

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH HERMAN E. BULLING

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

and

JARED KOSCH

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TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Mr. Herman E. Bulling on June 27, 2003, in Victor, New York, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

Jared Kosch: Jared Kosch.

SI: Sitting in on the interview is Mrs. Helen Bulling. Thank you very much for having us today.

Herman Bulling: It's a pleasure.

SI: The tea and strudel was wonderful, thank you, Mrs. Bulling. To begin, could you tell us a little bit about your father, who was born in Germany? What do you know about his childhood and why he came to the United States?

HB: Well, my dad came over to the United States in 1910 and I think he might also have been over earlier than that. My grandfather ran a glove company, Bulling, and I think my dad might have come over as a salesman, earlier. In fact, it may have been why he came over in 1910, spent a little time in Boston, and then, he moved to New York City. He was working with the South and Central Importing and Exporting Company and my dad was pretty much a linguist. He spoke French, German, and, when I asked him about school, he said, primarily, he'd learned Latin and Greek in school. So, he was pretty well educated and I can see him working in the import-export area. My mom graduated from high school. Incidentally, my dad, as far as I know, went to Heidelberg University. My mom was a high school graduate, Brooklyn, New York, and she went out to "business." Her brothers did not think that women ought to work at all and she wanted to, and so, she was a stenographer and a secretary and my dad and mother met there, at work, and, in 1920, they were married. My mother's family was kind of an interesting one, in that her father came over from Norway and he brought brothers and sisters over and was knighted and honored by the king for all the work he had done in establishing Norwegians in the United States. He was a tailor and he had his tailor shop in his home and they had eight children, I believe, and my mother was the seventh and she used to say she's the seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, because her mother, apparently, was [the] seventh daughter, also. They lived in Brooklyn. The oldest brother, his name was Einar, but, everybody called him Eddie. He wound up with a seat on the Stock Exchange. He had three kids and we knew them. We ran into them. In fact, we saw them out in Cincinnati, the son, Bob, and he had three kids. I don't know anything beyond my grandparents' generation. I wish I did. I would love to find out more on both sides. As a matter-of-fact, one of the things I've been doing now, I'm corresponding with a relative whom I've never met to get more information. ... I was interested in finding out something about my father's family.

Now, I had my first birthday onboard ship, going over to Germany. My father wanted to take his bride and his new son back over to show off to his family, and so, I had my first birthday onboard ship, going over there. I don't remember anything about that trip, but we went, again, in ... 1927, I believe, when I was five years old and my sister was three years old, and I do remember part of that. I remember playing in my grandparents' garden and my sister and I were there with a couple of cousins and they were Eberhardt, [who] was two years older than I, and Hans-Jörgen, two years younger. ... When I started to check, and this was, ... I guess it was sometime in 1993 that I started looking, ... [I] sent a letter to the postmaster of Ilmenau,

Germany, which is in the Thuringen Forest area, and Ilmenau was my father's birthplace and where the family home had been and I got a letter back, oh, probably a month later, and the postmaster turned out to be a postmistress, and she and her husband, she said, had been working for almost a month looking for some relatives, and I remembered that Eberhardt and Hans-Jürgen's name was Templemann, married to my father's sister, and they located the Templemans and I started corresponding with Hans-Jürgen Templemann, and, finally, in '94, Helen and I took a trip. I was already retired and we took a trip over to Germany and we met Hans-Jürgen and his wife, and Helen was surprised, because, when we met Hans-Jürgen, he looked more like my father than I do and he was a nephew. At any rate, Hans-Jürgen had been in the German Army and had been a Messerschmitt pilot and was shot down, but survived. He spoke English. His wife did not. She was a charming woman, but she did not speak any English. Anyway, we traveled. We saw some sights with them, spent a couple of nights at their home and we also traveled around, did some other things in Germany, but, apparently, the word got around, from Hans-Jürgen, and I heard from another cousin whom I didn't know. Actually, she was the daughter of my cousin Horst, whom I met when he came over to the States. I guess I was maybe ten years old and he was nineteen or twenty. Anyway, he had a daughter, Rosemarie, and, apparently, my parents had known her, had met her, because she sent a picture of my mother and myself and said, "You may want this. I found it going through some papers." Well, that started something and we've been corresponding and the trouble with corresponding through the mail is that it takes forever-and-a-day to get letters back and forth, and so, in the last letter that I sent to Rosemarie, I said, "You know, a computer is so much easier and faster, if you have access to it." The next thing I know, I got a letter from Sabina Vogel, who is the daughter of Rosie, who is the daughter of the cousin whom I haven't ever met, except for once. Anyway, Sabina and I have been corresponding back and forth and she passes things on to her parents, and so, I've been getting much more contact with the family since we have a computer to rely on and I have invited all of them to come here. They have invited us to go back there, but I think I'm on too short a leash with this thing [an oxygen machine] to do another trip over to Germany, but it's been very interesting and I'm trying to track down some more. One of the things that I've been trying to find out about, the name Bulling doesn't sound German. It sounds English, more than anything else, and, now, I've gotten them intrigued over in Germany, to try to check and see. They probably haven't even worried about it at all, so, I told them that this is what I was trying to find out, where the name originated. So, I don't know what more you want to know about my parents. They were married in 1920. I was born in '22. My sister was born in ... '25 and she has spent most of her life in Vermont and she married somebody that I knew. We did not go to school together, but he was another Bud, Bud Schomaker, and he was in the Air Force and was shot down over Albania. ... I was overseas at the time, so, I really found out about it only later. He was missing in action for about a year and, when he came back, he and my sister were married and I knew him because his sister and my sister were classmates and he was kind of a playboy type when he was in prep school. He got very serious about things after he came back from the war, having been with the Albanian guerillas for a year. ... As a matter-of-fact, he totally changed and decided to become a farmer and he came back ... carrying malaria and allergies out the wazoo; that made it very difficult for him to do the farming. He stuck with it and did it for, probably, fifteen, twenty years and [it was], I think, the toughest kind of farming, dairy farming. You've got to milk the cows twice a day and you don't take vacations, unless you get somebody to come and milk them, and [that is] tougher, I think, than getting a babysitter, but they lived in Vermont and, finally, he got into teaching. At the same time, my sister had been a

librarian and [had] been working in the libraries in Bennington and, also, in Montpellier and my brother-in-law died, oh, I think, maybe ten years ago and my sister continued to work until she was seventy. ... Then, it wasn't a mandatory retirement, but she decided that she would. She continued to work until she was seventy. Unfortunately, she is now in a home with Alzheimer's. They had two sons and, again, unfortunately, the oldest son died when he was in his forties and the younger son is still there and he's sort of watchdog over his mother's condition. I talk to my sister probably every other week and it's kind of tough. She said, "When are you going to come up here?" and I explained things to her and she says, "Fine," and then, five minutes later, she'll say, "Oh, will you be coming up tomorrow?" and she doesn't really have the sense of [the] three hundred miles difference and doesn't retain what I've told her. She's one of those very fortunate Alzheimer's people who has not gotten violent, has not gotten bitter about things and she's just very, very calm, but, just that she's totally lost [her] memory. So, I can't count on her for any help in remembering things that I don't remember.

SI: You had roots in Germany through your father's family. He came over here before World War I.

HB: Oh, well, that's right. He was over here before, yes. He was a citizen. He was a naturalized citizen. I don't know when he was naturalized. I think it was sometime during that World War I period, but he was not in the service.

SI: Did he ever discuss how the family felt about World War I or what it was like being German in America?

HB: No. I know that he was very upset by the war and he was very supportive of the American position in, well, now, I'm getting ahead of myself. I don't know what his attitude was on World War I. I know he did not want anything to do with Germany and he was very happy to come over here. He did miss his family and there was one brother, his favorite brother, Carl, [who] was a professor at Jena University, and I know they corresponded and he corresponded with his sister, Marie, and then, when the war broke out, obviously, that stopped. I know, when the war ended, my dad tried to reestablish contacts with them and they told him that they would prefer that he did not write, because they were in the Russian sector and that letters from the United States caused all kinds of suspicions with the Russian authorities. So, that's why there had been no contact for some time when I, in 1993, tried to make contact again.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about what it was like to grow up in Brooklyn? What was your neighborhood like, going to elementary school? What did you do for fun?

HB: Well, Brooklyn, of course, is all paved. ... My folks started out in downtown Brooklyn, and then, wanted to move out to the country. Out to the country meant going out to the Bay Ridge section. I don't know if you know anything about Brooklyn, but Bay Ridge is farther out from New York City and he moved out to 84th Street and I still remember 627 84th Street. That's the first address I ever memorized and we were living there for, oh, I think, probably up until I was five or six years old, and then, we moved into a house in Brooklyn and that was on 71st Street. ... I'm not really sure; I suspect that what happened was that that must have been around '29. My dad never mentioned what he lost in the Stock Market Crash, but, somewhere

around '29, '30, we moved into an apartment, got rid of the house. At the same time, my dad left the importing-exporting business. My dad was a big dreamer on what he was going to do and he got started with a small pharmaceutical company. He was the president and it was a branch of a German pharmaceutical company and I know there were a couple times when, I think it was Squibb, wanted to buy him out and his attitude was, "If it's worth that to them, it's worth that to me and my family," and he continued and I can remember struggles with meeting the payroll. ... You know, when there's a problem with the payroll, the boss is the last one to get paid, in a small company, and my mother was working there, also. She'd been a housewife up until that time, when he ... got the little company started. So, it was a struggle. I had started out going to private school. I went to a very lovely Mrs. Edward's School for Boys, first grade through fourth grade, and my sister was going to Shore Road Academy, which was for girls, and that's the kind of lifestyle that my father, I guess, had lived as a youth and my mother was just agreeable to anything that my dad did, and so, we went to private school, until one point, when my mother and dad sat me down and said, "We don't think we can afford to send two people to private school and it's probably more important for a girl to go to private school than a boy. So, you want to start in public school?" "Yes." I had no choices, but, "Yes," and it didn't bother me. I really enjoyed [it], a little bit of adjusting, because you weren't treated the same in a public school class of thirty-five, forty people as you were in a private school, where you had, maybe, ten in a class. So, it took some adjusting, but I did reasonably well, I think, and I went to PS 102 in Brooklyn. My dad was just so worried about my having to do that. I think he forced my mom to walk a half a block behind me, it was about five or six blocks away from where we were living in the apartment. ... I went to Manual Training High School, ... incidentally, [the same school] that my mother went to. It was not the closest high school to where we lived, but she had talked about it so lovingly, and so, we applied and, yes, they would take me from out of the district and I went to Manual Training High School. I think, originally, it started out as a trade school, but it no longer was a trade school. Well, I shouldn't say that. It was, but they also had academic [courses], and so, I took regent's courses and everything else and graduated with honors and that got me into my biggest problem at Rutgers. I breezed through high school. I was an honor student without half trying. We had high school fraternities there; I was in a high school fraternity. I was president of the fraternity. I was editor of the school paper. I was first singles on the tennis team and I had no problem with high school, lots of girlfriends. Everything was easy, and then, I got to Rutgers and I breezed along, living in the fraternity house. If there was a bridge game going on, "Yes, fine, I'll sit in for awhile." "Go around the corner to the Tavern and have a beer or two?" "Yes, sure." One of the things I've never quite figured out, I drank beer in high school, was there an age restriction? I've never been able to figure that out.

JK: It was not yet a federal law. I think, from state-to-state, it was different, especially in the years right after Prohibition.

