

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM

World War II Project

Personal Experience

O.H. 1077

JOHN LESTER HODGE

Interviewed

by

Doug Silhanek

on

April 15, 1985

JOHN LESTER HODGE

Lester Hodge was born October 1, 1919 in Mt. Jackson, Pa., the son of John and Bell Hodge. He attended Mt. Jackson High School and entered the service after graduation. In June of 1941, he trained to be a medic and later served at Normandy during the D-Day Invasion, the liberation of France, and the Battle of the Buldge.

Since his discharge in 1945, he has held various jobs at American Cyanimide, N.C. Khun Co., O.B. Metz, and the Flowline Corporation. He and his wife Janet have raised three children. Lester retired in January 1985. He is a member of Mt. Jackson U.P. Church and the Bessemer American Legion. His hobbies are sports.

DOUGLAS M. SILHANEK

YOUNGSTOWN STATE UNIVERSITY

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World War II

INTERVIEWEE: JOHN LESTER HODGE

INTERVIEWER: Doug Silhanek

SUBJECT: The Depression, Medic Training, D-DM Invasion

DATE: April 15, 1985

S: This is an interview with John Lester Hodge for the Youngstown State University Oral History Program, on the World War II project, by Doug Silhanek, on Monday, April 15, 1985, at 1135 Shannon Avenue, New Castle, PA 16102, at 6:30.

Tell me something about your early childhood, where you lived and where you grew up.

H: I was born in Mt. Jackson, and I lived there until I was about twelve years old. Then, we moved to North Beaver Township on a farm. My brother died when I was eight years old, so we moved to the house that my grandfather had. My brothers and I helped on the farm night and morning, and Saturdays and Sundays. I went to school every day. First four or five years, we walked three miles to school. One winter, we had a lot of snow, and we couldn't get to school. We shoveled the snow so the bus could get through. I graduated from high school in 1937. In 1941, I was drafted into the service.

S: What about your family? Tell me about the members of your family, what you remember most about growing with them.

H: I had an older sister and an older brother and then a younger brother. My older brother and I worked on the

farm every morning and milked cows before we went to school. [We] didn't have any time to take part in any sports program, because we had to work on the farm. My sister was five years older, so she was kind of the boss around home when my mother wouldn't be there. My younger brother was six years younger than I was, so he was always the baby. He hung around with my older brother and I all the time, and if we got in trouble we always blamed it on him.

We were a pretty close family. My brothers and I fought once in a while, but really, we always got along real good. We never had much money, but we never went to bed hungry or never had to go to school without decent clothes. Sometimes in the summertime, we would go in our bare feet; but that was, more or less, a matter of choice than anything else.

S: Did the farm help you during the Depression?

H: Well, yes. We always had milk, and we had to raise pigs on the farm. We had beef, and like I said, we raised potatoes and all kinds of vegetables. We were never hungry as far as that goes.

S: What about school? What do you remember most about school, friends, or some of the things you liked to do in school?

H: I was never a real good student in school. I always got passing grades, but I never studied too much. Lots of times, when we would come home from school, by the time we would get the barn work done, it would be eight or eight-thirty at night and we had to get up in the morning at five-thirty. So, usually after I came in from the barn, I got cleaned up and we would go to bed. So, I didn't study too much, probably not as much as I could have if I had really wanted to. I liked history, mathematics, and spelling. I got real good grades in those three, but I didn't care for English or geography, or art or any of those kinds of classes.

There were twenty-seven in my graduating class, and I was number twenty-one. But, I had an average of eighty-eight. We had a pretty good class.

One of the teachers I remember most was the principal, Sam McCullough. He was a real disciplinarian, but a very good principal, and everybody liked him. He could be real rough and mean if he had to be, but he was a good principal.

S: What do you remember as being a good time or entertainment? It seems like you didn't have a lot of time to

do anything outside the farm or school. What was a good time?

H: Well, [what] used to be one of the biggest times was the church sponsored skating parties. [They were] held in New Castle in the old arena they had in there. That was always a pretty good time. We usually arranged to get done with work in time to go to the high school basketball games, especially the ones at home. We didn't go to the ones away from home too often. Then in the schools, they didn't have dancing or any school sponsored program. If the school had a party, it was just that you kind of are there and looked at each other; and then, come eleven o'clock, you went home.

S: What about the Depression? What do you remember most, good or bad, about living through the Depression, mostly from your own experiences around where you lived or around the local towns.

