

Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview With
EINAR H. INGMAN JR.

Infantryman and winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor, Korean War

2000

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Ingman, Einar H., Jr., (b.1929). Oral History Interview, 2000.

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

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

Video recording: 1 videocassette (ca. 80 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Abstract

Einar H. Ingman, Jr. entered service in 1948 in Kewaskum, Wisconsin. In this interview Ingman discusses his Korean War service with the 17th Regimental Combat Team of the 7th Infantry Division focusing his account on the action where he received a Congressional Medal of Honor and the medical care for wounds he received during that attack. Ingman talks about enlisting in the Army, training with the 101st Airborne, having his MOS changed to infantry, and duty in Japan. He comments on landing at Inchon (Korea), fighting up the Eastern and down the Western sides of Korea, and the psychological effects of combat on soldiers ability to remember their training. Ingman describes living conditions in the snow, lack of certain types of food, and cooking in the field. He recounts the fighting near Maltari (Korea) where he used a grenade to take out one enemy position and was wounded in the head and then continued took out a machine gun nest before falling from his injury. Evacuated to a field aid station, he comments on medical treatment. Later evacuated to Japan, Ingman mentions the medical care at that facility, transfer to the hospital at Battle Creek (Michigan) where he underwent reconstructive surgery, and the effects of his injury on his memory. Also touched upon is receiving the Medal of Honor from President Truman, stay in Washington D. C., and parade upon his return to Tomahawk, Wis. He also discusses the benefits which come with winning a Medal of Honor, the celebrity which comes with winning the medal, membership in the Medal of Honor Society, and attending reunions.

Biographical Sketch

Ingman (b. 1929) served with the 17th Regimental Combat Team of the 7th Infantry Division in the early part (1951) of the Korean War. For his actions near Maltari he was awarded one of the one hundred and thirty one Congressional Medal of Honors awarded during the Korean War.

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2000.

Transcribed by Nathan King, 2003.

Transcription reviewed by Abigail Miller, 2003

Transcript of Interview:

[Note the first part of this interview appears on the videocassette only, it has been transcribed from the videocassette]

McIntosh: There, you look terrific.

Ingman: Perfect huh? That's good.

McIntosh: Hollywood will love it. You entered the service again, when was that?

Ingman: November of '48.

McIntosh: And you joined a US Army?

Ingman: Army. Right.

McIntosh: Volunteer or enlisted?

Ingman: Volunter. RA [Regular Army].

McIntosh: USA. And where did they send you for your basic training?

Ingman: Camp Breckinridge. Kentucky, 101st Airborne.

McIntosh: Breckinridge.

Ingman: Kentucky.

McIntosh: And there you went there first? Your very first unit?

Ingman: Basic training.

McIntosh: You had your basic training there too?

Ingman: Eight weeks.

McIntosh: Then you went right into the airborne from that?

Ingman: No. Then I went to Japan.

McIntosh: That was just as a regular grunt soldier?

[Note the interview on the User Copy begins midway through the following statement by Ingman]

Ingman: Everything changed when I left the United States. I never knew this till time came that if you're an enlisted man if you leave the United States, they can change your MOS number when you leave the United States and sent you to a far east command, where I did – Japan – and put you into the infantry.

McIntosh: No discussion?

Ingman: Yeah. That's because the newcomers don't know what the laws are today.

McIntosh: Oh, I see.

Ingman: After I was in Japan two years, infantry – I was an infantryman, 100% - I was talking with a sergeant that came into our outfit from Germany – he was an enlisted man making a career out of the service. He was a pretty old man already serving at the end of World War II, toward the end of it. And he said, "You know," he said, "You could have demanded your MOS enlisted man, or be shipped back to the states." He says, "Nobody tells these troops anything about that." And if you're an enlisted man, they've got to give you what you enlisted for. See, my whole deal was to enlist in the service and better my trade as a mechanic, so I was supposed to be in the motorpool. I never got near it. All I did was ride on the back of the trucks [laughs]. Strictly infantryman.

