

Alright, what is your full name and where and when were you born and what branch of service did you serve in?

Mr. Showalter: My name is Henry Martin Showalter. I was born February 10th 1922 and I served in the Army Air Corp in World War II.

What were your parent's names and their occupations?

Mr. Showalter: My father's name was Father Paul Showalter and my mother's name was Stella Showalter. My father was a farmer and my mother was a housewife.

How many brothers and sisters do you have?

Mr. Showalter: I had four brothers and two sisters.

Where were you placed in that?

Mr. Showalter: I was the fourth in the family.

How many years did you go to school?

Mr. Showalter: I went twelve years at first and then later on in the military I did another year and a half of college.

Did you go to college before you went into the service?

Mr. Showalter: No.

Do you remember much about the Great Depression and how it affected your family and some of the hardships?

Mr. Showalter: Well we went through the Great Depression and it didn't really hurt our family until the market went out in the poultry business in 1930. That closed down so we had to move from Harrisonville, MO to west of Harrisonville on a farm and it was kind of poor days at that time. But we made it.

Where were you actually born?

Mr. Showalter: I was born in Pleasant Hill, MO.

You grew up around Missouri then?

Mr. Showalter: Yes.

Did you have any job before you went into the service? Did you work at all?

Mr. Showalter: Yes, we moved to Kansas in 1934. While we lived in Kansas I worked for farmers and also we milked 28 heads of Jersey cows so I helped my dad in his farming. After I graduated from high school I tried to go into the Navy because it looked like there was going to be a greater war than what was being fought at that time in Europe. I couldn't go because my tonsils were bad and I needed an operation. So I had the operation and instead of going to college I went to a tech school in sheet metal, aircraft sheet metal, and when I graduated that I went to Wichita, KS, and worked for Stearman aircraft factory in the sheet metal department.

Is that what you were doing when you enlisted?

Mr. Showalter: That is what I was doing when I enlisted.

How much was your salary back then?

Mr. Showalter: I really don't remember but I think it was something like .76 cents an hour or something like that.

Before Pearl Harbor, how serious did you take the threat against America from the Nazis and the Japanese? Did you think we would be in war?

Mr. Showalter: Not really. Really we weren't sure. America was preparing to help the British in Europe and so that is why I was trying to get into the Navy. As far as the Japanese hitting our nation I really don't think it was in our minds and more of a surprise.

Did you keep up with the news pretty during that time?

Mr. Showalter: Yes.

Do you remember where you were and how you heard the news on the attack on Pearl Harbor?

Mr. Showalter: I'm not right sure. I think I was at work at the time at Stearman Aircraft Factory when the news came of Pearl Harbor being attacked by the Japanese.

Were you able to listen to Franklin D. Roosevelt's speech?

Mr. Showalter: I don't think so.

Okay. Were you satisfied with the way that President Roosevelt handled his office and the things at the beginning of the war?

Mr. Showalter: Oh yes I was Democrat; my dad made me that.

When did you realize that you would be, that you were going to enlist?

Mr. Showalter: Well working at Stearman Aircraft Factory I probably could have stayed and not had to go to war because they had started building B-29's and they were going to ship a bunch of us to that particular department. Some of my friends were being enlisted and being called up and so I just felt that it was time to go into the service.

So you enlisted in which branch?

Mr. Showalter: I enlisted in on July 16th, 1942. I went to Leavenworth at Kansas and enlisted in the Army.

Was that the Army Air Corp at that time?

Mr. Showalter: No, Army.

Did they give you tests for skills an IQ or anything like that?

Mr. Showalter: Oh yeah. We had all kinds of test and everything. I took a test to fly to become a pilot, or a navigator or bombardier or something like that. They said my depth perception was off so they encouraged me to become an airplane gunner.

Where did you do your basic training?

Mr. Showalter: At Shepherd Army Air Base; Shepherd field, TX, Wichita Falls.

