

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
THEODORE L. HARTRIDGE
Doctor, Army, World War II.

2000

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Hartridge, Theodore L., (1909-2008). Oral History Interview, 2000.

User Copy: 2 sound cassettes (ca. 75 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 75 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Video Recording: 1 videorecording (ca. 75 min.); ½ inch, color.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

Abstract:

Theodore “Ted” Hartridge, a Milwaukee, Wisconsin native, discusses his career with the Army Reserves including his World War II active-duty service in the European theater with the 66th Medical Regiment. Hartridge talks about being commissioned as a Reserves officer in 1937, two weeks of training at Camp Custer (Michigan), a year of active duty as a ward officer at Fort Leavenworth (Kansas), and passing the exam to become a regular Army officer. He comments on the little amount of training he had and his duties as a physician. In 1941, he states he was assigned to the IX Corps Headquarters at Fort Lewis (Washington) as a staff officer in the medical department. Hartridge talks about duty assigning medical personnel to different units and preparing medical first-aid kits for use in the Aleutian Islands. He tells of hearing the news about Pearl Harbor, joining the 66th Medical Regiment as an executive officer, and training the enlisted men to fire rifles while awaiting orders. Part of Patton’s 3rd Army, he speaks of sailing to Stone (England) on an overcrowded ship, camping in a field at Stonehenge with no food, and thereafter following the ambulance company to make use of their kitchens. He shares an anecdote about meeting actor Lew Ayres. About a month after D-Day, Hartridge tells of landing at Utah Beach, operating out of Avranches (France), hearing planes pass over to bomb St. Lo, and duty travelling around in a jeep to coordinate the evacuation of casualties from division and evacuation hospitals. He reveals the high casualty rate of one thousand soldiers for each mile and tells of having apple pie for dinner after uncovering a German supply depot in an orchard. Hartridge tells of sending casualty reports to 3rd Army Headquarters, seeing German bombers while stationed in Metz over Christmas and New Years Eve, having a chef from the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel assigned to his unit, and crossing the Rhine. He comments on taking control of a couple of German hospitals in Mainz, giving blood infusions to freed prisoners of war at Buchenwald concentration camp, and seeing one ex-prisoner murder another over a food ration. As part of the Army of Occupation, Hartridge mentions being stationed in Regensburg for a time before being assigned to the Philippines. He explains Japan surrendered while he was aboard ship, so they were redirected to New York. He expresses regret that he was never promoted to full colonel and tells of upsetting a superior officer when Hartridge called the officer on a misdiagnosis. After returning to the United States, he touches on continuing medical practice at Jackson Clinic in Madison (Wisconsin), serving as Professor of Military Science and Tactics, and retiring from the military in 1959. Hartridge discusses assignment in Landstuhl (Germany) from 1952 to 1954 setting up the Ear, Nose and Throat Department of the 2nd General Hospital.

He comments on inequalities between regular and reserve Army officers' promotion rates and Social Security benefits.

Biographical Sketch:

Hartridge (1909-2008) served in the Army and the Army Reserves from 1937 until 1959. He attended medical school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of Pennsylvania, had his internship at Philadelphia General Hospital, and, before being called to active duty, worked as a country doctor in Horicon (Wisconsin). After his service, he settled in Madison (Wisconsin) and worked at the Jackson Clinic.

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2000
Transcribed by Katy Marty, 2008
Checked and corrected by Joan Bruggink, 2011
Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2011

Transcribed Interview:

- Jim: [Laughs] All right. Speaking to Ted Hartridge and the date is the 8th of May, the year 2000. Tell me when you were born, Ted.
- Ted: I was born October 19th 1909, making me just 9-0 years old at the present time.
- Jim: [Laughs] Where were you born?
- Ted: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.
- Jim: You grew up there?
- Ted: I grew up there.
- Jim: I see. And when did you enter military service, Ted?
- Ted: I was originally commissioned a Reserve Officer in March of 1937. In August of 1939, when it was apparent that sooner or later we would get into a war, the Surgeon General telegraphed me and said, "Would you accept a year's active duty?" I reported as a One Lieutenant Ward Officer at the station hospital, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. General Lesley J. McNair, Brigadier General, was the commanding general of the post and I was the One Lieutenant in the hospital.
- Jim: At that had you had any training at all?
- Ted: I had had no training at all other than as a doctor.
- Jim: Go back a bit now. Where did you go to medical school?
- Ted: I started out here at Wisconsin; had my undergraduate work here, and the first two years of medicine were here at Wisconsin. Between my first and second year I taught anatomy, histology with Drs. Bast and Geist [?]. At the end of my second year, I transferred to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and had my internship at Philadelphia General Hospital.
- Jim: And after that, what?
- Ted: And after that I became a country doctor up in Horicon, Wisconsin, which was a delightful way of living. I was single at the time and I think I got more ducks than I did patients.
- Jim: [Laughs] Okay. And how long were you in Horicon?