McIntosh: Right. But you were in the Airborne. Didn't you have Airborne training?

Ingman: Little bit of it. But then went overseas.

McIntosh: And that was all forgotten?

Ingman: That was all forgotten.

McIntosh: So you never got to the point of making any jumps or anything?

Ingman: Nope.

McIntosh: So then you were just a regular soldier, then?

Ingman: That's right, yeah. Yeah. Before the Korean War started, we started gliding – infantryman gliding. Up in northern Honchu, Japan, they had a camp that was strictly for gliding training. And we would go up – and there I jumped, once. They raised me up with a –

McIntosh: In a tower?

Ingman: Tower. And then let you loose. That was the only jump I ever made. But we were in the process of gliding with these gliders, where a plane takes you up and then turns you loose, you know. And that was a lot of fun. But then when the Korean War came along, that all stopped – right now. But the only reason that we were going to do that, and I'm

surprised they didn't go back to doing it again, is we didn't know it until that time that Russia – every troop they have in service knows how to jump and glide.

McIntosh: They all –

Ingman: They all do. They all do. And we felt that our military people should be able to do the same thing. And that was the process which started, but then it ended, and it has never been continued again, and I don't know why. Why they didn't ever complete that.

McIntosh: So when the Korean War started, they just needed people on the line.

Ingman: On the ground.

McIntosh: On the ground.

Ingman: We only had airborne paratroopers, which was the 11th Airborne in Japan, in Tokyo. They were the jumpers. Jumped behind the lines, and that. You know, tree jumpers.

McIntosh: So the Korean War started how soon? When did they ship you over to Korea?

Ingman: With others, some of the first ones into it – into Korea from Japan. We went in through Pusan, by ship from Japan. And I think we stayed there about a week. Then we made the beachhead landing at Inchon.

McIntosh: I'll bet.

Ingman: And moved up and took Seoul. Moved up out of Seoul.

McIntosh: What regiment were you in, then?

Ingman: 7th Division.

McIntosh: 7th Division.

Ingman: 17th Regimental Combat Team.

McIntosh: 7th Division, 17th Combat Team?

Ingman: Yeah. The Buffalo Regiment. That's what we are. We are buffaloes.

McIntosh: [jokingly] You're not like the Buffalo Soldiers?

Ingman: Fighters.

McIntosh: You know about the Buffalo Soldiers?

Ingman: Oh yeah?

McIntosh: They have the Black outfit.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: Anyway, so, the 7th Division. And when did you run into combat for the first time? At Inchon?

Ingman: Yeah, right at – we made the beach landing at Inchon.

McIntosh: Did you see that hospital ship there? That was my ship there – the Haven.

Ingman: My God – it seems like we did see a ship there.

McIntosh: Right. A big white ship. That was mine.

Ingman: Oh, it was white. Yeah.

McIntosh: Yeah. Right.

Ingman: That's where you were sitting there? Out though, so you didn't get hung up?

McIntosh: No, that's so when you got hung up, they brought you back and we put you back together.

Ingman: When the barges –

McIntosh: Oh yeah.

Ingman: Water barges come in –

McIntosh: Well that tide was so –

Ingman: Tide.

McIntosh: Fierce.

Ingman: Oh yeah. We had –

McIntosh: That was a real problem because if you got caught in it, they'd sweep you out to sea.

Ingman: We had to sit out till it was safe to go in. Then we made our beachhead landing.

McIntosh: So, when did you first contact the enemy, then, in that landing?