Were you selected at that time after that for more specialized training?

Mr. Showalter: Yes that is where I took my basic and then they sent me into the Army Air Corp as a gunner.

What was your impression of the other recruits? Did you make friends?

Mr. Showalter: Oh yeah, a few. There was only 100,000 of us so how many friends can you make?

Was this the farthest away you had been from home at that time?

Mr. Showalter: Yes it was.

Did you feel lonely at times?

Mr. Showalter: Well sure.

Did you write a lot of letters to home?

Mr. Showalter: I don't remember.

Had you already met your wife to be at that time?

Mr. Showalter: Oh yes, I met her on the 6th of October of 1939 and that did it. I never saw another girl.

Did you ever participate in maneuvers or things on the state side before you went overseas?

Mr. Showalter: Well I went out to Las Vegas, NV, to the airplane gunnery school and was trained there to fire on enemy aircraft from our airplane position that we might be assigned to on an airplane.

Did you feel prepared after your training?

Mr. Showalter: Yes.

When you were shipped out, do you remember when you were shipped out?

Mr. Showalter: From Las Vegas, NV, I went to Pueblo, CO, for a month and then to Albuquerque, NM, for a month and then to Roswell, NM, for a month of training and then we went to Salt Lake City for an overseas assignment and preparation. Then we went on a furlough to home for two weeks and then we flew out of Topeka, KS, on our assigned airplane. The last week of March we flew down to West Palm Beach, FL, for departure from the United States for our assignment in North Africa.

Did you take a ship across?

Mr. Showalter: No, we flew. We departed West Palm Beach, FL, and flew to Trinidad and then from Trinidad down to Belem, Brazil. From there we went to Natal, Brazil. Then from Natal, Brazil, to the Ascension Islands for refueling and that was in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean.

From there we went to Africa and landed at the British coast at the city of _____. From there we went to Kano and then from there to Cartoon. Then we went from there to Egypt and then from Egypt we went down to Benghazi, Libya, and that was where we were stationed at.

What kinds of planes were you on?

Mr. Showalter: A voyager B-24 Liberator.

When they transported you what kind of transporter planes did they use?

Mr. Showalter: No, we flew our own airplanes. Our ten man crew was assigned to the airplane and we flew as a crew too in combat.

Wow, that's good. When you got to Benghazi how were the living conditions in quarters there?

Mr. Showalter: In tents; 6-men army tents. We as a crew, there were six enlisted men and four officers on the crew. The six enlisted men of us, we had tents and I don't remember what the officers had. We set up our tent down on the beach of the Mediterranean Sea and we went to a British dump and got some butter cans. They were square cans and we made a pit and we walled a pit with those cans and set our tent down on top of that so that we were in the ground four feet and even when we stood up we could see out. It was nice and cool that way and we had a nice set up. It was the only tent like that in the whole organization.

So that is where you were based out of when you started...

Mr. Showalter: Benghazi, Libya, yes. We were in the 10th Bomber Command and the 376th Bomb Wing. As time went on we had a hospital tent organization just across the road from us and we ran an underground power line over and we had electricity in our tent. We were the only tent in the whole outfit that had electricity.

Did you start combat right away there?

Mr. Showalter: Yes we did. Our mission was to hit Italy and blast their oil wells.

Would you kind of describe that?

Mr. Showalter: We would fly from Benghazi, Libya across the Mediterranean and maybe we would bomb Sicily or maybe we would bomb different air bases in Italy proper and we would go all the way up by Rome. Before we were shot down we were all training for low level missions on oil wells.

Did you expect to get shot down? Had you encountered enemy anti-aircraft fire before this?

Mr. Showalter: Oh yeah. We usually had some very safe missions but we always had a few enemy ack-ack encounters and few fighter plane encounters but not anything serious in our 21 missions.

How long were you there before you were actually shot down?

Mr. Showalter: We were actually there from April 15th to July 15th of 1943.

