

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with  
NORMAN A. ALFF  
Communications, 91<sup>st</sup> Infantry, Army, World War II  
2000

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**Alff, Norman A.**, (1921- ). Oral History Interview, 2000.

User Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 68 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 68 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Video Recording: 1 videorecording (ca. 68 min.); ½ inch, color.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Military Papers: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

**Abstract:**

Norman Alff, a Columbus, Wisconsin native, discusses his World War II service as a communications man in North Africa and Italy with Company K, 362nd Division, 91st Infantry, and his post-war involvement with the ROTC program at the University of Wisconsin. He talks about basic training at Camp White (Oregon) and his role stringing telephone wire and carrying communication equipment like the SCR-300 radio. Alff relates transportation to Africa, practice landing operations in North Africa, and training to fire a bazooka. Stationed at Arno (Italy), he comments on combat conditions including being under mortar and artillery fire, night patrols, and rest and relaxation in Tuscany. He relates the disappearance of a nearby squad, and later discovering they had been captured by Germans. Alff mentions crossing the Arno River, establishing outposts in the North Apennines Mountains, and being wounded by two “shoe mines” while trying to help a medic who had been wounded by a mine. Wounded in the legs and face, he discusses medical treatment in Rome and later receiving treatment for jaundice in Naples (Italy). He comments on occupation duty in Gorizia (Italy) and touchy relations there with Yugoslavian troops. Alff mentions seeing the Isle of Capri before coming home and discusses his role as the ROTC Regimental Executive Officer at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. He talks about majoring in international relations, working at General Motors, keeping in touch with a few other veterans, and revisiting Italy with his wife.

**Biographical Sketch:**

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2000.

Transcribed by Katy Marty, 2008.

Transcript checked by Channing Welch, 2009.

Corrections typed in by Katy Marty, 2009.

Abstract corrected by Susan Krueger, 2009.

**Interview Transcript:**

Norman: It's not easy.

Jim: Okay. [Approx. 18 sec. pause] All right, talking to Norman. Alff. It's the 10<sup>th</sup> of May, year 2000. Tell us when you were born Norman.

Norman: I was born November 13th, 1921 in Columbus, Wisconsin.

Jim: And when did you enter military service?

Norman: In October of 1942. Fort Sheridan.

Jim: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

Norman: I was drafted.

Jim: They sent you to Fort Sheridan first [unintelligible].

Norman: Fort Sheridan first, yeah.

Jim: Okay. And you had your basic there?

Norman: No, I had ah, they shipped us right out to – they were formulating the 91<sup>st</sup> Division. I went right out to the 91<sup>st</sup> Division and they had activated it and I went [unintelligible]

Jim: Where was the 91<sup>st</sup>?

Norman: 91<sup>st</sup> was stationed at Camp White in Medford Oregon.

Jim: [unintelligible]

Norman: Well, went all the way. We had a complete training in basic with all the tactics [unintelligible] stuff company. A regimental division and we ended up being '44 or the fall of '43. In corps (??) Maneuver, in the high desert of Oregon. So we [unintelligible].

Jim: What MOS rating did they give you?

Norman: I was started out -- so, shortly after I reached Camp White I was put into company headquarters [unintelligible] usually for communications.

Jim: What type of training does a communication sergeant get?

Norman: Well, a communication sergeant basically, when they complete basic training, of course, and then I went with the signal corps, the communications unit for the battalion and regiment.

Jim: Stringing up lines?

Norman: Stringing lines, radios, we had the basic radio which I usually carried was SCR-300. It was with a backpack.

Jim: That's the walkie-talkie?

Norman: Yeah, and then the walkie talkie, the 536 hand.

Jim: What was the difference? Tell me the difference between those two.

Norman: Well, one was backpack and had more –

Jim: Power

Norman: More power than the smaller hand carried radio.

Jim: What was the range of the SR, what did you call it?

Norman: SCR 300.

Jim: Right.

Norman: I believe it was maybe, I'm not sure but five to ten miles.

Jim: Oh. That's pretty powerful.

Norman: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Jim: And the walkie – talkie?

Norman: Well, that would be limited to three miles.

Jim: [unintelligible]

Norman: Both had batteries. Both were battery --

Jim: Was that a problem, getting batteries to places?

Norman: No, not because they would come up with your ration and exchange on a daily basis --

- Jim: You changed the batteries everyday?
- Norman: Well, I don't know. They weren't changed every day.
- Jim: Oh, but that never proved to be a problem?
- Norman: We didn't have any problem with that at all.
- Jim: They'd run them to you or you'd be out in the field laying out some wires or doing some of the communicating yourself?
- Norman: We would be out beyond the maneuvers. We'd be out and I would be responsible for contact battalion [unintelligible] and maintaining communications within the company.
- Jim: Oh. What was that like?
- Norman: Well, basically it would be mostly radio unless there was a stationary position. Then I'd string a wire, straighten (??) wire.
- Jim: To start with them you were a squad leader?
- Norman: The equivalent of a squad leader. I was basically – the people I had underneath me really had a squadron. All the runners as – and all the forms of communication, each platoon had a runner besides the company headquarters and these are the people I worked with (??)
- Jim: Now they were just packing all kinds of jobs weren't they? Those runners were not just --
- Norman: Yes, yes.
- Jim: Anything that the captain wanted, they'd jump in (??), go fetch.
- Norman: They'd go. They had (??) basically to contact between company headquarters and the platoons.
- Jim: I see (??).
- Norman: And you'd have the three rifle platoons and one heavy weapons (??).
- Jim: So it may not have been radio at all. It might be just word of mouth.
- Norman: It could be, but basically it would be radio if possible and then maybe some specific directions that might be relayed by mouth.

Jim: Did the signal corps do anything other than radio like old fashioned things like flags --

Norman: Well, we --

Jim: Semaphores or any of that?

Norman: We had some work on that but we never really used it.

Jim: What about the Morse code?

Norman: Yeah. They [unintelligible]

Jim: You had to be proficient?

Norman: [unintelligible] Morse code, but there again we didn't use that [unintelligible].

Jim: Okay. [unintelligible]

Norman: Yeah. [unintelligible]

Jim: Now that you're all fine, then what did they do with ya?

Norman: And you mean after we went through the corps maneuver. In the spring of '44 we got ready [unintelligible] and then we shipped out. We found out [unintelligible] I don't think we were (??) [unintelligible] our destination was Camp Hansen at Hampton Roads, Virginia. We shipped out for(??) [unintelligible] beachhead training in Africa.

