initial scouting before anybody else would go in. Once they'd do their initial scouting they would have building engineers, at which point they started to take, I believe it was a theodolight, they would take and put a point on the building as a reference and they would take optical measurements and angle readings and if the building shifted, which it was shifting quite a bit the first day, they wouldn't let anybody go in for fear that the building may collapse. So the initial efforts were mainly held up as far as body recovery and further expedition as to the safety of the building as far as the structure.

As it became apparent that it seemed to be for the moment, stable, we went in. I think I was one of the first teams to go in as far as body recovery.

There was CORPORAL INGERSALL, myself as far as photographers at that point, and the next day they had the FBI photographers, some other ones that made up the Body Recovery Unit.

There would be an FBI agent and whether there were law enforcement type agencies from either the military or the DC area, of a Federal nature, I don't recall local police being involved.

Formed up teams and as I recall there was supposed to be a person that does documentation, a

photographer, and two that would handle bodies as far as putting the body into the bags. While we were taking the body bags in, there was some protective suits at the first day, and started to proceed in.

We proceeded in from, as you're looking at the impact sight to the right, (he shows them on a damage assessment chart) this particular impact –

Q. (26:29) Yep, right.

Q. (Another) let's note to the tape that we are looking at Floor One, Wedge One, Department of the Navy. It's a damage assessment chart that we have for visual purposes.

Continue on please.

A. I believe it was, as I recall, the first level we went into there was massive devastation. We proceeded in. We went around to the edge of the building, which on this particularly chart is Labeled A-1. We went in from the side entrance, at which point they had various security checkpoints.

They had an outer checkpoint, and then an inner checkpoint for making sure only authorized personnel were going in. We had three teams I believe at that first time going in. We proceeded in this hallway along the edge, went in. Things I remember? There was no lights, so it was dark. If you had a flashlight, you could see, if you didn't you were hanging onto the next person stumbling through the dark.

The amount of water put in created flooding on the deck we went in. So we were going through approximately six inches of water, standing water on the floor. We proceeded down the hallway – dark. Ceiling tiles from the moisture had collapsed in, and some of the stuff was hanging so we had a lot of the false ceiling floating around and hanging from the overhead. Going through in

darkness, proceeding to the corner, we took a right. The damage looked a little bit more.

Proceeding along on that area indicated on this picture, A-2, the wall to the left as we proceeded, which was on the side where the impact site was, I noticed cracking along the wall. I didn't see massive devastation, but I did notice cracks.

Proceeding along we came to some large heavy doors. I would imagine they were approximately two inches thick and I seen a security lock, kind of a –

Q. (28:20) Cipher lock?

A. Cipher lock on it, which I'm assuming at that point, where it's the Navy Command Center, because it was a well secured area.

Q. (28:37) Yes.

A. We waited at that point for initial go ahead that we were prepared to go in. Everything outside the door was standing water, water damage and cracks along the wall. The doors were off their hinges, laying. Once we proceeded inside there was a total difference in the actual destruction factor. Inside everything was pitch black, rubble three feet deep. The doors of the Command Center seemed to have contained the blast from going out. We proceeded in. The rescue workers from Tennessee, the FEMA group had initially labeled where the bodies were. They would go through, label what they could find for bodies and give somewhat safe paths. So they actually scouted ahead before we went in as far as recovery team.

We proceeded in. Difficult—was slow going due to the fact that a large amount of rubble, sharp objects, stone, metal, around three feet deep was there. It was almost like a junkyard effect, which made, in the dark – it was pitch black – could not see where we were going without a

flashlight. So it made the initial going in very slow. At that point, because the, I would say the scouting team went in and they did not see any survivors, so at that point we were more concerned with safety. So we proceeded at a slow pace, trying to go through. Going in, we went in twenty feet, climbing over objects. Going through, then we took a right, and then as I recall we went and made another left to get around to get in. At that point there was a body here and there were some others that they went on to. So each team would split up at that point and we'd take, designate like, one team with these two bodies in this area, and then moving on.

Trying to go from memory and looking at this map close in the area.

We proceeded on and we didn't get in very far. There was a large number of bodies. Further in there was collapsed sections. So we stayed more toward this end right here. Which is toward the wall and from the wall to the crash site itself, we may have gotten in about one-third the distance. Concentrating here, because the initial point was to, as you come upon a body, it would be identified, bagged and then taken out. So we started from this point and would further go in.

Q. (31:26) So you'd stop and do your job and then leave the body there for other people to come in to physically remove it?

A. That is correct. The Army had assembled a team and they would actually come in to the door point and we would hand off the bodies at that point and they would take them the rest of the way. So we wouldn't have to fight taking each one out, back through the water and the darkness again, and we would stay in the, within the Command Center.

Q. (31:54) You concentrated in the Command Center?

A. Command Center. As far as the first body came upon, the body that I had worked with first, we came upon an area. It was very difficult to even identify the bodies at first due to the intense heat, which later I was told they estimated was from twenty-five hundred degrees up to 3000 degrees in there. Everything was coated with a black soot. So when you hit with a flashlight everything was black. So all you see is just various objects poking out and when you're going along, you will see what it looks, appears to be a body. You could identify some furniture pieces, but everything was covered with an intense black.