During that time you ran 21 missions without incidence?

Mr. Showalter: We were on our 22nd mission the day that our invading forces were crossing the Mediterranean to invade Sicily and our mission was Bari, Italy and we went in low altitude at 18,500 feet because there wasn't supposed to be any enemy ack-ack and fighter planes. But the Germans had moved down and our intelligence had forgotten to tell us. The ack-ack began to pick us off and the fighters finished. We lost five airplanes that day.

What happened in your particular plane?

Mr. Showalter: Well we lost the number 2 engine and we were losing altitude and the fighters were giving us a bad time because we couldn't keep up with the formation. The pilot gave the orders to bail out and I was a top tour gunner so I had to open the Bombay doors. When I opened the Bombay doors to bail out, it burst into flames in the Bombay because of the tanks that had been hit with ack-ack and we didn't know that. So everybody else had to bail out through the fire too. The pilot got out but was badly burned, the bombardier got out and was okay; the navigator and the co-pilot went down with the airplane; the radio operator went down with the airplane, the tail gunner went down with the airplane and the _____ went down with the airplane. There was five lost and five made it out.

As you bailed out through the fire were you injured?

Mr. Showalter: We had on short-sleeved flight suits because of the climate that we were flying in. My right and left arm was burned; not too bad but major enough that it was painful enough that I had to go be treated at a hospital. My face was burned but not really as bad as my arms and hands.

What were your thoughts while you were floating down in that parachute?

Mr. Showalter: As strange as it may seem as I was floating down from 18,000 feet I asked a question which I have often thought the Lord would never have given me the chance to be where I am today. I asked him, "What did I do to deserve this?" That is the hypocrisy that some of us live in at times.

When you got on the ground what happened? Was there danger when you were coming down?

Mr. Showalter: Well the German plane, the German _____ plane got us. They normally wouldn't have been there but they had moved down and we didn't know it. One of them came by and he waved at me and I thought as he was coming in on me that he would probably shoot me out of the sky but he didn't; he just waved and smiled and wagged his wings and went about his

business. So I floated down, hit the ground, and took my parachute off and headed for the woods close by. What I didn't know is that the woods were a black shirt Italian military training ground. I hid and in about an hour or something like that they found me and took me captive. They took me to a rendezvous area and there was my pilot and Bombardier. We were taken to an Italian hospital to be treated for our burns.

They were also burned?

Mr. Showalter: Yes, but the bombardier wasn't burned very bad. He was very light but they took him and us together. Now the other two crew members, Pogue and Medunik; Medunik was an Italian descent that lived in Milwaukee, WI. Pogue and Medunik were able to travel all the way to Milan, Italy and turn in there and was rescued by our people and then taken back to the states. So they never became a prisoner-of-war.

Both of those guys?

Mr. Showalter: Yes, they traveled together. I suppose Medunik being able to speak Italian made a difference for him.

From there, what happened?

Mr. Showalter: Well I don't remember exactly the number of days that I was in that Italian hospital but one of the days they took me over to another prisoner-of-war hospital that was mostly all British people; British Army troops from all over Australia and New Zealand. They had been fighting in Africa against ____ and they had British doctors that were doing the doctoring for them. The Italians just had control of the camp prison hospital. I got much better treatment for my burns there from the British doctors. We were there on the 8th day of September of 1943 when Italy gave up. We were about four days and we thought that our troops would be able to come in and take us because they had invaded Sicily. But all of a sudden the Germans showed up and that was it. We were prisoners-of-war of the Germans. So then they moved us to the North. We were in a camp in the North by Viennes and waiting there. Then the Germans loaded us up in boxcars and took us to ____ Pass to Germany. We went through ____ Pass on our way to Germany. We got into Austria and the train unloaded us at the town of Glasgow, Austria at

