

Interviewer: Okay you read?

Mr. Doss: I can talk normal can't I? I don't have to talk loud or anything?

Interviewer: Na, talk just everyday talk. Start out by telling us your name and where you were born.

Mr. Dodd: Thomas W Doss. I was born in Cookman, Arkansas 1916 November 6th. My parents lived in Cookman Arkansas for six months then moved to West Tennessee two and a half miles from Dyersburg, Tennessee and that's where I spent the next fifteen years or so seventeen years and that's where I got my schooling in a little village called Middle City two and a half miles West of Dyersburg. My first eight years of school was in a one room school house with one teacher. And that teacher taught all of the classes. When I finished there I went to Finley, Tennessee which was two and a half miles from middle city five miles West of Dyersburg and finished the rest of my school. And I was raised on a farm every year we farmed every year on a farm about two miles from where we lived and I made about 50 cents a day working from sun up till sun down. That was when school was out. When I finished my schooling down there then I went in the CCC Camp which was called the Civilian Conservation Core that President Roosevelt started.

Interviewer: About when was this?

Mr. Dodd: That was in 1933. Had a Red Cross lady the lived in Dyersburg that knew me and I wouldn't have been 18 until November 6, 1933.

Interviewer: Why did you decide to go in to the CCC?

Mr. Doss: Well because I was starving to death on the farm working myself to death, I weighed 112 pounds. Anyway this Red Cross lady got a hold of me and she wanted me in that Civilian Conservation Core, CCC Camp so she took me to Jackson, Tennessee and went in there to get my examination there was about fifty or sixty of us in there and we all stripped down through the line to be examined to see if we physically able to go in to CC Camp. Well in order to sign the papers I had to be 18 years old and the Red Cross lady put it down that I was 18 and I wasn't hardly 18 so I went through the line and you're supposed to weigh 115 pounds and I just weighed 112 well they turned me down. The Red Cross lady took me across the street there in Jackson, Tennessee to a grocery store where they had big stalks of bananas then they didn't sell them like they do now you just went up and got them off the stalk. She told that clerk in there put them bananas down here this boys got to eat three pounds of bananas. So I ate bananas until I thought I was going to bust I thought I couldn't swallow another bit. This Lucy Heart was this ladies name I never will forget her I just love her to death and still love her and she's been dead for fifty sixty or seventy years. And I started eating bananas and I ate all I thought I could eat and got up and said Ms. Lucy I can't eat no more. She said well eat two more you got to eat two more I don't think you've got that three pounds yet. So I stood there about twenty minutes gagging and chocking and everything else and I got two more bananas down. She took me back over there and I went through the line and I weighed 115 pounds and 2 ounces. So if I hadn't had eaten those last two bananas I would have never gotten into CC Camp. They shipped me to Over Fork, Georgia and I remember I weighed 115 pounds and 2 ounces with all the bananas. I spent two weeks in Over Fork, Georgia getting shots

vaccination shots and uniforms and a little bit of training but then they sent me to Dyer, Tennessee where I spent the next three years. And six months after I was in there I weighed 165 pounds, healthy. Worked six hours a day and had good warm clothes nice clothes warm clothes to wear worked six hours a day when it wasn't raining or cold. When it was raining or cold we just played games and exercised had all kinds of sports you had tennis and baseball, pool and our pay was \$5 a month. We got \$5 a month people boys in the CC Camp. I got \$5 a month and \$25 went home total pay was \$30 a month but \$25 of it went home to your family. And that \$5 bought all of my toilet articles and when I got to go to town I could go to the movie and get a hamburger or whatever I wanted. I said that \$5 lasted us the whole month. I spent three years there.

Interviewer: And what did you do in the CC Camp?

Mr. Doss: We set out locust trees and built dams and gullies on farms down in West Tennessee in Gibson County we set out thousands and thousands of locust trees down there. And if they had a farm that water had washed out big gullies we'd build dams in them with brush and hay and to stop the water from cutting them any deeper. So we done a lot of good work down there. I went down there about ten years ago and I still seen a lot of them trees I helped set out there big trees now. There big trees. And sometimes if a farmer was poor we'd help him build a fence around his farm so he could keep his stock inside. Livestock wasn't allowed to run loose. We'd help farmers that were not too wealthy build fences and things like that and that is the work we did. I felt good I learned a lot in the CCC Camp after that I married and after three years in the CCC Camp I got married and I worked in a cotton mill in Trenton, Tennessee until the war broke out. And I saw they were going to start drafting and they started drafting people of course I had a family and I hadn't been drafted you know or anything and I let that go until the first part of 1943 then I seen them start drafting people with two or three children, I just had two. I sent and enlisted cause I wanted to pick the service I went into and that's the only way I could do it if I enlisted if they'd have drafted me they'd have put me anywhere they wanted.

