

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral history Interview with
RAY H. FULLER
Infantryman, 32d Infantry Division, World War I
1995

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Fuller, Ray H., (1896-1996). Oral History Interview, 1995.

Approximate length: Two hours and 2 minutes

Contact WVM Research Center for access to original recording.

Abstract

Fuller, a Gile, Wis. native, discusses his service with the 2nd Wisconsin National Guard during the 1916 Punitive Expedition (Mexican Boarder War), and service during World War I, as a member of Company B, 127th Regiment, 32nd Division. He refers to training at Camp MacArthur (Texas), treatment of German-Americans, Army reorganization, medical preparations at Camp Merritt (New Jersey), and mess duty abroad the George Washington. He touches upon life at sea, landing in and traveling across France, camp life, and duty at Alsace-Lorraine. Fuller relates details of front line artillery barrages including 'box barrages', techniques of trench warfare, and the use of bayonets, gas shells. He comments briefly upon the difference between actual warfare and what is seen in movies. Fuller describes the morale and attitudes of American soldiers, Army supplies, attitudes toward replacements, and being wounded in battle. He touches upon serving in the Army with his brothers, impressions of "90 day wonders," and service in the burial detail. He provides a detailed account of the Armistice including troops reaction and the role of the Salvation Army. At the war's end, Fuller was sent to Coblenz, Germany, and mentions interactions with German citizens. Also discussed is returning to the United States and joining the American Legion. The interview ends abruptly while Fuller is discussing the American Legion

Biographical Sketch

Fuller (1896-1996), served with Company B, 127th Regiment, 32nd Division. He enlisted in the National Guard in 1916, achieved the rank of sergeant, but was honorably discharged a Private in 1919.

Interviewed by Mark Van Ells.

Transcribed by Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs staff, 1998.

Transcription reviewed by David S. DeHorse and Abigail Miller, 2002.

Interview Transcript

Van Ells: Okay, today's date is February 14, it's Valentine's Day, and I did buy flowers, 1996. This is Mark Van Ells, Archivist, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, doing an oral history interview this afternoon with our first veteran of the First World War, Mr. Ray Fuller of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, a veteran of the 32nd Division. Good afternoon. Thanks for coming down. I appreciate it.

[TRANSCRIPTIONIST'S NOTE – THERE IS A LOT OF HIGH-PITCHED BACKGROUND NOISE THROUGHOUT THIS TAPE.]

Fuller: My pleasure to be here. If I can be of assistance to you, I'd like to do it.

Van Ells: I'm sure you will be. I suppose we should start at the top, as they say, and why don't you tell me a little about where you were born and raised, and what you were doing prior to your entry into the service.

Fuller: Well, I was born at a little place called Gile, Wisconsin.

Van Ells: I'm not sure where that is.

Fuller: It's only about two miles out of Hurley, Wisconsin.

Van Ells: That's way up there then.

Fuller: That's right. It's a lumbering town and a mining town. My dad was a carpenter, originally a lumberjack, then he went into, in the summertime and like that, why he was a 'mill rod' really at the mill that was up there. He jumped at anything. If somebody wasn't there for the job, why he went and filled for them for that day. He done everything. We left there though when I was four-years-old and moved to Plainfield, Wisconsin, which was my mother's hometown, she having been born there. We lived there for, going to school and like that. Finally my dad picked up on the farm and we lived on that farm then until 1910. I was in school all this time, like that. And also, it was hard times like that and my brother and I had what they called a milk route in the town, just the two of us. Well, we had it. First we had a little cart that we had. Being a small town, Plainfield was, and we had a cart that the two of us pulled. Later on we got a horse and buggy. We were the king of the town, you might say, then. But then the farm was playing out and my dad, being a carpenter and that, he thought the city would be better so he took and quit the farm and went to Oshkosh. He worked there about five months and finally the rest of us moved then also. He got settled and like that and I transferred to schools in Oshkosh. Went on like that, one year in high school, and then I thought, well, I'm going to stay out the one semester and then pick up from there. It was hard times and my dad had two operations that one

summer. That was tough so I said I'm going to skip the one semester anyway. So I did. But then I decided I'd keep on. I had a little money coming in and that was the main thing. I was working for 10 cents an hour, put in 10 hours a day, 6 days a week so at the end of the week I had \$6. Three dollars of that went for room and board and I had \$3 left. So I was in the factory. That's what it was. It was a lumbering town, Sawdust City it's called today. All the sawmills up and down the river, they're gone. Sash and door factory where I worked. You start out for one factory and go to work, then change over, you go to another factory, they'd put you right to work the same day. You don't lose any time. Well, I worked on that for a while and then I got out of it, and odd jobs around. Whatever there was. I worked a grass carpet factory, making rugs. Started there as and worked up as weaver, getting pretty good money, so I stuck to that for a while. In fact, that's what I was doing when I joined the National Guard in 1916, when they was having that trouble on the Mexican border.

Van Ells: See, I was going to ask why you decided to join the National Guard. Was it after the Poncho Villa thing and you wanted to enlist?

Fuller: They were still supposed to be still chasing him around there like that. That's what I was called out for. Went down to San Antonio. But my brother was in the National Guard. He was younger than I but he was in. When he left, I says, oh, I think I'll go, too. So I talked to Mom and Dad. Well, it's up to you. So my brother got in, he was younger than I but he was taken for older than I. He always did. And afterwards, also. So I didn't have to. It was in 1916 and I was going on 20-years-old. Well, that was the reason. Adventure, you might say it like that. The guys that were in the National Guard, it was a clique, everybody called it a clique, so they were gone so I just joined them. They had left and I joined up, joined them again at Camp Douglas, Wisconsin.

Van Ells: I see. I was going to ask you what sort of training you had in the National Guard. I mean, like did you go to the recruiter and enlist and that sort of thing? How did you actually get into the service? If you could, walk me through the steps it took you from being a factory hand in Oshkosh to Camp Douglas. Who did you see, and what did you do, and that sort of thing.

Fuller: Well, I wasn't in, the company had left when I joined.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: My brother was in there and I knew what they were doing. I was down there when they were doing it. They were just drilling, hay foot, straw foots, you might say. Just drilling around. And you'd have bivouacs and have, we had a rifle range there in Oshkosh. Rifle range and what they were doing, and like that. So I was with the same group. So I left, got down to Camp Douglas, and it was the same thing, only there they started giving us examinations for this

and that, and give us shots for this and that, and then finally sworn into the federal service, we had to be in the federal before we could leave the state. Then we shipped for San Antonio, Texas. And that was the same thing, again. It was just drilling, and drilling, and drilling. We didn't have much. As far as warfare was concerned, we didn't have nothing. More or less drilling and like that. Hike from San Antonio, Texas to Austin.

