

NAME: JOHN HENRY BAKER, JR.

INTERVIEWER: ELIZABETH JACOBS

CAMP: OHRDRUF

DATE: FEBRUARY 27, 1980

Q: Full name?

A: John Henry Baker, Jr.

Q: And your address?

A: 116 McIntyre's Drive, Savannah, Georgia.

Q: And date of birth?

A: July 10, 1921.

Q: Your age at the time of liberation?

A: Approximately 23, 24 years.

Q: Prospective profession at the beginning of the war?

A: At the beginning of the war, I was a student.

Q: Present occupation?

A: Self-employed. A paint executive.

Q: Military unit?

A: I was with the 65th Division. I commanded Company B, 260th Infantry, Third Army.

Q: Rank at the time of liberation?

A: Captain.

Q: And liberated which camps?

A: I went through several camps. Ohrdruf was one that I remember distinctly. And our unit, the 65th Division, 260th Infantry, ended up in linking up with the Russians in the vicinity of Linz, Austria, and Mauthausen was a very

large camp at that particular place. We also went through some other camps that I frankly cannot remember the names of. In one of them many soldiers from the New Zealand and Australian troops who had been captured in Crete had been prisoners for some five years. This was not an extermination camp, but was a camp for prisoners of war. We were the first company to go through this particular camp.

Q: How did you first hear about the camps, the first one that you went to? Did you have any prior knowledge?

A: I'll be very truthful with you. When you are commanding a rifle company, you've got a very small picture of the large scale. We usually are in very narrow zones, and we have little or no information of what we may expect in front of us other than the enemy. Several times we would approach these camps completely unbeknowing to us at the time.

Q: Is that the way that you first approached the first camp you went into?

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: Do you remember what the first camp that you went into was? What was the probable date of arrival?

A: No. After 35 years, I haven't thought about these things, and it would be impossible for me to remember dates and places. At that time, you just tried to do a good job with what you had to do, protect your men, take your objective, and sort of live from day to day.

Q: As far as the different camps that you went to, can you give me as complete a description as possible? You mentioned some things before about the actual crematoriums you saw. Will you talk in as much detail as possible about the number of people that you think were there, the sights, the sounds, the smells. Tell us what you did once you walked in.

A: I think Ohrdruf was the worst camp that I saw at the time of liberating, and as I have shown you here, we have a few pictures that some of my men took at the time and gave me copies of at the end of the war. I think from those pictures you'll get a pretty good idea. Unfortunately, I have destroyed many of them, particularly those that were taken up very close to the bodies which show the expressions on the faces, because small children from time to time see them in my collection of pictures. I thought they were rather offensive and had destroyed those. But as you can see from these, there were very large pits. We show legs sticking out of the pits. The odor was very bad, and it was something that you didn't want to get too close to or spend much time around other than taking a picture or so. I think that you can also see from this picture that we have begun lining up the bodies to bury so many of these who had either been killed or had died of natural causes shortly before we arrived. And in this picture, there are some 100 bodies that we have lined up. Some are being covered up with cloth, and in this picture you can see the civilian population. I understand the civilian population claimed not to know anything about what was going on at that camp; yet, it was only a 1/4 or 1/2 mile away from the civilian population. They could see it, but they claimed that there was nothing wrong going on in there. So as you can see, the elderly men of the village had been brought up and they actually are digging the graves and are going to handle the bodies with their bare hands to impress upon them what had taken place.

Q: Did you get any actual tour of the camp by anybody?

A: No, other than we were there shortly after the entrance to this camp, and when you are in the infantry, you expect to see these things from time to time.

Q: Can you talk about specific buildings or places?

A: Let's see if we can find a picture that will show you an outside picture of this camp.

Q: [Flipping through pictures] This one right here?