Ingman: The biggest amount we contacted was – it seemed like on the outside of that little town right there. And then we boarded an old train that was sitting there, and we found a driver for it. And we rode the train – the boxcars of that train – up I don't know how far. We didn't go too darn far and the train went off the track. The bridge was blown out, and then we walked from then. We hit little enemy along the way, but then when we hit Seoul –

McIntosh: You probably –

Ingman: We didn't go into Seoul. When we hit Seoul, we stayed on the outside. Because I can remember now laying out on – in the rice paddies all night. But the rice paddies were dry, you know. There wasn't much in 'em. We could lay with no problem. And we spread out and we laid there. And you used to see the big planes come over with big spotlights lookin' for us – looking for troops. They never did spot us. We were laying on the ground, kind of blended right in with the grass. We kept our rifles tucked in beside us – no reflections of any kind. Then we attacked at Seoul the next morning. The Marines had tried to take Seoul, and they couldn't take it. So they were on the opposite side of the city, and when we come in, we walk right through there. But the Marines got the credit for it.

McIntosh: Huh.

Ingman: They set up their headquarters right in Seoul, on the outskirts of Seoul.

McIntosh: Now at this time, were you a rifleman, or did you have more responsibility than that?

Ingman: I was a rifleman at that time. I was a corporal.

McIntosh: Corporal.

Ingman: And then later on, I think the second night. We went all the way through –

McIntosh: Across the –

Ingman: Seoul. All the way up to the Manchurian border overlooking China.

McIntosh: Oh, well that's – that took quite a while. That was several months before you did that.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. We went partly up into North Korea by troops walking and attacking. And then we boarded ship, and then we went up to – God, I can't remember. Where the big dams are up in North Korea.

McIntosh: Chosin. [Note, this is alternately spelled Chongjin]

Ingman: Chosin. Chosin Reservoir. There we hit the land again, and then we kept right on moving. Right up into – to the Manchurian border.

McIntosh: The Yellow River?

Ingman: Well, the point of Korea, you know, on the map, shoves up into the point, well we were right up in there. We stood and watched the Chinese –

McIntosh: Across the river?

Ingman: Yeah, walking their shorelines, loaded. They were afraid that we were going to cross. I don't know if they had got some word that after we took that, we were going to go across, or what. I dunno. But anyways, we were up there, and the rest of the divisions in the Marine Corps, they were supposed to close in, and they got struck by the Chinese. They'd come across.

McIntosh: And did that leave you –

Ingman: And that left us up in that point. And we God damn near got wiped out completely.

McIntosh: That's what I'm saying, because they cut you off, then?

Ingman: Oh, damn near did. They didn't get us cut off, but they God damn near got us wiped. We got out of there just in time.

McIntosh: You slid back down the east side of Korea, then? Along the shore?

Ingman: Yeah. Sure. And when we –

McIntosh: You got down to Hungnam, then?

Ingman: We hooked up – I mean, pulled up to a checkpoint. And our company commander went in and reported, "Easy Company." And he said, "We got word that you were all wiped out in North Korea, up in the point. You couldn't get down here." The company commander said, "Well, you just go out and take a look at the initialing on the bumpers of them trucks."

McIntosh: How big was your outfit at this time?

Ingman: God, I don't know what it was.

McIntosh: Roughly what? 5000?

Ingman: I would say roughly 5000 of 'em.

McIntosh: And you hadn't suffered too many casualties at that time?

Ingman: Quite a few.

McIntosh: You had.

Ingman: Up there, yeah. Yeah, we left quite a few guys lay there.

McIntosh: What type of medical facility did you bring with you there?

Ingman: The regular medics. That's all we had.

McIntosh: And an aid station, and that's all?

Ingman: That's all.

McIntosh: No hospital?

Ingman: No. No! Hospitals were tents.

McIntosh: Which had docs?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: So it's just a battalion aid station, really is –

Ingman: That's what it was. Because when I got shot, the last time, when I got hit in the head, I laid in a field hospital. There was nothing but a – I think it was just a tent. A big tent deal. That's where I stayed for a week before they could even fly me back to Japan.

McIntosh: That's what I was going to ask you next is how they got the severe casualties out when you were pinned down in a corner of Korea. They flew 'em out?

Ingman: Yeah, that's the only way they could get 'em out of there.

McIntosh: Because they had you blocked.

Ingman: See, then they flew right from there right to Japan.

McIntosh: Oh yeah. That was really – that was really cold, then.