- Ted: I was in Horicon until the end of September, 1939, when I went into the service.
- Jim: Now when you joined you said you were given a Reserve Officer commission in 1937. What were your obligations then?
- Ted: The obligation as a Reserve Officer was a little training. We had two weeks' training because the Reserve of Wisconsin, Michigan, Illinois was the 101st Reserve Division, the Screaming Eagles, which later became the 101st Airborne Division. At that time it was a Reserve unit and I was the only officer in one of the collecting companies of the medical--
- Jim: Detachment?
- Ted: Battalion. It was all paper at that time with a minimal number of officers in it. We did have two weeks' training at Camp Custer in Battle Creek, Michigan. This was in 1938.
- Jim: I see. So you were planning to stay in the Reserve as a reserve for an indefinite period of time, or was it a definite period of time?
- Ted: Well, it was an indefinite period of time, *but* when I got into the Army at Fort Leavenworth I was so pleased with it I took the examination to become a member of the regular corps, regular Army corps.
- Jim: I see.
- Ted: That was the week of December 4, 1939; it was given at [pause] in Arkansas, northwest corner of the state, Hot Springs.
- Jim: Okay.
- Ted: At the station hospital there. I was accepted as a commissioned officer, 1st Lieutenant Medical Corps, regular Army, and the date, I think, was around the 4th or 14th of February, 1940. I was at the station hospital there.
- Jim: What was your division then--what division were you in?
- Ted: I was in no division.
- Jim: None? You were just in a medical hospital?
- Ted: It was in a station hospital.

- Jim: I see. So you must have had some training that summer. You know, that summer of '40 they had big things down in Louisiana and so forth. How did that go?
- Ted: That summer in 1940, as I remember, there was one Lieutenant on the post and one Brigadier General on the post.
- Jim: You mean medical officers?
- Ted: General McNair was the officer and I was the only Lieutenant in the hospital. Everybody else had been taken away, but I stayed. [laughs]
- Jim: Oh.
- Ted: I had to work.
- Jim: I see. So you had a summer encampment?
- Ted: A summer encampment was without me.
- Jim: I see.
- Ted: We had been on a maneuver in North Little Rock, Arkansas, over December--November, December, and January of 1939 and '40, and that was about the only training that I had as a medical officer Army-wise.
- Jim: What were your duties as a physician there?
- Ted: My duty as a physician was to go to the Ear, Nose and Throat Department, assist Colonel Brown, who is going to go on vacation, and take over the department when he went on vacation.
- Jim: But you hadn't had your residency yet, had you?
- Ted: My what?
- Jim: Your residency?
- Ted: Well, I had that at Philadelphia General Hospital, two years.
- Jim: You mean after Horicon?
- Ted: No. After graduating from the University of Pennsylvania in 1934 I had an internship for two years until 1936 at Philadelphia General Hospital.
- Jim: Oh, I missed that. Okay; and then you went to Horicon?

Ted: And then I went to Horicon.

Jim: Now the ear, nose and throat training?

Ted: The ear, nose and throat training came much later on, after the war when I was Professor of Military Science and Tactics at Washington University, lecturing to the students on one side of the street and a Fellow in Otolaryngology under Dr. Theo Walsh on the other side of the street.

Jim: That was after the war?

Ted: After the war; that was 1947, '8 and '9.

Jim: Okay, we'll save that until later then.

Ted: Okay.

Jim: Stay on track here. So here we are in 1940 and you're in the regular Army performing as a General Medical Officer.

Ted: General Medical Officer.

Jim: Right. And was there anything that happened between then and when the war started in December of '41?

Ted: Yeah, now let's take it in the spring--

Jim: Of '40?

Ted: Of 1941.

Jim: Okay.

Ted: I was sent to the Medical Field Service School at Camp Carlisle.

Jim: Colorado?

Ted: In Pennsylvania.

Jim: Oh, excuse me, yes.

Ted: And that's where I was at that time. From there instead of being--I was sent to the IX Corps at Fort Lewis, Washington. There on about April 1st 1941, I reported to the surgeon, who was Colonel R. P. Williams, and he

took me in and introduced me to the Chief of Staff, who was Lieutenant Colonel Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Jim: We all know who that was.

Ted: Which was a very high note to me. We then went on maneuvers at Hunter Liggett Military Reservation, the Hurst Ranch that is, in California. I returned to Washington, or I mean to Fort Lewis, Washington, and Eisenhower went on. He made Full Colonel next month, Brigadier General two months later, and then you know what *he* did.

Jim: Right. Okay.

Ted: So on--

Jim: Hold it for a second while I get a little taller here. Hold it just for a moment. [pause to adjust equipment] I like that better. Okay, keep going.

