

McFee, Mary N. Interview 6-8-90

[Speaker 2]

5, 4, 3, 2, 1, over. That's where I want it. Well, OK.

This is Stan Tisley speaking. I'm interviewing today Mrs. Tamara McAfee about her husband's experiences in World War II.

[Speaker 1]

Mrs. McAfee. I can stop this any time, doesn't matter. Oh, Helen.

Darn it, I can call you Helen. You may know her. What is her name?

I don't know. She was Helen McClellan. Oh, you know Helen probably.

That was Helen.

[Speaker 2]

What class was he at UT?

[Speaker 1]

Well, he started in 1940 and he never really had a class then. He didn't think he had one by the time he came back.

[Speaker 2]

He was in a class of 44. Should have been. 43.

[Speaker 1]

Well, he had to go overseas. And he came back and finished up but he never went to any reunions. He wouldn't have known anyone.

All the other ROTC maybe.

[Speaker 2]

So he must have gone. Do you remember when he went into the service?

[Speaker 1]

It was early 43, I guess, or late 42.

[Speaker 2]

And he'd been in ROTC at UT. Right. So he went in as a commissioned officer.

[Speaker 1]

Exactly.

[Speaker 2]

And what branch did he go in?

[Speaker 1]

He was in infantry.

[Speaker 2]

What do you think he remembered most about leaving home?

[Speaker 1]

That he would have?

[Speaker 2]

Mm-hmm. When he left.

[Speaker 1]

Yeah, we were not married then. I was still in college. Well, had gone out of the state to college, Kentucky.

And, well, I know that he had heavy responsibilities on the farm here. Not so much when he was in school and working. And, of course, he could have stayed out very easily because of his farm.

He came back to it and worked for several years on the farm after he got back. So there would have been no question about his not having to go. I worked in a coal company office, Southern Coal and Coal.

And they brought some men in from the mines that thought they'd rather stay here than go. And they put them in the office so that they had that privilege.

[Speaker 3]

Okay.

[Speaker 1]

But I think what his feelings would have been was that he wanted to do most of that age and what he knew he should. I'm sure he hated to leave the farm and the responsibilities that he carried when he was home.

[Speaker 2]

How old was he at that time? About 20 or 21?

[Speaker 1]

He was born in 22, in November 1922. And he was about 21 years old. Yeah.

[Speaker 2]

Was anybody else in his family in the service?

[Speaker 1]

He had a younger brother. He was the oldest of the family. The brother was in the Navy.

And he was in the Pacific, of course. I don't think he was in. He was in maybe.

He didn't go in as early as Tom. And I think by the time he went in, he maybe wasn't in all that long.

[Speaker 2]

Right. Probably wasn't. How much difference was there in their age?

[Speaker 1]

Well, maybe four. Well, okay.

[Speaker 2]

He would have just gotten in at the time. Got a little training and got in.

[Speaker 1]

Yeah. This is the way I recall it.

[Speaker 2]

Do you remember, and I'll just call him Tom, if that's okay with you. Sure. Do as best you can tell me what happened after he went in.

Where he went to, and then the next, and next, and next, and so forth. You can kind of take it from me.

[Speaker 1]

Well, he went from, when they pulled him out of the university.

[Speaker 2]

I want to make sure I'm not scrolling or anything.

[Speaker 1]

We've been doing this with him, too. I haven't fooled with it with other women. When they took his class out of the university, he would have been just, I guess, early junior year, if I recall.

They sent them to Fort Benning, Georgia. And they didn't leave him there very long. They were all of a sudden, I'm sure, totally trained in a very short length of time.

I say totally. I wonder how much. But then they sent them to Camp Kilmer in New Jersey.

Didn't they? And I think he was there for several weeks, as I recall. I don't know, maybe a little longer than that.

And then they sent him overseas. He landed, I think, in France.

[Speaker 2]

Directly from the States to France? Yes. He didn't go there anyway?

[Speaker 1]

No, I don't think so. I've been in England the last three summers. And I don't think Tom, I'm pretty certain because of that, that I'm sure he had never been in England.

Because he didn't go with me the first summer. Then he was gone the next two summers. He landed somewhere in France, I'm pretty sure.

Possibly Germany, because they were early on being on him. But he was in both Germany and France.

[Speaker 2]

So D-Day, it was after D-Day when he got there and already invaded France.

[Speaker 1]

They were immediately thrown into battle. And in fact, the first day he was in battle, his immediate officer was killed. And he had to move up and take that place.

