

**Interviewer:** Alright, Mr. Long, you want to state your full name and tell me when and where you were born?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, ok. Well, my full name is just Homer Long. Slighted me, my 3 brothers got one name, no middle initial. Homer Long is my name. And let's see, I was born in 1910, February the 2<sup>nd</sup>, Ground Hog Day. And they used to, used to embarrass me to death to go in and, they'll say here comes the ground hog, and uh, I think it's kind of cute now, being as old as I am, 99 years old, still a ground hog. But a ground hog lives a long time, doesn't he.

**Interviewer:** Yeah he does. Wow, every Ground Hog Day is your birthday, huh?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, February the 2<sup>nd</sup>, yeah, you remember that. Yeah, Ground Hog Day, they say it's going to be bad weather this year, they missed it entirely, it's been pretty weather throughout the whole time, I didn't expect anything else, I mean, I never did go by things like that. I do know, I do know I think though, the moon or the something had something to do, anything that has to do with control the tides because the ocean, might have a lot of power around us, that we don't know about, I don't know that. I can't prove that, I don't want to prove it. But I don't remember a lot of the old sayings but a lot of them are true. Yeah ok, you going to turn on or ready go?

**Interviewer:** We're already going so.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, well you want some more information, go ahead.

**Interviewer:** Alright so, what branch of service did you serve in?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** What branch of service did you serve in?

**Homer Long:** Branch of service. I served in the Army, and uh, well I served everyone but overseas, I served Evacuation, what they called Evacuation Ordnance. We hauled back, we suppose to haul back the tanks, our tanks that were damaged by the Germans, but uh, after the war got started, our commander, well he didn't want that, he wanted us to haul him up new tanks, and took new tanks for him, yeah and so, he had a lot of influence. He's the one that cut Germany in two, he went across, last tanks we carried him, he was over in Czechoslovakia, that was beyond Germany.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Yeah. So he cut the Germans, I mean in two, still a few were fighting down south, few fighting up north, you know after, dislodged that way, they don't, they not...., ok.

**Interviewer:** Uh, what was your parents names and what was their occupations...what were your parents names and what were their occupations?

**Homer Long:** My father was Henry Hugh Long and the Longs down on Romans Creek, my closest kin, you ever heard of Leslie Long, you probably haven't, a lot you haven't either, younger feller, and Tips Country, you may know, I don't know. I was born down there, I was born about 2 miles across from Pine View, you know where Pine View is don't you?

**Interviewer:** I think I've heard of it.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, yeah it's about down here by Tom's Creek, about 11 miles, 12 miles down there. I remember when there was just a few, few pines up there, now it's just full of pines, there where it gets the name. Pine View, ok. That's just a little history of it, well that's true history of it, I remember, I remember.

**Interviewer:** What did your parents used to do?

**Homer Long:** Henry, Henry Hugh long but he married Cobalt, my mother was a Cobalt. She stayed close to Cobalt over at Cobalt...

**Female Voice:** He didn't hear you.

**Homer Long:** ...over here at Cobalt, there's a Cobalt right over here in Hickman County, and by the way I finished high school in Hickman County, like I say back in my time, ....., decided he just let me go to school over there, he knew some of the , he knew the coach, and he knew some of the people over there and uh, so, I don't really, I got to go over there and I graduated over there like I said, I played baseball over there, had a good coach and from then on baseball was...., oh, I liked baseball.

**Interviewer:** What position did you play?

**Homer Long:** Center field.

**Interviewer:** Center field?

**Homer Long:** Center field. But now one of the colleges at, the coach asked me did I mind playing left field, I've got a center fielder that I've had for 3 years out there, and he said I hate to move him, but he says you've got to make my team. Uh, the first game, I hit two triples and one helped win the game, ....., you ever heard of.....?

**Interviewer:** Yeah, I think so.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, I imagine you have, it's a big center there where they have tournaments, you know. ....just some of my team mates.....

**Interviewer:** Did ya'll win a lot of games?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** Did ya'll win a lot of games?

**Homer Long:** Well, we won some of the important games, we beat the team from uh, .....University..... what?

**Interviewer:** Oh, uh, Tennessee Tech.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, yeah, we beat them, they had beaten Murfreesboro all four years, so like I say I hit two triples, we didn't get to play in....., that was being prepared, we had to play, had to put a field out there, oh, that's a big campus, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** We played out there, they just marked off a field, but uh, left field and right field, and some big trees, well if you hit a ball low enough, it'd hit those trees, you know and you just keep running.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, did you ever hit any homeruns?

**Homer Long:** Well, I, some places I did, one time we went from Free ....., I went Free....., I went to uh, University of uh, University of uh, of uh, West, uh, now let's see, it's in Kentucky.

