

# RICHARD A. ANDERSON

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## Interview with Richard A. Anderson by Jim Will.

Hi! Today is February 14, Valentine's Day, 1994. My name is Jim Will. I am a volunteer with the Rockford Museum Center which is cooperating with a statewide effort to collect oral histories from Illinois citizens that participated in events surrounding World War II. Today we are in the home of Richard Anderson who lives at 3111 Dartmouth Drive, Rockford, Illinois. Mr. Anderson served in a branch of the United States Armed Forces during World War II. We are going to interview him about his experiences in the war.

**WILL:** Okay, Dick, can we start off with your full name, place and date of birth.

**ANDERSON:** My name is Richard August Anderson. I was born August 7<sup>th</sup>, 1923, in Rockford, Illinois. I was the son of immigrant parents.

**WILL:** And their names...

**ANDERSON:** And their names were Richard E. and Dorothy Fannie Anderson. My mother was from Sweden and my father was from Norway.

**WILL:** Were they immigrants?

**ANDERSON:** Immigrants.

**WILL:** They came over...

**ANDERSON:** They came over from the old country and married in Minnesota.

**WILL:** They met in Minnesota. Do you have any brothers and sisters?

**ANDERSON:** Yes. I have two brothers that are younger than I and their names are Warner Olaf and Ralph Francis.

**WILL:** Are there any momentous occasions or special events that you care to share with us about your family and family life?

**ANDERSON:** Well, we grew up in the depression and when I was a youngster at 16 ½ I decided to join the National Guard with some of my friends. The local National Guard. It was Company K of the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry. To help fulfill some of the hardships, I joined the National Guard for the extra income to help support myself as well as give money to the family. In doing so, I got caught up in the mobilization for World War II.

**WILL:** When did you join?

**ANDERSON:** I joined in February '39.

**WILL:** What was life like before the war?

**ANDERSON:** What life was like before the war. For me, I was still a student in school, At the time of mobilization, I was a junior in high school, 11<sup>th</sup> grade. I worked at a theater as a theater usher for extra money. The basic entertainment was Saturday night dances at the church. We did a lot of pool playing in the pool halls ... State and Madison ... and in the winter, sports. We did a lot of ice skating, hockey, skiing. I was in the Rockford Ski Club which we used to jump ... the youngsters used to jump on the ski jump at Blackhawk Park. That all materialized in the last 13, 14, 15 and 16 year old period that I was a youngster. Along come March 5, 1941 where they mobilized for this one year of compulsory training. They mobilized a National Guard to enter the service to fulfill that obligation for the reserves.

**WILL:** Was that at Camp Grant?

**ANDERSON:** No, when we mobilized we marched down South Main to the Illinois Railroad station and got a train and ended up in Camp Forrest, Tennessee. Because the camp wasn't quite finished,—prepared for us,— they hauled the scrap lumber that was left from building the barracks—we made wooden sidewalks to stay out of the mud so we wouldn't

have to walk around in the mud. That took us two or three months at which time the draftees and the selective service people that were being mobilized into the army—the military would come to our camp and we organized our units and began our basic training.

**WILL:** This is in Tennessee?

**ANDERSON:** This is in Camp Forrest, Tennessee. That was in an area by Tullahoma,(?) Tennessee, halfway between Nashville and Chattanooga.

**WILL:** You were there on December 7 in 1941?

**ANDERSON:** December 7<sup>th</sup> we were at Camp Forrest, Tennessee, and I was in a movie theater on a Sunday afternoon when I got the word that Pearl Harbor was attacked. A notice came on the screen for all the men of the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry to report back to base immediately. So I jumped up and ran outside and, God, it was pandemonium. People running everywhere and we couldn't figure out what the heck—why is everybody running around. Well, it was mobilizing the guard at the camp. A lot of them were moving on the emergency moves out to the west coast, to the TWA dams, the aircraft plants, to set up guard duty to prevent any sabotage.

**WILL:** Here in the States?

**ANDERSON:** That was in the States and we ended up stationed at Chattanooga, Tennessee, on the Chicamauga Dam on the TWA Dam projects to prevent any sabotage. That lasted about two weeks and in the next two weeks we ended up at the multi-air craft plant at Nashville, Tennessee, guarding the air craft plant for two weeks. Then we got our notice to return to Camp Forrest, Tennessee, to be alerted to move somewhere and we got back to camp—our base camp—and found out that our division was being broken up. The 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry from Chicago area was being mobilized and sent to the west coast to go overseas immediately. They became part of the Marical Division which was in Australia and the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry was designated as a training

cadre because our ratings for efficiency in training were the best of the division. They selected our regiment to be the training division—or training regiment.

**WILL:** Which division was this?

**ANDERSON:** 33<sup>rd</sup> Division. Illinois National Guard and I was part of the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry. We had four regiments, 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 130<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 131<sup>st</sup> and the 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry which at that time designated a square division which in tactics and maneuvering and what have you in war, four regiments had a purpose but because of the new armored divisions and armor coming up and the artillery, the cavalry was obsoleted for armored vehicles. To speed up the movement of a division, they trimmed it to a triangular division which was three regiments. That's why the 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry went overseas as a separate regiment and joined up with two other regiments that made up the Marical division which our General Powell recently—our Commander in Chief—our General used to be part of the Marical Division. During that December 7<sup>th</sup> period in January of '42 ...

**WILL:** What was your reaction to Pearl Harbor?

**ANDERSON:** Pearl Harbor was—during this period, they mobilized us into the military army full time. was the European War—the way the Germans were escalating the war. We purposely thought we were being mobilized and trained to go to Europe. It was a complete shock to hear that Japan bombed Pearl Harbor and that changed the whole strategy and units that were scheduled for Europe got changed to be scheduled for the Pacific. I imagine that was a nightmare at the War Office. But anyways, it was a shock. In a way we were excited about the fact that maybe we'd go to the Pacific rather than Europe. Past experiences, books, literature that I had read about World War I which my uncle and father were in, sleeping in the winter snows and ice and everything during World War I, didn't look too inviting to me. I didn't relish that experience so I preferred the Pacific. As it turned

out I was fortunate that our unit was sent to the Pacific. During the exchange of troops in training and making our regiment a cadre, I stayed with my regiment all through the war from initially from Rockford, Illinois, in March 5, 1941, to July 12, 1945. March 5<sup>th</sup> '41 is when we were mobilized and I stayed with the unit all the way up to July 12<sup>th</sup> of '45 until my discharge.

**WILL:** You heard about what was going on in Europe with Hitler. What was your opinion on that—before Pearl Harbor.

**ANDERSON:** My opinion on Hitler was—he was a maniac and we had to hurry up and get trained to get over there and stop this maniac from ...

**WILL:** You were expecting ...

**ANDERSON:** We were expecting to be shipped to Europe in the '41 period but things changed and when they broke up our 33<sup>rd</sup> division, the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry, the 130<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the 131<sup>st</sup> made up the triangular division the new organization. Why all the veterans or trained personnel were transferred out into other cadre units, paper divisions that were being mobilized and organized through the war department which the trained personnel were sent out as training cadres for other divisions, other regiments so our table of organization is normally around 217 men in a rifle company—infantry company. At this period in August, or I beg your pardon October of '41, we were down to about 35 men in our unit which we were the nucleus of a cadre for training. We got draftees and selectees transferred into our unit which we started our 13 weeks basic training which brought it into February of '42, the end of the basic training. We were a fully organized training regiment. The other personnel up to October '41 were transferred out to other divisions that were being organized as training cadres. We went in to test out the troops before they were transferred to other units. We had a maneuver in 1941 (August, September and October) in Arkansas and Louisiana—maneuvers which we had what we called a blue

army and red army that tried to out maneuver one another and move through the countryside. We went from Arcadelphia, Arkansas, all the way down to Alexandria, Louisiana, where the battle stopped to be continued, maybe in another war.

**WILL:** The real thing.

**ANDERSON:** Well, we started our maneuvers at Arcadelphia(?) which was left off after World War I. During World War I there were some army units that started a maneuver in Missouri and ended up in Arcadelphia, Arkansas. Then in World War II period 1941, these maneuvers were still on file. The army just picked up where they left off in World War I and had us start up for two months maneuvers or three months maneuvers in Arkansas and Louisiana and it ended at Alexandria.

**WILL:** What date was this?

**ANDERSON:** That was about October of '41 after which we were transported back to our base camp in Tennessee by trucks. Everybody was on truck convoys. So we lived in bivouac areas, in state parks, Shiloh Park in Memphis, Tennessee. We bivouaced there at night setting up our tents in a row for bivouacing and we—our transportation was army trucks—moving from one area to another. We returned back to Camp Forrest in October '41 and that's when all the trained personnel that were eligible to be transferred into other units for training cadres. In October we started all over training a batch of new trainees. We were through with them— we were through with our basic training by February of '42 which we were told that it was imminent when ever we were going move. We didn't know whether we were going to go to Europe or whether we were going to go to the Pacific. Eventually they moved another division into our Camp Forrest, Tennessee, so we had to move out into the countryside and set up a base camp in tents, bivouacing. We did that for three months. Then in August we got our alert notice, August of 1942, that we were shipping over and as of the day we left our countryside camp in Camp Forrest, Tennessee, got on the trains. We thought

we were shipping over to the east coast. Then the people were saying we were going down to Louisiana, New Orleans, and ship out by boat through the Panama Canal to the Pacific. Now we had all kinds of gambling pools, betting on what was going to happen.

