

Alright Mr. Forsythe, formalities if you don't mind starting out on this, I need you to state your full name and where and when you were born.

Mr. Forsythe: Norman Forsythe and I was born at Newport, Rhode Island, 10 October 1924.

What were your parent's names and what were their occupations?

Mr. Forsythe: John R. Forsythe was my father and he was a chauffeur for ____ Perry. My mother was a homemaker, Helen Jolly Forsythe.

Were they originally from Rhode Island themselves?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes, from Rhode Island. My father was from Pawtucket, Rhode Island and my mother was from ____.

Did you have any brothers and sisters?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes, I have six brothers and four or five sisters.

That's quite a big family. What are your recollections of the Great Depression?

Mr. Forsythe: I remember that my dad was working WPA. He was a boss on the plumbing department, WPA, doing the road work; ditches and things like that and putting in pipelines. It was a bad time. We were living on a farm in Rhode Island. We had pigs, chickens, and stuff that we had to take care of; chores and everything. I remember we didn't have buses to go to school. We walked to school; two miles to school and two miles back winter and summer. We felt healthy and pleased doing it. It didn't bother us a bit. We grew up as a happy family. Three of my brothers went in the service. My oldest brother Howard was in the Army. My brother Ralph went in the Navy. I went in the Army and my brother Everett went in the Army. There were four of us in the Army. My brother Kenneth was National Guard. The governor of the state gave my mother a flag with five stars on it. She put it in the window to show people she had five children in the service during the Second World War

Can you tell me a little bit about your early education as far as grammar school? How far did you go?

Mr. Forsythe: I went to the 8th grade in grammar school and one year of high school. On the 7th of December I was in the opera house watching a movie, and they shut the movie down and made an announcement for all servicemen to report back to their base; all Army personnel and Navy personnel. Newport, Rhode Island, is a big Navy town. We had Fort Adams, Rhode Island, that had coast artillery. Fort Wetherill on the other side at Jamestown across the bay was coast artillery. They had the naval training station there at Newport with the fleet in. There were six boats in the harbor. You ought to see the sailors take off to their ships and the Army personnel taking off. All my buddies were being drafted in the service and going away and I felt lonesome. I asked dad one day, I said, "Dad can go in the service?" He said, "No, not right now. We are having a hard time." My brothers were in already. I kept on and he said, "Ok, I will take you up

to Boston to the ____ Building for your physical.” So I went down to city hall down to the post office to the recruiter down there and told him what I wanted. I wanted to go in the Navy. The Navy wouldn’t accept me because I had a lower testicle lower than the other. So I came back home and dad said, “Well that’s bad.” A couple weeks later I said, “Dad I am still going to try. I will try the Coast Guard.” So I tried for the Coast Guard. Well, the same doctor at the ____ Building was there. So then the Marines came up and I said, “Well I am going to be a Marine.” I went to the Marines and the same doctor was there. He said, “No! You are trying awful hard aren’t you?” So I went over to Fort Adams, Rhode Island, to the doctors over there and they wrote up a letter for me to take up there when I went up, so the Army took me. That is how I got in the Army. I stayed for almost 30 years.

That was in 1942?

Mr. Forsythe: 1943. 1942 was right but my initial active duty wasn’t until March 1943. They said, “Well wait home and we will write you a letter when to report and where to report.” A draft came in and my name was with that group to report to the train station in Newport. I reported down there and the recruiters were down there. They had role call and we boarded the train. They took us to Providence, Rhode Island, to hook on to another train and took us to New York, from New York to Washington, D.C. and from Washington, D.C. we changed trains and got on the Atlantic Coastline and down to Camp Davis, North Carolina. Camp Davis, North Carolina, is where I took my basic training. It was a triple A camp.

What is a triple A camp?