A: This one right here. This is from a distance of probably 200 yards from the exterior of the camp, to give you a brief overall picture of it. In these buildings, there would be bunks stacked two or three high, and we would find these people lying around, mostly skin and bones. You just couldn't believe that they were still living. First thing you'd want to do was maybe try to help them, but they were too far gone. They are not paying much attention to us, because they don't understand what is going on. They no doubt by this time have been mentally affected. If you gave them something to eat there probably would be a terrible reaction from them, because they hadn't had anything to eat in so long. There was so little we could do for them when you first went into a camp of this nature. This is a problem for those who would have better knowledge of how to handle those still living. This is a problems for the medics that were following us.

Q: Did you see anything else other than the barracks? Any work camps? You have pictures of a gallows there. I am looking for general type of description. Did you see any actual crematoriums, physical things?

A: Yes. I saw several crematoriums at one or two camps that I went through. However, I don't know how these people in these pictures that I am showing you here were exterminated, whether they were worked to death or what. From these pits and piles of ashes and bones and decayed flesh, I do not know the number that had been exterminated -- died or killed -- there. That would have to be determined by someone else who stayed around longer.

Remember, a front line troop only stays in an area a very short time.

Sometimes we would pass on a camp in one day and keep moving. The operation -- cleaning up and helping those in it -- would come up by troops following.

Q: So basically what you saw were the outer grounds with the pits, the barracks, and no other major buildings.

A: That's correct.

Q: About how much time did you spend at this camp Ohrdruf? Say a day or so?

A: A day or so, and usually we would just move on. Sometimes we would go in the afternoon and by early morning we had cleared the area and had gone on.

Q: Were the gates actually open when you walked in?

A: Yes.

Q: Had there been any troops in front of you?

A: No. Most times on a camp like this, Jerry<sup>1</sup> knew when and where the American troops were. He knew approximately about what time we would reach the area, and I assure you that all those in charge of the compounds had changed clothes, gotten into the civilian population, or gotten away as soon as possible. I am told that these two people in this one picture here who had worked in the prison had put on civilian clothes, and some of the healthier ones who had been inmates wandering around town recognized them, and, as you see, both bodies were completely destroyed by these former inmates.

Q: Did you have any idea of how many people were at Ohrdruf when it was

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<sup>1</sup>Term for Germans

liberated? Was there any estimate?

A: I have no idea, but from what I saw I would think that there were probably 250 to 500.

Q: Were they mainly men who were at the camp? The prisoners?

A: I saw only men at this particular camp. There could have been others, but I only saw men.

Q: You mentioned that some of them were lethargic and in the barracks. Were there other prisoners who were walking around?

A: Yes.

Q: What did they do when they saw the Americans coming in?

A: Various reactions. Some absolutely no reaction, and some would be very jubilant. I don't think that they mentally could comprehend what was taking place at the time.

Q: And you said you were one of the first troops to walk into the compound?

A: Yes.

Q: I think you had hinted at it before that you really had no specific orders concerning the treatment of these prisoners.

A: No, it was unknown to us. As I say, we would take an area and all of a sudden discover maybe a camp.

Q: What did you do? What did you see any of the other men in your battalion doing for the prisoners? Did they try and give them some clothes or food? What was the company's general reaction?

A: I think the company's general reaction was this was in our zone. We were not particularly concerned about these people. Those troops following us -- the medics, the American government, and those knowledgeable -- would take care of that arrangement. And that's why we only stayed there a very

short time, usually moved right on out. We were only concerned about the still active German soldier.

Q: Did any of the men spend some time talking to the prisoners to find out how they had gotten there and what they had been through?

A: No. Remember, they didn't speak the same language we did. That was one problem. So I had no personal conversations with inmates at these prisons.

Q: But somebody evidently stopped long enough to take these pictures?

A: Oh absolutely. Yes.

Q: Are you saying that within the first day or two that it was liberated they did have civilians in the camp? Do you know who got the civilians there?

A: No, that would be up to probably the troops following us. As I explained, the American government, the troops following us, would take care of that. We were only a front line infantry unit.