Jim: You crossed the ocean in what, about ten days?

Norman: (laughs) I think it would be about that. Today, it would have been -- what would be, Liberty Ship?

Jim: Surely (??) ten days.

Norman: So they were pretty slow.

Jim: Yeah, I was gonna say, maybe it wasn't at the time.

Norman: Yeah, right, right. And we landed in the vicinity of Oran, Africa.

Jim: Now this is the whole division?

Norman: This is the whole division.

Jim: Of the Ninety --

Norman: First.

Jim: The 91<sup>st</sup> Division.

Norman: Powder River Division.

Jim: Powder River okay. That was primarily an Oregon outfit?

Norman: No, it was made up of people from all over the country. In fact I have a roster from the company. We had people from the Carolinas, Chicago; Milwaukee was from Montana, and all over they were --

Jim: How did you find Oran? A little different than Wisconsin.

Norman: Yes, it was different and of course never being overseas it was an experience at the time.

Jim: What was your reaction to that?

Norman: Not, I was interested and curious about the country and what that would be like. One of the, I guess one of the things that was outstanding about Africa was the bivouac area in the Algeria was (??) a locust flight, a flight of locust took three days [unintelligible]

Jim: Did they get into your tent?

Norman: Pardon?

Jim: Did they get into your tent?

Norman: Oh yeah. They were all over I mean, it was just a swarm, just clouds of locusts.

Jim: How'd you keep 'em off your things in your tent? Just sweep 'em off?

Norman: Yeah, that's all you could do.

Jim: That must have been exciting.

Norman: No, no [unintelligible] But the beachhead training we took at the Port of Arzew, originally a Navy, a North African [unintelligible] at one time [unintelligible] crewmembers over (??).

Jim: What was your part in that maneuver?

Norman: Just to follow through with the company and maintain communications.

Jim: They landed with LST's?

Norman: Yeah, LCI.

Jim: LCI?

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Did you have a lot of equipment to deal with and take care of?

Norman: Just the radios.

Jim: That's all?

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: So you and your boys could carry off whatever you needed?

Norman: That's right.

Jim: But not all the battery packs. Somebody else had to --

Norman: Well, we only had the one big radio and that one I usually carried and the small radios the platoon leaders or the platoons would have (??)

Jim: I see. How much did that radio weigh?

Norman: I would imagine it be somewheres around thirty pounds.\_

Jim: Thirty pounds. Now they can probably put that in a cigarette case.

Norman: No, no they were --

Jim: No, I mean nowadays.

Norman: Oh yeah, it could be, yeah, yeah.

Jim: And you practiced using the radio and communicating by platoons --

Norman: Oh yeah.

Jim: You practiced that too again.



- Norman: Sure, that was even in the training we had in Africa at sometime we spent some time firing bazookas which were the primary anti- tank weapon for the infantry.
- Jim: How did they get you involved in that?
- Norman: Well, each company has, all members of the company training got to fire bazookas either in firing or loading or -- and they were useful, they were quite beneficial [unintelligible].
- Jim: Did you ever have rifle training?
- Norman: Well, the rifle training, of course, was pretty much done in basic. Maybe very little that was done at [unintelligible]
- Jim: Right. And you carried an M-1?
- Norman: I carried –
- Jim: A carbine.
- Norman: I think I probably carried a carbine.
- Jim: You had that heavy pack I would think that you had enough weight without --
- Norman: Yeah, yeah, yeah.
- Jim: M-1's a fairly heavy [unintelligible]
- Norman: Yeah, yeah right.
- Jim: Did you use binoculars?
- Norman: We usually, (laughs) had binoculars, oh yes. Yeah, that was a part, some more of the communications equipment.
- Jim: Right, that's what I was –
- Norman: Observation, yeah, right.
- Jim: Were you expected to make descriptions of the enemy ahead and report back on those or was that not your job description?

- Norman: Well, we would, we'd have to rely on our reconnaissance information. You'd have what might be ahead and basically it was a matter of the objectives and initial contacts. You didn't know where it was going to reach [unintelligible].
- Jim: Right.
- Norman: Because as you know we were under observation and [unintelligible] subjected to mortar and artillery fire. You didn't know where the ground forces might be.
- Jim: How far ahead were you of the rest of the Army of your division?
- Norman: It would depend upon if you were a frontline unit or back in reserve. If you were in a frontline then it's usually [unintelligible], which we were at one phase in the Arno campaign.
- Jim: Then you needed to have that bazooka around in case somebody wandered into your area.
- Norman: Well, you had it, that's the problem, to keep track of where that bazooka was. Each platoon had one but when the time came up to find a bazooka they had a hell of a time scrounging the thing up.
- Jim: One person wasn't assigned to this task?
- Norman: Well, he probably was but it was to a certain extent excess baggage.
- Jim: I'm sure they knew that at the front.
- Norman: Yeah.
- Jim: Matter of fact being that close to the front then you were subjected to mortar fire yourself and --
- Norman: Oh yeah.
- Jim: Sniper fire?
- Norman: Yeah, it was sniper fire. We had, I mean in the, actually the initial contact we had on June we hit a German [unintelligible]. They had a tank and the tank straddled the irrigation ditch through the vineyard and fired point blank down the irrigation ditch. We lost nine men there [unintelligible].
- Jim: Did they surprise you?

Norman: It was a surprise. The 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon made the initial contact. In fact one of my best friends made the first contact with the Germans. And he had, so that would have been maybe two, three o'clock in the afternoon, we had quite a firefight. At one occasion the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon leader was in the [unintelligible] story of farmhouse [unintelligible]. The 88 gun blew a hole right in the wall in the room in which he was in (??) and 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon did get, got a hold of a bazooka and two of the sergeants and the strange thing is they're both big six-footers, they took on this tank and got a direct hit with the bazooka and knocked the tank out of action. For that they got the Silver Star, and these two of all the casualties we had in the company, these two never missed a day of combat. [Unintelligible].

Jim: How many days in a row were you in combat?

Norman: It would be, probably from our initial contact, wouldn't be more than fourteen [unintelligible].

Jim: There is a limit to --

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Beyond which you're no longer very effective.

Norman: That's true.

Jim: So you were in a foxhole when you weren't looking around or?