**WILL:** Where were you going?

**ANDERSON:** Well, it ended up that we got on our trains and we just went straight west. We had the red flag, everything coming eastward on the railroads was sidetracked. Anything going west had first class—through way. We got to Camp Stroman, California, right outside of San Francisco near St. Petersburg, California. We got to a place called Camp Stroman(?) and there we were examined by doctors to see if we were physically fit. We got shots for overseas duty—typhus, malaria, and what have you. In three days we were on a boat heading out into the Pacific out of Frisco Harbor. We said goodbye to the golden Gate when we went under it. The ship that took us out of Frisco was a Dutch—what they called a deluxe cargo ship—half passengers and half cargo. It was a Dutch ship by the name of Clip Fontaine(?) and we were on that ship for 16 days. We left the 2<sup>nd</sup> of September and on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, after zigzagging through the ocean and—a couple of submarine scares—submarine alerts—we ended up in a harbor on an island. We couldn't figure out what the name of the island was, 'til they finally told us this is where we were debarking,—the Fiji Islands. So on the 18<sup>th</sup> of September we were in the Fiji Islands. When we got there that's when we became ... We went overseas as a regimental combat team, the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry. When we got to Fiji, we became part of the 37<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division which was a National Guard Division from Ohio. They were short one regiment. We became the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the 37<sup>th</sup> Division. The other two regiments were the 145<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the 148<sup>th</sup> Infantry. We were the 129<sup>th</sup>. We stayed with the 37<sup>th</sup> Division through the whole Pacific combat zone. We were on the Fiji Islands about six months, digging in defense positions just in case the Japanese would invade. We could defend her

with a couple of regiments but there wasn't very many troops for an invasion. You don't stop an invasion when it starts. August 7<sup>th</sup> of 1942 when we were in the Fiji Islands was my birthday. I was 19 years old. The Marines landed at Guadalcanal which was about 600 miles north of us. There was a group of islands in between Guadacanal which is in the Solomon chain of islands in Fiji. That was in the New Hebrides, the main island in the New Hebrides was Espri Santo. This scheme of island hopping is actually what was happening. We moved from Fiji to New Hebrides and the 37<sup>th</sup> Division, part of it was on New Hebrides with the regiments of the 145<sup>th</sup> and 148<sup>th</sup> went from New Hebrides to New Georgia. The 129<sup>th</sup> came on to New Hebrides behind the 37<sup>th</sup> Division to occupy the island while the 37<sup>th</sup> went on to New Georgia and Tulagi. That lasted for a period of about six months. At the end of that period we were practicing beach-head maneuvers with the Navy and the Merchant Marines. We got on a ship and we headed out. We did not know where we were going yet. They told us we were going to Guadalcanal. We got to Guadalcanal. They were just finishing mop-up operations and what have you. To get us familiarized with combat they went us out on patrols in front of the Marical Division, 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry, one of our old mother regiments, just to get a taste of being afraid, scared and possibly getting shot at. We were on Guadacanal for three weeks. Then they said our mission has been designated and we're going to make the invasion of Bougainville.

**WILL:** What was your rank and duties?

**ANDERSON:** My rank and duties in Company K of the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry was reconnaissance sergeant which was a staff sergeant. That's 3 stripes up and one rocker below. I went overseas as a staff sergeant and stayed as a staff sergeant up until this time. We prepared our combat loading of the ships for the invasion of Bougainville. We were invading Bougainville with the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the 148<sup>th</sup> Infantry of the 37<sup>th</sup> Division and the Third Marine Regiment of the Third Marines. We said this was history because we had never heard of the army making

a beach-head with Marines before but this was the first time that it was a combined operation. The Marines had their own sector, the 129<sup>th</sup> had their sector and the 148<sup>th</sup> had their sector but we hit the beach at the same time. When we hit Torkina(?) point on Bougainville, the point was like a right angle so as we penetrated we were forming a perimeter which was a quadrant of a circle because of the point was like 90°s you had less yardage to cover instead of a complete circle in a perimeter. So we advanced about six miles inland which took 2 ½ to 3 weeks in which sporadic fighting took place. The Japanese retreated all the way up into the mountains and in fact to the other side of the island to get away from any contact with us as they were outnumbered. Anyways, we formed a perimeter, six mile radius from the Torkina(?) Point so that the Seabees could move in and start building bomber strips, fighter strips. Our whole mission was to hold the perimeter while they built the bomber strips and the fighter strips so the allies could fly and take off on bombing missions to reach out to Rabal(?) New Britain, and all the other islands that needed air support and bombing. While we were on Bougainville, like I said, the battle petered out about April. We landed in Bougainville November of '42. We landed on Bougainville in November of '43 we were on Bougainville all of '44—up until December of '44. We were on Bougainville for 13 months holding this perimeter and during that period the Japs attacked us twice. Once on the 132<sup>nd</sup> Infantry which used to be part of the 33<sup>rd</sup> Division was also the Marical Division. The 37<sup>th</sup> Division was holding the perimeter. When we formed the perimeter the Marines were relieved and returned back to their commander. They were probably sent on other missions like Tarawa or Ferrel Island(?) or Marshall Islands. Anyway, the army had the whole perimeter on Bougainville up until December of '44 at which time after the main battles were over with, we knew they were defeated. They were coming in as prisoners, straggling in the jungles, half starved and some of them would attack us. We would shoot them or kill them, get rid of them. We fought the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry division of the Japanese

Army that was in on the “rape of Nanking”. We were told that, so during the fighting, you might say it was quite fierce because we resented the fact that they were the butchers and they weren't gonna scare us, you know. We practically annihilated them. In fact in March of '44 they attacked us. In April of '44 they really attacked us with everything ... 10,000—

**WILL:** By sea or by air?

**ANDERSON:** No, by coming down out of the mountains. On Bougainville. We formed a perimeter on Bougainville and they had the whole island. We just waited there for them. If they hit us, they hit us. But we weren't out to annihilate them. We were there to protect—defend the air strip. The military didn't want the whole island. They just wanted enough space for bombers and fighters. It was our job to protect the airstrip. After April of '44 when things quieted down, through reconnaissance and patrols, thousands of them ... that the enemy had retreated to the opposite side of the island. They were trying to survive themselves by growing vegetables. We saw that they had planted gardens and trying to grow stuff. Then our air force ... the fighters ... would go in and spray the fields and kill off everything. So they practically starved them to death. Anyways, then we started training of all things, in the jungle, in clearings that they had cleared when they were making the air strip to practice beach-head landings for the Philippines. We would group on the land and march down to the shoreline and take out Higgins boats and coxswains boats, infantry boats to the ships that were out in the water with landing nets on their sides. Several of them were American made, some were Australian made. The ones we practiced beach-head landings off of was the Westralia from Australia.. For about two months we did nothing but get on the ship, eat our food on the ship, and the next morning, early— four or five o'clock—daybreak—sound the alert, go down the rope ladders into the boats so we could practice beach-heads on Bougainville for the Philippines.

**WILL:** You did this how many times?

**ANDERSON:** We did it for two months.

**WILL:** Everyday?

**ANDERSON:** Everyday. Wet, sandy, dirty and during that period we thought boy this is the big one. Then they finally told us we were gonna hit the main island of Luzon. When we were finishing up our practice landing they had just hit Leyte. The army made the beach-head at Leyte. And it went so smooth there that they moved up to the beach-head to Lingayan(?) Gulf which was January 9<sup>th</sup> of '45. So January 9<sup>th</sup> '45 we were on our troop ships cruising up through the islands. We got over to the Admiralty Islands to pick up some extra troops to fill in the vacancies that we had in some of our units that were trainees from the—I forget the name of the relocation center no—the repo depots—they sent over replacements from the States to the replacement depot and then from the replacement depot by MOS numbers to trained designation number like an infantryman number MOS. My MOS was 1542 which was a reconnaissance sergeant. But anyway, we got our units filled up with spares for the big invasion. They figured we'd better be full strength when we made this big invasion. We were in the Admiralty Islands about three, four days living on the ships. They let us go out on the Coral Islands—500 yards in diameter. Had a beer shed on it. We got on the island and they served you two cans of hot beer. We'd sit there and drank the hot beer and then back to the boat. We got to do that every day, once a day, two beers. Then we finally got the alert and we're taking off. It was the largest troop convoy of the war including Europe at this time, January of 1945. There was over 800 ships involved in this invasion of Luzon—Philippines. We took off from the Admiralty Islands and started snaking up through the chain of Philippine Islands. Went up in through Mindanao Straits, went by Leyte. We were on the west coast of Luzon right outside of Manila Harbor which you could see right on the horizon. We got hit by Kamikaze airplanes—Japanese fighters—Kamikaze panes..

**WILL:** Hit the fleet or just your ship?

**ANDERSON:** Our fleet. Our convoy was attacked by something like 20 kamikazes. The one that dove on our ship, hit the stern—hit the water at the stern—damaged the rudder, literally lifted the ship right out of the water. We thought it was going to break apart when it landed back down. But the ship—the airplane the Jap was flying was full of dynamite. They loaded up their kamikaze suicide planes with explosives, mostly dynamite.

**WILL:** Enough gas for one raid!

**ANDERSON:** Yes, enough gas for one raid. But anyways we survived the kamikaze crash and it was getting dark. The Kitcom(?) Bay aircraft carrier right in front of our ship got hit by six kamikazes and we watched that one being towed away. It wasn't sinking but it was listing. All the aircraft that was available flew off of it on a list—aircraft carrier on a slant. But anyways they all flew off and they had to report to another carrier somewhere in the vicinity. There were 800 ships scattered over the seas from horizon to horizon. You could see them everywhere. All the time in the sky at night, just before dusk, during this attack all the F4Us, Navy fighters, P38s coming from Leyte. It was just a big dog fight in the air and fireballs.