Q: How did your fellow soldiers or superior officers treat the people? Was there a difference between the regular rank and file and the way that the officers reacted to the people in the camp that you could see?

A: No, I think that we were all Americans, and I think we all reacted the same. Regardless of rank.

Q: Was there an emotional reaction from a lot of the soldiers?

A: I think there was a very surprised element within most of the troops.

Q: Could you elaborate? Were they surprised that such a thing could happen?

A: That's true. I think they were surprised to see that this had actually happened, and when you walk upon pits and piles of decayed flesh and bones and rubble and ashes, I think this surprised them more so than seeing these half-starved people. After all, a half-starved person probably could

have been caused from just lack of food available, but I don't think that disturbed the troops as much as the bodies and the other debris in the area did.

Q: Did the condition that these people were in, the ones that you remember seeing alive in some of the barracks, make it hard for you to think of them as human beings?

A This was the latter part of the war, and remember that front line soldiers had become very toughened by that point, and we had seen many problems with human beings being destroyed. I think that one of the worst that I could witness would be an American soldier, so here we were seeing foreigners who didn't speak our language. I don't think that we were as disturbed as much as we probably were later after realizing what had happened. We didn't realize these things at the time. We were, as I say, front line troops, living from day to day, doing a job.

Q: In your mind, did you see a difference -- this is something that we have caught with some other interviews -- between being killed in combat and this? You mentioned the hardened troops theory, and granted a lot of these people were war-hardened soldiers, but it was different if you got shot by an enemy that you were shooting at compared to this. Do you remember thinking anything along those lines, either before or after during the experience?

A Oh very definitely. We naturally felt extremely sorry, but there was not much that we could do. We had to rely on people more knowledgeable than our front line troops to take care of them.

Q: Were there any guards there when you reached any of the camps?

A No. Usually, at all of these camps, as I mentioned earlier....

Q: You are speaking of Ohrdruf and Mauthausen?

A: Yes. The guards would have an idea approximately how far the American troops were. They would have an idea of when those American troops may get there, and they made sure that they had disappeared in the meantime. In many cases the camps were wide open. The inmates were running wild. Not literally running, but walking and stumbling out, and maybe trying to get to the nearby village.

Q: You had mentioned that while you were in charge of Dachau that you were in charge of the SS, and there were some things you did and did not want to say. Do you remember any specific orders concerning the treatment of the SS soldiers that you were in charge of?

A This was after the war. I was transferred some six weeks or possibly two months later to the 9th Infantry Division, and I was in command of Company B, the 47th Infantry. Our mission was to provide the security for the interior of Dachau prison, and in the interior there were many troops housed outside in the open and also in billets. But we had one particular section where we had some of the really bad boys in solitary confinement, possibly some of the former camp operators. And this was an extermination camp. They were governed by the American government troops, and I merely pulled the guard protecting the unit, seeing that there were no escapees and things of that nature. I did not have direct control of those inmates, only from a security standpoint.

Q: Would you say that your superiors or fellow servicemen -- and this is in reference to your stint at Dachau -- were very resentful or hateful towards the SS you had within the camp?

A I think by that time things had begun to mellow and we were thinking more

or less of a return to the States; after all, it had been victory in Europe for some six weeks to two months, and I don't think the troops had that in mind at all. The SS troops that were in the compound were very well controlled by their own superiors, their own officers, and they took care of themselves. We just made sure they didn't escape until they were processed to be discharged or further processed.

Q: At some time you probably had to think about -- you called them "bad boys" -- what kind of people do this. How did you rationalize after seeing these camps and then being in charge of these prisoners about how such people could do things?

A: That's something that's a little bit of hindsight. Really, I frankly don't know how to answer that question for you. I really don't.

Q Did it ever cross your mind about how another human being can develop the capacity to do that?

A: I think later. Yes. Yes. Later. But immediately upon this, you are only concerned about the security of your own troops and still the German soldier. So these things didn't pass our minds at the immediate time. But, as time wore on, the next day, maybe the next week, even to today, you do think about that quite a bit.