H: The Depression was, more or less, just a word because I can't remember of any of the neighbors or anybody that I really knew that didn't have enough to eat or didn't have clothes to go to school. There were people that didn't have any money. There isn't anybody I can think [of] that was really hurting for something to eat. It seemed like everybody managed to go out and work on somebody's farm, and if they didn't get money for their work, they got a hog, chickens, or eggs or something like that and milk. I would imagine in the big cities probably it would have meant more, but I can't say I ever went to bed without enough to eat or didn't have clothes for school or anything like that. We always seemed to get by, somehow.

S: Was there, more or less, cooperation too, among those who maybe had a little bit more, looking out for each other?

H: Yes. It seemed like if people had neighbors that were having a hard time, everybody would help out. Of course, there was no free food or anything like that. But, if the farmers would raise an acre of potatoes and somebody would come and help pick and dig the potatoes, if the farmer didn't have money to pay him, he gave him potatoes. Anything in their garden or beef, milk, or pork, or anything like that, they'd give them that instead of money. If the farmer was doing pretty good, he always paid them the money.

S: Okay, let's take it up to the war now. What can you remember when you first realized that either you or the country was going to be involved in the war? Was there an event or was there something gradual? Did you follow it in the papers?

H: I didn't pay too much attention to it in the papers for quite a while. Then, maybe a year before, it really looked like we were going to get into the war. When they started talking about the draft, that's when I realized that I was going to be in the right age bracket to get into it. At that time, I wasn't working on a farm. I was working for a dairy, delivering milk. I could have probably seen about a deferment, but I didn't want anything to do with a deferment because, at the time, I was young and I had really no obligations to anybody but myself. So, I really kind of looked forward to going to the service.

S: What do you remember [about the] mood of the Mt. Jackson area? Before you even went in or as you were going in, what was the mood of the town concerning the war?

H: Well, I think people were pretty concerned about the war, maybe more so with the younger group because there were a lot of the young people that enlisted instead of waiting to be drafted. Some of my friends were among the first to enlist. That was even before Pearl Harbor that they enlisted. I remember talking to World War I veterans, and they said that they wished that they were young enough that they could go. Of course, I think they felt pretty safe in not having to go.

S: This group, even before Pearl Harbor, pretty much anticipated that there was going to be some problems.

H: Oh, yes.

S: Do you think it was more towards Germany than Japan?

H: Yes, more towards Germany than Japan. I don't think the Japanese were even given too much consideration at the time.

S: So then, Pearl Harbor would have been a pretty good surprise?

H: Yes, Pearl Harbor was a big surprise.

S: Describe for me what it was like. You said you were drafted, or did you enlist?

H: Well, the biggest thing I can remember is signing up. I signed up on about October 14th. I had just turned twenty-one on October 1st.

S: What year was that?

H: That was in 1940. Then, I didn't hear anything for about six months. I got a notice that I had to. . . .

I think I went to Pittsburgh for my physical in May and passed the physical down in Pittsburgh about the middle of May. [Then, I] went into the service on June 28, 1941. I do remember there was a lot of fellows around Bessemer and New Castle that went down to be examined; and at that time, there were quite a lot that didn't pass the physical. I would say, maybe of the bunch that went to Pittsburgh with me, maybe 40 percent of them didn't pass the physical. Then, it seemed like a minor thing, maybe flat feet or something that you would never notice somebody walking around that there would be anything wrong with them.

S: Anybody do anything intentionally that you remember?

H: I thought that the one fellow that went with us put on a little show while we were being examined. He was bragging on the way to Pittsburgh that he wouldn't be able to pass the physical, and he looked very healthy to me. He gave us the impression that he had taken some kind of pills to raise his heartbeat and blood pressure.

S: How about basic training? Take me through where you went.

H: We left Pittsburgh June 28th, and we went to Fort Meade, Maryland. That was the induction center at that time. We stayed in Fort Meade for four days, and then, we were signed at different camps. I went to Camp Lee, Virginia. It was a medical training center. I was in the Company C of the Third Medical Training Center. We were there for thirteen weeks, and we took regular basic training, close order drill, and hikes. Our main course was in first aid, mostly minor wounds and battlefield medical treatment.

Then, from Camp Lee, I went to Camp Gordon, Georgia. We had more medical training there, and in the summer of 1942, we spent on maneuvers. We were out for about ten weeks out in the field on maneuvers. I was in the Headquarters Department of the Medical Battalion, and that was the administrative company of the battalion. We took care of all the paper work, and I was assigned as a driver. I drove for the lieutenant colonel, which was a pretty nice job.

