

This is a complete transcript of the oral history interview with **Samuel Douglas Faircloth (CN 658, T2)** for the Billy Graham Center Archives. No spoken words that were recorded are omitted. In a very few cases, the transcribers could not understand what was said, in which case [unclear] was inserted. Also, grunts and verbal hesitations such as “ah” or “um” are usually omitted. Readers of this transcript should remember that this is a transcript of spoken English, which follows a different rhythm and even rule than written English.

... Three dots indicate an interruption or break in the train of thought within the sentence of the speaker.

.... Four dots indicate what the transcriber believes to be the end of an incomplete sentence.

() Word in parentheses are asides made by the speaker.

[] Words in brackets are comments made by the transcriber.

This transcript was created by Bob Shuster and Katherine Graber and was completed in February 2018.

Please note: This oral history interview expresses the personal memories and opinions of the interviewee and does not necessarily represent the views or policies of the Billy Graham Center Archives or Wheaton College.

Collection 658, Tape 2. Oral history interview with Reverend Samuel Douglas Faircloth by Bob Shuster on May 25, 2011.

SHUSTER: This is an interview with Reverend Samuel Faircloth by Bob Shuster for the archives of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College. It took place on May 25, 2011 at Reverend Faircloth's home at Windsor Manor in Carol Stream, Illinois. Good afternoon, Reverend Faircloth.

FAIRCLOTH: Yes. Good to see you again.

SHUSTER: How are you doing today?

FAIRCLOTH: Fine.

SHUSTER: Nice to see you. As you...as we talked about earlier, I particularly wanted to talk about your time as a military chaplain in Italy and then maybe say a few words about the Billy Graham Portugal Crusade which never was. So let me ask you first, I know that it was September 11, 1945, you were appointed chaplain in the US Army?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: And after that, you went to chaplain school in Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia?

FAIRCLOTH: Yep. This is the...this is the folder from it.

SHUSTER: Oh yes, you're giving me the program from the graduation exercises for the advanced class...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...which was held November 17, 1945.

FAIRCLOTH: These...see, this is the military faculty.

SHUSTER: Oh yeah. Quite a large group, all chaplains.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, I was looking for a picture that I have, but I haven't been able to find it in the files there. It shows the whole class. There must have been fifty at least of us from different denominations of...each denomination had a quota, as you may know.

SHUSTER: And did it include the Jewish chaplains as well?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And if the quota was not filled by any particular denomination, why another one wanted to put more in could do it. I mean they had....so I got in under the American Baptist ordination...



SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...from Philadelphia. And so that was...yeah...that was quite an experience.

SHUSTER: How...how would you describe the school?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, the army had these things pretty well organized. And by the time I got in there, you know, at that time, why I think there were 9,000 chaplains in the...in the...in the military service. And so you had to go through certain training. This training was at Oglethorpe. And....

SHUSTER: What kind was....?

FAIRCLOTH: ...and it was training for combat. I mean, you had to go through barbed wire and the whole business.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: You had to go through machine gun fire.

SHUSTER: So something like basic training?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, it was basic training.

SHUSTER: Besides that....

FAIRCLOTH: And a lot of marching and all the rest of it. Of course I was used to that from...from Boy Scouts and all the rest, so some of that wasn't too new to me. But....

SHUSTER: What about the subjects specially for chaplains? What were...what kind of things did they teach?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, they wanted to make sure that you knew military rules. All kinds of things. For instance, I had in my service overseas, I think I had thirty three at least marriages...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...in Italy, which is a foreign country....

SHUSTER: And you were marrying US service personnel?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Well, in some cases you were marrying service personnel to Italian girls.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And a lot of the girls wanted to come to the States. And they were engineered in different ways, so I, as an Evangelical, I had to select what I would do. And I could do that.

SHUSTER: So how does that relate to the training you were getting at Fort Oglethorpe?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, they would give you all the basic...basic information that you needed for that. And then of course there were military...military subjects. I can't remember all the...all the curriculum. I don't have that....

SHUSTER: What kind of information would you need though? I mean basically you're telling me army procedures and rules that you had to abide by?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. We were officers. We were...any chaplain would start with First Lieutenant having had graduate degrees. So then you move up according to what service you were rendering. I wanted to stay with the men. At the end of the war, they had an opportunity to stay in the army. That would have bumped you up in rank, and you were probably bumped right away from the troops to some office position, which I wasn't interested in.

SHUSTER: So the higher ranks like say colonel major or colonel or etcetera were administrative and not dealing....

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, they went all the way up to brigadier general. And the head of the chaplains' corps would be in Washington.

SHUSTER: Did the school have any kind of training in counseling or anything of that nature?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. We had...we had all kinds of...f problems that... .A chaplain for combat would have his problems. Combat at the time I got there was over [clears throat]. So I was dealing with men that had been in combat and senior officers that had been in combat, and guys that were just itching to get out of there. And they were trying to phase them out.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: But occupation is a problem because you're occupying a foreign country. And of course, we lost a lot of lives in Italy. I was in the Fifth Army. And we lost a lot of...a lot of men in the fight up the...up the boot [Italy] there. And some of those guys were in my units [pauses].

SHUSTER: Well, why don't we get to that in a moment. I was...I just wanted to talk a little bit if there's anything else about the school. How would you describe the other men in your class? What were the other chaplains like?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, [pauses] you had the whole gambit theologically. I mean you got all kinds of people there. You've got the different denominations there and their emphases. And they all have to sort of merge into...into a pattern that will work in the army. Because we're not

ministering to Baptists or Presbyterians. We're ministering to all these different fellows. And they all have their needs.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And...so...so I'd say that you had just about what you'd have in the US pastorate. You get the whole gambit. You've got guys that are really sincere in their...their profession, you've got guys that are just professional people, you've got guys that do their duty. I don't know whether you want that kind of a story, but when I...

SHUSTER: Sure.

FAIRCLOTH: ...but when I came into the hospital...

SHUSTER: This was in Naples?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. I was one of four chaplains. This was a six hundred bed hospital. Mussolini had had it for tuberculosis. It was situation there over the Bay of Naples. You could see Mount Vesuvius from there. And the cities that were covered by Mount Vesuvius way back in the Apostle Paul's day.

SHUSTER: Pompeii

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...and Herculaneum.

FAIRCLOTH: And it was a...it was a...what we call in the Army a general hospital [clears throat]. So the first few days when I was getting myself established there, we had our offices, and I was taken around with the...with the Methodist chaplain.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: He was a Methodist when he was in the ministry out here. And he went around visiting these wounded guys in the wards. And he had nothing to say to them. There was no ministry.

SHUSTER: Nothing to say about their spiritual....

FAIRCLOTH: Spiritual ministry, yes.

SHUSTER: Yeah. So what did he talk about?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, I can't remember that, but it wasn't anything to do with the Lord. I mean, it wasn't any spiritual help to the men. I...I said to myself, "I can't stay with this guy. I can't do

things with him because he doesn't have my...my goals."

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I came in the Army to serve the country, that's true. I came in, however, to serve the Lord. That's the call of my life.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And...so I said, "I've got to establish my own office away from this guy," which I did. And found out, as you get in with these troops, which are men like you and me, that they got problems that only God can solve. And so I had an...I had an evangelistic ministry from the beginning. It was thrilling for me. Because I found out (in the States before of course, I pastored churches in the Philadelphia area part time there for a while), but I found out that I could minister to men. Not just women, but men. And...

SHUSTER: Was that a surprise to you or...?

FAIRCLOTH: No, it was a...it was a pleasure, because when you go into the ministry, why you have a call, supposedly (at least I did) from the Lord. And anyway, all the background that I had had - at the University of Illinois, at Wheaton College, at Eastern Baptist Seminary, for the churches in New Jersey - all fed into this...this whole burden: to reach these guys. And...and so when I separated (I don't know where we are here in the discussion) but when I separated from this Methodist fellow, things really started to happen in that hospital.

SHUSTER: So did you just say to him, "I think it's better if I go around on my own," or...?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. Yeah.

SHUSTER: And it was no big deal?

FAIRCLOTH: No.

SHUSTER: No. Let me just ask you quickly a couple other things before you got to Italy. So at the chaplains' school, did the...did you men talk theology with each other or was it mainly studying for courses?

FAIRCLOTH: Mainly studying for courses. They gave us a lot of stuff to do...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...you know, homework, and things like that to fill out and stuff, and read over regulations, and pass regulations exams, or whatever, so that we...they knew we knew what was up.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And it was a good...it was a good introduction into...into the service. Some of the fellas I met there were real solid Christian men. I met them later in Italy at different points.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: But you can't get in with everybody, so certain....

SHUSTER: What about your instructors? Did anybody stand out in your mind?

FAIRCLOTH: No. The only guy that stands out later...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...is the guy whose name is on this here, right? Finnegan.

SHUSTER: Oh yes. Terrence P. Finnegan.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. He was...he was a Roman....

SHUSTER: He was the assistant commandant it says on the program.

FAIRCLOTH: Right. So what happened to him was in the interval of me getting to Italy and going through almost a year of...of service there, that he is appointed chief of chaplains in Washington. And now he was sort of a...

SHUSTER: Tough guy?

FAIRCLOTH: Well he, yeah, he was stiff. He was a Roman Catholic priest, and military in his mind, and so that what happened later in Rome is very interesting. But I won't jump to that.

SHUSTER: Okay yeah we'll talk about that...we'll get to that point. Did you have much contact with him when you were at the school?

FAIRCLOTH: Not too much except that these guys were always in the parades. They were always in the, you know, in the marching and all the rest. They were...they were present. They were watching everything going on. It was very good from that point of view.

SHUSTER: Did you adjust easily to army life and the regulations?

FAIRCLOTH: I think I did because of Scouts. ...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: In Philadelphia, I had been a scout master there, Troop 88, in Philadelphia, the Third Presbyterian Church while I was in seminary. But I had been in Scouting ever since I was a Cub Scout. So scouting does something for you. We did a lot of marching in scouting, among other stuff. But no, I...I didn't have too much trouble with that.

SHUSTER: Okay. Now of course you were married at this point.

FAIRCLOTH: Right.

SHUSTER: And your...of course you were going to be separating from your wife when you went to Europe. Did you know at that point that they were going to be allowing wives soon to come to Europe?

FAIRCLOTH: No.

SHUSTER: No.

FAIRCLOTH: No we knew nothing.

SHUSTER: So you didn't know how long the separation would be?

FAIRCLOTH: No we didn't. We didn't. But Arlie went back to Illinois from Philadelphia where we graduated. She went back and...

SHUSTER: She went back to her parents?

FAIRCLOTH: ...she was a teacher.

SHUSTER: Oh, okay.

FAIRCLOTH: So she got into her...her...her teaching in East Aurora. So she was a full-time elementary school teacher in Aurora. I think she taught them during fourth grade. But yeah, she was occupied. She....

SHUSTER: And then at the beginning of next year, January 2nd, I think, you sailed for Naples...

FAIRCLOTH: Right.

SHUSTER: ...on the Blue Ridge Victory Ship from Brooklyn.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Right.

SHUSTER: What were the men on the ship like? Of course, they were not going to combat, but they were....