Mr. Forsythe: Anti Aircraft Artillery. We had all of the Coast Guard Cadre from the west coast over there; it was cadre force, and they were mean devils. First Sergeant Crocker, I will never forget him. He always had a riding crop under his arm and I got whipped quite a few times for doing wrong with it. He was a good NCO; good 1st Sergeant. From there we went to advanced training. We went to the same post but it was advanced training on big 90 mm anti-aircraft gun; twin bogies. They were bogies with the trails. We got alerted one week to go up to Hampstead, New York, to set up gun positions on the coast there. They were afraid the Germans were going to come in with the submarines and land people on shore. We went up there and we stayed there for about three months and then we got orders to move out to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, to join a unit going overseas. While we were on replacement we didn’t have an assigned unit to go to, but they took us to New York and put us on Dominican Victory ships. That was the name of the ship, the Dominican Victory. I hardly ever remember that name. It came to me just like that. The Dominican Victory was a Kaiser built troop transport. We went over and we took the North Atlantic. We had submarines and destroyers weaving in and out. We lost three ships on that convoy going over the North Atlantic. That water was so rough, you could hardly stand it. That North Atlantic was wicked in the winter. We landed in Greenock, Scotland, where the troop ships that were waiting down in the harbor were taken into shore by the LST boats, and put on trains down to South Hampton. We were in South Hampton about two or three months training for an invasion. Finally they put us on British troop transports going across the English Channel.

Were you still classified as a replacement or did you have a unit?

Mr. Forsythe. A replacement. Once we got across the channel is where we find where we were being assigned to. I was assigned to 778th AAA unit. I was a gunner on a half-track. You know what a half-track is, with the 150's on it; it has 150's on it. We spear-headed, we were in the Battle of the Bulge is where we wound up at. When I picked up my half-track I was only a Private, PFC, still yet. The platoon sergeant said, "Have you ever fired a 50 caliber?" I said, "Yeah!" He said, "Well you are my gunner." I said, "Well, what happened to the other one?" "Well he got killed yesterday!" I went up to the half-track and it was cold, snowing and cold. You could hear the 88's screaming mimi's coming overhead into our positions and everything. You didn't know who the first sergeant was or who the platoon sergeant was, nobody wore stripes. You just recognized them. He said, "Don't call me Sarge here. I will give you orders and that is it, just do what you are told." I said, "Okay!" He said, "Dig a foxhole and get it as deep as you can because we are afraid we are going to get hit tonight." Sure enough, that night we got hit. The next morning we got the command to move the half-tracks out. The drivers came and got me and said, "Load up Norman and get the machine guns ready." I said, "Okay!" The Germans made a big push that night on us.

Where about is this?

Mr. Forsythe: In Bastogne. We got through the first two or three nights okay and then the weather seemed to break and that is when Patton came in the picture. He wanted the 50's up front just to spray the sides of the roads so they could make the column go through. So we spear-headed with Patton and went five miles into enemy territory with no flank to protect us. We made it and they finally halted us until other units and supporting elements caught up with us. We went through the whole war. I shot down at least three enemy planes with my quad 50 that I think I can take credit for. Mostly our machine guns were ground work, strafing and penetrating the enemy position mostly. At the end of the war we wound up in Leipzig and Dresden, Germany. We got our orders to move back to the quartermaster's kaserne at Dachaustrasse in Munich to take charge of the Dachau prison camp. So we did and we set up our vehicles all around the prison. The troops went in there to clean up the furnaces. The old man said, "Do you want to see a sight?" This is the part I hate to talk about. We looked in them furnaces and there was bodies still in there; bodies still in the furnaces and ashes that wasn't cleaned out. It was pitiful. We got that done and the old man say, "Norman, you ought to reenlist, you are a good soldier." I said, "Well, let me go home first. Let me decide." I went home on 15 day leave and came. It just came out with if you enlisted for three years you get a 30 day furlough, free transportation back and forth home. So I said, "I will take it!" I did and when I came back my unit was gone. General Harmon had his constabulary organized then, the Circe C Cowboys. I became a constabulary man. They knew I was a tanker so they made me an M4; track gunner on an M4 rubber wheel track with a 20mm cannon on it. We patrolled the Meitz River in Mannheim and Heidelberg along the river there. Fraternization was still in effect. We had a lot of trouble with the quartermaster drivers and people trying to get down to the girls. Other than that we didn't arrest anybody we just let them go by and gave them a warning. I stayed with the constabulary there until 1947 and then came back to the states. I got stationed at Fort Bliss, Texas, on the 2nd Division move from Fort Bliss up to Fort Lewis when I was in transit. They cut orders for me to go to Fort Lewis, Washington.