S: Where did you go from there, then?

H: From Camp Gordon, we went to North Carolina. I forget the name of the camp in North Carolina. We were only in North Carolina for something like six weeks, and we went from there to Fort Dix. We went overseas from Fort Dix.

S: When was the first time you remember hearing about the scuttlebutt about where you were going to go?

H: We heard about it a long time before we ever left. In fact, we heard them after we had come back off of maneuvers in 1942. There was talk that we were going. For three weeks, they had us, more or less, quarantined. We weren't allowed to leave camp, and the rumor was that we were going right overseas from right there. Then, for some reason, it died down, and we were in Georgia for another four or five months before we even went to Fort Dix. Once we got to Fort Dix, we were pretty sure we were going overseas.

S: Do you remember your feelings, what they were like when you finally got the orders that you were going over?

H: Well, I was getting fed up with the daily routine in the States. I kind of looked forward to moving on and doing something different because, after about three years of more or less just basic training, it was getting monotonous.

S: Then, what were we doing? We went overseas, and what was that like? Where were you?

H: We went to England. We were in a small town, Tiverton. It was about 60 miles from the coast. Mostly while we were there in England. . . . We landed there in February, 1944, and most of the time, it seemed like we were just putting in time waiting for something to happen, to move on. [It seemed like] a lot of really the same medical training we had before we ever left the states. Nothing very exciting happened in England.

S: Where did you go from there, then?

H: From Tiverton, we went to Plymouth at the coast, and that's where we bordered the LST's--landing ship tank--to go to France. We left England on the fourth, and we were out in the channel until the morning of June 6th, when we landed on D-day.

S: This is neat! I didn't know you were at Normandy. What was that like? When did you first know? When you were in England, did you know there was going to be--you know there was going to be an invasion, but you didn't have any idea when it was?

H: We knew there was going to be one, and when we got to Plymouth, it was what they called the staging area. Once you got into the staging area, you knew you were going someplace, but where we went. I hadn't figured out that we would go to France.

S: Take me from Plymouth on through, where you went and where you got on.

H: We got on the LST the morning of June 4th.

S: Now is that a landing craft?

H: That's a landing craft. All of our vehicles had been waterproofed but the equipment--we didn't worry about the water because they had a dock and we'd run right on the boat. So, we were on the LST from about ten o'clock on June 4th to about eight o'clock on June 6th--that was D-day--and it was a pretty lengthy ride. Really, it would only take a few hours to cross the channel where we were, but they had to load LST's to get them out there and then bring another one in because they didn't want one LST going off by itself. I had no idea how many LST's, and even smaller craft, they had that landed. We landed at Cherbourg, south of Cherbourg, at eight o'clock on June 6th, and it was scary.

S: What was your beach?

H: Utah Beach.

S: You had Utah, okay. What was the feeling like, because that was different than Omaha, wasn't it?

H: Yes.

S: Did you have any communications with the other landings, either the British or the other American landing? Was everybody on their own?

H: I think there was communications between them, yes.

S: But, as far as the soldiers, you just had your mission and that was it.

H: Yes.

S: What was the feeling like on the LST's when you were coming over?

H: Well, I remember talking to one of the sailors on the LST. He said to me, "Boy, I'm glad I don't have to hit that beach," and I said, "Well, boy I'm glad to get off this boat." There were a lot of German planes flying around and dropping bombs, and I thought I had a better chance on that beach than I would have on that boat.

S: Do you think that worked to your advantage then, the fact that the guys were getting a little bit sea-sick?

H: I think so, yes.

S: You hit, you said, about eight o'clock in the morning at the beach. Now, what wave were you in?

H: I believe we were in the third wave. The infantry went in first, and then some artillery went in. I was in the first wave of the Medical Department.

S: Did you go to work right away, as soon as you hit the beach?

H: Yes. We got about a mile off the beach, and by then, there were a lot of casualties. They would be brought into this one company in our battalion called the Clearing Company. Anybody that was wounded was brought into there; and then, at about dinnertime on D-day, we started hauling the casualties back down to the beach and loading them on ships to be sent back to England. We hauled casualties all D-day, the next day. I think it was something like forty-eight hours before we ever laid down to take a little sleep, after we had hit the beach.

