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Fred Rohrig

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Veteran's Release Form

TO BE COMPLETED BY VETERAN OR CIVILIAN

(In cases of deceased veterans, to be completed by the donor of the material.)

I, FRED ROHRIG, am a participant in the Veterans History Project (hereinafter "VHP"). I understand that the purpose of the VHP is to collect audio- and video-taped oral histories of America's war veterans and of those who served in support of them as well as selected related documentary materials (such as photographs and manuscripts) that may be deposited in the permanent collections of the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. The deposited documentary materials will serve as a record of American veterans' wartime experiences; and may be used for scholarly and educational purposes. I understand that the American Folklife Center plans to retain the product of my participation as part of its permanent collection and that the materials may be used for exhibition, publication, presentation on the World Wide Web and successor technologies, and for promotion of the Library of Congress and its activities in any medium.

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ACCEPTED AND AGREED

Signature Fred Rohrig Date 3-27-05
Printed Name FRED ROHRIG month/day/year
Address 5660 BEE LANE
City MILFORD State OH ZIP 45150
Telephone (513) - 821-0157

Veteran's Release Form

Heather Rohrig: Ok? My name is Heather Rohrig and this is Fred Rohrig. He is a World War II veteran. Mark Rohrig is running the camera today. We are in Cincinnati, Ohio conducting this interview, and it is for Marshall University. And we're sending it into the Library of Congress. Ok, we're ready to start then.

Fred Rohrig: Ok.

Heather Rohrig: Alright, I have some questions here to ask then you've got all kinds of stuff we can look through, so why don't we start with some of this.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: We've got—let me pull it out here.

Mark Rohrig: Want me to pause?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Mark Rohrig: And do you remember how to...

Fred Rohrig: Actually, I wasn't a WWII veteran. I was occupational; I got in just at the end of the war, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Right, 'cause Hitler heard you were coming and ran for the hills.

Fred Rohrig: Right. This is the all the ranks I had; you'll just make copies of that, won't you?

Heather Rohrig: So now how long do you have to be in there before you can get the private first class and then the corporal?

Fred Rohrig: Well I guess I don't think there's any time limit to it, you know you just qualify and get it or whatever. And there's what all my jobs were there.

Heather Rohrig: So you were in charge of 14 men?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And they were all kind of underneath you, helping instruct the German youth activities?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, no. I just... these are guys just that I was in charge of. Like if you'd go into war you'd have, you know, to break it down.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So there was still a possibility of...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok, so now when you entered the army, were you drafted or did you enlist?

Fred Rohrig: I was drafted, yeah, 18 years old, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: 18 years old?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, I was, I think I was the last 18-year-old draft bunch that went in.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, really? What'd your parents think about it?

Fred Rohrig: Glad to get rid of me!

Heather Rohrig: Get a job, Fred!

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Well, I had a job when I went in, you know, I was working.

Heather Rohrig: Were you working on the farm or somewhere else?

Fred Rohrig: No, I was working at uh... I was learning a trade, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Ok, yeah. What were you learning?

Fred Rohrig: Core making. Four-year apprenticeship on that.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm. And I didn't finish it, I finished it up when I came back.
Heather Rohrig: Yeah. You were living at home still?
Fred Rohrig: Yeah, still at the home, yeah, uh-huh, yeah.
Heather Rohrig: And so when you were drafted did you head off to boot camp?
Fred Rohrig: Yes, uh-huh, yeah.
Heather Rohrig: Did they call it boot camp back then?
Fred Rohrig: Well, yeah, it was... I went to... I took my basic training in Camp T?
in Little Rock, Arkansas.
Heather Rohrig: Ok, yeah.
Fred Rohrig: Yeah.
Heather Rohrig: You remember your instructors there?
Fred Rohrig: Mmm, I don't remember any of their names, no.
Heather Rohrig: Yeah.
Fred Rohrig: Too many... too many of them!
Heather Rohrig: What was it like the first day you arrived? Did you come by
train, or...
Fred Rohrig: Ye-yeah, we went by train, yeah, yeah. Oh, you make buddies real
quick in the service. I mean, it just...
Heather Rohrig: Yeah.
Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I mean, had no problem there. And everybody just called
each other by their last names all the time, you know. No first name stuff!
Heather Rohrig: You and Rohrig—I'm surprised they could pronounce it!
Fred Rohrig: Uh-huh, yeah, uh-huh.
Heather Rohrig: So you took the train from Cincinnati to Arkansas?
Fred Rohrig: Mhm, yeah, mhm.
Heather Rohrig: And then you get there and...
Fred Rohrig: Yeah.
Heather Rohrig: Just hop off the train?
Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I had, see, it was sixteen weeks basic training...
Heather Rohrig: Mhm.
Fred Rohrig: Back then, yeah, mhm. It's a lot less now, I think.
Heather Rohrig: Yeah.
Fred Rohrig: Mhm.
Heather Rohrig: Even during wartime it was sixteen weeks?
Fred Rohrig: Yeah, sixteen weeks, yeah, mhm.
Heather Rohrig: So what was, what were kind of, like, the first days like? You
remember? Where you in pretty good shape?
Fred Rohrig: Well, of yeah. I was in great shape, yeah. We, we did a lot of drills,
and and marching, and and they just kept adding to ya. Well the first...first got
in there they just let it... most of the guys smoked.
Heather Rohrig: Oh yeah.
Fred Rohrig: And, 'course they threw 'em every now and then. They just let them
do it until they made a big mess then they got us all together and said, 'Ok,
clean this mess up.' Field trip, they'd call it, yeah. 'Course some guys said,
'no, we don't wanna...'
Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: 'We didn't throw any down!' But we all cleaned it up, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, you had to! So how long were the marches?

Fred Rohrig: Well, ten miles.

Heather Rohrig: Wow, every day?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, just once in a while, yeah. But we had all the basic training, we'd... you know, you... all the obstacle courses and the... you crawl under the live fire, and and shoot all the guns and learn to take them apart and put 'em together and shine your shoes real good and that back then.

Heather Rohrig: Now, were they mean back then? Did they yell at you?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, no, they they they were good, but, well, they'd holler at you if you weren't doing right, yeah. But I enjoyed it, I mean...

Heather Rohrig: Did you?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I enjoyed it a lot. I had a lot of friends there and played ball when I was in there, and...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Really enjoyed it, yes.

Heather Rohrig: So what was, what was the average day like? You'd wake up...

Fred Rohrig: Oh, you'd get up real early and I don't remember what the...

Heather Rohrig: Wake up with the trumpets?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, and you'd fall out for roll call, and then they'd check make sure everybody was there and then we'd...we'd get breakfast. It was always a lot of good food.

Heather Rohrig: What kind of foods did you guys have?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, had everything. Pancakes and sausage and eggs, the whole works, you know. One thing is you could take all you want but you had to eat all you took, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, wow. So would you have to sit there and finish it if you...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I think, yeah, but I-I always finished it.

Heather Rohrig: You didn't have any problems!

Fred Rohrig: No! Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So would they give you enough time to eat, or did they rush you?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, we had plenty of time to eat, yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So then what would happen...?

Fred Rohrig: And then after that then you had a lot of classes you had to go to, you know, and learn the different... take the guns apart and put 'em together and all kinds of exercises, of course, and, you had to drill, you know, to march and so on, you know, and all that. Well, all that stuff. And, and 'course, went along, I was doing that, you know, work...all that stuff, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Do you remember anything that you guys used to do that you really liked or really hated?

Fred Rohrig: I can't think of anything... I mean, I liked to play ball, play ball, and sports, you know. When, 'course, when I got overseas, I got that job taking care of the...

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: The, well, the German kids they'd come to the thing. I'd have to go out there every morning after roll call, after breakfast I'd go out and they'd all come from all over the place and I'd teach 'em how to play ball. 'Course they didn't... didn't know what base-baseball was! They'd never seen it before, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Now, you spoke German, right? So...

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, well, I, yeah. I took German too while I was over there. I spoke enough to embarrass myself, but I...but they could understand me, and I could understand them, yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Learn how to say 'hit' and 'run.'

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, oh yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, ok. So now, you were in the army, right? That was your, that was your branch?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, well I went in the... I actually went in the infantry, and then I got an infected finger and they put me in the calvary for a short while, 'cause my troop moved on, and then I got out of that, I got in... well they actually, the calvary switched over to constabulary, which was armored cars, tanks...

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: And all those things, yeah. So that's what I ended up.

Heather Rohrig: So you were going to be on the horses, and then they switched things?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, but I didn't see the horse, we weren't there long enough. I'd have probably seen a shovel anyways!

Heather Rohrig: How'd you get an infected finger?

Fred Rohrig: I don't remember. I don't remember—but I remember being in the hospital, and there's something there, you can still see the little scar.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I don't remember how I got it. I don't know.

Heather Rohrig: Huh.

Fred Rohrig: But anyway, they just opened it up, and...

Heather Rohrig: Ew. Drained it out?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Let's see here... Ok, so, sixteen weeks in basic training...

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: And then they-they shipped you off...did you take a train again, from Arkansas?

Fred Rohrig: No...

Heather Rohrig: To New York?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we went to New York by train, yeah. And then...

Heather Rohrig: Was this your first time in New York?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you get to spend any time there, or...?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, we just marched on to...through there, you know, we didn't have any time there anyways, no. Well, we went, well, they got us all on the ship, it was a small one, it was Rawlins Victory.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And it...I know it wasn't much communication because they thought we were German-German prisoners, and they were taking us to, they were taking us to England.