Interviewer: Why did you pick the Navy?

Mr. Doss: For one reason I had never seen a boat no bigger than a John boat and I thought I might see a boat and I got in the Navy. They had three lines and they shipped us I swore in in Nashville, Tennessee into the Navy I filled a lot of papers and swore to be true to my country willing to die for my country. Well I they sent us down to Tullahoma, Tennessee they had a station down there where they dispatched you to your basic training camp and they kept us down there for two or three days and when it come time for my day to line up they had three lines one Marine, and one Army and one for Navy. So they had a big Marine then I thought he was the Jolly Green Giant but he was a big marine he said what line you want in boy. I said I want in that Navy line so he put me in the Navy line. We stayed there two or three more days and went through orientation and stuff and they shipped me up to Fenwick, Maryland rode a train all the way up to Fenwick, Maryland Fenwick Naval Base. I took eight weeks of training there basic training. I learned how to fire the M1 riffle how to march how to solute men younger than me how to say yes sir and no sir to men younger than me.

Interviewer: How old were you about this time?

Mr. Doss: Let's see I was 25 or 26. I can't remember exactly but I think I was 25.

Interviewer: That was older than most of the recruits?

Mr. Doss: Yeh cause I didn't go in when it first started. So we spend eight weeks in Fenwick, Maryland and I thought well I had done died and gone to hell that's what I thought. They didn't believe in sleep up there and they treated you ruff they treated you terrible talked to you like you was a dog. Them little guys that didn't have much higher rank than you was going to get when you finished basic training you had to say yes sir and no sir and salute them and everything else and I thought that was awful you know but I done it I went through it. We got all of our shots and basic training in Fenwick, Maryland they put us on train one night and shipped us to Portland, Maine. So when we left basic training we had all of our gear our clothes and out toiletries and all in a bag what they call a sea bag white bag you filled it full of stuff and tie it up and throw it across your shoulder and carry it. Every one of us had one of them there was a certain way to fold your socks and a certain way to fold your clothes there couldn't be a wrinkle in none of them. When we arrived in Portland, Maine they took us off the train and put us on a bus and took us out to the sea port and bear in mind that the biggest boat I'd ever seen was a John boat and they had a fairy down there on the Mississippi River that I rode across the Mississippi River on it wasn't much bigger than a log cabin a little small log cabin. When we got off that bus I was looking at the UUS Nevada ship and that was the biggest thing I had ever seen in my life. I thought well lord have mercy how am I going to live on that?

Interviewer: You got to see some big boats then.

Mr. Doss: Yeh but you don't dare call one of them a boat, you don't say boat in the Navy they are ships. They are big ones if you said boat you got told right quick it ain't no boat it's a ship. Anyway they assigned me to the 9th division there were 12 divisions on that ship and they assigned me to the 7th division I started training right quick to be a pointer on a five inch 38 it took 13 men to operate it, it was enclosed like one of these machines now that has the cabin thing metal. This ship had 14 inch water protection at the water's edge and on up it was just about three quarter inch steel some kind of metal I don't know what kind it was. So anyway in this sea bag we carried around we also had a hammock to sleep in so I slept in a hammock for nine months before I got raised to a cot.

Interviewer: Was this hammock on the ship?