All of which I only learned, I guess I learned that only when his group, infantry group, started getting together again, which was the last six or seven years of his life. Up until then, a few of them possibly had, but they hadn't done much about getting together. And so he never really referred to any of this, and I didn't know.

[Speaker 2]

A lot of veterans don't do much talking for many, many years. Some never talk very much about it. But he was in battle the moment he got there, I suppose.

And he took over from his superior, who was killed. The first, second day. Okay, and then what from there?

[Speaker 1]

Well, they were in a lot of siding, and I had some letters from there. Of course, they don't spell out too much about the places. I had some e-mail and other letters, and there's not too much.

There are a few comments. I haven't looked at them too recently, and that's been quite a time. But I do know that the weather was terrible in wintertime, and the weather was bad.

I think the supply was a problem. So there was not much that you could do, I guess. But they did, they had a lot of that going on early on.

And then he, when his unit left to come back home, and he thought he would be with them when they did, they held him for occupation for one year in Germany. So he had charge of an occupation camp in Germany for a year before he got back.

[Speaker 2]

Were you all married before he went home?

[Speaker 1]

No, no. We had been in high school together, and I had gone to Kentucky to college, and he had gone to university. And we didn't marry.

In fact, at that time, one was a little more, so we waited until he came back, had worked, which he had never done as far as salary, and he worked for two, three years for me. We were married in 49. In 49.

He worked at Kentucky.

[Speaker 2]

Does he ever comment on his battle experiences?

[Speaker 1]

Oh, no, he really rarely, in all those years, referred to it, but when he went to one reunion in Chicago before, about the time that we married, I think we'd been married maybe about one year, maybe two, and that's the first one when they finally tried to contact most of them. And he went to that one that I did not go on. I think he threw up for that.

And then about, it was several years before he started trying to go to most of them, and I went with him to one in Cincinnati, and I learned from one of them, a little bit younger, but not much younger than Tom Lightly, a younger man that was there who, at this point, was a furrier in Chicago and had apparently done quite well. Actually, he was pretty well to do before that. And a very handsome young man who was there.

I don't remember whether his wife was with him on that first trip. But anyway, he made a point to tell me that early on when they were in battle that Tom had ordered him to go out front to, I don't know, I guess to see about positions. And he turned around and looked at this young man.

His name was Mahon, his last name, M-A-H-O-N. He said that Tom turned around and looked at him and realized that that young man was scared to death, and Tom said, oh, I will go. So I picked up some things like that always.

[Speaker 2]

Let's see, when he went out from UT, you've been a second lieutenant. What was it like?

[Speaker 1]

Well, it should have been more than it was. He was Lieutenant Colonel. But he was pretty slow, though.

They used a point system for a while, too, if you remember. And I don't really know how that worked.

[Speaker 2]

Did he stay in the reserves or anything when he got back?

[Speaker 1]

He did.

[Speaker 2]

He stayed in the reserves. He served a fairly long time in that sort of thing.

[Speaker 1]

He taught one year at Fort Leavenworth, which sounds like a prison. Isn't that where one is?

[Speaker 2]

I think so.

[Speaker 1]

But also, I think that's where his camp, where he went to. And I don't know whether the general command school got there. It seems to me he went through that.

I don't know what that is anyway, what it sounds like out there.

[Speaker 2]

What did they call that class he was in? I didn't have that.

[Speaker 1]

It was probably aptly named, isn't it?

[Speaker 2]

Did you all ever go into any UT reunion?

[Speaker 1]

Not really. Tom never really felt he had a class after he came back. I expect that's pretty universal, wasn't it?

[Speaker 2]

Yeah, I went to one, and it was so demoralizing to me because there were so many girls there whose husbands did not come back or were wounded. But the war took a terrible toll on them. They just grabbed them up out of OPC, you know.

Oh, it did. Now, which were you in? I was in the Air Force.

[Speaker 1]

Well, that was Pacific Black, wasn't it, or not?

[Speaker 2]

Well, it was both. It was kind of both. Actually, I was in India, China.

I was in the Flying Community of China. I have questions here that will be easier for you to answer because I know your information is limited.

[Speaker 1]

Well, it is somewhat. I remember, I know Bill Bell-Frayer was in that flying cadre, so of course we all knew that group. Tom did go to, he graduated in animal husbandry, which they call something more, I suppose, euphonic, I don't know, but differently now.