**WILL:** You had ringside seats.

**ANDERSON:** Yah. The P.A. system, the speaker on the system, said "I don't know who it is but there goes another one." There would be a fireball going down into the water and I guess we lost around five or six airplanes. But they lost all of their 20 or so that hit us. Anyways this was January 8<sup>th</sup> right outside of Manila Harbor that this happened. The next morning we were in the Lingayan(?) Gulf where we were making our beach-head. We awoke at four o'clock in the morning. They woke us up from our bunks and it was just becoming daybreak about 4:30. The sky looked like a polka dot sky anti-aircraft smoke—clouds of smoke just like a pattern like a polka

dot dress. Suicide planes flying around crashing into U. S. carriers, into cruisers, into an Australian battleship. We were forming up in line ready to disembark—get off the ship—and anytime something could hit us, you know.

**WILL:** How many men were on the ship?

**ANDERSON:** About 3000. It was a battalion—3<sup>rd</sup> battalion of the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry. We disembarked out over the side on the rope ladder down to these amphibious tractors like the Marines used. The reason our unit got those, through our prior planning in Bougainville,—our mission was after the beach head go inland two miles, cross the Camay(?) River, get inland three miles past the river and set up a combat—or an MLR they called it—a Main Line of Resistance. The reason we had amphibious tractors was for the speed that if we went ashore in Higgins boats we couldn't run that fast to get up into our area so that we had alligator tractors that the Marines used to land on shore. Then we had to watch out for explosive ammunition that are duds from the Navy from shelling. We get by that and here comes all the civilian Phillipinos coming up out of holes out of the ground just yelling “Victory! Victory! MacArthur has returned” and all that stuff. It was quite thrilling to see this but we had to be careful because in some cases there were saboteurs and pro-Japanese that would wait till we pass them and then they'd shoot at us from the rear. So we half way had to ignore them and there were troops purposely on land that landed on land that would surround up these people and herd them into a group to keep them away from the troops. Our mission was to keep going so we went on through this town of DeMali(?) We were being sniped at but not bad—not enough to really harass us.

**WILL:** Where would this be?

**ANDERSON:** It was in the vicinity but not always at us. We got to the river and crossed the river. In crossing the river we had to go underneath a railroad bridge. As we went under the railroad bridge, we saw 500 pound bombs all

wired up on the bridge. The Japs were ready to blow.

**WILL:** After you got over or before you went over?

**ANDERSON:** No, they hadn't blown it yet. When we went under it we saw those bombs. We told the driver of that amphibious tractor kick it, you know, kick it in the ass and get this thing going. We don't want this bridge to fall on us. So it was the whole convoy. There was about eight or ten tractors for our unit, for our company. When we hit the shore we were about ½ mile out of a line on what they called the red beach or blue beach. I forget what our beach designation was. So when we hit the river the company commander said we got to make a left turn in the water so we had to go under this bridge and that is when we saw the bombs. We kept our fingers crossed that the Japs wouldn't blow it. We moved into position about 500 yards—600 yards to the to the left—then went ashore and got on a highway that was heading for Malasinki(?), which was little town of about 5000 people—civilians. Our first night after we got out of the river heading for Malasinki(?) we had to—it was nightfall. We had to bivouac for the night. So we set up our perimeters and these amphibious tractors said, Well we got to go back.” They turned around and went back in the dark, back to their beach designation. There we were. Early morning—daybreak—we sent out patrols. Then we got in columns of two's and started marching down the road. The patrols out in front of us, the scouts, were watching for snipers, activity and what have you. We got all the way up into Malasiki(?), just about sundown. We heard a lot of shooting going on and we cut across a rice paddy onto a railroad because the communications we were getting was don't come down the highway. So they said come down the railroad. We had this advance patrol that was fighting off the Japs up there in Malasiki(?), the town of Mallasiki(?). We got there about—it was getting dark—and so we were told to dig in, so we dug in right along side the railroad track. By this time we had them Japs trapped in a triangle—the highway and the railroad crossing



for the triangle. There was a dirt road maybe a ¼ mile up from the railroad crossing and we closed it in—surrounded them. We were pitching grenades and shooting all night long. Snipe shooting, you know, just harassing them. All of a sudden my partner and I, Bill Cave(?), (he was my best man at the wedding when we got back after the war)—we were laying in a fox hole pitching grenades at certain places where we heard noises and all of a sudden somebody jumped in our slit trench and it was a Jap and he had a saber. He was getting ready to swing that. Both Bill Cave and I jumped up and grabbed him and pulled him back down and butted him to death with the butt of a rifle. I asked Bill if he was O. K. and he said, “Yah, I’m O.K.” So there was a few nicks that we got, one on the cheek Bill Cave got and on my hand.

**WILL:** From that Jap?

**ANDERSON:** Yes, from that Jap. That was just could have been anything scuffling in the dark. That morning the first thing at the break of dawn we finally had a Jap interpreter come down the railroad from the rear headquarters as an interpreter. Nothing was really happening. The shooting had stopped. We had the interpreter yell out to surrender, “You’re surrounded. You don’t have a chance. We got food for you.” They were starving. You could tell the ones that were captured during the night trapped in a small little patrol pockets hadn’t eaten for days. By that time they start coming popping up and running out of the wooded area with their hands up. We herded them into a theater in the town, a cinema, outdoor theater, with a roof on. We had them strip down naked so that we could tell if they had any weapons on them because a lot of them carried grenades hanging on their neck, ammunition, money belts, around their waists and stuff like that. So we had them strip down and we ended up with 168 Prisoners of War. We killed 60 some Japs—captured 168. During the hassle we’re calling regimental headquarters that we got over 160 prisoners and what did they want us to do with them? They said send them back in groups of 20 and two GIs to each group of 20. So we organized groups of 20 and then two GIs—two

riflemen—to escort them back. The groups were spaced apart like 20 to 25 yards. I was in one group. Walked them back 20 miles to Cabachuan(?) right by a railroad crossing on the river, Camia River, and turned them over to MPs. On the way they wanted to drink the water. We pointed down to the swamp “Drink that water just like you did on the Bataan March.”

**WILL:** They never gave you any other trouble.

**ANDERSON:** No, they argued a lot and some would say, “I went to school in UCLA” And stuff like that. You ran into all this kind of English speaking Japs trying to get preferential treatment. That’s what they were doing. But anyways, we reported back to our unit at Monkada(?). Before we left with the prisoners, the civilian—in the town government—approached our unit commander and said, “One of these men raped a woman last night”—during the night. Captain Kelly said, “What do you want me to do about it?” We want permission for the woman to look over the prisoners to see if she can find him and point him out.” Kelly said, “Go ahead. If you find him, you take him.” She walked through that whole crowd. We had them sitting on wooden benches, naked. She went through and she pointed to the guy—bearded guy—bushy hair. He wasn’t really a Japanese soldier. He was a civil engineer, civilian attached to the military.

**WILL:** Philippino?

**ANDERSON:** No, Japanese. The mayor or the city official. She said “That’s him.” He’s shaking his head no, no, no. She’s jibbering in Phillipino “Damn right you’re the one.” So Kelly lets them take him and boy, they had a Kangaroo court right there in the court yard and shot him and Kelly said, “That’s one less we have to worry about.” So that’s when we organized those groups of 20 and marched them back to Cabachuan(?) and Bayonbon(?) where the two cities were there.

Tape I, Side 2

Anyways we marched the prisoners back and when we got back to Malasiki(?) again we got orders to advance towards Manila. We landed on Lingayan Gulf on the 9<sup>th</sup> of January and we were in Manila 117 miles south by February 17<sup>th</sup>, marching off and on. On the way down we got to a city called Tarlac(?) which is right by Clark Air Field That's an old U. S. Air Force base that the Japanese took over. We were bivouacked off the highway of Clark Field when we got a news bulletin, they're mimeographed and they're passed out to the troops of the current events of the week or the days.

**WILL:** Something like a little ...

**ANDERSON:** Like a news letter and we said, "Hey, General MacArthur says Clark Field has been taken. We ought to breeze right through there on the way down to Manila." The next morning we got orders to take Clark Field. So we were side-tracked to take Clark Field and that took about seven days. What was suppose to be like a 12 hour battle lasted seven days—12 thousand yards later. We swept across the whole Clark Field up into the mountains where we pushed the Japs up into the mountains. During the course of battle we were strafed by our own Marine Air Force when we were on Clark Field. They thought we were the Japs.