Mr. Doss: No it was in that sea bag, they gave us that when they gave us our clothes. But they had cots built in cots on the ship but new recruits had to sleep in a hammock until a cot became available. There were 2500 men on that ship and I guess there was a thousand telephone on there it seem like cause everywhere you went there was a telephone. They put me in a compartment and I had to hang that hammock from the ceiling at night and I got to where I could sleep like a baby in that thing in fact I sleep in one now if I had it. I slept comfortable in it. Anyway we spent about a week in port there then they got orders to pull out for Europe then on the way across we done scrimmage battles for practice they had planes that would fly dummy planes that would fly with a target behind them and we'd have to try to shoot that target not the plane that was pulling it but that target. So we practices on the five inch 38 I was a pointer I had to match pointers on that gun to get the gun on target. There's a range finder on

that gun it took 13 men to operate that gun there were two men with at wheels turned like you had to match pointers you had arrows on these things and you had to match pointers to get on target the range finder he worked the gun this way and the pointer worked it up and down that was my job. And the trigger was on my side when the gun captain up top side hollered fire you pulled that trigger after you got your pointers down. Well that went off pretty good they was pretty loud I caught on to it pretty quick and got to liking it. But then when we got about two thirds of the way to Europe they started using them big guns the first time one of them fired.

Interviewer: Them 14 inch guns?

Mr. Doss: Yeh, I was sitting down on the floor when that gun went off I bet you I jumped ten feet in the air it scared me to death cause I'd never heard such it shook the whole ship I thought lord have mercy we've done got bombed here before we got to war. But I was just a country boy you know and it scared the heck out of me. I got used to that too had to. We had it on over we lowered anchor in Rose lease, Scotland. We spent two weeks in Rose lease, Scotland just waiting for D-Day you know which would have been June 6th and so I had liberty in Edinburgh, Scotland and Glasgow, Scotland and saw some beautiful country over there got some good liberty learned a lot about Scottish people. Then we got order tot pull out and we got back out to sea and on D-Day June 6, 1944 it was cloudy and foggy and everything and I said well they named this right D-Day is Dooms Day. So when we invaded France or Normandy I was on the on my battle station you know when you had to get on your battle station they would sound general quarters which was a noise they made on the bulletin whistle and so we got on our station and from there on I thought that every minute would be my last cause there was planes being shot out of the air and ships being blown up all around us and cloudy and raining and foggy and smoke from the big guns and everything. Me being the pointer on that thing I could see I had a scope I could see what was going on way out there and of course we was firing too but we was firing land mirage so our soldiers' could get ashore but I saw our soldiers killed before they even got to land just blowed up in the water just hundred of them. They had them outhousers the Housands them Germans did they had them under and they pull them out and out of their hole and start firing then they pull them back and reload and come back out and fire again. The outhousers they were great big son of a guns they was everything happening all around me but we stayed on battle. I won't never forget that's the first k-rations I ever eat. They come in a box about like a Cracker Jack box.

Interviewer: Did you have to stay at that station?

Mr. Doss: Had to stay at that station couldn't leave that station if you left that station somebody would shoot you. We knew to stay but they'd hand us them boxes of k-rations open up a can of green eggs k-ration had little can of meat ham meat or something like that. Had eggs but them canned eggs when you opened them up they were green but we eat them anyways. Had a chocolate bar we had a chocolate bar in there that was about an inch thick and an inch and a half wide and it was pure chocolate. We had to eat that you know to keep our strength and it worked you know it worked that chocolate had more strength in it than anything we eat and helped keep us awake too. A lot of them boys would grip every time they got one they wanted something else but I got to where I liked them I liked them k-rations for some reason or another being raised in the country and half starving to death them k-rations tasted

good to me. But they fed us good in the Navy I'll tell you the food was good but of course after you was out to sea about three months and the bugs would get in it and you have enough dark places on the bread you'd have to eat around it. The bread came out looking like raisin bread them bugs but anyway we finished up at Utah Beachhead at Okinawa I mean Normandy and we got orders to go down to Marsa, France and fire on them so we went down to Marsa .

Interviewer: Southern France?

Mr. Doss: Southern France yeh. Went on down we fired on Marsa, France about 24 hours we finished up three, during this time we hadn't got a scratch we'd been close there had been bombs and everything else right close to us ships blown up and shells falling close to us shells falling close to us from airplanes and we were shooting plans down too. But we left there and went to Naples, Italy and spent a week there checking things out they had done had the war there done had the fight there but we was seeing if they needed us to do anything else there stayed there about four days. Then we went to Polaradmorse, Sicily stayed there about two weeks?

Interviewer: Now were you allowed off the ship at this time?