He did go to their reunion type thing. And his daddy had been with the U.S. Army for 100 years, maybe shy two years now.

[Speaker 2]

That's a long time, isn't it?

[Speaker 1]

Yeah, it is.

[Speaker 2]

Did he ever mention anything about people from other parts of the country when he was out in this country reacting to him?

[Speaker 1]

I'll tell you how I reacted. I don't know about him. Tom, I'm sure, it's a puzzle for me as to how he understood, particularly those that were from the New York Bronx.

Because I had a phone call. We had not been married too long. And I had a phone call.

Early on, Tom did work on the farm for a while, and we were either going to have to get bigger with the operation, or he needed to get a job because, well, there's nothing new about that. It's not easy to make a living on one, and so he was either going to have to get more equipment and get bigger, or so he chose to go to work, which I think was, but, however, he still operated the farm with beef cattle on it, always. And, in fact, still a little bit now.

But he was still on the farm at that time so that I could at least get a hold of him if someone were to call to come by. And I had a call from someone that I could not understand. This was a few years after we were married, and probably before that, definitely since then, we've had foreign guests from most any place you put your finger down on the map.

And I never had any trouble with them. They had broken English, and sometimes even an interpreter. But I never had anyone that I could not understand.

But this man that called, I could not understand. And, but I did know that he said he was at Concord Park. So I found Tom on the farm and told him that I would go up and leave home somebody that was over there that I could understand very little, except he wanted to see him.

And when I got him, his name was, anyway, when I brought him down here, he had his wife and a young son. And I think that was it. And they were traveling from New York to Florida for vacation.

And I simply could not understand what he was saying. And when Tom started talking to the father, and I tried to to the son, it was worse. So there was just no conversation I could make.

[Speaker 2]

Where were you from?

[Speaker 1]

And they were from the Bronx, and they were Italian. But they did not have an accent that was foreign. And I understand it was Brooklynese or Bronx or something.

Or any of the same thing, when I went to New York, Tom had an uncle that was a very eminent surgeon in New York in those early years. And when we went up to visit him, I took the children's airplanes, and we went to one of the World's Fairs, that sort of thing. And when I would ask for directions on the tube going home, it just didn't do any good for me.

And I had to just take them out. I suspect, I know they could pick up that I wasn't Native, because when I made a phone call from the World's Fair grounds one time at a public phone, the woman that was using it turned around and told me she would only be a moment or something like that. And then when I took it and made a comment to her or thanked her, she said, oh, well, you're from the South.

I don't know whether it was that I wouldn't be in any big rush anyway, but whatever it was, she immediately let me know that she knew I was out of pocket. But I can't imagine that Tom would not have had problems with that. I didn't hear him say that specifically.

I do know that he had a very, very serious hearing problem in his later years, and I would say a large part of that had to be service connection.

[Speaker 2]

I would think so. I remember back in, I think it was 1933, where we went to Chicago for the World's Fair. I was just a kid.

Yes, uh-huh. And I stayed in a hotel. I had a swimming pool in the basement.

[Speaker 1]

I thought that was a great place. I wonder if it's still there. Some of the old ones have been brought back to life.

[Speaker 2]

I doubt it. But I could not understand the elevator operators and the people around them. It was just Greek to me.

[Speaker 3]

Absolutely.

[Speaker 2]

Everything they said in the Midwest, and I don't know. They probably weren't even from the Midwest, the people in the hotel. I remember that it just would frustrate me.

Oh, is it not frustrating?

[Speaker 1]

Well, we have had loads of foreign guests, and my son-in-law, who's a nuclear scientist, constantly has somebody coming in, leaving, here for two and three weeks, Russia, Japan, you name it. And I've never had any trouble with any of them. It might be broken English.

It might be quite an accent. But never have I had any trouble. But this other is a foreign language, and I don't know how Tom could possibly have managed with it.

Because he had quite a few. I know some other things he said that I don't know whether need to be put in and comment. But there was an ethnic group that he said always were medical, and they were never out front.

[Speaker 2]

That's right. I wouldn't be surprised. Well, I think that's not true.

[Speaker 1]

But I never knew him to prevaricate, so I have to think. I have to think he knew something there that bothered him.

[Speaker 2]
Clark Worth Orange.

[Speaker 1]
Yes, I know the name. I've written it once, but I haven't read it.

[Speaker 2]
It's written in this, at least the author attempts to write it, in this Brooklynese.