**Interviewer:** Oh ok.

**Homer Long:** Western Kentucky.

**Interviewer:** Western Kentucky?

**Homer Long:** Murray, I went to Murray for a year, and as a freshman I made the team, and then when I went to ....., when I was in Virginia, and I was eligible to make the team there, and so, and so the coach, found out that some players had played over here and needed to go to college, and he came and got us and, to go on his team, and he had, had a pretty good team over there for just a junior college. Then I finished over at .....

**Interviewer:** Oh. Um.

**Homer Long:** Well, went to Peabody first, got my bachelor's degree over there.

**Interviewer:** What did you get a bachelor's degree in?

**Homer Long:** I got the bachelor's degree at .....

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah, so how long were you in school?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** How long were you in, how long were you in school?

**Homer Long:** Oh, well, when I finished, let's see, I finished in 38', 1910, I was 28 when I finished. But see, uh, I was out, I had to stay out and teach or to stay out and work to be able to go.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** It took me 6 years to go, and I was telling him one time, our second baseman, he looked at me and said, well you haven't got much on me, it took me 5 years and I didn't even go to college during that time, they didn't even teach.

**Interviewer:** Do you have any brothers or sisters?

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** Do you have any brothers....

**Homer Long:** Yeah, uh, I've got, I've just got one sister, she's still living out here at uh, oh, what do you call it, uh,...

**Female Voice:** Nursing home.

**Interviewer:** Nursing home?

**Homer Long:** Nursing home, yeah,....nursing home, .....

**Interviewer:** So uh, what were your memories of the Great Depression?

**Homer Long:** What were my memories of it?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, I've got quite a few memories of the Great Depression, the first big memory that I have of it was, I was, like I was working for the highway and I was getting pretty good money and I was just cut out of the crew well all together, and uh, uh, I had to come home and uh, I was going to, well that first year I went to school, in Murray, Kentucky, and uh, my dad had to take me out of school, I mean it just, wasn't any money made. That was 1930 and 31'.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** And oh, it just uh, a panic you might you say almost. They had a, we had a holiday, for 10 days you couldn't even, you couldn't even transfer money, banks were closed there 10 days, to start with but along about that time Hoover Dam was built, Hoover, I can look back now, if Hoover kept on like he first started why, we made not have had that, those hard times during the 30's. Ah, the whole 30's, it just hard to make any money of any kind.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, so you remember Hoover then, back then?

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** You remember President Hoover, when he was President?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** You remember when Hoover was President, right?

**Homer Long:** Oh yeah, well, oh yeah, see I was born in 1910, I was just a boy, I was a boy in 1918 when the First World War was on.

**Interviewer:** Wow, you remember that time?

**Homer Long:** Oh, I remember some things that happened back then, of course I remember when they said the Titanic went down, great, I remember the song they had, it was sad when that great ship went down, that was just a common, common that they knew about the song.

**Interviewer:** What song was it?

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** What song was it?

**Homer Long:** It was uh, it was sad... that was the name of it. It Was Sad When That Great Ship Went Down. Well, it hit an iceberg or an iceberg hit it, collided so to speak, I didn't see where it was at, iceberg can come at 1000 tons, that's how big it was, it would scrap the whole side of a ship, and it looked like, well it said to be unsinkable, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, alright, so you remember, you remember when that happened, you said right? You remember when all that was happening and people were talking about it, when the Titanic sank?

**Homer Long:** Yeah.

**Interviewer:** So it was uh, what was everyone saying?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** You remember what everyone was saying at the time?

**Homer Long:** I'm just not uh....

**Interviewer:** You remember when everyone was talking about it?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah, I remember that.

**Interviewer:** You were only 2 years old.

**Homer Long:** I was just a boy. I remember a few years later, I don't remember when it happened, it went down in 1912, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** And then so I was just 2 years old, but 6 years later, there was a song, somebody wrote a song, it was sad, like I say and I remember, people were humming that maybe or something, you know, and I wondered what it was, but later on I could guess what it was.

**Interviewer:** So uh, you remember when World War 1 started?

**Homer Long:** World War 1?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Oh no, no I don't remember.

**Interviewer:** In 1917.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, 19.., yeah, oh no.

**Interviewer:** You were about 7 years old.

**Homer Long:** I was about, yeah about 7 years old. I remember slightly something about it but I just remember my dad had to register, you had to register, up to uh, well, I forgot, well, 40, I believe.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** I remember he had to register during that time, I don't know how, just how old he was at that time.

**Interviewer:** So he went, did he go into World War1, did he go over, did he fight in World War 1?

**Homer Long:** Did he, oh he never did. Pastor said he had, there was 3 of us, he had 3 children at that time, there was 3 of us, had an older sister and I, and had a brother, that was born in 1912 so there's 3 of us, he had his children and we didn't, they didn't take him, take him into the service, uh, a lot of times they were extruded for a while, given to leave absence or something like that,

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** But now I went in 1943, my daughter was born in 1943, she was 6 weeks old when I left to go into the Army.