Mr. Doss: Every other night every other night the Starboard side got leave one night and the one day and the portside got leave the next day and half and half on how they did it. We stayed in Polaradmorse, Sicily about three weeks I guess it was and them people they was so pitiful little kids begging for something to eat you know. Every time I'd go over there I'd try and take chewing gum a bar a candy of something for them the soap they wanted more than anything a bar of soap. Anyway we left there and on the way to this was in Naples, Italy we left there and we hadn't done all the damage that had been done to our ship we had torn some of the bulkheads that wall the Navy the wall is the bulkhead and we had torn some seems on several of the compartments so we come back to Norfolk, Virginia and stayed there about a month for repairs and I got a ten day leave during that period of time. And we left there.

Interviewer: How did you spend your leave?

Mr. Doss: Came home to see the family. We left there and went down southern south and went through the Panama Canal and that was a site for me to see being a country boy. You know getting the thing up and down to get through that channel that big ship. I guess we was seven or eight hours getting trough that Panama Canal. Then we sailed on and went to San Diego first and we spent a week in San Diego with liberty. Then we got orders and we went to Pearl Harbor and we stayed in Pearl Harbor nearly three weeks. In fact they sent us up to a rest camp on Wahoo Mountain for a third of the people and I spent a week up there in rest camp for soldiers, sailors, marines whatever then I went back to the ship and I had liberty in Honolulu four or five times. When we left there we sailed to Ewagema we fired on Ewagema about ten days and used up all of our ammunition let's see there was UUS Nevada and another battle ship I can't remember if it was the TSU or Wyoming and we had to go back out to sea then and reload with ammunition. And the morning of the invasion we went in we was about a mile from the island when the invasion started when the troops started coming all the troops coming ashore and we was firing laying borage after borage and our planes were dropping atom bombs on that it was

just three miles wide and five miles long but it was solid rock I guess and we didn't kill nothing. I don't know how much ammunition we did put on that thing and how many bombs and didn't kill nothing I thought somebody said we killed two dogs. But anyways they let the marines get ashore and as soon as they got ashore tanks ashore and they come out of them holes and just started popping them like popcorn claying them marines.

Interviewer: Could you see through?

Mr. Doss: Yeh I could see it, it was sick just terrible. Of course planes were flying all around us ole Tokyo Rose had done promised the Kamikazes were going to come in and get us but we didn't get one but other ships got em a couple of ships sunk there. And a lot of them small engine boats just blowed up. But the morning the marines raised that flag on Mount Suribachi I watched every move they made, they started up that thing and a marine would get killed and another one would replace him. I don't remember just exactly how many it was but there was several got killed going up there trying to raise that flag. But there were times one got killed somebody would replace him. They finally got it up there. You know that's been a famous picture ever since that flag being raised and I saw every bit of it.

Interviewer: Were you still at your gun?

Mr. Doss: Yeh I never did leave my gun we was there the whole time. We ate k-rations and kept on duty all the time we didn't sleep. When I got where I could I got me a whole day of sleep but anyway we fired we stayed there and our plane we had on our ship was a target finder you know. We had a plane on the back of our ship it would go up the river everyday and one day it didn't comeback so we didn't have it until we got it replaced. But I expected any minute any minute the whole time just like in Normandy I expected any minute to be blowed up cause they was big ships big ships sunk in Normandy and Okinawa I mean Ewagema. They had some kind of torpedo them submarines did that would just there was one ship over there that there was ten thousand men killed in one shot. And only about a thousand got off the ship alive a little over a thousand. That was my memory is getting a little bad but I think it was the Lexington burg anyway it was an aircraft carrier it was a lot of men killed and I didn't get a scratch. We stayed about two weeks in Ewagema then we sailed on down we crossed international date line where we were in one today and tomorrow too in fact they was the same thing and I crossed the equator. When we got to Normandy the troops were when we got there some of the troops had already got on land but we got there in time to help them out air deals you know. Ole Tokyo Rose spoke to us 24 hours a day telling us we needed a mutiny she said she had ten thousand kamikazes waiting for us to pick men off of the battle. But we fired a couple of days and on the 25th of March 1945 about 3 o'clock in the morning we was firing on shore and we got orders from the gun captain up on the top side that there were twenty four kamikazes heading towards the Nevada they had been assigned to hit the UUS Nevada. Well there it was 3 o'clock in the morning and dark and they alerted us so I got my pointers matched on and the range finder did too and when we did we clicked a little button there and the gun captain up top side said commence fire and so I pulled the trigger and kept them pointers matched and there was 24 of them this was 3 o'clock in the morning we shot twenty two of them down and two of them got through and hit it. It killed several and scared me to death I don't know why but for some reason or another it scared me to death. But anyway when they examined the bones of them kids that

