

Taped Interview

Cincinnati 2008

Murray, Bloom, Co I 410th

I was born in Highland Park, Michigan. I was working in a factory when the war started. It was an auto parts factory. The war broke out and it was important to me to join the army because it was for a worthy cause. I don't remember where I was when I heard about Pearl Harbor. I remember thinking what a disaster it was for the United States. That was part of the reason I joined the army because I felt we needed to do something or we would get attacked ourselves. I was in Ann Arbor Michigan when I joined up. I was twenty-two. I was sent to Camp Howze but I didn't do any basic training. They put me in the hospital with an ingrown toenail. I was in the hospital for six weeks with that, so I missed my whole basic training. I went to work in the office of the unit because I was one of the few people who knew how to type. I helped the commanding officer with letters and things like that. I also made guard lists. This was still in the States.

On the ship going overseas it was rough and a lot of people got sick but I didn't. It wasn't a bad trip. Everybody was nervous about going to

Europe and fighting in the battles. Everyone did the best they could. We played some cards and shot dice. We had double bunks.

When we arrived, I was put into the office for awhile but when they needed everyone to fight, they gave me a rifle and we went into the Battle of the Bulge. At one point in the Battle of the Bulge we were retreating and the Germans were trying to stop us by bombing in front of us. The Americans were bombing in back of us trying to stop the Germans from coming. We were caught in the middle. It was very scary because we didn't know which bombs were going to hit us. I was in the Maginot and Siegfried areas. I was also in Bavaria. I thought about home and getting out alive. I thought about being unkind to my father by enlisting because he didn't expect me to. I was just hoping everything would come out alright. One hard thing about being on the battlefield was being dirty and wearing four pair of long johns. If you got the long johns dirty you did not have time to stop and wash them. You would just put the bottom one on the top and just keep rotating them. You had to eat whenever you could. If you saw a rotten apple you just ate it or anything else you could find to eat because you were hungry.

When I heard about the A Bomb I was thrilled because I thought it would save a lot of American lives. If that is what it would do, I thought it

was worth it. At one point we got a *Stars and Stripes* newspaper that said the war was over. I had all the people around me autograph that newspaper. All the guys in my Unit signed that newspaper. I also have a newspaper announcing when the war was over in Japan. I still have the two newspapers.

I had contact with prisoners of war at the very end of the war. We liberated a concentration camp which was terrible. I don't know how those people were still living. We only saw their bones. They had hardly any meat on them, yet they seemed to have survived with the will to keep going. The Americans tried to get them something to eat and tried to relocate them.

When the war was over we were suppose to go to Japan. We were ready to be shipped out when we found out the war was over in Japan. They changed their minds and sent us home instead. I took a train home from the port in New York. My father and mother met me at the station. I had enough points to be mustard out. I didn't want to work very hard so I went to work for a company where I just worked weekends. I went house to house selling blankets and bedspreads and things like that for a dollar down and a dollar a week. I did that for a year and a half. I decided it was a good business so I went into it for myself. I did that for a couple of years then one of my customers asked me for a couch. I asked her what color? I got her the

couch. Then I thought maybe I should go into the furniture business. So one of my brothers and I opened a store and put a few pieces of furniture in there. My brother and I never had an argument in the fifty years we worked together. Some people came in and asked me and my brother for a “Limed Oak” bedroom set. I didn’t even know what “Limed Oak” meant. We told them to go up and see what you like and then call us. Then we would see what we could do. So we started in the furniture business not knowing anything about the furniture business at all. My brother and I stayed in business fifty years together. I had three brothers and they all had been in the Service. We always were close; we kept in touch and went out together. I retired from that job.

I got married right after I got out of the Army. It was during the time I was going “house to house” in my job. I was introduced to my wife by a friend from school. We had three children; three boys. I was divorced after twenty-five years. I married Carol and she has a boy and a girl. We have four grandchildren, ages thirty, twenty-eight, ten, and seven. I am enjoying being a grandfather. I do a lot of charity work. I play bridge and I exercise every day for an hour. I work on my computer. I work with my camera and do rug hooking. I also enjoy cooking.

This is my first reunion. One funny incident during my war experience was when I was AWOL. I was out on a pass and I was supposed to come back with the mailman. I missed him and I got back late. They made me dig a hole 6 feet x 6 feet x 6 feet. They had to put a pail down to get the dirt out because I could not lift it over my head to get it out of there. After I dug it they had me fill the hole up! It wasn't funny at the time. It is funny to look back at it.