

Interviewer: Please state your full name, when and where you were born.

Richardson: My name is John Minor Richardson. I was born near Clarksville, Tennessee July 31, 1922. On what is now Memorial Drive it was route 2 at that time. We I was born in pre-depression days actually in 1922 WWI was just over and farming conditions were not good they weren't real bad in this area but the average farm was very small in Montgomery County. The average farm I'd say probably 100, 150 acres at the most. Now there were a few large farms in Montgomery county but very few. My father had purchased this farm on Route 2 Clarksville Port Royal Road in 1916 and had a dairy. He continued to work this dairy until 1925 in 1925 he sold the dairy and expecting to probably go to Florida where there was a what you would call a land boom in Miami. My uncle who had been Mayor of Hopkinsville Kentucky was there and had done very extremely well in the sale of real estate. And dad and mother took young John to down to Miami in a T-Model Ford. He sold all of his cows and bought the T-Model Ford. I don't remember an awful lot about the trip but I remember a number of things about it going across the Gandy Bridge we went across the everglades on what they call Corduroy Road. It was rough in that T-Model Ford my dad was an enterprising young gentleman he made me a pallet in the back if I could sleep if I wanted. Apparently we spent some over a month on this trip roads there was absolutely no road maps and we dad would get out apparently would get out of the care every time we would get to a small town ask directions and we would continue on after that. I'm sure it was an interesting trip I don't remember an awful lot I do remember when we got to Miami my uncle was down there. And after dad saw what the set up was he decided he would come on back to Clarksville. He made dad was a very had a very good personality an individual who had made many friends. And I remember him getting many letters even as late as 33 or 34 from people he met along the highway. But he decided he would come on back to Clarksville and continue and work here. We as to world conditions at that time of course as a child that small I don't remember much but I do remember when I started began grammar school and on into high school the happenings of things and relating it back to history. That the causes of WWII were number one the Treaty of Versi which the United States never was a part although it framed the treaty it never was a part of that treaty at Versi. Woodrow Wilson that was his brain child and the United States during the Harding administration entered into a separate peace treaty with Germany. I am told I've been to Germany a number of times since WWII visiting and I've been told by Germans that the inflation of the Vimar Republic was extremely bad. They had to contract maybe if they were going to a restaurant for a family outing they would contract for maybe some two weeks before to what they would pay for their restaurant meal. And they would have to take it sometime the paper money was so worthless one of them laughed we had to take it in a bushel basket. So and then Hitler I remember when he came to power in 32 no one paid much attention to him. He began to rearm since the United States wasn't a part of the treaty it wasn't part of enforcing that treaty. And England didn't have the heart you might say by itself to enforce the treaty. France could care less to enforce it and it was not enforced they began building an air force in 34, 35 and Lindberg went over I believe it was in 35 to observe the German air force. And he was very complimentary of it and Hitler gave Lindberg a metal as a result of it. So you can see things gathering up Hitler would take one things after another but would never step too far. He was a good psychologist you've heard him probably called Goober I'm trying to think of what the name was. His grandfather changed the name from I wish I could think of the name at this point but he changed the family name from to Hitler and that's how he got the name of Hitler. Hitler