[Speaker 3]
Oh, really?

[Speaker 2]
And the whole book's that way. And I can hardly get through it reading it. The first place you get tired of reading it.

It's a foreign language.

[Speaker 1]
Well, I guess it is. I remember A.B. Kaplan and some things that I've read that were, I don't know whether it's the same sort of thing, but some that have been in dialects that are hard. And, of course, I think a lot of the southern dialect that you read has a lot of it, of course, written by people that don't know the south anyway.

But some of it's ridiculous. Right. It's totally ridiculous.

[Speaker 2]
Kind of like the way they speak it in the movies.

[Speaker 1]
Yeah, right, which is nowhere near correct.

[Speaker 2]
How long was he out of the streets, you know?

[Speaker 1]
Well, I'm sure some of the information, but I don't think he was gone more than two years, maybe.

[Speaker 2]
He went in 1943 and could get back in 1945.

[Speaker 1]
He was back back then.

[Speaker 2]
In 1946, let's see.

[Speaker 1]
I got back.

[Speaker 2]

I was only over 13 months. They flew us to bed. They had already killed us in there, but they sent us home in a hurry once we got to town.

[Speaker 1]

Well, I guess it wouldn't have been before.

[Speaker 2]

I bet it was in 1946, because it was November of 1945 before I got back. I was only over 22. I came from the Air Force.

I didn't know I was a civilian. I was trying to instruct the Air Force cadets. And then the first man in there transported me.

You went in. Right.

[Speaker 1]

And you probably know who this person is. Yeah, I know him. I've been up with him early on.

[Speaker 2]

Many, many times.

[Speaker 1]

I don't doubt it. They keep a nice group going. I know Ken Carton during Mary Fries, too, and they stay in a very nice little group, enjoy one another.

[Speaker 2]

Did he keep in touch with any of the people he served with?

[Speaker 1]

Yes, he did a surprisingly good job about that. And I think he did fairly early on. I know, of course, he was here at Christmas, but when we began to go back to the small group it was to begin with, and then it built up with those who were coming back.

And I think two or three times they had some little speech going, thanking Tom for a lot of paperwork and keeping the addresses and Tom Kelly, amazing how well he was thought of. Not personally since I know what his friends in the area and the family thought of him, but to have comments that I did from these men was just amazing.

[Speaker 2]

That's pretty good. Do you have an idea of what impressed him most about being overseas?

[Speaker 1]

Well, I think he thought the winters, which he experienced, were very, very severe. I don't know how to complain about anything.

[Speaker 2]

It just wasn't right.

[Speaker 1]

So that, other than just knowing that the winters were quite bad, I often wondered, and finally only in recent years, asking why I'm not crazy about fruitcake, and I think that's true of a lot of people, but he wouldn't eat it all, and I only more recently had asked him why he didn't like it at all. I never had heard this, and I learned that his mother had sent fruitcake to him, and he ate it all. So I would say that the food, I never did have a can of Spam in the house, ever.

[Speaker 2]

No, I guess not.

[Speaker 1]

But I don't think I had much else that I would think of.

[Speaker 2]

I don't know if his units put any prisoners together next to that.

[Speaker 1]

Oh, they did.

[Speaker 2]

Did he ever make any comments as to what he thought of, and if that had been different, and what kind of people he thought of?

[Speaker 1]

I think it really comes out at the moment. Of course, he did. I have a fantastic library of Civil Wars as well, or I think I do, as well as World War II, and I know he read everything he could get when he had time of that period.

All of Churchill's he has, and he's read. I've been to the home, but he was not with me by that time.

[Speaker 2]

Those prisoners that were received over here in the States, we took care of a lot of them over here.

[Speaker 1]

I was over at Black Mountain last weekend at a B&B, and I know that our 1-4-0 assembly hotel at Montreat received, I think that was Japanese they had.

[Speaker 2]

Is that right? These were German prisoners from the Afrika Korps, that he had suffered through the number of years. He said they were just haughty as they could be.

He'd never been overseas, and he said, it scared me to look down and talk to them. He said, I thought, oh, it's going to be awful to fight these guys. Of course, at that time, they still thought they were going to win.

That's so true. Of course, I think later on in Europe after the World War, I mean, after the invasion, they were like prisoners anyplace else. They were pretty well cowed down by then.