Norman: Oh, yeah. We actually, most of our action up until the Arno was moving forward, only a very little time spent in foxholes. After that firefight we ran into an ammo problem and we did radio black and the weapons [unintelligible] and gone back to bring up additional ammunition and to resupply and it was rather dark by that time. I volunteers to go back and meet 'em and get 'em back up to the area. In so doing I initiated, doing made initial contact with I Company lying in probably if I hadn't been alert to the password I probably wouldn't be here but I hit friendly troops. I had to have the password to let them know who I was, but I --

Jim: What was the password that they, do you remember?

Norman: I don't remember, (laughs) no.

Jim: I know that changes.

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Everyday.

Norman: Yeah. So that, but we did get the ammo supply along with about eight or nine prisoners of that day's (??) action [unintelligible].

Jim: Did your company take those prisoners?

Norman: Yeah, they took them. They were initially sent back to --

Jim: So you had a chance to use your carbine then?

Norman: No, I didn't get a chance to.

Jim: Oh.

Norman: No, I was usually -- the company headquarters and would be (??) [Unintelligible] advance column (??) [Unintelligible] clear people out (??)

Jim: Could you determine if these Germans were new troops or were more veteran troops?

Norman: We had, at that time we had no way of knowing.

Jim: You couldn't tell by looking at them?

Norman: No.

Jim: In certain areas, you know, some of these troops were obviously children.

Norman: Yeah, right. After we had finally advanced into the Arno River we set up headquarters in a house there called Casa Tabasco (??) as I remembered and this was a big three story home with someone in an observation area on top which is real good for our purposes looking down into the valley of the Arno and, but the thing there was subjugated to some sniper fire --

Jim: Right, that makes it harder, too.

Norman: The thing that I figured out was I think we made a mistake of opening up the second shutter on the balcony and if by doing that they knew there was somebody in there. And the company commander was wounded, shot in the (??) shoulder and out of action for two weeks as a result.

Jim: Sniper fire.

Norman: Sniper fire. And the interesting thing here, I went out one afternoon to check contact with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon, a place called Berimis (??) a beautiful hotel along Highway 65, had a swimming pool. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon had

posted guard at Berimis (??) , right on the front line. They got away with it by a couple --

Jim: They guarded it so nobody could find 'em.

Norman: Yeah, (laughed) I warned 'em that wasn't a smart thing to do.

Jim: They'd jump right in the pool? (laughs)

Norman: Yeah. But that was an interesting experience, and then --

Jim: How far away were you from Pisa?

Norman: We were at that time we may have been ten, fifteen miles east of Pisa (??).

Jim: So you were closer to Florence?

Norman: Well, no it's closer to Pisa at that time.

Jim: Oh.

Norman: And then that time we ended up probably about half way between Pisa and Florence at -- well, we spent the summer there at Miniato, San Miniato.

Jim: You didn't cross the Arno then right away.

Norman: Now, we, after reaching the Arno we spent the summer of '44 apparently waiting for instructions along [unintelligible] until September of '44.

Jim: Was there firing across the river all the time?

Norman: We were sending, even when we were at [unintelligible] there would be some firing across the river and there was patrol action. We had reconnaissance patrol.

Jim: And still today.

Norman: And so today. And we sent reconnaissance patrols out and they did too. We lost one of the sergeants that had joined our outfit after having served in Alaska, had taken a patrol out, came back in, hesitant on the paths, shot and killed by our own company.

Jim: Oh.

Norman: So I mean --

Jim: [unintelligible], yeah.

Norman: It was a ticklish situation and you were across –

Jim: Did you cross at night or how did they?

Norman: Done at night, night and we had our patrols out at night. We didn't, we were too much in the open to have any patrols out during the day.

Jim: I see. Well, that's a shame.

Norman: But then we moved. We were at San Miniato for the bulk of the summer [tape jumps back to count 275] with company headquarters right in the edge, in the ledge at San Miniato over-looking the river valley, the Arno and we had our platoons down on the lower area as out posting and we had – we would – supply – they would be out there. We supplied food each evening and I had been in contact, we had wire and contact with all the platoons, the three rifle platoons. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon was stationed right in the railroad station, which was a mistake, in San Miniato di Basso, the lower part of San Miniato.

Jim: I know what you're going to say. The Americans bombed the railroad station.

Norman: No.

Jim: No?

Norman: No. The Germans.

Jim: Oh!

Norman: The Jerry's threw in a mortar barrage. I was in contact with the squad in the station about 10:30 in the morning. Germans threw in a mortar barrage and I lost contact with that squad and when we went back down to resupply in the evening that particular squad was missing. They had disappeared, they were gone.

Jim: Never saw them?

Norman: Never saw them and we found out after --

Jim: You lucked out.

Norman: We found out afterwards they took the entire squad prisoners of war and they were okay. They came home free after the war, but they spent from

that time until the end of the war they were somewhere in Germany. But that same evening, the same day that we lost a squad from the railroad station or the next day I went down checking the other position and I hit the left platoon on the left. They had, I went down to see what was happening and I had talked to the platoon leader and all of the people that all can gathered in around the building and --

Jim: Civilians.

Norman: So I told 'em, "You better get these guys out in their perimeter fence because we lost this one squad. If you don't get out there you're going to have a problem." So I pulled out of the area and I had no more moved out then a mortar barrage came into that platoon. If they hadn't gotten out into their positions they would have some more casualties.

Jim: Right.

Norman: So, but coming back then from the forward area to the head company area I had two, three fellas with me but another patrol in our area and we weren't about to pick a firefight with them so we --

Jim: Oh, a German patrol.

Norman: A German patrol, yes.

Jim: You saw them before they saw you?

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: That was fortunate.

Norman: Yeah, so that was quite a -- but we, I sometimes wonder if we were wise in not getting, if and we should have intercepted them or if not, but I didn't think we had --

Jim: You didn't have your bazooka. (laughs)

Norman: But that, so then we did get back, get some rest, leave (??) went back into Tuscany in the little village of San Gimignano. It was near and I was just noticing it's known as it's, it has eleven towers. Some of the merchants carry on (??), but it's in, it's not on the coast.

Jim: I see.

Norman: And it's a city of towers. It's a walled city and they had a real nice restaurant I got in a couple of times but I checked out the cathedral there

in San Gimignano and after I entered the cathedral there was a big hole in the roof and sitting on, right in the middle of the cathedral was a dud, it was big, I imagine it was probably 100 pounds or more.

Jim: Oh, my.

Norman: Right in the middle of the cathedral with the fresco paintings all around and it was something to surely remember but it was taped off and there was the dud right, bomb dug right in.

Jim: It was unexploded.