was actually born in Austria and he served as a Corporal in the Imperial Army of Austria in WWI. I'd say he was a smart individual and this just kept on going at that point. After the opening I will have to go back to the 1860s after the opening of Japan to trade they changed their theory of government in Japan whereby that they became an expansionist nation. They entered WWI and with the idea of gaining territory which they did. But in 1905 they gained Manchuria they called it Manchukuo. Then they wanted Japan wanted to gain more territory in China they actually began in 1936 the invasion of China. And they at the Pan A Instant seeking a U.S. gun boat on the Yanksea River I can remember that quite plainly. It was Ms. Louisa Winn's class History class in Clarksville High that which we discussed it we had a whole hour in discussion of that instant. So you can see things leading up to it. Then in August of 1939 well actually in March of 39 may have been 38 but 39 what they call push into Austria when Germany took over Austria. And that was actually the French and the British didn't have the guts if you want to call it that to step in and stop Hitler at any time from his army build up until actually the war started. Then in August of 39 when the invasion of Poland my dad operated the restaurant called Richview Restaurant and we had a colored gentleman that was doing the barbequing for that party. So I stayed up all night with O.B. Rudolph while he cooked and I listened to the radio. Hitler came on I couldn't understand a word that he said of course it was in German and my mother was had could speak some German because my grandfather was from Nehanover. But she never she taught me how to count and that was all so I couldn't understand any of it. It was interesting to hear what a forceful individual that Hitler must have been oh he was a forceful individual. And could mesmerize a crowd I'll tell you what he said if we just have one radio station and feed these people with information they will make the bid for me they will be my children. That was his theory and that's what he did. He had a radio an AM radio with one station it only had that one frequency and that news would come across that propaganda. Gurgles his propaganda minister was quite an artist at feeding it to the people. Now that was in 1939 and I can remember that we all of us thought well England and France, France has the largest standing army in the world. Imagine that line no way could they stand up to that German army. I was talking to a now from August of 39 to May of 40 is what they called the Sits Creed. The British and the French set an imaginary line and the Germans on the other side each went on public address system with propaganda. And it was quite we could hear it over the radio we could see it in the newspaper the progress of it. They then in May the Germans came around what they call the little imaginative line around that and attacked the Maginate Line. This British Tommy that I met on the train one day one night coming from Manchester to near Black pool where I was stationed England. Told me of an instance he said they had ten rounds he was stationed with a company of French and they were in a pill box that is a hydraulic pill box it would go up and fire this cannon would field piece. And it would go back down and all the German artillery would just bounce off of it he said there was no way they could have taken it. But he says what happened they had ten rounds of ammunition to fire that's all he said the all of the ammunition was locked up in a box in a little cabinet like but a bag of where they were supposed to be able to get. And their commander was in Paris at a party and had the key so there was no way they could get more. And the French just immediately they melted they threw up their hands and they surrendered. He said I saw that so I left as quietly as I could and went to Dunkirk and escaped across the channel. The French did not have the will to fight no one really realized that. The French there was one man out of every four was killed in WWI. They had a good fighting army in WWI but they was unionized and that was the big thing that the French I found out during the war. I talked to some English speaking French and well

actually to the English who had I noticed it and they told me they were unionized. He said don't ever let the American army become unionized they would follow the union officers before they would follow the army officers. I as far as the depression is concerned before we talk how we got into the war. Tobacco was the chief product of Montgomery County in 1937 Acme-Boot came to Clarksville. And 37 is what you would call in the depths of the depression now the stock market was October the 29 of 1929. It didn't hurt the local economy like it hurt in other places. We were a farm Montgomery County was 32,000 at the time the City of Clarksville was approximately 10,000. Everything depended on the farm we brought our produce to town everybody did everything was concentrated right downtown Clarksville. Beautiful little town it you all your commercial stores was on Franklin and 3rd Street and a little on 2nd Street. Tobacco was the big thing they sold the tobacco and tobacco I the price of four dollars and eighty two cents hits my mind and this was about 1939 for a hundred weight. And the triple "A" that is the Agricultural Adjustment Administration was one of Roosevelt's pet projects. It was rendered unconstitutional in the Chicken case before the Supreme Court. Then they came back to help the farmer because the farmer was in dyer straights. But we were blessed in this area that the depression did not hit us as hard as it did in other places like Oklahoma, North Texas, New Mexico, Kansas the dust bowl in 35. I remember going to I walked to school there was a school at the back part of our farm and it I looked I remember one morning the dust was so bad I could see it on my nose like below my nose. And it was so bad you could look up directly to the sun you'd see a red ball it wouldn't hurt your eyes. It lasted that entire spring and the ole story was the Oakley's are going to California. They just took off from those states and went to California. Now looking at you see the background of this. Italy had been on the allied side in WWI the central powers had Turkey in WWI. The French had just been beaten strangled to death you might say in WWI the Germans came out in WWI actually as good if not better than they did then say some of the victors on the allied side. The English were in quite a depression they could see the war coming and Navel Chamberlin who was the British Prime Minister the last of the 30s I believe he became Stanley Baldwin was one of them between the two wars. And Navel Chamberlin was Prime Minister when Britain declared war in August of 39. He was he didn't have the heart to fight Deledda of France you never knew where he was going to stand. But everybody was fooled by them they thought well they are going to beat the Germans in three weeks. But Germany kept its economy on a peace time bases until we'll say as late as 42 kept it on a peace time bases. Hitler he made several mistakes why he didn't invade England after Dunkirk or stopped they didn't bother those soldiers at the beach at Dunkirk. They allowed them to go on over they used skits they used everything they could get a hold to to bring those soldiers back to England. The French had surrendered June 20, 1940 I'll never forget the date. I said I don't forgive those French for doing that.