Ted: My duty at Fort Lewis, Washington, was in Corps Headquarters as a staff officer in the medical department. I had the dual job of S-1 Personnel and S-4 Supply, which is the usual routine. As officers would come in to be assigned, I would check through where they were needed and then put them into the particular spot. Also it was my duty to work on the equipment--medical department equipment--for the troops that went up to Attu in the Aleutian chain when the Japanese occupied that, and I remember we devised a first aid box using cigar boxes with merthiolate bandages, a little sulfanilamide and some adhesive to put in each truck that was sent on up there. This is before Johnson & Johnson or the others had made a first aid packet or a first aid case for each vehicle. These things plus the equipment for the kitchens and the laundries of the troops that went to Attu. It was interesting there that I was supposed to get a commendation, but the person who was in charge of that had a little heart attack and did not carry out that particular task. It was interesting in that from then on, as a staff officer--this went on and on in 1941--to carry on out my duties as filling in officers, or medical officers, into the corps units and the 3rd and 41st Divisions were on the post and they had to have officers, medical officers, to fill their TO's or their training tables in addition, so that I was Officer of the Day at Headquarters IX Corps on December 6th, 1941, and I had just [crash]--that's my wrench.

Jim: Right.

Ted: And I had just had gotten home after spending the night in corps headquarters. I had just gotten home for about an hour or so when I got a telephone call, and it said the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor; get in here and get to your office, because there's nobody else here. At that

particular time the corps staff, the corps Senior Dental Officer was on vacation, the corps Adjutant was in a Command General staff school—no, he was on vacation. The corps of the Medical S-3 Intelligence Operations was at the Command General staff school, and so I reported to the office of the Surgeon IX Corps on this Sunday afternoon about 1:00 o'clock and I remained there at the desk until somebody came back, which was on Thursday.

Jim: Oh my.

Ted: So it was fun, it was pleasant. That's the way I was introduced into the war.

Jim: Right, and how long did you stay there?

Ted: I stayed at Fort Lewis as an inspector up and down the coast of all divisions that were in the state of Washington and Oregon until about-- now let's see, in the spring of '43 the corps headquarters, which was well overloaded with officers because it was a training corps, was sent down to the desert training center and then was sent to [pause] Mississippi just south of Memphis, where it was broken up. It was broken up in the fall in about September of 1943 and I was sent as Executive Officer to the 66th Medical Regiment, which was being trained at Camp Barkeley, Texas, near Abilene, Texas. I joined that unit roughly October 1st and had some training and did the training myself. [laughs] As Executive Officer I was supposed to know what to do theoretically with the help of a few books and the officer's guide.

Jim: This is about organizational things, not medical things.

Ted: This was organization and this medical group, it was a medical regiment, headquarters, headquarters company, and then there were individual battalions. Collecting battalions, a hospital battalion in which--well, as you know, the collecting would clear divisions and bring the casualties into the evac hospitals. As then shortly thereafter we received orders that we—oh, that we would be going overseas. At that time we were assigned to Patton's 3rd Army that was being developed in the United States; this is 1943. At that time also, we were told to teach all the enlisted men in the unit, in the regiment--to teach them how to use a rifle. That to me was fun because I had used a rifle, 22 and heavier, ever since I was ten years old. So I collected all the sergeants that had been infantrymen and any fellas that had had experience, and we borrowed .30-06 rifles and taught them how to fire. When we put them on the range, an inspecting officer came down from headquarters 3rd Army, and when he watched them his comment was one of which I was extremely proud: "Who taught these

medics how to fire a rifle like infantrymen?" And we were very pleased.
[laughs]

Jim: Ah, I'd say.

Ted: Then in middle January--

Jim: Of '44?

Ted: Of '44, by troop train we wandered pretty much all over the United States eastern half and ended up at Camp Dix, now Fort Dix, New Jersey, where we were rechecked and prepared to go across to England. We were supposed to go on the *Queen Mary*, I think, but she had bumped into some stormy weather, and so instead we were shipped out on the *HMS Pasteur*, which had been the *Ile de France*, and it was most interesting. Forty-four hundred men on board with flotation gear for *half* of them. In the stateroom of which I was assigned there were ten officers. We all tried to stand in it at one time and found we couldn't.

Jim: What was your rank then, Ted?

Ted: I was--oh, let's see, I made Captain in December, no November '41-- that's when I made Captain--Major in July of '42, and when I shipped out to Europe on the Atlantic side I was a Major, but when I landed in England I was a Lieutenant Colonel. [laughs] My promotion caught up with me.

Jim: I see.

Ted: So that's how that worked.

Jim: Where did you go when you went to Europe?

Ted: When we went to Europe we were sent to Stone, Staffordshire, and there were several other medical units there. Stone is a small town, not very far, it's in the Midlands. It's --

Jim: I've been there.

Ted: You've been there? What?

Jim: I've been there.

Ted: Oh, good. Isn't it a nice town?

Jim: It's in the Cotswolds. Stove?

Ted: Stone.

Jim: Stone. Oh, I may be mistaken.

Ted: Yeah, you said Stove. It was in the Midlands and was a pottery town. And we remained there doing minimum training and just sort of waiting until the time came for us to go south. Patton's headquarters was in Peover, P-e-o-v-e-r, if I remember correctly, and my commanding officer was Colonel Prentiss L. Moore, who was one of the senior medical officers in the medical corps. He and I went on up there and listened to Patton's harangue, etc. etc. I was kept all the time with Colonel Moore because he was not expected to be physically capable of lasting the entire war. I did meet him sometime after the war, in fact not too long ago, about ten, fifteen--about twelve years ago I met him in San Antonio on his 94th birthday, if I remember right. Something like that. Incidentally, did you know Dr. Bob Strawn [?]?