Q: You had related one incident that I would like you to go over a little bit now, if you can remember any more details, about some of the DP's<sup>2</sup>. We have a question here about violent incidents between the survivors and the guards. Was it at Ohrdruf or at Mathhausen that you remember these people going out to the town and finding...?

A I think it was practically every camp we went through. After our units broke

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<sup>2</sup>Displaced Persons

through the Saar Valley, outside of Saarlanduten, [unintelligible] second night we had taken over a small town in the Saar basin. We got into it after dark, only secured the outer perimeter and probably the first row of houses, so we would have a place to get into for the night. By the next morning, Jerry had pulled out completely, and we were being told we were going into reserve and would not be pulling out of that town that day. So, as I started looking around the town for better billets for the company, we found that there was a coal mine in this town and that the commander of the coal mine had a very nice large home. That looked like a pretty good place to make my headquarters, and when I arrived there, I discovered that there were many displaced personnel. They had found the wine cellar in the basement and by that time many were drunk, disorderly.

Q: These were former inmates?

A: These were former inmates. They were primarily Poles in this particular time. And they had become very unruly at times, and yet those sober would be most cooperative and many followed along with our unit and we carried them along to do a lot of work for us. They traveled many miles after that working with us. But then, there were so many that became so disorderly after being freed. In many cases wherever they found a wine cellar or something of that nature, it was plain chaos and you quite often had some time in managing them.

Q: You mentioned that incident. Did that occur at that place you were staying at?

A: At this particular mining town, after they had enough to drink and many of them were in the gutters, we had no more problems. By that time, we rounded them up and had them back under control. But now there were other

towns, for instance Linz, Austria. At Mathausen concentration camp there, they had slave labor there, and they had a very large number and Linz was declared an open city. We took Linz with no opposition. We had opposition not too many miles back down the road, but by the time we took Linz, here were these by the thousands out roaming. Att times they became very unruly and had to be handled very forcefully to get them back into the stockades or to where we could take care of them.

Q: Other than this incident that you related about finding these two people who had tried to become civilians and killing them, do you remember any other specific instances of violence between survivors and guards?

A: No, I think this was sort of customary anywhere, but this is the only one I have actually a picture of as proof.

Q: You have the picture of the German civilians there. Did they voluntarily come to look around the camp?

A No, they did not by any means. They were very fearful. Just over that hill was bad news to them. Many were claiming they didn't know what was taking place in that camp and therefore the American troops made these civilians view it, to witness it. At that time there were only small children and old men left around the countryside, and these elderly people were forced to come out and dig these graves. As you can see, that's not soft ground there. There's a lot of rock in there. I imagine it took them each a day to dig a grave there.

Q: How did they react?

A: Very quiet, would not talk. The German was very tight-mouthed at that time, and they were very disciplined people. And we didn't see the waving of the flag and glad to see us around the towns that we did in the

concentration camp. We saw only the white flags out in the countryside and in some cities that I don't think had camps of this nature around them.

Q: After seeing the camp and the civilians, did you feel they had any sort of responsibility in what went on there?

A: You just had to think that they had to know something. They couldn't have been within a quarter of a mile and not know what is going on inside. There was a nice open field in-between these civilian houses and the concentration camp. You just had to feel that they knew what was going on in there. But they all naturally denied it.

Q: Was there a lot of tension as far as relieving the camps went or did you [treat it] as just another part of your duty?

A: I am sure that the troops following behind us did have tension of that nature, but I think that for the front line troops it was just a day's work.

Q: Did anyone ask to be relieved of particular duty after seeing what went on at these camps?

A: Not to my knowledge. I think our troops were too hardened by that time. We had good soldiers at the latter stage of the war and they were well-hardened.

Q: Did anyone have any particularly strong reactions to what they saw in the camp?

A: I think that possibly some did, and how to define which group I don't know. But I do remember I did have some Jewish members in my command, and they felt a little stronger than the others.