Van Ells: Now, this was in the summer if I'm not mistaken, too.

Fuller: This was in the summer of 1916.

Van Ells: Actually, I'd like to backtrack a little bit. Just for the record, which regiment were you in when you went down to Texas?

Fuller: Well, originally it was the National Guard Reserve, which was the 2nd Regiment.

Van Ells: Second Wisconsin Regiment.

Fuller: Yeah, 2nd Wisconsin. Right.

Van Ells: And your trip down to Texas. I mean, that's a long ways.

Fuller: Well, it's all on train. There we just got on and kept on going. I forget just how long we was on there but they had an old Army camp down there, Fort Sam Houston, Waco, Texas.

Van Ells: Yeah.

Fuller: And they had regular Army outfit in there. We took over from there. We was in tents. We never had any barracks there in San Antonio. There it was just drilling and hiking, drilling and hiking. So there, we was there until in February. Well, then we went and we had hiking in a park one day. They had a sign up there "Dogs and Soldiers Not Allowed" 'cause the regular Army was rough guys, was a rough outfit, and they eliminating them. But we was only there a short time and they were inviting us out. People would come out there and invite us out 'cause we got mingling around. Some of us would go to a church, would go to church services like that. And then they invited us down for little social doings and like that. So then down come the signs. We were welcome anywhere we wanted to go. We turned the tables on it there. And we was there until February when we was sent back home. We never saw anything of the war and nothing like that.

Van Ells: There were some difficulties in Texas if I'm not mistaken. For example, you had these woolen uniforms and it was hot. Was that a problem?

Fuller: Well, we had a khaki uniform in the summer. We had two suits. We had a wool and then a khaki, too.

Van Ells: And in terms of having weapons like machine-guns and the rifles and that sort of thing.

Fuller: No, all we had was the rifle. We had Springfield rifles, and our side arms. That's all we had in 1916. Yeah.

Van Ells: So you came back in the winter of '17.

Fuller: February of '17, went back home.

Van Ells: And it wasn't very long until you were mobilized for World War I.

Fuller: That's right. Right. In the meantime, I was back to the old Lake Grass carpet company again. That was about a block from home so that's where I'd been working so I went right back there. But I only worked there a short time. I says this is no place to be and a very good friend of mine was on a dray, this was old horse and buggy days, and he had a team of horses and would go around with the dray and he asked me if I wouldn't like to help him. So I quit that and went to work for him. A little more money. And that's what I was doing on April 6 when war was declared.

Van Ells: Right. Now, as I've mentioned, I've interviewed a lot of World War II veterans and I always ask them about Pearl Harbor Day. And so that equivalent for you would probably be the 6th when President Wilson declared war. I'm interested to know your feelings about the war that was going on in Europe before we got involved and what happened to you after we declared war on April 6.

Fuller: Well, it just happens that I was just reading about World War I that told how this all came about. I wish I had done that. It would have been interesting. [HIGH-PITCHED SOUND – SEVERAL WORDS ARE HARD TO DECIPHER.] But it was due to some misunderstanding over there. And when it started in 1914--

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: --there was Russians in it and then they were all in it.

Van Ells: All except for us, just about.

Fuller: Well, we were not in there, that's right. Well, there was four years, the British, they'd win and take over some other outfit. Then some other place,

the French would take something, the Germans come in and take some other place, see-sawing back and forth.

Van Ells: As a young American watching this going on, what's your reaction and what are you thinking? Are you thinking that we ought to get involved? That we shouldn't get involved?

Fuller: There was nothing really that we should. No, we figured we'd stay out and mind our own business. I don't think that, and so many in the United States were German--

Van Ells: Well, especially here.

Fuller: Oh, yes, an awful lot of Germans, you know, and they had to be awful careful because you didn't know. It was surprising how quick it changed when war was declared because then these other ones that were Germans and like that, you had a few, but they were few, but they come right in because this was their country.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: And they had to go against their own people over there. A number of them had relatives over there, relatives fighting against each other, Americans.

Van Ells: Not very pleasant for them, I'm sure. I'm sorry.

Fuller: It took a lot, the United States took quite a bit before they got into it I think. There was, what they started doing with our shipping and that, to these different countries, like sunk the Lusitania and like, unbeknownst to anybody, just out of the clear sky, women, children and everybody. Well that was getting too far. And then they started interfering with our commerce and it got to the point where they couldn't do anything else.

Van Ells: Yeah.

Fuller: Wilson just had to step in.

Van Ells: And he did.

Fuller: Oh, yes. Absolutely.

Van Ells: And you were called up to go to war then.

Fuller: Oh, yes, as soon as the war was declared. Well, then there was 24 of us that right off the bat the orders came in, well, being in the guard. So 24 of us come in on guard duty. Stayed right at the Army like that. What for, I don't

know. To just be ready like that. And it wasn't long though before, that was in April, the very first part of June, the latter part of May, then they called in the rest of the company, the rest of the company, to be prepared. So the rest of them called in. Then we went back to drilling and wind up with the Army and marched down to the park and drop around there like that. So we went to Camp Douglas and there went in for all kinds of examinations and all of this, physical examinations. They were very fussy on that, getting shots and this and that, and the other thing, and still drilling, drilling, drilling day after day. Well, that's about all we did at Camp Douglas. All the new recruits were coming in all the time. We were getting a few later that signed up after we left home and they come down and joined us. And then they had all these others but we're still under the 2nd Wisconsin.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: We'd been back from federal service back into the state after Mexico. So finally we all had to get out there and take the oath. And, boy, there was a whole bunch out there and only one that we knew that didn't raise his hand.

Van Ells: What was his problem, do you know?

Fuller: Well, he just didn't want to go and that was his prerogative, I guess. He went up. Boy, oh, boy I wouldn't want to have been him. They painted him a yellow streak and all in all.

Van Ells: They did? [HIGH PITCHED SOUND]

Fuller: Oh, jeepers. When he left there he was a sight. So we finally got out of there and there was six regiments then. There was the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th--5th anyway. New one was the 4th. One and Two were the old ones but these others were all new. They kept enlisting all around the country so then they get that many more, well, units, well, that turned out to be regiments, yes.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: And so then we left for Texas again, Waco, Texas.