Jim: Yes.

Ted: Bob Strawn had an apartment in this apartment complex in San Antonio right across and on the same floor that Colonel Moore had. So I go in to see Bob Strawn and there's Colonel Moore's apartment across the door. Rang in and that's when I met him, and I had this book with him and he approved of the history of the group.

Jim: Oh, wonderful. So --

Ted: All right now, we have gone to Stone, Staffordshire. It was interesting. One of the things while we were at the desert training center with the corps was that I had to go and report to the commanding officer of an evacuation hospital who had just come in at 4:00 o'clock in the morning on a troop train--complete hospital with his nurses, ambulances, the trucks etc., and as I got in there--it was a Colonel Thompson--and I said, "Colonel, I'm sorry to disturb you at this hour, but the railroad company tells me that they want to move this train at 8:00 o'clock; it is now 4:00 o'clock. They want the train empty." [laughs] And so everybody got out and went to work very hard, except one man. One man was sitting over on a stump. It was a Saturday. This man was sitting on this stump, just doing nothing--contemplating, maybe reading. And I asked Colonel Thompson, "Who is this man?" He said, "Oh, that's Lew Ayres, the movie actor. He's a conscientious objector and the fellows like him. He never works on Saturday, but he is *always* the Officer of the Day, or the Non-Commissioned Officer of the Day, on Sundays, every Sunday, and that is appreciated by the other persons. So they like him and let him do it." When we left now to get back to Stone we were taken down to near the

coast and we were put in a field—and remember, here’s the headquarters, twelve officers, twenty-six enlisted men, no kitchen, no nothing--and we were put in this field and what do you know--here’s Stonehenge right here. No food, no nothin’. So I went hunting around and I found the 35th Evac Hospital about a mile away. What do you know, there’s Colonel Thompson, whom I had earlier told to get out of a train. [laughs]

Jim: Oh, my.

Ted: And [laughs] I asked him if he could feed us, and he fed us very well. From then on we kept one of our ambulance companies with our group. When the ambulance company moved, headquarters moved the same place. They had the kitchens, so they kept us fed. So then after about five days sitting in our tents, at Stonehenge, I think, we were put into a transport with a few other things, crossed the channel into France about D plus twenty-eight, twenty-nine. The 1st Army was all ashore and they were building up 3rd Army now. So we went ashore over Utah Beach, passed St. Mere-Eglise, and then were sent to a certain place on the far side of the Normandy peninsula. We had learned by then to keep an ambulance company with us so that they would be in one field, we were in another one. We were there for some time, until one day we saw more airplanes than we thought there ever were. The ground was shaking and booming, the noise was good. We were about five miles away from St. Lo. That was the day they bombed St. Lo and 3rd Army broke through that bombed area; that was where General McNair was killed and--

Jim: The Falaise Pocket.

Ted: What?

Jim: The Falaise Pocket.

Ted: No, Falaise Pocket was later.

Jim: Oh.

Ted: This came on through--this was at St. Lo and it was the beginning where they went on past, I think--I can’t remember the name of the town—it has a hill. You could see San Michel in the distance to the right and then we went on through Fougères, and then we swung--

[End of tape 1, side A]

uh, at that particular time we had all our companies with us. We were supporting evacuating casualties from four directions at that time and we had--there was a division there, and I can’t remember which division, because we were evacuating casualties through—uh, from Brest, from

ahead of us, from behind us. And then we started coming on and the Falaise Gap came after we swung down around--I haven't studied the map recently and I can't tell *exactly* where it was, but the Mortain Pocket was kept open, and I think the 35th Division was holding that corridor open, and if you really want to find out --

Jim: No.

Ted: --call Eldred Swingen [?], the attorney over here a little way.

Jim: So what was your duty specifically?

Ted: My duty was Exec Officer, see that things were --

Jim: You had supplies?

Ted: --done that the units--all the different--we had three or four--we had three battalions with us at the time, and my duty was to see that they all were--their duties were coordinated in evacuating the casualties from the hospital, from the divisions. Our job was to evac from divisions to evac hospitals, evac hospitals to general hospitals, to railheads, to air heads. In other words, my unit was primarily [laughs] a taxi outfit. Ambulances, etc. etc.

Jim: Sure.

Ted: And that was our job, primarily. It was interesting--I remember going, checking the troops being off-loaded from the general hospital at Avranches, which is on the base of the Normandy Peninsula toward the English Channel.

Jim: Yes.

Ted: And seeing one fellow that had been in the 83rd Division, yeah. 83rd, come off the hospital, come off a plane from the hospital and going back to join his unit; that was at about six, seven o'clock in the morning. I happened to be there again that evening, and here he come back with another wound. The 87th, 83rd Division was advancing at the rate of one thousand casualties *per mile*, which is a lot.

Jim: Yes.

Ted: Well, after we got down past Fougères, I can't remember the next town, but that's when we started swinging east, and that's when the corps, or the divisions, we were supporting, I think [sighs] either 19th or 21st Corps

containing two infantry divisions and an armored division. The 7th Armored was one of 'em; I can't remember the two –

Jim: That's not important here.