**WILL:** They hadn't gotten the word yet.

**ANDERSON:** They hadn't got the word. And that's when I first got wounded. I was on the attack to take towards the hill top, called "Top of the World." I was with my unit commander and he told me to run over to a tank and tell the tank commander to get his group of tanks moving—we're moving out. We were suppose to attack with these tanks. Well, there's a telephone hanging on the back of the tank and you go up and grab the phone and whistle through it. You'd get an answer and the tank commander says "Yah. What can we do for you." And I said, "Captain Kelly over here on your left is saying

we're ready to take off and attack this hill. He wants you to move along with the infantry." "Oh I can't, he says, "we're low on ammunition and we're low on gas." So then I kind of waved at my company commander. "We've got a problem. Come on over." So he comes over and he talks to the guy and said, "I don't give a God damn if you ain't got enough gas, you're gonna run it 'til it runs out of gas. We'll get you gas." You know, those five gallon cans from the jeep and trucks. So anyways we got the battle going and in the heat of battle I knew I was getting shot at and I hit the ground and a bullet hit right in front of my face and cut my lip in two places. I rolled over into the grass to get out of the line of fire. I figured once I got hidden in the grass he couldn't see me. It was a rifleman because it was single shots. It wasn't a machine gun? So then I'm laying in the grass trying to figure out what happened. My teeth are all there and everything, so I figured it must have been debris—rocks and stuff. The bullet ricocheted and splattered gravel and stuff all over my face. By that time Captain Kelly was yelling "Anderson, where in the hell are you? He's over there behind that tank. So I yelled at him. He says "Come on over." So I ran over to him My face is all bloody and he says, "What the hell happened to you?" I said, "I don't know. I think I got bullet shrapnel or stones splattered in my face from being shot at." At that time his radio man happened to move out a little bit to far from behind the tank and he got shot in the arm. We had to pull him down on the ground and get him out of the line of fire—told the tank to stop so we had something in front of us. Got a medic to come up and treat him. Then we took off again. We finally took this small hill that was right in front of "Top of the World". As we're climbing the hill I got hooked up with a squad. My, company commander was right next to me but he wanted me to go with this squad as an extra rifleman because they were shorthanded—some wounded people. So I'm with this Sergeant Pottsis. He's the squad leader, and we're moving up the hill. advancing and I'm just behind Sergeant Pottsis, more or less, acting as his guide or guard while he was directing his men. If I saw something, I told him to duck. I didn't know that we had another platoon circling around the hill to

come up the back side. They shot off a WP grenade which is a white phosphorus grenade from a rifle launcher and that thing sailed over the target which is a Japanese anti-aircraft—twenty millimeter gun on the hilltop that they had been using for flat fire over the airfield when we were attacking the airfield. They were using anti-aircraft guns for artillery and for machine guns. But anyways I saw that WP grenade coming up over the hill which is maybe 150 yards from me—coming right down on us. That thing went off. I got it on my arms. I had my fatigue jacket on but had the sleeves rolled up to here on both so there are scars on my arm.

**WILL:** How far away had it landed?

**ANDERSON:** Oh, about 10 to 15 yards. It exploded and it looked like a fireworks display, white phosphorous. We used that for enemy positions and stuff like that. Sometimes they'll get in a little pocket hole in the pit of a gun emplacement and shrapnel they can duck down enough that the shrapnel will miss them. But if you get a WP in there, that covers everything. It sticks on you. You try to wipe it off, you get it on your hands. Any ways, it burned so much and I thought I had it in my face. I did get some in my face and it was burning. You find out real fast how much pain level that you can stand. By that time Sergeant Pottsis grabbed me and laid me on the ground. He said, "Lay down." I heard him get this canteen out and sprinkle water on the ground and make a mud. He spread mud all over my arms and all over my face. By that time he had to move out. He said, "Just stay here. I'll have a medic get you" Well I must have passed out or something because when I woke up I was in a medical station laying on a stretcher. The doc said, "I want you to open up your eyes." I said, "Are they O.K.?" He said, "We want to see if they're O.K. Open your eyes?" I had my lid closed because the pain was such that—well, anyways, I noticed the pain in my face was gone. They had washed my face off and used copper sulfate. They smothered the phosphorus with sulfate and if it doesn't get oxygen, it doesn't burn. So they were, with tweezers, picking it out of my face and a couple other guys were working

on my arms. I still felt pain in my arms. They hadn't got it all. There was some heavier amounts burning in like a cigarette butt. I finally opened my eyes. Boy, were they watering but they said they looked O.K. That's when I saw little streaks of smoke coming off my face—particles still in my skin burning. I was there for observation for two days back in this first aid tent. They said, "What the hell happened to your face?" I had pock marks all over too, from the stones. And they didn't know whether that was phosphorous—. They were digging out the little stones. That's when I got two purple hearts. I got one when I reported to the medic and he put a tag on me for a Purple Heart for my lip being busted open or split open. He put tape over it to hold it together until we got to the aid station and then see if I needed stitches or not. I never did have stitches.

**WILL:** You were there two days?

**ANDERSON:** Yes, I was in the medical station two days and then things cleared up I had this white salve, zinc oxide, or whatever it was plastered on my face. I looked like a zombie when I reported back to my unit. That's when the 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant gave me my two Purple Hearts. Well, he gave me my Purple Heart and then he gave me an oak leaf cluster that goes on the Purple Heart. Actually, I got six altogether. I only claimed two. The others were just minor. The shrapnel in my knee and my thigh ...

**WILL:** Where did you get that?

**ANDERSON:** I got that—well, I was at Clark Field again—running across the field and getting shot at by anti-aircraft weapons. But they were so minor I didn't even go to the medics for that. Then the other one was going through the streets of Manila while going through the buildings. The Japs dropped a grenade through a hole in the floor. It hit the floor—just a poor quality hand grenade and it just split open and I got slivers in my back. One of the guys pulled it out. We got Clark Field occupied after seven days which was suppose to take a couple of days. They put us

back on the highway to start marching towards Manila. When we got to the outskirts of Manila on March 2<sup>nd</sup> of 1945, they stopped us from entering Manila. We were right at the gate of Manila. There was a statue at the entrance. I forget the name of the statue. It was a Spanish—some kind of a Spanish officer, hero, during the Spanish, when the Spaniards had the Philippines years ago. Anyways, they held us up so we had to move off the road and let the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry go through—armored division, MacArthur's pride and joy. They were going in first.

**WILL:** Where were they at?

**ANDERSON:** They had just landed and they were racing down Lingayan Gulf, 117 miles, with their armored vehicles to get to Manila. We were within a few miles—Clark Field was like 45 miles from Manila—50 miles. By the time they were racing down—(I don't know when they landed)—but they were racing down to get to Manila, they wanted to return the First Cavalry to Manila with Mac Arthur, "I have returned" deal. Anyways we waited there off the road—on the side of the road. We had to set up our defenses—our perimeters—because after the first day nobody showed up. But they said still wait, wait, wait. It took them three days. The third day—here they come. It wasn't more than two or three hours this whole convoy ends up being swallowed up in Manila. We hear a lot of shooting and artillery going on. Then we got orders to advance. So we continued to advance. Come to find out the First Cavalry was so rambunctious to get to Manila that they sped right across the bridges, the Passive(?) River—went across the bridges—got all their units south of the river and Japs blew the bridges up and had hem trapped on the south side. So we got into the outskirts of Manila and into the building to building—hand fighting and also house to house. We confiscated lots of beverages that we found in the houses—scotch, wine, beer. We sent that back with our jeep for a rear CP to hold for us so we could all split it up and divide. When we got down to the Passive(?) River, the fightings is pretty fierce. The buildings, hotels are burning. They declared it an open city but the Japs

wouldn't let it be an open city to save it—they just fired it up. We got down to the Passive(?) river. We couldn't get across the river. The way the situation was, the walled city which was like a big fort—Fort Stachinberg(?)—the walled city called Intreborous(?). The Japs were holed up and their fields of fire were so heavy nobody could cross. They had the First Cavalry pinned down. All the bridges were blown up. The post office was full of Japanese. The large post office like we have in Rockford or bigger. The walled city here, the post office here and they had control of everything. Somebody had the bright idea to make a river crossing and get into the walled city. During the night they lined up 144 artillery pieces on two sides of the walled city—so they could hit two sides of the walled city from the south side of the Passive(?) river—the north side of the Passive (?) river. We were on the north side. The Japs are on the south side. We found out that our unit, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Company K, was going to make a river crossing and invade or get inside of the walled city and try to make—get enough people going there where we're fighting—getting the Japs knocked down and holed up, making it easy to get through. Well, during the night they moved in all these artillery pieces and at the break of dawn all hell broke loose. They were shelling direct fire across the river. The artillery pieces were pointed directly at the wall. They would have maybe 6, 7, 8 guns pointed at one spot and using concrete piercing ammunition, they just pulverized the wall so you could walk over it. Prior to that it was a sheer granite stone wall you couldn't climb over. If you attempted to climb, the Japs would get you before you got over. So we shelled the hell out of it, and they bombed it from the air for the first two hours at the break of dawn. By six o'clock we were in engineer boats making the river crossing. And you know, machine gun fire, sniper fire and everything going on and we got up to the wall and we climbed over the crumpled part that we were at. There were several areas that were the same way that troops got in. Our unit went in right by the river crossing by the mint building in the walled city. When I say the mint building, we had to go through the mint, where they make money. Of course there are

stacks of silver, stacks of gold and stacks of coins and paper money, counterfeit money. We even found counterfeit money that the Japs were printing for their purposes.

**WILL:** Occupation money, I suppose.

**ANDERSON:** Anyways, we're inside the walled city within a couple of hours of the shelling and through the mint building. Everybody confiscating silver—stuffing it in their packs. We're inside the walled city, on the wall protecting—the Japs were buried underneath The Walled City in the tunnels—the dungeons which later on in modern day ('45) it was like a sewer system. They used it for tactics I guess. You know to hide. It was estimated over 500 down there underneath The Walled City. So one of the officers—I was a still a staff sergeant. I was an SFC now. I got promoted in Bougainville with an extra stripe—only to get a little more pay raise. They would give you a higher rank to get you more pay, so I was an SFC at this time. Everybody was “over in grade” because this was like going on 37 months in the Pacific. You wondered if you were ever going to get home. September of '42 when we left the United States, there were 88 guys, Rockford men, in Company K. In July of '45 there were only four of us.

