

Interviewer: Okay so would you say your full name and when and where you were born?

Giles: Howard Coleman Giles, I was born at Howell Kentucky, Christian County April 10, 1926.

Interviewer: So your family do you have any family history of military service?

Giles: My grandfather was in the Confederate Army.

Interviewer: What were you doing when, you said you were drafted?

Giles: Uh huh

Interviewer: What were you doing before that?

Giles: I was teaching graduates of World War II.

Interviewer: What were you teaching them?

Giles: Agricultural Foundations.

Interviewer: And then when were you drafted?

Giles: About August of 1950.

Interviewer: Okay after you were drafted where did you get sent to?

Giles: I was sent to Fort Knox for my training.

Interviewer: Was that for basic training?

Giles: Basic training and advanced heavy weapons training.

Interviewer: So you went through everything at Fort Knox?

Giles: At Fort Knox.

Interviewer: What was your MLS?

Giles: I have no idea.

Interviewer: Infantry

Giles: I was infantry yes.

Interviewer: You were infantry okay. What did you think about the state of military preparedness at the beginning and on the eve of the Korean War?

Giles: I didn't think much about it, it seemed okay to me.

Interviewer: Do you recall when you heard that North Korea had invaded South Korea?

Giles: No

Interviewer: No? Did you hear of or ever have any experience with Taskforce Smith?

Giles: No

Interviewer: No, okay you said that you came in just after the Pusan Perimeter.

Giles: Yes I joined the outfit I was with about 10 or 15 miles north of Pusan.

Interviewer: Do you remember what unit you were with?

Giles: I was with the 21st regiment.

Interviewer: Twenty-first regiment

Giles: Company D

Interviewer: Okay can you just tell me a little bit about your experience maybe chronologically?

Giles: Chronologically I joined about in January pushed northward to about the middle of what is now North Korea. By mid-summer the Chinese came in and we were pushed back below what became the DMZ by late fall as I remember.

Interviewer: Do you remember any specific engagements you were in?

Giles: Not really

Interviewer: Not really did you see combat, actual fighting?

Giles: Uh huh the whole time.

Interviewer: Did you encounter any UN troops from Greece or Great Brittan?

Giles: I did from Turkey.

Interviewer: From Turkey, how was that experience?

Giles: They were on the line right next to us and they were good troops.

Interviewer: Did you have anything to do with the Inchon landing?

Giles: No

Interviewer: No okay. Can you walk me through what a normal day would have been like for you while you were stationed there?

Giles: In Korea?

Interviewer: In Korea

Giles: Normally we would have gotten up and lunch out of a box that was usually delivered to us about every day. In that box was our breakfast, lunch, and supper and a pack of cigarettes. At the time I smoked Chesterfields. If I got a box of Camels or Lucky's I could swop it for two packs of Chesterfields.

Interviewer: Do you remember any of the fighting specifically? Are there any moments that really stand out to you in your time there?

Giles: Not really, probably would have but I've forgotten them.

Interviewer: Can you tell me your impressions of Douglas MacArthur?

Giles: I wasn't overly impressed with Douglas MacArthur. He was somewhat of a hothead.

Interviewer: Why do you feel that?

Giles: He wanted to go into China.

Interviewer: And you saw that as a bad idea?

Giles: Yes

Interviewer: Did you have any experience fighting with the Chinese?

Giles: They got in the fight during the late summer of 51 and I can't say that I had any particular experience with them. They all seemed like kids they were pretty young boys.

Interviewer: They all seemed younger?

Giles: Very young

Interviewer: After the initial success with the Inchon Landing driving into North Korea did you think it would be a short war or did you think it would be longer?

Giles: I didn't think much about it one way or the other.

Interviewer: You sort of stayed out of the politics of it?

Giles: Right it didn't get down to the troops.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about the point system that you were talking about?

Giles: The point system, the army developed a point system to rotate people back home to the states. And the point system was based on where you are and what you were doing. If you were actually in battle you got four points a month if you were in Japan stationed there you got one point a month. If

you were stationed Okinawa you got a point and a half a month. If you were stationed in Korea but not close to the battlefield you got two to three points a month. Like I was on the line and I got four points a month and so I rotated home within a year.

Interviewer: Do you remember exactly where you were when you first came into Korea where you were sent to?

Giles: We landed about Pusan and were sent about ten miles north of what was the line at the time.

Interviewer: And you pushed forward do you remember where you stopped pushing north?

Giles: I think we stopped pushing north in about the middle of what is now North Korea.

Interviewer: Okay do you remember any landmarks or anything?

Giles: No

Interviewer: No, okay. And then you were there when you got pushed back south of the DMZ?

Giles: Yes

Interviewer: Did you have any close encounters in combat?

Giles: I guess most of the time I was there was a fairly close encounter.

Interviewer: Would you be willing to talk about?

Giles: I can't remember anything specific.

Interviewer: Okay so what is it about that?

Giles: I was in the machine gun platoon and which is part of the heavy weapons company the dawn company the 21st Regiment, 24th Division.

Interviewer: So you were a machine gunner?

Giles: Yes

Interviewer: Do you remember what type of machine gun you worked with?

Giles: We had 30 caliber air cooled and 30 caliber water cooled. We used the air cooled mostly.

Interviewer: Okay do you remember anything about how you used it? Did you were you in a fixed position or did you move with troops?

Giles: We'd move it with troops.

Interviewer: Okay