**Interviewer:** So you were about 33 then?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, 33 years old. Trained in California for a year before that though, trained in the Mojave Desert, California. It was a long, uh well it's cold in the desert, but there's a little growth there, undergrowth you know, small busy trees and things like that, no, no forest, no forest there. In Northern California, I mean in Eastern California though, there's some mountains there, there's snow there, you see snow all year round but as long as, it was a long way away up in those mountains.

**Interviewer:** Yeah so uh, did uh, you taught after you got out of college or Bradshire?

**Homer Long:** Well, uh... when I...

**Interviewer:** When you graduated?

**Homer Long:** When I graduated from uh, Austin Peay, not Austin Peay uh...

**Interviewer:** Oh, Western Kentucky.

**Homer Long:** No uh...

**Interviewer:** Was it...

**Female Voice:** Henderson.

**Interviewer:** Henderson?

**Homer Long:** Henderson, yeah. That's a junior college there at that time. And I graduated from there and I remember having 90 quarter hours in college, and then in that 90 hours made me graduate, I mean I was considered uh, ready to go to a full fledged college, like ....

**Interviewer:** Um...

**Homer Long:** Had a job, after Hoover went out, Roosevelt, he and his party began organizing, people had organizations they could belong to, uh, like the WPA and the PWA and all that, you know. And, and, and they raised jobs for them, you know. They got money, but they got, had to work for it so to speak.

**Interviewer:** Hmm, uh, before Pearl Harbor, how seriously did you take the threat of America and the Nazi's uh, and the Japanese, how serious was the threat before Pearl Harbor happened?

**Homer Long:** How, how...

**Interviewer:** Yeah, how seriously did you take it?

**Homer Long:** How seriously?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, it was a shock, I remember that very well, oh, I was in the service when it happened, uh, see I was in the service from 19, uh, I went in, in 1943, I came out in 1945, and I stayed in 2 years, over 2 years, 2 and half years to be exact when I stayed in the service.

**Interviewer:** Uh, did you ever read newspapers and keep up with the events?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, I'm not uh...

**Interviewer:** Did you ever read newspapers to keep up with the events during 1939 to 41'?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, well, while I was in the service, that was partly my job, they found out that I was really scholared, you know, so I was to report the news to, every once in a while, I got credit for that, I mean, it helped me along, see uh, I made that, those talks to the whole group that I was in there see, the whole battalion of us and I made a whole lot of cigarettes' there and so I had a pretty good standing there, you might say.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Uh, so uh, do you remember where you were when you heard the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor, on December 7<sup>th</sup> 1941?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, I remember very well, I was in California, I was training, training to go overseas really, well I was training in maybe north Texas, and south Colorado, not Colorado uh, south, where's that place where the tornado, where they have so many tornados?

**Interviewer:** Oh, uh, Oklahoma?

**Homer Long:** Oklahoma, yeah, there's a place there that's pretty rough country and hilly and that's where they sent us for training, and they'd push old tanks off in those gulley's and you had to go in there with a, and pull them out in some way, best way you knew how, that's why we trained and then we moved from there to south Texas, to take the last train to go overseas.

**Interviewer:** Uh, did you uh, did you listen to FDR's speech, "A day we shall live in infamy.."? The following day or did you, did you remember when he gave that speech?

**Homer Long:** Did you what now, I'm just...

**Interviewer:** Do you remember when FDR gave the speech "A day we shall live in infamy.." on the day after Pearl Harbor was attacked?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, well, people were just excited everywhere, you know. It was just a well, they were reckoned the Japanese, to prepared just about any time. Which, wasn't as bad as the other one because we had more people, we had more, we had more people then..... we first thought we had, and uh, so it didn't develop into, it was a scare, oh it was a great scare of course, big scare, yeah, Japanese they had strong, they were strong about that time, their fleets you know, mainly their fleets, that's where they were stronger.

**Interviewer:** A lot of people were afraid of , they were going...

**Homer Long:** Oh, yeah.

**Interviewer:** ..invade the U.S.

**Homer Long:** Oh, yeah, so I was training, of course mostly at that time in California.

**Interviewer:** So it happened right when you were training, huh?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewer:** So did you approve of the way FDR handled his office, at the beginning of the war?

**Homer Long:** What was that now?

**Interviewer:** Did you approve at the way of, FDR handled his office at the beginning of the war?

**Homer Long:** Uh, did I what now, did I approve...

**Interviewer:** Approve of FDR?

**Homer Long:** Oh, yeah. The people, people went over strong, he was elected for 3 terms, only person who's ever been elected for 3 terms, you, you knew that didn't you?

**Interviewer:** 4 terms actually.

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** 4 terms.