Normally, it wasn't my job, but I got assigned to drive this two and a half ton truck. They could put eight stretchers on one truck. They put them crosswise on the truck, and we would haul eight patients at a time. When it got dark, we drove in blackout. It was kind of a hard job to do, because you couldn't see. There were a lot of casualties. Some of them were really bad, and some were just leg wounds or shoulder wounds or something like that.

S: Can you recall your feelings as though as you. . . . That was your first action, wasn't it?

H: Yes.

S: Can you remember your feelings when you hit on the beach? What did you first see coming out of the water? You were on those boats. You're sick, and you're getting a little anxious. Do you remember seeing the beach for the first time? The fighting was already going on.

H: The biggest thing I can remember when we came off the boat [was that] the colonel was with me and I had made it almost onto the beach before my car conked out. There was a German plane up there flying around, and artillery hit it. It looked like that plane was going to smack right into our command car. There was no place to go. He ended up--he landed probably half a mile from us, but it looked like he was coming right down on top of us.

S: Did you freeze?

H: Oh, yes.

S: Did you think that was it?

H: I'll never forget this colonel. After we got off the boat, the water was coming in on the car, coming in on the floorboards. Finally, this colonel got up, and he stood up on the seat. I had to sit on the seat, and I got soaked from the waist down. Just as I hit the beach it conked out. They had a bulldozer there. The bulldozer operator came out and pushed me inland, and we got it off. For some reason, it started, and we went on our way. The first place I suppose was about half a mile off the beach, where we stopped and set up this medical battalion.

S: Was that part of a plan to leave soldiers off and then have a boat ready to take them, the wounded, back?

H: Yes. I think that was planned.

S: So, you knew your job as soon as you got there?

H: Yes. As soon as we got there, we knew what our job was going to be.

S: And that was continuous [for], you said, almost forty-eight hours?

H: Yes.

S: Who was your commander? Do you remember? Who was the commander of the Utah, or was Bradley in charge of the whole commanding?

H: Well, Bradley was one of the head men, but another one was Theodore Roosevelt.

S: Was he in your group?

H: He was an assistant division commander in our group, of the 4th Division. In fact, he died over there. We hadn't been there too long when he died. I had the honor, or whatever you call it. When he died, they called and wanted an ambulance to come up to division headquarters and I took the ambulance up. They told me that somebody had died. It was at night and you couldn't see anything, so we loaded him on, brought him back to our medical headquarters, and got inside where we could have a light. That's when I found out it was Teddy Roosevelt.

S: What kind of leader was he, do you remember? Or didn't you have any direct. . . .

H: I didn't have too much direct to do with him, but he wasn't a spit and polish military man. He got things done, but he didn't go too much for the fancy stuff. As long as somebody was doing their job. It didn't matter to him whether you saluted him or not. Of course, he liked it and he knew there was times when it had to be done. But, if you would meet him out someplace, he would, more than likely, shake hands with you rather than salute.

S: What do you remember about the "Breakout?" Did you push through with everybody or did you. . . .

H: Yes. Once they got out of Cherbourg and St. Lo, then we started moving fast. This Clearing Company had two units. One would be set up to handle casualties, and the other unit would still be loaded onto the trucks. Then, when it would come time to move the one that was loaded on, the trucks would go to the new location. They would set up, and they would start taking the patients. The one that was left behind would load up and stay loaded. They would just leapfrog each other, so that there would always be a clearing station to bring the wounded to.

S: Were the roads open? Were they open first for Utah Beach? Were you guys ahead of anybody, or was it almost all at one time? Was it like an all at once, start pushing through?

H: No, I wouldn't say it was all at once. I would say it was gradual.

S: What do you remember about that the most? The mood, were the guys pretty fired up, or were they still. . . .

H: They seemed to be, I would say so, yes. When they would get moody it was usually when there was no action and nothing going on. If they were sweating more than three or four days in one location, after they would get rested up a little bit, they would get restless.

S: A little more anxious.

M: Yes.

S: What did you hear about. . . . Omaha was the worst. Did you remember hearing about what happened over there and maybe feel lucky that you were. . . .

M: Yes. In fact, there was one division that was supposed to land; it never did land, only very few of them. I don't think most of the men realized how bad of shape they were really in, because I know I didn't think too much about it. We didn't know it for a couple days that this other division hadn't made it to the beach. If they had known that they would have probably been pretty well shook up.

S: Were they shot out of the water or what happened?

H: Shot out of the water, a lot of them.