Van Ells: Camp MacArthur.

Fuller: Camp MacArthur, Waco, Texas.

Van Ells: And what happened there?

Fuller: What? Well, there, we pulled into there on the rails. Made on top of the ground, the ties were laid on top of the ground and the rails on top of them. They had to, coming in there so fast, everything was speeding up. Then we

got there and nothing there but a big cotton field. So it was all marked out so we knew where it was going to go and like that.

Van Ells: And so what did you think when you got off and saw a cotton field?

Fuller: Well, what the heck kind of country is this? But that's the way it was.

Van Ells: But that camp sprang up pretty quick, I get the impression.

Fuller: Oh did it. But the first thing was split up into all carpenters and started building mess shacks and all like that, mess shacks, well, latrines and everything that went with a camp. All the time we were living in tents. Eight men to a tent, one squad. Everybody had their own company issue. It was all laid out. Made a beautiful sight. But then we really started in for a different training. After we got the mess halls built and like that then we started training.

Van Ells: I was going to ask how Camp MacArthur was different than Camp Douglas. How did this training start to change?

Fuller: Well, we knew there was something up because it got all kinds of different training. Went into bayonet practice and grenades and all this, and dig trenches so we'd have something to go by and we had all instructors from, a lot of instructors from France and England. Taught us different things, different warfare the way they saw it. So we kept on that way. Well, one thing, for bayonet practice they had rigged up a press, well, like the old, more or less like the same order of, in Wisconsin, in corn when it first started. Put it in there and press it together, bind it up. So that's what this was. And different ones would go on detail. Some two or three days and then they'd come back so they didn't miss any other training. So we cut these corn stalks, whatever it was, and put them in things about 2 ½ feet long. And they were made so that when they were done they were about 6 inches thick and about 18 inches wide so it would be like a man's upper body. Make those and at night we'd bring them back in for a couple of days. That's what we used for bayonet practice. Hang those up so they're moving. Charge that with your bayonet into those. And they were pressed hard enough, tight enough so that you knew when your bayonet went in there. That's what bayonet practice. And hand grenades, throwing them, showed us the different ways of throwing them and stuff like that. That went on until, we left there in the first part of February or January, latter January, when we left by train.

Van Ells: Of '18.

Fuller: Left Waco, Texas.

Van Ells: Now, was it at Waco that you became the 32nd Division?

Fuller: Oh, yes. Waco, Texas. They were bringing all the companies up to manpower, 250 men they wanted, so it took a little time. And all these other guys, Michigan also came, and Michigan was the 64th Brigade, Wisconsin was the 63rd Brigade, and that formed the division. Along with that we had all the supply train, and your sanitary engineers, and signal corps, and all those were separate machine gun companies and divided up that way. And there they put companies together. Wisconsin stayed with the 63rd, they were a lot. And Michigan was the 64th. And we happened to be, they disbanded more or less one of these other companies, like Company B of the 1st Wisconsin then, they came up and formed in with Company B of the 2nd Wisconsin. Then officers changed around, our original officers that left with us from Oshkosh, he was out altogether. Another guy, who happened to be from Madison here, he was a haberdasher they called it, here in Wisconsin. Big, heavy-set, George F. O'Connell and he got to be our commander, our captain. Some of our guys, when he came over to be the commander, they wanted to transfer, a lot of them wanted to transfer. So they finally lined the company up to give them a talk and he said, "Now, I'd like to have you stay with us for two weeks. I'm not signing any transfers right now but in the two weeks if you want to transfer, I'll sign and I'll transfer you. Anybody that wants to go." The end of two weeks you couldn't get anybody to transfer, nobody. [HIGH-PITCHED SOUND] But they made out these applications. Some of them were taken out, signal corps and like that, telephone men we had, put in different branches like that.

Van Ells: See, I was going to ask, this is a major reorganization of the Army and I was interested to know how the troops reacted to it. You know, down the enlisted ranks such as yourself, 'cause some of these units like the 1st Wisconsin or 2nd Wisconsin, they go way back to the Civil War and there was a lot of regimental pride and I was wondering how--

Fuller: Yes, yes, Iron Brigade.

Van Ells: Yes, exactly. And I was wondering how some of the units reacted to this big change.

Fuller: I don't, just simply took it in stride as far as I'm concerned. I don't think that anybody really figured back to what had been or anything. We just went with what was, that was the orders and that's the way we were. We were disciplined and obeyed the orders and that was it. And ask questions, you didn't ask questions. You went with the order.

[HIGH-PITCHED SOUND]

Van Ells: I supposed that's the nature of the Army, isn't it?

Fuller: That's right.

Van Ells: I'm sorry, you were going to say something.

Fuller: It's just the Army, that's all of it.

Van Ells: So you went to Europe from there. You had to go up to Boston or something and then you went overseas fairly quickly after that.

Fuller: Yeah. When we left Waco, Texas, then we headed for the coast of course. We ended up in Camp Merritt, New Jersey. There it was just getting additional shots and like that. There was one shot that I was supposed to get but it never worked.

Van Ells: Which one was that?

Fuller: It's the, I forget which one it was. We took so many of them. Finally, I went over and got the last one. They said you couldn't go 'till that was, and, yeah, I said, [CHUCKLING & HIGH-PITCHED SOUND] so I didn't have to take the last shot but I went anyway. That never worked. So anyway, there we took a lot of shots and like that. There was practically no drilling. Working on the barracks and like that. When we got ready to leave there for Camp Merritt, New Jersey then some of our people in the one barracks my older brother was in was quarantined so they couldn't go with us. The rest of us went all right. How that, oh, that's all right. So then we went over to Camp Merritt, New Jersey and then finally got ready to ship out for Hoboken, New Jersey. There, our company was one of the first ones on board and found out that we were on, our company was on mess detail for the rest of the guys on that George Washington. And that kept us busy, two meals a day. It was all right. So everything went along nice. On mess detail there we had to peel the potatoes by hand, you can see us sitting around the washtubs there peeling potatoes in between meals like that. Then we had enough for breakfast so all we did in the morning was serve breakfast, serve, the cooks had everything for breakfast, they had ready. But from there on up to the noon deal, then peeling potatoes and everything you could imagine. And the ship's crew, Navy guys, were making bread and all that stuff. It worked out all right. Every day we had drill though, in case of an emergency. If we got over, when the submarines were around like that, why--

Van Ells: Oh, for the lifeboats and that sort of thing.