**Homer Long:** 4 terms, oh yeah.

**Interviewer:** He died in his 4<sup>th</sup>, at the beginning of his 4<sup>th</sup> one.

**Homer Long:** Oh, yeah, 4 terms, I was missing one, I wasn't thinking.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** I would know that. But anyways, that's uh, oh he's, he organized, he was a great organizer, no wonder he was elected, people had jobs, people didn't pay much attention to what the jobs were, just as long as they had jobs, make a little money, just a little something coming in, but he had jobs, when I went, Freed, when I went to Freed Hardman, that summer or the spring and summer when I went over there, I had a job sweeping out the lunch room, we had a big, it was more than a lunch room, it was a big dining room. And my job was sweeping it out,

cleaning it out, instead of sweeping it out, we didn't use a broom to sweep, we used a mop you, a big wide mop and that was my job, I got paid for it, I forgot now what I got paid, but anyway I got to go to school, to college and uh, that paid my tuition and board, and I didn't have the money right then to pay for anything, anybody else didn't much have it, my dad didn't have it to send because he had to take me out from Murray, Kentucky see, and I just going over there just because I had a job to pay if I went.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, I was making the best I could out of it, and back during the year, I worked one year for Mr. Wesley Duncan, used to live down there in Cress Bend, and uh, uh, he and my dad were in the Barrel Association, you know what that is?

**Interviewer:** I don't think...

**Homer Long:** The Barrel Association was something they organized, people paid so much for their, to belong to it, they got a cheaper barrel by belonging you see, and my dad and Mr. Wesley Duncan organized this Barrel Association and they got the first collection that was accessed, and that collection amounted to 25 cents for every for every 2 dollar they had, if they had a 300 dollar barrel, why they paid 75 cents, and uh, each of that are in trade, and uh, they could trade sargum, sargum molasses, or they could trade chickens for so much a pound, anything like that, they could trade it in you know, and so I worked with Mr. Wesley Duncan, I didn't get much out of it, I remember, but it was worth a year of college being around him for that long.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** He could sell anything, he could talk them into a notion of swapping whatever they had, whether it was chickens or whatever it was. I remember one time, he swapped them uh, sargum, and uh, it wasn't nice looking sargum, it was black, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** You can get something, you can get any kind of syrup or sargum, it's not good. I remember I said Mr. Duncan, I don't believe we could eat that, and he sniffed right big you know, and he said we're not going to eat it, we're going to sell it, and he did, he sold it, and it, I know, he just, he'll sell anything.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** It was worthwhile, to listen to him, put up his talk, boy, it's hard to turn someone down, ....., oh they can make it sound real good to you, but it didn't sound good to me because I 'd heard it told back to me.

**Interviewer:** How much did that job pay, you don't remember how much it paid?

**Homer Long:** What was that now?

**Interviewer:** You don't remember how much it paid, how much you got paid for it?

**Homer Long:** Oh, I got paid just very little, 2 or 3 dollars a day, and uh, I could have made quite a bit from teaching, oh, I go to school later on, before well, I go to school, in 34' and teaching down there at the, well, first over there at Harnell. They had a Harnell school, right where Doug Sanders business, right up the . . . , there was a school up there. That was built by the government, the government had that built and they had Mr. King, was a younger fellow, soft decay, used to live out here, that was back in your day, you remember when soft decaying used to live out there, as you go from town, out there on the left, there's a row of houses out there and they lived at the first house out there on the left going down, and uh, so uh, Willie King, she ran a beauty parlor, if I try to remember right, so uh, anyway now, I'm just, this is about mainly, how about hard times were, and really I'm not making them as hard as they were, and people were I don't know, you talking about now, talking about people being out of work or being, you know, here lately. We were one of the, one of the counties in the United States, the claim is about 36,000 counties now in the United States, Tennessee had got 96, 95, yeah Tennessee has, well you count them all up, . . . . . , New York, no telling how many counties they got up there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Now California, their counties are big counties.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** So while I was in service, part of the time, I was stationed in California, Mojave Desert, we trained there and we were in the war at that time but we were had our troops, the Asians and the Americans together had troops in Northern Africa, and that's the desert country . . .

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** . . . and that's where they sent us to train because it was kind of a desert country out there in California. Ellis Island, Ellis Island out there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, uh . . .

**Homer Long:** It's a deserted place, and people, it's just too hot to live there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, it's just too hot, it's the hottest, driest place in the United States, I think.

**Homer Long:** Oh, yeah, you're right exactly.

**Interviewer:** I know. When did you realize you were going to be drafted, or you were already in the service at the time right?

**Homer Long:** Oh no, I was drafted to go in.

**Interviewer:** Right.

**Homer Long:** I was drafted right out of the classroom.

**Interviewer:** Classroom, huh.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, they kept me out for a while, they kept me out till I finished that year, I was under Mr. Lexy Carrot, Mr. Lexy Carrot was the principle at that time, and he moved me from Louisville up here, and I was under him, I taught the, I taught the second year, a lot of the classes I taught, some of them were math and some of them were, I taught one or two in literature. It's pretty difficult for them to get a teacher that was certified in all the subjects that I was teaching, and uh, that kept me out for at least 6 months, till they could find somebody. So, the school board they asked the board, you know the county board, the ones that sent you.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Went to camp, camp uh...