We identified what appeared to be a torso. From looking at it, it appeared to be the back part of a person, because you could see more of a shoulder. It didn't appear to be the front. It appeared more to, somebody's shoulders and their back. Face down, stretched out pretty much on the floor. So that was the first body that we came across we's going to do.

My instructions were to take a picture of the initial scene which was before they touched anything, after they identified a body. So I did wide-angle shots, close up shots of the body as it was found in the position. The next thing was they would clear away any wreckage covering it to totally expose the body, at which time I took photographs again of the uncovered body, as far as any wreckage laying on top.

Once all of the documentation for the photograph was done, I would step back. The handling team would come in and assist them if I needed to help hold the bag or something, but they pretty much did more of it. The reason I didn't handle the bodies as much is they talked about contamination. I didn't want to handle bodies, and handle camera equipment and get a cross contamination. So I had gloves on. If necessary I'd handle what—I'd help—could do. I didn't handle the bodies much, because I didn't want to contaminate the camera equipment, because if I

touched the body and then the camera, I don't know if we could, what would be required for contamination.

Biohazard was explained to us. They didn't want to have anybody just touching things. So they had somewhat of protective suits, masks, and I believe it was two pairs of gloves.

Q. (34:18) The tybac suits?

A. We had – I didn't opt for the tybac suit. They were, you'd sweat to death in those, and actually it wasn't made to wear them. So the military personnel, the CORPORAL INGERSALL and myself opted not to wear it, because of the restrictions involved in it. I needed to be able to get around and be able to move my camera equipment. So I did put on the boots, gloves, protective air mask, but not the tybac suit. In that hot sun that day people were just sweating to death in those.

Later on, when they got more stringent, they made you wear the tybac suit, which was quite restrictive (34:58).

(Sr. Chief chuckles)

But I went in with just the boots, gloves and such.

On that particular body, as you picked up the body, when we picked it up, we noticed underneath the body there was clothing. On the backside of the body it was charred, black like cooked. Most of the tissue was thoroughly cooked, no fluids present. Any clothing was charred off. However, because it seemed to be such a quick and intense blast, anything under something seemed to have been somewhat protected. So when we lifted the body up we seen remnants of clothing. At that point we seen what appeared as I recall like a blue colored bra. So at that point we identified and made notes in our log, that body appeared to be female.

The only recognizable thing at that point was a bra underneath. Proceeded to put the body into the bag, and continued around the area looking for personal effects. Is there anything that could help identify? Dog tags, pieces of uniform, at various points, whether I recall it, was that particular body or some other ones, we'd find like a military ribbon that were left, because it was underneath. Quite a few of the bodies seem to have been face down. Trying to protect themselves.

Looking for any kind of personal, like I said, dog tags, anything that helped identify the bodies. At that point the concern was to make it as quick as possible to identify the bodies for the families.

Once we had searched the area looking for any possible signs of personal effects that helped identify, putting it into the bags, and then moving on to the next individual.

In the area we were, there seemed to be quite a dense amount of people. It seemed to be a point where I had to take a great concern for myself. When I was taking pictures, I needed to step back sometimes. There were so many bodies in that area, I'd almost step on them. So I'd have to really take care to look backwards as I'm backing up in the dark, looking with a flashlight, making sure I'm not stepping on somebody. Making a—it was slow going, pretty methodical, so with that body proceeded to the next one.

The next one seemed to be toward the outside of the building where we went on. Coming upon the body, it was more hunched over like a cabot (phonetic) or something. When we further identified, this one wasn't as quite as recognizable shape as the one we had just seen, even though it was maybe ten feet away.

That particular body, upon further examination appeared to be more two bodies, one on top of the other one. But it was hard to find body parts between them because of the amount of damage.

We took the top one off and identified as much as possible, apparently a second body, bagging any personal effects, moving on. The thing I notice was I, when we were trying to uncover the bodies with this second one, pushing a file cabinet out of the way, noticed when the file cabinet opened, there was still smoldering papers inside.

Moving on from that particular body, the other teams had found bodies to our left, immediate, as we were facing to the door to go out where we came in, to my left, there was a team working, found a body there. To the right there were found several more bodies. More than what we had body bags for at the time. We had a certain amount of stay time we were in. We stayed in, continued bagging. The total number of bodies that we did, I don't recall at the time. At that point, we started handing it over to the Army individuals that came in. They processed the body bags back and then after some initial confusion how the bodies were supposed to be labeled as far as location, the team came back out for further instruction. Still a little confusion at that point on being very organized.

We labeled as much of location as possible, but I guess they tried, they wanted to get some kind of a numbering system established for the bodies.

Q. (39:13) And the FBI did that?

A. The FBI was, wanted to come up with the numbering system, but they didn't actually put the number, it was more of the emergency FEMA guys. When they went in, they'd kind of say, "Here's a body," and how the FBI went tagging from that point I'm not sure. I didn't get involved with actually the numbering system part, but I know that they wanted to organize it as here is this body found and somewhat of an idea where it came from, and try and keep as much as possible in there, an idea where the bodies were located.



Coming back out, we had a chance to get something to eat. At that point I recall—I think it was the Salvation Army had set up a truck and had some little food rations—eating there and taking a rest, other teams, I guess at that point start to look to go in.