Heather Rohrig: They thought...

Fred Rohrig: To England, yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Hmm.

Fred Rohrig: But then they got there and they found out, so we took us fifteen days to get there because we went to England first.

Heather Rohrig: Did you stop in England, or did you just...?

Fred Rohrig: No, we just saw, we could see, like the cliffs of Dover, it's a big mud cliff,

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, that counts.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's right, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So how long did it take, the boat ride from New York to...?

Fred Rohrig: It took us fifteen days altogether to get there, yeah, it was a long-long time on, most everybody got sick but just a handful of us, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, so you were throwing up?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I... oh, yeah they were throwing up. Well, I heard keep your stomach full, and I did that, so I thought that would...

Heather Rohrig: That would be better?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, keeps you from rolling around, so that's what I did.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: So yeah.

Heather Rohrig: It's just that...I bet that was messy.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, oh it was a mess, yeah. Trays would slid this was and that way and on the ship, you know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you get any sleep on the ship?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah I got plenty of sheep—sleep!

Heather Rohrig: Plenty of sheep.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, and had some buddies on there, we used to box a little bit and it was fun.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Boxing where you couldn't balance yourself. And we jogged around the kip.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And kept in shape.

Heather Rohrig: So you weren't just stuck in a corner...?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, uh-uh. Only...had one little thrill because I was taking a shower, 'course they all got called up on deck for something.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And 'course I just stayed in the shower, I missed it, whatever it was.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: But they they, 'course they were still looking for land mines in the water and everything.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, wow.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah. There was a lot of them around. They'd see 'em and they'd just shoot 'em, you know, and blow 'em up.

Heather Rohrig: So you could see 'em from...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, you, they could see 'em, they're just, like a great big floater or something...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: With a big stem sticking up, you know, yeah, you could see 'em.

Heather Rohrig: You could see 'em at night and everything?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they they watched for them all the time, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Was there somebody in charge of just watching for land mines in the water?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, mhm, yeah, mhm. Yeah, we, most, some guys just layed around just the bunks, just sick all the time, just sick all the time.

Heather Rohrig: Just all fifteen days of it.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it was a long time, yeah. This one guy was real sick, you know, and he, he had to go on K.P., so he... he said 'Anything you want,' he said, 'I'll give you ten dollars.' Which was a lot of money, so I took ten dollars, and the job I was was he had, so all he had to do was bring the food over to a dumbwaiter...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Ff. And I just pushed a button and sent it up, and I got ten bucks, and I'm going...that's all I did on that!

Heather Rohrig: That's not a bad way to make ten bucks!

Fred Rohrig: No, it isn't.

Heather Rohrig: I'd do it today for ten bucks!

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, oh yeah!

Heather Rohrig: So, do you remember where you landed, once you got across the sea?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we were in France, I believe it was, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm. We went on through all those count...we went through France, Holland, all those countries.

Heather Rohrig: And that was on the train?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And that's where you slept in the luggage rack?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm, yeah. I, yeah. We ended up in Germany, and, in a little town named Stuttgart, which was near Hidelberg.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Pretty close to Hidelberg, you know, so... and that's where I saw our relatives over there. I saw the name up on the thing, 'Rohrig,' you know.

Heather Rohrig: Now, were you expecting to see Rohrigs over there?

Fred Rohrig: I was just walking down the street, and I saw the sign up there, said they had a little, had a little, little delicatessin.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And I stopped in, showed them my dog tags and told them who I was, and all. Then they had me in there every night, just about from then on.

Heather Rohrig: Really?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Did they speak any English?

Fred Rohrig: Not a, not a word of it, no.

Heather Rohrig: So it was just all in...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Choppy German?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, very, that's all they spoke was German, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So about how many relatives were there over there?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they had the two daughters, well, they had three daughters.

One was married, I never met that...they had Giesla and Analeise, you've got pictures of them in there.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, good, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, and the mama and the papa, George and Gaorshe.

Heather Rohrig: Gaorshe?

Fred Rohrig: Gaorshe was George, and her name was Elsie.

Heather Rohrig: Elsie.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. And the older daughter I think was Elsie, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So about how old were the daughters?

Fred Rohrig: Ooh, the youngest was about thirteen.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: That was Giesla, and the oldest one was about my age, about eighteen or nineteen, I guess at that time, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now would you...were you staying with them or would you would just go over there for...?

Fred Rohrig: I'd just go over there when I'd get done with my routine with, with playing with the kids, I'd go over there and visit them, sit around talk to all of 'em. We went around to different ballgames, you know, and they played soccer. They called it 'foosball.'

Heather Rohrig: 'Foosball.'

Fred Rohrig: 'Foosball,' yeah.

Heather Rohrig: The daughters played foosball, or...?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, no, this was like professional teams, you know, yeah, we used to go and watch that. Well, just Papa and I'd go do that.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: 'Cause Hanz Ginterlein, he was a small one, he was like six or seven years old or something.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. He was little, yeah. And I went to midnight mass over there with 'em.

Heather Rohrig: On Christmas?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, for Christmas, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, wow.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: How was that?

Fred Rohrig: It was real nice, yeah, uh-huh, yeah, real nice.

Heather Rohrig: So there were Catholics there too?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Now, were there many Catholics?

F I guess there was, I... they have big churches over there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, really nice churches, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So what kinds of foods would you guys eat when you were over at the Rohrigs?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, ate all that German stuff, good stuff, you know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, she was a good cook, made a lot of bakery stuff.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Saurkraut and sausage?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, everything, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Where's Dad going?

Heather Rohrig: He's going, he's off to church now.

Fred Rohrig: Oh.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, he and Derek were gonna go, I think. Ok, so, now you didn't see any combat while you were over there, did you?

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh. No, we used to go on raids all the time, you know, to check to... we'd-we'd find guns in the, in the wells and things. Most of them had 'em in the wells.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Tied on a rope or something. And I'd do the interpreting for the company then, too.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I remember that, yeah. Just ask people where they live, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. Now where'd you... did anybody get in trouble when you found the guns, or...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they, we confiscated them, but they didn't get in any trouble, no. I don't think they did, no.

Heather Rohrig: So were all...

Fred Rohrig: See, they had curfews, too. They were supposed to be off the street at a certain time, too.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, everybody was?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, everybody, yeah, mhm. And they'd catch them and bring them in, and people'd say, 'Oh, I just went to get the dog,' or something, you know. And 'course they'd let them go, you know. Yeah, we never had really any trouble with it in the area at all.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So now what was the area like where your company was stationed over there?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, it was nice. It was...we were just in, like, an old building, I guess it was.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: With just, set-up beds and everything?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we had the regular army bunks, you know, yeah, yeah.

Great big, good ones. It was, it was in Stuttgart and the the Rohrigs lived in Swissegen. Not Switzerland, but Swissegen. It was a real small town. It was real close to us, you could walk over there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok. Ok. And, so now, where did, where did the picture go that was the bunks where they were building, where you said Hitler was training...

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah. Oh, let's see...

Heather Rohrig: Is it one of the little ones, maybe?

Fred Rohrig: No, it was in, it was in this book here, I had some in here, might...

Heather Rohrig: Here it is.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, there it is, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yes, uh-huh, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: So, now, what was going on in these buildings?

Fred Rohrig: Well, the-these is where Hitler was training his men so when they ca-they were gonna be the mayors over here in the different cities and things, you know. And this is where we went for our non-comissioned officer school. They picked somebody, picked some from each company, you know. You know.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. See, here's the pictures of these kids I was over with, see.

Heather Rohrig: Those are the kids you were helping...

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, all these over here, yeah. See, and these... this is when I was in in in C T in Little Rock, Arkansas, see.

Heather Rohrig: Is that you, there?

Fred Rohrig:I don't know who that...

Heather Rohrig: In the helmet?

Fred Rohrig: I, I... not, that's not me, no, no. I'm not that tall, look at that!

Heather Rohrig: That's true—he is tall!

Fred Rohrig: I think, that's me here, looks like me. Yeah, I think this one's me... I'm not sure.

Heather Rohrig: So now, did you play baseball everyday, or did they vary it?

Fred Rohrig: We-no, it, it, we practiced a lot, and we played, we played like once a week, you know, yeah. And that was fun, over there. I got pictures of that somewhere. I-I'll maybe'll find 'em for you. See, now there are, these are Germany. Here's Geisla, and there's Hans Ginterlein. And Mama and Papa.

Heather Rohrig: Now, is this the Rohrig house that was over there?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, uh-huh, yeah. And then we went to... another guy and I went to Rome.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: In Italy, yeah. There's pictures of that in here, yeah. Look, here's army trucks.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, is that...where you in charge of the, what did you say it was called over there? Not the calvary, but the...?

Fred Rohrig: Constabulary.

Heather Rohrig: Constabulary?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, well, we... we always worked together on that, you know. I don't know what all this stuff is. This is the pope that was in there then, I guess. Here's another picture of the... see the cross on top so we-we wouldn't bomb it?

Heather Rohrig: That's good.

Fred Rohrig: And this is the guy I was with, and I can't even remember his name, 'cause it's been fifty years ago, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: But here's where we were over there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, that's the one you went with over there? No, is that you then?

Fred Rohrig: This is me here, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: On the right? That's a nice hat.

Fred Rohrig: Left, on the left, yeah, uh-huh. Ok, here's more of our guns over there, see.

Heather Rohrig: And whats—do you remember what that's called?