HB: Yes, yes. Oh, I can remember people talking about a ninety-cent lunch, which was a ham sandwich and eight beers, but the problem I had when I got to Rutgers was that I really didn't settle down to study. I thought I could absorb enough, but, no, it was different and that was the problem that I had at Rutgers. Then, what Rutgers had suggested [was], at the end of the year, that I would probably be better off to go to a local college in Brooklyn and get some good grades, and then, come back and I fully intended to come back.

SI: Did Dean Metzger sit down with you and tell you that? Who was it?

HB: Oh, I don't remember who that was. ... The only dean that I remember, really, was Luther Martin and the name is so easy to remember. ... No, somebody explained that. I don't know if they had guidance counselors. I don't really remember who it was, but, with all good intentions, I went back [to] living at home and commuting, take the subway downtown to St. John's University in Brooklyn and it was sort of a factory building. It was just not at all a college experience that I would recommend to anybody, but I was getting decent grades, because there wasn't anything else to do. I don't even know if they had; yes, they must have had sports teams, I think, St. John's basketball, going way back, but, at any rate, the problem that I had was that, December 1941, the war broke out and I had to wait until the end of January for the semester to be over and Rutgers switched to a trimester system and, therefore, their trimester was starting before my semester ended. So, at that point, I thought, "There's really no point in my continuing. I don't want to go to St. John's. I know I'm going to get drafted. I'm going to get some [work] experience," and so, at that point, I decided I would look for a job and I wanted to work for a newspaper and I don't know if the *News* was the first place I tried, it probably was, and they took me on as a copy boy. Usually, copy boys worked as copy boys for five, six years before they could move up. Probably the only reason I got the job was that they were so short of people, everybody had moved up. A lot of experienced reporters decided they were going to be foreign correspondents, and so, there were openings and I started as a copy boy and, inside of a couple of months, I was doing one day of rewrite a week. ... Probably, I picked up seniority faster than I ever have anyplace else, but I was a copy boy, and then, I became so senior on [the] copy boy staff that I could kind of set my own schedule, and so, ... I either worked at eight o'clock at night to four in the morning or six to two, and then, I was able to work [it] ... so that I did that Monday through Thursday, and then, Friday, I worked rewrite, but, that was dayside, and so, I worked until 2:00 AM or 4:00 AM, and then, started at eight o'clock in the morning. So, you'd take a snooze in the back room. ... Rarely did I go home, because I would have spent more time in the subway from 42nd Street, New York, back to 67th Street, Brooklyn, so, I thoroughly enjoyed that. I got to work; the most interesting [thing] was, ... on a couple of vacations, filling in at police headquarters. If I'm rambling too much, slow me down.

SI: No, no.

HB: The police headquarters beat was a very interesting area, because you worked at Center Street in downtown New York, at the police station. The cops had no use for the reporters hanging out in the police station all the time, and then, a very cagey police reporter by the name of Teddy Prager, Teddy had an idea and Teddy, incidentally, was a very good reporter, but, [he was] known as a legman. He could run out and pick up all kinds of stories. Nobody ever remembers seeing Teddy sitting at a typewriter and typing. He was strictly a legman and [he] calls it in to a rewrite man. He'd give it to me exactly the way he wanted it. Anyway, Teddy came up with the idea and he bought a building back behind the police headquarters on Center Street and he then rented offices to the newspapers and this was great. The newspapers liked it, because they had a difficult time locating their reporters when they were wandering around, because ... the cops would just get so tired of them being there, "Get the hell out of here for awhile." So, the papers were happy about it. The reporters were happy and the police were happy. So, there was this building with, I guess, eight or ten offices and the *News* had its own

office, the *Daily Mirror*, which was the big competitor, and [the] *New York Times* had the biggest office, the *Herald-Tribune* had an office, the *Journal*, also. There were a lot of newspapers in those days and there was usually a penny ante poker game going on and this was usually in the *Times* office, because it was the biggest, and you had enough chairs for everybody, and then, ... the procedure was that somebody would leave the poker game every half-hour and check, go over to the police headquarters, right across the street, look at the tickertape and see what was going on, go up to the desk and ask the sergeant, "Anything that I ought to know about?" "No, go back and tell everybody." If there was something, the protocol was that you told everybody. You never kept a secret out of police headquarters. However, if you got a call, if your office phone rang, you went up to your office, picked up the phone. You get told that there's something going on someplace. You hang up; you say, "I'm leaving guys." You go out and grab a cab and nobody ever followed anybody out, regardless of what you've seen in the movies about going out to see where the cab driver is going, never happened, because, if anybody had an exclusive, well, what everybody would do would be [to] go to the phone and call their city desk and say, "Hey, the *News* just got a tip on something. Is there something going that we ought to be finding out about?" Anyway, that was a very, very exciting way to work. I did that, filling in. I guess, I never did it for more than probably three or four days at a time and there were other copy boys who would also get a chance at it, but that was something that I enjoyed very much, and then, the rewrite once a week was very nice. So, that went on until December, when I got drafted and went into the service.

SI: Were most of the stories you were working on there just local city beat type stories? Are there any particular stories that stand out?

HB: Well, I mentioned to you before the *Normandie*, the burning of the *Normandie*. That was my first day as a copy boy.

SI: Could you repeat that for the tape?

HB: Yes. I remember starting, because the first day I worked for the *News* was the day that the *Normandie* burned and I couldn't remember the date, but I finally found it on the computer, but that was kind of an interesting procedure, because, in those days, you didn't have your photos going back through any kind of lines. They had to be hand carried back and forth, and so, we had to pick up the plates from the photographers, bring them new supplies, carry the plates back to the office. There's another little interesting bit of protocol there. Copy boys and reporters took cabs all over and I was told, early on, ... they didn't give me a schedule, but they said that everybody sort of adds a little to the cab fare and, if you don't do it, you'll make everybody else look bad. So, it meant an extra five to ten bucks a week and, when your base salary is sixteen dollars a week, an extra five is not too shabby, but I'm sure that the controller at the paper knew what was going on, but he was happy with it and everybody was happy with it. So, everybody padded those cab fares and, of course, cab fares were not [expensive]. I'm talking about taking a sixty-cent cab fare and making it eighty, you know, nothing outrageous, and the cab fares were so minimal that nobody got upset over it. The other thing that was interesting there, a few times, I worked with sports photographers and that was great. You go out to Madison Square Garden and sit in one of those overhanging boxes, you know, hanging down from the balcony, where the photographers [are] there and they're shooting everything and you stay there and, about the

middle of the first period, he's got enough shots for the early edition and you take it and you go back and the rest of it, he takes himself and carries it back when the game is over, but that was another interesting phase. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Please, continue.

HB: I was talking about when I started with the *Daily News*. When I started trying to write some of these things down, I didn't remember specifically what time I started there, but I knew that the first day I worked there was the day that the *Normandie* burned in New York Harbor, and so, I had no difficulty finding that date on the Internet and that was February 9, 1942. That was a very exciting time. ... As a copy boy, I was carrying photographic plates back from the photographers who were there on the dock, shooting every bit of the *Normandie* sinking there, and then, getting in a cab and taking them back to the office to be developed. ... I think, at that point, they were still doing extras on something like that, because you could see the smoke from there for miles and miles and miles. That was an exciting time and I enjoyed the excitement of the newspaper business, but I also came to realize, with all the things that I was doing, that it was difficult to have a normal life and a family life and raise children and work on a newspaper, either as a reporter or even as an editor, because the interesting part of a morning paper was the nightshift. Night side had all the action. The dayside was sort of catch up time, rewrite things, add to it, but nothing really got in until the first edition, which came out, I think, around nine, ten o'clock at night, ... the early edition, and then, the late edition was out at one o'clock, two o'clock in the morning and that was the home delivered [edition] and that was the bulk and it still is the bulk of newspaper circulation. So, that's about it, as far as my newspaper career was concerned.

SI: While working for the newspaper, were you able to get a sense of how the war affected New York City, in terms of defense measures?

HB: No. I knew that we had air raid wardens wandering around, but, again, that was a period that [I was] working nights. I probably slept until, probably as long as I could, because there were an awful lot of times that [I was] getting off at two o'clock or four o'clock. ...

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE-----

SI: Please, continue.

HB: If somebody said, "Let's go out and have a drink," I've always been amenable to that sort of suggestion and we went out and, because of the hours, we went to some places that I wouldn't want to today, where you got served a shot of whiskey in a coffee cup, and I can even remember one night when there was a body at the door and the owner came out and moved the body so that we could get in. That was on 44th Street and I'm sure the whole thing is changed now, but it was a coffee shop at 44th Street, around Eighth Avenue, and nobody's going to go to jail over that right now, but it was very exciting. It was a lot fun working on a newspaper. As far as the effect of the war, I don't really recall anything, because we were concerned with accidents. Boy,

I remember, one night, I got home and I got home in time to have breakfast with my parents and they said, "Where have you been?" "Oh, I've been covering a fire in a spice factory," and I must have smelled like the strongest taco that you've ever had, but there were fires, accidents. I remember one suicide and somebody went off the roof of an apartment house into a courtyard and I was there because this was one of the things we'd gotten a tip on and I went out and covered that and walked into the apartment of the people who were the relatives of this man who had gone off. ... The police thought I was a relative and the people who were there thought I was a policeman and I sat there through the whole interrogation, until the police finally figured [it] out. They started to talk to me and I said, "I'm a reporter." "Get your ass out of here." So, I went back out into the courtyard and the cop who was down there was friendly and he said, "Stick around. You can help me lift this guy onto the stretcher," and the coroner, apparently, had been there and pronounced him dead. It was pretty obvious and, I remember, ... I took the feet, fortunately, and the cop had the upper body and he had just so many broken bones, we couldn't move him. We just left him there. ... I can't say that is the high point of my newspaper career, but there were all sorts of different things going on, and so, I enjoyed it, but, when the war was over and I came back, I decided that I didn't really want to do that for the rest of my life, although, when I was in high school, I thought that's exactly what I wanted to do. ... [I] decided I wanted to get into something else. ... In fact, I think it was my dad who said, "What about copywriting?" and I said, "What is that?" I thought it had something to do with legal terms. He said, "No. It's writing advertising," and so, I applied for a job as a copywriter and got started with the J.C. Penney Company at their central office in New York and that was a great experience, also. I met some wonderful people there and I've always felt that that was probably one of the best training grounds that I had ever seen, because Penney's had a central advertising office and they had sixteen hundred stores at that time and the stores are placed by AAA, AA, and all the way down to, I think, F, very, very small stores, and what they did in the central office was to prepare advertising. Incidentally, the advertising department was one unit, but, then, there were buying offices that were downstairs. ... Well, in spring, they would have the toys that were being bought for Christmas, and so, they would bring the samples up. They knew what they were shipping to the stores and you could write the advertising for it and everything was done in modules. I remember, one of the first things I worked on was a toy service, which is what they called these things, houseware service, a toy service, housedress service. The toy service must have been a couple of hundred different toys and each one of them was done in a one-column cut and I don't remember the specific [requirements], but it would have been four lines of thirty-seven characters and that was the copy that had to be written for each one of these. It taught a certain discipline, because you had to make all of those fit. Then, they took a portion of those and made two-column cuts out of them and you could embellish and add a little more copy to the two-column, and then, there was probably a three-column or a four-column, depending on the toy. There were several features, and then, there were formats that were sent out. If you're going to run a half page ad, you take one feature this way, and then, four more down below here, and so, it was a great basic training in how to put advertising together and it was done so [that] it could be done in the small stores with people who did not understand a thing about it, other than [to] follow the instructions. ... Also, it introduced me to some things that I knew nothing about, like, I remember getting an assignment to write about a cotton pick sack. I didn't know what a cotton pick sack was, but I found out that it's a canvas bag with a strap that goes over your shoulder and it hangs down here and you pick cotton; you put in the cotton. So, I learned a lot there about different things from all over the country, where they had