**Female Voice:** He gets to move around, he might get tired.

**Homer Long:** ...Georgia, went to camp in Georgia.

**Interviewer:** Oh, that Fort Oglethorpe?

**Homer Long:** Camp Fort Oglethorpe, it's a fort, it's a fort there now.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** It was a big...(phone rings)...you get that for me will you.

...(Tape cuts, and starts again)...

**Interviewer:** Quick lease.

**Homer Long:** Ok.

**Interviewer:** So did you ever pick uh, did you have a preference which branch of service you wanted to be in, was it the Army, or the Navy...

**Homer Long:** Well, they were fighting as though, they kept training us and we had this larger equipment, we had, we were organizing that equipment and we didn't need that kind of equipment where, where we suppose to go. We were suppose to go and be uh, uh be the first, be the first to recognize the their planes when they attacked in England and so forth, and so we didn't need that kind of equipment, but they decided, they trained us to go over there and haul up tanks, to Patton, Patton was over the Army there, that cut across Germany, and um, we cut across up there on the Autobahn, auto road, that means auto road.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, there's a bonhauf.

**Interviewer:** Train station.

**Homer Long:** Uh, yeah, that's the rail road.

**Interviewer:** Rail road?

**Homer Long:** Yeah. Well, when we were out there on the Autobahn, it was like the uh, interstate. Yeah, I doubt it's any better than the interstate, but it's just as good as the interstates, we been on that, it helped us out quite a bit. It wasn't all that, we had to cross some rough country to get all the way, to keep up with Patton, with Patton Army, I'm talking about General Patton now. He was a Lieutenant General, he wasn't the main General, under Eisenhower. Eisenhower was the main General, and uh, the boss uh, crossing the town.

**Interviewer:** Patton was located in North Africa originally, right?

**Homer Long:** Patton was appointed by him to lead the attack against Germany right after us, well, it wasn't a success, it was a success for the Americans, the British to get across over there, and so we organized and Patton was appointed to lead the way. And he did, we caught up with him in Luxemburg.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Luxemburg's a little place. Just a little...

**Interviewer:** Country...

**Homer Long:** ...it's not a country, it doesn't belong to France, well, it's not suppose to belong to anybody, but uh, I had some pictures that I had, visited schools there, visited one school and they were all girls, well I knew, I knew kind of what to expect, but I acted like I didn't know, I said where are the boys, oh, they said they had another school across town, I said, yeah I figured that, I said you don't have, we have the boys and girls mixed in the, over in the States, we don't have any schools were they just, well, we might have private schools were there's just girls going, and we might have colleges where they go, but all the public school I know about anywhere in the United States, anywhere now, there are pretty well public school. What I mean by that, they has the support of the, support of the general public, and upkeep and so forth, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, did you ever go to an induction ceremony where, did you ever go to an induction ceremony where you were tested for I.Q. levels?

**Homer Long:** Oh yeah, oh yeah. Went to, went to, went to this place at uh, they did that for us there at the entrance, where we entered. Yeah, if you made over, if you made over 39, you were classified as higher, you were classified as officer material, yeah. I was classified, I made mine was 43.

**Interviewer:** Really?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, oh yeah, I was classified as, so that didn't help me later on though, I had to chance one to make uh, well, let's see what was, I was about to make 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant or something, the one in command, he said why he might not be here, he might not be here a week, but leave me, to be a Lieutenant, you know to training and that worked against me there you see. So, it worked both way I guess, I don't know, but anyway, I didn't help me.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, did your, so did your civilian job....

**Homer Long:** What helped me, when we were getting to haul those tanks up, that place, Patton, to get those new tanks, when he needed them.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, and when he called for them, we were ready, cause that was an eastern transfer, we left there to take the tanks, across the Rhine, we crossed the Rhine, first crossed the Rhine it was on just a kind of, a barge, jus run tracks, and they were up the railroad, drive down, bridge outfit but they didn't have time to build a regular bridge out across there, they just ran tracks, now you couldn't take the, those big trucks to haul the tank and that track is wasn't hold it up enough and you had to unload the tank and carry them across separately, and you had, somebody had, I rode across a time or two there first, guiding, the fellow was guiding the tank, keeping me on those tracks, you know just barely give a signal, that was dangerous for both of them, he would have drown down in that thing, and I could have jumped off somewhere, I was on top, you know, guiding him, I was in a better position than he was in, you see, I could jump off and had a chance, you didn't have much of a chance, the Rhine River's a pretty swift stream, you see.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** When all in all we caught a ride back across, back around the bay, Loire River, that's down south, it rolls around to the Mediterranean.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** The Mediterranean, oh, we first got on a ship there, anyway that's where we saw Clark Kurk, Clark was stationed there. I loaned him a watch, I could swap, I didn't take, I didn't smoke cigarettes at the time, I just smoked a pack at that time, I could take a carton of cigarettes and get a good watch, a trade with the Germans, you know. Yeah, I could get a watch, and I let

him borrow that watch that I had, or 2 or 3 watches, I brought one back to my dad, and uh, now I'm scared of watches, I got so many of them.