Norman: Unexploded, yeah.

Jim: Yeah.

Norman: (laughs).

Jim: Right. Now, when you backed off the line what did you do? You were there so long that you didn't have much to do then, did you?

Norman: Well, I imagine there would be, it was just a matter of rest and rehabilitation. You could get into town or there would be, you could play some --

Jim: Something for you --

Norman: Baseball.

Jim: To do in those local towns.

Norman: Baseball or something.

Jim: Oh.

Norman: I mean in the area.

Jim: Sure.

Norman: And that's about -- and taking care and cleaning equipment was to be a priority.

Jim: But you did go into a couple of towns and have something to eat at their restaurants.

Norman: Yeah, oh yeah.



Jim: Did you enjoy that or --

Norman: Oh sure, yeah, yeah. But then after spending the summer in San Miniato in September we were to jump off on the North Apennines Campaign.

Jim: Right. Put ya in the mountains.

Norman: Put us in the mountains and the objective there was to Futa Pass which was a fortified position. The Germans had put concrete bunkers. It was well fortified. And that was the objective. Our division, initially in breaking through the pass, and --

Jim: But you needed either airplanes or heavy artillery to deal with those bunkers.

Norman: Yeah, I assume there was well bombed. Artillery fire, there was lots of artillery fire and so we jumped off on the North Apennines Campaign because the engineers put pontoon bridges across the Arno. We crossed on that and September and the first day after we had crossed the Arno and moved forward and the company got into position, squads, the platoons were all pretty well hidden and we had a German, I don't know how many but a German had and it was I think it was a mistake. Had a German group move through, right through the area. They were ahead of us and so they were ahead of us and I think they should have been intercepted at that time. They weren't, and then when they moved out and the next day as we started up the mountain trail late in the afternoon we had one hit. Again the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon was starting to get [unintelligible] fire. We were fired on by the Germans and so we sort of stalled on the trail. We had -- the Germans had an opportunity to lay their mine fields. So they lay "shoe mines" are with a quarter, a little wooden box with a quarter pound of TNT in it with pressure firing mechanism. All you had to do was step on it and you lost your foot.

Jim: Foot [unintelligible]

Norman: Yeah, yeah. And so we had one fella -- he lost stepped on one and instead of staying on the -- where he was he ran off to the side and into the field and he got up there, the medic went up to help get him out and the medic stepped on a "shoe mine".

Jim: Another one?

Norman: Yeah. So four of us, and this was a mistake, went up to get the medic. The other guy had gotten down, gotten back to the trail, but the four of us went up to pick up the medic who had lost a foot and in the process of picking

him up, one of the -- and four of us and that was too many people, one of the fellas stepped on a "shoe mine". He lost a foot.

Jim: How far away from you?

Norman: Oh, he probably -- we had, we'd picked the medic up.

Jim: Right.

Norman: So we had two on each side.

Jim: He was standing right next to you?

Norman: Yeah. I don't -- see the one that stepped on lost their foot, the other guy, another one lost a leg. I got shrapnel with both legs.

Jim: I was gonna say you must have got something sprinkled on you.

Norman: Yeah, I did. I had it in both my legs.

Jim: Right.

Norman: Well, we got the medic back down to the trail. They did -- they got the stretchers up. I didn't have sense enough to stay put. I went over to help. I helped put the medic on a stretcher and so doing we rolled him onto a "shoe mine" and I was bent right over lifting him onto the stretcher so, of course, he was pretty badly damaged and I got the full blast in my face and so that's my experience with "shoe mines". And then the, when I went back to the --

Jim: What did that do to your face?

Norman: Well, that was pretty black and powder burned. I went back to the field hospital and they wouldn't even give me a mirror to see what it looked like. And --

Jim: They discouraged this.

Norman: Yeah, they put me into the field hospital and then the next -- I don't know if that night, but anyway the surgeon cleaned up all the debris out of my face and I think I have some up here.

Jim: Still have some spots there?

Norman: Yeah, and several spots in my face. I was wearing glasses. I threw my glasses off and I still, I think the only reason I have eyes today is I was

wearing glasses, but I had a little piece of something in the cornea of my eye.

Jim: In the cornea?

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Oh my. Did that guy get it out?

Norman: Yeah, he got it out. There's a little scar, there's still a little scar there, and so then I went back and they pretty well took care of dressing my face. I went back then. They flew me back to the 5<sup>th</sup> General Hospital in Rome so I was back from; I was back in Rome September. I was there for two months.

Jim: Two months?

Norman: Two months.

Jim: You never went back to your outfit?

Norman: Oh yeah.

Jim: Oh, you did.

Jim: I think the only reason they kept me that long I had this scar on my hand which was slow in healing and they kept me there until it was pretty well healed so on November 11<sup>th</sup>, and my birthday is on the 13<sup>th</sup>. On November 11<sup>th</sup> I went back up with the unit and --

Jim: Did the corpsman make it, I mean your medic?

Norman: No.

Jim: That second mine did him in?

Norman: Yeah, he was gone.

Jim: So that's two in two minutes is not fair. That's more than you should have to put up with.

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: You couldn't -- tell me about the "shoe mine". You couldn't discern them at all?

Norman: No, they're – I mean they're --

Jim: They're just so flush with the ground that they --

Norman: They just – well, put 'em you put 'em, all you take a little bayonet, dig a hole, cover them with dirt and debris.

Jim: How big were they?

Norman: Well, a quarter pound –

Jim: The whole thing?

Norman: Yeah

Jim: The shoe?

Norman: About, probably four by four.

Jim: That's all?

Norman: Uh huh.

Jim: And they're, yeah, I know simple (??). I know they're just pressure.

Norman: Yeah. Pressure activated in a little wooden box.

Jim: Right.

Norman: So –

Jim: But they were obviously easy to conceal then.

Norman: Yeah, easy to conceal but then, actually, then the next day I found out that the company had a lot, had more casualties. How many I don't know. But they ran into the "Bouncing Betties", the ones that sort of --

Jim: Yeah, those are really dangerous.

Norman: Yeah, and also stake mine. Stakes that will detonate and spread the debris at the stake.

Jim: The "Bouncing Betty" was usually activated by a vehicle though, right?

Norman: Yeah, but if there were, trip, it's just a matter of tripwires.

Jim: Oh, tripwires.

Norman: Tripwires. Tripwires.

Jim: Yeah, those are nasty.

Norman: So they, I know one of the units from the one fellow from the 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon was pretty well banged up from the stake mine.