Penney's stores, but, then, when I moved from the main office out to a small store, I was applying what I'd learned in [the] central office, but, then, when I moved to Shillito's, which was a big department store, I really got the first taste of how merchants operate and the thing is, with the Penney's stores, somebody could have absolutely no sense of merchandising and run a Penney's store. All you had to do was follow instructions. The only people who got in trouble were the ones who didn't follow the instructions, but ... [those people] didn't really have much choice in what they sold in the store. The merchandise was sent in by the central office, and so, the store manager couldn't really say, "I want to go out [and buy this product]." Well, I can remember one of the things, when I first started with Shillito's, ... a boy's clothing buyer who said, "Boy, I think these Davy Crocket hats are going to be hot." He bought, probably, ten gross of them and I can also remember another toy buyer who thought Pogo Sticks [were] ... going to make a resurgence and he was stuck with Pogo Sticks for the rest of his career, which didn't last too long. Anyway, most Penney's stores, there was no way that anybody could do that. They could not take a flyer on something, but, getting into Shillito's, I, for the first time, got involved with the idea of budgeting and allocating dollars to different departments in different categories in merchandising. So, I picked up a lot there, and then, moving to a small store, Chappell's, after that, I was able to apply some of the things that I'd learned in Penney's and in Shillito's in a store that size. The next move, to Pogue's, was an interesting one, because Pogue's was ... [the] second biggest store in Cincinnati, but it was the high-class store and I thoroughly enjoyed that one. ... When I started there, it was an independent store, but they were bought by Associated Dry Goods and I, then, for the first time, got into the idea of management, someplace else telling you what you had to do, and it wasn't anywhere near as much fun as working for an independent store. Without getting into too much detail on that, they moved people around. They moved store presidents in and out and they moved merchandise managers around and I can remember that, at one point, ... incidentally, I had been very friendly with the president of the store, who hired me to come back to Cincinnati, and he was a guy who had been in the sales promotion end at one point, but had gotten to the point where he moved up in this family store and became president. After Associated Dry Goods bought the store, he was made chairman of the board, although there was no board, and a president was sent in and his name was Jim Petty, the former president. Jim and I still had coffee every morning and it was peculiar, because I was advertising manager, Jim Petty was the chairman and the third member of our triumvirate was Fred Zeis, who was the fur buyer. We, you know, [were] thoroughly disassociated, so, we never talked about work. We talked about the Cincinnati Reds. We talked about horseracing in Churchill Downs and somebody had a new joke every morning, but we had our coffee breaks there and, I guess, I learned a lot. I guess I kept learning a lot in all of that and I enjoyed my stay there until we got to the point where the new president who had come in had been president at another store, came in there as president of Pogue's. I learned a lot from him, because he was a guy who was very much interested in high quality things, watches, ... a step higher than anything that had been covered before and it had been a quality store previously and he improved a lot of things there. Then, the New York office sent in another person who was now in a job between the president and myself and that's when I decided I'd much prefer [to] work in an independently owned store. That's when I came to McCurdy's and, while there were a lot of things wrong with McCurdy's, Gil McCurdy was the president, I could go talk to him and, whatever decision was made, that's what we did.

JK: What year was that?

HB: I came here in '65 and I retired in '87. So, I had twenty-two years of very enjoyable work and, during that time, I also got involved with national organizations. We had a buying office and I was involved with that. ... There was the National Retail Merchants Association. I got involved with that and ended up being chairman of the sales promotion division and, also, you're probably not aware of this, but Midtown Plaza in Rochester is the first downtown enclosed mall in the country and that happened in, they started building in '62 and opened in '64, which was just before I got here, but that enclosed mall had its own management and, as the sales promotion director of McCurdy's, I also was part of the promotional board for the whole mall and that also was something that I really enjoyed doing.

Helen Bulling: Don't forget, they wanted to talk about the war.

SI: Oh, no.

HB: Oh, I [can] tell war stories.

SI: We can cover all that later or we can go there now.

HB: Okay.

SI: Nothing ever goes according to sequence.

HB: That's the way I've written [it] here and I started out by saying that I'm putting down things, calling it my musings, rather than my biography, because whatever I'm thinking about, I'm going to write about and I have jumped around from something about Korea and back to something about the *Daily News*.

JK: I think it is fine this way.

HB: Good.

JK: To jump back, you were at the newspaper and you were drafted while you were in New York. What happened next?

SI: Can you tell us about the process of being drafted and having to report in?

HB: Okay, I was going to look for something, because I thought you'd want to talk about that. I got drafted and, at the draft board, they said, "We pay your way to report in," and I said, "Okay," and they gave me a little ticket. It's a five-cent subway token and I have that someplace, because I never turned it in. I reported in and we're going to Fort Dix and, from Fort Dix, ... we took some tests and I don't know why they assigned me to an armored division. I could drive a car, but I've never really understood that. I took some tests and they also sent me to radio school and I knew nothing about radio. I guess, in one of the tests, where ... you hear a sound and they say, "Now, let's listen to this sound. Is it the same or different?" I guess I did pretty well on that and that's more a musical ear, I think. So, I went to radio school and, in fact, that's where I first met

your [Helen Bulling's] brother. Yes, I think we first met in radio school and he knew less than I did, but they assigned me to an armored division and I went to Camp Campbell, Kentucky, and went through basic training, and then, I had the radio school and learned to drive a tank. Really, this was World War II that we're in, the first tank I drove was a World War I tank and instead of having a turret, it had a windshield and a piece that propped up and was held by two other arms to hold it up and sticks to drive it, well, even though the other ones that we drove had sticks, because you're really driving two things, this track and this track, but it was interesting, and then, I thought, "As long as I'm going to be doing something like this, I'd just as soon be in the Air Force." So, I applied for the Air Force. Then, we went on maneuvers and, when we went on maneuvers, they weren't going to assign me. Knowing that my request for transfer was in, they weren't going to assign me to a tank crew. They assigned me to be the general's driver, and so, I drove a jeep and I drove the general's tank and I drove the general's scout car; he had all three.

JK: One specific general.

HB: One specific general and he was a commander of Combat Command B and he had these vehicles. The nice thing about it was that I was the only driver who could take a vehicle down to the motor pool and have them change the oil and do whatever else had to be done and that's because I had three vehicles. Usually, drivers had to service their own vehicles.

JK: Do you remember the general's name?

HB: Yes, General Peckham, Brigadier General Peckham.

JK: You must have been privy to some interesting things, driving the general around.

HB: No, no, no. I'm just the driver. For the most part, during maneuvers, he was not in the field. If we went some place, I would drive and he would be sitting alongside me and he would holler out things to his aides, who would be either in jeeps or some other vehicle, and so, all I did was drive him and didn't really get that sociable with him. So, anyway, when maneuvers were over, the 12th was transferred to Abilene, Texas, but I went home on furlough and my transfer hadn't come through, and then, I took a train ... and bus, got down to Abilene, Texas, and there were my orders for transfer waiting for me. So, I went to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and went through a whole bunch of tests there and I remember a lot of them were called the psychomotor tests and they were testing us. ... Finally, I think you got a 9-8-7-6 grading [system] and, I think, they had an eight for pilot, seven for navigator and six for bombardier. They were all passing grades, and so, they sent me to the next phase, [which] was College Training Detachment, because I did not have a college degree, and so, this was to, in six months, make up for that and [I] went to Western Reserve University, which was, again, a great experience, because, ... this was in Cleveland, there were no military posts nearby. So, we cadets at the Western Reserve, right on the campus there, had the whole campus, all the females inviting us to open houses at their houses and all sorts of things. We had a very good time there. ... I think the most memorable thing I did there was that we wanted to have a party; it was not a graduation, I don't know if it's Christmas party or what it was, but, somehow, I got roped into arranging the party and found out that there was a brewery in downtown Cleveland and, along with two other guys, [I] went down there to see whether we could get any discount on beer or whatever and we got in

there and it was sort of like the *Sopranos*. It was people standing around, “Look, what do you want?” and we finally got to see the guy and I don’t remember, to this day, what we asked for, but I think I asked, ... “Could we get a good price on [it]?” Well, he had a kid in the service someplace. We got the beer free. So, that was kind of a memorable experience and I have no idea what the brewery was or what his name was or anything else, but we got to meet the headman, but, boy, it was scary getting there. ... Anyway, then, that ended when the Air Force decided they had more pilots than they had planes, more crews than they had planes for the crews to fly. So, the Army, in its wisdom, decided that we all had to go to the infantry, because the first thing I said was, “Okay, I’ll go back to the 12th Armored.” No, no, nobody could go back, because where they needed bodies was in the infantry.

JK: Was the 12th Armored still in the United States at the time?

HB: Yes, yes, yes, ... because they were still down in Abilene, Texas, and they didn’t go overseas [yet]. They must have gone someplace else, too. Do you know where he went next?

Helen Bulling: He never talked about it.

HB: The difference between her brother and myself is that I love to talk about it. ...

Helen Bulling: He came home still shell-shocked. He couldn’t talk about it. He was in Germany.

HB: But, I got to the 75th Division and I told you, I don’t know if I said that here or just told you before, the 75th was a bunch of misfits. It’s on there? Okay.

SI: Oh, no, please tell us again.

HB: The 75th Division had been on maneuvers and I don’t know if you know about the maneuvers, but, they grade the outfits going through maneuvers and the 75th had flunked everything, and so, they, I’m sure, relieved the commanding general and all the other bigwigs and they also took all the qualified enlisted personnel and used them as replacements, ... saving only a cadre of officers and noncoms who could start a new division, and it was a terrible outfit, because the officers and the noncoms that were left were ... the leftovers. They were not choice. I had one sergeant; I ran into something there that influenced me later. For some reason or other, I got assigned to an I&R Platoon, which is intelligence and reconnaissance, and it really appealed to me and the sergeant that we had was really a nice one. He was really sharp. He wanted to go to OCS and he was one of those poor individuals who, ... on a test, he wound up with about a 105 IQ, but he was one of the most savvy guys I had ever met. So, I don’t remember, I think it was 110 was the minimum for OCS and this sergeant and I, again, I don’t remember his name, but I learned an awful lot. He was an innovator, too. I mean, [he] ... took us out in a jeep and we’d jump out at varying speeds. He wanted to figure out what speed you could safely jump out of a jeep. Well, at that time, I thought it was kind of fun and we’re working out that, ... at this speed, you might be able to stay on your feet and run. At this speed, you definitely go into a roll, but we did a lot of interesting things like that, but I did apply for OCS, because I really couldn’t find myself staying with the 75th, and so, [I] got down to Fort Benning. I was accepted and got

down to Fort Benning and went through with Class 351-B. We started out with two hundred people in a class and graduated seventy-seven and [had] a lot of interesting [experiences], same as in going through OCS, you know. I would say I enjoyed a lot of them. I did not enjoy some of them. ... Probably the most significant experience I had there; I shouldn't say I didn't enjoy [it], I can't think of anything, off hand, I didn't enjoy. You learned about all the weapons and that I did enjoy and you had a chance to direct artillery and we took turns on it and you call for the artillery. Cost a small fortune to send somebody through there, but we did that. Yes, I can think of one thing that I didn't enjoy and it was primarily because [of] some goof somebody did. We were on an exercise on firing a flare to signal moving forward and, the first time we did it, the flare hit in a dry brush and started a fire. We all managed to stamp that out, and then, the guy who was in charge, a lieutenant or captain, whoever it was, said, "Okay, let's start over again," and I don't know that anybody tried to, but we all looked at each other and he's going to do the same thing again, firing into the dry brush there and it did [set a fire] and, finally, we started a good enough fire that we had to call the whole damned thing off and it gets so frustrating, knowing that something bad is going to happen, watching it happen, because somebody is so inflexible that he won't change his mind. That's part of it, anyway, but we did so many things that I found extremely valuable. I have a terrible sense of direction and there were other guys who really put me to shame in having a sense of direction. Not having a good sense of direction, when I went out with a map and a compass, I did exactly what the map and the compass told me to do and ... I was not one of these people who say, "I think we're going to go a little more this way," and I wound up being right more times than wrong by just following [the map and compass]. They give you problems on [a course]. You look at the map, you're here and you've got to go over here, but there's a pond in-between and there's woods over here, and so, you've got to do the whole thing. You map it out on your compass, reading your azimuth on the compass, and how many paces you think you have to go and plot it out like that and, if you don't have a sense of direction, you have to follow exactly what your plan is. So, I think I did very well. Probably the biggest problem I had going through OCS was that they were constantly telling us to be aware of booby traps and we were out sitting on bleachers, doing an artillery exercise, and, somehow or other, when we were getting up to leave, my helmet liner and do you know the helmet liner is?