Ted: --infantry divisions.

Jim: That's alright.

Ted: But they were the ones that swung around and helped close that Falaise Gap. They swung around and the Canadians came down from the north and this corps came up from the south and blocked off, and got most of the Germans in there. A lot of 'em got loose by leaving their equipment and using their feet.

Jim: Right. Can you tell me about your experience now? I know about those other things.

Ted: Yeah.

Jim: Tell me about what you were doing during this time.

Ted: What I was doing, again, as I said, coordinating evacuation and --

Jim: Did you have trouble getting supplies?

Ted: No.

Jim: How about food?

Ted: No. Oh, that's one thing that we did have no trouble with. All the way across France we had eaten C-Rations, K-Rations and things like that. When we got to just about in, I think, St. Menehould in August, which is a couple of towns outside of Verdun, we were bivouacked in an apple orchard, and our chaplain had been available, going around, and he had found when they had uncovered a German food depot. His jeep, which contained his portable organ, his trailer, had, in addition, a couple of hundred pounds of flour, a couple hundred pounds of sugar. And so we were in this orchard and that's the day every officer peeled apples. [laughs] That day, for dinner that night we had all the apple pie, approximately a piece of apple pie a foot square per man [laughs], and all the coffee they wanted to drink. So those were --

Jim: That was a highlight.

- Ted: As I remember I had to censor all the letters the fellows wrote home, and I can remember in different times references to things like that. This is the day the Colonel and all the officers peeled apples. [laughs] Then we got to--[whistles]
- Jim: The Rhine?
- Ted: Well, we're not at the Rhine yet. Month or so or two away.
- Jim: Well, the exact place is not important. What you were doing is important.
- Ted: Yeah. Well, I wasn't doing very much other than coordinating and seeing that if this unit, this division, had so many casualties, like I would say-- let's say that division had forty casualties that day or that clearing company; I'd see that sufficient ambulances went to that –
- Jim: Collecting area?
- Ted: Division collecting point.
- Jim: Yes.
- Ted: Yeah and then to see that the evac hospital had sufficient space for them. If they didn't have, we'd have to send another platoon of ambulances to the evac hospital and evacuate them.
- Jim: Okay, very good. So then what happened in your next move?
- Ted: Well, the next move was Verdun--yeah I guess it was Verdun, and it was just more of the same. I did have a chance to get a look at the Mortuary of Somme, where the French lost 400,000 of their men in that one particular area, when Pattain says, "They shall not pass." The Germans started their drive in the spring of 1916, and by November they had gained 1700 yards. God, that was a slaughter. In the little towns in that area there would be a pile of stone all flat on the ground and a sign there: this was such and such a town, by name. So, then on to Metz, and we were there over Christmas. Again, the same thing of coordinating; that was my job. I averaged about two hundred miles a day in a jeep.
- Jim: How big an area did you have to supervise?
- Ted: Umm.
- Jim: Fifty square miles? Or not that much?
- Ted: Or more.

Jim: I see.

Ted: What was the front of the 3rd Army? [laughs] I can't remember how wide, but it was a pretty good-sized width. [pause in tape] And then, of course, every day one of us had to send a report of all the casualties in 3rd Army, collect them in from the divisions of the different corps, and collect those casualty reports and take them to Headquarters 3rd Army. That was one of the ways--actually what we were doing was reporting the number of casualties so that they, back there, knew who would and how many casualties they would have to replace, how many persons would be needed to be replaced to bring the divisions up to strength.

Jim: Okay.

Ted: When we were in Metz it was interesting. On January 1st, 1945 the Luftwaffe came out in force; that was the last time they came out in strength. And I remember standing in front of the apartment complex we had taken over and looking up in the sky and seeing at least fifteen, twenty, maybe thirty airplanes, both German MS 109's [?] and/or American fighter planes, probably P-51's, fighting up there and around, and you would see tracers coming here and there. And I remember seeing one plane coming down, just *absolutely* straight down until it got maybe 1500 feet off the ground, pulling out, and he wasn't more away from me than that window over there; so close that we could see that he was wearing a blond mustache. He went on, missed the building that we were all quartered in, and hit the ground a hundred yards beyond. There was a big explosion; that was the end of it. The officer standing with me ran toward the basement window and dove through. I never knew how he got through it, because he couldn't get out of it later when he tried to. [laughs] I just stood and watched it, because by the time he had passed me he couldn't shoot me anyway.

Jim: Right.

Ted: So that was to Metz. Then my unit, then we got close to the Rhine River, and I remember we were called into 3rd Army Headquarters: the 66th Medical Group will be responsible for collecting, enumerating, discharging all German medical wounded in military and/or civilian hospitals, plus all concentration camps. That was a stinkin' job. So--oh one other thing, a truck driver was sent on in to our unit as a replacement for one of the ambulance drivers, and I got to talking to him. "And what was your job in civilian life?" "Well, I was the meat chef at the Waldorf Astoria." He didn't go any further [laughs]. We ate well from then on. He was a very excellent cook and a hell of a nice fellow. I can't remember his name, but he remained with us, and some of our enterprising sergeants

went through a house that had been all blown to hell and found a pantry with a lot of dishes in it; we ate off of dishes from then on. [laughs] So. Then crossing Germany, crossing the Rhine River; I crossed by Navy, one of these little Navy ships, ya know?