Q: Do you think the chaplains had any more of a stronger role at this time upon discovering something like this in a combat?

A: I am sure they did, but I truthfully was not that close to the chaplains, and

the chaplains were not close with us. Chaplains are usually a little behind a rifle company. They usually were taking care of the sick, the wounded, and things of that nature, and the chaplains would have been those that would have come up into the camps probably no doubt after we had first cleared them.

Q: Did you tell anybody about the camps, and this means your immediate family or other soldiers that you happened to see? Did you relate the camp experiences to anybody?

A: As you can see, there's a note on the back of each one of these pictures. I either sent these pictures to my wife or my mother back in the States, so yes, it was free discussion, absolutely free discussion. In fact, usually at a bad camp the reserve units, the units that weren't in the front line, would quite often, not be instructed to, but given the opportunity to take truck rides back to there to witness these camps. This took place. I think that the American government did want witnesses. Remember, this is about two days after a camp had been taken and you see the number of soldiers standing around. A lot of those have been brought up to witness this.

Q: Why do you think the American government felt it important that they witness it?

A: Because we had heard about these things. Here was a unit that had gone 500 and some miles through Germany, the longest route of any other Division in Germany, and had some of these troops not actually seen these things they might have gone home and said, "I didn't see it," and "Maybe it didn't happen." It just so happened that these camps weren't in the sectors of some of the advancing units so I think it was a good idea if the unit was in reserve and could spare a few men and give them an opportunity to go back and see

these things. And that's what you are seeing in one or two of these pictures.

Q: Are you willing to talk about it to prove to people that it did happen or just because you think it was important? A lot of people don't grant these interviews right away. Is there any reason why you decided to, other than getting your record down for posterity? And was there a hidden motive as to why you think you ought to make people think that these things did happen?

A: I think that none of us like to talk about them. I never talk about them. I've talked about them not too often, and certainly not in many years, but any time I am asked a direct question, I try to give the truth and what I know. You have asked to interview me on this subject and I am going to tell you just like I saw it and what I know.

Q: Did you feel that it was important that your wife and your mother knew about these, and did you try to convey things to her about the camps?

A: No, no, I don't think so. We had heard that these things had taken place. I believe in the things that I was told in the Service and this was just proof and I don't think that it was any great surprise to my family and certainly not to me. It just happened that some of these camps did fall in the path of our advancing unit that I was in.

Q: When you use the phrase "we heard about these things," do you mean just German atrocities in general?

A: Just German atrocities in general.

Q: Did you hear the word "camps" associated with these atrocities? Because you used "these things" I was just wondering what kind of rumors had filtered back through the lines before some of these camps were opened.

A: We knew, naturally, they had a lot of prisoner of war camps. We knew that they were using a lot of slave labor. We knew that they had a lot of Poles,

Russians, French, practically every nationality somewhere in Germany in camps, so there were so many. And Germany is not a very large country in mileage when you think of a [unintelligible] country, and therefore each village is another new surprise. Never knowing what we were going to see.

Q: But you had hints when you say "these things" that Germans were doing some very immoral things as far as the practicing...the war was going.

A: Right, right.

Q: Did you watch the *Holocaust* TV show when it was on?

A Yes.

Q: Were there any reactions to that that you tied into your camp experiences?

A I thought that some of the scenery in the camps with the bunks were very correct. I thought it was very truthful what I saw.

Q Do you think it is important that shows like this be shown, or perhaps that lessons about the Holocaust be taught in school?

A I think we are then getting involved in politics and things of that nature, and I really don't know. I think it should be part of history but I have no personal feelings on it.

Q: Afterwards -- and I am just referring to specific experiences about the camp -- did you have any nagging afterthoughts or perhaps nightmares or restless nights just remembering what you had seen in the camps? I know that most men who go through combat are going to have to reckon with what they saw sometime later in their life. I was just wondering if there was anything from the camp that just haunted you.