Interviewer: How did you hear about that?

Richardson: Over the radio I kept my ear to the radio. We didn't have television the television had been invented but it was in such an infant stage actually television didn't really come in to affect until the early 50s come into use in the home. And then it was a rare thing I'll go into that in a minute. But the VC regime that was Marshall Bataan he was the French Commander down in Veshi France. And the what the after the surrender of France to Germany they didn't surrender their fleet you see. Here it was Bourdo and Paris that northern edge of France was German occupied territory. What they call in the

southern portion of France Veshi was the capital they it was supposable independent but they were nothing but pawns of the Germans. Now the English and they had wonderful leadership in Winston Churchill. I never will forget hearing Navel Chamberlin excuse this in going back a little. But he goes over to Munich and when he gave away Austria no it was Chekasolvokia excuse me the sedaten land. He says hurry Hitler had promised us that we will have peace in our time if he could get the sedaten land. Why sure that took all of the defenses away from Chekeslovakia they had all of their defenses in what they called the sedaten land in Germany speaking portion of Chekeslovakia . He was getting all of his pawns in place and after he had invaded France and France was getting in the process of giving up Italy entered the war. And Roosevelt's speech Dagger in the Back speech I call it. Now how did it affect us and what did we know about it and how did we look at it? In August of 1941 see we had instituted the draft in the summer of 1941. And then they in August that 41 Roosevelt applied sanctions against Japan. They we could not sell no one could sell steel, iron, any type of war material to Japan. I looked at my dad when I heard that news I said dad watch it in less than six months we are going to be in war with Japan. So you can tell that was in August of 41 and December 7th of 41 was Pearl Harbor. We they didn't recognize they were being under attack in Pearl Harbor. There they came across that Colly Colly Pass they didn't have radar we didn't have radar the Navy had radar. They saw these planes but they thought that they were coming seventeen's that thought it was a group of seventeen's coming from the U.S. So it was ignorance on our part now some people say that Roosevelt set it up. Well I think he was doing what he thought was right but the mistake that Hitler made was two things. Number one that he didn't take the opportunity and invade Brittan right after the fall of France. That was a big mistake and the second and the biggest mistake was when he declared war on the U.S. on December the 8th 41. He brought the war on himself and that spelt this doom. But we were so ill prepared for the war it pitiful. Now I could see the war coming I was out of high school in May of 41. I told my dad I said I want to do something I don't want to get in this army because we are ill prepared I think I can do more if I say get into aircraft industry. So we had an aircraft school down at Clarksville High I learned to I went to that. I learned to rivet to solder and things like that sheet metal work and things like that. Two months of that I went to Valatie in Nashville and got me a job. They paid me 19 dollars and 80 cents per week I paid for room and board transportation on the weekend to and from and transportation from Woodland Street to Valatie out there its Valatie Boulevard in Nashville. And I continued on until about May of 42 now to regress just a little bit, I was working at Valatie when Roosevelt asked for declaration of war. And all of the factory workers were brought in mass where we could hear his speech over a PA system. I continued working there until approximately May of 42.

Interviewer: How large was the operation at Valatie?

Richardson: I would say probably from what I can remember I would say probably maybe 1500 worked there. It was a sizable factory I maybe stretching it a little bit but that's I never did get a figure on it. I usually remember figures and times and things but I never got a figure because everything was really classified then. I mean we were on a war time footing. That in May I'd say the last of May I said I came home as usual every weekend on a Friday and I said to dad, dad I'm making about 25 I either I was making 25 maybe \$30 a week. And I said I had been taught especially by my mother regardless of how little you make always save some you will need it. I couldn't do it now inflation had hit a little not much.