Jim: Yup.

Ted: And, let me think. Mainz. Is Mainz on this side?

Jim: It's on the western side of the Rhine.

Ted: It's on the German side, on the eastern side?

Jim: Of the Rhine, but still in Germany.

Ted: Of the Rhine. And I remember going in, we went into Mainz. The Air Force had visited it the night before. It was kind of smoky and some of the buildings were tottering from side to side. I looked up and there told my driver, "Get the hell out of here; there's a building just about ready to fall over."

Jim: Oh no.

Ted: And it was about a four story one and we got on and the building fell in behind us. I found a German hospital in that town, five stories down in a champagne cellar. It's interesting to see the German soldiers wounded and in bed, when somebody hollers "Achtung" come to attention in bed, but they did. Interesting thing also, I could speak a little German, *nur ein bisschen* [only a little]. I had *fuehrer, aber, und so*, but when you're going in and directing a German officer or NCO to give you a total company report and the names and homes of every man, you don't speak in German if you're gonna clobber it, so everything I said would be in English. I remember going down to this one and I told him, "I want a total roster of all your men here. Their ranks, serial numbers, homes and the general information. I want it by tomorrow morning and I'll come and get it." So the next morning I came and got it, and the end result was that we considered them prisoners and then those that were capable of walking would go to the prison camp with the MPs; those that were not would go to another hospital or go home, because we were supposed to get rid of them. Also, when we went to Mainz, you go on up a little way up the street towards Wiesbaden. There was a hospital there that I was the first American medical officer in and took it over, and when I went in there I saw their commanding officer, who was a great big, burly German that walked with two cudgels. I told my driver, "Slip you carbine over your shoulder and walk five feet behind me." [laughs] Because I was the only American in that hospital and here's a full German hospital staff in there.

It was interesting also when I went through, I found an American soldier from one of the divisions that had been wounded, and I suggested to the commanding officer that he be given a little special care, and I hope he will recover, because you wouldn't want to go to the Russian Cage, would you? [laughs] There was no such thing as the Russian Cage, but they didn't know it. Well, that was about everything until crossing Germany. Let's see crossing Germany--we followed the 3rd Army area over past Cologne, and I can't remember the exact towns.

Jim: That's not important. Where did you end up? The last town.

Ted: Well, I can remember one town that was interesting, and that was Weimar and that was where Buchenwald was, the concentration camp. We put a battalion into that when it was uncovered and they helped clean that up. There were dead all over the place and persons were, well, dying. At that time we had 1500 units of good American blood extra. It was just about at the time limit to expire, and so we put the men and some three thousand Czechs, Belgians, French got a half a unit of blood instead of throwing it away, and I think it helped them a good bit. On the way out of that camp--and incidentally, I saw those lampshades made of tanned human skin and of the others--but on the way out, there were two men sitting on the side of the road as I went by, and I saw that they had one--you know these Cracker Jack rations? I can't remember which those were.

Jim: K's.

Ted: C's?

Jim: The K-rations; the K were the Cracker Jacks.

Ted: Well, anyway the one--they had some chocolate and two cans of food in it. The two, if you can realize how cheap human life is, the two were fighting over it; one pulls out a knife and killed the other.

Jim: Oh my.

Ted: And that's the way it is; I saw that and decided to keep on going, realizing that human life during wartime is the cheapest thing that you have. We then swung south and ended up in Nuremberg, just a little south of Nuremberg, when the war ended in Germany. We were then told to prepare to be part of an army of occupation and were at Regensburg, Ratisbon, and that was where we ended up that stretch in the Castle Kofferung. We took over the Castle Kofferung. We had our company with us, and one of the medical officers of the ambulance company recognized dengue fever when one of the men came down with it; break-bone fever, you know.

Jim: Yes.

Ted: And we sprayed the canal, [laughs] the moat all around it. And that was the end of that. Some German duchess was living in part of the castle, but we took over the rest of it. And that was very delightful. As I said, we were supposed to be there as part of the army of occupation. So, as you say, never dig in 'til you've got the third change of your order. We were there and 'long about the middle of July we were told prepare to move with One Company to go to Marseilles, get in transports, go through the Panama Canal, and land in the Philippines to be part of —no, we were told to be part of the force there, of the army there. Well, we got to Marseilles and--the thing is, we're right outside of town, I can't remember the name of the town, but there was a Roman amphitheater there, and that's where I saw my first bloodless bull fight. We remained there for about three weeks or so and our unit was broken up, and I was sent to the 15th Major Port to be the Surgeon of the Port of Manila, which would have carried with it a star. Well, that's the way things go. So we get all set and ready to go on board the ship, and I went on board the ship. As we passed the Balearics I noticed we were, we went to Gibraltar, and at Gibraltar--we had a map, the officers there had a map, we were supposed to go down past, I think, the Madeiras and head straight for Panama. We kept seeing the lights on our starboard. "Hey, we're not going to Panama." The next morning the captain of the ship announced, "Now hear this. Japan is figuring to surrender. We will be landing in New York in four or five days." [laughs] So that's how come we came right straight here, and--

Jim: Did you make full Colonel then?