SI: Yes.

HB: Okay. It's the inside, and then, the middle goes over there and we only wore helmet liners. We didn't wear the metal helmet. My helmet liner got knocked off and a bunch of guys [were] standing up at the same time and I thought I saw it down there. We go down there, I picked it up and it was a booby trap and, while it was a small charge, it still blew enough sand into my face that I couldn't open my eyes, and so, they had to take me back to the hospital and they squirted something under my eyes, to loosen it up, but I couldn't keep my eyes open. They kept falling shut and I missed a day. They kept me there overnight, and then, I had a big argument that, "Yes, I'm ready to go back," because, if you missed two days, you're dropped back into another class. So, I did get out the next day, got back with my unit and, fortunately, there were enough good buddies there to lead me around and, fortunately, I did not get into a situation where I had to do the artillery sighting or anything. So, that's, I think, the closest I came to getting washed out there, because a lot of people who did get washed out as [a result of] partly class work and

partly fieldwork, and so, I was sort of happy with the whole situation, and then, you get to be an officer and you see a whole other side of the Army. Are either of you ROTC? No.

SI: It is not required anymore. I have a general question about the College Training Detachment at OCS. They were giving you a lot of training in a very compressed amount of time. Could you describe what a hectic pace that was and how you adapted to it?

HB: Well, the hectic pace, with the College Training Detachment, we really were learning an awful lot of theory of flight, meteorology, nothing that I thought was really that significant and we were all just waiting until we got down to flight school, but I don't consider that [worthwhile]. I really thought that was sort of a wasted [period]. They weren't, certainly, going to give me four years of college in six months, and so, it was just like having a couple of other courses. So, I didn't really think that was that significant. OCS, on the other hand, was. I have always felt very good about the training there and very respectful of the school down there. You got a lot of physical training, which did come in handy, a lot of theory of battle, fire and movement, all the things that you should know theoretically, and you go out on a patrol and you didn't know whether you're going to be the patrol leader or the lead scout or what. So, you got to see all of those things and you had a lot of classroom stuff. One of the things I remember was a highly decorated guy who had come back from the war and was giving us a lecture on leadership and one of the things that he said was; incidentally, I have to mention [that] the motto of the Infantry School is, "Follow me." It's a saber and a "Follow me," and that's that Infantry School. He said, "This is very good, but," he said, "don't over do it." He said, "Example leadership should be your last resort, because if you're going to get out [in] front of your troops every time, you're going to be the first one that gets hit and you're no longer a qualified leader when you become a casualty." You got a lot of this kind of stuff. We've also got, oh, all through the Army, we got *Why We Fight*, a series of movies which was really, I thought, very inspiring and I enjoyed most of that. I was pretty *gung-ho* about it. So, anyway, getting through OCS, I really did feel [well trained]. I took it seriously and I felt qualified and I did have opportunities on the example leadership, to when to and when not to. Both times, well, [the] first time that I was wounded was in Korea and I was really doing the wrong thing. We had moved; do you mind my jumping to Korea?

SI: No, no, go ahead.

HB: One of the things that happens in the Army in the infantry is that you work on an "up system" with the platoons. First Platoon is up, Second Platoon is next and you rotate and, the next day, your Second Platoon is up first, and so, on this particular [day], I was platoon leader of the Third Platoon of K Company and Second Platoon was up and we moved into position and the company commander said to the platoon leader [of] Second Platoon, "Okay, get your guys moving," and he couldn't. He was trying to get them to jump up and, finally, the captain jumped up and said, "Follow me," and the guys got up and followed him. Then, he said, "Bulling, take the right flank," and so, he took the left flank, I took the right flank and we moved forward. ... One of the things that you have to keep doing, one of the things the platoon leader has to do, is to keep the guys firing, because what happens is that if you got up and started moving forward, ... the guy you're fighting is going to get up out of his hole and shoot at you. You've got to be laying down a lot of fire, so that they keep their heads down. The tendency of every man

moving forward is, "I get thirty rounds, sixty rounds, I don't want to use it all up," and so, they don't want to fire and they're waiting to see somebody and, boy, you don't very often do.

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO-----

JK: This continues an interview with Herman E. Bulling on June 27, 2003. If you would continue, Mr. Bulling.

HB: Okay, I was moving forward and saying that, "You have to keep after the guys. Keep shooting, keep shooting," as you move ahead in an attack and you try not to get out in front of your men, because, for one thing, you can't holler back, "Keep shooting," when you're out in front there, too. I remember going out on this particular day and we were moving along pretty nicely and the other thing you keep hollering is, "Don't bunch up." You want them to keep spread out and keep moving forward in pretty much of a line and keep shooting, and so, the job of a platoon leader is to make sure that this is all happening.

JK: Do you remember where you were on this day, just for reference, what area you were in?

HB: I know specifically, (Sanguramokchan?), Korea, and I know that because that's what it says on the paper, [the Purple Heart citation] but we kept moving forward and I finally came to a point where there was a grenade that went off pretty close to me. So, I kind of took cover and I looked up and, probably fifty, sixty feet away, there was somebody in a bunker and I looked. I got my rifle ready and he threw another grenade. It was what we call a potato masher grenade. It's something about the size of a beer can and a wooden handle on it and they were not that lethal, because it's just an explosion, and, if you get hit with the handle or anything else, it'll hurt, it won't kill you. Anyway, he was throwing; he was throwing over my head. So, next time he popped up, I got him and I got him right between the eyes and that's one of the things that is a very vivid memory. I'm not sure, I know I hit him and I think, in my mind's eye, I see a hole. I see the whole thing happening and he went down and I'm just about ready to get up again and another guy pops up, just looking around to see what happened, and I got him, too. There aren't too many times that you see the enemy that you're fighting. More often than not, you're shooting and they're shooting and people get hit and you don't know where it came from, and so, we moved on ahead. I had thrown one grenade and we moved on ahead and here's the captain on the left, coming up with the Second Platoon, and I came up with the First Platoon. There was still another hill to go up and what looked like a bunker on the top of that, and so, the captain said, "You got any ammunition left?" I said, "Yes, I do," and he says, "You got a grenade?" I said, "Yes, I still have one grenade left." He said, "I'm out. Can you take it the rest of the way?" and I said, "Yup," and I took the grenade and I guess the hill was probably another sixty feet, pitchers mound, and so, I took the grenade, pulled the pin, let it pop, let the handle pop off, "Mississippi one, Mississippi two," throw and it went off and I hit right in the bunker, and so, as soon as that went off, I started running up the hill. So, I was the first one up the hill and, when I got up to the top of the hill, down[hill], going away from the hill, is a little path, going down and off to the left, and so, there were three guys who were just about to [get on] the path where it turned off and I popped the first one and he went right over. The second one went right over. The third one stumbled, but didn't go over and I think I squeezed off a second shot and, just about that time, a bullet got me in the shoulder and it was an odd feeling, because it didn't hurt,

but I just spun around and went down. The stupidity is that you don't get up on the top of a ridge and stand there. You silhouette yourself against the sky and I'm still not sure how the bullet ever got through, because I was like this and that bullet went through my shoulder here. So, it was about three inches from my nose and went through and came out the back. I think I was extremely fortunate. There's a bit of luck in that, too. The doc who examined me said, "You know, that was an armor-piercing bullet that hit you." I said, "No, I didn't know that." He said, "The way that went through, and so clean," he said, "if that had been regular ball ammunition, it would have probably shattered and possibly even got into your lung, but this just came through so clean." They didn't have armor-piercing ammunition, but they had captured some of ours and some of our guns and some of our ammo and I still, to this day, don't know whether it was a North Korean or Chinese, because we were up against both, but I was extremely fortunate that, here, I got hit with the bullet that was the easiest. A tracer is by far the worst, because that's got the phosphorous burning. So, anyway, I went down with that and you want to hear more?

JK: Oh, yes.

HB: Okay. I landed on the ground, on my hands and knees, and I looked down at my knees and here's a foot in front of my knees and I thought, "My God, I landed on one of the buggers," and I start crawling off. I crawled probably about fifteen feet and the foot was still there and the body was still back there where I'd left it. So, I got his foot caught between my knees and carried it off, and then, an aid man came up, bandaged my shoulder, and the captain came up and said, "We'll get you back to [the] aid station," and he said, "Hey, Zeke;" Zeke was an ammo bearer. He said, "You're going to go down for more ammunition. Take the Lieutenant down with you. Make sure he gets down to the foot of the hill. I've radioed that we have a casualty up here and they're going to send an ambulance." So, we started down the hill and we got shot at when we're going down the hill. Oh, no, before we got down there, yes, we got partly down the hill, and this is one of the things that I sort of look back on and say, "Boy, I still don't know if I did the right thing." One of the things we had all sorts of lectures about was the fact that the enemy is very tricky and very dedicated and, when you think that they're beaten and they're lying on the ground, they may reach up and pull one more grenade out and fling it at you. So, when Zeke and I were starting to go down the hill, there was ... an enemy soldier lying on the ground and he reached up like this and I said, "Shoot him, Zeke," and Zeke, dutiful, took his .45 and blasted the guy. I don't know whether I was right in that. I don't know if he was simply clutching where he had been wounded, but that's one of the things that you have happen and that's the most bitter memories that I have of it. We got down to the bottom of the hill, finally, and the ambulance was there and there was one occupant in there already and he was one of the enemy, North Korean or Chinese, and so, I didn't know who was more uneasy, him or me, because the two of us were in the back of the ambulance and they got me off first at our aid station and they must have taken him wherever they had the POW station. ... That was [due to] the fact that, ... once I got up to the top of the hill, ... first, I should have fallen down in the prone position and fired from there, but I just stood. You don't, that often, get a chance to get a shot off and I saw these three guys and I thought, "Boy, I can pick them off," and I did, but one of them, not one of them, but somebody else, got me. That's my first Purple Heart story and that's the Korean War. We got away from ... World War II and there isn't that much with World War II. The one interesting thing that I can tell you, we were on the island of Panay. ... When I first went over, we landed on Leyte, and then, from Leyte, moved to Negros and Negros is where I joined the

40th Division and got assigned to platoon leader of Company B, Second Platoon. They were on the top of the hill. They had already done their attack. They were dug in at the top of the hill ... we had to climb, about five or six of us that were replacements, and we had to climb the hill, but they had Filipino houseboys who carried our packs up there. This one houseboy had two packs and was going way ahead of us and [he would] come back to us and go way ahead. We climbed, I remember, it was Hill 3155, which means that that's the elevation, and we got up to the top of 3155, joined the outfit, and, yes, they did counterattack, but it wasn't much of a counterattack, threw some mortar shells in at us and they never did make a really strong [effort]. [It was] hard to do it, because we were in the best position.