Fred Rohrig: Looks like an anti-aircraft gun, doesn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, it does.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Did you ever have to fire a gun over there?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we'd fire everything. We had bazookas and we fired them. And mortars. I like the mortars 'cause you can shoot over a hill with them, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you ever hit anything?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah. Well, what you'd, you'd have your target, and you'd... one guy'd get up on the hill and he'd tell you so many yards, hundred yards this way or that way, and you would adjust until you zeroed in on the target. That was just practice, though.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Didn't shoot at anybody, no.

h. So is this over there, or is that back over here?

Fred Rohrig: No, this is after I got home, I sent them over some bathing suits, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, and they sent you pictures?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, the girl... this is Geisla.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And this is Analeise, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok. So when you were over there, did you write back home?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, everyday's mail... Mom always sent something everyday. She's always afraid I'd starve to death, and she always sent stuff. 'Course, if you get something in the Army, you ju... you only one cookie out of it, really, but...

Heather Rohrig: Everybody else ate it.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, but she thought I needed it, so...

Heather Rohrig: Well, that was nice.

Fred Rohrig: It-that-see-that... fried chicken over for me one time.

Heather Rohrig: Oh my gosh, how was that when you got it?

Fred Rohrig: It was good! Yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: It kept all the way over?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, oh yeah, yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did she send letters too?

Fred Rohrig: Oh yeah, everyday Mom sent... yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Now, could you write back?

Fred Rohrig: I could, yeah, mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did they cross out a lot of it, or...?

Fred Rohrig: I think they... I guess they di-didn't cross anything out, but they didn't have anything in there to cross out.

Heather Rohrig: That's true, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So who all would you write back to?

Fred Rohrig: Well, just Mom mostly, I think.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: She'd tell everybody else, you know, yeah. Tell you what to do that day, and so on, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So what was a normal day like, once you got over to what's... Stuttgart?

Fred Rohrig: Well, we, we were always going on raids, or, and you always had your, your revely in the morning, you know. And I had my routine with the kids, playing the ball, practice, and I really wasn't too confined to anything. I had to make a report on the... what my...report on that, you know.

Heather Rohrig: So you would just kinda come out and all the kids would run and you'd just...

Fred Rohrig: Well, they'd run, and I'd be, get there at a certain time everyday, and they'd all be there, yeah, or they'd see me, they'd come and, you know, mhm. And there's a bunch of pictures in there of them, you'll see all of them, yeah. Yeah, that was a good job there, yeah. I enjoyed that.

Heather Rohrig: So when you were playing baseball, what was everybody else kinda doing?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they'd watch us play.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: The rest of them'd come, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: That's good then.

Fred Rohrig: When we... because you were on a team and then the rest of them'd come and watch, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Ok. About how long do you think you were actually in Germany?

Fred Rohrig: About a year, a little over a year, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: And you were there in the same city the whole time?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah. Except the trip to Switzerland, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: So now when you got to go on leave, what kind of things did you do?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I went to Switzerland, that was my... some guys'd come home, back then, but you'd come from over there all the way back to here, so we just went to Switzerland, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: How long was your leave?

Fred Rohrig: I think it was... seventeen days, it was a pretty good while, you know, yeah. 'Cause then we were gone for a long time.

Heather Rohrig: So what kind of things did you get to do in Switzerland?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I bought this watch—still got it.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, wow!

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Well that's been around a while, then.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm, yeah, that's... I think I paid... I'm not sure what I paid for it. I know the jeweler told me it had like a half ounce of gold in it, so it's pretty valuable, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I had a bunch more things that got stolen when I got ready to come home. I went, left for a few minutes and came back, it was gone.

Heather Rohrig: Aw, man.

Fred Rohrig: Everybody has that happen, I guess, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So did you just tour around Switzerland being touristy, or...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, well we just went around, just, just walked around and... well, he had a relative over there that didn't speak English, and neither one of us spoke Italian either, so I think what he said mostly us was is, we ate at their house one time.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. But we enjoyed it, though, I know that.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Just the scenery is georgous over there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Well, you were there, so you'd know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, I was over there, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now, what'd you wear your army uniform, or...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you get any comments, or does everybody seem...

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, no. Just nobody paid attention to it, no they... Yeah, I don't think you were allowed to leave without uniforms in those days.

Heather Rohrig: Really?

Fred Rohrig: I think everybody had to wear them all the time.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: That was all I had when I was in over there, you know.

Heather Rohrig: So you couldn't have worn anything else.

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh.

Heather Rohrig: No. Ok, so I'll just go back 'cause I want to look through these pictures here. So now this the the Rawlins Victory?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now is this everybody that was on the ship, or is it just kind of everybody that was on this side of the ship when they took the picture?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, you can't get everybody. I don't even know how many was on it, I know it was, they said it was a small ship but we were in there like sardines, though.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Really crowded, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now is this probably one of the last ships that went over?

Fred Rohrig: Probably then, yeah, uh-huh, I would think so, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So what, what did they say the name of your mission was?

'Cause the, the war ended as you, when you were on the boat, or...?

Fred Rohrig: No, well, I'm not sure when it ended. Probably when I was in basic training, I...

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Well, anyway, they... what was the question? Oh!

Heather Rohrig: Oh, was it the last, the last mission that went over, the last ship that went over, one of the last ones.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, probably, right then, yeah, uh-huh, because they stopped drafting and it was, I don't know, they, I guess they, I don't think they took them on ships later, I'm not sure, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So now, when you were drafted you were, the war was still going on, right?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you were thinking you were gonna have to go...

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: So now, did you, were you kinda relieved when it...?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, very relieved, yeah!

Heather Rohrig: So what were your thoughts when you were thinking you were gonna have to go to war?

Fred Rohrig: Well, right when you're young you don't think too much about it, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: 'Til you get there and see it, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Were you kind of, were you excited about it, or just scared, or...?

Fred Rohrig: I wasn't scared, no, I wasn't too worried about that, no. I don't know, you get so many good buddies in there, it's just, you know, you're just very, you went, everybody, and all a sudden you know a lot of guys, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm...easy to make friends.

Fred Rohrig: You start hanging, yeah, that's right. And if you play ball or something, then naturally you're with those guys, you know, and we went around and, you know, walked around town and things a lot, and...

Heather Rohrig: So were you ever, d'you ever, d'you ever feel afraid when you were over there, or you were just...?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, I was never afraid, no, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Did you have to carry a gun around with you, or did...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, when we first got there, we did, you know, we had to do it when we first got there, but then guys started playing cowboy and then they took 'em away from us then, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Well, yeah. What, what do you mean, they started playing cowboy?

Fred Rohrig: Well, shooting each other, you know

Heather Rohrig: Oh! Did anybody get hurt?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, yeah! Some of 'em got shot, yeah, but not killed, but some of 'em got shot, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, my gosh. Just a bunch of U.S. Army guys shooting at each other?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, well...

Heather Rohrig: Just bored? Ok, so now, where these the same men that were over with you in Stuttgart?

Fred Rohrig: Well, that, that, there's a lot that went over on that thing, you know, I don't know where they all went, you know. And a'course you had to tell it'd be the whole companies, you know. If you were an army captain it was company after company, you know and you only know the ones that you're with, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: And then when we played the ball, and we would play the other companies, see.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm. That's how it was, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So how many companies were stationed in the same city that you were?

Fred Rohrig: I don't know-I don't know how many was at Camp T?, I mean, I just, hundreds of 'em, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Just a bunch of 'em, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, there was lots of 'em, yeah. Well, I don't think we ever played the same baseball team twice.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: We always played different ones all the time.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now who took these pictures, or was it just a...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, this is a, a, a, there all the same, see.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: This is by some professional photographer.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah

Heather Rohrig: They'd come over and take pictures of all the ships before they leave?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they, yeah, they do, and then they sell 'em to you, yeah, hmhm.

Heather Rohrig: What's this flag? Do you remember?

Fred Rohrig: Looks like a cross, doesn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I, I ca-there's so much stuff you can't remember, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: It's, what, I'm seventy-eight, I was eighteen when I went in, so that's sixty years ago, right?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, sixty years ago.

Heather Rohrig: Sixty years.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Well there's a whole bunch of flags.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, there's that's, yeah, well they all had them on 'em, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's the last thing you see and the first thing you see when you come back, you know. The Statue of Liberty, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So when you came back over you...

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, you, that's the last thing you see on shore, the first thing you see when you come in, you know, the statue.

Heather Rohrig: That's a nice image.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it is, yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Well they look like they're having fun.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they were all happy

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So now what, what would they do to occupy themselves over there?

Fred Rohrig: Well there was a lot of crap, and girls! They played, you know, they played a lot of di-what do you call it-dice.

Heather Rohrig: Dice?

Fred Rohrig: Crap, they called it then, yeah, mhm. Yeah, and cards and things, but no, I didn't have any money to waste on that.

h. Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: So, sure enough.

Heather Rohrig: That's probably better, then.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Let's see here... SO, now, you guys... getting over there after the war was pretty much over, did you have any problems with getting food and supplies and everything to where you were stationed?

Fred Rohrig: No...but for a while we were on the K-rations, is what they called it, when we were out in the field or something.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm

Fred Rohrig: And that's all you got was just a little box of that. I remember getting that for a while, yeah. And some of our food would just, w-would be outside, you know, you'd just get it outside and they'd just be, you'd just get, have your canteen and just fill it up, you know. And little kids'd run maybe and grab something off your plate and run or something, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Now, the village where you were, were the people pretty well off after the war or were they kind of struggling?