Ingman: 35 to 40 below zero. Slept outside all the time in your sleeping bag. Laid right in the snowbanks.

McIntosh: What about eating in those circumstances? Just the chocolate bars, and that's about it?

Ingman: Canned – canned food. You eat it cold. Or if you had time, there's some place where you – we had these little burner deals.

McIntosh: Sterno.

Ingman: Yeah, like World War II troops had, that you could just break a little hole in the center and light it with a match, and you could lay your can of chow right on top of it, and it would heat it up for you. We did a lot of times, moving on trucks, sitting on a truck, we'd open a can of chow, and how come the God damn trucks didn't catch fire, I don't know. When you think of it, all these God damn little burners on the – sitting on the floor, and guys had –

McIntosh: Nobody paying much attention –

Ingman: Never even worried about it. Didn't worry about it.

McIntosh: Did your outfit carry any heavy guns?

Ingman: Oh yeah, yeah.

McIntosh: What –

Ingman: Machine guns.

McIntosh: Nothing heavier than that?

Ingman: See, our 4th platoon was heavy weapons.

McIntosh: And that was .60 caliber or –

Ingman: Yeah, machine guns and stuff. And then we had our backups with the heavy fire. They were truck – great big cannons that they pulled behind the trucks.

McIntosh: How about mortars? Did you have those too?

Ingman: We had mortars, yeah.

McIntosh: Big ones, or?

Ingman: Not real big. Maybe middle size.

McIntosh: 60mm.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. But we never had 'em with us. They were always in the back. They came in if we needed it. Like the day I got shot. Oh, I should say, when we came back out of North Korea, came down a ways, and then we boarded ship again. And then went back down –

McIntosh: To Pusan?

Ingman: To Pusan. Then we started moving back up again on the opposite coast.

McIntosh: On the west coast?

Ingman: Yeah, on the west coast.

McIntosh: Oh, back towards Seoul, then? OK.

Ingman: And –

McIntosh: This was in the spring then, of '51?

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. Because I got – well, it was winter yet, because I got shot January – January 26th, I think.

McIntosh: Of '51?

Ingman: Of '51. That's when I got shot.

McIntosh: But you were on the west coast by that time, you said.

Ingman: Yeah, we were moving back up.

McIntosh: So what was the circumstance?

Ingman: Where I - ?

McIntosh: Got shot.

Ingman: You'll have to ask my wife. I can't – I never know.

McIntosh: Is that right? I've seen it written.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. But she's pretty good at that. She –

McIntosh: She's memorized the –

Ingman: I just can't - I never can remember where it was. It was a little town, though. All I know is I was an advance platoon. I was then an acting platoon sergeant.

McIntosh: I see.

Ingman: And we moved up – we patrolled ahead of the companies, and we attacked at anything that was in front of us. Crews along the sides of the mountains, and anybody in foxholes, we shot 'em. [unintelligible] a lot of them were taken anyway prisoner. It was a dirty

shame – these people were so doped that they didn't even know what the heck they were doing. If the dope would wear off, then people would run – turn around and run. They'd out of our range. And I can remember one – they had trenches dug along the sides of the mountains – they would never come up on the ground. They could maneuver back and forth right in the ground and trenches dug. And we came on one of these North Koreans, and they come up out of the foxhole, out of this trench, and I told one of my men, "Shoot him in the head." He didn't know what the hell he was doing. He just stood there, and the blood just poured out of his head. We shot him right here.

McIntosh: He didn't fall?

Ingman: Never fell. That's how badly these people were doped. He stood right there until the blood stopped, and then he fell.

McIntosh: That's *unusual*.

Ingman: Ain't it? That proved right there that they were being doped so badly –

McIntosh: With what? Do you know?

Ingman: I don't know what they were using. Whatever it was, it numbed their body so that if they got shot, they didn't fall down.

McIntosh: Did you have any attacks by a mass charging of Chinese?