7A. It was a French prisoner-of-war camp with French, Serbian, and Russian prisoners-of-war. It was quite an experience. The French men everyday went down to work in shops in town. Because they had been prisoners-of-war for so long they were able to come and go with just a guard to work in the stores, bakeries and different things in the town. The Russians and the Serbs were very badly treated. We spent all of our time fighting bed bugs and lice. Every day we had to pick them off two or three times during the course of the day in order to get any sleep at night. While I was there I wrote a letter to the International Red Cross and told them, "Look, we are airmen, we are NCO's and we are not supposed to be in this camp. We are supposed to be in an American NCO Airman Camp and we want moved." So the Germans moved us in to _____

8A over in Czechoslovakia, just outside of Lamsdorf, Czechoslovakia. It was a big camp. There was 45,000 prisoners-of-war in that camp. There were British men from all of the colonies of Britain. There was Russians there and there were all kinds of prisoners-of-war. Each of us had our own compounds. The Canadians had their compound and the British had their compound. There was just a few of us Americans; only seven of us, so we were in with the British compound. The camp was so well-organized and big that they had their own little stores at each of the compounds where you could take your c-rations. That was the first time we got American Red Cross packages or British Red Cross packages and you could take your items that you didn't want and trade them at the store for items that you did want. That is where I met a boy by the name of Gider, Tech Sergeant Gider. Gider was a man that had been trained in radio intelligence for keeping in touch with allied headquarters. We teamed up and the Canadians had set up an escape system and they had dug a tunnel out of their compound outside of the camp and they were sending prisoners-of-war out through there one at a time. They would go down to Yugoslavia where Tito would take the responsibility of getting the prisoner-of-war back to the allies. He got \$1,800 American dollars for every American prisoner-of-war that was returned that way. They wouldn't let any of us Americans go at the time because they had a full load of their own people that they wanted to go. So they trained Gider and I how to set up escape programs in American prisoner-of-war camps. Neither one of us spoke German so we somebody that could be with us that could speak German. There was an Australian Corporal by the name of Thomas McGraff and Thomas McGraff could speak good German and so we needed him. So there was an American boy by the name of Paco. He was from Minnesota. He was a Tech Sergeant and he wanted to go out and work out on the farms so that he could maybe escape and go see his grandmother which lived in Czechoslovakia because he was Czech by birth. So we traded their records. Thomas McGraff became Thomas Paco, a Tech Sergeant and American and Thomas Paco became Thomas McGraff, an Australian. He went out on a work detail and I don't know what ever happened. I never heard of him after that. Thomas McGraff that became Thomas Paco became our escort with us with Gider and I. I wrote another letter to the International Red Cross for release from that camp to an Air Force Air Corp camp of American NCO's. They acknowledged it and the Germans moved us then by train, seven of us from there and we moved through the _____. While we were at the station there, there was a young girl, a German girl and she talked to the seven of us. We visited with her while we were waiting for our train to come in that would take us to an Army Air Corp camp. We were picked up and taken to