When you were with the 778th what division was ya'll?

Mr. Forsythe: The 76th Division.

Ya'll were attached to the 76th Division?

Mr. Forsythe: I became a member of the 37th Field Artillery Battalion. Everything was going good and the old man says, "Norman, did you ever fight before? I see in your record that you were a CYO champ in Rhode Island in boxing." I said, "Yeah!" He said, "Well we are forming a regimental boxing team, would you want to box?" I said, "Hell, I ain't in any shape to box. That was just fun boxing in the CYO tournament; you know YMCA and that?" You knew who you were fighting with, you wouldn't hurt one another. He said, "Well why don't you come out for it?" I said, "Okay." So I did. I took the regimental title at light heavyweight and then they were hurting for a heavyweight. They wanted me to go up to a heavyweight. I was still a light heavyweight but enough to cover heavyweight too. I went and boxed heavyweight and took division title in heavyweight, then went to Army and took all Army; 6th Army title. They wanted me to train for the Olympics in 1950. Pat Nappey was the Army, back in history Pat Nappey was the boxing coach for the Army. He was our boxing coach there at the time. He did such a good job, he wound up as a boxing coach for the Olympic team. He wrote me a letter and wanted me to go for the Olympic team so I said, "Okay Pat." In the meantime they cut orders for me to go to San Francisco and train at Presidio, which I did, and the Korean War broke out. Well they called us all back to our units so I didn't make the Olympics. I went to Korea with the 37th Field Artillery. The 14th day of August I was up on a hill observing auxiliary shooting high angle fire after the Chinese were coming up the hill and the Korean troops the Chinese were coming up the hill, the Tago Offensive. I was shooting high angle fire and they found my position and they started to mortar me. I got hit with mortar in the back. I stayed up there that night and that morning the pain got so severe I lost the blood. I was feeling faint so they came up and got me and sent another 2nd Lieutenant up. He got hit that night and killed. They sent me down to the hill and they sent me to the aid station. Once they got the shrapnel out the pain started to cease and the old man was hurting for an FO again so he called up. He said, "How is SGT Forsythe?" The medics didn't want to release me so I took off anyways, left and went back to the unit. The Commander found out about it and he raised hell and got me off of the hill. We spear-headed right up to Korea there. We were coming through Koran-ri and we lost practically all of our division. Through my BC scope I could see the Chinese mass on the Orye River. MacArthur was in the states at that time trying to get permission to bomb the Orye River but the old man wouldn't let him do it. The Chinese came across and bayoneted the troop's right in the I killed about 16 or 17 with a bayonet alone; I ran out of ammunition. We walked out of Koran-ri. The 1st CAV came in. It was a 13 mile valley we had to go through to get to where we wanted to go to out of range. Lucky enough the 1st CAV came in with their tanks to get us out. It was hell coming through Koran-ri; frozen weather 40 degrees below 0. Another big battle we were in was Chipyeong-ni. I don't know if you read the story about that. One battalion plus a French company battled almost three Chinese Divisions that held them off. We got a unit citation for that.

How long after the 1st CAV had to come in was this battle?