**Interviewer:** Now, were they good watches?

**Homer Long:** Oh yeah, good watches, oh, yeah. First class.

**Interviewer:** First class...

**Homer Long:** But the cigarettes were first class to them too, see.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, they didn't have any.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, that's the...

**Homer Long:** .....where you had money, where you didn't have money.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, did your civilian...

**Homer Long:** ...they had products but they didn't have...

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Did your civilian job help you with the Army?

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** Did your civilian job, did that have anything to do with what you did in the Army?

**Homer Long:** Oh yeah, yeah, kept me, it just kept me from making uh, what's First Class Sergeant, it wasn't uh, wasn't uh, wasn't, anyway, the Second Class Sergeant, had kept me from making that first, but later on, it might have helped me some, I couldn't keep up with it, it hindered me there because when you got to there's little difference in a Book Sergeant and a First Class Sergeant, not First Class, but you might say Second Class Sergeant, say uh, cook or something, would be a second kind.

**Interviewer:** Uh, you did your basic training, where did you say you did your basic training at?

**Homer Long:** Basic training, California.

**Interviewer:** California?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, Mojave Desert California.

**Interviewer:** Mojave Desert.

**Homer Long:** Eastern part of California. There's a whole, there's a long section there, that's called the Mojave Desert. It's, it's uh, well it's more or less, it's just almost a desert but another part of it is Death Valley, it's worse than the desert, you can't live there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. Uh, uh, were you selected for more specialized training, were you selected for more specialized training?

**Homer Long:** More specialized, yeah, we had to go south in Texas to uh, to take our last training there. That's where, that's where this picture probably be, where's that, in May, let me have a look, I'll have to see. Yeah, that was taken while I was down there.

**Interviewer:** Oh yeah?

**Homer Long:** Yeah, she came to see me and I got to come home, stay home a day or 2, just a day or 2, Christmas, oh, I remember when I finally did get to come home, bailey was, uh, let's see when I left, she was about 6 weeks old, when I got back she was almost 3 years old, boy she looked me over. Oh, yeah, she was wondering whether to keep me on as her dad, but I just remember that, I remember, they live up there at the, right close to where the drug store is now, over where Maw Bess used to live and she took care of Linda, when Linda was growing up and the boys were, she had some boys in school, what were the boys, one of them married Laura Ruth over here, Dan.

**Interviewer:** Oh.

**Homer Long:** I forgot Dan, that was Dan, Dan Devers. And uh, she knew them and all. Maw Bess cared for them, and she kept these other because they were her grandchildren, Maw Bess did, but she kept Linda for, paid her for keeping Linda, of course so you know, so she didn't have to stay here, you might just say grow up with her grandparents, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Ok.

**Interviewer:** Well, what was your impression of your fellow recruits?

**Homer Long:** When was what?

**Interviewer:** What was your impression of your fellow recruits?

**Homer Long:** Retreats?

**Interviewer:** No, what was impress..., what was your impression of your fellow recruits, your fellow service men, what was your impression of them?

**Homer Long:** Of the recruits?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Oh, I thought he was real good, Dan King, I never will forget his name, Dan King, and by the way, we were stationed at a little place there in Texas, called Honey Grove, and uh, we stayed there, they kept us, Fulsurs, I can remember his name as well as I can my own. They lived there, and we told them we didn't have any room, they said well you can have a room, you can some of you want to, if you don't want to, because they said we're not rich but were well off enough, we want to do well, we want anybody in the service to do well, so we were behind the service people, and they told us that, they told all about Honey Grove while the war in Texas, Texas you know, Texas was a country for a while, while they were, while the change was going on, the Army's passing through and they were tired of the old uh, food they were having, that ain't sweet to eat, and they found out that this Honey Grove, bee tree's there, they could get honey out of it so they started calling it Honey Grove. That's what it's called when we, when we, uh, I say voted there, we wasn't and uh, I remember, I just remember that name, just as well as I do my own. I'd like to uh, call out there sometime, I imagine they're all gone, I would have, you see that's been years ago, years ago.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** I had a good young friend, that got killed and uh, and uh, Battle of the Bulge, well I was partly in that, I was stationed with the, with Patton's army, and he said... , I happen not be one of the ones sent north to help out, in it, or to help stop the drive, but this boy got killed there and I never could get in touch with their folks, he was uh, he was about 21 years old, he was just the nicest guy, the feller, but I don't know he just took a liking to me, but he was, he kept, he kept being transferred around, and back then, they ain't flew much over there but planes, to get them up there in time to help send that attack, you know the Germans were making, they making the last stand, uh, last chance stand against the Americans. Oh yeah, one of the great wars, one of the great battles, just went on and went on, few months, just like the, just like the taking of Germany, it took a pretty good while to take Germany, but uh, our men were the last troops, I mean the last tanks that we carried up, you think, we went all the way across Germany, and it had been cut in 2 like I said, well I mean, cut in 2, there was uh, there an ....., on each side to protect the way through, we went through there to a place called ..... I remember that trail and from then on cross uh, uh rougher country, anywhere a big can go we can carry those tanks, we could carry more on summer trucks, we could carry three tanks on them, the big tanks with the used gasoline, and uh, we had plenty of tanks for a while, and we ran short of ammunition, we hauled 2 loads of ammunition, and they claimed there wasn't enough firepower and ammunition, well there wouldn't have been anything left over there.