**WILL:** Oh my gosh. Did they transfer out of it?

**ANDERSON:** No, most of them were wounded and killed—mostly wounded. There were 16 or 17 killed of the original 88 and the rest were wounded. Only one guy out of the whole 88 that never got wounded. His name was Canaly. He worked for the Post Office. He got out of it without a scratch. Eighty-seven guys something happened to them, killed, wounded, including myself. When the years go by and you're overseas fighting, Guadalcanal, Bougainville, in the Philippines, you just wonder if you're every going to make it. The odds—well, fortunately when we got to Manila and took it—they then put us out in the rice paddies. Made up a base camp and then we started basic training—not basic training but military training again—exercises just to keep us busy. Then we got

orders to go up into the Cagayan Valley where we were to take Retau(?) which is on the northern tip of Luzon. So there's a town called Lapal(?) which is right about north of Clark Field where we started our mission walking up this country road, winding road up up through the mountains. On the way we would skirmish with the Japs. They'd dig their tanks into the hillside and use them for pill boxes. We had skirmishes here and there. This was like in May of '45. We're up in a little town called Retau(?) which was half way to Apari(?) which is the northern end of Luzon. We'd just finished off knocking out four Jap tanks with flame throwers. One of my additional duties as a communication sergeant, I was a flame thrower squad leader. I had two flame thrower crews—twelve guys, six guys one each. I had an assistant squad leader—ten guys, five guys on each flame thrower. We used napalm and jelly gas. These were all fueling gases.

**WILL:** Weren't those kind of dangerous. To use it?

**ANDERSON:** Ya. You get one on your back and you get shot when one of the tanks go off. Good bye. Anyways we had that happen to one guy. He just went over the edge a little bit. He went further than we wanted him to but he was determined to get the job done. In doing so he got shot. Well, he got shot plus the fuel tank got penetrated and ignited and blew him up. When we got to Aritau(?) there was a hospital there with Japanese wounded in it but they were all half dead. We called and said we got about 32 prisoners here but they're all sick. They're in the hospital beds. They said, “We don't want any more prisoners.” Well, what we gonna do with them?” They told us it was up to us. So we shot them all. We didn't want to leave them behind. They could be playing possum. By this time we were so hardened we could open up a can of hash and eat it with our fingers next to a dead Jap with maggots crawling all over him. Didn't bother us one bit. Then we got up from Arutau(?) we went to a little town, Trinidad. For some reason or other the Japanese convoy got strafed and shot up there by our air force. There was money laying all over the ground. Silver pesos, like a silver

dollar. I got a handful of those—about 2500 of them. Anyways we found out that they were all laying in the weeds—the Japs—in the brush, dysentery, malaria, and they just didn't have the strength to fight.

**WILL:** Not near where the hospital was?

**ANDERSON:** No, this north, a little town called Trinidad north of Aretau. Aretau(?) is where the little hospital was where they were all laying on the beds. They hardly moved. They were just half dead and they look at you mercifully like they'd say "Do it. Kill me". You get to that point where you don't want to suffer.

**WILL:** Put them out of their misery.

**ANDERSON:** We get up into the hillside on this road by Trinidad. That's where we found this convoy and all this money and stuff. Then we found over 320 Japs that were scattered out from this convoy. The convoy was all shot up and burned and the ones that still survived the strafing were underneath the branches and the bushes—in the ditches and culverts. We called them and told them again, "We've got about 320 some Japs up here that are either dysentery, malaria, sick wounded, half dead." "We don't want them." So everybody got ready to go out and anything they saw shoot it, kill it, make sure its dead. Well then a jeep comes up. Stiles from Detroit, Michigan, and shouts "Anderson, McVay, Harry Revere, and Getts, get your stuff—we're going home. This is on the point system at this time. Anybody with over 100 points rotated as fast as possible to the States. They wanted to make a big showing. The war in Europe was over. That was over in April sometime in '45 or was it sooner than that?"

**WILL:** That was May.

**ANDERSON:** April, May. Somewhere in there. Roosevelt died. That was a crush on us. It really hit us hard over there because we were all raised in families under Roosevelt. He was the greatest, you know.

**WILL:** How did you feel—you and the rest of them feel about it?

**ANDERSON:** Well we felt real bad about it. We just hoped the country would hang on and get the job done like he was doing. We thought he was doing a magnificent job. Then Truman took over. Was it Truman?

**WILL:** Yah. Truman took over.

**ANDERSON:** Was it Truman?

**WILL:** Yah.

**ANDERSON:** Just ten years later he was involved in Korea, too. Anyways I don't remember who the Vice President with Roosevelt at that time. I think it was Truman.

**WILL:** Yes, Truman took over.

**ANDERSON:** Was it Truman, the haberdasher. Anyways, I threw my satchel pack, my maps. See, by this time we're being infiltrated by GIs from Europe—air force individuals, sent the infantry and everything. This Nightingale, was an air force sergeant, a ground crew, and he was assigned to the Pacific and they put him in the infantry. I said, "Nightingale," I threw my map bag at him and said, "It's all yours, goodbye". Captain Green—we had 13 company commanders in 38 months. Thirteen company commanders. Thirteen of them. This is #13—boy, that 13 must be a lucky number for me. The one just before him was wounded, then we had one killed. Some of them were just transferred out—exchanged. We had one killed, 2 or 3 wounded. I was just breaking in this Captain Green with the maps and what the strategy was with the battalion and battalion commanders because I was a kind of liaison between our unit and battalion headquarters and all the other units. By this time I'm old hat—you know—Sgt. Anderson. It was getting to the point where the captain would say "What do we do now Anderson?" You know, because he's fresh. I'd bring him up to date on what the situation was

and then our executive officer was always in the rear bringing up the kitchen and what have you—the rear supplies—so he was never involved. So it was up to me to brief the company commander as to what the situation was. Then he'd go back to report to the battalion commander to get briefed some more, I suppose. He probably met the battalion commander prior to that. They usually say get up to your unit as fast as you can and get acquainted, then work back in getting information. So here this Captain Green—we'd just finished this battle and he lived through it, fortunately. This jeep drives up and says, "Anderson, Devere Getts and McVey, you're going home. Climb aboard." So I got on the jeep which took us back to original headquarters. We had to stay there for the night. They took our guns away and our gear. "What the hell if the Japs come down off the hillside, what am I going to do?" They said, "Don't worry about that." Then we got shelled that night by the Japs. So anyways we got back to Manila at the replacement depot—got processed through. It took three or four days.

**WILL:** This is probably in what—June?...

**ANDERSON:** This is June 23<sup>rd</sup>. On June 23<sup>rd</sup>, I got on a ship called \_\_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_ and that took us back to San Francisco. We made a stop at Guam to pick up some more GIs and transferring back to the States. Then we were on our way back to the States and arrived in San Francisco on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1945. The war's still going on. It took us so long to get back. We had to keep zig zagging—submarine tactics. Got off the ship, went to Angel Island, went across the dock, got on a ferry, went to Angel Island. The first day processed, there. This is July 4<sup>th</sup>. It was 72° and we were freezing to death. We were shivering.

**WILL:** Your were used to the ...

**ANDERSON:** We had fatigues on. We were climatized for the Pacific, 120° weather. Here it's 72°—almost half. Our blood was thin so they got us in wool clothing—overcoats. You know, the regular army blouse and Eisenhower jacket,

wool pants. People on the base at Angel Island were in T-shirts, walking in T-shirts. t, "What's the matter with those guys?" Anyways, 11 o'clock that night—this was early in the morning—seven o'clock we were off the ship, over to Angel Island, got processed, paper work, back pay, stuff like this. By eleven o'clock that night we were on a train heading for Fort Sheridan.

**WILL:** Chicago.

**ANDERSON:** They split up the guys in the different directions they were going. I was in a group going to Chicago. July 4<sup>th</sup>, that night—midnight—we were got on a train—. It took us four days and four nights. Every train stop—. See, everything going west had priority. So now we're on the eastbound train so we had to take siding. I'm telling you, the GIs were crazy. Every time that train stopped they'd jump off, run into town, buy a bottle, get some beer, then the train starts moving again they'd grab a cab and meet us at the next town and get back on. Then we'd be out there writing on the Pullman cars, "MacArthur's pride and joy—the U. S. Army" all over the train. We had Jap flags flying on the outside of the train. July 10<sup>th</sup> we get to—that was five days and five nights, I guess—on July 10<sup>th</sup> we got to Fort Sheridan for two days of processing. I had German prisoners sewing up my ruptured duck patch on my shirt—issuing me ribbons put all my garbage on my chest. Then they'd ask us questions—the ones that spoke English. "Were you in Europe or the Pacific?" I said, "Pacific". "Oh," he said, "You fought those damn Japs." He's a German prisoner. Then July 12<sup>th</sup> I got separated from the service for the convenience of the government, I wasn't discharged. They gave us 90 days to decide whether we wanted to stay in or not. I says, "90 days ain't enough. I have been away for 38 months overseas. I've only been home once in 4 ½ years for six days." That was in '41 before we shipped out. I got home—We rented a cab from Tallahoma, Tennessee, all the way to Rockford. There were six of us in the cab with the cab driver. Seven guys. It was a Chevie and we were

packed in like sardines. We had one guy sleep in the trunk.