Body recovery from that, in that afternoon on and into like the second day was sketchy. The engineer on the scene would continually have people come out. We would have a body recovery team in and we'd get the call to come out. Apparently he would note a shifting in the building. So as far as the body recovery, it was hampered the first couple of days by the structure itself and the concern that it wasn't structurally sound. A large amount of time was taken putting in a shoring to the left of the, right immediately left of the impact site. They put in large wooden blocks to shore up underneath the actual structure to take up some of the weight. Taking, I guess start to pull off some pieces trying to reduce some of the weight stress.

So the first three days continued on as, same as on the first day, that first day as far as me going in. We were on twelve hour shifts starting as I recall, six in the morning, going until six at night. Worked until my shift was over so at that point when it became six o'clock in the evening, I'd been there since the morning of September 11<sup>th</sup>. So I'd been there roughly thirty-six hours. At that point I was pretty much ready for a nice bed.

So I went home and I became part of the day shift, and the other Marines that were with me, the Sergeant and the Corporal also stayed on day shift. Went back, went back to the room, at which point I was pretty much exhausted. Walked from that point up to my room. Took a shower, getting whatever I can to munch on to eat. Just going to bed at that point, I was so tired. Waking up the next morning. Going down and starting the next day's routine. The second and third day was pretty much the same. Waiting until we get clear point to go into the building. Going into the building doing any body recovery.

As time went on and most of the, the whole bodies were recovered, I was down there a total of ten days. Later on in my time there, I spent some time when they started doing more rubble recovery, which I think it was going into about the five and sixth day point. I went down to the rubble pile for a couple of days doing documentation down there. I believe they call it the North Parking lot.

Q. (42:33) Yes.

A. I went down there and if they found plane parts once again or something that they needed pictures taken of, we took pictures. The personnel working there was FBI agents and other individuals, like I said from the various military law enforcement agencies.

Wasn't finding much body parts initially in the rubble at the, was being brought in. They have a loader, load it up. Put it in a dump truck and an FBI agent would ride escort with it down to the area, and it was all secured area. It was dumped out and spread out to try and find things in it.

We were instructed to look for classified documents, and certain materials which we were told, we were given identification what to look for and said, "Look for this. Make sure it doesn't go in there."

So we looked for those specific items. I won't go into detail of what they told us to look for.

Q. (43:36) Fine.

A. And any kind of documentation. So we looked through mainly small items the first day, and then the other day I was down there we started noticing more personal effects. They started finding individuals passport, personal clothing pieces, plane parts, wiring harnesses from the initial impact site. I went and transferred—just to get a little different involvement with the FBI

on everything going on at that point—I went down to the morgue and that was down into around the 7<sup>th</sup> day, I believe it was, went to the morgue. Approximate. I don't remember the exact date I was doing events.

Q, (44:12) Where was that, the morgue?

A. The morgue was the loading dock area. There was new construction for the Pentagon. Going from the initial impact site, you look left. There's a ramp that goes down and they have a loading zone which would be normally for mail and cargo coming in the Pentagon. That was turned into a temporary morgue, and they had semi-trucks there bringing in box containers, refrigerated trucks. The Army had some green trucks there as I recall. That's where the bodies went into. Working down there, went in there, it was like a shift assignment. Come in in the morning, get a shift assignment. Went down there. I was briefed on what they need for working in the morgue. It happened to be my luck we had the most stuff come in that day. Like ten days out of there seemed to be the heaviest workload for the morgue. So initially it came in, mostly body parts. I see—apparently they reached a point in the wreckage from the rubble and they were clearing that they were getting into a central part of the aircraft, because a lot of body parts were coming out. So that day we happened to have gotten, as I recall during the total part of the day, which I took over four hundred photos, we had over four hundred body parts alone, and also some whole bodies coming in.

Basically for documentation, the bodies would be brought in. There's evidence tags. We want to preserve that. They were photographed initially as they were found. Whatever location, but they wanted further documentation or control conditions. So my job was to do close-up, like macro-photography. Very close up to fill the frame full of the body part for further identification later

on down the line for evidence and for identification purposes for the, finding the remain's identification.

We'd take and there'd be serial numbers with each body part. That would be part of the frame when I take a picture. There'd be the tag with identifying part number, taking each part and basically going on, and this was almost non-stop. It seemed like I got there and nothing seeming like—and all of a sudden it was just a flood load of body parts coming in. Worked almost non-stop. As soon as we'd get done with one and start to clean up then another load, a huge load of body parts would come in.

Broke for lunch when we'd reach a breaking point. We'd find a lull, clean up before the next load came in, had a quick part—we were wearing tybac protective suits. Basically just take your gloves off, pick up – we had hamburgers brought in. Just eating right outside the door for the morgue area. That's where we ate our lunch. (said with some dejection)

After, went back in and continued on. It was pretty much almost non-stop the entire day. Recall bodies coming in. The condition of the bodies were, some of them weren't quite as charred.

Talking with some of the other military photographers that were also doing body recovery, the initial area, bodies were quite charred. Other areas farther away, bodies you couldn't see the physical damage, the charring, puncture wounds. Bodies were more intact. The cause of death would be related to smoke inhalation. So the immediate impact area we were, the bodies were quite charred. The farther away you got, people were trapped and died of smoke inhalation. They were more in tact.