Mr. Forsythe: That next day. The old man says, "Every man for himself! Take two bandoliers apiece!" Each man had two bandoliers and their rifle and took off. We thermaled out our

ammunition, our guns and everything; we put thermal grenades to them through the tubes into the boards so they couldn't use them. We took the reach block out and blew it out, flattened the tires on the vehicles and everything so the Chinese couldn't pick up a lot of good pieces of equipment. We put thermals to the motors to the vehicles and we took off. We were out of gas, we couldn't move. We got out of that one alright. Then the Koran-ri came up and then the twin tunnels. That was another big battle we had. Then it was our time to come home, I had enough points to come home, so I came home. I stayed at Fort Lewis for awhile and then went to Europe, to Germany. I stayed a tour over there and came back and went back again to Europe for a tour and came back for the Vietnam experience. That was three tours in the Army.

What units were you with in Vietnam?

Mr. Forsythe: I was with the 7th of the 15 Artillery in Nam at LZ Uplift held by Hell's English on Highway One, a major highway there. I was 1st Sergeant and we would go out in the bush about once a week. We stayed three days, came back in. We would take two or three of the guns out with us and come back in. One morning the old man says to me, "Norman, this is your 3rd tour over here. You know what happens to these people. I want you to take a convoy of ammunition up to one of the line batteries." This was a great big 8 inch thing we had to... I said, "Okay." It was a treacherous country road and I traveled it several times before. I knew the habits of the people. I knew the outlook of the whole countryside. I said to the old man, "Okay, I am going to take the lead jeep. I want six riflemen, a machine gun up forward, a machine gun in the middle, and a machine gun in the rear." We set up the convoy like that and had the lookouts out. I sent a patrol ahead and they radioed back and said that the road was clear. I said, "Okay, stay in your position, we will be right up." Coming around this one bend, I noticed that there wasn't a person in the rice field working, no oxen, no birds flying, nobody was around, and everything was as quiet as a whistle. I said, "Something is wrong here. I'm coming back and I want six riflemen to take two bandoliers apiece to put in the BAR and come with me." We circled around the mountainside and right on the tip of the mountain of that curve was a damn Charlie sitting there in that black uniform and everything. I said, "Open fire!" They opened fire and killed every one of them; 26 of them. I got the bronze star for that for notorious service. The old man said, "Norman, boy if we lose you we lose somebody good." I said, "Yeah!" Anyway, I came home from that tour and went to Fort Sill. I was an instructor at Fort Sill. When my tour was up I had another tour with the 173rd over there. That was the English. I was a Provost Marshal there. General Blackjack McFarland, maybe you have heard of him, was the commander at the time. I was there about six months with him and then he got orders to come back to the states. He said, "Do you want to come back with me Norman?" I said, "Yeah I will come back with you." So we came back to Fort Campbell here and from here he got orders to take over the armor command at Fort Sill so I went up there. That is when we both retired. That as the end of my career.

I'm going to run some of these questions by you that I got here. You mentioned that you were in theater when you heard about Pearl Harbor. Prior to Pearl Harbor do you recall any tensions here in the United States as far as what Hitler was doing in Europe or Tojo was doing in Japan? Do you remember what...?

Mr. Forsythe: We knew what Hitler was doing but nothing about Japan. We knew what Hitler was doing because he was trying to occupy all the small countries; Poland, Czechoslovakia and places like that and that was news then. As far as Japan goes, nothing was said.

What was society's view at that time though as far as what role Americans should be playing with Hitler kind of running free in Europe?

Mr. Forsythe: The Marines were kind of playing a big role. They were advertising for more Merchant Marines because they were putting more ships into service.

You mentioned that you remembered the night of when you found out about the attack on Pearl Harbor. Do you remember hearing the radio speech of Roosevelt the following day, the day of which we will live in infamy?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes. I remember hearing that speech.

What were your feelings, you were a young man then or more or less, what were the feelings of your father on Roosevelt's handling the affairs outside of America?

Mr. Forsythe: He thought the President did a fine job. My oldest brother was in the service at the time. He called up and said, "Dad, I am going overseas, I know it's soon." Dad said, "Well just take care of yourself son. Be careful and we will pray for you." We did. As days went by, I got more patriotic and more patriotic and more patriotic. As the days went by you could see more troops leaving, your buddies here and your buddies there leaving and everything and finally you are, "why ain't I in to do my duty?" That is the reason I went in. You could see patriotism building up and building up and building up, the doughnut dollies, the girls and the _____.