[Speaker 1]

I'm sure that they had to be totally shocked at the pain treatment that they received at the hands of the Americans. I do know one thing that Tom told me, because my daughter spent, I remember this, and I think I remember it because of the fact that my daughter and four or five girls spent between her junior and senior year in college, they spent the summer in Europe. In Munich, she had a friend that she had known in New York State at camp, up in New York State.

When she visited this friend, she would not go with her, the friend would not, who lived there, a very wealthy girl, which I guess has nothing to do with it one way or the other, but maybe it does, I don't know. But she would not go with these girls out to view the... But I do know that Tom had told me that they, and I assume he maybe even was a part of it by his mentioning it at time or two, that they lined up the civilians and had them look at what was to happen.

I'm sure we all know that now, but so much has been written and done about it. I do recall him telling me that.

[Speaker 2]

Yeah, I'm glad we did it. I couldn't say anything about it.

[Speaker 1]

Absolutely, yeah.

[Speaker 2]

Did he ever speak of his relationships with the civilians overseas? I guess particularly after the time he spent.

[Speaker 1]

I think he would much rather have been at home back then. And I don't recall... I doubt that he had a lot of...

...supplies in there, and I don't know just what all was then involved. I have been sorry, and I guess a little surprised that he didn't learn the language because he was nothing but honor the whole time at UT, and I know he could have done it. He either didn't have any interest in doing it or just maybe the situation was not the best for him.

[Speaker 2]

He may not have done a lot of it very much.

[Speaker 1]

I don't know. Well, he had these German prisoners. That's true.

[Speaker 2]

I don't know. He may not have much contact.

[Speaker 1]

That very well could be.

[Speaker 2]

Do you know if in the time he served overseas, did he ever mention he had any contact with Allied troops such as English, Australian, French? What he thought of?

[Speaker 1]

I don't know how much contact he had with them. I don't think I would be quoting him on some of that. I know that all of us have heard comments that they'd be about as willing to fight the English next time.

They're just so super... I love England, and I've gone back quite a bit of time in the last three summers. Well, of course, we all know what Montgomery, what he was, how in attitude.

And I think maybe that feeling transposed to the whole English.

[Speaker 2]

A comment, a fellow I interviewed was saying his commanding officer was the son of Montgomery. And he went to Montgomery's headquarters to ask him what took the assignment that Montgomery wanted him to take care of. And he said, word back, says, I haven't got time to see you, but you guard my right flank.

He said, I put up with that a day or two. He said, we just moved on out. He said, we were ahead of 50 miles further into Germany than his right flank.

And he never got stopped.

[Speaker 1]

I don't doubt that at all, from anything I've ever read or heard or anything else.

[Speaker 2]

He said he had to keep one soldier stationed on some road every morning that Montgomery would pass in his Rolls Royce. And that would prove to Montgomery that the Yanks were on the job. And he said, we were 50 miles up there, and there's one soldier behind me.

[Speaker 1]

And I imagine, I don't know that I heard it, that he stopped for his tea and did all that. Who knows? But that's the impression.

And I don't believe that all of these that were over there, I don't think all of them could be wrong in picking up that sort of attitude.

[Speaker 2]

Did he write pretty often?

[Speaker 1]

Very.

[Speaker 2]

Did he make many photographs while he was over there?

[Speaker 1]

Not too many. And I looked at some the other day, and they're not good at all. I don't know that Tommy even flew with a camera over there.

But he did have a few pictures, but they're not very good. They're small. I expect most of them are small that would have been made up.

Oh, they are, yeah. I have some from World War I that probably are better. But Uncle Tommy, he was old.

World War I, they pulled him out. They sent all of Johns Hopkins' senior class over in World War I. But then in World War II, he did not have children, and Tom and I were very close to him as well.

But there were some good pictures of his. But then he had charge of the whole field hospital in World War II in France in a chateau there that I have pictures of and some very nice pictures of his. But I don't know if, I do know, and I hope my son, I'm sure he still has it.

Several things were made in this occupation. Oh, and I have a painting back there. It looks, well, it would be classified very primitive art look to it that one of the interns in this camp would have done fine.

And then one was a large box that opens up like this. It was sort of like a sewing box. It had three layers.

It was carved, threaded up. Well, it's Germanic looking, and that's not all that pleasing sometimes. And another carved box.

It had my name on top of it. It was a small jewelry box. And I have that there somewhere.

This size, carved out of wood. Pictures, though, there were not very many.

[Speaker 2]

That's interesting. What age was his uncle when he served in World War I?