I said now I think I can find something here in Clarksville. I said if you'll let me work at this restaurant I don't mind waiting on tables until I can find another job. I he said son I don't blame you your not doing anything your just taking the money and turning it over that's all. So I quit in less than two weeks I had a job with B.F. Goodrich making 50 better than \$50 a week. I saved my money of course I was working I was living at home didn't cost me anything I slept during the daytime I was on the midnight shift slept during the daytime. And I worked at the restaurant waited on tables until about oh until around 8 o'clock. I got one of them to make me a sandwich I went to work and worked until around 7 o'clock the next morning. I did this for nearly four months and I had enough money saved up then because I used his car and his gasoline he just helped John out. And I paid for my schooling, dad couldn't have paid for it, at David Lipscomb its University now College then. And knowing that the war was coming that we were in it and I was going to be drafted soon. I went to defense school at Vanderbilt it was called radio engineering. And I was interested in radio oh I would tinker around with them I would make them and you've never heard of a crystal set I'm sure.

Interviewer: I've heard of it mentioned yes.

Richardson: But I made a crystal set I made radio equipment. So I was got my 1A classification in October and the end of the quarter I told dad and mother both well when I got the 1A classification I put in for reclassification went on with the quarter. I didn't really finish but went on I yes I did and anyway that this got me in position that when I was drafted in January of 43 I was put in electronics radio equipment. And the I'm trying to remember my specialty I was put in the air core not air force but air core. And I went to radio school at Camp Crowder Missouri then I was shipped to New Orleans Louisiana that's the New Orleans Army Air Base. And I went to radio school there advanced radio school. In the later part of September 43 I was sent to England and I ended up at the Wharton Air Drove the British called the Air Base which was about 15 miles south of Black pool England. Probably most haven't heard of Black pool but it's a big summer resort the British take their holidays the ones from the south go to Black pool and the ones from the north industrial area go south to Brighton. But anyway that I saw that I was going to be drafted I knew that but its one day after we had gotten into the war and I went over to the Customs house in Nashville. I told dad I said I'm going on and volunteering for the Air Core. He said well you do ad you like so I went over there and oh it was a long line I expect there was 100 ahead of me. And that line kept getting shorter kept getting shorter there was three ahead of me I scratched my head like that and I said John if you get shot it's your fault if you volunteer. But if you're if you let them draft you and you get shot it's their fault so get out of here. That's what I did and then they drafted me I believe that was in the fall of 42. But I studied I went to radio school I did everything I could do to prepare myself and the classification center down at Fort Overthorpe Georgia I made an exceptionally good grade on the mechanical aptitude test. And I when they went through there they asked me what I thought about the army and what I thought I could do to be to help the cause. I says I would like to get into electronics in radio. Well that's what we want to do for you. Now mind you there was 168 of us from Montgomery County that went in January the 19th of 1943. Most of them went into the infantry some of them well a good friend of mine Bufford Darnell for example went in as a cook because what training did we have to warrant us to go into anything else. And I could see that looming in the future so that's the reason why I prepared myself for it. And I felt like I did and I was shipped to England and let's see I stayed over there