What is a doughnut dolly? I am not familiar with that.

Mr. Forsythe: A doughnut dolly is a Red Cross worker that gave you doughnuts and coffee before you board the ship and when you got off the ship. They were doughnut dollies. Ask _____ what a doughnut dolly is. He will tell you.

When you left, after you finally joined, was this the first time you had been that far away from home?

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yeah.

How did you feel at the time?

Mr. Forsythe: Homesick, real homesick.

How long did it take for you to kind of get to the point where you were comfortable with that?

Mr. Forsythe: It took me a long time; it took me a long time.

You went in, in 1943. I don't believe you participated in any of the big maneuvers but you mentioned that your brothers were in the military. Do you remember him going through the Louisiana maneuvers?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes.

What was his MOS?

Mr. Forsythe: He was a motor sergeant and then he made 1st Sergeant.

Was he over in Europe with you?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah.

What division was he in?

Mr. Forsythe: He was with the 33rd Armored.

Did you get to have any correspondence with him?

Mr. Forsythe: He came up to see me one time in his jeep and we got close together just for about dinnertime. We ate dinner together and talked for about 30 minutes and then he had to go right back to his unit.

When you crossed over the channels on LST's was that D-Day +2, 3, 4; what point in the invasion did you actually get to cross the channel and go into France?

Mr. Forsythe: We were on the channel for about four days. The channel was rough too. We went into LeHavre and from there went to Nice and then we went into the Bulge.

Up into the Bulge what was the countryside like? What were the French people like?

Mr. Forsythe: The French people were good people. They were good people. They hated Hitler with a passion. They had a reason to, you could tell it. They were poor people. By the time we got there Hitler had taken everything from them. They were very nervous about the Americans. They didn't know the American ways. They thought we were all gangsters.

They watched too many American films.

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah.

What were your living conditions like there in France prior to the Bulge?

Mr. Forsythe: Pup tents and any village we could get into. If people weren't living in it we would try to get into a house or something where it was warm out of the weather.

Was the chow pretty good?

Mr. Forsythe: K-rations.

Did you get any free time, any passes or anything while you were over there?

Mr. Forsythe: No, pretty much just fighting the whole time.

You got several bayonets there. You were telling me about them. They are different sizes due to different rifles. What all small arms did you train on?

Mr. Forsythe: The gran rifle, the carbine, the pistol 45.

Did you carry the 45?

Mr. Forsythe: The M1 and the gran rifle. It was heavy but it was a good weapon.

You mentioned being on the Dominican and that was a troop transport. Were ya'll over crowded on it?

Mr. Forsythe: We were very overcrowded.

Did you have to hot cot, rotate out of your bunks?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes, in the morning we cleaned, swept the decks and ladders, latrine orderlies would report to the latrines. That was the worst job you had, the latrines. Sick and the smell out of them troop's ships was awful. The minute you got up top side you didn't want to go down below. They made you go down below, lights out and black out. The convoy would black out practically all the way.

Did you ever lose your convoy?

Mr. Forsythe: No.

I was talking with the....

Mr. Forsythe: We had two ships collide into one another in kind of rough seas. What the reason was for I don't know, they had good navigation on there I imagine. I don't know but they did collide and put a hole in one of them.

The two ships you mentioned German U-boats got to, were they just carrying freight or were they troop?

Mr. Forsythe: They were carrying tanks; tanks and ammunition.

How soon did you see combat after you got across the channel and got into France?

Mr. Forsythe: Three days.

Where was that at?

Mr. Forsythe: Bastogne.

What was your initial take on it to seeing combat firsthand?

Mr. Forsythe: I was scared stiff. They told us about the screaming Mimi's.

Tell me a little bit about that.

Mr. Forsythe: The first one that came in scared the devil out of you.

What exactly is a screaming Mimi?