A No, not to that degree. As I said earlier, the things that distressed me most was when I'd see American soldiers being destroyed, and particularly those in my own command.

Q: We have had some people who we interviewed who mentioned that. Did you consider yourself a religious person at this time?

A: Yes, yes, I think so. Yes. Very strongly. I was an Episcopalian.

Q: Did the camp experience make you question God or have any more thoughts about how can these beings that we place so much trust in let something like this happen?

A: No, these kind of things in combat didn't cross your mind. You were too busy thinking about other things. You are thinking about your troops. You are thinking about the enemy. This had already happened, there was nothing we can do about that. But we still have that man in front of us, the Jerry that just pulled out of there. And that's who we are after.

Q: Did the religion have any effect on your attitudes towards forgiving the Nazis, or did you ever put that much thought into who to blame for something like this pit here?

A I think we only blame the higher echelons and those directly over the camps in situations like that. I can see, possibly, where a lower echelon, a worker or something, could be gradually dragged into it. But those in charge and those giving the orders and those overseeing are the bad guys.

Q: Did your experiences change any of your political views as far as maybe the Civil Rights movement or the Viet Nam War or even the establishment of the State of Israel in the Middle East?

A No. I didn't think from a political standpoint at all.

Q: I would gather from what you had said that you may not have thought this was primarily a Jewish persecution .

A: No. I don't think so, because in many of these camps there were not only Jewish people that I saw, but I saw Poles, Russians, Yugoslavs, Czechs, all

denominations.

Q: Did what you see at the camps and what you heard afterwards change your attitude about the Jewish people in any way?

A: None whatsoever, except the world has realized that they had a very misfortune in Germany and I think the world is very one-sided in that today. I think the German people today, from what I read in here -- I haven't been back since -- fully realize this now. And certainly the Germans that I have met since World War II coming out of Germany fully understand it, regret it, yet they were headed, you might say, by a fanatic group. That group, I hope, has been liquidated.

Q: Do you feel a need to do anything today to make sure this never happens again? In education, religion, things like that?

A That's pretty hard when you see the problems around the world even today in Iran, and it just depends upon which side you are on. It looks like we will never learn. I don't know.

Q: There are a couple more things that I would like to discuss. We don't need necessarily specific dates or names, but if you can remember anything concrete about the camps that you viewed. Usually it takes you a minute to think back about what you saw other than the barracks and the pits. Anything of the general layout of Ohrdruf and Mauthausen, any little detail that you can remember helps us to complete a picture.

A: I remember in the picture *Holocaust* the so-called "showers" which turned out to be gas chambers and those chambers that I saw were exactly as laid out in the movie.

Q: Do you remember if this was Ohrdruf or Mauthausen?

A: I would say at Dachau. I did not get into that part of it at Ohrdruf. I was

only where the bodies were, in the billets where they were still sleeping and so forth. I was too busy to be looking up every little detail. That was very immaterial, if it wasn't being used at the time. I think one of the things, though, that stuck out in my mind was pictures that I saw when I took over command of the unit, the interior guard at the Dachau prison. Our billets were formerly SS troop quarters, and on the walls were big, slick photographs. They had a pair of ice tongs that we usually used to pick up 100 or 200 pound blocks of ice with, and there would be a picture of the Germans moving these bodies around with these ice picks and stacking them, before the camp was liberated. They probably had the picks through the head and they'd be dragging bodies around and stacking them up. That picture stuck in my memory for a long, long time.

Q: What else did you see at Dachau? Were there still any remains of the prisoners by the time you had gotten there?

A: If they were, they were getting back to health. They were outside the compound. They were sort of displaced persons. We called them that on the exterior, and they seemed to be getting along all right. No doubt they were being fed by the American troops, and the ones that I saw were still being rather useful to us. They knew their way around, they knew what had happened, and they were quite useful for us. They were actually doing a little work and helping around.

Q: Did you ever talk to any of the SS that you were in control of at Dachau?

A: No, no, I never talked to any of the SS. I never interviewed SS in combat, and I was up against them several times. I took them prisoners too.