A body came in. It was classified instead of a body part, more of a whole body because there was more, enough mass there, but still there didn't seem to be very many bones still left in tact. It was more of a lump of flesh. Doing once again, setting it out. Trying to take pictures from various

angles and identify. We noticed that in the torso, it seemed to be twisted around, what might have been a bra strap, so once again it seemed to identify as a probable female. Within the twisted flesh there might have been a bra strap.

Did as much photography as possible. The FBI individual working in the morgue, she seemed to be the chief morgue individual. She would do classifications. As much identification, do further tags, and I'd say half the people working in there was FBI, and then other federal law enforcement, military law enforcement types.

Q. (48:39) Now when things came in were they bagged up and somebody was there to take them out to set them so that you were to photograph them?

A. They were individually pretty much bagged, and their job was to take them out of the bags and it would be just into cutting the bag open and without disturbing it as much as possible, setting it on something else that would become its new –

Q. (48:59) Bag.

A. Wrap. Because they, being in the rubble pile wherever, they couldn't necessarily bag each one to the, like the morgue wouldn't take the individual time. So it would be identified. It would come in bagged and they would also re-bag it. So they'd put some of the other bagging material, re-bag it, identify another tag with it, and do an extensive log. Everything was logged as far as every part had a log number and they kept an extensive log and I would take photographs and then relate to them also – from the first day I was told to, the initial frame of my pictures would be a slate, which would identify the crime scene number. I was given a little piece of paper. Given a crime scene number. Told to put the day, my name, the roll of film and general location

of what I was doing that day. If I was in the morgue, body recovery, and the first picture of the day would be that as the slate which would identify the roll in case it got mixed up later. I'd also write on the outside of the film, the date and the roll per day, and I kept my own photographic evidence records, which I turned into the ERT, their Evidence Response Team, which was another van they had set up, which was our, for me, the command post I worked out of.

I would turn over—I would take custody of the film, and as each photographer would and we'd take out, log and we'd turn it in to that central evidence location part, and it was used later.

Another body came in. This one was more whole. I couldn't recognize the uniform as much because there was some charring to the uniform. This one seemed to be more due to the fact that seven days later, approximately, individual was quite bloated and something that was, you don't think about as much, but apparently flies had started to reach the body, because we noted maggots and other insects crawling through the body.

Went in, took as many photographs as I could. Overall shots, close up shots that could be used later for identification. Once again the body was put in a re-bag, documented and put in a refrigeration unit with the other body parts that were going to go on to a place I do not recall, which would be a full forensics lab that would do the in-depth identification work.

Q. (51:22) Dover?

Q. (another) (51:23) Yes, it might have been Dover.

A. I believe it was Dover.

Q. (51:24) Dover, yes.

A. And there would be an FBI agent that would ride with that container. As it was loaded on an aircraft, he would fly with it, take it to the location. Throughout, when I was there, nothing was ever unescorted. As far as evidence there was always an FBI agent with it, or like photographic evidence, the photographer always had custody of his material until he turned it over. We turned over the evidence at that point to the RP Unit, as I stated before.

Q. (51:52) So this is the Chain of Custody receipt then?

A. Uh huh

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Q. Process.

A. The parts themselves, as far as plane parts from the first day on, they'd be put in a bag, Whichever individual found them, filled out evidence cards and they would bag it up and they'd trying to catalogue. And the main thing was what zone the part came from, because due to the sheer amount of parts we were discovering, it would be hard to individually identify and log – and do each individual part. So parts were zoned and if it – and they took more care if there was an identifiable number on it, because then they could identify, This was just part of the plane, to get more, but other tiny little pieces, just a little quarter size piece of metal, other then that they were just put into – this was this zone. Due to the sheer amount of parts, it was the only practical way we could do it.

Continuing on, I went and worked a little with the body recovery unit again. Pretty much that was my time there. I spent one day in the morgue. Like I said, with my luck it happened to be the busiest day they had. Went back to working the body recovery unit. Had about, I think it was a nine or ten day point there. The recovery effort started to pretty much get flowing on. Things

started to slow down. The rubble pile had gotten its mass of amounts through. The whole body recovery was pretty much finished at that point. There was going to be, however, several more days of just slowed down, picking up small pieces and due to the amount of classified material floating around, that was going to take a while to clean that up.

It was decided at the photo lab that the workload that we started to pick up on, because now, as the initial September 11<sup>th</sup> part was waning down, our needs and photolab started to gear up with the intelligence photography going on. So at that point, I did some stuff with the actual Pentagon work in around the ninth or tenth day. Went and returned to the photolab and I did some assignments for somebody else that's in the Annex. I don't – at the top of my head I don't recall the initials. Like Defense Intelligence Agency, or Defense Security Agency, DSA. The exact one I don't recall. Basically, it was to do, we had one photographer do like I think an air ride. We were supposed to take some more additional aerial photos. I did some overall scene work of the Pentagon. I also, for the Commandant of the Marine Corps, did some overall shots of the Pentagon as the rescue work proceeded as part of the briefings.

So this was more at this point, what is the progress at this point? So I did overall shots of the building from high up. I went into, we got special clearance to go up into the top of the Annex. The building we're in right now, to the one end of the building. Due to the fact that we had snipers everywhere on the rooftops now, we had special clearance. I would have to go up into certain areas and allowed to take photographs from a high angle without having to go in a helo, for logistic reasons just not having to get a helo, and doing shots of the Pentagon over a few days period to, for military briefings as far as progress.