Ted: No, I never made full Colonel. That's one of the unhappiness of my life. I was only recommended for full Colonel for four or five times, but there's a little story about that. A certain officer at Fort Sam Houston was going to show me how to do a neck dissection, and he was a somewhat conceited officer; I'll not mention his name.

Jim: He's probably dead now anyways.

Ted: He probably is. But he had this soldier with a great big swollen side on his neck, and I had looked at the chart quickly and noticed the kid was from a dairy state.

Jim: [Laughs] I know what's coming.

Ted: Uh-huh. And he was just about started on the skin to show me where the incision was to be made. I said, "Have you needled this?" He said, "No." I said, "Try it." Pure puss; tuberculosis.

Jim: Tuberculosis.

Ted: Yup, tuberculosis. And--

Jim: He was embarrassed.

Ted: He was embarrassed, and my efficiency report, which had been superior for nineteen years, dropped down to eighty something on a basis of a hundred and fifty. I was blocked totally; and so it just so happened that I came to Madison. My wife, first wife, was from Milwaukee also. I had known Arnold Jackson and Jimmy Jackson and Reg; in fact young Reg had been a classmate of mine. In fact, I did his pathology unit when we were in second year med school. I came up here and talked to Arnold, and by that time [blank tape] after I had been given a poor efficiency report I was made a Fellow of the American College of Surgeons. [laughs] So Arnold, when I went on up, he said, "Sure," and I was just talking to him back and forth. And then that was, oh, a few months before I called him and he said, "Do you have a job?" I said, "I'm supposed to be Chief of Service at _____ 5th Avenue in New York, but that would mean I live in Connecticut and that would be commuting daily. And Arnold says, "Madison would be a much nicer place to live." And it was, so I came here.

Jim: Where'd you get your ENT training?

Ted: Washington University in St. Louis.

Jim: Oh, my father had graduated from there.

Ted: Uh-huh. Well, I was, as I said before, I was Professor of Military Science and Tactics on the medical school side of the staff and a student in Barnes Hospital.

Jim: You mentioned that. When did you get out of the service?

Ted: I got out of the service on 31 September **[End of tape 1, Side B]** 1959.

Jim: You were in service all that time?

Ted: Yeah, I was in service for twenty years. It's interesting this way, of course. As you know, I am not a veteran; I am a retired regular Army officer. As such, I'm still not Army paid, which helpful to retirement. But the interesting thing was on September 17th, 1959, I had 19 years, three hundred and sixty-four days service. The next day, according to using reserve time, integration time, overseas time, I had twenty-eight years

service, which was helpful, and so I retired that month and came to Madison.

Jim: So yeah, then you did retire?

Ted: Yeah.

Jim: But you say you're still on Army pay, or do you just get disability?

Ted: It's retired pay.

Jim: Retired pay, yeah. You retired at seventy-five percent of your Lieutenant Colonel pay?

Ted: Seventy-two.

Jim: Seventy-two percent?

Ted: I think it's seventy-two.

Jim: That's a nice retirement package.

Ted: Oh yes, that helps.

Jim: What did you do after the war besides taking three years of Ear Nose and Throat?

Ted: I only had two years of that.

Jim: Oh; then where'd they send you?

Ted: Well, from there I went back overseas. My second tour in Germany was 1952, '3 and '4 at Kaiserslautern at the 2nd General Hospital. I set up the Ear, Nose and Throat Department of the 2nd General Hospital at Landstuhl.

Jim: So you finally got to be Colonel then?

Ted: No, never got to be full Colonel.

Jim: Oh, my goodness.

Ted: Nope.

Jim: You got there so fast and all of the sudden you came to a halt. [laughs]

- Ted: It came to a striking halt. Because as you know, "There'll be no promotion this side of the ocean." Do you remember that one?
- Jim: No, tell me about that?
- Ted: You never heard that?
- Jim: No, tell me about that.
- Ted: Well, that's just the standard thing among officers: you either got killed, a battlefield promotion, or nothin'. "There'll be no promotion this side of the ocean."
- Jim: You had to go overseas to get a promotion? Is that right?
- Ted: [Laughs] No, you didn't. For the regular officers that was the trouble; the reserve officers would be promoted. Both our battalion commanders when they got out of the service as reserve officers and called to active duty, they were promoted to full colonel when they were separated, but regulars, uh-uh.
- Jim: Why was that?
- Ted: That was the way the law was written. Similarly on the Social Security. Regulars had all the Social Security--what is it you need sixty quarters or so built up, the number of quarters necessary to be eligible for Social Security? Then Congress passed a law that those particular persons who used their active duty time for retirement pay could not duplicate it for Social Security, so there goes all my Social Security. So when I came to Madison here, I started all over again.
- Jim: When did you start at the Jackson Clinic?
- Ted: On October 1st, 1959. It was most interesting. I was asked to speak on--to give a talk, and I gave it on stapes mobilization. I had done quite a few hundred of them down with-- the fellow at Randolph Field in the Air Force was an old friend of mine, and between the two of us we worked out and did many stapes mobilizations in cases of conductive deafness. And so my first talk here in the Jackson Clinic was a talk on stapes mobilization. One of the men of the group there, Tom Ferrell [?], who had gone to Pennsylvania and graduated from school with me, came up to me and said, "Boy, Ted, I'm glad to see you. We heard that you'd been killed on Anzio." I hadn't been; I hadn't been there. So that's the way it was.
- Jim: So you enjoyed your practice in Madison?