Fred Rohrig: They were struggling, they were poor people, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: The Rohrigs were... they had a garden, a nice size garden. They had a great big factory fence around it so they, they'd grow, they, a lot of 'em had their own gardens.

Heather Rohrig: That's good.

Fred Rohrig: See, the towns, the—all the people lived in the town and then the, the farms were out.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know, pieces of ground that they used, you know.

Heather Rohrig: That's good, then. It kept everybody from just starving.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, they-they-they-I didn't see any skinny people over there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I saw a lot of prisoners of wars.

Heather Rohrig: German prisoners?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah. Well, a lot of 'em were displaced persons, DP's.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: That's the ones I-I meant to say, DP's.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Displaced persons. And they were, some of them were shot up pretty bad.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And they were... take care of, you know. Maybe a nose off or an eye out or something. It was just... sight, you know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Where were they...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, we'd see them around the camp, some of them worked around the kitchen, and a lot of them were out there and they'd, they'd come and they'd get the, the, the... 'course it was when they made coffee, you know, it'd be in this great big round...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Things, and they'd right through... well, the coffee grounds, it's, people'd get them, and they could make a lot of coffee out of that, you know, but...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: After they were used once, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now these were displaced Germans, that had been in...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they could be Pol-Pollacks, and different countries, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I mean, they were displaced, and I-some of 'em, I don't know if they were, didn't know who they were or where-what, I mean, you know. But, you know, they...

Heather Rohrig: They had been soldiers?

Fred Rohrig: I, well, they had, the all had a big DP on their back all the time.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: A big letter, DP, displaced person, yeah, so... I never talked to any of them or anything, so I really don't know, I mean, just what they were.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I think some-I did talk to a couple guys that were from Poland, you know, but they weren't displaced persons. I talked to one guy, I think he was, he was in the service twelve years and hadn't seen his family in all that time, so...

Heather Rohrig: Oh my gosh.

Fred Rohrig: He didn't go home or anything.

Heather Rohrig: He was one of the DP's?

Fred Rohrig: He might have been a prisoner of war or something, you know, with Germany—I don't know where he was all that time or anything, you know.

Heather Rohrig: So was there a POW camp near where you were?

Fred Rohrig: I think there were quite a few of them around everywhere, yeah, mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So how kinda do you think they were treated?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, they didn't treat 'em good over there at all, you know...

Heather Rohrig: The German prisoners-of-war weren't treated well?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, Americans treated to-theirs, yeah, oh yeah, yeah, oh yeah, they, they, they, but, oh, the Americans, they were starved to death practically, yeah. I-I knew some people were prisoner-of-war, in fact, Mr. Vester down here was a prisoner-of-war.

Heather Rohrig: Was he?

Fred Rohrig: And so was Wolfexel over here.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, he was a prisoner-of-war, yeah. I know another guy, he's, he just starved to death, he said he actually eats too much now because he was just...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm, just can't get used to it.

Fred Rohrig: Starving, yeah, mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So how long, you think, were they...?

Fred Rohrig: Prisoners-of-war? Well, some of 'em were in there for almost the four years.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You know, the war was four years, so...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Even, even six months'd be a long time down there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm

Fred Rohrig: You've seen pictures and movies of that stuff.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, some of that, just really bad, yeah. Yeah, but I was very fortunate to, the time I went in.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know, every-missed all that and...

Heather Rohrig: Did you go pretty soon after you turned eighteen?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Is that when they drafted you, right after birthday?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I-it's got the dates there where it was, I forget just what it was...Y-It was a while, I think. Let's see... I went in the service the September of '45, so my birthday's in December.

Heather Rohrig: So they gave you a couple months?

Fred Rohrig: Long time before, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I was almost nineteen September.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: 'Bout three months before I was nineteen, yeah, before I went in, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now how did they work the draft? How-how did it work that you weren't drafted until so late?

Fred Rohrig: Well, that's just when they-number came up, or whatever, they sent me the card.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Hey-I don't know, I didn't ask 'em why didn't get me sooner!

Heather Rohrig: You didn't want to complain!

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Well, I know there was, out where I lived in West Chester wasn't that many people, really.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Just a few. And we had to go to Hamilton, I think, then left from there, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. There wasn't many at all, back, you know, that I knew.

There's some great big guys got flat feet, something, they didn't have to go, just little things.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: But you were in tip-top shape?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I-good enough to go, I...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: But I didn't mind any of the training, or anything, I, you know, enjoyed all that, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Walking didn't bother me.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Or any of that.

Heather Rohrig: You had plenty of practice for that.

Fred Rohrig: Ye-yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So how many boys from your area, in West Chester, do you think?

Fred Rohrig: Well, when I went, I think there was only, well, see, Over-a guy named Overbay went in when I did and... he's the only one I can think of right now. Well, then, some of 'em didn't make it, you know, they didn't pass, they couldn't...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Physical. I don't even know where I went for my physical. Probably Hamilton, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I think so, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So were you with anybody that you knew when you went to Arkansas?

Fred Rohrig: No, when I went over there, no. I just met guys, you know, when I went, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I think—really easy to meet people in the service.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know. Everybody's got something they wanna do, you know, and...

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: 'Course, if you play sports and things, then naturally...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know, you were with those guys, and...

Heather Rohrig: So, now, when you left from Arkansas to New York and on overseas, were there people that you had had basic training with on the ship?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: That you... sure, uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, uh-huh. Yeah, every once in a while you see somebody you were in with before, and...

Heather Rohrig: Was there anybody that went all the way through with you over to Stuttgart?

Fred Rohrig: Well, not wh-I started, but, 'cause of the, but when I got out of the hospital then we stayed together the rest of the time there, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: When you got out of the hospital?

Fred Rohrig: Well, remember I told you about the...

Heather Rohrig: About the finger, that's right.

Fred Rohrig: Uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: After they drained the goop out.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you-they switched your company when you had, your finger was infected, so...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they'd, they'd, they went out, they left before I did.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: And then I had to stay in the hospital 'til they got done and then, then they put me in the other company. That how I got it.

Hh. Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I got in to, it was actually the calary, and then, and they, I wasn't in there long at all and they switched it over to...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: To constabulary. You can see I was in the constabulary there, see, I took basic training in the...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Infantry, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Right. So then the company that you had done a lot of your training with went-went...

Fred Rohrig: Went over.

Heather Rohrig: Went overseas?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, they, they were there before I got there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did they go to the same place?

Fred Rohrig: No, the-we, I don't know where they went, no.....

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: No, I don't think they went there, no.

Heather Rohrig: So, how, how quickly do you think you guys got news when you were over there?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, I don't think it took too long.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: A week, maybe? I don't know. I don't know if it came by, s-probably came by plane, I think. I don't think it took too long. I don't think it took too long at all, 'cause they just had roll call and then they'd have the mail call.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: And they'd just call names out, you know, and you'd just go up there and stand and bring it down, and then, call your name out and you get it, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I got mail almost every day, maybe a little bit longer. And, I'd write a bit to her everyday, tell her what I was doing.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And how hard I had it and so on.

Patricia Rohrig: (laughs) You want to tell me that again?

Fred Rohrig: Nope!

Patricia Rohrig: Very funny.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now, you didn't have to pay postage, did you?

Fred Rohrig: No, we got free. But Mom had to pay it, though, yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, I'm sure she didn't mind though.

Fred Rohrig: No. It wasn't much, what...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm, oh yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Two cents, maybe? Three cents? I do-we-didn't know, think. It was j...

Heather Rohrig: Gone up a little since then?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, it was cheap, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I-it was free, we could send everything free.

Heather Rohrig: So now, when you were, you said, when you guys were out in the fields and you would have the K-rations?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: What would you, what kinds of things would you be doing out in the fields?

Fred Rohrig: Just training, you know, yeah. Just training, yeah, just have basic training, just more training, you know. And you were-you'd eat this and you'd still be hungry, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, but drink a lot of water, I guess, and take care of...

Hh. So that your stomach felt full?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: What kind of food would be in the...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, there'd be a little, little piece of candy, you know, and a little pack of cigarettes, and a little toilet paper.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And crackers, and, and, and a little can of meat or something in there, and, and I always traded the cigarettes for chocolate—I got the chocolate.

Heather Rohrig: That's a good trade!

Fred Rohrig: There was always a lot of guys ready to trade, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, I bet.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah. They only had like three or four cigarettes, they're just little mini packs, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they weren't much though.

Heather Rohrig: Just about everybody smoked over there though?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I'd say probably, oh, na-maybe sixty percent.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah. Most guys did at that age, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: But they let you smoke all the way through training through...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, you could smoke, well, they'd, you'd, you'd be training, they'd stop you, take a-a break.

Heather Rohrig: A cigarette break?

Fred Rohrig: Ta-take ten, they'd say. Well, some guys'd light a cigarette.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Other guys they just lay down, and put-propped their feet up.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And stretched, yeah. But, I... an awful lot of guys smoked, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Awful lot.

Heather Rohrig: Hmm. It's different than today, probably... where they don't get smoke breaks.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it's just as bad, yeah. Well, cigarettes were cheap then, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Let's see...

Fred Rohrig: Lot of guys I think their family us sent cigarettes too, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, I'm sure.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: You got fried chicken, and they got cigarettes.

Fred Rohrig: That's right, they got cigarettes, yeah!