Fuller: Yeah, where the lifeboats and everything were and all this and that. We had those trainings. Finally one day, we was just starting to serve, at 4:00 in the afternoon, two meals a day we had, just starting to serve and, oh boy, all the sirens, all the ships blasted off. Well, everybody took to the upper deck then, one of the upper decks especially for that and there every company by itself

and you were surprised how they could go up there, the companies were right in line so we practiced it that you'd sit there right where you would. Our gunners, the third gunner fired one shot from a three-inch gun. Boy the whole ship was up, then we knew it. This was amazing. One of the guys was seasick and he went over to the rail to heave and out of a clear sky, over the side hollered out "Two bits he comes." Well, it's just something, in a case like that you'd think that everybody'd be frozen or something but you always had somebody like that, would come out with something that just. That's why I say everything seemed to be natural.

Van Ells: Yeah. This trip took how long to get over to, you went to England?

Fuller: Well, we were on the boat 22 days. We had a big convoy and there was a couple of ships hidden there, all kinds of rumors. One of them was that they loaded with calves and horses like that, an old ship they didn't care about. And, oh, different things like that. One along the side of us was all camouflaged. It looked like another troop ship, just like ours. When this happened that troop ship, well, here it was, went ahead then swung back. Another one in back of us that was supposed to have been holding the rest of us up on account of its mobility, it was slow, that took off diagonally, just left a cloud, oh boy, like we were standing still. Come to find out it was loaded with ammunition. They got that out of there. So there were things like that that happened.

Van Ells: So, where'd you land? Was it England or France?

Fuller: We landed at Brest, France.

Van Ells: Yeah. What happened once you got off the ship?

Fuller: Well, we were the last ones off due to the fact that we were still on mess details. There was unloading cargo and all that that took a little time, so we were the last ones off. The people there, frankly, they come out in boats and like that, how quick they got to, they'd want a cigarette and all this and that, and fruit, and wanted to buy it. So we'd let a basket down and they'd put their, and we'd send the money down to them like that. It was fun. We left and went to, when we left we went out to where Napoleon, barracks that Napoleon had used. **[END SIDE A, TAPE 1]** My brother was left, no he'd taken off, one of the first ones to the hospitals. It was supposed to have had scarlet fever so he was, didn't see him. So my other brother, he was in this quarantined group so I was the only one out of the three of us, and we're in this company together to start with, I was the only one who was with the company yet. So we started out and the first thing we know we were building barracks and all this and that, different things, all carpenter work. Found out they were going to make, what did they call them? Well, we were supposed to be, gee, I can't think of the work now but construction crew and like that,

doing all these things. Well, you know, we weren't going to the front. I don't know, we probably were staying or whatever, more like engineers. And that didn't set good with our general and he put up such a holler. He said, "We didn't come over to do that." and they switched us back then. So then we started out, load us in boxcars, forty homes for eight horses, or whatever. Sometimes we'd go that way, some days by truck. We might travel by day or overnight and we'd stop in be in this place for two or three days. And drills. Drilling for us, they kept us busy. And it was hop, skip, and jump. Orders kept changing. We got to one place and stayed there about a week and that's when this one group that had been quarantined, some of them caught up with us, and my brother was one of them, Earl, the oldest one, he caught up with us. Some of our group went to England, that were left behind, they went to England. Especially the group that was, they were smaller people. It seems that the most of them were on the lower end of the company, 7th and 8th squad and so forth where they're getting smaller 'cause the rule of it, the tallest were in the front and on down, and those are the ones that went to England. They got the military police. The regular company, most of us, those other boys joined us and then we went to hop, skip, and jump and kept going.

Van Ells: Across France.

Fuller: Any time they stopped for more than a day or two, there was drilling right away. That's all we could do. Finally we got up to where, we knew we were getting fairly close to the front. Finally, landed at a place, Corsailles, and there we stayed for, oh, probably a couple of weeks or so. More than that. And there, where the stuff come from I don't know, but there was, the first thing we knew, this guy is out there, a bunch of them, playing baseball. Where they got the equipment, I don't know how it worked out. Different things like that. Then there was finally something to do in between drilling and that. We always had guard duty. Two or three companies at that one town where we were, C Company was on guard one night, the next morning we found out one of the cafes had been robbed, all the champagne was missing and stuff like that, so they blamed it on the Company C men. They got together and they wouldn't stand for so all the company officers took, the three of them chipped in, and paid for the. They couldn't find out which one it was.

Van Ells: Did you ever find out who it was?

Fuller: Never tried to really after that. They just let it go. They wasn't going to make a big deal out of it. Different stuff like that happened in other outfits, too, you know, because you, as I recall, we never really got down and thought we were, we knew we was in a war, but we just kept going because that was the thing to do. So we got, finally we got to that Alsace-Lorraine sector, which was a quiet sector, farm country and like that. The Germans didn't want it shot up and the French didn't want it shot up. So you're in there for training,

both of them, with trenches on both sides. There were a couple of other places there where there's, oh, there's some distance between them, but cherry trees out there. We'd go out there and pick cherries, we come back, they'd go out and pick cherries from the other side.

Van Ells: Is that right?

Fuller: Yeah.

Van Ells: And these cherries were in the "no man's land?"

Fuller: Yeah. In the day time, we'd open up the barbwire, they had outposts so go out from the main line, from the main trench, go out to these outposts every so far. A guy was at this one outpost, one of the first days he was out there, why, a German come up over there, yup, took a shot. There was a French instructor there. How he got out there, I don't know. He was out there, nothing funny, said, "No, no, don't shoot." they shoot back. Well, that's what it was, they wanted to keep it quiet. Changing back and forth. We'd been there for maybe two or three nights, then we go back, somebody come up and relieve us and we'd go back, and we'd go on our hike for a day to another sector. After being there maybe a couple of days, then we go back in another section of the front line, of that line. I don't think we went back, once I guess we went back for the second time but the rest of the places, we kept on jumping that way, back and forth.