Mr. Forsythe: It's a screaming sound and when you hear the scream you hear the hit. It's just that quick. It's going through the air. The German aviation screaming Mimi's they called them and they were a wicked weapon. It was 1/4 inch wide 105 Howitzer. It was so accurate and wicked and the weird sound it makes, the projector going through the air. That is why they called it the screaming Mimi. They were accurate. It was an accurate gun.

Did you notice that adrenaline just eventually took over for you? How did you cope with being scared?

Mr. Forsythe: With the what?

With the fear of feeling combat the first time how did you....?

Mr. Forsythe: Over there if you weren't scared, they are lying to you because everybody was scared. Certain times you didn't have time to be scared, you had to do things to take your mind off of it.

Do you feel that your training there at....

Mr. Forsythe: Camp Davis? Oh yeah.

So training was key when having to deal with pressure like that?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah. You followed the leader. If you had a bad leader you had a bad squad or a bad platoon. If you had a good leader you had a good squad and a good platoon, a good battery and a good company.

How did you classify your leaders?

Mr. Forsythe: Real good; they were combat ready and these were old timers. These weren't any of those young kids, these leaders. They were regular Army troops even before we even thought of going in the service.

Do you remember their names?

Mr. Forsythe: These were career soldiers.

Do you remember any of their names?

Mr. Forsythe: One of the Sergeants name was Fifer, my platoon sergeants name was Coleman. There were so many, I forget.

Who was your CO?

Mr. Forsythe: Hadley; Captain Hadley.

He was a career soldier?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah, he was a career soldier.

What were the interactions between the NCO's and the Officers? Did you notice any?

Mr. Forsythe: In combat you don't notice it that much. In regular garrison duty you do notice it; combat you don't.

Was there a professional respect though in combat?

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yes, oh yes. A majority of the time the company officers would let the NCO's run the company and it would run a lot better. They give the order to the NCO; the NCO took care of everything.

Would you say that it is fair to say that the troops back then followed orders a lot better as far as just unquestioning orders and just doing whatever they were told during World War II?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes. Mostly your enlisted people were like farm people, uneducated people, draftees that came in and all that learning and teaching was through their basic training. They were well disciplined. They knew there wasn't anything else.

Were you ever promoted during World War II?

Mr. Forsythe: No, not in World War II.

Did you stay a PFC during World War II?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes.

In Korea.....

Mr. Forsythe: I got promoted to 1st Sergeant.

You were a First Sergeant in Korea. What were your impressions of the Germans? Did you ever have as close contact...?

Mr. Forsythe: The German were very intelligent soldiers; very intelligent. They were very dedicated to Hitler's regime. Very intelligent they were.

What did you think about their tenacity? Were they tough?

Mr. Forsythe: They were tough; tough trained. They had Nazism all the way.

Did you have any up close contact with them like you did the Chinese in Korea?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah.

You didn't mention, you weren't wounded while you were in World War II were you?

Mr. Forsythe: No, not at World War II; in Korea I was wounded.

Did your unit suffer heavy casualties in World War II?

Mr. Forsythe: We lost six men; between four and six men. It was so long ago. I think it was four men we lost through strafing or a bombing raid they made on us. They got hit right there in the track.

Now you mentioned Bastogne and the spear-heading. I may have gotten this jumbled up but were you at the tip of the spear with Patton that went in and got the 101st out of being encircled?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah.

What was the contact that you had with the troopers from the 101st? Were they pretty battered? Did you get to see any?

Mr. Forsythe: They had morale; the morale was still high.

Was it really?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes, the morale was still high. They had a lot of frozen feet. The cold was so wicked there. As a matter of fact some of them had to put diesel fuel in their steel pots to make the recoil mechanism to keep them thin so they could recoil the recoil mechanisms. That was the same thing in Korea; we had to do the same thing.

You think it is fair to say that they were happy to see you all?

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yeah! They held up good.