Heather Rohrig: Was that the best package you ever got over there, was the fried chicken?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, I had some pretty good cookies and things, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it was good. Yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: That's good. So then how long did you-did you get to keep in touch with the Rohrigs over there?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, all the time I was there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I found them, I-I got there and started walking around the town.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I saw the name, and the-they had me come back, I came back there almost everyday, some.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: A little bit, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, unless I was out on a parade...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And couldn't come or nothing, yeah. And we'd go out and go hunting, they'd let us go hunting, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah?

Fred Rohrig: We'd get deer, and different things, and jackrabbits, and rabbits.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I would take them over there and give them to the Rohrigs.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Some of the stuff, you know, and ca-help them eat it, of course!

Heather Rohrig: That was nice of you.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, yeah, we went, we went deer hunting and, some of us, and well, it was different then it is here, though. They- we'd hire some... say give us some cigarettes.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And what they would do, and they would, we would get on one end of the woods, and they'd co-they'd come through and make noise, and then the deer'd come through.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it was like shooting fish in a barrel, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. We got a couple deer. I got one and another guy got one, and 'course that was eaten up in camp.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: It's like a meal or two it seemed like, it didn't last long, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah. All those hungry boys.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you paid them in cigarettes to chase the deer out?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they paid, I didn't have any cigarettes to pay them.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: Chocolate was gone!

Heather Rohrig: So, what, they would give you the guns back to go hunting?

Fred Rohrig: Well we had V?, we had guns, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, we had our own guns, yeah. That's what we shot 'em with was V?, yeah. And we had forty-fives and 9-1s. We had carried the forty-fives with us when we first got there.

Heather Rohrig: So that's a handgun?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, you had a holster.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And put them in there, mhm, yeah. And then we had bazookas, we shot them. We had all kinds of machine guns and...

Heather Rohrig: You learned how to fire all those in...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I fired everything they had, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: We'd go on R? and do it, yeah, and just practice with it, with the different ones, yeah. And then sometimes you'd have to get in the, in the tip where they were shooting.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And, and you'd have to hold up a sign, what they hit, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I forget what it was. I, I know one name was Maggie's Drawers. That was, if you missed everything you'd put up the Maggie's Drawers, we called them, I don't know what it was.

Heather Rohrig: That's funny.

Fred Rohrig: Underwear! Maggie's Drawers!

Heather Rohrig: They put up some underwear to shoot at?

Fred Rohrig: Well, no, no, no, I mean that they put out, that would be the sign, you know, they, they...

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: But, I...

Heather Rohrig: If you didn't hit anything?

Fred Rohrig: If you didn't hit anything, yeah, mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you ever get a Maggie's Drawers?

Fred Rohrig: I don't think so.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I don't think I got a... I had some medals where I got, it wasn't expert.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: But it was marksman.

Heather Rohrig: Okay.

Fred Rohrig: Or whatever it was, yeah. It might be around here somewhere, I don't know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I still have my dogtags, one of them.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, do you?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I gotta get some.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I got one dogtag left, yeah. You had two of them, see.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I've still got, if you wanna take that with you, you can too, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, I'll make a copy of that one too. Yeah. So now, everybody that you were stationed with over there lived to tell about it, right?

Fred Rohrig: No, no.

Heather Rohrig: No?

Fred Rohrig: Some of them, no, some of them got ki-killed different ways. Some of them got venereal diseases of different kinds.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And there was two guys, they, they weren't in our company, but I heard about them, that they got, they were sent home to die, you know, yeah. That they were, they let it go too long, or something.

Heather Rohrig: They were just partying over there?

Fred Rohrig: Well, yeah, they partied. Guys, guys got drunk and hung out of windows and they'd have, well, a bunch of guys out there and then they'd, some of them'd just go berserk, they'd, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: They'd never been away from home before.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: They were out there sowing their wild oats, you know, yeah. Having their fun, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yup.

Fred Rohrig: But I was fortunate; I had a bunch of good guys just to bum with and stuff, and...

Heather Rohrig: Good.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you ever get a chance when you were over there to go out at nights, and...?

Fred Rohrig: Well you could go out any night that you wanted. I mean, most of the time, you know, but they had the camps where you could go, and, what'd they call them? Well, what'd they call them where they went, you know, they had their beer, and all their stuff? I didn't, I never enjoyed going to those places,

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So, what would you do for fun? Was it just, you'd just play baseball all day and then come home and...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I had my regular routine. I'd go over and see them.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And, and talk to them... of course, there was no television in those days.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, so, and we'd sing. We'd le-I learned a lot the of German songs and things.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, singing.

Heather Rohrig: Do you remember any of them?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, but I'm not gonna sing 'em!

Heather Rohrig: Ok, alright.

Fred Rohrig: L?, that was one that was pretty good, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Was it just popular songs then, or is it...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it's still popular today there.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: That's neat.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they hadn't, I don't think they changed a whole lot on the songs, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. You think your German got a lot better while you were there?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, well, I didn't hardly know any at that point. I took a, classes over there too. They got a couple from each company to do that. I think just one from each company that went to the classes, you know.

Heather Rohrig: To be an interpreter?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, they, it was good. I know our, our teacher, he was a little bitty guy, real skinny.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And the guys'd kinda tease him. They'd offer him a cigarette, and they'd pull them out where he could reach them, he'd always pull two or three accidentally and then, and start apologizing, and they said, 'Oh, keep it, keep it,'

you know. It was, it was the same thing all the time and everybody'd laugh about that, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: But cigarettes, oh, cigarettes and coffee, they, boy, they loved them, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So was your teacher German?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, oh yeah, he was...

Heather Rohrig: He was from the village?

Fred Rohrig: Well, he was a regular German teacher, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: At one time, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: So was he kind of hurting for money, and...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they, they were all hurting for money, yeah. I didn't see how any... I didn't... well, they had, we got marks, it was marks, but it was, you know, I forget just how it was. Do they still have marks in Germany, or is it something else?

Heather Rohrig: They might have changed to the euro.

Fred Rohrig: I think they ch-euro, that's what I thought, yeah

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And we had marks. I think a hundred marks was, a hundred marks was ten dollars, maybe?

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: Something.

Heather Rohrig: So they were pretty worthless.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, it was, it was a lot, yeah. You'd have a whole pocketful of money.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: When you got your pay, you know, yeah, it was a lot, lot of money, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So was the...

Fred Rohrig: It wasn't...

Heather Rohrig: The stuff that you could buy inexpensive, or was it...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I bought that stuff in Switzerland.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: So that watch and stuff, and, I'd... well, you could go to KP's and buy, you know, candy or different things like that, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Is that what most people spent their money on?

Fred Rohrig: A lot of them, booze, I'd say. Booze and girls, well.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, a lot of the guys had to have a girl, you know, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. A lot of soldiers were...

[End of Side A]

Heather Rohrig: Is that what most people spent their money on?

Fred Rohrig: A lot of them, booze, I'd say. Booze and girls, well.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, a lot of the guys had to have a girl, you know, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. A lot of the soldiers were...

Fred Rohrig: Well, they...

Heather Rohrig: Seeing German girls over there?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, yeah, mhm. They, they, lot of... There was some working in the camps, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: In the kitchens and things, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I-if you were looking for girls, you wouldn't've had any trouble finding them, soldiers wouldn't, in any country, you know that.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: It's easy to find, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And they just go crazy... You guys didn't pull any pranks, did you?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we probably did, I can't think... well, I know one time I got in kind of late, and, and they'd shorts-, what they call shortsheeted my bed, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Shortsheeted.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I had that. I remember that one, when I got that done to me one time. But... I know going over they had a food fight on the ship.

Heather Rohrig: Ugh.

Fred Rohrig: Some guys did. It was in the middle of the night, and they, that was bad, they, really bad then, 'cause they...

Heather Rohrig: Did they have to clean it up?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, I don't know. I th-l, I think they got in pretty much trouble.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: The guys who did it, they, you know. I didn't know if anybody I knew was in it, it was in like the middle of the night, real late, two or three in the morning or something.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And they got into the kitchen and they done it. Yeah, there was always somebody getting in trouble, you know. 'Course, they had military police to take care of that.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: You know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now who, who did you answer to? Who was the person that kind of gave you...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, you had you, your seargant.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, your seargant, and, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you like him pretty well?

Fred Rohrig: Oh yeah, very well, yeah. He was from Cincinnati too, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, was he?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you guys got along?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, because he came up and he just said, 'Rohrig, you're going to school,' you know, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. He didn't ask me if I wanted to, he just said I was going, you know.

Heather Rohrig: To learn German?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah that.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And then I went to the non-commissioned officers school too.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, so, yeah. So that was good.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I enjoyed that, yeah. I met some guys there, too, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: In the officers school?

Fred Rohrig: Non-commissioned officers, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Non-commissioned officers.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Now what is non-commissioned officers...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, that's corporals and sergeants and so on, and then commissioned officers were the captains and the lieutenants and the...

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Generals and so on.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. But you could go from that on up, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: If you stay, go on and make a career out of it, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. But you didn't want to make a career of it?

Fred Rohrig: I wanted to get home, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Back to the farm! Yeah, I wanted to get home. Everybody did, yeah. Well, right then, it looked like we were gonna have to go to war with Russia when I got out.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: And they said, you know, they wanted me to join the reserves, they, and I just said, no, I didn't want to do that.

Heather Rohrig: 'Cause you knew you...

Fred Rohrig: And they said, 'Well, you'll keep your rank,' you know, if you'd, if you'd done it I stay and I was in a, so I was, you know, but things cooled off and never had to go back, so.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, that's good.

Fred Rohrig: And when was the next war? The, was it the K...