Van Ells: Now, it's a quiet sector but were you scared a little? I mean, this is your first-

Fuller: Well, the trenches, they were with us in the trench warfare and like that. They tried to show us how and all this other stuff that goes with that, you know. But we were there in these dugouts, day times we'd be around there, we'd be in the trenches all the time. We had an opening space out there in back of the trench and we took, we played cards and anything. I know one day a couple of guys hung a hammock there. There's other guys around who heard a shell just come whistling. It landed right under that hammock, but it was a dud. But they would. Every once in awhile there'd be shooting. Mostly duds though because they were running out of ammunition. But then we finally got into one sector and it run along a canal, and there we had outposts, and there was probably 20-25 men in that outpost, and they were there all the time. They'd be changed back and forth, the trenches leading out and everything went by, in trenches, went overboard, why that's too bad. So one night, the morning of the 3rd of July, the Germans laid down what we called a "box barrage." They had an outpost like this. They laid down artillery, barrage right around it, so we couldn't get back. These guys couldn't get back. I was back in the main line. My partner on this post got shrapnel through the stomach here but he lived. And the different ones. But on this outpost, when

the come in, when the Germans come in that open end, they mistook a machine gun post that was out there for the dugout and they opened up with liquid fire. Well, that teed our guys off so they just returned the fire like that and some of those guys, they killed some of them, wounded a couple, and they took some prisoners. Well, it turned out to be a flop. We had a couple of guys wounded and other casualties on that. The German officer was wounded. He said he was in charge, he was the main one, that he had been doing that for three years. He said it' the first time that it ever failed. The only time he'd ever failed in all this time that he'd been making these raids. Von Hinesburg's Circus they called it. So that was our first experience under fire.

Van Ells: Yeah. I suppose it was a lot different than the Mexican border. I mean, it seems more serious now.

Fuller: What?

Van Ells: It seems more serious now.

Fuller: Oh, yes, oh, sure.

Van Ells: Was it at this point that you realized, jeez, I'm in the middle of a war? Or did you sort of take it in stride?

Fuller: Well, our instructors and that had told us of these things, you know, but don't do anything to upset them, like that, in that sector, so that was the first time. And that's the only one. It just happened to be our company. They could have picked any one of those outposts along that whole line but just happened to be our company.

Van Ells: Yeah.

Fuller: This other post, this one was here and another one here, hit here and the two guys that just threw them back, but they both lived. We didn't lose anybody that was killed in that raid or anything but there was several of them wounded. Some never come back to the outfits and some were transferred and sent right home, wounded bad enough.

Van Ells: Now, you were in Alsace-Lorraine, not very long though. A couple of months? And then you went north?

Fuller: Oh, yeah. We weren't there very long after that. Then they moved us out of there finally, and then we started up and went up through Chateau Thierry. They'd already taken Chateau Thierry, and Belleau Wood was mostly under control. There was some stragglers in there you might say, and there was some snipers and machine gun nests but you find out where there, guys would

keep shooting, keep them down then others would circle around, that way they come up captured. That's when they used the bayonets a lot of times 'cause some of those Germans wouldn't give up. Others who saw it right away, they'd come right, ready to give up, but some of them, well, very few. But we didn't, I didn't see any fighting myself but a couple of them in our company went on those. Where we were going up and like that, you never knew. They were shooting gas shells along the road and like that where we were, were going up and like that so you had to be prepared all the time. Naturally just walked into it you might say. Well, that's what we come over here for and that's what we're going to have to do. Deserters, no, you never heard of them. There were some deserters along the line somewhere but never see them. Our guys were all there, all accounted for all the time.

Van Ells: Yeah.

Fuller: I don't know where'd gone, where they'd went if the would desert.

Van Ells: I get the impression that moral was pretty high, among the Americans anyway. I mean, you were there for business and you wanted to go out and do it.

Fuller: That's the way it seemed, yes.

Van Ells: Was that the case with the French that you came across? I mean, they had been fighting this war, or the Germans that you captured for example, this war had been going on for three, four years before you got there. Was the American attitude a little different than say the French? Or what was your impression?

Fuller: Well, I don't know. I think the French army, in general, got a different attitude, where they'd been losing all the time and now they saw a chance at winning. They came up a lot more than they had been doing. Well, the same with the Germans. They were tickled to death to give up. A lot of them, the prisoners we took, they were happy to be prisoners, they were going to be safe then. Well, like this guy says, "I'd rather be a live coward than a dead hero."

Van Ells: That's what one of them told you?

Fuller: Oh, that's remarks that were made.

Van Ells: Oh, I see.

Fuller: Yeah, "I'd rather be a live coward than a dead hero." But, you know, a lot of people that, everybody that did something else stayed together, medal of some kind, well, boy oh boy oh boy. To me, everyone that was over there and done

that was entitled to something. Well, we all got our Victory medal in the end anyway.

Van Ells: So after you left Alsace-Lorraine, you went farther north and took part in an offensive in July and August, is that right? It was the first major offensive that the 32nd Division was on.

Fuller: Yeah. Well, naturally, we kept getting replacements and as we'd go in, you'd go in there for about three or four days, then you'd drop back and somebody else would come in, but you'd get replacements and the first thing you know you were back in again. Back and forth. We was in there for 21 days, reserve, right in the reserve or in the front line just waiting for our replacements. Sat in one place one night and we moved in. But we moved in the night and here we're moving right into a bunch where the artillery was and that artillery was packed in there so thick we could hardly find a place to lay down. In the morning, then I opened up with this barrage but we had to be ready to go, follow that barrage along. We got a bunch of recruits in there one time, uniforms, you wouldn't know who it was for, some big, some were small, and like that. They come up with Enfield rifles where we'd always had the Springfield, and we had instructed on how to use that, so we give them our Springfield's and showed them how to use the Springfield. We took their Enfields so we'd have a gun because as we were going up, like the little kids at school asked me a while ago, "Did you aim at somebody and fire? Or did you spray them?" Well, I knew they had been watching pictures, see.

Van Ells: And World War II pictures, too.

Fuller: Yeah, and that's the way we were going on account of them. So like that, the first guys here were shooting to a certain extent but you just kept going, going, going, going. Well, as we went up through there, Sergets was the first town that I recall we were in, and we'd been under shellfire and gas attacks like that. Well, you put on your gas masks and somebody'd let you know you could take it off then and like that. We got up here in this one, Sergets, we were in reserve, sign out and return in the morning. After we were back a ways, then we moved in the reserve. One thing that Major Treir, he was from Fond du Lac, he just saw the doorway as it is the headquarters and he was killed there. And we were up ahead of them at that time. That was back of the line. But that's the way it happened. Then we were up here and, moving up was simple, one wave kept going, well, we'd come up. We got this one place along the road and Company C again, from Manitowoc, they were in back of us, we were just ahead of them, right here, they were shelled right in the middle of the road. They lost a number of men there. We didn't realize we were in for it. They'd been trying to take this woods. See, twice, they fell back, had to go back, retreat. So finally we were shoved in and there were some of these others with us that had been in before, but we just went in as replacements but we went in as a group you might say. Then we kept going