**WILL:** How did you get back?

**ANDERSON:** Same way. He stayed in town. We had six days. Four days home and one day getting up here Twenty-fours roughly. And 24 hours getting back. So he stayed up in town. We paid his—\$60 a man times seven. We had to rotate. One had to sit in the trunk. We wired it open so you could see out and then wired from inside so it stayed up and didn't bounce. That was a riot. But anyways, getting back to July 12<sup>th</sup> when I got separated from Fort Sheridan. We all—several of us guys—decided let's all meet at the Palmer House and have one for the road—you know—in Chicago. I was the only one that showed up at the Palmer House. I sat there for two hours waiting for everybody. Then I thought, "The hell with this noise." My train is about due to go to Rockford so I went down to the train station. Sure enough, there was the train getting ready to go to Rockford. I got on and got in Rockford on July 13<sup>th</sup> at 2 o'clock in the morning. I thought I don't want to wake up everybody at 2 o'clock in the morning, so I grabbed a cab and hauled me up to the Nelson Hotel on South Main Street—the old Nelson right there on Elm Street and South Main. The Cutler Building—old Cutler Furniture—Hanley Furniture—right across the street was the Nelson Hotel. Anyways, got in the hotel and when I got my room I said, "I want a like a sauna bath—steam bath. I wanted to get all this crap out of my system. So I'm in there and you could just see the dirt rolling off my skin, coming out of the pores. Went for a little swim and by 3:30—4 o'clock I jumped in bed. Woke up about 8, went down to the barber shop, got a shave and a hair cut and asked him to use the phone. He let me use the phone. We were talking war. I just got home. He was all excited, the barber. Vern, my younger brother, just right after me, answered the phone. I said, "Hey, I'm down here at the Nelson Hotel. Anybody got a car that can pick me up?". "No, we don't have a car but we'll come down with a cab." I said, "OK". Then Ralph, my younger brother, came with him. He was nine

years old then, and my other brother is two years younger than I am. I was ...

**WILL:** Were they in the service?

**ANDERSON:** Yah, my younger brother, Vernie, was. He was in the Marines. They called a cab and by the time they got to the barber shop, I was paying the barber. We got in the car and went home. Everybody at home, my step-father, my mother, two brothers. Then they called a bunch of people by phone and they all came to visit. So really I loafed around for about two weeks. Met my wife downtown shopping for civilian clothes.

**WILL:** You were married?

**ANDERSON:** I wasn't married

**WILL:** First time you met her?

**ANDERSON:** No, I knew her in school. I met her downtown and that started the affair. I called her a few times. Finally she consented she'd have a date. We went to a show. In fact it worked out so good that by November 10<sup>th</sup> we got married in '45 about three months after I got out of the service we were married. That was it. We got married. We had two children. I rejoined the National Guard, became a commander and a custodian of the armory. I became an officer in the National Guard and lo and behold come December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1953, we mobilized again and I had to move my unit to Camp Cook, California of the National Guard. Had to leave the family home and went to Camp Cook, California for a year. I went back to Fort Benning, Georgia for three months refresher course as a retreat. Got my \_\_\_\_ (?) \_\_\_\_ orders and ended up in Japan. In Japan I got assigned to the 45<sup>th</sup> Division which was on the front line in Korea. So when I got to Korea—30° below zero on this night train that was air conditioned with outside air—30° below zero with leather boots on. We didn't have our winterized boots that they hadn't issued to us. We got to division headquarters—the 45<sup>th</sup> Division—and I got assigned a bed. The first thing we did was strip down naked and get in that



sleeping bag to get warm. When you're naked you warm up fast when your skin body is in that bag. Then in the morning, this was in February 4<sup>th</sup> 1953, we get dressed and wandered around. Found out where we were gonna have breakfast, went and had breakfast. A few of us officers wandered around and we found the S-1, the administrative officer to find out who do we report to. Who are we assigned to. They said that will be at 9 o'clock. We met the division commander. I don't remember his name but found out I was going to be assigned to the 180<sup>th</sup> Infantry but they said, "We don't know what unit you'll get. You'll find that out when you get to your regiment." So they put us in trucks and they hauled us up and I said, "Sure as hell, 180<sup>th</sup> Infantry—I'm gonna be right there—sand bag castle." We get up to the 180<sup>th</sup> and they had a coffee break—had lunch—then a regimental Commander Colonel DeOrsa—He was from New Jersey. He said, "You men have already been assigned by name to units so we're gonna read off your name and the unit—you know, no explanation or nothing—just read you name off and the unit.

**WILL:** No choice.

**ANDERSON:** So Anderson being the first on the list,—He says, "1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Anderson, headquarters company, 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion, 180<sup>th</sup> Infantry. I said, "See, I told you—sand bag castle." Lt. Poe said, "I'll probably be with you." He got assigned somewhere else. Anyways, I ended up reporting to the headquarters company, relieved the headquarters commandant, took his job. I held that job for about a month. And the battalion commander got wounded and got shipped out. Major Ottenter took over and said we need a unit commander at Company L up on the line. He said "I want you to go up and take over that company." The unit commander that was up there was combat fatigued and going a little berserk. So I packed up and there was another officer that took my place. This was like within a month—I took my place as headquarters commandant and I went up to Company L and reported in to this lieutenant. He was a West Pointer by the way—dark, gloomy bunker, you

know—not cleaned up. I said, "How can you stand it up here?" He said, "Oh you're never in it. You'll never notice it." Well, from the talk I heard from the troops, they're all trigger happy, scared to death. They had no confidence in that officer so they're all looking out for themselves. I had three days to get acquainted with the front line before I signed his release but after the first night I sighed his release and got him out.

**WILL:** Didn't he ...

**ANDERSON:** He started shooting up in the bunker at rats. They had rats up there like that. "Well," I said, "the reason why there in here is because you let food lay around and everything else." So, (I know I've gotten into this Korean thing) anyway I was in Korea—well you earn four points a month when you're on the front line. You rotate at 32 points. So I was on the front line all the time I was there. By September I was rotated back to the States and came out as a captain.

**WILL:** Do you remember where you were in Korea?

**ANDERSON:** Yah, 35 miles inland from the east coast Inji(?)—north of Inji(?) about 30 miles north. We were north of the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel. The 38<sup>th</sup> parallel kind of crossed over about 60 miles inland from the east coast down below the 38<sup>th</sup> over by Seoul. But I was up 35 miles in from the east coast. On a clear day I could see the ocean and the mountain tops. We had some of the well known combat areas in Korea was the Punch Bowl which was on my right flank within 500 yards and Heart Break Ridge was about 1000 yards to my left across the valley. My position was Sand Bag Castle which got to be a good name over there. Everything happened at Sand Bag Castle. Anyways I shipped out of Korea in September and came back to the States. I was released from Camp Carson, Colorado, on September 23<sup>rd</sup> of '53 and then I started my second family—a boy and a girl. So really I raised two families. I've got children—the oldest is 48, the youngest is 36. The youngest passed

away here six years ago with cancer. My youngest daughter.

**Tape 2, Side 1**

**WILL:** OK. Looking back on the 2<sup>nd</sup> World War. You did a good job so far here. The mail and stuff—can you tell us about the mail? Did you write a lot and did you receive ...

**ANDERSON:** Yah, I wrote a lot. We used to like a—we had what we called the “V” mail where we’d write the letter then our officer would censor our mail—cut out the bad stuff and then it would be photographed and sent by microfilm to the States and then reproduced in a negative type like a photograph letter. The “V” mail was a form a single page that you wrote your letters.

**WILL:** You were limited to a single page?

**ANDERSON:** You were limited to a single page for one page and then you’d seal it up and that’s a one page letter. But lot of fellows would write on one page and number it 1 and then the 2<sup>nd</sup> one #2, #3 for the different pages. Occasionally we understand some of the mail got lost or a plane got shot down. The mail was lost. So a lot of people in the latter part of the years overseas, the guys getting their letters from their wives and their girlfriends. I never had it happen to me. I never wrote more than one page being a single kid—and writing to lots of girls—you know—all kinds of guys had sisters, girlfriends and all that were in our unit. I had lots of time being a single kid, a young fellow—20 - 21 years old—A guy would say, “Hey, I got a sister at home that’s pretty down in the dumps. Why don’t you write her letter and pick her up?” I’d do that and I got a chain reaction going. I had about six different girls going with letters. I only got to see two of them after the war. One was in Chicago and one was in Kewanee, Illinois. The one in Chicago wasn’t that serious although it could have been. I hadn’t met my wife yet. I was writing to a girl but she joined the Navy so I wrote her off. The girl friend I had when I left home joined the Navy—Waves. The older we got, the more we

realized that—she was 16 and I was 17 ½. We were just kids, you know. It wasn’t really love. We were just going together but we thought we were made for each other. As you get older things change.

**WILL:** Did they send packages?

**ANDERSON:** Oh, yes—We’d get popcorn. I had a friend that would send me Old Jack Daniels in a box of popcorn. The ones that got through were pretty mangled up but still no one discovered what it was so I’d get it. I know there were many that got broken open in mailing and handling. Somebody would say, “Hey, look at this!” and they kept it themselves. But we used to get cakes and cookies. Sometimes the mail in transition—where we’d move from one island to another—the mail would end up being a month or two late.

**WILL:** The mail would arrive in bunches then?

**ANDERSON:** Yah. You’d get it in bunches. Then you’d get your cake and it’s all moldy—sitting in a bag somewhere on an island waiting to be transferred to another island in the hot sun. We used to get bouillon so we could mix with our field food, like what we called field rations—we get our army beef stew and army hash and mix a cube of bouillon with it and it flavored it up pretty good.

**WILL:** You mentioned early, you were pretty hardened by the time—months into the war. How else did you feel? Were you continually scared?