SI: What was that first experience with coming under enemy fire like? How did you respond to this?

HB: Oh, the same way I did the eighth or ninth and tenth, scared. You've got to be. I guess the only thing I can compare it with is that, if you're standing at bat and you've got a fastball pitcher whose reputation is for being wild, how do you feel? Incidentally, my baseball [experience] goes back to before they wore helmets. So, whenever I stood there, I was scared, but, in a sense, you can say, "I'm prepared," but you're still scared when you come under fire. When you hear mortar shells go off close by, you've got to be scared and anybody who isn't [is crazy]. I remember hearing stories about this fearless Marine who, can't think of his name, but he's a legend in the Marines.

SI: Chesty Puller?

HB: Chesty Puller, yes, fearless, wounded I don't know how many times and they said he was absolutely fearless. I think you've got to be an idiot to be totally fearless. I just don't understand how you can't have enough regard, you know, [for] what can happen to you and I think you've got to be a little scared. So, yes, I was scared and I was on subsequent times, also. There are several things that are a little harder to explain. The things that I just mentioned have a horrible aspect to them. When you're going through it, you don't get that; the horror is not the same. I think one of the things, probably, [that] was a big shock ... in the Philippines [was] the first time I smelled dead bodies. That is a kind of a shock and the first time you see dead bodies lying there, that's something of a shock, but you very quickly, I think, get to the point of saying, "Well, I saw dead bodies yesterday. I'm now seeing more dead bodies today," and it does not have the same impact on you. I don't think fear is the same. I think you still get scared every day and, if you ran into something like that, I can still [hear] bullets whistling and I got scared every time I heard the whistle of a bullet and I think I almost automatically duck, even just not knowing where they're coming from. I could be ducking into them rather than ducking away from them. Yes, I think ... that should be human nature. I can't imagine anybody totally not being afraid.

SI: A number of other veterans commented on how you very quickly become callous towards losing people on your own side and seeing bodies.

HB: No, I never saw that many of my own troops getting hit, but, yes, I get [that] you could get callous to that, but you'd have to see an awful lot of stuff to do that.

SI: Yes. I think it is a survival instinct. What happened on Negros after the first encounter?

HB: Oh, Negros, very little more happened on Negros. We had taken Hill 3155 and I don't know what we wanted it for, because we pulled back off it. There was no reason to go over the next hill. The Japanese, having made a weak counterattack, pulled away, and so, we were pulled back. I assumed that somebody else relieved B Company. It may be that they simply switched, put another battalion up there in the same position, but that was probably close to the last action on Negros, had a few patrols and never ran into anything more on Negros. Then, we went into the next phase, which was, I also remember this, with the Colonel [who] called everybody together and said, "We're now going to be preparing for the landing in Japan," and he said, "The General said that the 40th is one of the lead divisions," and he said, "I know you gentlemen," he's talking to his officers, "I know you gentlemen will be happy to hear that I said to the General, 'Make the 160th the lead regiment,'" and we said, "Thanks a whole bunch," and so, we started now in preparing for a landing and that was kind of a no fun thing. You load everything on a ship and go over to Panay, go through the exercises, going off the ship, into the landing crafts, land on it, wait two days, load up again and go back and land on the shore of Negros and we did Negros to Panay, Panay to Negros, Negros to Panay, and, about that time, we heard on the ship's radio that this bomb had been dropped and we just couldn't believe it and we thought it was propaganda. For some reason or other, the Japanese who gave us that; oh, one more little tidbit, on the ship going over, it took us twenty some days to go from San Francisco over to Leyte and we heard a report that our ship had been sunk on Japanese radio, and so, we didn't trust whatever you heard on the radio. When we finally got back on Panay, our regimental commander, Colonel Stanton, who was a West Pointer, said, "The war is over. Starting this Saturday, we will have a parade in dress uniform every Saturday," and so, the next Saturday, ... the first time I'd worn a tie in some time, we got on our dress uniforms and we were in suntans, so, it wasn't jackets or anything like that and we were standing parade and the General was making his inspection and he was just up to my [platoon]. At that point, I had the I&R platoon and somebody came rushing in, a Filipino farmer, ... and talked to somebody and they finally interrupted, rushed up to the Colonel and said, "This farmer has just seen some Japs within, probably, a mile of our camp," and so, the Colonel turned to me and he said, "Bulling, take a patrol out and find out about this." So, I grabbed, probably, oh, maybe First Squad, it was only eight or ten people, and we went out on a patrol and I didn't really see anything, but I heard a shot and one of my guys had fired. He told me, later, he said, "The guy I hit had a bead on you, Lieutenant." I don't know whether to believe it or not, but he shot one and we captured one and we took the captured Jap back and I delivered him to our G-2 section and they started to interrogate him and they didn't believe them. They said, "Something is wrong with the counting. He must be uneducated, because it sounds like he's saying five hundred and there can't be five hundred men up in the hills, still." He was right; there were five hundred of them still up in the hills and what we did was that we dropped a radio to them, so that they could contact Japan, because they didn't know the war was over, and we waited a couple of days. They got in radio contact with them and we waited a couple of days, until we got a stockade built for five hundred troops, and then, they paraded down out of the hills and my I&R Platoon was the honor guard for the ceremony and, of course, the Colonel was great on ceremony. I mean, he had long tables set up with the staff officers sitting there, and, in fact, I have, someplace, got pictures of that, too. That was one of the worst impositions I ever made on my father. [I] got those pictures, I sent

them home and I said, "Dad, I need forty copies of these," and, at that point, my father, somehow or other, got forty copies made and sent them back to me and every member of my platoon had copies of the surrender ceremonies; Colonel Stanton, accepting the surrender. I don't know, he wasn't that much of a big shot, but he was in charge of whoever was up in the hills. They were in terrible shape. They were physically exhausted. They'd probably been in the hills for two or three years and they had come down out of the hills only to be put into a stockade, but they were better off there than they had been up in the hills, because the farmers had said that there were raids on their fields, but they couldn't have been getting enough food and that's the end of World War II, as far as I was concerned. The occupation was interesting. You've got to stop me.

SI: No, no, go ahead.

HB: [I] went into occupation in Korea. I'm just trying to think, my trip story, this one that I think was kind of interesting. This isn't the war, but this is part of it. When we were still on Panay, ... we were also allowed to go into town and one of the things that I did [was], I was procurement officer and what it meant was, "Go out and see what you can get from the Navy." So, I would make trips down to the dock and talk to the Navy guys. We had all sorts of captured equipment. I don't know how in the hell they even kept it all, because they had so much of it, and I would trade off a machine-gun for fifty pounds of beef and this was kind of an enjoyable period and one of my grandsons loves this story. He's three years old; it's not [that] I'm telling little kids these stories. ... Eggs were big on the list and, at one point, I came back and I said to the mess sergeant, "Two dozen eggs is the best I could do today," and he said, "That's all right," and so, ... at officers' mess, we each had a fried egg and I heard two of the sergeants talking and one of them said, "Hey, that was real eggs this morning," and the other one said, "Yes, I found an eggshell on mine." He said, "So, did I." That crafty mess sergeant had taken the eggshells and broken them up and put them in the powdered eggs that he fixed for the rest of the guys. Two dozen fresh eggs will not feed a company of two hundred men, but it will feed two dozen officers that were eating there. Anyway, my grandson likes that story. Well, anyway, the other story that I was going to mention [is], another lieutenant and myself had found a bootlegger and it's one of the things, I think, [that] is kind of fascinating. I don't know if anybody has ever done a real study of it, but the amount of medical alcohol that was consumed in Europe was a fraction of what was consumed in the Pacific, because, in Europe, they had all kinds of wine and everything else, but we drank a lot of homemade booze, but this other lieutenant and myself found a guy who was making some pretty good whiskey over in the Philippines and we were buying it and I can't say that we were really profiteering. I think we're making a little edge on it when selling it off to the other guys, because we were doing all the work and it was no problem. I was going in there with a jeep, to go down and do my bickering on the docks with the Navy, and so, we had the booze. ... When we got the order that we're going to go to Korea, we had eleven gallons of booze, which we kept under a spare cot in the tent we were in and we were about to leave it there and it was hard to bring back, but this other lieutenant was involved in the logistical end, the loading of the ships and everything else. So, he got two five-gallon cans that were on vehicles and we put ten gallons of whiskey into those two cans and we had a one-gallon jug leftover. That one-gallon jug, I carried onto the ship, which was going to Korea, and they told us it would be a three, four-day trip and, when we got onboard the ship, we were shown to a room and we got pretty nice quarters. There were six of us in the room. There were two triple deck bunks and a nice table and a sink and the first sailor I saw going by our door, I said, "I'd

like to see your chief,” and he very dutifully got the chief and the chief came in the room and he said, “What’s wrong, sir?” and I said, “Well, I just want to work out a little detail,” and I said, “Try this,” and I gave him a canteen cut with something in it and he drank and he said, “That’s not bad,” and I said, “Okay. Lieutenant Sprague here can give you the exact vehicle that has a five-gallon can of this on it and I’d like you to have one of your guys bring that can up to us, up to our stateroom here, and I’d also like to have some fruit juice or something else to mix along with it and I’d like to have ice brought up here regularly, like once every hour, for the next three days.” He says, “Why should I do that? You tell me where it is and I might just take it myself,” and I said, “If you do the first one and it gets up here, I’ll tell you where the second one is.” So, he agreed and we had a poker game going in our stateroom and it was going, I’d say, twenty-three hours a day for the next three days and one of the interesting parts about it was that ... Sprague and myself were the only ones [I knew] and he had arranged that we would get together, but we had people that we didn’t know. I think they were ... one captain and he was a chaplain and somebody said, “Oh, it’ll be nice to play poker here,” and everybody kind of looked at him and he said, “That’s my favorite game,” and he then confided in us that not only did he play poker, but he was pretty much of a card shark and could deal from the bottom or whatever. He said, “The only thing you’ve got to do, if we’re going to do it, you’re going to have to have faith in me that I’m not going to do it to any of you.” He says, “The only time I will do it is if I see somebody cheating. I will then go after him,” and I still remember, he said, “What happens, if I unbutton my shirt, and then, right away, button it again, that means don’t anybody put big money out. Let me go after the guy.” I only remember seeing that once, but he did it and the guy did it and left the game, but this was open only to officers from the 160th Regiment and we had a game going continually and, if you were playing the game, you could drink there. We did not want to have a bunch of people just standing around drinking, but, when we left, I don’t think there was any of the booze left. So, we’d gone through six gallons and I don’t know what the chief did with his five gallons, but I hope they enjoyed it as much as we did, but that’s one of the stories that I put in here that Helen said, “Oh, you don’t want to do that. Show that to your grandchildren,” but it’s in there now. She finally agreed that I could do that, but that was interesting. Then, we got to Korea, and then, I get serious again, because I ran into some things that I just thought were just so bad and, unfortunately, while I approve of George [W.] Bush and approve of what’s going on for the most part, I don’t know how we can be so damn stupid about our handling of other countries. The way we handled Korea, we went in there for occupation and, the first thing that I remember being struck by [was], we get in there, we moved into a camp that had been a Japanese camp. The Japanese were ordered to pull all their troops in the garrison, which they did. So, I really can’t fault them, but they went into garrison. There was, however, an area that, from the looks of it, it looked like it was gravel pit that had been worked over to as far as they could go and there were caves in it and this is where they kept the lepers and the leper colony was in the caves down in this gravel pit. The Japanese brought food down there and put it in the middle of the gravel pit every day. The lepers came out, got the food and were satisfied. [When] the Japanese went into garrison, the lepers came out; there was no food. The leper colony was now all over the city of Pusan, because there were not getting fed down there. ... They may have not [known] anything about that. However, the first job that I had there, we were sending the Japanese back to Japan. We were searching them on the docks. The officers were allowed to keep fifteen hundred yen, no, civilians fifteen hundred yen, officers, one thousand yen, and enlisted men, five hundred yen, and they were not allowed to take any jewelry, anything else. They weren’t allowed to take paintings. So, we searched them on the