**Interviewer:** Um...

**Homer Long:** That's those uh, they would be as long as your arm, those big round shells, you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** And they were filled with powder, a blast, a football, a ball, you'd know where it hit.

**Interviewer:** Yeah

**Homer Long:** Practice, practice, when we first started practice, we practiced in California and there was a mountain, were we let, oh, about 15 miles out and the shells would go all the way out, hit out there, actually there was a plane that would fly around, and bring that sleeve, there was a silk sleeve, well they would hit that silk sleeve and it would burst and you could tell, there was a tracker over here, he kept uh, he kept uh, well it was automatic, it would run more than just turning power, but it took 2 people here and it took to get it organized to start with and that was my job, working on that.

**Interviewer:** I'll stop real quick.

**Homer Long:** Ok.

.....(cut tape).....

**Homer Long:** If it suits you, you just go ahead and start asking me questions.

**Interviewer:** Alright.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, ok, just slow down, that way, I can get all that at one time and I won't have to ask you to repeat so much.

**Interviewer:** Ok. Um, so that wasn't your first time being away from home, was it?

**Homer Long:** No, no, let's see, I trained away from home, you see. I was away from home for 4 years time, almost a years time from when I left here, until I got back, till I saw my daughter, she met me in Virginia, they sent me across, they asked me where I lived and I told them, and they said they would give me a leave of absence, I could come, I could get off here, well, I found out later, they made a mistake and routed me around to Chicago, 700 miles or 6 or 700 miles away but anyway, it was a nice trip through there, but uh, they had a hard way of doing it, we got on the train and we had booths to sleep in, they had a places to sleep, I remember when, north of Detroit, Michigan, and I remember we got around in Canada, it's stormy, it's rough up there, and you could tell by looking out the windows, it was snowing and doing everything up there, well got back in the Unites States, the edge of Germany, I mean uh, Canada, I said Germany, I forget about that because I was in Canada then, there's about the only time I've ever been to Canada. I was there, I'd say all night, next morning, we came back into the United States in New York, and we crossed all together....(phone rings)....yeah, get that for me.

.....(cut tape).....

**Homer Long:** Ok.

**Interviewer:** Alright ready. Um, did you participate in maneuvers stateside?

**Homer Long:** Participated in maneuvers what?

**Interviewer:** Maneuvers stateside.

**Homer Long:** Maneuvers.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, yeah, oh yeah. I, I had to, I was in charge of uh, going out with the tanks and I mean going out with these big retriever trucks and of course all those had, had power on the back of them, where they could, where they could get that wrecked tank out of those places, those were bad places...

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** ...and get them up where they could be stationed or helped by some other part of your contraption or equipment that we had, and then we could bring them on and they could be rolled off again for some other, somebody like, working the same type of work I was working, see.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** They would go see if they could get them out and bring them out and then we had a read of maneuvers doing about the same thing, in the extreme southern part of Texas, the hill country down there.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Next to the coast, ok.

**Interviewer:** Uh, how good do you think your training was for the task ahead of you?

**Homer Long:** What did you say?

**Interviewer:** How good do you think your training was for the task ahead of you?

**Homer Long:** Oh, we kept training for different things, that was the trouble about it, we trained first to go overseas, and anti-aircraft artillery, well there's an entirely different kind of thing to protect places, then it was to go in there and tear things apart, so it's just a lot of different types of work to do, but you do what there was and you could gage it that way. So we, when we got to Germany and we were signed to that follow up, we got to, what'd I call that little place in there,

well I got, well where I caught up with Patton, that little country in there that don't belong to either of them...