Would you say that the Germans started fighting dirtier and harder the closer you got to Germany or as you got into Germany?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah. Once we had them on the run they were giving up left and right. We cut off their supply lines which was a good strategy. They used up all their ammo they had, their rations were short, their gasoline rations were short and they couldn't run their tanks no more because we cut off their supply to their gasoline tanks. They just had no place else to do but to run and give up.

Did you encounter any of the conscripts that they had though from Czechoslovakia, Poland, and Austria, some of the non-Germans that they had actually fighting for them?

Mr. Forsythe: The DP's?

Yes.

Mr. Forsythe: Yes, displaced persons; we convoyed a lot of them back to humanitarian lines and turned them over to the public affairs people. Of course we had a lot of them working for us too after the war; displaced persons. A lot of them were deserters from their own Army and didn't want to go back. They stayed in Germany.

What were the German civilians like as ya'll came in?

Mr. Forsythe: At the end of the war a lot of them hated us. As it went on and on and we started building our forces up over there, they had to get to like us. In Mannheim, Germany, were the Railroad Depots. That was the main railroad hub. They had a lot of blacks in there and the German people didn't really get along with them very good. After time consumed and time went on and on they started intermixing everybody and they finally got along good together. We didn't have mixed blacks and whites in the Army at that time.

The units were still separate units?

Mr. Forsythe: Yes. Like the 100th Division, the _____ was all Hawaiians, I think. There was one division that was just a black division. I can't think of which one it was.

You mentioned the Red Ball Express to me. Can you tell me a little bit about them?

Mr. Forsythe: All I can tell you about them was they went through hell getting supplies up to the troops. They got under fire quite a bit. They pushed and pushed and pushed and got supplies up to us and kept us going. I give them 100% to what they done.

What was your feeling of Patton?

Mr. Forsythe: Crazy! Crazy, young, hungry. He wanted to take over the command so bad that he was doing anything for it. He was a die-hard General.

Do you feel he was unsafe or do you feel that he was just a warrior?

Mr. Forsythe: He was a warrior. He feared nothing. He was a warrior in and out.

Did he have the respect of his men?

Mr. Forsythe: I would say 80% of his men. He didn't have the respect of 20% of his officers.

But he had their fear though.

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah, they feared him.

How much correspondence did you have with home while you were in Europe?

Mr. Forsythe: Every chance I got I tried to get a letter sent out but whether it got out that day or not, I don't know. We didn't have too much time to write, but when we got a chance to write we did.

Did you get many letters from home?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah, but they were always late getting to you.

Did they censor your mail any?

Mr. Forsythe: Outgoing mail, I think, was censored. I couldn't say for sure but I think it was censored. Incoming mail, I don't know.

Have you been back to Europe since you were there in the late 40's?

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yeah, I had two more tours over there. I was over there with the ____ outfit from Fort Bliss, 63rd group, and we went over there to Hanau, Hanau Kaserne, and then we moved from Hanau to Wurzburg, and set up hawk sites at each one of the little posts they have there; Furth, Frankfurt, Hohenwald, and air bases right around there. We set up missile sites.

How much has changed?

Oh it has changed an awful lot. They got high rises over there now and superhighways. I would be scared to drive on the highways over there; it is crazy. There is no speed limit.

Do you think the people are a lot warmer now though to the Americans?

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yeah. You got such a mixed population over there now with Arabs and South Africans over there. It ain't like the old Germany no more; it's like the United States is now. You got Mexicans over there with them living.

Kind of like a melting pot?

Mr. Forsythe: Yeah it is. We speak to Erica that works out at the bowling alley. She went over there last time and she said, "It is not the same to me anymore. There are too many nationalities over there now. You don't know who is who anymore." You got a lot of Indians over there from India. Pakistan is over there, Turkey, business people and a lot of Jews are over there now. The best place over in Germany to go if you are going over there is Garmisch or Berchtesgaden, Munich, or the Black Forest. It is beautiful.

I got to ask you sort of a personal question. When you were in the field going through France and going through Europe, how often did you get to just take care of personal hygiene? How often did you get to shave?