Jim: Tell me how the stake mine worked. I'm not as familiar with that.

Norman: I'm not that familiar except that as I understood it they were pretty much a stake loaded with an explosive which shattered and just scattered shrapnel.

Jim: All right. So what did you do in the hospital? You really didn't have much to do there and you really weren't incapacitated very much.

Norman: That's right.

Jim: You must have --

Norman: No, it --

Jim: Somethin' to keep busy.

Norman: I wasn't too incapacitated but believe it or not they still had opera performed in Rome at the main opera house. (Jim laughs). I managed to see, oh, at least three or four operas --

Jim: Wonderful.

Norman: When I was back in Rome. Aida, Aida, I saw once, but the rest -- and so I managed to take in a couple of operas, and at that time Vesuvius choose to erupt. So we could sit on --

Jim: You had a lot of entertainment.

Norman: Could sit on the patio of the hospital and watch Vesuvius erupting.

Jim: Drink a beer, put your feet up and really living.

Norman: Yeah, yeah. That's right. Watch Vesuvius blow its stack. Interesting it is that I got to have a good look at Vesuvius in the next spring.

Jim: In the what?

- Norman: In the spring of '45.
- Jim: Oh, I see. You got closer then.
- Norman: Yeah, because the – getting back – oh, well, the – then we spent the winter of '45 or '44 in the North Apennines about fifteen miles south of Bologna which was the Po valley. So this was the North Apennines campaign from Florence to Bologna.
- Jim: When did you get back to your outfit?
- Norman: I'm back in November 11<sup>th</sup> and so then we wintered in the Apennines. One particular case we sent up our forward advance listening post area in Livergnano which was completely, a village completely destroyed which had been captured by the 3-6-1 but we set up company headquarters and spent two weeks in a wine cellar underneath the motel which had been completely destroyed by fire and it was an arched wine cellar, very secure, but we would get our rations in at night and sent -- we had to, had phone communications to the rear and a group that went back for rations had the responsibility of checking the wire and repairing wire every night from the forward position to the rear. And I think they were quite often subjected to mortar fire along that as they went back but as I recall, initially when we moved into position down below the highway there seemed to be a flashlight, a blue light that would come on and off and I think my, looking in retrospect it was here was some German or partisan that was with the Germans signaling when we had personnel out on the highway because the mortar barrages would be coming as soon as we got on patrol.
- Jim: With one foot on the road.
- Norman: Yeah, and they never had sense enough to fire at the flashlight down there, but I think that's – but that was quite an experience and I learned afterwards the Germans did eventually get a direct hit on that wine cellar.
- Jim: Oh, my.
- Norman: I spent two weeks there, but [unintelligible]. So that was an interesting experience. Then I went back, spent the rest of the winter in the North Apennines around a little place called Piano and --
- Jim: Was it pretty cold place up in the mountains?
- Norman: Oh yeah. Well, it wasn't, -- it was normal I would say for a normal winter and I got hit with yellow jaundice so January of '45 they sent me back to the hospital again. This time I went back to Naples and we were put in a barracks. It was a wooden barracks. It wasn't a hospital, but it was --

Jim: You keep all the hepatitis patients isolated from the rest?

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: I would imagine. It's quite contagious.

Norman: It was all yellow jaundice persons in the building that I was in. In fact the company commander and several other people had gone back. Some of them were in the hospital, but I wasn't in the hospital itself. I was in a separate --

Jim: Were you fairly ill?

Norman: Not, well, yellow jaundice, I mean, you're lackadaisical, you have no ambition.

Jim: Fatigue.

Norman: Fatigue and you're completely fatigued. All they gave us was a good diet, lots of beef.

Jim: You were able to eat?

Norman: Oh yeah, yeah, and --

Jim: How long did that last?

Norman: Well, I was there from January until April of '45. I was there almost four months.

Jim: It took that long for you to get well?

Norman: Yeah. and it went in -- towards the end we got in, again I got to see a couple operas in Naples. Got to take a trip up to see what Vesuvius was like and that was interesting in that some of us went up and went up with a group of battalions that were also going up for a picnic and we got up to the lava flow. We took a car up to the lava flow and got up and walked over the lava flow, picking up a car on the other side a little further. So that was interesting but then they had had cable cars from the end of the cog railway to the top of Vesuvius but due to the eruption in the war the cable car was out of operation so if we wanted to get up to the summit we had to hoof it which we did. And actually --

Jim: Pretty hot?

Norman: We were able to get up and look right down into the crater at that time.

Jim: Must be enormously hot.

Norman: Well, I didn't have the nerve but I know several fellas went in a little ways to pick up coals to light their cigarettes from the --

Jim: Pick up coals with what?

Norman: From the crater. (laughs)

Jim: Yeah, I know, with what? With what?

Norman: (laughs) I don't know. I don't know how they did it.

Jim: That's terribly warm, you know.

Norman: Yeah, yeah, yeah. So I got – I didn't have a camera but I do have some pictures up on the crater. So that was an experience but then – actually, then I was able to get back, I think the war ended in mid April.

Jim: May 8.

Norman: May 8<sup>th</sup>. I went back to the unit prior to that in the vicinity of Verona, and so I got credits for the Po Valley Campaign although I didn't see anything in the campaign itself in the Po Valley, myself but I was with the unit prior to the war. So we had the Po Valley Campaign and we had some from then on from there we went to, we were assigned eventually to occupational duty in North eastern Italy, a little town of Gorizia which was near, well, I'm trying to think of a big city.

Jim: That's okay.

Norman: And so we were assigned initially to set up a guard at a power station in a little river town, Gorizia.

Jim: I was gonna ask what your duty was.

Norman: And so we moved up there and we found that the Yugoslavs were already at the power station and so it was kind of a touchy situation.

Jim: I was going to say, who's going –

Norman: Who's going to hold what? Well, eventually we moved away from the power station. We moved to the south side of the river and as we were moving up that night we had, we had moved tanks. We had artillery kegs,



everything in position and all it would have taken to start a little firefight with the Yugoslavs would have been somebody firing intermittent rifle fire which it never happened. I mean there was enough control that there were no five (??) shots fired.

Jim: Did you talk to any of those fellas?

Norman: No, I never talked to the Yugoslavs.

Jim: No.