FAIRCLOTH: Well, that's another interesting story. Because we were in Camp Shanks, which was nearby the...the place where we would embark. And it was Christmas Eve. And it was winter, so it was cold. We were in a tent, of course. There were twelve of us or fourteen (I can't remember) officers. All the other guys were second lieutenants.

SHUSTER: On the whole ship?

FAIRCLOTH: No, in this...in this tent.

SHUSTER: Oh. Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: There were over 2,000 guys on the ship. But in our tents, I was with a group of second lieutenants. And I had my...my uniform of course, and they knew I was a chaplain. I did my duties in the tent just like the rest of them. We all had our stuff to do to keep everything clean...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...and all that kind of stuff. And we were there several days. And it came up to Christmas Eve and one of the guys lived not too far from there. He asked the commanding officer if he could get a leave overnight to celebrate Christmas with his family. He gave him leave. The other guys ganged up on him. One guy got enough courage to talk to the chaplain. And he said "Chaplain," he said, "you've been helping us and working with us all these days." He said "We'd like to know what you believe." Well, the minute he said that, like bees, all the guys came from all over the tent to my cot. I had a chance to give them the Gospel right there. And we got on the ship.

SHUSTER: What kind of reaction did they have...did they have to what you said?

FAIRCLOTH: They were all interested. Because it's the way you talk to people, you know that. You can be a puffed up person or you can get down with them and give them the message.

SHUSTER: So, I mean, for example, what kind of....I mean, pretend that you're saying it again. What would you have said?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, you get down into the fact that..., "Why I'm in the ministry is because I want to see people come to know the Lord, those that don't know him, because to know him is really the best thing in life. Come to know the Lord." And of course these guys are all going overseas. They don't know what's going to happen to them. And they're all interested in knowing what the real Gospel is. Anyway, that...so I'd go through whatever. I can't remember what I said, but I know that God guided me to give them an evangelical witness with the idea not to hammer on them...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.



FAIRCLOTH: ...or push them in a corner, but just to say, "Look it, this is what happened to me."

SHUSTER: I mean, they asked you.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. "This is what happened to me." And I made friends. So we got on a boat. Well, I'm not obliged to do anything on the ship. But I went to the commanding officer of the ship, and I said "Look it, I'd like to hold services on this ship." "Whoa," he said, "You've got the...you've got the place. What do you want to do?" Bing, bang, bong, we were every...every day over at...going over to Italy. We had services. And the guys, one after another, came to Christ. We had...I don't know how many of them came to Christ on that...on that trip across the ocean.

SHUSTER: Now did you have other Christians helping you with these services?

FAIRCLOTH: I can't remember. Not on board the ship. I can't remember that. I may have had....

SHUSTER: Those services...?

FAIRCLOTH: ...some of those GI's may have come up and wanted to. Of course, they were in the services.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Not just the guys in my tent. But guys from all over the...all over the ship.

SHUSTER: Now was the ship all officers or was it...?

FAIRCLOTH: No, no. No, there were all kinds of people on board. Yeah.

SHUSTER: Were they individuals? Or were they different units? Or were they assigned after they got to Europe?

FAIRCLOTH: They were assigned after they got there. Yeah. Yeah. We were assigned to the hospital.

SHUSTER: So your services were basically singing and preaching or...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Regular...regular Evangelical. See, the Army had a small hymnal, *The Army Hymnal*. It had a hard bound book (I wish I would have saved one of them. Smaller than this [held up a small book]). And so we had hymnals. We could use the hymnals. If any guy played music (I don't...I forget now, but we may have gotten one guy to play the piano or whatever it was. I can't remember what they had on board there). But we did have Army...what we called SP organs, those little organs you put in your Jeep. And pump them. And so we...later

in Europe, we had those. But I mean, I can't remember what was onboard that ship, but undoubtedly they had equipment for that. And so I got a hold of one of those or whatever it was. And we had services, and the guys enjoyed the services going across. And this gave me a chance to counsel people because guys would come up later and talk.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I can't remember the talks. It's just too long ago. But I mean, we did have talks. We did talk to guys, and people came to Christ.

SHUSTER: You say we. Were there other chaplains on the...was...?

FAIRCLOTH: I don't remember that. But I think there probably were.

SHUSTER: And when people came to you for counseling...I mean, you don't remember individuals, but do you remember the kind of things they were asking you?

FAIRCLOTH: No, I can't go into that. I can't remember the exact conversations. But the conversations with soldiers would have to do with all kinds of things. I mean, they just have...they have unanswered questions that they never asked their pastors, that they never asked any church person. I know sometimes, people have this thing, they've been storing up problems in their minds about Christianity or whatever. And nowadays it's up over your head.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, so it was a...all these experiences that, I'll tell you, that I had in the Army from the beginning to the end, built me up. I got the advantage because I learned how to work with men.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And one of the weaknesses of pastors is they don't know how to work with men.

SHUSTER: As opposed to women?

FAIRCLOTH: They know how to work with women, but they don't know how to work with men. Some of them do, of course a lot of them do. Especially overseas that's true. With foreign...foreign people.

SHUSTER: And you were having services, and you were giving the invitation, and people were committing their lives to Christ. Is that true?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah.

SHUSTER: So how...what happened then? I mean, did you have Bible studies with them or did

you...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, we did. We had little Bible studies onboard ship. Yeah. And we...we did whatever follow-up we could do at the time. Of course, when the guys split, then you either have opportunities or not. And some....I can't remember anybody of those GI's who went into the hospital service as male nurses or anything like that. I don't know. I can't remember that.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: We had some dramatic things happen though, all...all...all the time we saw something dramatic.

SHUSTER: Anything else about the voyage over that you recall?

FAIRCLOTH: No. No. We all...we all...we were on board. When we went out of New York, I remember one thing. I was looking at the Statue of Liberty because I had a missionary call on me. I mean, I knew before I left seminary that God wanted me in missions. I thought I was going to Africa. And so I...I didn't know, I wasn't decided, I hadn't approached anybody about it, but at least it was in...it was my mind and my wife's mind, and we had been with missionary candidates to...to different places in the world at seminary. So we were prepared mentally to...to think missions.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And when I went out of there, I prayed, and I forgot that prayer until several years later. But when I saw the Statue of Liberty when we were going by and going out.... We didn't know at the time, none of us, that we were going to Italy. We didn't know that. We thought that we were going to maybe Japan. We didn't know where we were going: through the Straights [of Gibraltar], going through the Canal...

SHUSTER: Panama Canal?

FAIRCLOTH: ...or where we were going. But it ended up that we were going to Italy. And so....

SHUSTER: That's because troop movements....

HUFFMAN: ...that's why I prayed. I said "Lord, maybe you want to take me someplace where you want us to serve." I forgot that, because when we went through the Straights by Gibraltar, coming back...coming back two years later [microphone gets brushed] we had maybe several thousand troops were on board this boat. And my wife was with me then. But we couldn't be together on the boat. They had to separate us for obvious reasons. And I looked to Africa to the south, and I said, "We'll be there." Because we knew that a lot of people in the Congo that were in school there. And I thought that we going to the Congo, and then I remembered that prayer when we got back, and the different situations in the States on deputation for foreign service and,



“Hey, wait a minute. God is...God is telling me something else.” And we ended up in Europe.

SHUSTER: But your prayer had been to...

FAIRCLOTH: That God would direct us.

SHUSTER: Direct us.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And he did. He did direct us in a big way, because I don't doubt that God would have used us in the Congo. We were going down there to get into the upper Congo there. Ruanguba, which was a Bible school that our board had set up. And we were...we were destined to be teachers there if we got there. So....

SHUSTER: So on your voyages, you said you didn't know where you were going. That was just military secrecy.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: When did you find out that you were going to Italy? When you reached Naples?

FAIRCLOTH: No, we watched...we watched the map.

SHUSTER: Oh, I see.

FAIRCLOTH: You know, when you go across the ocean like that, they're tracing the thing on the ocean. And we said “Uh-oh, we're going to Europe.”

SHUSTER: So the men on the ship at first didn't know if they were going into combat or not?

FAIRCLOTH: No there wouldn't be any combat at that point.

SHUSTER: In Japan there would have been....

FAIRCLOTH: Yes, yes.

SHUSTER: Oh no, I'm sorry. You're right. Of course the whole war was over. Yeah.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah it was just at the end. Right smack at the end.

SHUSTER: Yeah. So you arrived....

FAIRCLOTH: When we were...when we were actually going, you know, I don't know about the other guys, but I know that I was trying to get into the service [chimes in background] before I got out of seminary. I mean...my whole youth was in aviation. I told you about that. But...so I had the fancy idea that I might get into the Air Corps. But of course that didn't work out.

SHUSTER: Why not?

FAIRCLOTH: Eyes.

SHUSTER: Oh that's right, I think you mentioned that.

FAIRCLOTH: And then I tried the Navy chaplaincy.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And they had to have 20/20 vision for the South Pacific. And that's where they were sending them. So I didn't make it there either. So I got into the army chaplaincy. And that's what happened on that.

SHUSTER: And then you arrived in Naples. How would you describe the condition of Italy at that time when you arrived?

FAIRCLOTH: Italy was pretty torn up. Everything south of Rome, the Germans had reeled in all electric wire. They stripped all the wire from the posts, when they retreated up north.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: I found out this later, because I was in the war crimes trials of the German generals of the 14th German Army for several weeks. And the chief of staff explained to us what they had done.

SHUSTER: The German Chief of Staff?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, a young guy about twenty-seven years old. Anyway, they said they reeled in, and they had...they had hooks on the back of that train, and they ripped up all the ties...

SHUSTER: On the railroad tracks?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, they ruined stuff all south of Rome. Of course there was a lot of fighting down there.

SHUSTER: And could you still see this when you were traveling?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah.

SHUSTER: Yeah.

FAIRCLOTH: The...well the people were just devastated. I mean the Italian people...the Italian people were left in the aftermath of a dictatorship that failed miserably. And they were...they were...they were living off of tin cans. I mean they were using aircraft parts from the bombers or

whatever that were shot down. And they took the skin and made pans out of them, aluminum pans and stuff like that. They were selling them in the...in the...in the market. I got some pictures, I can't...probably and slides, I think, or movies or whatever. I got some pictures over there of just, I mean, just the fact that you as a father would sell your daughter into prostitution because you're starving, because you don't have...for your mind, you've got to get some way of living. So I got a...I was just reading off of the ...off of the biography in there before you came to show Betty something. But we got off that boat in Naples. And we thought, "Well, we'll try to get into town to see if there's any kind of coffee around." So I think there might have been ten or eleven of us, I don't know, officers. And I was the chaplain with them. And we were walking into Naples from the debarkation point. And we weren't too many yards down the road before two girls, teenage girls, grabbed an officer on that side (I think I was on the left side), grabbed me and wanted to sleep with us.

SHUSTER: Prostitutes who wanted to...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, but these girls were...their fathers were in the shadows. They were...they were...they were trying to make some money. And of course the guys thought that was the funniest thing in the world because the chaplain was walking along here, and he got...he got propositioned, see? So they got a bang out of that one. But it wasn't funny for the...for the...for the people.

SHUSTER: And they couldn't make a living because their building...their homes were destroyed? Or because they...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, because the economy was bad, everything was black market.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: The Army had our own money that was printed for us.