and the Germans spotted and opened up with machine gun fire and a few shells, but mostly machine gun. Somebody who'd been in it before said, he hollered out "Retreat." Our company commander who was a full colonel, he hollers, "Retreat, hell. B Company stand." As I said, when he spoke, that was it; we'd been trained that way. So I stopped right there, right down, and a few minutes, completely around and finally he got the company so we got more or less organized again, and this other filled in with us, they got back in their company so it was all settled in. They had nowhere to go. There was other companies, the 42nd Division was on one side of us, too, and others just along the line in this one sector. What they were doing, I don't know. But this was our objective so we went in and we took it. Took new ones that night. Went all the way through the woods. Then we fell back through the woods so everything was all clear, then we fell back just a little ways, then we dropped for the night. The next morning they got food to us all right. We started out, oh, it was probably around 9:30 and, in columns of eight, oh, about ten feet apart, a squad, line like that, and we were right in the front then. And we got shellfire, some shellfire, and machine gun fire and, well, I got hit, in the arm. It wasn't bad but I went back a little ways, then I dropped, took my blouse off and took my first aid kit and put it around the best I could, then went on back. On the way back I met a couple of our guys that were worse off than I was and one guy was pretty bad and I gave him a drink of water out of my canteen like that but we kept going back to the first aid station. Well, then they gave me a shot and bandaged me up and I said, "Well, can I go back?" No, no, nothing doing, they loaned me an ambulance. I said, "I don't need that." Anyway, I got into the ambulance, back to Chateau Thierry. Got in there, was loaded up on a hospital train, then they had that thing filled up but they said they had room for one more, I was the one more. Come to find out, they didn't have room for one more so I slept on the floor that night, oh, and that thing hurt, I remember that. So I was out again and in the meantime, my first, my younger brother had joined us but right away he was sent on a detail and picked up I think it was two men from each company along there for I don't know just how many it was, and the detail back of the lines picking up horses to bring up, buying horses for the government. So he wasn't with us at Vance, but Earl was, and on up to Thiemes, probably heard a lot of Thiemes there. That's where the heavy fighting was. A lot of casualties there. He was gassed there on the 6th of August I guess it was, so he went back to the hospital. Up in Themes, our guys on this French chau chat. That's a rifle, you've got some up here I noticed, with the clip underneath, half moon, holds 50 shells. That was the one. It was supposed to be shot out of from a tri-pod. They were, that's the way we learned how to use them, and we had to learn how to, my job was to take that chau chat about, put it together in the dark, so we had this, we had to do that because anything went wrong, why, you had to be ready for it. That's the little training we got. Well, these guys was up there, I don't know what they was, two, or three, or four of them, really was in on it, they grabbed that chau chat and brought it up this way, from the shoulder. Boy, oh, boy, they got a lot of credit for that.

Van Ells: I bet.

Fuller: Oh, yes, they did. Two or three of them got citations. They were, well, you wouldn't call them riff-raff, that's for sure. There was no riff-raff in the Army, but they were a little lower. They were good soldiers but they got a few feathers in their pocket, and, wow, a little more loud.

Van Ells: A little more rowdy.

Fuller: Oh, yeah, they liked their liquor, egg them on, but they were just as tough. One of them, Lt. Spencer from Oshkosh, he later took over the whole company, and he had no, he didn't like these guys too well for that reason but they were good soldiers. But he changed his mind after he saw that. He says, "I'll take those guys anytime." He was decorated, too, for, he was shot right through the stomach here somewhere. I knew he was, too, 'cause when we were going up this and later on another front, they was always changing from front to front.

Van Ells: Now, this was your first offensive along the Marne there.

Fuller: Yeah, that was one of the first ones we were in like that, right.

Van Ells: And you went to war enthusiastic, sort of--

Fuller: When my brother came back, then our company went in at [unintelligible place name] and [unintelligible place name], a different front. That's as far as our outfit went. It took Themes and then they were pulled back, others took over, and then it switched around and went into another section, and my younger brother had joined the outfit then. They had taken the town, Travigne, a rough battle they told us. Earl and I were both in the hospital and they had this patrol that was in cleaning up and, like, the guy that was in command, he could talk German just as good as any Germans ever did. In fact, he got 37 prisoners out of one billet that they were just because he could talk German. And, of course, the Japs, well, that's getting ahead of it. Now, Sam Lashinski, his father had been what they called a Kaiser's Guard, Home Guard, in Germany and, so, Sam could talk German like nobody's business, and he was in the command of this patrol. They'd taken this one billet, this one house, and made sure nobody in there, kind of stepped out, brother Ralph happened to be the first one to step out, sniper got him right through the heart. Now I know this because it was the guys all from my hometown, all except Sam. Well, there might have been one or two others but some of them were from my hometown on that patrol. And Sam was just like one of our own, you might say. So another things that happened. Then, well, that was about it. They took that then. I don't know where the company went from there until Earl and I got back. In September, Earl and I got back to the outfit and

that's where we learned that Ralph had been killed. Earl got back two days ahead of me, then he told me. That's the way it was. Our first sergeant was out, Earl jumped from corporal to first sergeant and I went from corporal to acting sergeant at that place right there. But Earl jumped up and he was the one, Ralph and I were in the Mexican Border, doesn't know the training but Earl come in later. Well, he was older and different things so right away they put him, jumped up like that to first sergeant. Then we moved out by truck, the first day, probably a couple of, well, we drive 'till about maybe 8 hours or something like 6 or 8 hours, you go out and probably stay there overnight. A nice meal. Then the next morning you get another meal, take off again. Sometimes they'd load us in, sometimes they go by foot, sometimes they load us in the boxcars, and sometimes by truck. All depended on what conveyance they had I suppose and like that. Sometimes we stayed a couple of nights in one place. Every day the orders seemed to be changed. That's why you had your company runners to back and forth with these messages. Well, we went on. Now this, we're getting up in the Verdun front.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: And there, I wouldn't want to put this on tape, the guy that, oh, there's some things that no use in, I don't like to put it on tape, some things.

Van Ells: Okay.