S: Where do we go from there, then? You got the landing and the "Breakout." Where did you go from there?

H: I guess the next important thing would have been the, where they had the big slaughter of the American GI's. That was around Melmandy and St. Fifth. Some of the Americans had surrendered, and the Germans came in. And I forget how many were slaughtered. A lot of American GI's were slaughtered right there on the spot. Then, we went from there to Luxembourg. We were in Luxembourg when the breakthrough came. Then, we didn't know, or they never told us what bad shape we were in when we were in Luxembourg.

S: When was this?

H: This was in 1944, when they had that big breakthrough.

S: Are we getting towards winter now?

H: This was in December.

S: So, we're at the Bulge.

H: Yes. We were actually surrounded when we were in Luxembourg; but at the time, we didn't know it. We were still getting a lot of casualties, but we didn't know how bad the breakthrough really was.

S: Who was your commander then?

H: I think then our division commander was--Barton, I believe, was his name. I think that's who he was, because when Teddy Roosevelt died, he was the assistant division commander and this Barton moved up to division commander after that. I can't remember who the corps commander was at that time. There were three or four divisions, and they would form a corps.

S: What Army was this?

H: Most of the time, we were the 7th Army.

S: Was that Patton's?

H: Yes. For quite a while, we were in Patton's Army.

S: Did you make the trip when Patton moved so many miles. . . .

H: No, we didn't do that. When we moved to Luxembourg, I think that's when we got out of Patton's Army.

S: What do you remember about the Battle of the Bulge? Were you involved in that at all?

H: We got a lot of casualties, and we had been in the town where the Bulge started. We had stayed there overnight for three nights on the way to Luxembourg. We didn't know how serious that Battle of the Bulge was the time. We knew that there had been a breakthrough, but we were never told how serious it was.

S: Did you ever hear about McCollough's, when he was surrounded? Did the news when he said "nuts" to the Germans get back to you guys?

H: Not at the time. We heard about it maybe a week later. We didn't know that at the time.

S: Did that get anybody's mood up or anything up? I often read where the troops heard that, and it fired them up.

H: Yes. I think that had a lot to do with it, sure.

S: Then where? We are almost in 1945 now, early 1945.

H: I was in Paris the day it was liberated. That was before the Bulge, wasn't it? We were the first American division to go into Paris. The think I remember about that. The colonel and I were on the bridge by the Notre Dame Cathedral. Sniper fire broke out, and we got out of there pretty quick. One thing I remember about this colonel, every time he would get real scared, he would have to go to the bathroom. Of course, in Paris that was no problem, because they had the toilets right on the side of the street. You would just walk in there, but there were times when there was no place for him to go, but every time he'd get a little bit scared, he had to go to the bathroom.

S: Did you parade through Paris then?

H: No, we didn't parade. Another thing, while were in Paris, the colonel wanted to go look for a bottle of champagne. I was sitting alone in the street in the car, and this lady came out and started talking to me.

She had married a man that had been over there in the first war, [and it] happened that he was from Pittsburgh. He came home, and he and I had quite a talk about Pittsburgh. He knew where New Castle was, and it [the conversation] was very interesting.

S: He had stayed in France?

H: He had stayed over there, yes. He knew all about Pittsburgh. She brought me out a couple glasses of wine, and when the colonel came back, he hadn't found anything to drink yet, so I was better off than he was.

S: Back to 1945 then, pushing the Germans back into Germany, you had to start thinking that the war--or did you--that the war was starting to. . . .

H: We were getting the feeling it was coming to an end because, [during] the first part of the war, if we moved two miles it was a big move and now we were probably moving thirty-five and forty miles. We knew that we were getting them pushed back pretty well.

S: What about towards the end? Was it June 1945 when the war was at the end? Where were you in at that time?

H: Yes. I can't remember where we were when the war was over. We had crossed over into Germany, and if I'm not mistaken, I think we were in Bamberg, Germany when it was over. It wasn't a real big town, but I think we were stationed right outside of Bamberg, Germany when it was over.

S: Do you remember getting the news? Was it a surprise?

H: I don't remember too much about it, because I remember the colonel would keep telling me, "In a day or so this is going to be over." We had no formal announcement that it was over. By then, someone had found a radio someplace. We had listened to it, and they said the Germans had surrendered.

S: Any celebrations or anything?

H: Not as much as you would think. Everybody was glad it was over and everything, but there were no real big celebrations.