Heather Rohrig: Korean?

Fred Rohrig: Korean, and then the other one, the...

Heather Rohrig: Viet-Vietnam.

Fred Rohrig: Vietnam, yeah, uh-huh, yeah. It woulda been the Korean War, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you would have been sent back to that one if you'd stayed in the reserves?

Fred Rohrig: I might've, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, if I'd stayed in there, yeah. I don't know, that came pretty late, though. That was quite a while after I was out, wasn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I was married then, and had kids and all when that came on, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So the highest rank you went from was the, was the corporal?

Fred Rohrig: Corporal, yes, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Well, Hitler was a corporal, you know! And so was Peacock! Well, tha-

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah

Fred Rohrig: No, he's a captain.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: But he was really a corporal. Did you see that on there?

Heather Rohrig: Huh-uh.

Fred Rohrig: At one time?

Heather Rohrig: No.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, a guy came in and said he was in the company with him and he said he was really just a corporal, you know! I think he blackmailed him on it! Got a little money, it was funny.

Heather Rohrig: So it was a year, over a year, and then did your service just, you knew your time was gonna be up soon over there?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I didn't know, I-I was in eighteen months altogether.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I hadn't, I didn't know, I didn't know it was gonna be up until they said, they, they, they said my, my papers came in.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I can go home, you know, I get my...

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, and I took it!

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Oh, I enjoyed it while I was there. A lot of times I-I'd like to have stayed, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I would have stayed in if they, if I could have just stayed over and kept playing ball with the kids, but I'm no, no, didn't want to go to war, that's for sure.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: If I don't have to, you know. I admire the ones that wanna do it, but...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I didn't wanna do it, so... If I had to, I would have, but... don't have a choice.

Heather Rohrig: Right. Yeah. Were you worried about that when you were first drafted, though?

Fred Rohrig: No, I wasn't worried about it, no.

Heather Rohrig: You could've done it if you had to?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, oh, yeah. Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: That's good. So you were drafted and they didn't tell you how long you were gonna be in the army?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, you didn't know. No, uh-uh.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You didn't know. You just knew you were in and, and, until you got out, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I was busy all the time. I got a little bit homesick when I was on the ship going over.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: But I got over that in a hurry, you know, yeah. Just nothing to do on that ship, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Hh. Do you remember what you were doing when they gave you the papers saying you could go home?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I came in from the, the, with the kids over there, and I came in and they told me that my papers came, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I'm gonna be leaving such-and-such a date and everything, and you get stuff packed up and, and then of course they'd always have in you, and talk to you.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And try and get you to sign up again, and, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Were they pretty insistent, or...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, he said that...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: If I would sign up for four years, he said they'd, that I'd make a first lieutenant.

Heather Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: And if I would do that, you... but I said no, I-I wanna go home, and, so...

Heather Rohrig: And so how long was it from when you got the papers to when you actually got to ship back?

Fred Rohrig: It just, just seemed like a week or something.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: It wasn't very long, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And you left from Stütgard again?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, left from there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And did you have to go up around England?

Fred Rohrig: No, we didn't, no, we didn't on the way home, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So the shorter journey on the way home?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm. Yeah, oh we got back quicker, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So what was the confusion about when you left? That they decided you guys were German and...?

Fred Rohrig: I-They thought, well, they, they thought we were German prisoners, they were trying to ta...

Heather Rohrig: Was it before they saw you?

Fred Rohrig: They, they saw us, but I guess we looked like Germans out there. Well, it's, you know, they, whoever's doing, captain of the ship or something, or they just didn't look at us, or just looked at us. I guess we looked like prisoners or something.

Heather Rohrig: Maybe they saw you up front, and, 'he looks German.'

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, maybe that was it. There's so many guys just spent all their time in their bunk, and they told them not to do that, because that just makes it worse.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: They just laid there and just back and forth.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Was there any medicine to give the people that got seasick?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, they would, yeah, they'd, they, they play on sick call, they got some, they got shot or something, I don't know what it was. But you always got shots in the army, though. Just every time you turn around, you got a shot, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Eww. Did you have to get a whole bunch before you left for...?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: They go-yeah, you always got shots, every time you went somewhere.

Heather Rohrig: What were they for, do you remember?

Fred Rohrig: I don't know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: They were all just for, just for, keep from getting sick, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And, and measles, or whatever they have, I don't know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So the worst that you got when you were there was just the infected finger, right?

Fred Rohrig: That was it.

Heather Rohrig: So the shots must have done something.

Fred Rohrig: I don't know what, yeah, yeah, I don't know what, I don't even know how, how it got...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Infected, yeah. I don't remember. Unless I scraped it or scratched it or something.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Probably, probably did when I was in training or something, I guess, and didn't do anything about it, I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You should have got me on that 60 years ago, hon.

Heather Rohrig: You remember all this!

Fred Rohrig: Yeah....that was...that's right.

Heather Rohrig: Probably around 60 years ago. That would have been an interesting interview!

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I know it! Yeah, it would have been, wouldn't it!

Heather Rohrig: Did you see Grandma there? Ok, let's see here. So, now, when you came back, did you, did you enter the trade school again that you...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, yeah, yeah, I went back to where they, they sho-my apprenticeship was at core-making, yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you, it was called core-making?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: What is...?

Fred Rohrig: Co-coremaker. Well, it's like molding, only it's the...

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: It's the center of the thing instead of the outer part.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: The molders make the outer parts and the corers make the center parts.

Heather Rohrig: Ok, and that's what you were gonna do?

Fred Rohrig: That's what I did, I think that... well, I, I did that until, well, I-I stayed at Lugenmers where I was until Rick was born.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And then I got laid off.

Heather Rohrig: Mmm.

Fred Rohrig: And then I went to Uckley-Pattern, I did the same thing. And I stayed there until your dad was born.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And then, then I went, be off a little while, then I went to Ohio Powder Works, and I did it until Susan was born. And then I got in the Post Office and I stayed there.

Heather Rohrig: That's good.

Fred Rohrig: They called me back, I was, six months later or three months or something probably... They called me back, and I just stayed right there.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. So I got my army time too, then, you know, for the helping on my retirement, yeah, see.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah, they helped you from...?

Fred Rohrig: Ye-yeah.

Heather Rohrig: That's good.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: So now do you still do anything as far as Veterans' Associations, or...?

Fred Rohrig: I've never been to a, a veterans' thing at all, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh.

Heather Rohrig: You keep in contact with the...?

Fred Rohrig: With guys I know that were in there, like Bob Benhase, we talk.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And stuff, and different neighbor guys that were in there... I know a lot of guys that were in it, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. Were they over there about the same time as you?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they were before me.

Heather Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: He's, he's in his eighties, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, is he?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. And Vester's in his eighties, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And there's some guys my age. Mr. Cody's son was my age and he got killed over there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. That's the only kid they had was him, and he got killed.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, man.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, he got killed over there.

Heather Rohrig: Was he drafted?

Fred Rohrig: He was drafted, he wasn't in combat, they say, just to do ire-and got killed, you know, so yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, he was about the same age I was, and, that's the only kid they had, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now what about your brothers? You...

Fred Rohrig: Well, Frank was crippled.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And he couldn't go, and Ronald was a Marine, he got in the Marines.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: And, of course, this was after the war, and in between wars, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: 'Cause I remember he served his time and got out, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And Dad was in the army, my dad was in the army too, it was, I think he was like me, at the end of the... I don't know if he wasn't in combat, I know that, so.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. You guys were both lucky then.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I don't, my, my uncles, I don't, I don't... some of my uncles were probably in there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And cousins, I'm-well, I was the oldest cousin, though, so...

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. So, not the oldest, I am now.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: But, back, but they were all, all the males, they were all...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You know, the missed all of it, you know.

Heather Rohrig: That's good.

Fred Rohrig: They were too young.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. So how do you think your brothers felt when you were shipped off?

Fred Rohrig: I don't think they cared.

Heather Rohrig: Really?

Fred Rohrig: Well, Frank, oh, yeah, see, and Ronald's just small yet, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. He's six years younger than me.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. What about your sisters?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they...they're 14 years apart, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Well, they were, they were home when I went, yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I think Florence was married when I came back, and Rita was just little then.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Rita, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: She's the baby, isn't she?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, yeah, mhm. Yeah, these pictures will all help you a lot.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm!

Fred Rohrig: When you look at all them, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, well, let's look through some of them...we can look through all these too. Allright...

Fred Rohrig: You can take all of this stuff, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: That's from Mr. Truman, Truman.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, so, this was your discharge papers?

Fred Rohrig: Ye-ye-part of 'em, yeah, so, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Carefully preserve for future use?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, you... so, this said I would go back, if there was another thing, then I'd have to go back, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, so you would've had to've gone back?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah, that was there.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. In the event of another national emergency, you would enter either active service in the grade you hold at that time, or rather than be subject to possible draft as a result, see.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: I was...I'd have been as a result of the draft again, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So if there was a war you could kinda enlist again at your same rank, or they could draft you as back at the start again?

Fred Rohrig: I-I-they'd draft me over, and I'd go back as a private.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. And here's my certificate for training center in...

Heather Rohrig: Oh, that's from the basic training?

Fred Rohrig: Mmm... replacement in school command army-armed forces, at the training center, camp where I was, in Arkansas. That was Robinson.

Heather Rohrig: So now when you were in basic training, did you, did you specify anything, or did you, did they kind of focus you on more than-one thing more than another?

Fred Rohrig: Well, you just learned the whole thing, you just...