docks and, at the end of the day, there was, literally, a bushel basket full of money and I took that money to the bank, Bank of Korea, and handed it over to the person there. I was told he was the president of the bank. He bowed his head to thank me. I didn't know how to say, "Receipt," and he wasn't about to give me one, anyway, and he had been head of maintenance before the Japanese were pulled out. Our military government people, when we told them about it, and it wasn't just myself, it was everybody else who was doing this, told the military government people and they said, "There isn't anything we can do about it. This is a liberated country. ... Although we're calling [ourselves an] occupation force, it is a liberated country, not an occupied country. We have to give it back to the Koreans. We have to let them run it." Well, they had the worst inflation you've ever imagined. Their money became worthless after awhile. Some Americans managed to grab a piece of it. I mean, I could have stolen a pocketful. I wasn't about to, because, number one, ... I didn't think it was the thing to do and, number two, ... if I did it, what am I going to do with it? We were paid in scrip, so, [with] all this Japanese yen, I would have had to go out, and some people did this, they went out, in fact, I know or I heard one story about a guy who bought property. He couldn't bring that back with him. He had to go back there and live to enjoy it. I don't know if he ever did, but that was so foolish. ... The other thing was the railroads, where ... the highest-ranking man in the railroad organization had been the foreman of a track cleaning crew and he now became the head of the railroad. He didn't see any reason why people had to pay fares to ride the railroad. We're going to run these cars up and down anyway and, when the train is full, it can go. ...

-----END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE-----

HB: When the train's full, it can go. One of the worst things I've ever seen was the head-on crash of two trains with people not only riding in it, but riding on the outside of it, hanging on to it. It was a terrible situation. I don't know how many [died]. I've never seen anything in print about it, about how many people were killed, but, at that point, finally, they said, "Okay, our Transportation Corps is going to step in and take over the running of the railroads." Our military government people wanted to encourage the Koreans to set up a democracy and I heard that, after the first thirty days, there were fifty political parties. They don't know how to handle [it], didn't know how to handle [it], and I think we're going through the same thing over in Iraq right now, yes. [Editor's Note: Mr. Bulling is referring to the situation in Iraq following Operation: IRAQI FREEDOM.] Afghanistan, I think, is a different problem, but, over in Iraq, we're trying to give freedom to people who don't know what to do with it and while ... I want to be supportive of what's going on, I wondered if we haven't learned [anything], because it was terrible over in Korea and, when I got back, I said to people, "The next war is going to be in Korea," and they said, "You've been in the Army too long. You keep seeing things for the Army to do." ... I wouldn't say it's criminal, but it was terrible the way things were mishandled. I did see, at one point, I was up in Seoul and got a glimpse of the Russians and the North Koreans and, boy, the North Koreans were not happy with the Russians stepping in, but they ran things and, if we had gone into South Korea and ran things, we would have been far better off. ... I guess the Japanese had occupied Korea for over a hundred years. I don't know, you're history majors, what about that?

SI: Yes. I want to say eighty years.

JK: A little less than a hundred, I would say. [Editor's Note: Japan's intervention in the Korean Peninsula began in 1876. The Japanese formally annexed Korea in 1910.]

HB: Okay, at any rate, ... more than a generation, and so, the Koreans had no idea and, when you say to somebody, "We want you to have democracy," and they say, "What is democracy?" and you say, "We want you to go vote for somebody." He says, "They're all going to do the same thing; they're going to come collect taxes from me. So, why do I care which one of them it is?" They just don't understand it. It takes more time and, I think, we should be learning from history. At any rate, that was one of the things that bothered me. It bothers me today that we haven't learned from our past experiences, but I would say that, for the most part, I enjoyed my first trip to Korea, got out of there in due time. So, now, we're up to my getting back into civilian life?

SI: I just have a few general questions about the end of World War II.

HB: Yes.

SI: Did you have any interaction, either in the Philippines or in Korea, with the people, the natives, anything that stands out?

HB: Well, I had one experience in Korea that I have mentioned to several people and I was walking down the street with two other officers and on the other side of the street and in the street was a mob of Koreans and some of them had clubs, some of them had rocks in their hands, and, when they were just about opposite us, they stopped and it got to the point where I had my hand on my pistol. ... They started throwing rocks way over our heads and they were throwing at the building behind us, which was a school, and they were from the other school that had been beaten in some kind of an athletic match. They probably don't know how close they came to getting shot, because these other two guys and myself were ready, at least, to make a stand there, but they weren't mad at us at all, but they were furious, you know, and I also saw, the thing has been reported many times, a thief gets caught and every passerby takes a kick at him. "Somebody tried to steal your bicycle? Well, all right, let me kick him, too." They're a peculiar people, as I'm sure that the Iraqis are, too, in that their sense of values are not the same as ours. The other thing, also, I saw somebody hit by a streetcar and it was very difficult. He didn't get any assistance until the police got there, but there's that Asian feeling, if you saved somebody's life, they're yours and you're going to take care of them from then on. There's probably some kind of a name for that, some Asian theory. Well, for the most part, when we were in the Philippines, the natives were not unhappy to see us. I mean, ... they considered themselves good friends of the Americans. We had Filipino houseboys. ... In fact, at one point, I remember, the Filipino houseboys were just kind of falling all over themselves, trying to do things for us. ... We were in tents and there were four bunks to a tent and they would come around and they wanted to do things, and so, they put bamboo poles up to hold mosquito nettings. The next thing they did was to tell us they wanted to build a floor and they built a bamboo floor and, you know, nobody was paying them for any of this. I guess they might have been getting fed a little bit, but they were pretty kowtowing to the Americans. They wanted to make us happy. The same thing was true with the Koreans, starting out, the first time over there. They were very friendly, so, I can't say there were any bad situations there. No, I really can't think of anything that I would

say was worth even mentioning. They were very friendly. I'm not sure that they had a high regard for the Americans, all of them. I can tell you one more story. One of the other things is the procurement "officer." I also went into various shops and the Colonel had said, "See if you think we ought to be sending the troops in there." I went into this one shop and I got in there and the proprietor came out from behind beaded curtains, you know, the way you see it in the movies, and he clapped his hands and a little Korean girl came out and he said something and she went back and she got tea for us. Oh, he spoke English and he told me that he was Chinese, not Korean, but he had the shop there and he told me about how you had to do business in the Orient and he explained that we would have a cup of tea and, when we were finished with the tea, the first one finished would start the conversation about shopping and it would be, "What are you looking for?" "I'm not looking for anything." "What do you have to offer?" "Oh, I have a lot of things," but, you know, that's just sparring and you finally get to, "Well, do you have any teapots?" "Oh, I do, but I don't think we have anything that you would like," and, "Well, if you did have some, where would they be?" and they just spar back and forth. ... "Do you like this one?" "Not really, how much is it?" "Well, it's much too expensive." They just keep sparring and sparring and sparring. This was interesting and I went in to see him several times and I went in to see him just before I left and his shop; in fact, it wasn't the same shop. He was now in a much larger shop and I saw him and his wife and everything in the new shop had a price tag on it and, yet, he told me that somebody had come in and he had, at the front of his shop, three showcases and various merchandise in them and somebody had come in, ... it was a Merchant Marine, and they had said, "How much is this?" and he said, "Which one?" and he said, "All three cases," and the guy paid him first price for all three cases. It was enough money for him to start up a whole new store and he decided that the Americans didn't mind having a price set on it, whatever price he wanted. So, he was set up in a totally different business. The second time back, I was only in Pusan for a short time, but that's about all I can tell you about post-World War II Korea or Philippines.

SI: Can you tell us about the process of leaving the Army the first time and joining the inactive Reserve? Why did you join the inactive Reserve?

HB: Oh, yes. We were in, I don't even remember the name of the camp. We were in Seattle. We came back at the end of World War II and the occupation and we were about to be separated and they said, "You can sign up here for the Reserves and, if you don't want to sign up for the Reserves, you have to wait until Major So-and-So gets back from his leave, which shouldn't be more than another three, four days, but, if you want to go home today, you can sign up in the Reserves." I did. I signed up in the inactive Reserve; I signed up in the Reserves. I was inactive. I never went to a meeting, but that's how I got in the Reserves.

SI: Was that on the tape, your career between the wars?

HB: The stores, I think that's on the tape.

JK: One of the first things we went over.

SI: When you were recalled for Korea, can you tell us about that, that process? What was going through your head?

HB: Our first child was a year-and-a-half old and he was probably a year old when I first got the notice [from] the Army. I went in in December of '50. I had said to Helen, "You really don't have to worry about it, because they're going to bring me back in there." The last assignment that I had, Colonel Stanton, although he was a rigid West Pointer, one of the things he did was that when we got over to Korea, the Army started sending replacements in and he said, "I don't want any of the men who were in combat with me to start getting bossed around by stateside guys who haven't been involved in the war." I was a first lieutenant and [had] no possibility of getting promoted to captain, because those promotions were frozen, but he said, "Any of the guys that were with me are not going to wind up reporting to somebody who hasn't been in combat." So, he made me S-3 of the regiment, which is a job for a major or lieutenant colonel, but he couldn't promote me to it. He took every one of the guys who'd been in combat and gave them different jobs around. So, if you were a platoon leader, you could get a captain coming in and, this way, he protected us. So, anyway, I said to Helen, "If they look at my past record, my last assignment was S-3." Even though I didn't [have] the rank for it, that's what I was doing. But, when I got over there, they said, "Were you in combat in World War II?" "Yes." "That's where we want you, on the line." So, I wound up being a platoon leader again. I'm really not that bitter about it. I don't know what the Army could have done differently. I understand they're thinking about calling the inactive Reserve, although I know there were guys who were in the active Reserve who were upset that they weren't being called. I don't have any kind of bitterness about that.

SI: Just getting back into the military and maybe that refresher you took at Fort ...

HB: Oh, yes, that was a farce. I don't think anything would have been different had I [or] had any of the other guys run the obstacle course.

SI: You said they had taken you out to the obstacle course, but nobody would run the obstacle course.

HB: Right, right. One of the things that I mentioned, all the training was awfully good in sharpening me up and I can almost say that World War II was almost all schooling to get me ready for the Korean experience. There are some sad things. First, there was one lieutenant who went over with me, ... going over to Korea the second time. He was ROTC and not a retread and he was a very likable Southern guy and, when we first got over there, the company commander, I guess, probably, the second day out, told me that he wanted me to take a patrol out and he indicated on a map where it was, to go out here, go out and scout this out, see if there's any activity. I went out and each platoon had a Korean, I'll say houseboy, had somebody assigned [to it], so that you could always have a language contact, and, [with] this houseboy or scout, you should say, we went out and he and I were close together and I said something to him about, "Watch out for that. It's tripwires." He said, "Fine," and he passed the word along the line. When we got back from that patrol, I mentioned to this buddy of mine, who I knew was going to take the patrol out the next day, "Be careful when you get to such-and-such a point, because there are tripwires there and we should try to get somebody to dismantle that." He said, "Okay," and he went out on the patrol and he said to his Korean guy, "There's tripwires over there." The Korean guy misunderstood what he said, went over and grabbed it and the Korean

was killed and my buddy, on his second or third day over there, lost an arm and a leg and went back. That's a hard thing, when you're dealing with people who don't speak the language.