Ingman: Well, I think the day that I got hit, when I got shot, I think there was Chinese in there. In that –

McIntosh: With the trumpets and blowing and –

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. In that group, I think there was. Because when we hit the enemy, we were at the bottom, and we start moving out. Everybody – we spread out. And everybody start moving up that mountain, and we got about halfway and I halted everybody because the fire was too hard. It would have killed everybody. Then I had a young lieutenant had just graduated from officer's candidate, and he had the radio. And I told him to call back for heavy fire along the top of the mountain. And you know, that man, he couldn't operate a radio. I never did forget about –

McIntosh: He hadn't had that in school?

Ingman: He was so shook up that he couldn't, you know.

McIntosh: Oh, it wasn't he wasn't taught, he's forgotten it all, or just –

Ingman: He just couldn't do nothing. So I took the radio from him. I called back for heavy fire, and we stayed put right in that one position and left all the fire going over us. They hit

everything in front of us. And then when that stopped, then we moved out. And when I got to the top of the mountain, I had what – nine men left? Out of 37. The rest were all shot or wounded, or one of the two. I can only remember driving one back, laying – propping him up against a tree, and I told him, “Just lay cool, and the medics will pick you up.” And he was shot right through the neck, and couldn’t talk at all. And I think it was right through this area that he was shot. And I God damn near got it right there.

McIntosh: You mean, you were hit, or it came right next to you?

Ingman: Came right close to me, right in that area. I was, when I was pulling this guy back to prop him on the side, and holy cripe the shells were flying around me. I lost my helmet.

McIntosh: Mostly mortars here?

Ingman: Rifle. Rifle fire. And then I had to go back and get my helmet. Hoo! I didn’t know if I was going to make it or not. I didn’t want to go without it, you know. So, I did get it, then we started moving on – moving up. And we got to the top and I had nine – I think it was nine men left. And I knew – I just had a feeling that there was a North Korean or a Chinese –

McIntosh: Just missed, or –

Ingman: Just over the ridge where we were at. So I grabbed some grenades from some of the guys that were shot, and I threw a grenade. And, I don’t know, it must have not come close enough to kill him, because then when I took my rifle and I raised up to shoot, soon as I raised up, he shot me right in the head.

McIntosh: How far away?

Ingman: God, I don’t know. Probably just maybe –

McIntosh: Ten feet?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: Jesus, how could he miss their head? You’re lucky he wasn’t a very good shot.

Ingman: Oh, I guess so. So as soon as he shot me, I killed him. I shot him right there. Hip-shooting. I was good at hip-shooting.

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: I took a lot of that training in Japan.

McIntosh: At hip-shooting?

Ingman: Hip-shooting.

McIntosh: With an M1?

Ingman: M1. We took our M1s in Korea, filed the trigger's spring, and when you pull the trigger back, she fire automatic. You had to release it if you just wanted to shoot one shell. We made 'em automatic so that when we got where we were in a jam like that, like him, I just "BRRT!" That was it, just like a machine gun, you know. That's the way we had them M1's all fixed. We did it ourselves. They wasn't like that till we got to Korea, and when we got in combat, we wanted something –

McIntosh: A little better.

Ingman: That would fire more shells at a time. And so that's the way they were set up. And then, after -

McIntosh: You were not unconscious then, right after that?

Ingman: No. Never knocked me down.

McIntosh: Oh, it didn't knock you down?

Ingman: No, no.

McIntosh: Well you just felt some heat? Is that – and then, of course, the blood?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: And you couldn't see out of that eye.

Ingman: Yeah. I don't know – well that eye wasn't blind right away. I evidently – this eye went blind after a while.

McIntosh: I see.

Ingman: There was no attention to that eye until I was back in Japan, and back in Michigan. Percy Jones Army Hospital, in Michigan.

McIntosh: So, anyway, you were struck and then suddenly he was gone, and then what?

Ingman: Then I moved out. I just kept right on going. I knocked out one machine gun nest myself, headed for the next machine gun nest, knocked that one out. And I headed for the third one when I passed out.