- Ted: I have enjoyed it very much.
- Jim: All right.
- Ted: I have enjoyed also my retirement of twenty-five years
- Jim: You worked until what age there?
- Ted: Sixty-five.
- Jim: Sixty-five you retired?
- Ted: Well, I didn't want to retire; I wanted to stay on two to three days a week, but they already had hired somebody to take my place.
- Jim: Malpractice insurance is too expensive.
- Ted: Yeah, that plus the fact I'd had to have an audiometer, an audiologist, a receptionist, and a nurse for small local things.
- Jim: Did you join any veterans' organizations?
- Ted: No.
- Jim: And have you kept in touch with any of the men that you were in service with?
- Ted: Ah, the Colonel only; the other fellows, I kept in touch with a few of them for several years and that was about it.
- Jim: Right. So I think you've had a long career that has been very meaningful for you.
- Ted: I've had an interesting life.
- Jim: I would say so.
- Ted: That's what I would call it. Because when I was ten or twelve years old, I knew I was either going to be a doctor or I wanted to go to West Point. I was one of these kids that nowadays they'd have put 'em on Ritalin. My father said, "You can put him in school or put him in a cage, which one?" So I went to school, and as a result I graduated from--well, I entered the university at the age of sixteen, so I was fortunate in that I had two years, so I could take a third year pre-medicine and I could drop out a year teaching with Bast and Geist [?] anatomy, histology, neurology, and still be in my same right age group.

- Jim: Tell me about getting along with Teddy Bast.
- Ted: He was a wonderful person to get along with.
- Jim: Charming guy; all the students loved him.
- Ted: Theodore Heironymus Bast. One fellow in the class, Eddie Care, very bright student, wrote his full name out: Theodore Heironymous Bast, turned in a perfect paper but spelled Heironymus wrong. Dr. Bast took off one point. [laughs]
- Jim: Cute, yeah. He was well loved.
- Ted: Oh, he was very well loved.
- Jim: Geist went in the service. When I was in medical school, he wasn't there.
- Ted: He wasn't?
- Jim: No, he went into service and then left and went into practice, I think, but he never came back.
- Ted: Yeah. Well, he was in Madison, because on January 1st--oh dear, dear, dear--about '61, I had him for New Year's dinner.
- Jim: Oh my.
- Ted: I guess he had retired.
- Jim: Then there was the other fellow that was in that department.
- Ted: Otto Martinson.[?]
- Jim: He was in Anatomy, but I would see him in Neurology.
- Ted: Oh, in Neurology?
- Jim: It started with an H, but I can't think of his name, but --
- Ted: He wasn't there when I was there.
- Jim: I think that's correct.
- Ted: Dr. Bardeen was the Dean, and there is a person for whom I have a great deal of love, admiration and respect.

- Jim: Charles Bardeen?
- Ted: Charles Russell Bardeen.
- Jim: First Graduate of Johns Hopkins Medical School.
- Ted: He was?
- Jim: Yes sir.
- Ted: Then how come he was--I thought he was at Harvard, for a while at least, and was the personal friend of my uncle, Dr. William Thorndike, in Milwaukee.
- Jim: I don't know about that. I just know that Wisconsin received a lot of doctors from Johns Hopkins on the staff here at Wisconsin. Many of them had been like Ira Sisk, trained down at Johns Hopkins, and others, too, I can't recall right now, but there's quite a connection between Johns Hopkins and Wisconsin during those early years of the Wisconsin Medical School.
- Ted: Hmmm. Well I remember Dr. Bardeen calling me one time, long about in November or so, and he says, "I want you to come to Sunday night supper with me at my home." And so I went--had Sunday night supper with him. He said, "You know Hartridge, you were admitted in the top ten percent of the class; now you're failing. You know what your trouble is? You're trying to learn four courses: anatomy, histology, physiology, chemistry. But you're not. You're learning one course, the human body. When you flex a muscle, think of what occurs physiologically, contracts, shortens, what happens to the muscle cells." And you know, that made a tremendous difference for me, because my grades, which had been 37, 45, 54--80, 90, 100, 100, 100. [laughs] So, that's why I owe such a great deal to Dr. Bardeen.
- Jim: He's a grand fella, grand fella. All right sir I think we've done it.
- Ted: I think you've done more than I expected. You've got me --
- Jim: Talking. That's the idea.
- Ted: Talking.

[End of Interview]