were on the suicide planes the kamikazes had 500 gallon of high octane gas and a 500 pound bomb and they them kids were strapped in there and when they tested the bones they 15 and 16 year old kids. Of course they was trained to die for their country for their imperia their going to be with the imperia the great imperia. But the saddest thing I was scared to death the whole time I was in there except when we was out in the middle of the ocean sailing I could forget my fright you know but when we backed up out to sea to bury our dead that was the saddest days of my day in the Navy. Those you had been talking to that day before were done. Sea burial is very sad. That bank throw a canvas down and just slide you down that bank after they have their little funeral either the Protestant or the Catholic Chaplin either the Protestant or the Catholic Chaplin they had two on the ship. One was Catholic and one was Protestant and if the soldier was Catholic the Catholic said the mass thing and if he was Protestant he said his thing. That's never got off my mind I can still see them boys sliding down off that thing but. Then we sailed back to Pearl Harbor and spent about three weeks. And then we sailed into San Diego, California and they transferred me off the ship in North Island Naval base in San Diego and I spent three weeks there then I was shipped home by train. All the traveling that I'd done from camp to home and home back to camp by train. I was discharged October 30, 1945.

Interviewer: Do you remember hearing of the Japanese surrender?

Mr. Doss: Yeh, I remember I was tickled I said well thank god maybe we will get to go home. But they let us out by point and I had a family and I got out before some of them did but any way I got to come home I guarantee you that not a day goes my ever since then that I haven't thought about that. How many people dies and how many was injured you go to the hospital now and see those that were paralyzed quadruplets just sad. And their life is over and how lucky I was to get back. I think that god had a hand in it I believe with all my heart that he had a hand in it that I came back. But anyway I was discharged October 30, 1945, January 1, 1946 I signed up with the funeral home there in Trenton, Tennessee to be a funeral home director and embalmer. I took two year of training of that and was good at it and I went and got my license then when I went out to get a job I didn't think I was getting enough money to raise a family you know back then they didn't pay nothing if you didn't own the funeral home you didn't make nothing. The funeral director made money because it was a high policy deal. The people that worked for a funeral home back in 1946 and 47, 48, 49 didn't make no money. So I thought maybe I could get a better job in Michigan so I went to Michigan and got a job in a funeral home up there and I worked about two and a half months at that funeral home and found out that some of the people there was stealing from the dead. So we picked up a body about 2 o'clock in the morning one morning and the body was about a 75 year old man and he had a on a union suit like the men used to wear back in the old day and he had money pinned on him and them guys stole that money so I went and told the owner of the funeral home the next morning I said I'm quitting and I won't be back no more and I walked out the door. He hollered and asked me why I was quitting and I said well ya'll are thieves that's why I'm quitting. So there I was in Michigan with no job no nothing. So this was I can't remember what day of the week it was but one day during the week I quit. Well the next Monday morning I red ads in the paper to see if I could find a job and the next Monday morning I picked up the yellow pages in the phone book the very first name in the book was Allied Dandelion Trucking Company so I called them and they said come on down. So I went down and O worked for a private moving company there in Flint for