Norman: But, so the war, after that evening we ended up at a guard duty. Our company was given guard assignment. We were on the south side of bridge and Yugoslavs were on the north side across the Isonzo River and the interesting this is we **[End of Tape 1, Side A. ca. 45 min.]** when they – those off duty were free to go anyplace in the area as long as they were back for reveille the next morning, and it seems strange – I was at this point, by this time I became first sergeant of the company, and it seemed strange type of option. You didn't have absentee loss – an absentee member on that situation. They were always there for reveille.

Jim: Right.

Norman: And so we – we had our own – we had and sergeant who the sole responsibility securing liquor for the company bar. The guy was so good that the division took him “Wham” away (laughs) from us.

Jim: He procured it from the locals?

Norman: Yeah, I mean procuring; no this was a member of the company.

Jim: Oh, I see.

Norman: That took care of liquor procurement for the company bar, but he was so good at it that he got the right variety at division. He actually took – well, what we had then, we had a regimental or division rest center at Grotto which is a resort on the Adriatic, and we had, I can't think of –

Jim: It's not important.

Norman: Anyway, we had a company headquarters up in the (??) – company press center up there and then the corps and division were down at Venice (??).

Jim: Now, tell me, this free time, did you fraternize with the local girls? Or should I ask you this when we're outside alone?

Norman: (laughs) No, I had being a “primo sergente”; I didn’t have too big a problem. I mean I had a real nice Italian (unintelligible).

Jim: Sure.

Norman: And, ah –

Jim: Well, they were all hungry for food and so it seems like an obvious trade off here.

Norman: Her father was the post master at Gorizia.

Jim: Oh really?

Norman: And so it was interesting. But came back to the states –

Jim: No writing of letters or –

Norman: Yes, I wrote back, we wrote back and forth for a period of time –

Jim: Uh huh.

Norman: Before I met any of the girls from – of course there some girls back in the states that I had corresponded to (laughs).

Jim: Well, you were very busy socially.

Norman: Well, there was no problems. See, you would have your battalion or company about to go (unintelligible) down in battalion dances, so there was social activity on and then there were the beaches at Grotto.

Jim: Did a lot of guys set up housekeeping with these girls?

Norman: No.

Jim: That wasn’t allowed or they just didn’t do it?

Norman: No, no well, actually, a strange situation. They had one Yugoslav gal that spent some time with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Platoon and I can imagine the only reason that she was there is for intelligence purposes, for information.

Jim: She was training too. (laughs)

Norman: Sure. But I think that was her responsibility but so – and that probably should never have been allowed either because that was giving information that she was picking up.

Jim: Did you have any trouble getting mail? Mail, was it pretty regular?

Norman: Oh, yeah.

Jim: And food was never a problem?

Norman: Food was never a problem.

Jim: Not very good but --

Norman: C-Rations, K-Rations, --

Jim: Right.

Norman: But, no, food wasn't --

Jim: But you had a kitchen though.

Norman: Yeah, we had a kitchen.

Jim: Sure.

Norman: We had a kitchen.

Jim: In the occupation especially you must have been pretty stable then.

Norman: Yeah. When, especially occupation, you had your own cook right there, right in the area. It was company area and we were able to play a little sports activity and there again we had -- I got down, got a pass to Venice. Spent one day in Venice, spent some time in Florence.

Jim: Rode the train?

Norman: Yeah, and then when we were to come back, we were supposedly to come back to the States for our training and then move onto the Pacific. So we got, took the "Forty-and-Eights" train down to Naples, or the city of Naples and the war ended in Japan there in August, and while were at the evacuation center we were able to get out to the Isle of Capri so we got to see the Isle of Capri.

Jim: See the Blue Grotto?

Norman: Yeah, Blue Grotto.

Jim: Yes, I've seen it.

Norman: It was an interesting experience, and then so we came back to the states and since the war was over, October '45 I was discharged. So that was about three years in the service.

Jim: Now that decorations did you win in your Italian campaign?

Norman: I had a Purple Heart. A Bronze Star for the shoe mine –

Jim: A Bronze Star?

Norman: A Bronze Star for the shoe mine experience.

Jim: That was good.

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Well, that's nice.

Norman: And then the campaign ribbon for –

Jim: Yes. I assumed that was –

Norman: For [unintelligible] campaign.

Jim: I was wondering whether your unit got a unit citation. Do you recall?

Norman: Ah, I don't know –

Jim: Probably.

Norman: But actually as far as the -- we had statistics – you want killed in action or anything like that?

Jim: No, no. Those are in books. I know about those things or I can find them. No, I'm enjoying what you're telling me, I know.

Norman: So that's about the extent.

Jim: Did you join any veterans group when you got out of service?

Norman: Well, I was with the, I came back in the ROTC, stepped right in the Advanced ROTC at the University of Wisconsin.

Jim: Oh, your GI bill went to work right away.

Norman: Yeah, I went direct back to school. It would have been in '46 and I was Advanced ROTC.

Jim: I guess with all your experience they must have made you a major right off the bat. (laughs)

Norman: No, I was regimental exec in the unit.

Jim: Right, I thought so.

Norman: And had the – able to give Alan Ameche close order drill. (laughs)

Jim: Oh, well that's an experience right there.

Norman: Yes, it was. It was his --

Jim: I don't expect he was much of a soldier.

Norman: Well, not at that time, no.

Jim: He didn't probably show up much either.

Norman: Well, no, I –

Jim: He was married you know, most of the time he was in – so –

Norman: But I think he was pretty serious –

Jim: Was he?

Norman: About his ROTC, yeah. And so that, but then regimental exec, we were, had our first real ball after the war and went overboard on that –

Jim: Sure.

Norman: Griff Williams –

Jim: With all the veterans back.

Norman: Three big bands. The Memorial Union really jumped all that year, but they didn't break even on it either. (laughs)

Jim: No, they never do.