Fuller: They wouldn't, some of them, they wouldn't believe it but the strangest things happened. But we kept on. Every day you start out with a new squad. **[END SIDE B, TAPE 1]** One guy, well, people would stand, the day that I was hit, when he got the objective that night he was the only one left from the squad. The rest of them had either been wounded or something. In that, as I mentioned, I know three guys in the company that all said that they were not coming home. My brother was one, Pete Johnson was one, and Vern Brandason. And my brother--this I can prove by clipping, 'cause I got home and it was in the newspaper, 'cause he sent the first notice home about Ralph--and when Ralph came back to join the outfit he came up through the supply company, which Nelson was the first sergeant, and they talked like that and whatnot, went on to join the company, told him, said, "Well, Art, I don't think I'll see you again." Or he said, "I won't be seeing you again." And Art wrote that home. Well, then when Ralph got killed he was in the supply company and he got word of it right away and then he told him, Ralph had told him that he wasn't coming home. So I got that verification of that 'cause it was in the *Northwestern* at the time, how he--the folks got the word from him before the government notified them that Ralph had been killed. But went on and Earl was wounded up at Verdun and taken back and Spencer was just ahead of that and he turned the company over to Earl. No, Earl was appointed as a first sergeant before that but he was acting, oh, he was, Spencer turned the company over to him instead of the lieutenant officer, the lieutenant we had

which was, well, we called them “90-day wonders.” They’d been to officers’ school for 90 days.

Van Ells: I take it you weren’t very impressed.

Fuller: Right. And, so he didn’t have the confidence, he turned the company over to Earl. So that’s, and, Earl was wounded, then he went back. Then we kept on. I was in charge of a detail. I went back to the first aid station for something and low and behold they kept me there then--

Van Ells: Left off with the words “burial detail” so take it from there.

Fuller: Take it from there. Yeah, I was put in charge of burial detail with eight other men. Then they sent word back to the company that I was on this detail. Twenty-four men were buried in one shell hole. One was head here and the other one here, alternating. There was quite a post of here. So how they found these people later to notify who they were, it’s a puzzle to me how some of them found out about those things. So I was on that for a little while. And the company kept going. Then I got a chance one day, it was for some reason, and I went up to our company with a mess detail that came down. The lieutenant was in charge of the company there, I said, “Get me off of this detail.” so I got back with the company. He worked it so they sent somebody else. We just kept on, losing, every place was getting replacements every day. You didn’t know a third of the people, you know, in a company. A few were old men but most of them wounded or something like that. Some of them came back later.

Van Ells: Was that a problem in terms of fighting effectiveness, in terms of morale and those sorts of things, to get all these new people? Did they need to be trained all the time? And for old timers such as yourself and in leadership positions, was it a problem to keep them in line and fighting capable?

Fuller: Oh, the younger ones?

Van Ells: Yeah.

Fuller: They just seemed to flow right in because it wasn’t like, see, a bunch of fellows over there. You just stand up, aimed, and shoot at them. You just take it in stride. You didn’t know if you hit somebody or not. They just fell right in. They saw what it was doing. It didn’t take them long ‘cause they, well, I imagine they could see right off it’s either you or me. Well, anyway, that’s the way she went until we got word that the Armistice was signed, or going to be signed. Got rumors a couple of days ahead of time that, the Germans had the same thing, too. So then they kind of laid off. But our company had orders to go at 11:00 and this lieutenant we had, he was all set, ready to go, but one of our sergeants told him “Nothing doing. You don’t

move this company out.” He says, “You go out there, you’ll be filled with holes.” Finally, he backed off. Just a few minutes later, why, Armistice was signed. But he was going to take the company over. He would have ‘cause he wasn’t liked by anybody, he was an SOB.

Van Ells: So when you first heard of the Armistice, do you recall where you were and do you recall your reaction and those around you?

Fuller: How’s that?

Van Ells: When you first heard of the Armistice, what was your reaction to it? Was it a celebration?

Fuller: Oh, sure. We were shooting our guns and the Germans were shooting theirs in the air. Let the bullets fall where they may. Some, not too much, but there was some. A jubilation. Boy, everybody was excited. I might say something in there, though, that after I got back to the company, we were going up, we were in one place and we’d been there a couple of days, maybe more than that, but some of us hadn’t been able to have a bath or anything for a long time but we got a hold of a barrel somewhere. Where it got from and all that stuff, I can’t tell you. We got it, got it mounted up in a tree and we formed a bucket brigade, we got a hold of a pulley somewhere or something, a rope, fastened that up there, pulled the water up, filled it, then punched holes with his hand, like that, for a shower. There was a YMCA there. We’d been back for a few days, a couple, so the YMCA was there so we had, got stuff like they usually had.

Van Ells: Like--

Fuller: Yeah, cookies and like that, yeah. Salvation Army, well, I’d say they came up when we were right in the front lines. Especially when we was in the trenches and they came in there in the daytime, down in there with stuff. They were very, very good.

Van Ells: And I suppose you had Red Cross people there, too.

Fuller: Well, they were there. Some of us, as far as I was concerned, I think the Red Cross, Salvation Army stood out number one. Practically all the ones I talked to still do, still mention the Salvation Army. Yeah. There were things mentioned about them and some things that I saw, too. When somebody will tell you they received a package, bought a package and come to find out it was something that had been shipped to the YMCA, Red Cross and the Red Cross was selling it. Had the name in yet to deliver it.

Van Ells: Those may or may not be true, those rumors.

Fuller: Oh, yeah, some of those things.

Van Ells: So, after the Armistice, what happened to you then?

Fuller: Well, then we started on the way up to Germany. And that was again hop, skip and a jump. You know, they just stay in one place maybe a week. Yeah.

Van Ells: And you ended up in Coblenz?

Fuller: Coblenz, the railhead, that we went back, got back into a Hantfeltz and Herschblach. Hantfeltz is a battalion headquarters. Herschblach was one other side. We were the farthest out in our company, O'Connell, he'd been made major of our battalion. He wouldn't take it unless he got the 1st Battalion and he got it. He had his way because he made a name for himself there. So we went over to this other town, Herschblach, and that was the farthest out, outpost that was from the Coblenz headquarters. There the Germans treated us nice. But they couldn't leave town without us going with them. They'd have to go out and bring in wood from out someplace and there all these villages and all the people that have these farms lived in that village, then they'd go out from there to their farms, and like that. The wood, we'd have to go with them and all that. They treated us good. They were fine.

Van Ells: Did the French treat you nearly as well?