[Speaker 1]

Well, at that time, he had graduated from the University of Tennessee and was president of the senior class there, pretty small class. And then he went to Johns Hopkins and he pulled out that whole class, the same way that Tom was pulled out. He was a U.T. later in World War II.

[Speaker 2]

And then he served in World War II. He was in both. How old was he?

[Speaker 1]

Well, when I first knew him, it was after Tom and I married. And that was in 49. And I expect I met Uncle Tom in probably about 1950.

And he died in, maybe even later, in Who's Who in America, not just in Upper Fish or Tennessee or anything else. And, unfortunately, I don't know where I got this one, but I have the book that he sent me. I expect the only one from Concord we'll have in a long time.

But he had quite a few more pictures. I have one with him, by the way, with Montgomery. And this man with ribbons all over him.

That was a close friend of Uncle Tom's. I have that out in there.

[Speaker 2]

It's about this size. Was he in his 50s or 60s when he served World War II?

[Speaker 3]

Yeah, he had to be.

[Speaker 2]

And he was, I guess, what was his rank when he was?

[Speaker 1]

He was 1st.

[Speaker 2]

When he was over in the treason world, you know, the second time in World War II.

[Speaker 1]

I know he has the part there, which I have back there, and numerous things like that. Well, he would have been, he had to be in his 60s. But then he was also on the staff of all the major hospitals in New York, too.

So he was on quite much in his career.

[Speaker 2]

Did your husband ever voice any opinions, early or late, about?

[Speaker 1]

He was well informed with radio and TV. He wasn't over-communicated with, certainly. And, no, he saw it as a duty that you do.

And, of course, just like we pay taxes, I don't feel very thrilled with the way things are being managed, but I'm going to pay them, I guess. And really not, try not to purchase too much, maybe. But, no, I think, well, and I'm sure he thought it was necessary, certainly once he got over there.

And I expect, in retrospect, we know that it was, more than even though we worked with him to it.

[Speaker 2]

Well, the fellows that are listening, I think it's really important to them that this is a war that we're living in. And it would be a general impression that they've got to be verified. He don't want to be living under a dictated circumstance.

Absolutely, absolutely. A low standard of living.

[Speaker 3]

Right.

[Speaker 1]

I found it very hard to be around these Vietnam and Korean, or Vietnam veterans. And I do think it's very sad that they, the whole thing is sad. But I think what's the saddest to me is that, for example, a young professor at UT, I hadn't met him ten minutes.

This has been ten years ago, maybe, eight. I hadn't met him ten minutes until he was feeling very, very sorry for himself. This was a group.

Tom was there. I don't think he heard it. And I always found it so very strange, and I guess unbecoming, for them to be so upfront with the fact that they felt like they'd been handed a raw deal.

Which they were.

[Speaker 2]

Yeah.

[Speaker 1]

But somehow to me, that was so alien to what I had seen in Tom, who did his duty and went on and forgot about it, and would have been the case also in Vietnam. But I think it's the different attitude and the different background and the different expectations of those two generations. I don't think it's because the one was the right war and the other wasn't.

And it definitely was not.

[Speaker 2]

And I think we all agree with that. We all agree with that, yeah.

[Speaker 1]

But I think it's the difference in the men and what it was like for them. And I know they weren't maybe so honored and that a lot of things were wrong when they came back. But I cannot imagine letting that be a part of their personality the way I've seen it.

[Speaker 2]

It's hard for me to relate to that.

[Speaker 1]

I guess I have to wonder what they would have thought being pulled out and sent and having people dropped right and left. In that sense, it wouldn't have been any different. I think it must have been that they felt it was penalt and that they weren't honored when they came back.

But were you honored when you came back? Tom wasn't. I think people were so glad.

Well, I suppose those that hit New York a year later, there wasn't anything but just a man coming home.

[Speaker 2]

Well, I got back, I guess you might say, during the happy time where the police there up east were having an inundated with soldiers. You know, if you went home, perhaps somebody might just pick up the check for you. Somebody didn't even know.

[Speaker 1]

Well, okay, I guess now that's wonderful. And I'm sure that would be a contrast maybe to the later war. Tom didn't have any of that at all.

[Speaker 2]

But, you know, I've had trouble accepting the Japanese. I've had trouble accepting all of them, you know. Yeah, true.

It bugs me, the whole thing.

[Speaker 1]

Yeah, I'm sure it does.