this camp and here it was an Army camp and not an Air Corp camp. There was a large group of new prisoners-of-war from the _____ raid. They were really disorganized and we couldn't set up anything with them in way of escape programs. There was just no organization. So Gider and I again immediately requested transfer to an Air Corp camp and the Germans acknowledged it. We were shipped in from there and we went all the way up into Lithuania to a camp that was the new Air Corp Camp. There we had 1,470 boys in our compound that was all American Air Force boys, Air Corp boys. It was well guarded though so there wasn't much chance of escape from that camp. It was about 30 km southeast of Nemo. This was in February of 1944. The Germans were fighting on the Russian front and losing. The Russians were pushing them out of Russia and the first thing we knew; here the Russians were within 20 km from our camp. The Germans decided they weren't going to let us be taken by the Russians so they rushed us by truck up to Nemo and rode us on the Norwegian barge that went down to the Baltic. We were down in the hull on that, all packed in real tight. I don't remember how long we were on the sea down to Steden in Germany on the North Sea. There we were unloaded out of the ship onto boxcars. There had been a bunch of American prisoners-of-war that had escaped from Luft 3 and so it had aggravated Hitler so he issued an order that all American prisoners-of-war would be given a bad time from that time on. So we were handcuffed together, two of us handcuffed together. We had our bags and everything to carry that way on our back and handcuffed together. So they loaded us off the boxcars and they marched us in from the stations where they unloaded us off the boxcars in two by two and they ran us through the camp some 5, 6 or 7 km. They had dogs and a lot of the boys got bit by dogs and some of them got _____ by the guards. They had a young group of German marines and they were really mean and nasty boys. But we made it. I was handcuffed to a boy by the name of Miller. He told me, he said, "Now if you don't make it and you drop I will drag you. I'm not going to get stabbed or anything. We are going to make it to this camp or you are going to be dragged." I kept up with him and we started way back in the back and ended up right behind the first two men when we arrived at the camp. We were there and this was done on Luft 4, another Air Corp camp for strictly Air Force boys. We were there then until once again the Russians got close enough to us that they had to move us. The camp was at _____ and it was up on the northern part of Germany and Pomerania. The Russians had to come within 20-30 km of us and so they moved us out of there by train again down to Nuremburg. We went to Nuremburg and here was a camp that had many thousands of prisoners-of-war and we were only 1,500 meters from the German underground aircraft factory that built the jet aircraft that they were building. While we were at Nuremburg we saw the 72-R bombing raids when there were airplanes in the air for 72 hours at a time. The British bombed at night and the Americans bombed at daytime. It was quite an experience because one night a British airplane dropped a 4,000 lb. bomb just a little ways from us and liked to have shot us all up real good. We saw some beautiful night displays of ack-ack fire and search lights in our own airplanes putting out target. They would set up a paradrop of flares and block off a bombing area and then they would bomb that area within those flares. That is how they kept from hitting our camp. So anyway, the war was progressing and the Americans were moving in and the British were moving in to Germany. Then they decided that they better move us from

Nuremburg down to Moosberg. This was in February and it was quite a few km from there to Moosberg so they put us in formations by compounds. There were 1,670 boys in our compound. We started out and Gider was chief of the _____ at that time. They put an American Lieutenant Colonel over us from the Air Corp Officers camp and why they did that I don't know. I supposed the officers thought they were smarter than we were. But it was quite an experience. The Lieutenant Colonel was so dumb and he didn't know anything about Germans. We had Paco with us so we could more or less bargain with the Germans and get them to do things that we wanted them to do and stop us in good places and let us buy things from trade with the German civilians for food and everything. On our third day President Roosevelt died and we asked the Germans to let us play Taps for him. So we went out on a hillside, stood in formation and played taps for his death and then we took off from march that day. The next day we were in a town and we were under a railroad bridge. We stopped there and Gider and I didn't want to stop there because we didn't like to be under that railroad bridge with some of our boys. So we finally talked the German commander into moving us out into the countryside and he did. We got out on the countryside and we asked him permission to put out emergency signs telling them that we were prisoners-of-war. Gider always had communication with the allied headquarters and we knew that there were airplanes coming over to bomb the railroad marshalling yards where we had stopped in that town. We got outside of town and sure enough here came the B-47's and they bombed that railroad bridge area. There was one of the troop trains that had some American prisoners-of-war on it that had come from the hospital in Nuremburg. Some of them got hurt and killed. But we were all safe. Then we went on 14 days on a raid to Nuremburg and from Nuremburg to Moosberg.

How did you go, marching the whole way?