McIntosh: Yeah, that's what I'm saying. By this time, the effects of that bullet –

Ingman: Yeah, in the meantime, they called for a helicopter. Let's see. Soon as I fell, they loaded me. I didn't know nothing. This is what the guys told me after. And they flew me back to the field hospital.

McIntosh: In Pusan, or further –

Ingman: Someplace up in there where we were at, someplace there was a field hospital where they could land helicopters right there, I guess.

McIntosh: So, not much they can do for you other than just cover that wound.

Ingman: That's all they did was just cover it –

McIntosh: Put a bandage on.

Ingman: Covered my head, and after 4 days, 5 days in the field hospital they were finally able to fly me back to Japan. And then –

McIntosh: Did you eat? In those first few days?

Ingman: Liquid foods.

McIntosh: That's about all, because your jaw was –

Ingman: Good thing I had a tooth out right here.

McIntosh: Oh, so you put the –

Ingman: I stuck it in through there.

McIntosh: The straw in there.

Ingman: And I suck it. That's the only way I could eat it.

McIntosh: Because otherwise your jaw was so swollen, and –

Ingman: She was tight, tight shut.

McIntosh: Is that right?

Ingman: Couldn't move it at all.

McIntosh: I'll be darned.

Ingman: The joint here was all destroyed, and then it just clamped tight, and I couldn't move my mouth at all. And so then when I got back to Japan, they got everything taken care of. But they paid no attention to my eye at the time.

McIntosh: Oh yeah.

Ingman: Because if they would have, I wouldn't have lost my eye. But they didn't until I was in Battle Creek, Michigan. They gave me an eye test, and I told 'em before, I said, "I can't see out of that eye." So then they tested it, and they – had a hole in the back of the eye. Concussion, they said, it was the concussion of the bullet.

McIntosh: What'd they do for you – when you went to Japan, did they do any surgery, then, on this?

Ingman: Just patched everything up.

McIntosh: Just closed the wounds?

Ingman: Closed my ear, and –

McIntosh: Alright, just didn't do any reconstructive stuff –

Ingman: They didn't do nothin on my face at all till I got back to Battle Creek.

McIntosh: Did you go from Japan to Battle Creek?

Ingman: Japan, I went to Hawaii, Hawaii to California, California to Texas, and Texas to Battle Creek.

McIntosh: And that took what? Five days?

Ingman: I don't know. I don't know how long it took. But anyways, when I was in Japan, the commanding general that was in charge of all head injuries, he had seen me in Japan – I mean in Korea, which I didn't know. And then before I was scheduled to ship out of there, he called to have me brought over to the – I was in the annex of the Tokyo General, and he wanted me over to the Tokyo General Hospital. So, picked me up one morning, took me over there. He asked me, "Soldier, how do you feel?" I said, "I feel good, but I can't remember nothin." "*Holy man.*" All I can remember him saying is, "I want to see his X-rays right *now.*" And they X-rayed me quick, and brought me back into his office and he looked at the X-rays and said, "Boy, schedule this man for surgery tomorrow morning at 5 o'clock." I think it was around 5 in the morning. Transferred me, and brought my personal things, which wasn't much, from the annex to the general hospital, and they started getting me ready for surgery. Shaved my whole head. I had a moustache, like we – curls. This one was gone, but they never did take the other one off, so then I told 'em, "Take that one off too. I'll look like hell with one on there." And then they shaved my whole head, and they operated the next morning. You know, they couldn't even get me to sleep. Boy, I tell you, they did some running. They put the

penicillin in my arm, and I laid on the operating table I don't know how long. It seemed like a long time. And somebody coming up said, "How do you feel?" I said, "I feel good. Doin' nothin'." [makes incredulous sound] He went out of there, I tell you. There was two of them come back, and they had a needle, and they shoved that needle right in my neck and throat. I was gone then. I was gone right now. That was too long already. Then they operated right away. But right after that operation, the next day, things were startin' to get a little better, you know.