SHUSTER: Occupation money?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And this was script money. And so that was issued every so many months. It was changed so that...to try to trick the black market stuff going on because some of...some of the American officers and GI's were involved in black market...black marketing American equipment or stuff...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...into the Italian black market and making money for themselves. So every once in a while, they would hold a midnight meeting by surprise and all your money is changed. And of course these guys were caught flat many times. And I could tell you some more stories from that hospital about that. Because...I don't know what I've told you on that, but in the past...in this story of that hospital, I got together with Phil Howard (his picture is in the autobiography).

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: He's the younger boy there in the Howard family) ...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Well, Phil and I worked in that hospital together. Once he came into my office one morning and...big private first class, tall fellow. Knocked on my door. That was right after I got my office settled. And...eight o'clock in the morning, and I said "What do you want? Who are you?" He says, "I'm...I've been doing stuff in the hospital that's illegal. I know it. And I need your permission to continue." And I said, "Well, what training have you had?" Well, he said.....Do you remember that story or not?

SHUSTER: No, no, please go ahead with the story. But you said he was doing things illegal. What did he mean by that?

FAIRCLOTH: He was holding services, and he wasn't a chaplain.

SHUSTER: So he wasn't authorized.

FAIRCLOTH: Oh no. He's a PFC. He was a PFC working on the GU [Genitourinary] clinic. He was working with venereal disease. And I said, "Well, where did you study?" And he said "National Bible Institute in New York and Prairie Bible Institute in Western Canada." And I said, "What's your name?" He said "Phil Howard. My dad's the editor of *Sunday School Times*." I said "Phil, forget I'm a lieutenant. Forget you're a private. Let's get busy." And boy....

SHUSTER: So what did you do?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh, man. We held meetings every night in the wards. He'd lead the singing...or something, we'd sing...whether it was him or a chorus and other guy'd preach. And we'd go back and forth. And we had guys saved, I'm telling you. We started Navigator [Christian para-church organization] meetings in my office, had these guys around the desk teaching them verses, trying to do follow-up with them. And one day a master sergeant who was in for yellow jaundice, so he was moving around the hospital, he wasn't...he wasn't prisoner in a room or anything. So he was moving around, and he was (I hate to use the language), but he was raising hell for the nurses. He was changing their medicines on the stuff. He was messing up. He was mad that he was in there. And so he was messing it up for everybody. And he was in the ward one night when we were preaching. And that guy got saved! He was a chain smoker, he had a filthy tongue, he didn't say four words that he didn't swear once. Well, so he came up to me afterwards a couple days later, and he said, "Chaplain, what do you think of this cigarette?" His fingers were all yellow. I said, "What do you think of it?" "Well, I don't know now that I'm a Christian, I don't know whether God likes...." I said, "Well you do what God tells you to do." And he quit smoking cold turkey. A few days later he comes up, and he says, "What do you think of my language?" And I said "What do you think of it?" "Well, I don't...I don't suppose God likes it too well." Well, I said, "Well, you do what the Lord tells you to do." He was growing like a weed.



SHUSTER: What was his name?

FAIRCLOTH: His first name was George. I can't remember his last. Anyway, he comes into my office one day, and he said, "Look it. I've got to share something with you." He said, "Me and one other sergeant outside are the head of a big black market ring here in Naples." He said, "If we were caught, we'd be in Sing Sing [Sing Sing Correctional Facility in New York] for twenty-five years each."

SHUSTER: So what they would do would sell Army equipment, food, and supplies?

FAIRCLOTH: They were selling flours [sic] out of the bakery in truckloads because that bakery was for all southern Italy there. They renamed the licenses on the six by six trucks. They tipped the...the...the GI's at the gates so that they'd let them through. And they were pulling big deals. Every once in a while, they would pull a big deal like that. He said, "Chaplain, I got to get out of here tonight. I know there's going to be a job. I want to tell the other guy 'It's off.'"

SHUSTER: He has to get out of the hospital?

FAIRCLOTH: I said "Man, you're under orders to be in here. I'm under orders here. You're under orders. You can't leave here without orders. You know that." He said, "I know it, but I've got to get out of here." Well, I went off to meetings with Phil at seven o'clock or whenever we did it. We came back at ten o'clock to the office, and his...his...his hospital clothes were in our office. We waited him out. After midnight he came in. He got past both guards. He said, "I got to this sergeant." He said, "I told him it's off, and I want him to come and see you." So he was trying to evangelize...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...the sergeant! And the guy came in a week later, whatever, to see me. And I talked to him. I talked to him, I talked to him. I gave him the Gospel. It bounced off. You know....

SHUSTER: How about George? Did he stay in the faith?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. He was heartbroken because this guy would not...but he scrotched [sic] the job.

SHUSTER: Meaning he put an end to the black market deal?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. So these kind of experiences happened in that hospital. And another one was with a nurse, one of the nurses because she was interested in the Gospel [microphone falls off]. I've got that off here.

SHUSTER: Oh [fixing microphone]. Its got like a little tie clip there. Okay.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, this is a sad story, because one of the nurses was watching us operate in the hospital, and George of course was one of the guys that she couldn't figure out because he changed. After he was converted, no more mess ups. Then he started to help the nurses. So this is a testimony in itself.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: So she wants to know more of what I'm doing. So I started witnessing to her. Well, they had a dance on the top floor of the hospital for officers. And so everybody was supposed to be up there, the nurses and everybody because they wanted to dance with them of course. So she said, "You know, I'm obliged to go up there, but I want to talk to you." Well, I said, "I'll go up there. I'll have a Coke instead of, you know, liquor" because they were all drinking. And so we went up there, and I was talking to her at one of the tables and a major cut in, and he said "Look it, I want to dance with this girl." And I said, "Go ahead." She came back. Days later, and I'm sure that...I'm not sure that she was saved. But she sure was close to it. She was on a bus with about thirty-five men who were being sent back to the States from the hospital.

SHUSTER: Was she going back to the States?

FAIRCLOTH: No, she was just out on an excursion in Southern Italy. They were going on a, you know, a trip. The bus made a bad turn and went off the cliff. The whole bunch of them was killed except one man sitting next to the driver. She was killed. But I mean, we had all kinds of opportunities to witness. And I went to that guy, and I said, "Look it, why are you alive?" He said, "I don't know." I said, "God wants to talk to you."

SHUSTER: You talked about the services you had with Phil Howard.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: What was a typical sermon like? What did you say?

FAIRCLOTH: We just took Bible stories, we took....we just taught what you would find in any kind of a sermon that was aimed at evangelism just like Billy [Graham] would do or anyone else. We focused...we focused on the person's sin, we focused on the fact that Jesus took that sin on Him, and that...and that...and that faith was necessary for them to come to Christ. We didn't go into any deep theology with these fellows, but we said that God loves you. And that we...we just presented the Gospel like you'd have in any good message that has to do with evangelism. And they responded. We had...we had...we had one guy.... One thing that I'll never forget in my life. We had some real mental cases because of battle problems. And this one guy was out of his mind. And they had him in a straight jacket. And the doctors were watching me work, see, and they couldn't figure out how these guys changed. They couldn't figure out how George changed, they couldn't figure out how...how the Gospel works because they'd never seen it work.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And so they were...they were going to pull some tricks on me. And one of the majors was a doctor there. He thought, "Well, I'll pull a trick on Faircloth. I'll put a real case in front of him." So he brought one of these guys who was out of his nuts...he was nuts...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...and he had him in a straight jacket, and took the thing off of him, pushed him in my office and shut the door.

SHUSTER: To scare you or as a prank?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. But he did that. I'm sure he was standing outside the door because if the guy had attacked me or something, he would...he would...he would have to...he'd be responsible.

SHUSTER: Sure.

FAIRCLOTH: But at any rate, he was pulling a big joke. Well, what happened? I had a big Thompson Chain Reference Bible on my desk. That was my library.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: He saw that Bible. The first thing he saw when he came into the room, he must have seen that Bible. And he snapped out of it! He snapped out of it right in front of me!

SHUSTER: He snapped out of being crazy?

FAIRCLOTH: Yes! And he came...the guy opened the door because he thought that I'd be in trouble, and he sees this guy in his right mind.

SHUSTER: Did he talk to you?

FAIRCLOTH: And it blows his mind. God is amazing.

SHUSTER: Well, did the...the crazy man talk to you? I mean did he...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, I can't remember. But he was...yeah, he was alright. He...something in his Sunday school time, he was in some church. He knew what a Bible was, he knew what God was, and he was back...he was back with it. But I mean, you say, "Well how did he do that? How did that happen?" Listen, God did it. He did things like this all through my ministry, not just in the Army. Now, the Lord....If...if we honor the Gospel, if we...if we...if we tell the truth and are fearless in it because we have nothing to apologize for. WE really don't.

SHUSTER: Did you have a lot of resentment like that from the other officers or from the administration? Like this one guy who threw this other fellow into the room? I mean, was there

opposition to your preaching or your ministry?

FAIRCLOTH: There may have been, but it would be from the higher officers that maybe had...had their hangups. We had a colonel that wasn't....This was not an experience from the hospital, but I had an experience later on up in Italy in....

SHUSTER: In Rome?

FAIRCLOTH: North of Rome when I was switched out of Rome in the north to the field artillery there. We had some outfits there that were together across the road from each other up in Viareggio.

SHUSTER: Viareggio.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And that was sort of a resort town before the war.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: That was a place that where you'd go for vacation, and a very beautiful place, but then the Germans, of course, fortified that thing. When they were there, there were pillboxes. There were pillboxes of a good size, the size of the center of this room, right down the main avenues. And they....

SHUSTER: So a pillbox about eight feet by twelve feet or something like that.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And they had the machine gun slits and....

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And to try and get those things out of there, you would have to tear the place apart. I mean, the Germans really built them. They were reinforced concrete. And I mean...yeah.

SHUSTER: So you were talking about a colonel up there who was opposed to your...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. I was telling my wife here, I pulled up some pictures from the biography there that I've got on the computer. I was in...I was in this outfit that was mostly black. They had failed in combat, and they had been demoted to be engineers. So they were....

SHUSTER: It's the 1170...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. And they had some pretty good officers in there. They had some real Christian guys in that outfit. And in fact, one...one.... There were brothers who had been in one family, and they had moved all the way around and were still in that outfit together, and they were terrific singers. And I had them sing in chapel services.

SHUSTER: These were two officers?

FAIRCLOTH: No, they were four...three or four brothers.

SHUSTER: Oh. I see.

FAIRCLOTH: I can't remember how many. From Alabama or some place. And I...I...I went to the commanding officer who was a colonel, and I said, "You know, I want to have these Easter services for the guys. And I'd like to build a back drop and have it outside the chapel because we've got a lot of guys here, and we'll get them all in chapel." And he said no.

SHUSTER: Did he tell you why?

FAIRCLOTH: No, but he was one of the guys who had come through the North Africa business. He was as hard as nails. And I thought...I thought...so I said to myself, "Well, I'm going to go to the battalion commanders." So I went to the officers in the battalions, and I said, "What do you think of this?" "We'll do anything you want" [Shuster chuckles]. They had carpenters. They had all the guys. They built a beautiful backdrop. They had a big rolling stone in front of the tomb. They had vegetation all around. They made a regular scene and a platform. And we had a huge service out there with all these guys in front. But I mean it's because you either...you either stand for what you believe and stand up for it. Now he thought he could scotch [sic] the idea but no, no, no. God wanted to have a service there, and we did.