**ANDERSON:** Oh yah. You’re never—in fact every battle you’d go into you feared the worst and then after it was over with you realized, Hey, it wasn’t as bad as I thought it was going to be. Based on how involved you were with the mission like—my case I worked under the company commander as reconnaissance sergeant. I had to maintain his maps and the situation for him and mark up all the positions and while we were in a defensive mode I had to make overlays to turn into the battalion that they mark up their

master map. I wasn't too involved in any fighting except when I got to Manila and Bougainville on patrols. When I was assigned to a patrol as reconnaissance sergeant I'd draw maps and I was trained to use the compass for measuring the height of a—inside of the jungle you could see a knoll or hill and I'd shoot an \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_ and figure the trig, you know, the height of the hill from where I was and then the master planner knew what the different elevations were up into these mountains and valleys from mosaic photographs. Established elevations. And then when I would submit a sketch back to our battalion then our battalion puts it together with others and sends it back to our regiment—the regiment puts their's together and sends it back to the division. The group that makes up these maps \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_ more accurate maps with more accurate details that we send back. Then every time we made a turn in the trail we'd shoot \_\_\_\_? \_\_\_\_ and mark it on the map—how far was it—100 yards—did we walk a 100 yards and then turn 30 degrees or what. This is how we established the topographical icons and grids, and what have you on the map, the contour lines and the valleys and ravines and the—not a dam but a waterfall—stuff like that to make the detail of the map more clearly. When we first hit Bougainville, we had a map that showed the shoreline outline and a thousand yard grid—and a thousand yards between grids lines and a big blotch of green and down here on the shoreline it shows like a river outlet so you know a river goes up in there somewhere.

**WILL:** In the green ...

**ANDERSON:** When we built up this perimeter and sent out patrols daily in different directions and make these strip maps on the trails or we made a trail, made a strip map. Then down further back in headquarters division or corps headquarters they pieced all this together. Then your map makers would begin to put it together and print up a decent map. So if we weren't in combat we were on patrols doing this work and occasionally we'd run into combat making maps.

**WILL:** You carried a weapon then.

**ANDERSON:** We'd find a stray Jap patrol or a couple of stragglers lost in the jungle.

**WILL:** You carried a weapon?

**ANDERSON:** Yah. We carried weapons.

**WILL:** What were they?

**ANDERSON:** I carried a BAR. That was a light weapon with a carbine but I never trusted a carbine. I was good at a BAR in training. I shot expert in the Browning automatic rifle. That's a 20 round clip. The second part of the BAR I like is 20 rounds versus 8 rounds in a M-1, and I'd carry it hanging on a sling by my hip like what they called snap shoot. If you got good eye sight—I was good at pull(?) shooting so I figured if I'm good at pull(?) shooting and I see a guy 100 yards from me, I can snap shoot I can hit him. That was one of my favorite weapons.

**WILL:** How about—did your unit run across any concentration camps in the Philippines?

**ANDERSON:** Yes, in the Philippines.

**WILL:** Were they civilian prisoners?

**ANDERSON:** There were civilians—prisoners of war from Bataan March when the war first started. There were a lot of civilian school teachers, educators, nurses, doctors. I went on a 90 man patrol. I went with a G2. G2 is a division intelligence group. There was about—they wanted a patrol, an infantry patrol, to protect them on this mission. It was a reconnaissance patrol where we got up in the mountain and looking down at this town of Cabathauan(?) with all American prisoners—about 600 of them—a little over 600. We had to sit there for 15 days protecting this G2 crowd, intelligence group. They were monitoring the changing of the guard and how lacsidasic they were. If they were alert and they made all these notes and put a plan together for the marauders, Mural marauders, commandos attacked Cabathauan(?). But on the way back on that patrol when we were heading

back we were out in front of the front lines with this patrol looking at this prison camp and on the way back we got caught. The plan was if we got caught, we'd scattered in groups of five and find our way back to the line. Our group, the one I was in—I went with this infantry platoon because I was a reconnaissance sergeant. I was a map sergeant. I could draw maps for these people on this patrol while they wrote up all the information. I monitored all the maps. A rifle platoon was fifty-two guys and then the rest were all from G2. It was about 90 people on a patrol. I thought to myself at the time—I thought moving 90 people around at night—sleeping in the thickets, and the woods and the jungle by the day and then moving at night—moving 90 people—moving a lot of people. You know it ain't too bad moving 20 or 30 but to control 90.

**WILL:** Where was this in relation to Manila?

**ANDERSON:** This was straight east of Clark Field on Highway 5 and the next prison camp was in Manila at the University. I want to say the name, I can't say it. Sanitomaz(?) University. The only time I got involved with that was when they called up the units and wanted volunteers for—well several things on the PT boats out in the harbor. Picking up Jap prisoners on the boats that were sniping from the sunken boats out there. But we volunteered our services to go to this Sanitomaz(?) University because the word was—they thought they had liberated the people but there were a lot of Japs hiding inside and they were threatening the people if they told them where they were they'd kill them. We had to go in there and fleece them out. There was a few people killed. Some of them just died from shock, you know, heart attack. But we had to clean it out. Right by the university, there was the ball field or the football—baseball.

**WILL:** Athletic field?

**ANDERSON:** Athletic field, like Wrigley Field. We had a tank force that went in there and they were holed up underneath the stands and the tanks were shooting through the wooden walls at the base of the stands when they went into the

field. There was infantry on the other side getting them that were trying to escape. But we went through all the rooms of the university one floor at a time. That's when I got that shrapnel in my back. When I caught a piece of shrapnel but it was—the guy just picked it out. A sliver, you know. But it left a mark on you. Anyways, then the other—to have something to do—the war over as far as the Philippines was concerned. It was cleaning up these pockets. We found out there was a prisoner camp here or there. Well, we got volunteers and wanted volunteers to go on the PT boats to go out and search out all the sunken ships that were half exposed in the bay. 'Cause they were complaining, the Navy and the Merchant Marines were complaining they were getting sniped at from \_\_\_? \_\_\_ off the bay so we had four PT boats and on the way out we searched all the ships and we caught one prisoner and we caught him because we saw a pair shorts hanging on a—a pair of boxer shorts hanging on a railing. The PT boat commander says, "That's kind of weird. By this time you'd think that thing would be rotten or blown away when the ship was sunk. Why is it all of a sudden there's a pair of shorts there. We better check it out." So I jumped on deck on the railing and slid down the deck to the bulkhead which was at 45°. The stern was up out of the water and I grabbed the handle on the door and I kept the steel door between me and whoever was inside the paint locker or whatever it was and I opened it up and another GI standing on the railing hooked with his legs on the railing pointing his gun and there that son of a bitch was buried in the water—naked—trying to hide. He stands up. We yell at him to get up and he gets up, he says, "Don't shoot. Don't shoot." and there was his rifle and we threw that overboard. It sunk. We put him on the PT boat. He was the only one we captured. The rest of them—we shot two of them that tried to escape or shoot back. We shot them before we got to the boat. Then we went over to, I want to say Salvador where MacArthur's last stand was ... Oh, the little island of Corregidor. We went over to Corregidor because there were some complaints over there but they said they took care of it. We spent one night on the PT boats and the

Navy guys fed us. That was great. Two days out there in the water scouting around and cleaning up things.

**WILL:** Something different.

**ANDERSON:** And getting fresh ice cream and fresh food. So then we got back to our base camp which was in the rice paddies north of Manila. That's about the time we got orders to head up towards Cagayan Valley. That's where I went up in Cagayan Valley out of Retau(?) and got ... between Retau and Trinidad when they come up and said, "Geddes, Anderson, Devere and McPhinney you're going home." I had 117 points.

**WILL:** How many points did you need?

**ANDERSON:** You needed over 100. The first batch was 120. Then they dropped it down to 100. Now the 120, there were guys that were only overseas a year and a half or two years but they were married and they got so many points for each kid. I was single. But I had 117. Wounded twice with two purple hearts. That was five points apiece. Then you got so many for each ... five points for a beachhead. Two of those. That was ten. Purple Hearts awards, Combat Badge. Everyone added up into points so I was one of the highest—117 that was single, not a married status. Now Devere, McPhinney and Geddes—Geddes was a National Guardsman, McPhinney was a National Guardsman and Bill Cave and myself. We were the last four.

**WILL:** About their points maybe?

**ANDERSON:** Oh, points, yah. They were married and they had less points than I had. They had 108 or 107.

**WILL:** They started out with an advantage then.

**ANDERSON:** Well married men and family men they had an advantage but that was—you know

the single guys accept that because he needs to go home.

**WILL:** Where were you—Did you remember VE day over there in the Philippines?

**ANDERSON:** VE day. Victory Day? I was home.

**WILL:** I mean of Europe?

**ANDERSON:** Oh, Europe. Yes. We were in Lapau getting ready to go up in the Cagayan Valley around April or May of '45. When we were up in the Cagayan Valley in August, they dropped the bomb on Hiroshima.

**WILL:** What did you think of that?

**ANDERSON:** That was August 6<sup>th</sup>. That was the day before my birthday.

**WILL:** You were home here.

**ANDERSON:** No. Yah, I was home here. July 12<sup>th</sup> I got out.

**WILL:** What did you think the atom bomb was?

**ANDERSON:** What did I think the atom bomb was. The training that we got in California—no I mean in Camp Forrest, Tennessee. No it wasn't either. It was in Bougainville when they talked about electrons and protons and itrons and what they called the isotope bar. The officers had a bar in their officers mess hall called Isotope Bar. They went through a seminar on the atom bomb and what to expect of it and when they went through that class, they graduated as being educated and one of the atom breakdown was the isotope. We really didn't know how terrible this thing was but I forget now what they told us that Hiroshima was the equivalent of so many tons of dynamite. We couldn't imagine from ground zero a mile radius was completely wiped out and diminished from there, you know, burns and what have you. When we heard that we dropped the bomb—Truman dropped the bomb on Hiroshima

on August 6<sup>th</sup> and then three or four days later, Nagasaki. I never gave it much thought—I knew it was going to help win the war, end the war but how soon I didn't know. But then when they told me when they come Geddes, McPhinney Anderson, you're rotating back to the states, I figured something's happening that turned this around.