Norman: No, so the, but Dorie --

- Jim: And then you finished college then?
- Norman: Yeah. I finished. I had started out prior to the war in electrical engineering and of course engineering was out of the question when I came back.
- Jim: Oh.
- Norman: And so I went in –
- Jim: Wait a minute. Why was that?
- Norman: My math and math was horrible condition by that time. So I went into international relations. I majored in international relations.
- Jim: Well, you've had some good experiences.
- Norman: Oh, yeah.
- Jim: Yugoslavia and Italy and --
- Norman: And Africa.
- Jim: And Africa [unintelligible]
- Norman: And, but the problem was they, with the hearing situation that I had, it was an interesting experience. I had twelve credits of Russian and about twenty in balance in French and I'd go from French to Russian class to a French class which was a mistake. The French class was a speech, was a speaking class. The Russian was really pretty basic. It was interesting and we had the instructors were two White Russians, two women. They did a tremendous job (??) They as far as the Russian language was concerned. So that was my major international relations course. I got out and graduated and by the time I had applications in for foreign service. I had applications with various branches –
- Jim: With the State Department?
- Norman: Yeah, State Department, various branches of the armed services –
- Jim: Uh huh.
- Norman: And of course in '48 there were no openings at all.
- Jim: Right.
- Norman: And so I never did anything with –

- Jim: They were closing all those things.
- Norman: Yeah, I didn't do anything with international relations, but it was at least something that I've had a continuing interest in. It's what is happening in the world and – As a result I mean I was married in '47 and I was fortunate. I worked for Highway Trailer for a period of time and –
- Jim: My grandfather used to be president of Highway Trailer a thousand years ago.
- Norman: Is that right?
- Jim: It was many, many, many years ago back in the Twenties.
- Norman: Is that right?
- Jim: Early Thirties. I lived in Edgerton.
- Norman: Yeah. You were familiar with Edgerton then.
- Jim: Well, I was born there.
- Norman: You were born in Edgerton. (laughs)
- Jim: But I didn't stay there very long.
- Norman: Oh.
- Woman: I lived in Stoughton.
- Jim: Yeah.
- Norman: Oh, is that right?
- Jim: [unintelligible] comes from Stoughton. Right, so --
- Norman: Well, anyway I worked for Highway Trailer for I think, August or from the fall of '45, until, no '46, '48. Anyway, I worked for Highway Trailer less than a year. They spent about six weeks training me in time study as an industrial engineer and then the Highway Trailer had its periodic manpower reduction and I lost out in April of (??) '47 and I was, I applied at General Motors, which was a break as far as I was concerned. I got into General Motors. I started out in –
- Jim: That's how you got to Janesville.

- Norman: Yeah. That's where I got to Janesville, and so I started out there with General Motors in the material department and since I had had the background in time study with Highway Trailer I was pulled in industrial engineering. So I spent the bulk of my time at Janesville then as an industrial engineer, did time study, all cushion, trim and paint. Never did any work in the body shop. Initiated in (??) direct labor standards in the material and the maintenance department.
- Jim: I see.
- Norman: And sort of [unintelligible] the experience and from then because of the interest, I mean the, realized that the importance of sequencing of the jobs of the automotives, of the car as they moved down the line which was critical as far as controlling your work standards per line operator. The – I was moved over to the work standards to the, of the scheduling department. I went when Fisher Body and Chevrolet merged as one unit and I was moved over there as a supervisor of passenger car scheduling.
- Jim: Oh.
- Norman: And it was interesting. Initially we started out as far as air conditioning maybe running 20, 30% air conditioning and by the time I left in '78 or so we were running about 90 – 95% and then all your options were dispersed for your sequence of style. You have – station wagons would be spread seven or eight jobs in between a group of four doors and two doors.
- Jim: That was because the individual work that it took was different for that you had to –
- Norman: That's right.
- Jim: Group 'em.
- Norman: Right. We did and you'd have each, depending on the float space, you could, if like on a wagon if they had five minutes or so you could get more float space.
- Jim: I don't know anything about that float space. What's float space?
- Norman: The distance on the –
- Jim: Between automobiles?
- Norman: On the floor – yeah, between you'd have float space of four or five automobiles that you could float to work on that once. See, you could



spend a lot of time working on it, if you had six cars in between wagons you could spend six minutes working, because we were running pretty close to a job a minute. You could run six minutes on a station wagon, come back and pick up the next station wagon. Didn't do any work on the cars in-between. It all depended upon what your job assignment was.

Norman: Yup.

Jim: Yeah, you read about these things but I've never seen exactly how specific those jobs were.

Norman: Well, they're very specific, very specific. If a fellow was – I mean you're installing the doors, you'd have maybe all they would do would be install the front doors. Another team would install the rear doors. Another team would set up the rear quarters.

Jim: Did he have to move to do this?

Norman: Sometimes.

Jim: Move along?

Norman: Yeah. It all depends. Yeah, you move. The float spaces, the job, the float space would be one float space per job, I mean the length of a car. If you could go, if you could go, if you could put two minutes on a job, you could take two lengths to do it in, but you had to have that time to do it in.

Jim: You just turn around and another door would be – somebody else or something – would have that next door right in your face –

Norman: Sure.

Jim: And you'd turn right around and put it on.

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Boy, that's teamwork.

Norman: And then it's the same thing when it came to glass. I mean you had that a glass [unintelligible] install front doors, windshield, rear door glass, the back shelf glass, and then all the interior trim you put in you have specific door panels that you put on in [unintelligible] things were scheduled.

Jim: Did you have problems with a blue door coming up when the car was brown or something like that? How deal with that?

- Norman: Not very often. That was all set up with the scheduling and of course then by then we had computers where you had your schedule sheets that you went by and then they – the colors were aligned when they came through so when that door came through to be added to the body you had the right door to be added to that body.
- Jim: So, tell me. Would there be an accident sometime and the whole line stop for some unexpected ---
- Norman: Sure, sure.
- Jim: Did everything in the whole plant come to a screeching halt or --?
- Norman: Yeah, on occasions it would and of course that was a catastrophe, because --
- Jim: Yeah, management didn't like that, I'm sure.
- Norman: No, no. Right.
- Jim: That cost money.
- Norman: That's right. That's right. Yeah.
- Jim: Well, that's fascinating, yeah.
- Norman: And actually two, another importance of the sequencing as far as the job is concerned is the painting. If you could run a sequence of bodies of the same color anywhere's from six to ten in a row of a blues, say, you don't have to purge the gun but at any time they changed the color you'd have to purge the gun so you'd have a lot of wasted paint. You purge the spray gun so if you ran a sequence of one color, you save paint.
- Jim: Okay. Purging the gun, does that mean just squirting? Is it lost? The paint's gone?
- Norman: Sure, sure.
- Jim: You just squirt it into --
- Norman: It had to be squirted into the water curtain and so you have clear color coming through when you go to paint the color.
- Jim: I was going to say then you have to run something through to make sure it's all out before you put the new color in.