SHUSTER: Well, going back to the hospital, of course, you had Catholic chaplains there too.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: Did you chaplains work together or you more or less ignored each other? Or what...how did you...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, we wouldn't work together in the hospital. I mean, we wouldn't clash with each other. But we wouldn't be working together. In the chapel, later on when I was up with the hundred...the next group there, we were in one chapel. (I just held a picture of it up to show Betty) but it was a regular Army chapel.

SHUSTER: This was at the hospital or this was...?

FAIRCLOTH: This was up in Viareggio.

SHUSTER: In Viareggio.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Up above Florence. And...so the Catholic would have his service ahead of me because they had the Mass earlier.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And yeah, we had no problem. He had to drink all the wine though that was left over. I thought that was rather interesting. He emptied the bottles, boy, I'll tell you that. Faithfully. Yeah. So that was...that was a little bit different. But no, I...in fact, I roomed with one. I roomed with a Catholic priest. He was a Jesuit in Rome before I got settled there. I was in a...in the rest center there, and we weren't assigned yet. And so I was rooming with him. And I'd do my devotional time and he'd...he'd get his missal, and he'd be over in his bed doing his...

SHUSTER: With his...praying with his rosary?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. But I'd talk to him. He said, "You know, my whole salary goes into the...into the Catholic Church." He said "I'm on a dole."

SHUSTER: A dough?

FAIRCLOTH: A dole. I don't know how....

SHUSTER: D-O-L-E?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah, he's...he was...he was a typical priest.

SHUSTER: How do you mean that?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, he had...he had...he had his rituals.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I had nothing to do with that of course. We were together for the time. We respected each other. We were in the same room together. No problem.

SHUSTER: During the time that you were in Italy, how would you describe the American occupation? How were the American soldiers reacting to being an occupying army? How were they relating with the Italian population?

FAIRCLOTH: That depended on whether...who you were. The black unit that I was with of several thousand men, were...they should have been repatriated to the States. They should have been out of there. Because they were...they couldn't find any black girls to go with. They couldn't have any recreation time that made any sense to them. Outside of the Army, here's what they did. The Army trucked into our outfit in that location, every Saturday night, they trucked in several six by six trucks full of girls.

SHUSTER: Italian girls?

FAIRCLOTH: And then I had to deal with this.

SHUSTER: Plus the hospital too. You were mentioning before the venereal disease was so high.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. And here's a girl comes up to me and she says, "I want to marry so and so." And I said, "Who is it?" "So and so." So we had the personnel look up this guy. He's a black man from Alabama. "You can't marry him."

SHUSTER: Why can't she marry him?

FAIRCLOTH: It's against the law. You live back there, they might string you up.

SHUSTER: You mean it would be against American law?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. American.... Well, yeah. In New York, if he was from New York, it would be no problem. No problem. But all through the South...there were a lot of southern guys in our outfit. Blacks. So you've got real problems that the Army fomented it by bringing these girls in...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...giving some ideas of grabbing a soldier. I'll tell you a story that you won't believe. One girl said, "I want to marry so and so." We went to the personnel and looked him up. "Well, he's a black man, so and so." "He's not black!"

SHUSTER: That's what the girl said?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. "He's not black!" I said, "He's black." "Well, he might be black now, but he told me that on the boat, he gets a couple injections because he got injections coming over." He really had her sold. You wouldn't believe that, that any person would believe that, but that girl believed that. And you know. So we had all kinds of cases. But [clock chimes in background] we had opportunities to witness.

SHUSTER: Besides relations between the sexes...sexes, I mean, how was the American Army doing it's occupation? I mean, what...was it achieving something with its occupation?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, I think what the...what the Army has to do in an occupation situation is hold...hold the peace. And assist the transition to the civilian government. And of course in a war zone, why you, the civilian thing has all been dismantled. Now what was happening out there, what was happening, and it played out in the next how many years, thirty years or more, the Italian situation was extremely tenuous. The...the...the government changed repeatedly. They weren't able to hold a coalition government in place. The communists were after power. The communists were very strong in Italy. Even when I was there. They were marching down the street, and they'd take the whole street, and they'd mow you down. They'd come right down the sidewalks and everything in a big mass right by that church where I...where I had services eventually. This is in Rome.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.



FAIRCLOTH: I was in Rome almost a year.

SHUSTER: Right.

FAIRCLOTH: And...I got the big Episcopal Church which is one of the six diplomatic churches in Europe in the capitals.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And this one in Italy was one of them. And it was a beautiful church. And...the rector before the war had fled because of the...of the fascists. He had to get out of there. And the congregation was decimated to a few...few dozen people.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And so I thought to myself, "You know, I could use that church" [watch alarm goes off]. So I went to the people. I remember one lady, Madame [name unclear]....

SHUSTER: This is what was left of the congregation of the church?

FAIRCLOTH: I said...I said, "Look it," I said, "I've got about 400 or more GI's that will come in here if we could use your church. And we can hold services and then you could...you could also benefit," (because the original services were in English). And they were delighted. I said, "Well, now one thing that we're going to have to do, we won't be doing an Episcopal service. We'll be doing an Army service." And I said, "We'll be using Army hymnals." "I don't care what you do, we want to worship the Lord, and you can come in." So we...we held services there, and we had all kinds of wonderful things happen there. But....

SHUSTER: Now you were talking about the Army doing its duty of occupation and managing the transition to civilian control. Do you think they did a good job?

FAIRCLOTH: They probably did as good as they could do. Yeah. Because...because there were all kinds of funny ideas after the war. I was in an officers' meeting where they were going to make the Germans into farmers. You see, they're not going to have them be military anymore. Well, that's stupid. The top engineering in the world, some of it comes from Germany. These guys aren't all the sudden going to forget who they are. So I mean, there were dumb ideas. I heard all kinds of dumb ideas. It never would work out. But the general occupation of the country was done in an orderly manner. We got out of there. The guys who didn't want to stay there any longer than they had to. So we had....Well, I'll tell you, the 88th Division was up...up in Northern Italy. They ended up...they had been together ever since training in Texas, all through the war.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And the chief chaplain was (I forget his name now), but he was a colonel. And

he was a real solid Christian. And I got in touch with him, and we had pretty good fellowship together. He was up in the Udine, up there across from Yugoslavia. And they had an occupation force up there of 5,000 troops from the US, from England, and France, I think. And he was over the US force. And Arlie and I went up there in a staff car to visit him. He took us all over there and did some travel together. But these men they had no...they had no discipline in that outfit for months. The guys were so proud of their unit.

SHUSTER: How do you mean they had no discipline?

FAIRCLOTH: Eisenhower decorated them for no venereal disease, no nothing in their outfit.

SHUSTER: So you mean they had very strong discipline?

FAIRCLOTH: High discipline.

SHUSTER: High discipline.

FAIRCLOTH: High, yes. High...what do you call it? Esprit de corp.

SHUSTER: High morale.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. High morale. So I don't know, there were guys, you know, they were...there were guys that had been over there in combat and they wanted to get out of there.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And they got them out of there pretty fast. But....

SHUSTER: You mentioned of course that you spent most of your time in Rome. How did that assignment come about?

FAIRCLOTH: In the hospital in Naples, we had a command situation where there was a chaplain over the whole of Italy. Under him was a Presbyterian chaplain (I think this guy [the chaplain over all Italy] was a Lutheran), I think under him was a Presbyterian chaplain. And I was down here in Naples. And they heard about what was going on in that hospital. And they...they even communicated to me about it. They were happy about it.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And they had a problem in Rome. There had been a...chaplain in Rome (I think he was Episcopal, but I'm not...I can't remember) and he got to thinking that he had to drink with the boys. And he got to be a chronic alcoholic. They had to dismiss him to the States. Discharge him. And in that hole, there was no Protestant chaplain in Rome. Imagine this. So....

SHUSTER: And of course there are a lot of American troops in Rome.

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah!

SHUSTER: Catholic and Protestant.

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. The Protestant Presbyterian chaplain over me said "Look it, I'm going to move you into Rome." Well we were going great guns there in Naples. But he said "You can do a real ministry there in Rome. There's an Allied radio every day of the week. You can preach on the radio." And besides that, we got the rest center there, we got spots where you could oversee the services.

SHUSTER: But he was encouraging you to evangelize and to....

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. He was a real evangelical guy, he was. And so...so we were...I was moved out of there, I was moved north into Rome, and it was in Rome that my wife was moved over.

SHUSTER: That's when she came over?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, because before that it was...she wasn't in Italy.

SHUSTER: She came over June 28th, I saw in your....

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. And then we got into the Excelsior Hotel which was an officers' building. Right in the heart of the best district of Rome, they had several of hotels commandeered. And they had officers in these hotels. And so out of that...that hotel is where we worked. And....

SHUSTER: Now were you assigned to a particular unit or regiment or were you...have a general responsibility for Rome?

FAIRCLOTH: I was in the headquarters command.

SHUSTER: Headquarters command.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, I had offices in the headquarters building right across from where Mussolini used to harangue the crowds. Right across the square. And...yeah. So I got a...I got an Italian girl as a secretary. I got a chaplain's assistant, Herb Betcher [?]. Here's Betcher [?] [indicates a photograph].

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I had a Jeep driver who was a prisoner of war. He was an Italian cab driver in Rome.

SHUSTER: This is you, right? [Shows Faircloth photo]

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And he had been captured in the Mediterranean in the Italian Navy. And he knew Rome like a book. It was amazing, he could do anything I wanted him to do in Rome. Marc...Marcello. Several years later, I went with my family to Portugal on a vacation, went down to Rome and found him [Shuster laughs] and his wife.

SHUSTER: What was he doing then?

FAIRCLOTH: He was...he was a cab driver.

SHUSTER: Cab driver.

FAIRCLOTH: But he...he was an interesting guy. Anyway.

SHUSTER: So you were assigned to Rome. What was...what was a typical day like? What did you during a day as chaplain?

FAIRCLOTH: Well I had...I had several spots to watch. I had...I had the...I located the troops in that church. But I had to go out to the rest center where they had guys from all over the place that were being rehabilitated and everything physically. So I had...I had a chapel out there, a regular army chapel. I must have a picture of that.

SHUSTER: Now is that something that you did every day or every week?

FAIRCLOTH: Every weekend.

SHUSTER: Every weekend.

FAIRCLOTH: Well, during the week, we would have some Bible studies in different places...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...for guys, yeah. And yeah it was a very fruitful ministry.

SHUSTER: Did you have a time set aside just for counseling when men could come in to talk to you?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. And of course in this situation, I got calls from officers that wanted to get married. And that's another one of the stories that's amazing. Because this captain came into my office. And he wanted to...he wanted to talk to me. He wanted...he wanted to get married to a Red Cross officer girl. And I said "Look it, I don't...I don't perform any marriages whatsoever unless I can talk to you...in counsel previously." Because that's my conviction. There are plenty of chaplains around," because there were other chaplains in Rome and different places. I was in the headquarters command. And I said "I'd be glad to talk to you, but would you bring the girl with you?" He did. He brought the...he brought her along.