While down at the Pentagon site, talking to some other individuals, I happened to talk to a couple of individuals. One was a jogger. He was actually jogging past the Pentagon when it actually



happened. So he actually witnessed it going in. The plane came over the Columbia Pike side of the Navy Annex. He said it cleared the building maybe by twenty feet. I was told later by some of the individuals, who I told you I was working for in the building, that they looked at the roof and they noticed that gravel, that's part of the tar and gravel, was blowing off of our roof. So he was close enough that just the jet blast blew off parts from the top of our building as far as the roofing material.

He said it cleared the building which is above the photolab and talking to people later on, like the Corporal, they heard the aircraft go over. So it was close enough on that side of the building, they could hear it. The building which I was, the side of the building I was on, which was on the cemetery side, I did not really hear it that much. The building's somewhat insulated more, and because the plane came in so close only that end of the building seemed to have heard it. So he said it cleared the building by maybe twenty feet coming in, and Highway 27 which is raised a certain point at the angle, he was coming in, he barely coming in above that. His wing seemed to have clipped a telephone pole, or actually a light pole, and there was a taxicab at the time, I guess, driving by. It landed on his cab, and coming down and on the angle into where the first floor was.

Things I recall from my time down there - each day as I was done I would walk back, then I'd walk in. Security zones established, expanded them from Highway 27, being on the first day, the initial one. They pushed the security zone back until we have the cross, the light down at the bottom right of hill, that became the next initial zone for the area of compound. And then beyond that, even blocks away, it was almost a total lockdown for the first few days. Couldn't even get that close blocks away from here. I had special security badges assigned to me that would get into the, access to the Pentagon zone area.

Reporters had set up along the gas station. I could see the news reporters and everyday when I walked to and come back I'd notice that reporters were there with their cameras. They had some on hydraulic poles that they put up in the air and were trying to get their zoom shots in, because they couldn't get any closer than that. The security wouldn't let them any closer.

So I remember, unusual how walking and looking at the press, and in the evening sometimes going back and looking at the TV and it was surreal. Going back and watching the TV just what I came back and walked through.

Q. (58:10) When you walked up through there, because I had been up there myself, did anybody ask you any questions or approach you? Any civilians or newspaper people?

A. Do not recall anybody approaching me as far as reporter related, or civilians. There's some military individuals I knew and stopped and briefly talked to me. A few days earlier, I did a retirement, no I think he had a promotion. He was getting a promotion and award. I did shots for him, some pictures. Whenever we have- part of my job was we have an award ceremony, retirement, people getting promoted. I go in and take pictures for the historical and it's part of a morale part. That's common military, what we do. And he had stopped to talk. I recognized him. We talked a little bit and he thanked me for what I was doing, and I noticed some other individuals had started forming right at the base, the Navy Annex right out here.

Occasionally civilians would come up, military, thank me for what I was doing. Pretty much that was my initial shock as far as that part. Not use to something like that.

(interviewer chuckles)

Usually as a photographer we're pretty much in the background and never getting that much attention.

Q. (59:34) Right.

A. So a little put off at first with the attention. I was surprised and I kind of liked seeing where at the base of the hill of the Pentagon, I'm sorry not the Pentagon, the Navy Annex right here, in the grassy area right out there, they started putting up little flags and various thank you, shrines like that. As I recall being down there, during my ten days down there, they'd bring in certain little posters that the school children drew, like thanks you, and things like that. That was probably my initial shock, was the amount of patriotism it seemed to strike. So. I was kind of wondering if there was that much patriotism left.

(everyone chuckles)

So that's what I – the positive aspects was the amount of patriotism I seen. Pretty much other than that, that seemed to be most of my time down there.

Most all the pictures I take, actually I took, correct English, was confiscated by the FBI. There was a roll of film that wasn't evidence related that I was able to bring back with me. The exact day, I do not recall, it was about the fourth day, there was a flag still standing. Actually there was an American flag and a Marine flag, still as, the collapsed area. Right at the very edge of the building, within a foot, there was a flag pole stand. You know it happened to be a Marine individual's office. I can't remember exactly, I think it was a civilian, but as somebody that was in the Marine Unit for the headquarters, I was asked if I could record. So I went in and there was this Marine officer, went into a bucket and went up with a, I think a rescue person that would run the bucket and went up. He reached over with this little claw thing to try and get the flag out and recover the flag. So I did take pictures of that particular flag recovery.

At the point in time, I happened to have been with the body recovery unit so I was in the inner compound from an angle which nobody else could get at. So later, all of the photographers that were not initially put in either the digital ones, because they weren't ready to handle them for evidence, any photographs that we took that we had custody of we went through the official channels. I'm trying to recall who it was. But getting clearance that this will, can be published. And certain photographs we were told would be not published for reasons of security. Certain ones were allowed to be published. One thing they didn't want was security possibilities. The other was obvious reasons, anything with the injured people.

You had some pictures that were taken initially of, as injured people come out and they were being helped. It was wondered if some of those would be picture of injured people, should be published or not. It's always considered for a while and debated.