Mr. Forsythe: Whenever you got a chance to you took it.

How often? Was it maybe once a week or...?

Mr. Forsythe: Well it depends on the situation you were in; whether you were on the move or, we all washed our face and brushed our teeth. There was no reason that you couldn't do that. I kept my toothbrush down in my boot. You could always use any kind of stuff to brush your teeth with. I used ashes; cigarette ashes to brush my teeth with. Any chance you had for general hygiene you took it.

You have been a veteran of three wars. Is it fair to say that all three were very much different?

Mr. Forsythe: No, the Korean War was the worst.

Was it just based on the enemy or was it supply?

Mr. Forsythe: The enemy, the terrain, the weather and then the unknown from the states on what the next move was going to be. Our politics; it was a politicians war; there is no doubt in my mind. It was just move, shove, and move out.

I heard a quote one time and I don't remember whether I heard it or read it. It stated that we went in to Korea because after World War II a lot of the guys were released, you know it was a downsized Army, so we went into Korea with an untrained Army and came out with a good Army, went into Vietnam with that good Army and at the end of Vietnam we came out with an untrained not so good Army. What are your feelings on that?

Mr. Forsythe: We went in with good troops into Korea, the 1st Cav, 2nd Division, 4th Division; all of them troops were good. At the end of the war dope started to set in and troops were ready to come home and get out of there. They were tired of it. They were glad they stopped the 38th

furlough. After the war occupation of Korea and you go up and see the 38th parallel and look across there and see the North Korean mass and everything for show, it's just a heart warmer to know that you lost one of your good friends up in North Korea. The beginning of the Vietnamese War dope was a big factor with the troops over there. If they didn't have dope, they would go crazy. When I came home and went through C-Tac through the airport I was spit at for wearing my uniform. I was ready to fight and we had MP's to escort us down through there. That is how bad it was, people hated us. That was my first tour coming back home. My second tour was just as bad. My third tour I just put on civilian clothes in the restroom and walked through it and they still hated us.

I have learned a lot more about Korea, especially here in the last couple of months about the politics that were involved in that war. It was as much in Korea as it was Vietnam.

Mr. Forsythe: Oh yeah.

Was there much politics in World War II that you could sense at your level?

Mr. Forsythe: No; no politics in World War II. World War II was fought for a reason.

The objectives were clear?

Mr. Forsythe: The objectives were clear: to give back to small countries that Hitler was taken away from. He was trying to dominate the world. When he bombed England, the next place would be the United States. We had to step in. We showed them that we were not going to tolerate it and we didn't. Korea, when we landed at Phu San, we got off that troop ship and there was women squatting down doing their duty. We thought what kind of country are we in anyway, this is supposed to be a civilized country you know for the first time being in Korea. After we got all of our troops unloaded and got all of our vehicles unloaded, I got all the troops and I took the trucks up to the zone we were going to defend and the Korean people were, you could see them, why aren't these people in uniform; these young men? Why are we fighting their war for them? Some of the young men in Korea could have been in uniform fighting, but no, you see the Army carrying dead chickens over their shoulder with their rice in one sack and chicken in the other sack. That is how they lived. They didn't care whether they won that war or not. It was the Americans that were forced into it, their fight. Look at the Presidents of Korea, Sigmund Rhee was overrun. The next one came in, _____ was the biggest smuggler and gangster there was and then the other one took over at the end. Everyone that took over was a politician or in there for the money, not for their country.

What were your feelings of the Chinese soldier?

Mr. Forsythe: The beginning of the Chinese soldiers weren't good soldiers but at the end they were. The regulars came in at the end. The first wave that came across the Koran-ri was young, untrained soldiers. They came over in mass, but the rear of them was regulars. They were good; well disciplined.

Your Purple Heart was in...?

Mr. Forsythe: Korea. That there was landing in Inchon. I was carrying the American flag.

Did you go in the big landing there at Inchon?

Mr. Forsythe: No, we came in later.