a year and I learned how to drive one of them big trucks during that year. So then the company I was working for Allied Dandelion got a contract with General Motors Buick Motors division in Flint, Michigan to haul automobile shows all over the United States and Canada so I got in on that. But I worked at that for right at 20 years but the last ten years that I worked there they made me a transportation supervisor but I still had to drive trucks to a city and set up a show and then fly to a city and set up another show and then fly back and tear this one down and move it somewhere and I was flying and driving too. So I had a couple of narrow escapes in planes and the last five years I was there we run into a storm I was leaving Montreal, Quebec and leaving there by plane and we run into a storm and I thought we were going to crash but we made it through it. I got on a banner barrow line in Chicago going to Lubbock, Texas and the right engine it was one of them two engine propeller things and one of the engines quit that scared me to death and the plane started leaning and shaking and I thought the pilot was gonna land at the next airport if he could but he didn't. I thought I don't want to go through that again. So I got on another one and I believe it was in Austin, Austin, Texas before that one got off the ground the right wing come loose and the plane started twirling, twirling, twirling before we got off the runway I thought now what if that would have happened while we was up in the air I wouldn't be here. I made it another couple of years after that and I was in Atlanta, Georgia I was setting up a show in Atlanta, Georgia you know they always had our tickets ready at the airport when we got there and had our appointments made they done that from the home office. So I checked out of the hotel when I got that show done there I checked out of the hotel about 30 or 40 minutes before my flight time and I got a cab in Atlanta, Georgia that big airport and this cab my appointment was at 3:00 and I checked out of the hotel I guess about 2:30 I guess and got my cab in plenty of time to get there well we run into a traffic jam and I told the driver of the cab I said is there any way you can get through here and get around I said my flight leaves at 3:00 and I need to get there. He said there ain't no way said that traffic is too heavy to think there is no way for me to get out of here. Well it took us about seven and a half minutes we were bumper to bumper well after it was over with I figured I was going to be late so after I got there the plane had just left so I missed that flight. So I went into the lounge there and got me a double shot of vodka cause my nerves was shot cause I wanted to get on the plane cause it was going back home where I could spend the night before I made another trip. The next flight going to Flint, Michigan was two hours after that one and it had a stop in Cincinnati and Detroit before it got to Flint the other one I caught was going to carry me to Flint. Well I got on that plane when we got to Cincinnati the plane I missed was on that ground that hill there that extends that Cincinnati airport burning there was 61 people on it burned to death so if I'd have been on there I would have been 62. That will sure scare you. When I got back to Flint I spent the night at home I went back the next morning and I told them I quit I can't handle this no more I said not this is ridiculous I said the lords trying to tell me something cause this is about the third or fourth time I've missed death by seconds. I said I'm not going to fly no more and they said you can go back driving a truck and I said what I think I'm going to do is go back home back to Tennessee and that's what I did. So I moved back to Vanleer over her in Dickson County. And I went to Nashville and went to school up there to learn how to be a paramedic and I finished that school and come back down here in Dickson, Tennessee and I got a job with the ambulance service I also got a job teaching school at night over at the vocational school teaching that class you know teach class. And I done that for Dickson County for four years and then Humphries County they are joining counties down below us here. I got a call from the county commissioner down there wanting to know if I wanted to be

a director down there for their they wanted to start up their own ambulance service cause at that time the funeral home was doing their ambulance service with the Hurst. So they wanted to start up their own ambulance service so I went down and I worked with them nearly 10 years directing that service down there and also driving an ambulance and still teaching at the vocational school in Dickson at night. I taught summer classes over in Erin, Tennessee and some of them at Waverly every once in a while. But I retired in 1983 and I've lived a pretty good life since then.

Interviewer: How do all of those things compare to your service in WWII?

Mr. Doss: There's nothing that compares to that nothing. That was years of my life that are still a nightmare. If I get to thinking about it too strong it's just a nightmare of what we went through. That's why I can sympathize with people now that's in service and in war I know what they're going through and it's sad. But when you sign up when you sign them papers you sign your life away when you go in the service. You die for your country and that's what you have to believe the whole time you're in there that if you do get killed you die for your country. I think I ain't the only one that didn't want to die didn't none of us want to die but we faced it. How we done it I don't know how I come back with any sense I had friends that come back and drank their self to death and I had friends that come back and just didn't want to do nothing and some of them just died on the streets just homeless. And I saw that happen and I said I guess I got a pretty strong constitution or something I don't know I just don't want to die like that. So I didn't drink myself to death and I didn't go homeless like a lot of them did. And a lot of veterans shot themselves after they got back they just couldn't face reality they couldn't get over what they had been through. And you'd be surprised and amazed at how many done that because they could not get over what they went through. But for some reason I lay all this to my mother, my mother had the strongest will of any person I'd ever known in my life she was a fighter and nothing got her down. But that was the another bad thing about the war was when them people come back I wasn't right I've never been the same person I was before I went into the war but I tried to make the best out of life that I could. I didn't try to kill myself I didn't drink myself to death. I had nightmares for I guess three or four years after but I finally got over them.