The series that I took did not involve any of the classified, really, so that one went through on the flag. Some of those were actually used for publication. The *Marines Magazine*, the front cover was a collage of the initial event from what the Corporal used. The back cover was used, the photograph of the flag recovery that I did. I think I got about half a roll of the initial – I pretty much done from when he was on the ground all the way up to recovering it, to back on the ground. But since I was in the body recovery unit in that real inner compound, I couldn't follow to go on. So some other civilians took pictures of pretty much what you see in the papers now.

Q. (01:03:30) With the body recovery, initially there were a lot of bodies recovered out of the Navy Command Center. Just from your having been down there were there any particular areas, second floor, third floor, fifth floor, where they also found a, another large amount of bodies, whether they be Army or Navy, or - ?

A. I think—I didn't recall going to the other spaces. My area was mainly down at the –

Q. (01:03:58) Down at the Navy?

A. Command Center.

Q. (01:03:59) OK.

A. And there was two shifts. There's a night shift and a day shift, and I pretty much worked the Command Center. Later on I was told some of the other members went and worked some areas and that's where the bodies were found, and it wasn't to the degree. To my knowledge, the most intense bodies as far as volume was from the Command Center.

Q. (01:04:24) OK.

A. Two basic reason, one, being a Command Center I think you just have more people there. Other factors were, it was a newly renovated section of the Pentagon which was what helped the Pentagon survive as much as it did. Part of the reconstruction was putting steel beams in as reinforcing. So that particular area of the Pentagon was heavily reinforced structurally and that's what allowed as much to stay in tact as possible, because it was newly renovated and structurally upgraded.

I talked with the structural engineers as I'm with the FBI evidence down there talking with them. They were talking to people. They were telling them, describing to me about the damage done to the building. On how a certain distance out it was beyond structural repair and a certain distance beyond that it could be repaired if it was financially worth it, and then some that was just water damage beyond that. And they showed me color graphs of what would be, have to be done, and

it was amazing that in the time that I was down there, within ten days they already mapped out a strategy of how they were going to do the reconstruction. How they were going to get on with it. So it was almost in, within days they already had the planning of how they were going to do the rebuilding. I hear, I don't know if they're still going to go with it, but the initial plan I heard within the first ten days was to, for the public they were going to do a façade. Put the outside façade back in first. Once the façade's back up work to the inner rings. So the public view would look like the Pentagon's restored as soon as possible.

Q. (01:06:04) The E ring would be rebuilt first.

A. Uh huh.

Q. (01:06:06) and it's going up pretty quick.

Q. (another) Yes.

A. Yes, and –

(appears to be a break in recording)

Other than just impressions of what was going on, as much as

Q. (01:06:24) I have a question relating to the first day. When the FBI came in and declared it a crime scene, did you see any particular issues of the culture of the FBI – “this is a crime scene,” versus the military, “we’ve got to go in and get our people out”?

A. The FBI did not, as far as survivors, they did not hamper the rescue workers. They would stay out of the rescue workers way and the FEMA group that would go in and do the structural scouting, that seemed to be on their control, as far as crime scene. They seemed to have

precedents about when people could go in and why, and the body recovery teams which the FBI were heading up were actually told if and when they could go in by the engineers and that group.

Q. (01:07:20) Well, I mean, I mean even earlier like in the first, within the first hour of being there.

A. Within the first hour, there wasn't much thought of going in as far as evidence at that point, into the building due to the raging fire which went throughout the night. I think the FBI, this was my impression because I was only right there, I wasn't dealing with other ones. There might have been some battle between individuals, personalities later on, but initially right there from what I seen, we were just waiting until the building was declared safe enough we could actually go in.

Q. (01:07:52) OK.

A. There may be, between some of the shift commanders, issues about who has control of this area. I pretty much seen the FBI was going to be in control of the evidence there. Other law enforcement agencies from the military which I dealt with, mostly like the Army, some of the other ones that came in, seemed to pretty much have to answer to the FBI. So pretty much no matter what federal or military law enforcement group you were with, the FBI was in charge of evidence and body recovery team and things like that. Issues about who's going to get this ground to put their trucks up and do this, probably went on quite a bit of squabbling, because the territory it went up within days, like tent city. I was amazed at all the trucks that rolled in and it was like within a couple of days it was tent city. I walk in and all these little generators and tents around. It was interesting that such emergency efforts can be brought together so quickly.

You remember from the first day though, as a humorous note, one of the unknown aircraft warnings that we had, that was the FEMA plane itself coming in. They'd scrambled the FEMA plane, and they turned their transponder off. So they scrambled jet, a warning, "Identify yourself or we're going to shoot you down!"

(everyone laughs)

So that was—FEMA came close there.

Q. (01:09:30) How has this changed your life, or how has this affected you? Anything that way. Has there been any changes that way on a personal level for you?

A. It made a slight career choice decision for me in the future. When I retire I'm actually considering applying with the FBI now as evidence response, and doing photography with the FBI. From what I was doing with there- I was wondering if the body, working with the bodies would affect me as much, but there were individuals like the other military I was with, some of them started having nightmares and having problems with it. I personally didn't seem to have problems. It was work to me and I knew it was an individual, but my thing to be able to help them would be to get the body evidence done, to help get the bodies out in recovery. So I was more, looked at as a professional nature. Something that needs to be done, and it didn't seem to affect me as much as some of the other individuals.