Mr. Showalter: Yes, some days we went as far as only 10 km and some days we went on marches 20-25 km. It just depended on when we got started and how things went. They would bring us food by truck and things like that so we would stop and eat. The boys would keep up on their health and their feet gave out. We was having trouble keeping our troops together and the Colonel was getting all upset and he wanted to go faster than the boys could go and everything. So him, Gider and Tom Paco got into a huge dispute of who was in charge and who was supposed to be taking care of the troops. Gider resigned and I became the leader then of the formation. We had 1,400 and some boys left. Gider and I had been able to get the Red Cross trucks that bring us packages to take some of our boys and take them to a hospital and drop them off. A lot of our boys that had been dropped out had been sent to hospitals and they were safe. So we went and made it into the camp and there was 1400 and some of us left when we got there. It was fourteen days on the road.

Wow and that camp was...

Mr. Showalter: Luftwaffe 7B.

How long were you there?

Mr. Showalter: We got there about the middle of February. It was a short period of time and General Patton and his forces had come in and set up on the outskirts of the Ober River. It was just a little ways from our camp. That night he met with each one of the prisoners-of-war logger chiefs and the American and German Covenant. He made an agreement with the German Covenant that if he would turn the prisoners-of-war over without firing a shot that he would be given leniency. The German commander agreed so that night Patton was pretty smart. He moved the big Hollister 44's across the Ober River onto our side of the camp and at 6 o'clock in the morning there were shells being fired across the top of the camp into a wooded area that was some 300 meters from us. There were a bunch of German SS troops in there that was going to do what Hitler wanted to do to kill as many prisoners-of-war to be killed of Americans and British. Patton took care of that. At 10 o'clock he moved in and raised the American flag and saluted all of us and it was a great day. So we were now American prisoners-of-war.

How were the living conditions and the food that the Germans gave you there as a prisoner?

Mr. Showalter: As far as the Germans, they could have never fed us. There wasn't any way they could produce enough food to feed the thousands and thousands prisoners-of-war that was in those camps. Like that 45,000 prisoner-of-war camp, if the British hadn't of been able to get there International Red Cross packages into our camp the boys would have died like the Russians died. Every day the Russians you would see eight or nine or ten of them hauled out on a wagon and dumped in this open trench. It was the same way at all of the prisoner-of-war camps, the Germans fed us the best that they could. Actually as Air Corp people we were given special privileges. Owen that was in charge of the ____ was pretty lenient with the Air Corp prisoners-of-war. He respected us for who we were and therefore we got special privileges. We got the packages probably when nobody else got packages and things like that. We got Red Cross packages at all the different camps that I was in. In those seven day packages was enough food to sustain you for seven days. So if the Germans wouldn't have fed us anything, we would

have been able to have made it through. But with what little rations we got from the Germans which were horse meat and rutabagas and wheat. They cut our barley and made soup out of the grass and things like that. The Red Cross packages are what kept us alive. The clothing that we got from the Red Cross is what kept us warm and healthy. So really as American POW's we were too bad. Once we got into Luft 6 and Luft 4 and even in Nuremburg, Gider was a very efficient operator and we had it alright in Nuremburg. When we got to Moosberg we were there a short enough time. The Red Cross was so close to Switzerland that they could keep us obliged so we faired alright.

Still you lost weight; what was your weight going in?

Mr. Showalter: I don't know, I probably weighed about 135 lbs when I came in and I weighed down to 118 lbs during the course of the time. But I still was pretty strong.

When General Patton released you, what happened then?

Mr. Showalter: We were there for several days. I got to go outside the camp and went down to...it was one of the famous towns down on the Rheine River. I went down and viewed the city and took lots of pictures of families and different things there. The boys wasn't really fair; a lot of them ransacked the homes and they stole property that really shouldn't have been stolen from the Germans because we were free and now could do what we wanted to do. One of the funnies sights I saw was at Moosberg. There was a line of German prisoners-of-war lined up against the stone fence and there was a convoy of our boys that came down in their trucks. This big Negro man got out of his truck, he was driving, and he went over to those German prisoners-of-war and he went down and punched one and went down and punched another on. What had happened was his buddy, they always drove two so that they could change driving, had been killed by a sniper and he was upset about that. He was taking his revenge out. Armed guards that were guarding those German prisoners allowed him to just have his time until he was tired of punching Germans. He was really giving them a bad punch right in the head. Anyways, I think we were there for about five days before the American forces came in to move us. We were taken by truck over to an airbase about 20-25 miles from the camp. We were loaded in C-46's cargo aircraft and we were flown in back to France. On the way across we were just flying across the Rheine River and headed for France when the news came that Germany had given up; had surrendered. So we then went on and landed at Camp L_____ in France. That was a rehabilitation center for getting all the prisoners-of-war out of Germany and sending us back to