from September of 43 to January of I believe it was January the 10th of 46. I was not in combat I did what I could and what they told me and I had an experience in England but that's about as far as WWII. After the war I was given a wonderful opportunity I went to academic school at Austin Peay and then on to Vanderbilt and then I passed the Tennessee bar and practiced law for approximately 40 years and I've been retired for about 20 and I've had a wonderful life and a good wife three fine children. What more do you want? Christian gentleman and I hope to see the Lord someday so that's about it. It's a lot more in between that 1950 when I passed the bar and my 40 years of law practice but I think you want to know more about WWII. Anything you want to ask me about my impressions? Hitler admired Churchill and people have often wondered why did he invade England why? And you ask yourself where could we have staged the greatest the biggest modern on the history of the world where could that have been staged if England had fallen? If Hitler had invaded England in 1940 England would have fallen and that would have been it. And my theory is Hitler admired Churchill to the point that he thought that he was going to capitulate give up and they could exist together. That's what I think about it. But now Gearing told him said now you give me the planes and I will bomb into submission and that was came the battle of Brittan. Now I met Churchill's secretary at Fort Lauderdale Florida on a vacation one I believe it was 1989. I noticed this lady sitting next to me she was about to freeze it was cold we had snow at Fort Lauderdale. And I said ma'am I have an overcoat here I can share with you I'll let you use my overcoat. We were eating supper that was part of the jungle cruise and in a typical British accent she says oh thank you. And we of course that struck up a conversation I said your from England, yes so she told me that she had been one of Churchill's secretaries and that they about the war office and so on near the embankment. And they had a tunnel under the Tim's River that in case of invasion by the Germans they would try to escape through this tunnel. She said that in September the 15, 1940 they had a less than a dozen operational planes that they could put in the air to defend the air drones around the country. Instead they changed their tactics a mass bombing of London, Coventry, Birmingham, Manchester your industrial cities your industrial heart the middle of England is what they bombed. And instead of making them give up that just those people became more stubborn. I don't see how they existed off of 1100 calories a day I never will understand but they had the grit and determination and Winston Churchill and the Lord on their side okay. Anything else?

Interviewer: A two part question, what did you think of when you were a child growing up during that time period of the great depression and during WWII how did you feel FDR did handling those circumstances?

Richardson: Well FDR wanted he wanted to help Churchill just like he gave the land lease or what you call 50 over age destroyers. He robbed our Navy to get those over aged those 50 over aged destroyers to try to help to help Brittan. He could not enter the war because congress wouldn't have let him without some catastrophic event bringing us into it. And he knew this and if the truth could be known I would say that was his reasoning behind the sanctions in August of 1941. Incidentally I went over to Greenock Scotland from New York to Greenock Scotland which is Glasgow Scotland I mean that Greenock is the sea port for Glasgow. And on the Queen Mary the fastest thing afloat then 18,000 troops were on that thing and you just went how in the world could they. Every little nook and cranny was handled the British who had been trained in Canada and the Canadian troops airmen they were on the A deck and B

deck I was down on D deck and you talk about a hot place. That was hot but every place that an individual could possibly sleep it was taken up with a hammock, that's how we got over there. And it was good that we did at one time during WWII these figures stick in my mind that we had 15,000,000 men under arms men and women. In Brittan we had over 2,000,000 men before the invasion. I didn't participate in it my brother and my brother-in-law participated in it. Every household in this nation was affected by that war. And I that's what I don't understand about this present war situation but I'm not going into that. Thank goodness that they gave us you might say the GI bill and this kind of goes back to the depression. I couldn't not my parents could not have and beyond my fondest dream would have been an education like I got. I'll tell you something that a lot of times we don't do the best as we can to achieve the best. But I'll tell you that is something I really appreciate and I often say that if the federal government wanted to up its taxes that they are raking in they could give every ably bodied person a college education including graduate education to as far as they wanted to go. And they could get I served in the legislature two terms and I really appreciated it and this was something I really appreciated the people of Montgomery County giving me that opportunity. My dad was well known over the county and through his good name I was elected the first time and was a contestant very well known person ran against me and I was victorious and the second time unopposed. Frank Clement was governor the 75th and 76th general assembly. Anything else?

Interviewer: How did you feel about the training you received stateside before you went over to England? Did you feel that prepared you for what you were doing in the military?