SHUSTER: She was also an American?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. And...I said "What's your experience? Where have you been?" He told me the horrors of North Africa. And he was in the battles there. And how many guys died in that. He didn't know whether he believed in God or not anymore. He got into that, and I said "Well," I said "I'm going to tell you the Gospel. I'm going to tell you what God told me through His Word." I said "First of all," I said "God is real." He said "I...I...I...I think there's a God." "Well," I said, I started witnessing to him. "God loves you. He loved you so much that he brought his son into this world to take your sin on Himself." I went through that thing with the two of them. Both. The girl wanted to marry him, so they were very receptive. They listened to everything. It was at least four or five hours I was with them. On a Saturday. And ended up both of us kneeling down in that office. Well....

SHUSTER: All three of you kneeling down?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. I performed the wedding. I think it was in...yeah, in that church, in that Episcopal church...

SHUSTER: In Rome?

FAIRCLOTH: ...a lot of GI's present from his outfit. He was a captain at the time. And...several...two or three months later.... I gave them a Weymouth New Testament that I had available as a present. And I told him to have devotions every day together, to read together, and pray together. Two and a half or so months later, I was walking up in Rome in the very area where their billet [quarters] was and she was across the street going someplace and she yelled to me across the street. And she said "Chaplain, come on over here, I want to show you something." And took me up to their room. She said "We're in," (I forget where it was, but some place in the epistles). "We're reading every day." Twenty years later in Portugal, I get a letter from her. Her husband had gone into professional engineering outside Europe. And he had several kids, boys. All their boys are Christians. "We're celebrating our twentieth anniversary and we want to thank you."

SHUSTER: Do you recall their name?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, I've got it written there. I've got the captain. I've got his picture in there because at their fiftieth anniversary of their marriage, they went back to Rome to that church. And rededicated themselves to the Lord at that church. And she...she sent me a picture. A colored picture of her husband and her. And he had died a couple months earlier and she wanted me to have that picture. So I put it in the thing, I put it.... It's amazing what God does.

SHUSTER: Indeed.

FAIRCLOTH: When you just...give them the Gospel.

SHUSTER: Did...this was the Episcopal church in Rome?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: That's the name of it?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. It's one of the many churches in there. One in Paris, one in England, one in Germany, and so forth. There were.... Oh by the way...

SHUSTER: If I could have a moment, if I could just ask do you recall the address of it in Rome or the street it was on?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, it was on Via Nazionale.

SHUSTER: Via Nazionale. Okay, go ahead.

FAIRCLOTH: And...one day, early on in the services there, who appears but...what's his name who was envoy to the Vatican from Roosevelt?

SHUSTER: Oh...

FAIRCLOTH: He was a dollar a year man.

SHUSTER: Tuscan? T something?

FAIRCLOTH: I've got him, I've got his name in there.

SHUSTER: Anyway. He was Roosevelt's envoy to the Vatican. [Myron Charles Taylor]

FAIRCLOTH: He came into the church. He had a diamond stickpin [Shuster laughs]. And once when he came out, he said "Now look it, chaplain," he was the guy with the Vatican.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: To the Pope.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: He said "You know I deal with the Pope all the time," he said "Do you want to meet the Pope?" I said "Yeah, I'll meet the Pope." "Oh I'll get you an engraved invitation." Well, he did. He got the invitation with an Episcopal bishop, black bishop from Florida. And so the three of us went to see the Pope. This is a story that's.....

SHUSTER: This would be Pius the XII I think?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah. Yeah. But you see, what's his name? Gosh! I can't remember his name right now.

SHUSTER: While you're telling the story, I'll look it up in your autobiography. So you went....

FAIRCLOTH: Taylor!

SHUSTER: Taylor, okay.

FAIRCLOTH: Myron Taylor.

SHUSTER: I'm sure that you're right.

FAIRCLOTH: And he...he...he was in church every Sunday there. Because he was...oh yeah. He was diplomatic.

SHUSTER: What kind of person was he?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh, well I can't remember that. He was very friendly. He was....

SHUSTER: So what happened at your audience with the Pope?

FAIRCLOTH: Well, I'll tell you. We were...we were given this invitation. We were told to be there at a certain time at the Pope's quarters which are to the right of St. Peter's, as you go into that big circle. The Pope's quarters are up in the right side of that big...installation there several floors high. We went in there, we were ushered in there. As we went through certain things, you have a military [clapping] atmosphere. Swiss Guards coming to attention, all this stuff. And we were ushered into audience chambers. And you'd go down the hall, you'd have the big audience chambers and they get smaller and smaller the closer they get to the Pope's quarters. And each room has a throne. And each room is luxuriously decorated with tapestries and all kinds of art that is invaluable. So we...by the...I don't know what you'd call it, Papal chaplain or Papal whatever it is. Would move us. My wife was with me and so was this other fellow. So we were moved along. Well, Arlie insisted on sitting in every one of those thrones [Shuster laughs]. She was a rascal.

SHUSTER: How did the Papal servants react to that?

FAIRCLOTH: He...he didn't know that because he left us alone.

SHUSTER: Oh [laughs].

FAIRCLOTH: He's leave us alone for like ten minutes or fifteen minutes and then he'd move us. But we got down to the place where we were to receive him. And all of the sudden, this fellow sort of flew out of the room. And the Pope came down the outside hall there where the windows were to the outside. And came in the room. Very slight of stature, fragile looking man. And talked to us in fairly good English as I remember.

SHUSTER: What did he ask you or what did he talk to you about?

FAIRCLOTH: Well he talked to us about where we came from in the States and all this kind of stuff. And of course he could see I was a chaplain from my insignia. And he could see that I was married because I had my wife with me [Shuster chuckles]. And after a while, he said "You know, do you want my blessing?" I said "No, I don't...I don't care for that."

SHUSTER: How did he react to that?

FAIRCLOTH: He didn't react. Then the Episcopal guy, to my amazement (if you know anything about the history of the Episcopal or Anglican church, why, you know that they wouldn't be bowing down to the Pope). But this guy kneeled in front of him and received his blessing, which in Latin sounded like a machine gun for about two seconds [imitates a machine gun]. And so that was it. And then he presented each one of us with a medallion of his ring with his image on it. Which any Catholic would give their right arm to get that, you see. My wife's folks are several...my first wife's folks were...several people were Roman Catholic. And when we told them that story, they said, "We would have given our right arm, we would have crawled in there on our hands and knees." Anyway, that was an experience with the Pope.

SHUSTER: Did you have...get any sense of his personality or his...what he was like as a man?

FAIRCLOTH: No, well no. You wouldn't get that out of that short of a visit. Except he was very cordial. He was polite. He was...he was doing his duty. Because he would be receiving let's say, the whole complement of the boat in that big room. He'd get the whole crew in there. But we were probably a couple rooms from where he would do baptisms outside of his...apartments. If you have any...if you have any...if you've done any study about this fellow (which it's out there if you want to study him) he was a rascal with the Nazis. He was the Nuncio [papal envoy] to the Hitler government before he became Pope. After he became Pope, he was...he was footsy-footsy with Hitler's system about the Jews. Jews went by his window to...to the gas chambers. All these are documented facts. He...he was a rascal. And...I mean he was...he was in the fascist network. No matter what they say, this is...this...this is factual. And several books on that, I was in the trials of the German officers that were in Italy because I told you, some of that stuff comes out in the testimonies.

SHUSTER: Yeah. Well let me ask you, when you were in Rome, were you still holding evangelistic meetings?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, we...I used the old...the Episcopal pulpit up there. I had to climb the rope [?] and be up there.... I did everything to please the Episcopalians in the audience. To our GI's it didn't make any difference. Some of them may have been Episcopalians, I don't know. But we filled that place up. And we had things happen there, I'll tell you. We had one day, Herb Betcher [?] was at the door. And the guys came in, he was sort of the usher type in our services. And one day, we were singing at the beginning of the service. And we were...everybody was standing. And a woman came in. And she started going up and down the rows, sort of bothering the guys. She was begging. And Herb tipped her on the shoulder and said "You can't do that, you might do that in a Catholic church, but here you're not doing that. Talk to Chaplain if you want to." So she did. She waited. And at the end of the service, I talked to her. She was an American woman.



SHUSTER: She was an American woman, and she was begging in the church?

FAIRCLOTH: She was a prostitute.

SHUSTER: Oh.

FAIRCLOTH: She said...of course I didn't know it at that point. She said "I need some money to send to my daughter in Naples. She's in very great need." And she said "If you'll loan me some money, I'll give it back to you. Within a week or so." So I looked at her and I said "Well, let's loan her the money." She wanted 600 lira at the time. So we gave her 600 lira. And it was a week or so later, she came up to headquarters. And Herb let her in and she had the money. And I thought "well, I'm going to...I'm going to try to find out about this lady." So I got her into counseling in my office. And I said, "What's happened to you? Are you American?" "Yes I'm American." "Well what happened to you? Why are you here? What...what are you doing?" And she told her sad story. She was a soprano in the Metropolitan Opera. At seventeen, she was singing before royalty in Europe. She had sung before the Queen of England. She had sung before all of...Scandinavia. All over the place. On another visit, she brought to me her album...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...with all these pictures. So she wasn't fibbing.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And she said "In Italy, when I was here before the war, an Italian orchestra conductor from Florence seduced me. I became his," What do you call it?

SHUSTER: Mistress?

FAIRCLOTH: "As soon as I was living with him, he suppressed my talent. He wouldn't let me sing or anything. We had two kids. We had a boy and a girl. A war broke, our house was bombed, my husband died"

SHUSTER: So they got married?

FAIRCLOTH: No, her...her whatever.

SHUSTER: Her lover.

FAIRCLOTH: The orchestra conductor died. The boy was, of course...had been drafted into the Italian army. He was in North Africa against the...against the British. The Germans used the Italian units as...to draw the fire. And they were back here. She said "My boy is coming home. I heard here after six years. He's coming...he's coming back to Italy. He's being released by the British as a prisoner."



SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Well I witnessed to her. And she said "You know, I'm so hard," she said. "God can't...." I said "Don't say that." But she said "I want you to talk to my boy." She said "He's going to be absolutely devastated when he finds out what happened because his sister is down in Naples and she's in prostitution and she's had kids by three different armies already." Well, I kept in contact with her because I tried to help her. One day, Giacomo came into my office. "James...that's "James" in Italian.

SHUSTER: That's her son?

FAIRCLOTH: He spoke pretty good English. He'd been with the English for six years and he....