- Norman: It would be all out. I don't know the exact procedure but you had to clear the gun to go from one color to the other. Yeah, and so there again so you hit sequencing. You were concerned with your style mix, two doors, four doors, and station wagon and then you were concerned with the color sequence, running as many of the color sequences and then you wanted to disperse all your options. You had your air con, you had power window, power seats --
- Jim: If there was a mistake on one or two of the cars you had to pull them back and start them over again and redo it and repaint it.
- Norman: Well, there weren't to be any mistakes.
- Jim: Oh, that's on paper, sir. (laughs)
- Norman: (laughs) Well, it didn't happen very often.
- Jim: It didn't?
- Norman: Unh, unh, because the, for each, when the job started out in the body shop, you put the complete order on there with the options and as this thing moved through the various areas those options were built to match the specific body.
- Jim: You mean there was a piece of paper that told the people as they go along what was supposed to go on this car?
- Norman: Yeah, well, it was all each area, each station had a, was a preassembly, prepainting, and it was painted in sequence.
- Jim: So when a car came they'd look up their sheet on the wall they would know that was the right car and --
- Norman: It would come down. It would come down on the conveyer --
- Jim: Oh.
- Norman: So the right door would come down on the conveyer to match the body.
- Jim: Got it.
- Norman: (laughs) For awhile I was taking, I did tours. And of course when I retired from the plant here in Janesville we were building the conventional Chevrolet. Then they went from that to the Corvairs and from the Corvairs now they're going to the SUV's and the [unintelligible].

Jim: We drove a Suburban for seven years.

Norman: Yeah?

Jim: And I liked it.

Norman: That's what we got now is –

Jim: Big horse. (laughs)

Norman: Yeah, we just, we bought a, well, we bought a Montana, shouldn't say (??) Suburban. Because if you're going to haul a bunch of tools or you're going to haul flowers or something you have to have more space than you've got in a trunk of a car, and we had a station wagon and with a rear pitted station wagon that worked out nice for hauling flowers back and forth or something. They don't – only station wagon General Motors makes now is the Saturn. So they –

Jim: Oh, the old fashioned type of station wagon.

Norman: Yeah.

Jim: Oh, I see.

Norman: So if you wanted that type of height for storage you had to get a van in most cases.

Jim: Right. Now, did you keep in contact with any of those folks?

Norman: In the service?

Jim: Yes.

Norman: Right after, shortly after the war in '46 we had a group get together, went to a Wisconsin football game at Madison. Company commander came out from New York and some of the other key personnel.

Jim: Oh, that was wonderful.

Norman: So we did that and yeah, I've – up until Captain Foot died, I kept in contact with him and one of the fellas that I buddied around with in service ended up a judge in Rockford. He was the guy that got wounded (??). in two of the firefights. The second time he ended back in the hospital never did come back to the unit. He ended up in Rockford. He ended up as a judge. So I see him fairly often, and several of the fellas who had been in my company headquarters I correspond with.

Jim: Any veterans organizations?

Norman: No. Ah, no, none. I didn't join any.

Jim: You didn't join any. All right, I can't think of anything left to ask you.

Norman: (laughs) Okay.

Jim: Did you forget anything?

Norman: No, I don't think so.

Jim: Uh huh.

Norman: We covered it pretty well. It was fortunate; I mean I did not see the Battle of the Bulge or any of that type of action.

Jim: So you weren't in the wrong place. I mean you were in the wrong spot for that.

Norman: I was in the right place --

Jim: For good health.

Norman: In most cases for good health and managed to, time was spent -- of course a lot of times it was nice to get back to the hospital for a little bit of rest (laughs), recuperation.

Jim: Right. But your experience and that was satisfactory considering the things you went through?

Norman: Oh, yeah. And --

Jim: Your training was --

Norman: Otherwise I wouldn't have come back and of course I joined the ROTC.

Jim: I was going to say you must have appreciated it.

Norman: Yeah. And of course the Advanced ROTC, we were all veterans and of course I think in some cases we gave some of the instructors a pretty rough time. (laughs)

Jim: I'm sure.

Norman: Because I had several paratroopers in this Advanced ROTC and we had a pretty nice group. Spent six weeks down at Fort Riley –

Jim: That's right.

Norman: After advancing.

Jim: How long did you stay in the service? I didn't ask you that.

Norman: I stayed in the reserves for ten years

Jim: Ten years after?

Norman: And should have stayed longer but it got to the point where it was a matter of advancement up or out which required a lot of correspondence courses and –

Jim: Well, and then, but you don't get retirement pay.

Norman: Well, I don't get any service retirement pay.

Jim: Yeah, right.

Norman: I only had a total of about twelve years.

Jim: In service.

Norman: In service but I think you have to have about twenty-one for retirement.

Jim: Yeah, you may need more active duty, too, wouldn't you, to really qualify than –

Norman; I don't know, what the –

Jim: Four years, --

Norman: I don't know what the situation is with that, but anyway, so I got out. Yeah, I didn't get service pay.

Jim: Hmm. All right. Excellent. Thank you.

Norman: You're welcome,

Jim: Appreciate it. Very interesting.

Norman: I don't know, this is not as exciting maybe as some experiences.

Jim: They're all different.

Norman: They are.

Jim: I mean, some guys had horrendous experience, everybody can't have that, you see.

Norman: No. Thank goodness.

Jim: Right, that's –

Norman: But, and then of course in '85 or '95 my wife Dorie and I were able to get back.

Jim: Back to Italy?

Norman: We went back strictly, we had an exchange with a group of Germans but they in, in conjunction with that spent some time – they took us down into Italy and with, in conjunction with the German people and so we were able to visit some of the area that I was familiar with. I didn't get, I wanted to get to the south of the Arno River. Instead they, the bus trip took us across on the north of the Arno. I didn't get to visit San Miniato, but I got to Florence.

Jim: You could look up your old girlfriend. (laughs)

Norman: No, I didn't get up to Gorizia. Didn't get up to Gorizia. I don't know what happened to her.

Jim: She's probably married with four kids by that time.

Norman: Well, she's a pretty nice gal.

Jim: Have pictures of her?

Norman: What?

Jim: Did you have pictures of her?

Norman: Yeah, somewhere.

Jim: Hidden away?

Norman: Oh, they're not hidden. I may even be able to find one. But that – I got to know Italy pretty well basically from Rome to Venice.

Jim: It's a beautiful county. Gail and I loved Italy. Just a gorgeous place, right on the sea. All right, that will do her.

Norman: Okay.

Jim: Thanks again. I appreciate it.

Norman: You're welcome.

Jim: Good interview. You tell your story very well. Get my stuff rewound here.

**[End of Interview]**