Fuller: I think the Germans really, the French were good to us, the French were, but I think the Germans. This one lady where I was, she treated me, we had a chance there, I was in sports, we formed a company football team, company basketball team, and I was a big player on the battalion basketball team. We had to go to Seltzers to play so they load us in a truck and away we went. We didn't have uniforms. We had our own clothes and like that. So you played in your underwear and after the game you just put on your other clothes and start for home. Well, my clothes were wet, I got a heck of a cold, and the next morning I was coming out but the second morning I was down with the YMCA but then went to first aid and that gave us, I went back, then this woman took over, German woman, and what she didn't rig up for me. Boy, I was out of there. But some of these 90-day wonders, they weren't all it was but this one we got was something else.

Van Ells: Really bad?

Fuller: Oh, yeah, as far as us old timers were concerned. He had no use for us. Any little thing, we got it until Spencer got back. Oh, yeah. He busted me from sergeant just like that. And how that happened was on this place I was telling you about where we rigged up this water, this what-do-you-call it, shower. They had dugouts around there. There was six of us, five guys and myself in this one dugout. In the night they got ordered to move out. To this day I

swear that nobody down there heard, knew what was going on. They just overlooked that dugout and nobody called us out. They didn't me and the rest of them swore that they didn't hear and I think they're absolutely right. But, so I took over, I was in charge, I took over, and we finally caught up with, just at dark, with the company. I went up and reported to him and he says, "You're a private." Just like that. I went up to O'Connell and told him but Ray said, "There's nothing I can do." It's a company order, he couldn't interfere. So I came home a private.

Van Ells: Funny how that works.

Fuller: You don't have to tell them. You can tell them to knock that off, you know, but I just wanted to mention that that was the kind of guy he was. So he came home with us and that. Some of us, 17 of us, came home on USS Chester. They got word that, the rest of them came back on the George Washington, went over on. So we'd been, went over first, I went over on the George Washington so we thought it would be fun so we come back on the US Chester. Not a darn thing to do from morning until night except play cards or what have you. All our meals were practically served. So that was a little experience, too.

Van Ells: And you came back--

Fuller: But that was through O'Connell.

Van Ells: Right.

Fuller: It came down to him that this wouldn't make it. They immediately called our company commander to see if there was any of us that wanted to do that. Our company commander called us older ones, what there was left of us, and set up the 17 of us could go. So we talked it over. We said, yes, we'd go. Now he brought that all the way down to single us out. That's what he thought of that company. Good old George F. O'Connell. That Spencer was a good one, too. But some little things like that. Now, I don't know what this one thing about the battles I went on.

Van Ells: I thought what you said was very interesting about the battles. It's the soldier's perspective. It's not always the general's perspective. It's often very different. So I thought that was very interesting, actually. I've got a couple of questions about the--

Fuller: Okay, shoot.

Van Ells: --post war period. Now, it's often, when the troops come back off the ships and go back home is where the war stories end but there are some interesting questions that arise about the post war periods. For example, when you got

back with your war wound here, did you have any problems with medical problems regarding your wound or chemical exposure or anything like that after the war? Once you got discharged did you have any service-related medical problems?

Fuller: I didn't.

Van Ells: You didn't.

Fuller: I didn't, no, no. I didn't have a thing. No, this was all done and I was told I could put in, and I could have. I could have got ten percent but I'm just that stubborn or something. I said, "No, let the guys have it that deserve it." 'cause so many of them come back that I knew where going to be in bad shape. Like that one guy come back with so shell shocked, you know, and he'd never do anything like that. I said, "Let the guys have it that deserve it. I can still go out and make a living. I'm not physically handicapped in any ways. I've got no bad effects of the war. Why should I take?" And there's a couple of others I know that, but some of them, I know a lot of them, I didn't realize how many goldbricks there were. 'Cause I know some that afterwards that weren't hurt any worse than I was and they got it and now look at what they'd be getting. Eighty-nine dollars a month. For what? For what? I'm happy. I got by, raised a family of six children on my own.

Van Ells: You mentioned shell shock, too. That apparently wasn't a problem for you but it was a problem for many veterans in that war. Did you have any other sort of psychological adjustments to make once you got back to society? For example, nightmares and that sort of thing.

Fuller: No, I didn't, I didn't. So many of our guys, when we came back, in Germany and like that, we were just back in one big family again. Especially on the ship coming home it was our group. Most of us were from Oshkosh.

Van Ells: And that was important, do you think?

Fuller: Hum?

Van Ells: That was important, do you think?

Fuller: Yeah, right, yeah. That's why they bring you down to our company. There was others that had the same chance to go on the USS Chester but when it got to battalion headquarters, like that far, O'Connell right away he called company, called Spencer, and we got it. So it was something. Spencer was great. He always remembered the men. And Spencer did, too. The men come first. And Spencer was right out there the day he got hit. He was right out here. We were coming up this way up on kind of a grade here and there was a big hedge over here and we was headed for that hedge, and he stood

here in kind of a ravine there where we went down through, and he direct us, "Go, go, go, go." And he was hit, and I knew he was hit, but he stayed right there until all the company was through there. Then he turned the company over to Earl. I knew he was hit. He hit bad. But he came home and he lived.

Van Ells: I've just got one last area of questioning and that involves veterans' organizations. Now, of course, as a World War I gentlemen, who started the American Legion. Did you ever join the American Legion?

Fuller: I joined the American Legion in August of 1919.

Van Ells: So right away.

Fuller: Right away. When another guy and I came home from service and we took off for Kenosha. We didn't want to stay in Oshkosh right away.

Van Ells: Why not?

Fuller: Well, I don't know for any certain--there was more of them wanted to go but what it ended up, there was only two of us that met at the restaurant at 2:00 in the morning to catch the train to Kenosha. Only two of us went. Well, there wasn't much to do in Oshkosh, you know, and like that. So we thought that, so we went down there. In the meantime, we'd met these girls. In fact, on Memorial Day in '19, went out to, this guy, Art, had a cottage out in the country, on the lake, we went out there. We invited these girls to come out to spend the day with us. I guess there was five girls and I guess there was six or seven guys. Anyway, then Art and I went to Kenosha and we got a job working nights. So Friday night, or Saturday morning, if we wanted to, we could catch a train, an early morning train. Catch that and get in Oshkosh at noon. And then Monday we catch a train out of there at noon and go back and go to work at night. So we had it nice. So every other week we'd do that. And we'd met these two girls so when we come home the first time I called this one and made a date with her. I asked her if she'd get one of the other girls. Well, she called her up. So, okay, we more or less blind date in a way. So we kept doing that all the time, back and forth.

Van Ells: I hear a knock.

Fuller: Okay.

[INTERRUPTED BY KNOCKING]

[REMAINDER OF TAPE IS BLANK]