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: He said "Look it, I came in here because my mother sent me here. That's the only reason I'm here." He said, "She wanted me to talk to you, but that's not my desire. But that's what my mother said." Now, he said...he said, "I played the piano for the British." He was...he was a concert pianist. His father had...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...that's where he got it from.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And...anyway, we...we...we talked and I...I witnessed to him. And he said "I've read the Bible through. I've read the Bible through down in Africa when I was a prisoner." He said, "I can...that's why I know a little bit better English." He said, "I went through the..." But he said, "I saw too many people die." He said, "I'm only one of two or three of my whole outfit that's alive. They were all shot in pieces by the...by the...by the...in the war." "Well," I said "Giacomo, if you don't mind, come back when you have a chance, come on back up here. I'd like to talk to you. I want to...want to...want to witness to you." Well, he'd go down into Rome. This is an interesting thing, he'd try to get a job. They made up little orchestras, three or four guys, and they'd play for restaurants.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: So he would get some money that way. And he could make out. So he'd come back up to my office on Fridays. He'd keep talking. It took me three months to win that guy to the Lord. He finally dealt with me. And he was really saved. And he wanted to tell all the other people about it. And he wanted to...some girl he'd been going with, he wanted to evangelize this girl. Well, I was holding meetings. This was another thing I did in Rome. I started Youth for Christ type stuff. [a clock chimes] in the Red Cross center in Rome. They had a place for several

hundred people there, and I said to Jacomo, "you know, you play the piano don't you? Why don't you come down there and help me?" And he did.

SHUSTER: Now, had Youth for Christ sent some staff people over or were you just doing this on your own?

FAIRCLOTH: No.

SHUSTER: No?

FAIRCLOTH: No, no. But in the middle of that, toward the end of that, Torrey Johnson shows up in Rome.

SHUSTER: While you were there?

FAIRCLOTH: And I told Torrey, "I'm being shifted out of here," because I already had orders to be shifted out. And I said "You know, maybe you can find out some way to take care of this thing because it's at least..." Well I can't remember what he said, but after I came back in, I got into Windsor [Windsor Park, Carol Stream, Illinois – a retirement center founded by Torrey Johnson], I was in the dining hall here and Torrey was sitting at a table down here and I touched him on the shoulder and I said "Hey Torrey, remember Rome?"

SHUSTER: [Laughs] And of course that's Torrey Johnson...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...who was the first president of YFC.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: So when you say a YFC style meeting, how is it different from the other meetings you were holding?

FAIRCLOTH: Well we were...we were.... I could whistle a chorus to Jacomo and he could play it [snaps fingers] just like that. He just had an ear. And we sang, we sang things like you'd sing in the SingSpirations and things that were going on at that time back home. And we had been in this kind of stuff and we used hymns that were lively. Like I had done in any of the other places where I was. So....

SHUSTER: Were you usually the speaker or did...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. I did have a lieutenant...I had a lieutenant that was a dentist in the medical corps. And he was...what was his name? He was two years at Wheaton and then he went out to Northwestern and got his dental degree at...at Northwestern and he got in the Army. And they flew him around. He was in the Air Corps and they flew him to different places

where he could be of service as a dentist with the...with the GI's. But he got wind of me in Rome, and so he'd stop by there and I'd use him to direct the music. And...yeah, we had.... He ended up in Seattle with a dental...dental business out there and he...he...he formed that, I think they call it the missionary dentists. They went to South America, do you have any wind of that?

SHUSTER: I've heard of it, yeah.

FAIRCLOTH: He was in that and he'd take equipment down there and he'd do free dentistry on the mission field down there with the different missionaries. Gosh, what's his name? I'm getting to be too old [The Missionary Dentist was founded by Vaughn V. Chapman in 1950].

SHUSTER: Did the Palermo brothers come there while you were a chaplain?

FAIRCLOTH: No. No I didn't know the Palermo brothers until...well let's see. I didn't get to know them until well into their career. Because I was in the international meetings Billy promoted and of course, they were there.

SHUSTER: You had mentioned earlier about the...your run in with the theater chaplain, Terrence Finnegan.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: Want to say a few words about that?

FAIRCLOTH: Well what happened there was in Rome, dealing with one of the Baptist pastors called [pauses] his name was Veneziano. Vincenzo Veneziano.

SHUSTER: And he was an Italian.

FAIRCLOTH: He was an Italian Baptist. But he...let's see how that worked. He...he had contact with an orphanage that had been torpedoed. The torpedo skipped into the orphanage.

SHUSTER: The orphanage was on the coast and...?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And did some destruction there and they were helping them. And they got...I got involved with him and I went out there and I told the GI's, I said "Look it, guys, let's make a big collection for these...for this work." Well the guys were all ready to make a collection for something like that. So we had a big box, gosh, we had a box...it would take more than this table. And they kept filling it up with stuff from the PX [store on the Army base] of and any kind of candy bars or anything...

SHUSTER: So it wasn't a collection of money but of...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah it was money too. At the services I took offerings and I told them all about it. And of course we had rules in the Army. Now this is one of the things that you learn at the

chaplain school, see? So I had a book where I recorded all this kind of thing. And money...if money would come in there in that...Rome, that's where we did it, we would receipt this...this stuff. So it was out of my hands and into the people's hands that it was destined for...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...within hours. And so that was going on and we were having a great fun, the guys loved to do that. They even went out there and tried to play soccer with the...with the kids. All these little kids play soccer even before they're out of.... And it was a great...it was a great...it was a great work outlet for the...for the troops. Well this...after a while, Finnegan comes to Italy to review the chaplains over there.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And he comes to our unit and...several months before, in fact (I couldn't remember what date it was, but several months before) I had a very interesting situation develop. [Pauses] The Catholic fellow wanted to get married. Well my...my procedure on that would be to refer to him to a certain monsignor in the Vatican. And this monsignor would handle our army affairs for us with the Roman church. So this kid came and he wanted to get married. And I put in the request for him. No answer. Made the request again because he came back. No answer. He said "You know, I want to get married!"

SHUSTER: Was that typical, it took a long time to get an answer?

FAIRCLOTH: I don't know but...no I wouldn't say that. But the point is that he didn't have an answer so he said...I said "I'll just give you an authorization myself because I don't want to hold you up. That's not my....that's not my decision." So we...I forgot how the little details there, but it worked out so that he got his...he got his authorization and he...whoever married him was a Roman Catholic undoubtedly. And he was okay. But months later, Finnegan comes. He's a priest, he's a Roman Catholic. And he comes and he comes and he looks me up specifically. And he comes up to...to...my command there in Rome. And he says "I want to talk to you." So he...I don't know whether we went to the apartment to talk, I can't remember. Or whether we...I mean in the hotel. I think we did. I think we were in the hotel. I'm not sure of that. Anyway, he pulls out this document where I had approved this guy's marriage. He said "What are you...what are you...who are you?" I told him the story. I said "Your people didn't respond." I said "I tried three or four times to get the Vatican to do something because they were supposed to handle our affairs and they didn't do it. And this kid was not to be punished because of the inefficiency of...of these people. That's what that's about."

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Well, he saw that I had an answer for him, so he switched to another thing. He pulled out some statement that I had taken offering my services. Now he said "What's going on here?" I said "Here's what's going on." I took out my books and showed him. "I'm not making any money off of the Army. We're helping somebody here, who's...who's in some trouble." But



he tried to pin me and he couldn't pin me. And so the visit ended and within a few months he had them cut orders on me. That's why I got out of Rome. He cut orders on me and he pulled a dirty deal. This is the kind of stuff you get, I got this on the mission field afterwards. I've seen this all over my work with the Roman church. And you've got a lot of hankey pankey going on here in Chicago all the time. And it's sort of coming up on the surface now. For years, they wouldn't publish anything against the church. But now they don't mind embarrassing the priests. But this guy, this guy pulled a trick....

SHUSTER: This guy Finnegan.

FAIRCLOTH: This, this....

SHUSTER: You mean Finnegan?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. He had him cut orders on me. And there was another guy up in that unit where I told you about.

SHUSTER: Runreggio.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: Viareggio.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. There was a chaplain there, real sharp chaplain that was doing...doing some real solid evangelism with the.... And so he cut orders on him and he cut orders on me and he was switching us. And he thought that he would dump all of my work, because I was on the radio every day, I was in all of these rest centers and stuff, I was in the church down in the middle of the city. I was a thorn in their side.

SHUSTER: Their being the Catholic Church?

FAIRCLOTH: Yes. They wanted to get rid of me.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: I was within a mile of the Vatican everyday on the radio. And I was preaching the Gospel. And he got me out of there on orders and he got this fellow. Now what does God do about that? God lets this guy get into a jeep accident.

SHUSTER: Who was a chaplain up in north Italy.

FAIRCLOTH: I can't remember. I can't remember his name.

SHUSTER: But he's the one you're talking about. He's the one who was in a Jeep accident?

FAIRCLOTH: Yes. And he, I think he broke his leg or something and he...he couldn't leave right away. So I was switched. And I got up to talk to him. And so I explained my whole program to him. And I said "Now you can take that over intact. Intact. And you tell me what you're doing and I'll...I'll..." And we traded. And so the ball went over the fence in the wrong direction. But I mean this kind of subterfuge and you're...you're always fighting it. And of course the Roman church in my experience never takes the blame. They always have somebody else do their dirty work. In this case it was personnel department....

SHUSTER: The Army personnel?

FAIRCLOTH: ...that traded us. So you can never trace it to him, because he's.... Well anyway, that was one of the things that happened out of Rome. But we had...I had a good ministry. I had a good ministry in Rome. But I...I still remember a lot of the things that happened, amazing things that happened.

SHUSTER: Well let me ask you, you mentioned in your autobiography when you first came up to Rome in February of '46, one of the first things you did, they sent you up to Geneva...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: for a conference there? What was that about?

FAIRCLOTH: The World Council of Churches had not been formed as you know. It didn't...it didn't organize until 1948 in Amsterdam. So this is earlier. But the early...exploratory work was being done. And [Willem A] Visser 't Hooft was the Dutchman who was over the...sort of chairman of the thing.

SHUSTER: And he eventually became the first secretary of the World Council of Churches.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And he...he had a....we were sent up to...two of us were sent up to Geneva. I...I don't think there were more than sixteen guys in that circle. But we were from the Army.

SHUSTER: Why did the Army care? Why did the Army send a body up...send anybody up to the...?

FAIRCLOTH: Well I think that the...whoever the top brass was wanted a...they wanted us to be in on what was going on as an activity I suppose. Because the war was over and this thing was going to go forward and they wanted us to know about it. And....

SHUSTER: So you were going up there just to observe...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...and to see what was happening?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. We were in on the conversation but it was very interesting. Visser 't Hooft was a Dutchman, he was smoking his cigar there and having a good time with us. See, I wrote a thesis when I was in seminary. My thesis for the degree on Christian unity. And I maintain from the Scripture that you and I are united in Christ. There's no organization necessary. We don't have to...we don't.... So you've got a...you've got a...you've got a...some kind of a hodgepodge going on because organizations don't unite anybody spiritually. Christ unites them. And if you get away from that, you're sort of in left field.

SHUSTER: So did you...?

FAIRCLOTH: Because all kinds of things can happen in an organization. There are people in churches right here in Wheaton that are members of the churches that aren't necessarily converted.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: I was one of those in Aurora years ago. My father was one until he was forty-two. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church and he wasn't converted. He wasn't saved. And so you have that going on all over the religious world, so called. The evangelical world. And the fact is, the unity in Christ is not limited to the First Baptist church Wheaton or some other place. It's...it's...we're in Christ by rebirth.

SHUSTER: So did you say this at this meeting with Visser 't Hooft?

FAIRCLOTH: Probably did.

SHUSTER: What kind of response did you get?

FAIRCLOTH: Well those guys are all...they're all exploring. I mean my idea is as good as anybody else's.

SHUSTER: So it was just discussion?