I can tell you about my second Purple Heart and some other hairy stuff that I went through. You want to hear that?

SI: Yes.

HB: Okay.

SI: You told us about the first Purple Heart before.

HB: Yes, yes. On that one, they sent me over to Japan, to Kobe. There's a bonafide hospital over there. It was very nice. They were very busy, so, they sent me back and I had to check-in with the doctor when I got back to Korea, check-in there, and, no, I guess this was still in Japan, yes. He was checking me out and he said, "Raise your arm." I did raise my arm and I can hold it for maybe three, four seconds, then, I couldn't hold it up anymore and I said, "I hope that's going to improve." He said, "Oh, sure. Fresh air and exercise and you're going to be in good shape," and so, he sent me back and I got back there and I was getting fresh air and exercise and I still couldn't raise my arm and I developed a boil on my back and my aid man took care of that every morning with a Coke bottle, popped it, put a bandage on it and I was good until the next morning, when, again, it was all puffed up again. I could not really keep a pack on, because the pack just rubbed against it, and so, the arm did improve and I could hold my arm up and we went on several other things and it even got [to] the point where I could tolerate the pack for awhile.

There was one encounter with the enemy which I have always said was my closest call. We went out to help retrieve a tank and, apparently, what had happened is that the tank, the previous day or two days, had thrown a track under fire and they managed to bring another tank over, get the personnel out, but the tank was there. They wanted the tank back, our Army wanted the tank back, and so, what they wanted was ... a battalion of infantry to ring the hill while they got the tank out and we did that and we had barely gotten into position when we started to get some mortar fire and the battalion commander decided that K Company should go across from where we were and stop the mortar fire and we started across and we had to go across rice paddies and, when you cross rice paddies, you've got to walk the edges of the rice paddy. We were in the middle of crossing a rice paddy and one mortar shell landed, probably, I'd say, maybe ten feet from me. It was close enough so that it splashed water from the rice paddy on me, but it didn't go off. It was a dud, and so, I really think that was probably my closest [call] and we got across. We did engage them and we stopped the mortar fire. We lost one man and that was that. Then, we had another one where we're out on patrol, and this was north of Seoul, and we went out. This was the day that Third Platoon was up and we were leading the way. We got out in a forward position and there were tanks that were working with us and the company commander said, "Bulling, just take your guys out another hundred yards and look over the top of that next hill." So, we did and, as we approached that next hill, so did the North Koreans on the other side and they got there first and they set a machine gun up and we were in full retreat and running back and this was just like in the movies, [with] the dust kicking up where the bullets are hitting. That's not a very pleasant feeling. One of the tanks pulled right in-between and really saved our

butts, because we were like ducks in a shooting gallery, really, and that tank really saved us. The next day, in almost the same area, we passed by a hill on our left, going out, and I guess there was a call from battalion headquarters that said they spotted some activity on the top of the hill, which they had hit with Air Force and artillery, and so, I had to take a patrol up and it was difficult climb, because ... you almost had to go single file, because it was not something where we could spread out and go up. So, we went up and I had a scout, squad leader, myself, and, generally, the way I work was, [have] a scout and rotate the scout every ten minutes or so, squad leaders, the same thing, but I only had one squad with me, so, I only had one squad leader, and then, I was in third position, I think, and we got up to a point where the scout waved to us, "Come on ahead," and he'd gotten up and saw white flags. Well, the white flag was a signal and they all threw grenades and there were, I think, five of us were hit initially. We all dropped back fifty, sixty feet to get out of the area they could reach with grenades. I got hit and I jumped and the only place I knew I'd gotten hit was in the lip and got a little piece of shrapnel in the lip. When the aid man came up, [he] almost fainted. I'd been hit in the neck, also, and what I did not realize was that I'd also been hit in the leg, had been hit in the arm and I'd been hit in the head. There were five pieces, but, again, it was not a grenade such as the grenades that we had. A doctor later told me [that] this was probably a Russian grenade and they were small fragments and he said, "They're meant to wound and not to kill," their philosophy being, you wound the man and you got him out for awhile, but you also got two men taking care of him. So, again, I was lucky that it was that and not a captured grenade, but there were five of us hit and we did manage to get down off the hill. The lead scout was the worst hit and a couple of his buddies volunteered to go pull him back and they did, with no shots fired or no more grenades. I don't know if they had any more grenades, but we managed to get Bobby off the crest of the hill and my radioman said, "I'll carry him on my back," but he dropped the radio. I said, "Okay, leave the radio," and what I did was empty a fifteen-round clip into the radio after everybody had gotten away from it. Unfortunately, they weren't satisfied with that, and so, they sent my platoon up the next day to retrieve the radio and ... the Koreans or Chinese, whatever it was, had left, so, there wasn't any more battle. That's how I picked up the second Purple Heart, but the most interesting thing about that, I think, was that, when I got back to the aid station, the piece in my lip was there and it was there for twenty years. It finally dissolved. The one in my leg, nothing was ever done; that, I think, has dissolved. This one went through the arm and out and the one in my hand, I could pick off myself. The doctor at the aid station got the one out of my throat here and I still have that. I saved that piece and it's just a small piece. That's what these grenades were, but, at the same time, he looked at that boil on my back and said, "I'm going to send you back to the hospital."

The next day, I was on a troop train and I was the highest-ranking non-medical person on the train, which automatically made me the train commander, and so, for the next two days, I was train commander. Now, a trip from Seoul down to Pusan is not a two-day trip. You can't walk it in two days, but we kept getting off on a siding, because the priority was for trains coming north, not going south. So, I was troop commander or train commander, [for] which all I had to do was to make sure nobody was complaining. There were doctors and there were medics and [I was] just to make sure that nobody missed getting a meal or anything like that. We got down to Pusan and there were ambulances waiting for us, and then, we got into a courtyard and they had everybody come out and the doctors looked at them and they put me on a stretcher, you know. I was never more than walking wounded, anyway, and so, now, they put me on a stretcher and this

was a Swedish hospital unit that was over there and I'm on there and two people come along, pick up my stretcher, and I say, "I've got to go to the john." "*Jah, jah.*" I'm finally screaming, "I've got to take a leak. I've got to pee." I'm screaming it and all I get back is, "*Jah, jah,*" and the next thing I know, I'm getting sodium pentothal stuck into my arm and I'm out cold. They got rid of the boil. They cut that one off and that's ... bigger than the bullet hole, but I woke up whenever it was, an hour or two hours later, with this gorgeous Swedish nurse looking at me and I suddenly realized, I wet my pants and everything close by, and I tried to explain that to her and all she says is, "*Jah, jah.*" So, that's my, "*Jah, jah,*" story, but we had a very nice session in the Swedish hospital and they were very nice people. From there, when we went back, I did have to see an American doctor who asked me, "What do you do as a platoon leader?" and I try to explain it to him and I said, "We have these packs. Wherever we go, we've got to take all our belongings in a pack," and he said, "Well, can you do that?" and I said, "No, I don't think I can wear a pack very handily right now, because my back is still bandaged," and he said, "Well, I'm going to put you down for limited duty," and that's how I got assigned to IX Corps, which was somewhere in the middle of, I think I put Taegu, and I don't think it was that far. It was somewhere in the middle of Korea and I don't think I even knew what city it was near, because we were just out in a desolate area in the hills, and that was, again, another interesting assignment. They made me target officer in the G-2 Air Section of corps headquarters and my responsibility was to select targets for the Air Force, based on everything else that G-2 had, so that I got reports on what they had heard from ground crossers. We had two airplanes of our own. We had a lot of airplanes, but we had two L-19s, I think they were, which is a two-seater high-wing, like a Piper Cub.

SI: Is it an artillery spotter?

HB: Same thing that they used for artillery spotting. ... My command consisted of two lieutenants who flew in those as observers and the pilots were [from] the pilot pool, whoever was going up, and they flew out once or twice a day, depending on weather and depending on the amount of activity, and they did sightings. I did a few of those when somebody was on leave. I did a few of those, too, so [that] I got to see the ground that we're covering and we'd fly about twenty miles out and it was not really that hairy a deal, because, while you can shoot one of those things down, they really didn't want to, because, within two minutes, there would have been fighters there. So, they generally did not. I think if we'd gone down to fifty feet, they might have taken a shot, but we never really went down much lower than one thousand feet, eight hundred, maybe, and you're just simply looking to confirm or un-confirm reports that there's artillery being set-up. You could certainly spot trucks moving along the road, even troops moving along the road. I'd say, at three thousand feet, you can pick out troops pretty well and distinguish them from civilians. So, that was kind of interesting, and then, the next step was to take all this information, convert it into coordinates and call it into the Air Force for night bombing and the next step on that was to be on the radio when the Air Force came over and [they] would report to you what they were seeing, whether there were secondary explosions, which was the thing we always were looking for. That's about it, unless you can enter my cribbage playing.

SI: I have a few general questions about Korea. The impression I get from studying the war was that the first phase of the war was a see-saw battle up and down the peninsula. Then, the second

half consisted of small battles for hills and other strategic points. Did you come in on the cusp of the see-saw battle or was it already a hill-to-hill fight?

HB: We were on the way back up.

-----END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE TWO-----

SI: This continues an interview with Mr. Herman E. Bulling on June 27, 2003, in Victor, New York, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

JK: Jared Kosch.

SI: I was just asking, when you were in Korea, was it a battle of movement or was it a hill-to-hill battle?

HB: You get to the top of the hill and say, "There's nothing more ahead of us than more hills that look exactly the same," and you moved ahead and moved ahead and moved. The first time they pushed up, they went too fast and left too much behind them, and so, I fully understood the fact that, for my second Purple Heart, I went up the hill that was supposedly clear and, yet, we proved that it wasn't clear and I guess that's one of the things that they're running into in Iraq, too. It is so hard, especially in hill country; it's so easy to hide. There's one other thing that I should mention, that I thought was really kind of interesting. At one point, we had an assistant chief of staff in the corps. When he came in, I thought, "This is one of the funniest guys I'd ever seen," and I remember his name, because the first time he came around, he came into our tent and here he is, a brigadier general, he walks up to me, held his hand out and he says, "Mine is Dewey, what's yours?" Well, he was General [Lawrence R.] Dewey, but it's an interesting way to meet people and I'm sure that he has used that line over and over again. Anyway, at one point, General Dewey came to our target officer's tent and he said, "The chief of staff," who was his boss, "would like to see you." "Yes, what did I do?" So, I went to see him and I don't remember his name, but he said, "I'd like to talk to you about a target," and he said, "I can't really talk to you about this, because you're not cleared for it and I'm not cleared for it, but they have asked me," he said, ... "to find out that, if we had some kind of a bomb that was much bigger than any of the bombs that you have seen?" and I said, "You mean like ..." He said, "Don't say it." He said, "I'm not cleared for it and you're not cleared for it. Is there a possible target for a bomb that would have fallout and that would be much, much larger?" He said, "Don't answer me now. Go back to your maps and take a look." I went back to my maps and I got back to him within an hour and I said, "There is no target in the area that we're in that would be a suitable target." I always get tickled ... when I read the outrage about, "Oh, they were considering using an atomic bomb." The Army would be absolutely nuts if they didn't investigate [the possibility] and that doesn't mean you're going to do it and, right over there, there actually was no place to do it. Now, if I had come back to him and said, "Yes, there is," it still would be no assurance that it was going to be used, but there was, in our whole sector, ... no spot that could be used that would have been effective, effective use of it, because we were covering hill country, where it was all up and down and wouldn't have been viable.