Heather Rohrig: Everybody did?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we all did the same thing. We all, we were all together, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Each company. Here's my, this is...

Heather Rohrig: This is your honorable discharge record?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, see: army of-this is my medals.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Army Occupational medal, WWII victory medal, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Now, what's the Army of Occupation medal? Is that...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I don't know where it is. It was a medal, just, that, what I did, and...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And a Victory medal, too. I don't know what victory I did, but...I got one.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: See, I was the L rifle.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Section leader, see. Four-four twenty five.

Heather Rohrig: That was your section?

Fred Rohrig: Yes, Murray, Indiana, this is where I went in, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I went to there, and from there on up, yeah. See, I was a coremaker apprentice when I went in.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Troop 15, Constabulary Squadron.

Heather Rohrig: So you went from West Chester to Attersbury?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: To start off with?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I went to Hamilton, then from there the-I, back, was, we were on a train over there. This is, this is a certificate for the...

Heather Rohrig: Constabu...

Fred Rohrig: Constabul, Cons, Constabu, Constabu...

Heather Rohrig: Constabulary?

Fred Rohrig: Constabulary!

Heather Rohrig: Constabulary!

Fred Rohrig: You're getting me confused here!

Heather Rohrig: Sorry! So, you completed your basic training and you also completed this?

Fred Rohrig: This is for my, when I got to be a, in, an officer, yeah, that was it, yeah. That was overseas, yeah, I did that, see.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So what were you supposed to do when you were in the Constabulary school?

Fred Rohrig: Well, you-you, we just went out and practiced driving, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And different vehicles.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And just training, and just drive all over, learn how to drive the armored cars, and the tanks.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And we'd all take turns getting in there driving them.

Heather Rohrig: So you got to drive the tanks

Fred Rohrig: Tanks, armored cars, yeah, uh-huh. The armored cars I liked 'cause you could shoot up fast and go back quick, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You know, they were real fast.

Heather Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: They had wheels on them, yeah, yeah. I think that shifted just the opposite of a car. 'Course, you don't know how to shift.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, man, that'd be confusing.

Fred Rohrig: It wasn't bad. Just the opposite, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: For a car, you go ri-left and right, up and down, but this was that way, just the opposite, but no. You got onto it in a hurry, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, I guess you'd have to.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Well, there's a whole bunch of us there.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: There'd only be three or four sitting in the front seat, and...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Of course, there was no seatbelts in those days or anything, so...

Heather Rohrig: So what's this?

Fred Rohrig: That's what I just had, all that stuff.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: So now when you came back over, you came into Fort Dix, New Jersey?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And then what kind of stuff did you have to go through there before you could come home?

Fred Rohrig: Just examinations and so on.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Physical exams?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah. They were pretty good. They examined you real good.

Heather Rohrig: Well, that's good.

Fred Rohrig: These are all guys I bummed around with in basic training here.

Heather Rohrig: So who put this book together?

Fred Rohrig: I had this before I went in the service, and I...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I didn't take it with me, I just brought this stuff home, put it in. These are all the little German kids. These are some buddies of mine.

Heather Rohrig: That's you right there, isn't it?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm, that's me right there, yeah. I had a picture of me when I got my corporal thing, but I can't find that. Suppose it's out of here.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Showing it off, holding it out. I think that's German people here, I'm sure. 'Cause there in the window there—I don't know who they were.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. Who's this goober?

Fred Rohrig: This is, I think this is Aunt Rita, see?

Heather Rohrig: Oh, is it?

Fred Rohrig: Pro-

Heather Rohrig: She's wearing your...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah; wearing my coat, see how big it is on her? 'Cause she's just a little kid, then, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So is it after you came home?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: She decided...

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I didn't come home at all until I got out, see.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: 'Cause I was, basic training and overseas, so, so they didn't see me for 18 months.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Did you feel differently when you got back, or did you fall into...?

Fred Rohrig: Ye-no, I got right back into routine, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, all these pictures are good, here. I like all these.

Heather Rohrig: Who's this?

Fred Rohrig: That's Ronald, Uncle Ronald.

Heather Rohrig: Ok. Did they send you that when you were over there?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, this, this is some of the stuff was put in at different times. This is, girl I used to go with when I got out.

Heather Rohrig: Don't show Grandma that!

Fred Rohrig: No, she saw it! This is Geisla, she was really pretty.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah, she's beautiful.

Fred Rohrig: I liked her, yeah, mhm. And this, see, they're a nice family. See, here's Analeise.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: See how nice they look?

Heather Rohrig: And that's the Mama of the family?

Fred Rohrig: Here's the schoolbus I used to drive once in a while.

Heather Rohrig: This is in Germany?

Fred Rohrig: No, this is over here, I, when I got back. And our old priest, he was real little.

Heather Rohrig: He is a little guy.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, I, I used to drive it once in a while when he couldn't do it, and they'd get me to do it.

Heather Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Fred Rohrig: And this is the Catholic Rural Youth, you know. You've got CYO, we had CRYO, Catholic Rural Youth.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, see, this is us, and some of my classmates and...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And this is my first car here.

Heather Rohrig: That's your first car?

Fred Rohrig: Uh-huh. 1932.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: It's a Model-F Ford, yeah. And there my Nash I had.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: There's Aunt Rita up there.

Heather Rohrig: Who's this here?

Fred Rohrig: This is Uncle Ronald and I. This is back on the farm just horsin' around. This is, see the great b? there?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And there's our house, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Is that you too?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's when I was little, yeah. I don't know how little—pretty little.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Must be some of...that's of Hans Ginterlein there. That's good picture of him.

Heather Rohrig: Now that was the...

Fred Rohrig: German boy, yeah. But aren't they pretty people, though?

Heather Rohrig: They are, very.

Fred Rohrig: They are ni...

Heather Rohrig: What's this?

Fred Rohrig: That a ferry some kind, isn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Mmm.

Fred Rohrig: Looks like a ferry. This is 1948 here, isn't it.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: This is '45, there. 1945.

Heather Rohrig: So did you figure out how distantly you were related to these...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, they said that there were some Röhrigs that came over in such-and-such a year, I don't know, and I asked Grandma about it, and she said, yeah, she said some of them came over, some of the cousins.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: There's, they's, and then you're other uncle over there, found some Röhrigs too, didn't he?

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah?

Fred Rohrig: In another part of Germany.

Heather Rohrig: Oh yeah! Tony did, in Berlin, I think.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, Berlin, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Is that you up there in your uniform?

Fred Rohrig: No that's Papa Röhrig there, see it?

Heather Rohrig: Oh, is it?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, look at it. See, that's him.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: See, here they are, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: This is Mom and Dad here. Let's see what we got down here...aw, you saw that.

Heather Rohrig: What is this here? Is that a dog or a pig?

Fred Rohrig: That's one of my dogs, that's a dog, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: That's a cat, it looks like there, doesn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, it does look like.

Fred Rohrig: This is the Rhine River, I remember that. We were by the Rhine River there.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah. It's pretty swift. It's, well it's, I don't think it's quite as wide as the Ohio, but it's swift.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Real swift-like. Seemed like it was then.

Heather Rohrig: You wouldn't wanna swim across it?

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh, no. Not when I was over there.

Heather Rohrig: Now why does he have a special helmet, do you remember?

Fred Rohrig: I don't know...

Heather Rohrig: Looks different.

Fred Rohrig: It does look different. I don't know who he is! Now, these are German guys here. I don't know why I got that.

Heather Rohrig: Hmm. Is that you here?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's me there, yeah, uh-huh. That's over there, I think.

Heather Rohrig: Is it snowing?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, see, it's white...

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: It's all white, yeah. They had nice air over there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. I don't have any pictures in here of Uncle Frank, I don't think. Here we all are, here. That's me, right there.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And that's Uncle Frank, Uncle Ronald... wait a minute... one of them's my cousin Joe, I imagine, 'cause there's only three of us.

Heather Rohrig: Who's the little girl?

Fred Rohrig: That's Aunt Susan. That's Dad and his car.

Heather Rohrig: What kid of car is that?

Fred Rohrig: That's an old, that's a Model-T I think. There's me at 16 months, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: And there's Aunt Rita feeding the pigs, see it? Trying to get it to speak, I think!

Heather Rohrig: Do pigs speak?

Fred Rohrig: See it-no, they don't, no. And there's our, see our house?

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Kind of in the boondocks, ain't it?

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah, it was.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's...

Heather Rohrig: The handsome one?

Fred Rohrig: Hmm?

Heather Rohrig: Who wrote that—the handsome one?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's Uncle Ronald, yeah. I did, probably. Mom did a lot of the writing and the putting the stuff to-

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And the notes on there, because that's not my handwriting. Now, these are the German kids. They, they, they, they knew a little boxing, but not much, and they, they, they liked ball.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: It took a while to run the right way, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah! So did you play, did the-the-the boys play or did the girls play too?

Fred Rohrig: Everybody played.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Boys, girls, yeah. Some little bitty ones, and some big ones.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Well, you'll see the pictures of them there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I'd love to go back and see those kids now, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: That'd be great, wouldn't it?

Heather Rohrig: See they're all...

Fred Rohrig: Oh, gosh, a lot of them are...

Heather Rohrig: In their 50s and 60s?

Fred Rohrig: Dead I'm sure, yeah. That was 60 years ago, goodness sakes.

Heather Rohrig: Any of them about your age?