Q: As far as the actual liberation process at either of the camps, I need a little more specifics in the reaction of the people of the camp who were still

walking around. Did people try and communicate with them? Did they try and give them stuff or did you ignore them and take a look around?

A I think we would naturally have to ignore them at the time; we can't go in shaking hands, it's not that type of operation whatsoever. We would take a camp to make sure there were no Germans still in there. Not knowing what's in there, we've got to look. We've got to search it out, and we've got to secure it, and we've got to move on to set up our defenses if not still on the attack

Q But, evidently somebody was there long enough to take these pictures?

A Yes, these were taken a few days later, and these were taken by some members of my command who merely gave me the pictures. I frankly have never taken a picture of my own by myself, but I was there; I was a witness. In fact, here is a picture right here of Dr. Schley.<sup>3</sup>

Q: Oh, in that picture?

A Yes, that's him from the rear. I think you see a Red Cross on his helmet. Right.

Q: Were these taken on the day that you said you were in there?

A: This man here was a soldier of mine, and these are authentic pictures, no doubt about it.

Q: Would you say at the time these pictures were taken that you were within the camp area?

A: I was within the sight of the picture. We weren't taking pictures of each other. We were taking pictures of conditions. This is what I have here. These are not pictures of each other. Yes, I was right there.

Q: Do you think the reason these people took pictures is because people

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<sup>3</sup>Another liberator interviewed by The Witness to the Holocaust Project  
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by Copyright Law (Title 17 U.S. Code).

wouldn't believe them when you came back to the States?

A: That's a pretty gruesome sight here. I think that anyone who would have a camera would certainly use it at that time.

Q: Just to record it for history.

A: Absolutely, absolutely.

Q: There was also something else that you had mentioned that really didn't affect you at the time, but it wasn't until afterwards. If you can expand a little bit on that about how things maybe sunk in a little more after you realized....

A I think you realize later, after time goes on, particularly the next day, the next week, if you had time then to think. During combat you don't have much time to think about what you just saw. You better be thinking about what is going to happen next.

Q: But you do think that at sometime it did start to sink in about the whole process of the Germans' inhumanity to man on this type of level?

A I think that as far as I am concerned, we merely witnessed what we had heard, and what we expected.

Q: Okay. As far as that goes, I don't have many more questions. The only other thing I would be interested in is with regard to Dachau. Will you just go over that again. You were just in charge of guarding prisoners.

A: I was in charge of the interior security in Dachau prison. This was a very large compound, so there were other troops around the exterior, but my men were all inside the prison, controlling the security of the solitary confinement section and other sections within the interior of it.

Q: Did you have any problems with the SS that you were guarding?

A: None whatsoever. Remember, at the time the SS -- in fact, the entire

German nation -- were so thoroughly beat that there was no opposition.

There was nothing but cooperation at that time.

Q: Did any of them try and commit suicide that you know of?

A: The soldiers themselves?

Q The SS. Yes. Or the soldiers.

A I am sure there were suicides. I don't recall any in my direct view, but I understand there were some suicides. I had heard that the mayor of Ohrdruf was forced to go down and look into this camp and these are the pictures that we have here. I have heard, and it was very authentic, that when he returned from the camp, he committed suicide when he went home. I don't know whether that was an admission that he knew about the camp or that he was really so shocked at what he had seen at the camp, since he was mayor of the town it was in.

Q: How long were you with the interior guard of Dachau?

A: I was there for about three weeks, then I volunteered for the invasion of Japan.

Q: Is there anything else that you can remember from your experiences that you would just like to add or to put down any comments? Any other things that happened along the way that you would just like to discuss? You can take your time.

A: Elizabeth, after 35, 36 years, and this is something that you put out of your mind, it is pretty hard to think back and to be able to remember certain things. It is most difficult. I think, though, from what I can remember of this particular time is spelled out right here in these pictures.

Q: I think that will just about do it then.