SI: Do you think this inquiry was just a general investigation or was the situation dire at that point?

HB: No, no, no, and that's my point. I think that what you do is that you check out all the possibilities. I think that if I was in charge and I said to one of my subordinates, "Do you have any idea whether we could use an atomic bomb?" I'd hate to have him say, "Oh, we never even thought about that." I think the obligation is to do that, to be prepared to answer the question when it comes from a higher authority. So, that was one of the more interesting things I thought happened over there. I'm trying to think if there were any other [things].

SI: We will say this is for the Korean War, but, if it applies to World War II, do not be afraid to answer; what was it like for you, coming in as a replacement officer, to get adjusted to this unit?

HB: It's a very tough thing. First thing you do is sit down with your sergeant and you try to get names, I had one of these little pocket notebooks, and try to get the names of everybody, and then, you want to kind of evaluate them and you want to know what the sergeant thinks, but you don't want to go totally on his opinion, and so, you spend an awful lot of your time trying to figure out who is good, who is just ass-kissing and you know. One interesting point, I think when I was over there was the first time that the First Cav ever had a black soldier and, in fact, they were a little bit paranoid about it and we got called to a meeting. I think it was probably the whole regiment and we're told that ... we were going to be forced to accept blacks in the First Cav and there were probably going to be an awful lot of people who are upset about it, some of the Southern boys, and, on one day, my forty-man platoon, I think the strength was twenty-two at the time, we got five blacks. Two of them were damn good soldiers, two of them were lousy, one of them, I didn't see enough of to evaluate, and I think you could have given me five white boys, five Koreans, and it would probably be the same ratio and there was never any kind of a problem, nothing that I know of. Now, ... when I got my last Purple Heart, I wound up in the hospital and, two days later, one of my black replacements showed up there. When I saw him, I said, "What happened?" I said, "Were you ... on another patrol?" He said, "No, I'm in here with a broken ankle," and he said, "I broke the ankle coming down off that hill with you," and he said, "I didn't tell anybody about it for two days, because I didn't want them to think I was goofing off." So, he walked around with a broken ankle for two days. So, he was a damned good soldier.

SI: What about your supply situation, rations, ammo? Were you always able to get your supplies?

HB: Oh, yes, yes. I mean, for when I was there, yes, we had no problems. I'm sure that there were other times that there would have been all kinds of problems. I also never minded K rations, C rations, whatever we had. I felt like I was pretty well fed by the Army, so, I do not complain about that. The one interesting one that I've told people about, we tried something, and this goes back to my time in OCS, they came out with something called a D ration. Are you familiar with it?

SI: I have heard of it.

HB: Okay. It's like a big chocolate bar and, when they gave it to us, they said, "We want to try this and it's supposed to give you a lot of energy," but they also said, "Don't eat it in less than ten minutes." Well, we all got them and one guy, who was known as one of the chow hounds, he gobbled it down and, probably, I don't see how you could get it [down] in less than four or five minutes, because it was dense, dense chocolate, and he passed out. They had to take him off to the hospital, but I don't know whether they ever used that. I never saw it again in Korea or in the Philippines.

SI: Was that during World War II?

HB: Yes.

SI: Okay.

HB: And that was before I went overseas. I was in OCS at Fort Benning. No, we never had [shortages]; I can't remember when. When you're on-the-line, you've got your rations. You're carrying a can or a box of K rations. You've got them with you. You've got at least one meal, probably two meals, depending on when you started out. They used to bring the kitchen truck up, very close to the frontlines, and feed us out of mess kits, whatever they were feeding us. So, I've had nothing but admiration for the way the Army has operated. In fact, I'm so satisfied with the Army, only to talk about it, except for some of the bloody parts, I have felt that my Army career was all good and I was not too upset when our oldest son enlisted to go to Vietnam. I was upset when he died, but it wasn't from battle. He probably had a little too much Agent Orange, but he was forty-one years old and he was back here. He had three kids and died of cancer of the esophagus and I still can't say I'm bitter at the Army for it, because they didn't know. You can argue that, that they should have known, but they were doing what they thought was right. The politicians may have been wrong in our being in 'Nam at all, but the Army did not make that decision and the Army isn't making the decisions in Afghanistan or Iraq and I just hope that our politicians are right more often than they're wrong.

SI: I interviewed another Korean War veteran recently and he spoke about how the North Koreans and Chinese had this tactic of, basically, trying to overwhelm a command post with human wave attacks and take out all the officers. Was that how it was when you were there?

HB: Well, we all pinned our brass on the underside of our collars. I met a couple of guys in the hospital who were a little upset by the fact that they were; one was redheaded, the other was blond and they were in, I forget which division it was, a black division ...

SI: 92nd?

HB: I don't know, 92nd, I don't know.

SI: I think there were two African-American divisions. One was the 93rd and the other was the 92nd, perhaps.

HB: Anyway, they were upset over the fact that, in an attack, no matter how much they'd rub mud on their faces, it was pretty obvious who the officers were, but, normally, we didn't have any problem with that. Actually, in World War II, we had a rule that, in combat, a buck private called me "Bud;" we didn't call my captain, lieutenant, sergeant [by their rank]. I should have been shot if I [had] ever hollered, "Sergeant," so that they could hear that and take a shot at one of my sergeants. We tried to remain as anonymous as we could. We learned some things in World War II. One of the things that I remember being very impressed with, [at] nighttime in the Philippines, we would go into our position and the normal procedure was that we would run tripwire around the perimeter and take an empty ration can and you take a grenade and you can put the grenade in the ration can, pull the pin and you circle your position with ... a series of grenades and, if anybody hits that, you're going to hear it and they're going to probably get killed. [When I] got over to Korea, ... as I told you, the first thing I did was go out on a patrol, out a couple of hundred yards from our position, and then, he [the Captain] wanted outposts and he wanted patrolling all the time. That was so foreign to those of us who were retreads from the Pacific. In Europe, I'm not sure what they did, but I just really hated that and ... I still, to this day, ... don't think it's smart, sending out all those patrols. The best thing you can do at night is to protect yourself, cover up. If they want to attack, it's very tough to attack. Given a choice of defending or attacking at night, I will always take defending. The only other thing that ever bothered me on defending, ... in several instances when they felt an attack was imminent, we sent up flares. Oh, boy, I tell you, [you] sit there looking out and that flare goes off and comes down like this, shadows running all over the place. Every bush has a shadow; this way, then, that way, and then, when it burns out, you can't see anything. Something that was better, but still not perfect, I mean, they were shining big searchlights on the clouds, when there were low hanging clouds, to light up the area, which is fine, except, if they were fast moving clouds, you got the same effect. The lighting kept changing and you can imagine, a bush, it's got a shadow on this side, it's got a shadow on this side, it's got a shadow on this side; you're sure it's somebody moving. Anyway, I think the idea of buttoning up at night is much better than trying to go out on patrol. We also had those night vision goggles. I hope that they're better now. Oh, they were awful. You could not distinguish anything except movement. You can tell that there was something moving, but you couldn't tell whether [it was the enemy or your own forces] and, especially if you've got patrols of your own running out there, it is very, very difficult.

SI: Did you ever encounter a case where somebody could not handle the stress of combat?

NB: Yes. It was looked at very sympathetically in some cases and down the nose in others. The one sympathetic one that I recall was one kid who was witness to his best buddy's getting killed and he and his buddy had been right on-the-line and both had been hit and ... the bullet had hit right here in the helmet and traveled around, never touched the skull. His buddy, on the other hand, was killed and he continued to wear that same helmet, but it continued to remind him of his buddy and, at one point, he was in such bad shape that; it wasn't my decision, it was somebody else's decision to send him back, which I think is fine. My first night in Korea, the company commander said, "We're having some difficulty with SIWs," and I said, "What's an SIW?" because I'd never heard of it in World War II. It is a self-inflicted wound and the idea was, you shoot off a toe and you'll go back to the hospital and the trouble is that some of them blew their foot off and it was awfully hard to make a good story out of it. You know better than to clean your rifle with a bullet in the chamber and those were not looked at that sympathetically.

I had a buddy, a lieutenant, who reached that point and he finally put his hand on the back of a truck and took his rifle and tried to break his hand and he didn't break it. All he did was bruise the hell out of it. He went back to the aid station and, between the doctor and the battalion commander, they decided he ought to be court-martialed and I don't know whatever happened to him, but it happens.

SI: In terms of air support, how often could you get air support and what kind of support was it?

HB: Oh, we got it damned near any time we asked for it. If you've got time for one more little, funny story; when I was at corps headquarters, the Air Force would send over P-51s and they would come over; well, forget that I said P-51s, fighter planes, and they would check-in with me on the radio, asking if I had any targets of opportunity that had come up and there's one guy who had a real Southern drawl, would gab and gab and gab, and he was the squadron or flight commander. ... The way the Air Force worked, and I found out about this later, one time, I was, for some reason or other, going up to Seoul and got a chance to meet these guys that I'd been talking to, and so, some of the guys complained about him. When you're on the radio and something comes up, [if] I'm talking to you [Shaun] on the radio, he [Jared] taps me on the shoulder, I say, "Break," and I go over and find out what is [up]. Well, "Break," to the Air Force, means take off in different directions. ... Recognizing that everybody else does this, "Break," to the Air Force, it's, "Break-break," means, "I'm breaking to talk on the radio." This guy with the Southern drawl, his, "Break-break," was so slow that, half the time, the guys that were following had gone into their break for flight formation, which I found out later, and they kidded him about it all the time, but ... the air support was fantastic. I can recall one time when we called for air support and we kept saying, "Closer, closer," and they kept saying, "We can't come any closer," and we finally talked them into coming closer, because we were that close, that they had to, and we finally got a little backslash of napalm and a couple of guys got touched with it. That's a scary thing, too, but, boy, I'll tell you, when you're right on the frontline there, you want that air support to be close and it's no good to hit them back behind the frontline and I understand, having talked to these pilots, it is awfully damn tough. You're going so fast. ...

SI: Where there any other friendly-fire incidents?

HB: Well, the only other friendly-fire thing, I really did not [see it]; I heard about it after I was hit the first time. I had a replacement and he was killed before I got back and he had gone out on a patrol and called for artillery fire and called the coordinates wrong and called it and got himself hit and a sergeant and a couple of other guys. That's the only [incident]; I didn't have any other personal experience with it.

SI: We have taken up a lot of your time. Is there anything else you would like to put on the tape?

HB: Can't think of anything else. I wish I could say I owe it all to Rutgers, but, no, I enjoyed my time at Rutgers. If I had gone back to college, I would have wanted to go back to Rutgers and I'm anxious to see what you would come up with and I'm going to write to Harry, because he mentioned a couple of people to me, and I want to find out more about where they are and

several others that he didn't mention, [I] want to see if he knows where they are or if they still are. It's been a pleasure talking [with you]. As you can tell, I enjoy talking.

SI: We enjoyed listening.

HB: Thank you, Shaun.

SI: We will now officially conclude the interview. Thank you very much, both of you, for having us.

HB: Thank you.

-----END OF INTERVIEW-----

Reviewed by Kevin Bing 6/22/04

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 3/15/05

Reviewed by Herman Bulling 3/31/05