FAIRCLOTH: ...comes to the table. Yeah. But those fellows were...some of them of course might be sincere. I don't know. The organization has done some horrible things in history since then.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: They've backed up armed rebellions in South America and all kinds of stuff. In the name of Jesus.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: I mean it's...you know...I've been through the whole gambit because being a

teacher of church history for years now at a graduate level. And missions. Which is what I've been engaged in all the time. And so...

SHUSTER: So what...?

FAIRCLOTH: These are particular subjects....

SHUSTER: Sure. So did this meeting make any particular impression on you or was it...?

FAIRCLOTH: Well I was sort of glad to be there to see what was going on. Because later on they had the meeting in Amsterdam [organizational congress of the World Council of Churches in 1948] and you had the opposition of guys like what's his name? The Presbyterian church there in the east [Probably Carl McIntire]. There was a big movement against...against the World Council of Churches.

SHUSTER: Of course that was after you had returned to the US.

FAIRCLOTH: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. And I was in on stuff in Geneva, Switzerland years later when we took some Portuguese up there from Portugal. What was the year? 1960? Up in Geneva. The...which was a count...counter...counter meeting to the World Council of Churches. They had all kinds of churches together who were fundamental type churches opposed to this other group and so forth. You would recall the name of this Presbyterian pastor who was a great leader of that movement.

SHUSTER: Not Barnhouse?

FAIRCLOTH: Nope. Barnhouse would be on our side.

SHUSTER: Oh okay. I thought you said he would be opposed to the World Council of Churches.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, Barnhouse would be probably. I don't know, I never heard him talk about that but I was in his church several times in Philly. No I don't....

SHUSTER: So at this particular meeting, it was just discussion and you said it was interesting to see what was going on. What was going on?

FAIRCLOTH: Well they're trying to get everybody together to get into that eventual meeting in Amsterdam. They were trying to get people to know what their motives are...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...what are they doing, and of course they want to get people together and they want.... When you have this kind of a move for unity, you have to see...you have to give up...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ... something according to the way things work. You have to have a common denominator that everybody can agree with. And that denominator is the...very, very simple. So simple that you eliminate the problems that people have when they deviate from fundamental doctrine.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Because fundamental doctrine cannot be stated in one line. That's why you have the Westminster Confession of Faith there.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And the shorter Catechism or whatever of the Presbyterian church which is really solid basic doctrine. Or the other famous doctrines in the history of the church...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...that pull people together around a real core of conviction. And there are some horrible things as you know if you are reading *Christianity Today* or any of these magazines, why people are deviating from this grossly and committing terrible, terrible heresy. That's the only thing you can call it from the apostolic doctrine of the New Testament. Because most creeds that are fundamental are based on the New Testament. On the Scriptures. So yeah, the World Council of Churches start probably had a good idea. But when you get into the nitty gritty of trying to get all of these people together, that is not the unity that is spoken of in the New Testament. The unity that is spoken of in the New Testament is engineered by the Lord Himself.

SHUSTER: By the Holy Spirit.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. I...I...I feel...you know, I've been in all kinds of international meetings. I've been in the...I was at Lausanne (International Congress on World Evangelization, 1974) I was at the Berlin meeting that Billy held there in Berlin [World Congress on Evangelism] in '66. Dr. Edman, by the way was with me at that meeting. And several of the other big meetings in Amsterdam in '83 and '86 [the International Conference for Itinerant Evangelists] where we had in '86 as many as 10,000 people and the Americans were in the minority by a long shot. I mean from all over the world. And when you walked with these people and you talked with them, you felt a unity with them. I mean, you just knew it. You didn't have to speak Chinese. You knew that that guy's a Christian. You just know it. It's a spiritual unity that is not made by man. It's a...it's a God given thing. So I.... In Portugal, in Portugal later on, my ministry was known as a unifying ministry.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Because I worked with everybody that I could work with that was inside the

lines. And most of them are. Almost ninety percent.

SHUSTER: Inside the lines, you mean in...?

FAIRCLOTH: Fundamental...not Fundamentalism, but fundamental doctrine. Fundamental doctrine. Where we could work together. And by the way, that's happening right now as I told you before. There's...the new campaign that they're working on, that's what I.... When I went to Charlotte, I got into that...that headquarters there where they're monitoring what's going on around the world with the My Hope...My Hope campaigns. Which is television evangelism. From Franklin [Graham], Franklin's doing this. What it's doing in Portugal, it's uniting all these churches together. Right now, there's over 1,000 churches in it. It's over 700 pastors. This is a state the size of Indiana. Can you imagine 1,000 churches in Indiana? I mean can you think of that?

SHUSTER: Sure.

FAIRCLOTH: One thousand churches in Indiana? That's 650 pastors of different denominations in Indiana? Working together? This is amazing.

SHUSTER: Indeed.

FAIRCLOTH: And it's happening in other places. And...

SHUSTER: If....

FAIRCLOTH: ...it builds on stuff that we started. That's why I send that picture to Port...to Portugal!

SHUSTER: To Franklin?

FAIRCLOTH: I sent this picture. They...that's a different picture. Pardon me, I got this thing on me [starts to remove microphone and get up to get a different photo].

SHUSTER: Yeah, well why don't we finish the interview...

FAIRCLOTH: Why don't we'll do that.

SHUSTER: Going back to your Army chaplaincy, and I think we've covered most of the main assignments, but what was the effect on your own faith, your own walk with the Lord, of this two years as an Army chaplain? Or was there an effect?

FAIRCLOTH: The effect...the effect was...was very plain to me that...working with...working with the troops gave me an ability to...to work with...with men.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Now that sounds funny. But a lot of pastors don't have it. The men aren't coming to the services in Portugal a lot of times because there's something lacking in the approach. And so it did something for me...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...that way and then also from the standpoint that you know God has called you to do something. I mean it's evident in the results.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh. So then...

FAIRCLOTH: I can't convert anybody. ...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...You know, I can't convert anybody. I know that as I...I know for sure that if I preach the Gospel.... And by the way, I was told by my home pastor when I was first converted and they knew I was going to go towards the ministry. He said "Preach expositionally. Exposit the Scriptures." So all during the church planting ministry in Portugal and in the Army, I just told them what the Bible...you say what the Scriptures say. And it's amazing that when I'm teaching even up here at Windsor or wherever I'm teaching, the Spirit of God knows who He wants to talk to. And He knows how to use His Word to get there. And I don't know. So you are ordered to preach the Word. That's not just 3...John 3:16. That's John.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: The whole Gospel. Or Mark or Isaiah or wherever you are. You say what the Word of God says and the Spirit marvelously reaches somebody who has some need that has to be met. And that might be comfort. It might be that the person is actually lost and realizes that God loves people. It...it can be a whole gamut of needs that the Spirit knows these people need and He uses me as a messenger. I am not the Spirit, I can't convert a single person. I can't do anything but be honest with the Word of God as to the best of my ability. That means I've got to study. I've got to be diligent in what I'm doing and tell the truth.

SHUSTER: What about your own personal faith, your own personal walk with the Lord. Was that impacted by your time as chaplain?

FAIRCLOTH: Oh yeah.

SHUSTER: Your own relationship with the Lord?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: How so?

FAIRCLOTH: Well you just realize that you've got to keep in touch with the Lord. You can't serve God unless you're in fellowship with Him. And that means daily, moment by moment fellowship with Him. What does that mean? That I'm perfect or that I can be perfect? I don't believe with John Wesley that I can be perfect.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: But I do believe with any of the other people and maybe him too if he talks about it that as we walk with the Lord in fellowship with Him [clock chimes in background] He is able to use us in reaching people which is what ministry is all about. So what I learned I think is that God could use me. One kid in the Bible Institute in Portugal one day who was a student there was trying to imitate Billy Graham. And I said "Forget it. You're yourself. You're not Billy Graham. You're never going to be Billy Graham. Billy Graham is Billy Graham. I don't want to be Billy Graham. I want to be me! Because God can use me! And Billy would be the first guy to tell you that." So it's just interesting because I believe that with all of my sin as a sinner, if I walk with the Lord, my sin is covered by the Cross and I walk as close as I can to the Lord and I walk in confession daily that God would continue to be merciful to me. But I know as a Christian that He has made promises to us, that He will never leave us or forsake us. And Betty and I pray everyday here, we did already, that if God has something for us to do, that we be hearing. You can't hear if you're walking away from Him. You can't hear Him if you're doing what you want to do and "Lord, bless my plans." I learned that a long time ago. You don't do that. And God isn't in that. If he.... And of course Proverbs, when you read Proverbs, that's what it says. You might have your plans, but God has plans for you and He's going to affect them. He's going to make the happen.

SHUSTER: "Unless the Lord builds the house, the laborers labor in vain" [Psalm 127:1].

FAIRCLOTH: Right. Right.

SHUSTER: Just wanted to take a few minutes at the end here to talk about another topic that you had mentioned to me earlier. The Billy Graham crusade in Portugal that never happened. What's the...what is the story there?

FAIRCLOTH: Well the fact that...it was the early 60s. [Pauses] Now wait a minute, I'll back up a little bit. When we came out of the Army, that was '48 there when I was home. Billy was up in...he came back from Birmingham I think with the YFC. And he was up in Milwaukee and I don't know why I was there....

SHUSTER: Up in Minnesota?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, up in Wisconsin.

SHUSTER: Minneapolis?

FAIRCLOTH: Up in Wisconsin.



SHUSTER: Oh Wisconsin. Oh okay.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, I had lunch with him. And we were trading stories about what I'd done in the Army and then what he had been doing up in England. And after that encounter, we were overseas. So we were...we were...we were overseas.

SHUSTER: You went to Portugal?

FAIRCLOTH: So I never saw him until, oh, let's see, 60s I think it was. I heard he was going to be in Switzerland. In crusades in Switzerland.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: I don't know, I probably found out through Bob Evans. Through Evans. Through.... And....

SHUSTER: And they had a meeting in Montreux, Switzerland?

FAIRCLOTH: Montreux.

SHUSTER: Yeah.

FAIRCLOTH: Well no, they had...here's what happened. I had been in the seminary work in Leiria in central Portugal. The Baptist seminary, I had founded that seminary and was teaching there and directed there during the '50s. We got our first graduating class. We had some sharp young guys.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I thought "Well, three or four of them will get in a car." And one of the pastors who was a real evangelist would go with us, the guy that taught me the language. And we'll go over there and see if we can hear him preach.

SHUSTER: You'd go over to Switzerland to hear Graham preach?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. So we...camped.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: We had a bunch of stuff on top of the car and we camped along the way. And we got up through France, we went up to Geneva, we went up to...Beatenberg, right above Interlaken. At about 1600 feet there in that Bible Institute. And we stayed there overnight or whatever we did and then we headed over to Zurich. And when we got to Zurich it was raining. And it was a Saturday afternoon meeting. And it started raining. So everybody was under umbrellas, but I don't know how many thousand people. At least 30,000. And so we got up in the

stadium in back of Billy. There was...there was no choir...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...and so we were up in the stand way up there. And I said "I want to interpret for you guys into English...into Portuguese. While this guy is interpreting from English into German." And so that went on and the meeting ended with an invitation. Everybody was under umbrellas all over the place and...I bowed my head. I had never been at a meeting before where he was preaching like that. So when I opened my eyes, there was nobody there but the interpreter. What's his name from Berlin. And so I thought "What's going on here?" So I ran down...I ran down...I ran down the steps there and I went up to the interpreter and said who I was and that I wanted to contact Billy. And he said "Well, they're over at the Hotel so and so until six o'clock, they'll probably go out and eat. So get over there before six." So we...I told him who I was first because he didn't want to talk to me...