**Interviewer:** Oh, Luxemburg?

**Homer Long:** Luxemburg, yeah. Luxemburg, visiting those schools, I was just on a 3 days leave or a 2 day leave, you know to rest, and I thought that would be interesting to me and it was.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** But I kind of expected those classes to be just like they were, I didn't expect them to be like ours because I knew there were like the Danish and most of Europe, and well most countries probably but the United States, we don't follow anybody see.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** We, we made our own row, and we've done that, since colonial time, since time beginning.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, we had our armies over here, we had George Washington, he was the one, he was the first commander of the Army.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, he was the first, he was the first at war, first at peace, and the first in the hearts of many countrymen, that's what this Virginian, somebody from Virginia, that knew him well, I was under him in the service, and uh, he knew George Washington well, he knew George Washington, in other words he wasn't even a General in the States, he made I think, I believe, he was some kind of Officer in the French and Indian War, for the French.

**Interviewer:** He was a British, he was for the red.

**Homer Long:** Huh?

**Interviewer:** He was on the British side then.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, yeah, British, he was British there for, but now the British and the French uh, they were opposite angles, you know, in that country, that was way back and Hudson River was the main place where I was and came across and came down by the uh, what is that Army training center, uh...

**Interviewer:** Uh, West Point?

**Homer Long:** West Point, yeah came down by West Point came on down, and of course we came on down to uh, well when we came back from overseas, well we landed in the, the feed us in the uh, in the just south of the men's training, oh let's see...what was that camp that there? It was uh, anyway that was the best supper I ever had.

**Interviewer:** Oh really?

**Homer Long:** Did I get that a while ago, but yeah it the best supper I ever thought, when we came back across, we came what they called the southern route and we pretty well landed, the oh, Navy, head of the Navy department there, it's in Virginia, anyway it's close by, what are the other courses there, there ought to be a few others...

**Interviewer:** Yeah, uh, so you had pretty good living conditions in the camps?

**Homer Long:** You had pretty good living...

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** Well, we just made them that, we made it what they were by the way, we got to camp, when I got there, well we were there close to uh, I mention that place a few minutes ago, we, we got to Germany, we crossed, we crossed the Rhine River, we were in Germany there, Autobahn and we were close to the Autobahn, we used it, as far as we could use it, on the line where Patton, where Patton, Patton is the one General leading the way across Germany, you might say capturing Germany or defeating them really, I guess you'd call it, the best way to do it, so uh, yeah that was uh, we used that extensively, like they'd use it here, we've got these interstates now, we could, our Armies, we can go by land or by...

**Interviewer:** Yeah, I know. Um, so did your unit, they traveled overseas on troop ships, right?

**Homer Long:** What?

**Interviewer:** Your unit traveled overseas on troop ships.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, yeah. We went on, well we went on, we went on our own troop ship, we went on the Navy ships, the Navy had uh troop ships where they carried, we went right by with the Navy, we went the Northern route, they call it, or route, and uh, we went right by where the, or fairly close, it was later on, it was about 5 years later, it was that song I was telling you about, it was saying that great ship went down, I don't know how close we got to where it went down, but that's a big country up in there, it's dark, I had a brother stationed in Greenland, he stationed in Greenland, several, a few months there that he didn't see the sun, it got light enough he could tell the time of day, and said they had they sidewalks built out of concrete but they were on ice, it was just ice, Greenland mainly just ice covered island you see, just nothing, it came in handy though for the Unites States, it's location you know.

**Interviewer:** Yeah, um. So which port did you depart from?

**Homer Long:** We departed from uh, New York, we went out from Statue of Liberty and we went up what you call the northern route, we hit there north, northeastern, well Boston route, and shook across east, and we went east there and like I say I don't know how close to where the Titanic went down, but later on, why, I, I knew about a song that they were saying, about when it went down, sad you know, but that was about 6 years later, 7 years later, I was about, the 6 grade and I remember back then we had superintendant of the school, first superintendant I ever saw, I was in the 6 grade, and uh, he visited our school and he made a talk, got up in front of all of us and made a good talk, oh he knew his business, he was Mr. Thurman Duprese and for years there he was superintendant of the schools, and later on why he was county judge, and lot of things, I knew him first, so I knew him well.

**Interviewer:** So how was food and living conditions on the ship, how were the food and living conditions on the ship?

**Homer Long:** Oh, well it was different for us, they had hard boiled eggs for breakfast, hard boiled eggs now, well now if I would had scrambled eggs or something, ham first then scrambled eggs on them, it would have been a lot better for me, but that hard boiled eggs, I don't even like hard boiled eggs anyway, dinners, suppers, anytime, I don't like hard boiled eggs.

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Homer Long:** It's tough.

**Interviewer:** How many soldiers were on board the ship, how many soldiers were on board the ship?

**Homer Long:** Oh we had, I guess, it'd be my guess on this, what a troop ship would carry over. I imagine we had 2 companies, I imagine we had 2, 2 companies would be 300 men, 300 people, but 300 people, I know the Titanic had a lot more, they had probably...

**Interviewer:** Thousands.

**Homer Long:** Yeah, I guess this troop ship might have had 3 companies...

**Interviewer:** I think your....

.....(cut tape).....