Richardson: Oh definitely as far as electronic is concerned. I had no military I had one week of military training I hadn't even been to the rifle range until they looked at my they were getting ready to ship me overseas and the company commander happened to look at my service record and saw that I hadn't even been to the rifle range. So if had and that's something when twice that would have affected me. Number one is when they began to bomb Berlin and they we had to have a cadre of troops over in to Russia. I had to idea somebody said their shipping so and so and so and so to Russia. I said man wouldn't that be nice to go over there. And of course I stayed where I was I've later talked to my CO and he said we needed you. Then the next time it came up is when it was such a drain on the Battle of the Bulge. The Battle you know Bastogne you've heard of that I had no military training and I told my CO we had reunion of the outfit and I said I sure appreciate you not sending me. He said John I'm going to tell you something put his hand on my shoulder he says you worked you did what you could do. I had so many I had several that didn't produce didn't do anything and he said that he says I needed you. And that's what my commander had told me we get those that who don't produce see I was in something like a factory. And that is that radio equipment 24s now we didn't the 17s were at the beginning our beginning of WWII. But when I got over there it was B24s and they the B24 had and this I'm going to have to mention to you about radar something that I almost forgot. Our army did not have radar did not bank period. In England we had to buy all of our radar equipment from England every bite of it. There was bulky ole big bulky green looking equipment with an acela scope about that size. It was good equipment anything that the Birtish make is good sturdy doesn't break down on you. And anyway that's the way I feel like I was trained well for electronics for what I was set out to do. And I had a specialty my army specialty number was 624, still remember it, and I still remember my serial number 34506783. It's I

don't say that I enjoyed every minute of my army days. But I was in there three years five days two hours and fifteen minutes you can tell how much I enjoyed it. So that's about it anything else.

Interviewer: While you were over in England were you able to keep track of what was going on or hear any news about what was going on on the Pacific side?

Richardson: Oh yeh we could we had they let us convert army radio equipment from we would convert it to work off of 220 volt which was the English house current 220 volt. And we had radio in the barrack and our Nissan huts and we also had on a PA system we had American Forces Network on a PA system in the shop. And we kept up with what was going on in the Pacific as well as what was going on in the Europe too. I know I left out something I wish I could think of everything. And if you have any more questions go ahead.

Interviewer: Regarding Joseph Stalin of course him and Hitler had that alliance there and Hitler broke the ties with Russia and or the Soviet Union

Richardson: That was so funny in a way that they had that nonaggression pack ole malentoff had negotiated that with Hitler and that freed Hitler up to attack France. It accomplished its purpose but when they were going to ship we'll say that part of that pack was that Germany would ship to Russia and Russia would ship to France to Germany. The Russia had the narrow gage track and Germany had the wide gage track. And they couldn't their equipment one couldn't go on the other. Now in Hitler's intention was to attack Russia in the spring of 1941 that was his plan. But his underbelly as they say was attacked by Hallowfish. He was supporting King Peter of Yugoslavia and (Tape ended)

Tape 2

Richardson: And he held up the German troops until July of 1941 for about let's see about four months in there. If he had been able to go on into Germany when planned in April of 1940 I mean if he had been able to go into Russia excuse me he could have taken that he was already even as it was he was in Stalingrad knocking at the door of Leningrad and Moscow. But you jus think if he had had summer time that he could roll that bliss creek right on in he would have taken I think Russia would have probably surrendered. That's the way it looks to me but the Lord was with us that he didn't do there are so many things that I look back at how it worked out for the good and the peace of the world and it's a shame that we haven't used that peace to the best. It's a shame but its one of those things. Anything else?

Interviewer: Well after the Soviets took Berlin Germany pretty much defeated did you have any feelings that maybe the Russians weren't very trustworthy or that we would set our sights on war with the Soviets especially after Japan surrendered?

Richardson: Well really you think I just basically I felt like that Russian really wasn't trustworthy. But yet we had see by that time Truman was president. Truman was a down to earth type of person that jumped into a thing that was just absolutely strange to him and he had a vice-president that was near Henry Wallace that was near a communist. I call him a communist. And there were a number of individuals in the Roosevelt high I don't say in the cabinet but they were had communist leanings.

Especially after Churchill made his iron curtain speech. Now you know I was over there during all the election when Clement Uteley beat Churchill that was right after the surrender of Germany but before the surrender of Japan in the summer. And we weren't allowed to say anything we would go to a movie and oh I'll tell you what they were tired of Churchill because they were tired of war. It wasn't Churchill so much but it was war. And I felt like that I didn't have confidence in Stalin and I think I look back over it I think we handled it in the right way. I remember we I had a professor at Austin Peay who had communist leanings and I used to get into arguments with him oh man. History was my major political science and I would get into discussions with him. But I didn't trust the Soviets they weren't trustworthy they wanted to make the world into a communist state. And communism itself is dielectric materialism will not answer the problems okay anything else?