SHUSTER: Sure.

FAIRCLOTH: He thought I was some kook. I said "Well we came all the way from Portugal. There are some Portuguese pastors up here." And I said "We'd like to...." So we got in our car and we tore across Zurich and we got to this hotel and went in the hotel. And I went up to reception and I said "is...is Billy Graham here?" "Oh yes, they're in the rooms." "Well," I said "Is there any possibility of me talking to him?" And he said "Well, I'll call him. Go on over to the hotel booth over there and I'll try to get him connected." So I went over there and Billy heard my voice and he said "What are you doing here?" [Both laugh] He said "I thought you were down in Spain" he says. And I said "No, we're up here with some Portuguese pastors and they all heard you preach yesterday." And he said "Well, where are you staying?" And I said "We're staying in...we're camping.." And he said "You're not going to camp here," he said "Find a hotel and we'll...we'll...we'll handle it." I didn't know what to do. I said "Well, I'll try." But they said "Tomorrow morning, call up as early as you can in the morning and we'll make up a time when you can come over here and we can talk." So Evans was...Evans was there and I talked to Bob and I said "I don't know...I don't know what hotel to get." He said "I'll tell you where to go." So he told us where to go and then we called up Billy in the morning and he said "Come on right over." He said they had a couple hours. "Have breakfast with me and bring the guys with you." So I brought these fellows over and they couldn't believe that they were talking to a preacher who just preached to 40,000 people or whatever. And he was so friendly to them and he talked to them about their pastorates and he offered to pray with them about certain things. And they were really impressed. Well then Cliff Barrows walks in the room. I hadn't known Cliff. Billy introduced him and said "This is Cliff Barrows and Cliff is our team treasurer on this trip. We're going to be ten days in Switzerland and you guys are going to travel with us" [Shuster laughs]. And so he said...he tried to distribute the guys around and he said "Now look it, Cliff, you take Sam," and so forth." So that's the way it was for ten days.

SHUSTER: Was Roy Gustafson part of that group too?

FAIRCLOTH: Can't remember. I know Carl Henry was. Henry was Billy's backup in theology.

Whenever he got in a jam with...the Swiss pastors who were all neo-orthodox guys, Billy...Billy would switch it over to Carl and Carl would answer all their questions. [Chuckles] Yeah.

SHUSTER: So how did this lead to a crusade in Portugal?

FAIRCLOTH: Well see, that's the first time that we were with Billy. Now, let's see what we did. We started praying that he would come to Portugal. Now that's 1960. Way up into the '70s. Because I was working through Bob Evans every time I got a chance, we got in contact with them. We went to...I was in Berlin.

SHUSTER: At the Berlin Congress in '66.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. I was in Berlin. I was in Lausanne.

SHUSTER: That was in '74.

FAIRCLOTH: Right. We were in all these different meetings. Trying to get...trying to get...well keep him thinking about Portugal.

SHUSTER: Well in your autobiography you said it was at the Lausanne meeting that he made a commitment that in '74 or '75 he would be coming to Portugal.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah and that was a real exception because he had...he told us that that year he had 3,000 invitations. And that he and Ruth had prayed over that thing. And they came up with eight. And we were one of them. So we...we really felt that God was leading towards something there. And John Corts, who was over crusade set ups, came to Portugal with his wife. And my wife found them a place to stay. And they were there for six months getting everything ready, all the different arrangements for this and that with crusade preparation.

SHUSTER: How would you describe John? What kind of person would you say he was?

FAIRCLOTH: Great guy.

SHUSTER: What makes him great?

FAIRCLOTH: Well I mean he was a friendly fellow that I could work with. Because I...I was with the other fellow that's printing *Peace With God* now, Rezinna [?]. Fernando Rezinna del al Mada [?] is the guy over the Nucleo Press [?]. He was co-chairman with me in Portugal. So anyway....

SHUSTER: So what...what were you expecting of the crusade? What did you hope would come of it?

FAIRCLOTH: We had...we had...I had been very active with the Christian Businessmen...CBMC International with a local guy there, who was a green and feed man. He

was a first...the top business in the country under the dictator's business. And Van den Heuvel [?] would be the Dutchman. Van den Heuvel [?] was backing up my ministry. I was trying to unite all Evangelicals in Portugal (which we were doing for several years). And...so we...we knew that we had to get a neutral spot for a meeting. We had to get a place where everybody could agree to meet. And of course Billy would require that as well.

SHUSTER: Sure.

FAIRCLOTH: And where would that be? Well, the logical place would be the Bull Ring in Lisbon which had 25,000 seats.

SHUSTER: That was logical because it was the best known and the biggest?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. Yeah. And it was...it was in the capitol. And we had one problem. The problem was that the country historically has been divided in their political set up. Porto, the northern city, likes to think they're the most important city. And Lisbon is in the south. And never the twain shall meet in a sense. But we had a meeting. We were...I did all kinds of road work for years to visit all these pastors. And so, we had...we had an objective of reaching the country through...through that stadium. I don't know whether Billy would have been able to go north. We may have been able to...Corts may have been able to do something on north on a minor scale to...to pacify the people in the north.

SHUSTER: You mean like a rally, a one day rally?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, or something like that. But...so we did...we had one miracle happen to us. And that is that the bull fight people who...who programmed that stadium had bull fights precisely on the time in September when we wanted to hold the meetings. They moved the bull fights off which was, I mean in the dictators.... We...we thought "boy, that is something. Because that happened before in Madrid with the central, big meeting hall in Madrid when Luis Palau was there. But Portugal was a different situation. Anyway, we....

SHUSTER: They moved because you asked them or they moved without asking?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: Because you asked them.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. They moved that off. And so...but you see, then we were mobilizing all over the area. Corts said, I don't know how many, we were going all over the area. He had churches all over the place and we were...we had a headquarters set up in Lisbon. And...see we had been working...all this is part of a network of evangelistic preparation.

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: Because we were in league with Central America with the Latin American

Mission...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: strategy of...

SHUSTER: Mobilizing Evangelism-in-Depth.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. It was called in Portuguese the Evangelismo em profundidade or whatever. And that program had been going on. I mean, we had a committee working on that, you see? And Billy Graham's crusade was part of the network. Palau was involved. Different, other evangelists were also involved.

SHUSTER: So Palau also came to Portugal to preach?

FAIRCLOTH: Yes he did. And so Billy would be the polisher off of the whole thing. That would be the big...

SHUSTER: He's the closer.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah. And then we get...then we get this warning. Billy already...he came to Portugal. He addressed three hundred and some pastors in a hotel in Lisbon.

SHUSTER: That was in '70 or '71 I think, wasn't it?

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah, so it was...it was...it wasn't something strange. People were thinking about that. And that's what that book is all about. There's 7,000 signatures in that book I gave him.

SHUSTER: Oh I see.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: You're pointing to a photograph...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: ...where you're giving the invitations...

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah,

SHUSTER: ...to Billy Graham.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: And so it was in '75 eventually that the crusade was planned for. Of course there was a revolution going on in Portugal at the same time. So what happened with the crusade?

FAIRCLOTH: Well the communists, when the...when the...when the dictatorship was overturned, the communists who had been underground (and this is their strategy all over) surfaced. But they surfaced organized. In a country that for almost a half a century had been held back from elections, it made any kind of sense [sic]

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: People didn't know, they didn't have political minds. These guys were going to really swallow them up.

SHUSTER: Because they were organized and ready for....

FAIRCLOTH: They went...they went into the local city councils...

SHUSTER: uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...and they, you know, they gave all their wonderful propaganda. And people would swallow this stuff up. And so it was a very strange atmosphere because the chief of police in Lisbon was a communist. Well the [United States] State Department got wind of that, of course. And they sent us a telegram. And they said "Look it, do you guys want to be famous for killing Billy Graham or not?" We weren't thinking about killing Billy Graham. But they said "You don't have any...you don't have any assurance around that stadium that a sniper couldn't pick him off." Because in this country [United States], ever since [Martin] Luther King was killed, there is no crusade that isn't swept by the police completely and any balcony that a high powered rifle could reach the pulpit. It's cleared. And you guys can't do that. You can't do that in Lisbon.

SHUSTER: Because you don't have confidence in the police in Lisbon?

FAIRCLOTH: No. So here we got a central committee of sixteen people that had been working hard. So Rezinna [?] and I took the thing to the committee. And Corts was there too. We took a vote after we talked about it and fourteen guys said "We don't want to kill Billy Graham."

SHUSTER: Fourteen out of how many?

FAIRCLOTH: Sixteen.

SHUSTER: Sixteen.

FAIRCLOTH: A couple guys said "Let's trust the Lord. He's...he's bringing him here." Well, after thirteen....

SHUSTER: How did you vote?

FAIRCLOTH: Well I can't remember that because I didn't want to kill Billy Graham either. I don't...we were...I think Rezinna [?] and I had to vote against him coming. And that...that hurt us because we had been all...all this effort that we had for several years...

SHUSTER: Uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: ...seemed to be evaporating. But of course, you know what, you stop to think about God, He has His plans. He's over the whole business.

SHUSTER: uh-huh.

FAIRCLOTH: And I believe that God stopped that crusade for His own reasons. That's a Roman country in the statistics of the census. Even though in actual fact, the people are ignorant of their faith. And so I think God stopped it. I think He stopped it for reasons that only...they come to the surface only after you go through something. And what I told the guys that are over there right now that are completely new battery of workers because the generations have changed since the mid....

SHUSTER: '70s.

FAIRCLOTH: Yes. So you've got a whole new group of gung-ho leaders. You have an evangelist...you've got a...a spirit of collaboration in the country that has never existed at this level. Where people want to work together in the Evangelical Alliance in Portugal. They want to work together.

SHUSTER: And that wasn't true in '75?

FAIRCLOTH: No, they had all kinds of problems. Well, we had...we had people working together. But I'm talking about the general...the general thing now is sort of favoring that...strongly. So what's going on in Portugal now, I think, is...the way the guys over there are interpreting this is that the seed was sown and now it's coming up. The seed was sown and now it's coming up. And the atmosphere at Charlotte in the [Billy Graham Evangelistic Association] headquarters, this Latin woman who's over the world picture told me, she said "We think there's going to be an explosion in Europe. And it's going to start in Portugal."

SHUSTER: Well....

FAIRCLOTH: It's interesting.

SHUSTER: Yes. Praise God! May it be so.

FAIRCLOTH: Yeah.

SHUSTER: Well I appreciate all the time you've given me this afternoon, and...and all the...going over in detail so many of the ways the Lord has used you. Is there anything that you'd like to say in conclusion or any...?

FAIRCLOTH: Praise the Lord.

SHUSTER: Praise the Lord?

FAIRCLOTH: [Laughs] Yes.

SHUSTER: Well thank...thank you again.

END OF TAPE