Q. (01:10:35) Have you, have you heard about the SPRINT Team that you know, they're a team of counselors and –

A. Yes.



Q. (01:10:44) They've gone to the other groups.

A. Yes, I was contacted several times from Navy medical personnel and other ones. Are you having problems? I personally wasn't. I'd say, I'd talk to them and say, "I don't seem to have a problem with it." They'd come up and the Chaplains office asked do I want to talk about it, and, really, like I said, it's a tragic event, but it's just something I had to do.

Q. (01:11:16) Do you have any lessons learned. Things that you observed that went wrong, or things that went right from any point of view?

A. The, as far as emergency procedures, there was a lot of confusion the first day. Trying to get emergency vehicles in. What procedure should be done. I suspect they weren't ready for a crisis of this magnitude and then the FBI, the only other time they've dealt with something this big was like when there was a plane accident, a plane crash, which was just, you know, a mechanical failure of whatever. A plane would crash. That's the only other time they had a crime scene this big. The FBI was overwhelmed with the sheer size of the crime scene. Most of their crime scenes were before where you have one body, a murder scene or something. You could rope it off and do this. The sheer amount of evidence and the size of the crime scene for this group and especially from when I'm talking with them, New York, it was just almost impossible in trying to declare several blocks and thousands of tons worth of stuff, a crime scene. So they were not prepared for crime scenes of this magnitude, and as time went it, it became the—one of the things I recall we were looking for was the black box, and so as we were on this body recovery was told to, we were given pictures. "Look for this." So when we're going in we'd look around. Didn't happen to see that. Eventually they were found. I don't recall who found them, but they

were found. Box came out. As I was told some of them were just so damaged they couldn't get much out of them.

That was one thing and the NTSB came in and there was certain areas like where I'd worked they collected the evidence and there was a sheer amount of volume of evidence. They would put it in the boxes, and plane parts in boxes and they'd bring a semi-truck to load up all this evidence to be able to move out. They were working, between the FBI and the FAA, who it is that does crash scene. Pretty much the FAA had one or two that showed up, but it wasn't really something they were really investigating because there wasn't a question of why the plane went down.

(laughter)

So it was just kind of a moot point of trying to investigate why the plane went down. So it wasn't like a normal, which probably added to the confusion. it wasn't so much trying to figure out why the plane went down, which is normally their function, as to making it a crime scene. So that was part of the confusion factor. They're normally just to looking at it, - why did the plane go down?

Q. (01:13:57) How about military side of the house.

A. From down there, over a period of time as I recall I remember seeing the military Chaplains come through. There was a Chaplain, I believe was from the Army. Had put on some protective equipment. He went in with the Army troops into the initial area as the bodies were coming out and he was doing I believe it was last rights, or the – as the body would come through. Chaplains would come through various, like where we were, talk to the FBI agents. “Are you having problems?”

The rescue workers as far as like I said, the team that did the scouting as far as my knowledge working with FEMA, from Tennessee, they were more of a civilian nature. Some former

military. I had a chance to talk with some of them. They were former Navy. I believe one of them was like a Second Class. Had been use to being in the Navy Damage Control and worked with fire fighting. And they had became a part of this fire fighting unit. They had their initial going in and coming out, each group had their tasks and they worked within those. That particular FEMA group was basically structural analysis. Apparently they seemed to be the most, with massive damage or structure like that, either from an earthquake or whatever. Finding out is it safe to go in. Charting a path, which was not seen to be in the purview of the FBI range. Once paths were declared safe, structural safe, the FBI went in and declared it as evidence area, and as parts came out documented them.

In the area, I recall Army setting up a camp from the initial area. Going back to the little map here. An actually fence was brought in. Barriers were brought in to start creating an area through here (he's pointing to an area on the map). Navy Corpsman within the first day had set up a triage unit, right in this area outside. Actually not here, but using this as the Pentagon, facing the 27. Within the area that's Highway 27, setting up a triage unit and Navy Corpsman were working there. Various rescue facilities in the compound area, just to map it out, the area where I was working with the FBI was off to the right of the impact area as you're facing the impact area. Fairly close. The FEMA guys were behind us working back up in here. There was a Salvation Army unit right here. Command Post truck that later came into the FBI was right almost in the center. Emergency vehicles, initially on the first, they were primarily located to the left as you faced the Pentagon, to the left of the impact site. Most of the fire trucks and everything was right there.

Q. (01:16:56) Would they have been further left of the helo pad? Or –

A. Yes.

Q. OK.

A. From—one of the fire trucks could not escape and was caught in the fire. Just stayed right there and had a flat tire. I mean I thought they'd have put a tow chain on it and get it out of there, but they just left it. So it stayed there. Surprisingly, within, as far as a historical note, within the immediate zone of the impact, there was an American flag near the flight pattern. The Corporal, he got some pictures of it, while it was still standing, within the first hour. And that was amazing it was untouched that close. It was only within I'd say a yard. I mean less than a hundred feet. Maybe fifty feet or thirty feet away from the initial impact area and was still standing right there. So an effort was trying to be made to recover that flag. Like I said, the Marine flag which was on the second floor was later recovered.