[Speaker 2]

Well, you know, that's the way it is.

[Speaker 1]

When I was in Scotland, up near the border in the Lake District in the state of B&B three or four years ago, there was a man from Scotland that he and his wife were seated at the same table at breakfast in this B&B. And I guess he must have asked me. I certainly wouldn't have volunteered it.

But when he did know that I was, well, I guess that was obvious from the States, and asked that, he thanked me for the fact that our government and our men had done so well by then. And that was in the Lake District in northern England. I see.

That's the only time I've run into anything like that, and it was such a surprise to me.

[Speaker 2]

Do you have any particular feelings, or did your husband ever voice any feelings about the draft age people that didn't go into service?

[Speaker 1]

No, he never did. I knew who stayed and who did whatever it took to stay out, and I knew who made money during that period and advanced their career, and I've always known it and still do. And one whose sons are very prominent in Knoxville now, and I find myself thinking, you'd have to have had a leg up, wouldn't you?

But no, never did I hear that from him. Although he did know of it, you know. But I never heard anything that would have been unkind about that.

[Speaker 2]

Who do you remember most about his coming home?

[Speaker 1]

Well, his was sort of, you know, after the fact, as I said. It was a little bit different.

[Speaker 2]

Yeah, it was.

[Speaker 1]

It was a whole year later, so there was no group coming. So there's not any particular other than just a happiness that he was home. And then he did stay in the military and in the reserve.

In fact, we were going to you. Are you in the ROA here in Knoxville? No.

Well, we went to most of that because, of course, he knew quite a few of them, most of them, I guess. A lot of them. That's all different services, but nevertheless, he had known them through, I guess, growing up here too as well as some that were in the service.

[Speaker 2]

No, I was, of course, I had a chance like everybody did to stay in the reserve, but I elected not to.

[Speaker 1]

Here again, though, he stayed in the reserve. I don't know how long. I suppose his brother did.

I don't know whether he's still in. I believe I might have, well, anyway.

[Speaker 2]

I was kind of better. We received a commission as first lieutenant in our 421, or whatever it was called. Right across the top of it.

It said, frozen and good, which means we could never get a promotion. So we went over as first lieutenant, and then we came back as first lieutenant. Right.

And that's the time they wanted me through. Oh, I think that's. I said, that's.

[Speaker 1]

Forget it. Yeah.

[Speaker 2]

Yeah, forget it.

[Speaker 1]

Well, I know Tom, had he stayed one more month, he would have come back at a higher rank, but he was not interested. Right. I guess had it been one day, he might not have been interested.

I don't blame him for that. And then he stayed in the reserve for years, but apparently they worked the same way. And I guess that's what being, that's what the term being in the Army means, maybe, is that they do what they want to there.

And so when he was ready to jump another grade, they terminated him.

[Speaker 2]

And isn't that a true thing to do? Isn't that right?

[Speaker 1]

But there again, Tom had a poor life, and he would have known how to be bitter about something. But on the other hand, that's.

[Speaker 2]

Treated that way.

[Speaker 1]

Oh, yes. I'm sure. It's not the kind of things you would want for staying prepared all these years.

And believe me, that was a heavy thing because they really had to study hard and stay on top and a lot of field work. And then he taught several years. Of course, their teaching, I know some professors, and I don't think I ever really knew, went with Tom every year.

I'm sure there were several of them, but I don't know and didn't when he told me who it was, who he referred to. But the Army had such superior teaching facilities to what the university had always. Oh, really?

Very superior. This professor that went with him several times was just amazed at how these running accoutrements that they had, how great they were and how much he helped. And the university, which I suppose was on a par with most, maybe many at that time, just had nothing to approach it.

[Speaker 2]

What year did he die?

[Speaker 1]

86.

[Speaker 2]

86. Well, he hasn't passed away too long.

[Speaker 1]

No, it'll be four years. Four years.

[Speaker 2]

How long were you all there?

[Speaker 1]

38 years.

[Speaker 2]

38 years.

[Speaker 1]

He had two children.

[Speaker 2]

What does your son do?

[Speaker 1]

Well, he is in an engineering field at Oak Ridge, and I know very little about where he goes.

[Speaker 2]

Is your daughter, is she married?

[Speaker 1]

My daughter's married. They don't have children. She had graduated from an excellent job.

We thought that she could have had all of her life, but it wasn't. She liked people, and she had gone to the top of her department and all that, but I think it's not what we would have done.