S: What did you hear from home while you were in? Do you remember hearing anything? Did people send you stuff, newspapers or anything?

H: Yes. I got the New Castle News while I was over there. It was nice to get. Maybe I would get three or four at

a time, and I could kind of keep up with what was going on. V mail was pretty popular at that time.

S: What was that?

H: You had a form, and you would write your letter on this form. Then, they would take a picture of it and would send it home. The reason for that was that it didn't take up so much room. Probably these V mail letters would take up half as much as a regular envelope. Of course, mail was free; it was all censored, but it was free. Once a month, or every couple months, I'd get a package or something from the church. That was after we'd been over there in France for a while.

S: Was there a committee in the church that took care of that?

H: Yes. I think the ladies' Sunday school class took care of sending it. I got cookies, and they had a pocket-sized Bible they sent. I still have mine.

S: What did you miss about home the most? Do you remember anything at anytime while you were in [the service] that you missed?

H: One of the biggest things you missed was the cooking. It didn't matter how they cooked the food in the Army; it wasn't like home cooking.

S: What about your final days in the service, what was happening? How did you finish up, and when did you hear about going home?

H: I guess it was about a week after the war was over. We were sent to a staging area to come home. You got sent home by the point system, and that was your length of service and whether you had any dependents at home. In order to get out after the war was over, you had to have eighty-five points. I was very lucky, I only had eighty points, so the people that didn't have enough points to get out come home first, had a thirty day furlough, and then went to Japan. I came home, and while I was on my thirty day furlough, the war with Japan was over. So, I was out of the Army before some of the ones with 90 and 100 points had even left Germany. I got back in the States August 1, and had a thirty day furlough and went back and was discharged on September 12, 1945. Everything was over there.

S: Was there a feeling for an invasion of Japan?

H: Everybody thought so, yes. When they dropped the bomb, then that was it.

- S: Now, when you came back did you notice anything different about the town, different because of the war, different attitudes, probably people had moved?
- H: Not really. I didn't notice too much different. I'll never forget the night I came back into Mt. Jackson. My aunt had come into town to pick me up at the train station. I went around the corner, and there was some young kid standing there and he called me by my nickname. I hadn't heard that for four years, and that was one of the first things I remember about getting back to Mt. Jackson.
- S: You knew you were home then. Could you tell the difference, once you settled back at home, that it wasn't like the Depression?
- H: Yes, because when I came home there was no problem to get a job, everybody seemed to have money. But, the only thing was, you couldn't buy a new car or anything like that. I had no problem getting job. I waited a couple of weeks and went down to the powder mill and had no problem at all getting a job.
- S: Was there an attitude towards veterans, did you notice, by those that didn't serve or the older Americans, even the younger?
- H: I think that they respected the veterans very well. I never had anybody say anything against veterans at that time.
- S: Do you remember losing any friends in the war, anybody that went at the same time that you did or served at any time?
- H: We had one fellow in one of the other companies in our battalion who was killed. He and I were friends, we weren't real close. Really I had no close friends that were hurt. I had a friend that was badly wounded, but I had no real close friends that were killed in the service.
- S: Did you ever run into any servicemen that were from around here, other than the man you knew from New Castle?
- H: I ran into a fellow I went to school with. I happened to know what outfit he was in and one day I was out and I saw his outfit, so I stopped and asked the staff sergeant and he told me where this fellow was. I went and saw him and we talked for maybe an hour. Probably a week later I saw the same outfit and I asked about him, but they wouldn't tell me anything about him. He had been badly wounded.

- S: Looking back, would there have been any changes you would have liked to have seen in the military? Was there anything that you looked back on and saw as being useless, the way you were treated or anything?
- H: I think, from what I hear, that back then the military was in better shape than it is today. I think we had it harder than they do today. We didn't have any eight hour work schedules and Saturdays and Sundays off or anything like that. I know that discipline was a lot better, and even things that didn't have anything to do with being a soldier, like we had to shave everyday and keep our shoes polished, I think the military needs to get back to that.
- S: Is there anything we left out, anything that you remember that sticks out about life before or after the war, within the war?
- H: About all I can say is that I'm glad I went but I wouldn't want to have to do it again. I would hate to think of anybody having to go through what we went through. It's bad. I would have felt bad if for some reason I couldn't have gotten in or wouldn't have passed the physical or something like that because all of my friends were going. At that time I don't think I had any friends that got a deferment or even applied for a deferment. They seemed to think that that was their job.
- S: Thank you.