Talking to individuals during my ten days there, some people were located on the upper floors, and when the explosion happened they could see something happen with the floor, cracking, and they knew something happened, but it wasn't that the floor collapsed where they were allowed to get out. So the third and fourth floor, the damage above, even right where the plane went in, was not that extensive that people in that area could not get out. That's part of the reason why, we didn't miss, you know find the bodies up there, because the initial impact did not reach into those areas.

Q. (01:18:22) Right.

A. Like I said, the concrete floors contained most of the energy of the blast to within the hallways and it, it—much more destruction that way. More people were killed to the left and

right of the impact area because the blast and everything was contained and just wiped out anything beyond the blast or there. Which I assume might have—Navy Command Center was totally wiped out because it was, the blast doors were on either side and it was very in the center and all the energy was contained right in that area.

Q. (01:18:51) Right.

A. So I'd say the majority of the amount of the damage was contained right there. I noticed that the aircraft had proceeded in, almost like the third ring, but wasn't much damage done into that point. Fire may have done more damage, but as far as the initial aircraft puncturing it, it made it into third ring, but by that time it was the tail section and the energy had been dissipated quite a bit.

Q. (01:19:14) Could you tell it was the tail section just by observation?

A. Some of the pieces we started bringing out, you could see some more pieces, heavier objects, like the engines, more pieces. I personally did not see much more of a piece that could not be carried by more than six people. Not much of the aircraft made beyond that size. Partially because, it hit such a strong object, a solid object, only very heavy structurally stronger objects would have retained much, like the engines. Some pieces of the tail section because they were protected made it more intact. The most intact pieces of the plane seemed to be the tail section, which was what they were hoping for the black box, as being toward the E ring section, because it was more - in the tail section be more protected, but it still chewed quite a bit of damage, because each section of the aircraft would enter a new wall. The nose hitting the outer side of the E ring, then the cabin section hitting the inner wall of the E ring, ripping it away and then

proceeding on to each next ring. Sections of the aircraft hitting, hitting a large stone wall and just ripping it away.

Q. (01:20:27) Do you know if, where most of the airline passengers were found. Were they further into the building?

A. To my knowledge what I was getting was mostly airline passenger body parts. Whole bodies I would say would be more from the Command Center. People on the aircraft due to the devastating of the metal, even itself, I would say very few whole bodies came out of the aircraft itself. The majority of our body parts were coming from aircraft personnel.

Q. (01:20:55) Were they down in the –

A. In the rubble area, down, maybe located toward the Navy Command Center, because basically how it went, whole bodies where we could actually get to, or body parts found would be taken from the sides. It was too dangerous to really go in through the rubble. So what they would have to do is scoop up the rubble and take it out and as they would scoop it up and take it out and, with the North Parking Lot, with the rubble pile, they'd find a large amount of body parts there. So I'd have to say whatever initial Navy personnel, or military personnel caught in the, where the impact area, would probably be more of pieces and would probably come out as rubble. People, excuse me, to the left or right of the initial impact site, they were still, their body were quite heavily charred, or were more intact and would come out as whole bodies.

Q. (01:21:51) Is there anything else that we should ask you about or haven't asked you about?

Q. (another) That we haven't thought of?

A. In sometime I come up with a little detail I just forget, just like the Chaplains being down there. There was quite a few federal workers, military coming in, but like I said to me I was in, part of how I seemed to have accidentally found myself a piece of history going on. And thinking back, it's just ironic on that part. And just watching, to me it was interesting for me to watch history going on, so I would take and watch and get the feel of things going on and people's reactions and how things were done, which is why I said I've now considered putting an application in with the FBI, because I worked with them and I figured that might be an interesting thing to do as far as a career later.

Q. (01:22:47) Great, great. Any final thoughts?

A. There is information probably available, you're going to have access. There is actual footage of the impact. It's on security cameras. Whether it will be classified, you'll be able to see it or not, I don't know.

There were eyewitnesses that actually – I believe there were two or three. Like I said the jogger that I talked to and there were some other individuals that were actually standing on the outside of the Pentagon near the blast site, that when it impacted, I think, as I recall, the jogger he was blown right off his feet. Pushed him, the blast of the initial impact just blew him right back off his feet. And some actually, people witnessed the plane coming in.

Q. (01:23:30) Is there anybody else we should speak with from your shop or anybody that you would recommend.

A, I would say the Corporal. CORPORAL INGERSALL, because he was there with me, also. We were on the same body recover teams, the group of team that went in. He went in with

myself, but if you had different assignments, then you have different perspective of what was going on. And then the Sergeant like I said. SERGEANT PAULL was an individual that also –

Q. (01:23:57) He was a Reservist you say?

A. No, he actually is also Active Duty Marine photographer, but he works on the Commandant's staff. So he pretty much does only that whereas with the headquarters Marine Corps, I support all of the Navy pretty much in the building of the Annex and we support any Marine command within the DC area. So all of the Marine Generals going on events, historical events. I happen to, I mean like do something with the White House or something, I might go there and do some photography or like the ceremonial parades that are official Marine Corps parades, or we do stuff with the ceremonies up at the Arlington Cemetery burials, we do those.

Q. (01:24:38) OK.

A. So it's more of the wide general historical.

Q. (01:24:32) All right, well thank you very much.

Q. (Another) Thank you very much.

Q. (first) We really appreciate your time.

Transcribed by:  
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July 24, 2002