**WILL:** You weren't needed, it sounded like.

**ANDERSON:** Well, they got so many GIs from Europe coming home and we were overseas three years and haven't been home. They had to make a quick exchange and make a good showing to the public.

**WILL:** For morale.

**ANDERSON:** Yah, for morale, what have you. When we came back from the Pacific and went underneath the Golden Gate Bridge on that Hunter Liggett ship, troop ship, the Navy band was up there on the Golden Gate Bridge playing "Anchors Aweigh" and we came into dock side near the Fisherman's Wharf at San Francisco at Fort Wilson, army base. And the Red Cross and the Salvation Army and some other charitable organization welcoming us back and I couldn't get over how all these civilian people knew we were coming home. Because half the guys on the ship, it was their families. And a lot of them were living in California, 'Cause we were trained in California before we went overseas. Tennessee, Camp Forrest, Tennessee. They must have paid the radio man a few bucks to send a telegram that they're going to arrive approximately such and such a day in Frisco because there were thousands of people waiting. So they hustled us off the ship, went through the warehouse on to a ferry over to Angel Island and, of course, by that time I was more concerned about myself, getting myself cleared up, and processed and get on that train and get home.

**WILL:** Rather than hang around San Francisco.

**ANDERSON:** Yah. Although coming back from Korea, I hung around Frisco for a day before we

got on a train to go to Camp Carson, Colorado. Took a little more time going home from Korea than I did World War II.

**WILL:** How about VJ Day?

**ANDERSON:** VJ Day I was in downtown Rockford with my so called girlfriend, wife to be, around September 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> whenever the truce for the unconditional surrender was signed by MacArthur and the Japs and we ran downtown. Vehicles weren't too sufficient in Rockford during that period. A lot of cars with the rationing and everything. The only way I could get around was to rent a car from a taxi cab company which is like Hertz and I'd rent that car for about 3 or 4 days out of the week. Send it back Sunday night or Monday morning and pick it up on Thursday or Friday so I could run around, you know, otherwise there was just a lot of walking. My wife, at that time my girlfriend, lived on Hinkley Avenue which is only about eight block, ten blocks, from downtown Rockford. We ran downtown and the streets were just full of people that were building bonfires in the middle of State and Main. Just going like they're going nuts and then, of course, the MPs were out there trying to control the military people and then they glance at me and seen my ruptured duck on my shirt and we can't bother him, he's through. I didn't get touched by the MPs.

**WILL:** I think we've about covered everything. A couple last little questions here. You don't have any disability or anything.

**ANDERSON:** No.

**WILL:** You don't have any association with Veterans' hospitals

**ANDERSON:** I got malaria. When I got home I came down with malaria. That lasted about two years and nine months. They gave me quinine shots and that burned it out and gradually—but they still won't take my blood at the blood bank because of the malaria.

**WILL:** Another question I forgot to ask how was the medical treatment in the service?

**ANDERSON:** In the states when it came time for physicals, like once a year we'd have a physical. That was good. I accepted it as adequate And overseas you avoided a lot of stuff that could make you sick. Like natives, if they had elephantitis, what do you call that where there fingers drop off and everything.

**WILL:** Leprosy.

**ANDERSON:** Leprosy. We witness—I saw leprosy in the Fiji Islands, New Hebrides and the Philippines. I saw elephantitis, I saw a lot of weird diseases that you wouldn't want to have any contact with them so you avoided that.

**WILL:** As far as medical treatment ...

**ANDERSON:** Medical treatment as far as I was concerned when I was wounded, it was efficient. It was fast. When somebody got hurt they got you back to a first aid station like, well, in Korea it was helicopters which was a life saving device to me because in Korea I had a lot of wounded GIs in a few battles. In fact I had a hundred and sixteen killed and wounded in a period of eight months.

**WILL:** Did they have those MASH units like the TV show there?

**ANDERSON:** Yah.

**WILL:** They were more advanced than in World War II?

**ANDERSON:** Yes. Yes. More high tech material and x-rays. In World War II you didn't see no high tech equipment, x-ray machines or anything like that. The doctor had to decide whether you had a compound fracture or something and straighten it out or cut it open and lined it up and sewed you back up. Where Korea there were so many fantastic life saving devices. They had for blood plasma. If half of those GIs

in Korea that were wounded were in World War II they'd a died. We lost a lot of guys in World War II because of the seriousness of the wound and shock treatment. They're in shock. Location, too. See over there you get on an island you're battling an enemy that is a fanatic and if you don't kill him, he'll kill you. And you're on an island. I they overrun you, who's left.

**WILL:** No where to go.

**ANDERSON:** No where to go unless you're a good swimmer.

**WILL:** I just got a couple more here. How about the Veterans' Administration. Did you have any contact with the VA?

**ANDERSON:** I used the Veterans' Administration right after the war. I went to work at the John S. Barnes as a machine operator. That's what I was when I was going to school on summer vacation and weekends I worked at Greenlee Bros. learning the trade on the drop hammers and learning lathes and milling machines and when I came back from World War II, my father-in-law, future father-in-law, was working at John S. He got me a job down there on the night shift running mills and grinders because it was a night shift, you got a bonus. I thought that was pretty good, a dollar thirty cents an hour which at that time was good money in 1945. Two weeks after I got out of the service, I was working. I came down with malaria which I couldn't stand at a machine. I'd freeze to death. Shake and everything. They were worried I might injure myself trying to run a machine with the shakes so they had to let me go. I went to the VA and while I went to the VA, I went to the post office because they said they'll hire Vets. They hired me and I was there three months sorting mail in the mail service. By that time I got organized with the VA to start on the job training and gave me medical assistance on—I got \$11 a month disability to buy my medicine, really. That's what paid for the quinine. I went to the doctor in the same building I worked in. I started training as a mechanical design engineer and going to Rockford College nights. The amounts

the government pay changes with the raises you get from your employer So I started out with \$125 a month subsistence and I started out at .25 cents an hour. When I got 30 cents an hour my \$125 probably would go down to \$120, 115. I reached my journeyman's wage in two years, nine months which means I was qualified. When you reach a journeyman's wage, you're qualified. So the rate at that time was \$3.40 an hour as an engineer. I got my apprenticeship training with a company called \_\_\_?\_\_\_ Industrial Engineers, got a couple of patents that he got, things I designed just to have something to do. They were lawn gardening equipment, tools. Then from there, he ran out of work, I had to find my own training place to keep getting my subsistence money from the government. I found a job up at Liberty Engineering in Roscoe, Illinois, designing machinery and I was there about a year and ran out of work, lack of work, and I found myself with a job at Witcomb(?) Locomotive in Rochelle, Illinois, designing mining locomotive, diesel locomotive and I finished off my apprenticeship there. I was there nine months in Rochelle. I reached my journeyman's wage in my first job as a journeyman was at Roper Stove Company in plant engineering. I would plan out automation projects and what have you. Then from there they went on a strike. I got laid off. I went to Greenlee Bros., worked there for a few months, learned the transfer line, special machinery design and eventually ended up in 1967 with Sundstrand Machine Tool in sales application engineering, how to apply machine tools to the industry. I retired out of there in '78. Retired with a pension with Sundstrand Machine Tool. Then I had to have something to do, I went to work for Redin Corporation, Unisec(?) Company. Since '78 I've been working all over, free lancing. I got my own consulting business. I work out of my house. Semi-retired.

**WILL:** Yah. Sounds like a good way to go. Last question. Would you tell us something about how your family supported you during your military life. Were your parents against you going into the service

**ANDERSON:** No, I got my mother to sign for me so I could leave with the National Guard. I was underage. I wasn't over 18 so—

**WILL:** Did she have any regrets or?

**ANDERSON:** No. I don't think so because I talked her into it. I said, "Mother, one less mouth to feed. I'll be able to send you so much a money a month. I kept \$25 a month. The rest went to her. Then pretty soon my younger brother got in the Marines. Same thing happened to her. So I think it really helped her out a lot. She only had to raise one boy who was 9 years old when I got out of the service. She regretted it in a way that she could lose her sons and then she was worried about her parents and relations over in Norway when the Germans took over. Then she went to Norway after the war to visit her family and friends, found out they were living better than she was. She got mad. All in all, things worked out fine. Prior to the war, my mother separated from my father and when I got called in with the National Guards she remarried another gentlemen which was my stepfather and he turned out to be a nice man for her. A stepfather, even though he's a nice man, he's not your father.

**WILL:** Well, I guess that about does it, Dick.

**ANDERSON:** Everybody was behind me all the way.

**WILL:** Sounds like you had an exciting time of it.

**ANDERSON:** In fact, I was working at the Times Theater as an usher, Mr. Van Mear (?) who owned the Coronado and the Midway, the Palace, the Times Theater, State Theater called me up to his office when I turned in my time, I was leaving with the National Guard and he gives me a little brown envelope with a \$50 bill in it as a bonus for being patriotic.

**WILL:** All right.



**ANDERSON:** He was a patriotic gentlemen himself.

**WILL:** That about winds it up, I guess. Do you want to say good bye?

**ANDERSON:** Yah. We'll see you.

**WILL:** Bye.

**ANDERSON:** Bye. Bye.