Fred Rohrig: Well, some, some of them, yeah, there were bigger than I was.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Just a few years difference, I'm sure.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, we just had a certain ballfield we went to, and they'd all come from far around, you know. Come down and play, and...

Heather Rohrig: Would they come from other villages too?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, they'd, yeah, they'd, as long as they could get there, they came. We didn't care where they came from. There was no, there's a lot of them there going, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And everybody talking at once, and wanting to play, wanting to bat, and...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Wanting to do this. 'I wanna pitch,' and so on! And that was just softball with that, of course, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: But, but it was a lot of fun with them, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You start out telling them they have to hit the ball then they run to this base.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And you had to put the bases around for them.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And all that—it was a lot of fun, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you have real equipment, or was it just kinda...?

Fred Rohrig: We had all they, see, I brought all the stuff, see.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I had all the equipment, I was in charge of all that, so, I just brought it all with me, and had to have all that, yeah. Yeah, but all they played was soccer, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And we didn't play soccer, we just played ball, generally, yeah. We didn't have baskets, to shoot baskets there either. We just played softball, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Did you guys ever play soccer with them?

Fred Rohrig: No, I didn't play it at all. I didn't even see a soccer ball...

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Except when I went to the soccer games, yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Still fun, then. Now what's, we didn't go through this up here, did we?

Fred Rohrig: Which ones that one?

Heather Rohrig: This O?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, we had these out, right over here. I don't know what this is. Application for service life insurance—oh, yeah. I had \$10,000 insurance on me. I made it out to my mom.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: In case I got killed, then she'd have got \$10,000, which was then a pretty... what's this up here? That's, is that \$10,000?

Heather Rohrig: \$10,000, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, \$10,000. Yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Was that a requirement, or d'you just...?

Fred Rohrig: No, I did have to take it, you didn't have to take it.

Heather Rohrig: No?

Fred Rohrig: You had to pay that yourself, out... it wasn't that much, I don't...

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: It didn't cost that much.

Heather Rohrig: So if anything happened to you, your mom just would have gotten that?

Fred Rohrig: Mhm. Well, Codys, I think they got that when...

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I, I, I don't know if this was mandatory or not, I, seems like it wasn't.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm. Doesn't look like it was. It doesn't say anywhere that you had to do it.

Fred Rohrig: Application for service life insurance in relation with... without report, it says, with exam. You didn't need a physical; you just had one when you got in there.

Heather Rohrig: I was gonna say, they know you're healthy.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I got this for, way, 'cause I was a private.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I was undecided at the time.

Heather Rohrig: And this is when you were still thinking you were gonna have to go over to war in the infantry?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yup, it's all infantry, basic training, you know, it's... ended up over there at constabulary. But that's what they were gonna, probably most guys probably did go into that, I imagine, because really they didn't have much use for any infantry then, you know. They wanted the vehicles, then they'd get around to start that.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So what kind of options were open to you when you got drafted, for what different branches you could go into?

Fred Rohrig: Well, I coulda gone into anything I wanted if I'd have joined. I wanted to join the Navy.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Before they drafted me, and Dad said no, he wouldn't sign, so... 'cause he said, no, if you get in and you don't like it you'll be blaming me, so, he s-he said wait 'til they getcha in there, so...

Heather Rohrig: That was before you were eighteen, you wanted to...?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm. Or when I was eighteen, probably, first 18 I probably wanted to do it.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: But you had to have your parents...

Fred Rohrig: Huh?

Heather Rohrig: Sign off on it?

Fred Rohrig: Well they, they wouldn't sign for me, see. They don't have anything to do when they draft you.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: You, you gotta go, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: You weren't an adult then until you were 21.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok.

Fred Rohrig: But you still, you had to go, yeah. It was different then, but still 18-year-olds... Lot of guys lied about their age and got in, you know...

Heather Rohrig: To go earlier?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, 16, 17-year-olds in there, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, wow.

Fred Rohrig: Oh, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So now this is just to-from...

Fred Rohrig: This is when I took that trip there.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: See how old that is?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: The cover's wore off of it.

Heather Rohrig: So this is all the soldiers that went?

Fred Rohrig: This, this is just, this other guys and I went. I'm sure other guys went too at different times, yeah. It was his idea 'cause he had relatives close to there, and he wanted me to go with him, and I did, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, ok. So where were you?

Fred Rohrig: Switzerland, all they way through Switzerland. We went on through a train, down there up through the mountains and all that.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: It was gorgeous, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Well, that's neat.

Fred Rohrig: They got little maps there.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Sure, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So you came up and looped around here and came through?

Fred Rohrig: I guess, mhm. All the way from Italy to Switzerland. We went to Italy first, I, I...

hHeather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And I...

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: I remember being in here, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Looks exactly the same.

Fred Rohrig: You had the same thing, didn't you?

Heather Rohrig: Yup.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. When you were over there, did they speak a lot of French, or German, or a lot of them spoke English.

Heather Rohrig: English, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Oh, so this is destroyed from the war?

Fred Rohrig: Ok, what...?

Heather Rohrig: Did you see a lot of...

Fred Rohrig: They weren't in the war.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Switzerland was never in the war, I don't think.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. So how much, how much buildings like this did you kind of see over in Germany?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, a lot of them, they, they were, they were just completely, they were just... the roads were good but the buildings were blown away.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: So they really were good at their bombing, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: But that was all over and done with by the time you got there?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, oh yeah, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: You never got to hear any of it, or...?

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh, no.

Heather Rohrig: Oh that's pretty.

Fred Rohrig: You shoulda been doing this with Mr. Benhase, 'cause he was in the action, see, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, no, this is...

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, ok.

Heather Rohrig: Different perspective on it.

Fred Rohrig: It is, yeah. It showing what we did afterward.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: To, to make peace, you know it.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Besides the Röhrigs, did you have contact with, like, adults?

Fred Rohrig: I had met a lot of people there.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And yeah, the parent's would come out for the kids.

Heather Rohrig: Right.

Fred Rohrig: And I would talk to them, and so...

Heather Rohrig: Were they all pretty friendly?

Fred Rohrig: Very friendly, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: In fact, most, a lot of them thought I was a German, you know, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, yeah?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, mhm.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: I'd be over at the Röhrig's house, I'd have my army shirt off and just have a t-shirt on.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And they, they'd be talking, and they'd think I, 'Oh!' They thought, they thought I was one of them, you know.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: So there were no hard feelings?

Fred Rohrig: Oh, no, no!

Heather Rohrig: Not in the village?

Fred Rohrig: No, huh-uh, no.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: There was no hard feelings at all then, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Did you do that right there?

Fred Rohrig: No, uh-uh.

Heather Rohrig: I wouldn't!

Fred Rohrig: Looked like they were getting ready to go up there and go skiing, doesn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, that's pretty.

Heather Rohrig: So that was what kinds of things you saw in Switzerland?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: Wow.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. Yeah, it was beautiful.

Heather Rohrig: Oh, look at that.

Fred Rohrig: Mr. Roberts went there last year, I think, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: In fact, he's got relatives in Switzerland.

Heather Rohrig: Oh really?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok, yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Came back, yeah, he said he really enjoyed it. I think, they were gonna go when Kim got sick.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: And you know they cancelled it, and then after she died they went after a year or so.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: After she died, yeah. Is that a shoe?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Boy, that's wore out, isn't it?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, a mountaineer's shoe?

Fred Rohrig: Uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: So where did you stay when you were in Switzerland?

Fred Rohrig: Don't remember.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Were you with a bunch of army...?

Fred Rohrig: Well, in Switzerland, just two guys.

Heather Rohrig: Mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Just a guy and myself.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: We just, I don't remember where we stayed, really. Probably like a motel or a hotel or something.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, soemthing like that.

Fred Rohrig: I guess.

Heather Rohrig: Did the army give you extra money to spend on leave?

Fred Rohrig: No, no, no.

Heather Rohrig: Or did you have to save up?

Fred Rohrig: You had to have money, you had to save up.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah. You, anything extra for anything.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah. Did you get paid once a month?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, uh-huh, yeah-uh-huh.

Heather Rohrig: You remember how much your paychecks were?

Fred Rohrig: Seems like about \$76, I think.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: A month, yeah.

Heather Rohrig: And that seemed pretty good to you, or...?

Fred Rohrig: No!

Heather Rohrig: No?

Fred Rohrig: Before we left I was making a lot working. It wasn't much.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: Huh-uh. No, it wasn't much money. But, I didn't need the money then, so I wouldn't worry to much about the money.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: He's mad about something.

Heather Rohrig: I know!

Fred Rohrig: Kids are kids the world 'round, aren't they? Here's this.

Heather Rohrig: That's beautiful.

Fred Rohrig: That's what you look and see when you're there.

Heather Rohrig: Did you guys have a car over there, or did you just walk around?

Fred Rohrig: No, we didn't have a car, no. You'd go on t-you know, buses and cars.

Heather Rohrig: Yeah.

Fred Rohrig: And whatever they had, yeah. Buses, they...

Heather Rohrig: It's about quarter 'til.

Fred Rohrig: Yeah, I know, and Grandma...

Heather Rohrig: Grandma gotta eat soon?

Fred Rohrig: Yeah.

Heather Rohrig: Ok.

Fred Rohrig: She has to eat at 12.

Heather Rohrig: Well, we can stop now, then.

Fred Rohrig: Ok. Can you turn that off?

Heather Rohrig: Yeah, mhm.

Fred Rohrig: Ok.

Heather Rohrig: I can do that.

Fred Rohrig: Back to, see, we forgot our...

[End of Side B]