the states. We were given medical treatment there and we were given clothes and they set us up on rations so that we could gain weight and all those things. Then we went from there to port in Versailles, France and were loaded on one of the wooden ships that were built by Kaiser and we went over to Britain. We were there for a short period of time and then crossed over the Atlantic Ocean and landed at Boston.

On planes again?

Mr. Showalter: No, no we were on ship. But we were on an American ship. I gained from about 118 lbs. back to 128 lbs. by the time I reached her house.

After the war did you stay in the military?

Mr. Showalter: No, I got home on the 28th of May at Kansas City and I went to her house. There I visited with her and we were married on the 17th of June, 1945. After that they gave me a two months vacation so we went on our honeymoon. We were on our honeymoon for three week and then we came back. All of a sudden they decided they would give me another month, so that was three months of vacation that I had. So then I went to work for Sutherland Lumberyard. I worked there until I was due in Miami, FL. Thelma and I went by bus down to Miami. We were there on Miami Beach at the Edgewater Beach Motel. They sent us through processing every day. I would go to processing and get all ready to get out. Then on the 12th of October I was discharged from the Army Air Corp as a Staff Sergeant. I was a Tech Sergeant when I was there but I was a Staff Sergeant. I hadn't had my Tech Sergeant long enough to keep it. They made me a Tech while I was at Fort Leavenworth, KS, before I went on vacation. So then we went back to Kansas City and I was going to go to an agricultural college but they were all filled up out at Kansas State. So I decided to go to Colorado at a state university. That was at Fort Collins. So we loaded up everything we owned, her and I, and we drove to Fort Collins. We got out there and there was an opening to go to college but no housing; no place to stay. So I went to work for a farmer. I was going to earn my irrigation and knowledge of farming with him. I worked all that winter until the following summer for him. Then he decided that he didn't need me anymore; him and his son were going to run the operation. I went to work for Fort Collins sheet metal shop in Fort Collins, CO. Mike was born February, 28th 1947 and we moved up to Wellington, CO. I still worked for Fort Collins sheet metal. I had paperwork that I brought home from the prisoner-of-war camps and from all of the experiences that we had had at prisoner-of-war camp, the food rations, clothing, and the names of all of the boys that they had at different

camps. They asked for me to go into the Air Corp and go to Nuremburg, Germany, and I didn't want to go and she didn't want to go to the war trials. So I said, "Well, I will send my paperwork." When I was in Kansas City while I was on vacation, they had interviewed me, their intelligence people, and I had signed my name 156 times to documents of information that they took from me. They knew all the equipment that I had. So what they did is they said, "You send all that equipment and we will send it to Nuremburg and that will be used instead of you going." That is what happened and then they returned it to me and I still have some of it. I got tired of working for a sheet metal shop and decided, "Well let's go back in the service." So Thelma's brother-in-law, Buzz West, was a General in Washington, D.C. We got in touch with Buzz and he got in touch with the Air Corp training command General and they gave me an assignment to train as an aircraft mechanic down at Estesmill, MS. I was shipped down to Estesmill and I went back into the service October 12th, 1947. Then I went down to Keesler and went to school. It was a yearlong school and then I came back and got Thelma. After a little bit we pulled a trailer down there and lived down there at Keesler Air Base. So 17 years later on September 1, 1964, I retired from the Air Force as a Senior Master Sergeant.

(END OF TAPE)