Interviewer: Do you remember what they were?

Mr. Doss: Aw they was horrible nightmares bombs was falling and the house was falling. I dreamed I was falling out of planes and falling to the earth things like that I would wake up in a cold sweat. It took quite a bit of time to get over it, I've still got scares from it but I lost friends I lost people you know when you're in the service and you've got comrades that right beside of you who are fighting for their lives and you're fighting for yours you forma bond between you and them people don't understand what I'm trying to say and I guess I don't really do but you become bonded to them you know just like well we're going to die we're going to die together. We're here because we have to be here we're not here because we want to we're here because we have to be. I had a hard time getting over it Thank god I did. I had a lot of help from god you know. I knew it would be wrong for me to drink myself to death and I knew it would be wrong for me to kill myself. I had two friends who shot themselves when they come back they wasn't on the same ship I was on but they went in the service the same time I did. It's a sad thing war unless you go through one you don't know nothing about it. You think you do your

imagination about what it would be like but being there and facing death is something you just can't imagine. As far as you know when you're a young man and you think you've got a lot of life ahead of you and you don't want to die but you're pretty sure you are going to die before you get out of this mess. I does something to your mind but there if you got enough will power that's one things I get from my mother she had more willpower than anybody I ever known in my life. If you've got willpower and trust in the lord you can get through anything. I get to sit here in the swing now and enjoy it getting old get to talk to my grandson what more could I have?

Interviewer: Would you go through it all again?

Mr. Doss: If I was back young and it become necessary to defend this country Yeh I would do it again cause I believe it would be the right thing to do. You know it's a lot better to go over there than it is for them to come over here and kill people in your country. And you know they've got war and terrorism and everything all over the world and it's beginning to hit the United States now terrorist are you know 911. Yeh if it come to a show down and war with terrorist was in this town I'd go in there and get my gun right now and kill all of them I could before they got me. No I've always loved this country. And I thought President Roosevelt was the best President that ever hit that seat up there and he might have been a gangster I don't know what he was but he saved my life, he fixed it so I could have a life because back in the 20s and 30s people was starving to death there was soup lines a mile long. Unless you lived through that you couldn't believe it. I worked 16 hours a day for 50 cents a day I picked cotton 100 pounds a day. I chopped cotton plowed with horses and nukes from sun up to sun down back then there wasn't no clock you worked from sun up to sun down and you took an hour for lunch and at 11:30 you took off for lunch and at 12:30 you went back to work an worked until sundown that's the way you worked. That's the way I was raised and I thought it was fine if I was hungry I thought well everybody else is living like this I ain't no better than they are but the CC Camp changed my whole attitude on life. I won't ever forget Roosevelt doing that this country you know that banks all went broke in 29 1929. This country was starving to death no money no food no nothing. I f Roosevelt wouldn't have been in elected in 1932 we wouldn't be here is my belief. But saved this whole country when he stared the CC Camp for boys like me that didn't have nothing but an old pair of shoes nothing to eat put us in there fed us good clothed us good and tried to teach us something teach us how to be a man. Well people that had families then he started the WPA where people could make a little money they didn't have to beg people for food. He had a soup line started WPA and the Civilian Conservation Core shortly after he got in office. He went right to work on saving his country and he done it he done a good job and I don't want nobody saying anything bad about President Roosevelt. Now there may be some other guys I really don't like what Bush had done I really don't got anything against Bush but he ended this war too quickly that we're in now three weeks the shortest war in history. Got on an aircraft carrier and said that. I think Bush is s good man I just don't think he knew what he was doing when he pulled them out of there before the war was over. I think I'm not by myself I think a lot of people think that if he kept all of the troops over there until the job was finished it might have turned out different. Now as far as I'm concerned now I'm just a an old country boy but I've been through a war and I don't think he left enough troops over there to finish the job. There are troops still being killed over there. If he'd have left the troops over there another three months I believe he could have cleaned that country up but he

didn't do it pulled them out mission accomplished. I won't ever get over that I've got nothing to say against his catcher or anything I just don't think he knew what he was doing. I think if they'd have dropped him over there in the middle of it he would have changed his mind real quick.

Interviewer: I think that's about it.

Mr. Doss: You think that will work? I've tried to stay as truthful I have not told not lies I might have missed a few things but I haven't added anything .