Interviewer: Do you remember where you were at and how you heard about it when the bombs were dropped on Japan?

Richardson: Yes I can remember that quite well. I remember also when Russia entered the war against Japan. I said ole uncle Joe is gonna make this thing end. I had been transferred to the 1041st air infantry regiment. Now what that meant we was supposed to come back to the states a weeks furlough and then back to the Far East wherever it was going to be. The it was about Russia entered the war and looking back at it I'm not sure about the time frame but I think it was some two to three weeks before the dropping of the first bomb. That was joy joy joy when I first I heard I was at work and we had a PA system. Incidentally the unit that I had been transferred to after the war in Europe was over was a small unit it was about 30 or 35 of us in the unit. And air engineering that's what the name not infantry but air engineer. And Truman came on the air and said that we had dropped and using the energy of the sun the way her termed it. And then the second one was dropped and they asked for terms. And that I will tell you I was so glad because I wanted to come home. But I look back at it I don't think that Harry Truman could have handled a situation thrown in his lap any better than what he did. Not knowing anymore about what was going on than he did. I admired Harry Truman and I felt like he did a good job. I felt like Roosevelt as a whole he did things during the depression I look back at it he did things that he did what he thought was right. I feel like in 1937 when he tried to stack the Supreme Court instead of nine he wanted to make fifteen I feel like he wanted to make himself dictator of the U.S. I liked Roosevelt and I voted for him in his fourth term that was my first election yeah first election that I voted cause I was 21 then yeah 22. But I think he was power hungry at that time in 37 but I think it set him back to a point that it made him think what am I trying to do what am I doing and what have I been elected for? I think that's what it did it brought him to his senses. Now as far as Montgomery County is concerned the progress that we have made we have made a tremendous amount of progress in this county. And I look forward to a bright future for it okay anything else?

Interviewer: One last question would be how would you describe the English people when you were over there. Were they very steadfast very determined?

Richardson: Oh they were very deteremined my goodness yes. The English are the kind that put their hills to the ground and they make up their mind they are going to do something they stick to it. Comparing them to the Amiercan people the Americana people fickled. We couldn't have stood up to

what those people stood up to I mean we wouldn't have. It's just like I've often said about the depression if we had a depression today like we had in the 30s we wouldn't stand it. I mean we would have a revolution and everything else. But those people they had the guts I admire them for what how they stood up to it how they did it. They would have fought Hitler with pitch forks and everything else if he had tried to invade. It wouldn't have been an easy job but I say they would have taken England in two weeks. I we went around I was stationed at Exida for awhile they had no defenses on the sea shore. Oh I mean they had way of shooting gas out there and water would be the gas would be set on fire what they call Fido. But that wouldn't have stopped Hitler had the largest army and I'm going to say he made two big mistakes. Number one was he declared war on the U.S. which was his biggest mistake, number two when he invaded Russia. And even the most brilliant minds can't see their nose to spite their face sometimes and that's what happened to him. But fortunate of us he couldn't see it and the mans gone but we could have well go on. The peace that we have had if he head taken England we would still be at war with Germany or we would have asked for peace. Germany coulnd't have taken us Japan couldn't have all that Japan could possible swallow was probably maybe California and Hawaii and that was it. Germany maybe New York, New England and that would have been it. Too much for them they didn't have the resources to occupy and hold this country so that's my theory of what they were into. But we had to get rid of him no way around it and Roosevelt knew that and he knew that he had to get this country into it someway somehow before Hitler brought England to its knees. And when Hitler answered that question by declaring war on the U.S. I believe it was one day after Japan struck at Pearl Harbor. So that situation was taken care of anything else.

Interviewer: That's all the questions I have unless there is something else you would like to add to the conversation.

Richardson: No I think we've about covered everything through that time.

Interviewer: Okay

Richardson: And I do appreciate it I hope I've helped you some.

Interviewer: Yes sir and I appreciate it the Kiwanis Club and Austin Peay appreciates it. Thank you very much.