McIntosh: In what way?

Ingman: That I knew who I was. And I had mail, but I couldn't read it.

McIntosh: You mean, you couldn't – looking at the letter, the written word didn't mean anything to you?

Ingman: Yeah, not a thing. And he said, "Well, that's something you're gonna have to put up with." He said, "It may come back, may not." So then, when I was in Battle Creek, they kept checking on me all the time. They asked me how I felt, and I said, "I feel good, but," I said, "my memory is just no good." I said, "It comes and goes all the time." And he said, "We can't do nothin' about it. You had too much brain damage on one side of the brain." The memory bank on this side was damaged too bad.

McIntosh: Did he tell you what he did when he opened your skull?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: What, did he drain out the fluid?

Ingman: Drain.

McIntosh: You took subdural is what you had, I'm sure, that's –

Ingman: And took all the bone out.

McIntosh: Yeah, but he took the pressure off, that's –

Ingman: Took all the pressure off of the brain.

McIntosh: See, if you had some bleeding in there, that's what he was in a hurry –

Ingman: Boy, sure. So – and then it started getting better, but.

[End Tape 1 Side A]

McIntosh: Over the years, it's gradually gotten better, has it? Or did it reach a point –

Ingman: I think it's stayed the – it's stayed the same. Like, what I'm doing here today, tomorrow will be all gone.

McIntosh: Really?

Ingman: Oh yeah. But it'll come back.

McIntosh: Oh.

Ingman: When we start talking, then it comes back.

McIntosh: When your wife mentions that Gail and I were here, then it'll –

Ingman: Then it'll come back. Names –

McIntosh: That's strange.

Ingman: I cannot remember names at all. Completely. I can know the person, but I don't know their name.

McIntosh: You mean, these are people you've known all your life?

Ingman: Yeah. Just gone.

McIntosh: Nothin' there.

Ingman: Yeah. And I can sit down and read sometimes – sometimes I can sit down and read the paper, lay the paper down and look at something, and come back and I can't read the paper at all. It's gone completely. And I can say to myself, "I was just reading, but I can't read now."

McIntosh: That's weird.

Ingman: Yeah. I can't write. Very little.

McIntosh: Well, you wrote your name –

Ingman: Yeah, very little things, but to write a article or something, I can't do it. I know I could – you know, you feel like you can do it, but the words –

McIntosh: Don't come.

Ingman: That's right. Between - the brain and my hands don't cooperate at all.

McIntosh: Oh, that's terrible. Yeah.

Ingman: So it's just something you've gotta put up with. There's nothing they can do about it. I was surprised that I handled the mail near as long as I did. I handled all the mail comin' in and out of the company. Because nobody ever bothered me. If I'm relaxed on my own, I can do better than if I got somebody with me.

McIntosh: That's what you say, when you try to a group and try to speak before a group, you couldn't handle that.

Ingman: I can't do it.

McIntosh: But one on one, the two of us – no problems.

Ingman: It's alright.

McIntosh: That's really bizarre.

Ingman: That's something. When there's a big group of people, then I can't do it.

McIntosh: Forget it.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: Tell me about getting your medal. How – when did you find out about that, the honor?

Ingman: See, I was in Battle Creek at the time, and the commander of the hospital had the nurse or ward [unintelligible] bring me down to his office. And he said, "I just got notice in Washington that you're gonna receive the Congressional Medal of Honor." And it seems like, - oh then he said, "We gotta get you a uniform." Because I had none.

McIntosh: That's right, all your stuff was in Korea.

Ingman: Japan.

McIntosh: In Japan.

Ingman: Sure, all in footlockers in Japan.

McIntosh: And God knows where that was.

Ingman: Yeah. When I finally got my stuff out of the footlocker, it was in Texas – in a warehouse.

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: A lot of guys never got their stuff back.

McIntosh: Oh, I know it.

Ingman: I've told a lot of guys what to do because –

McIntosh: If you don't say anything, you don't ever see it.

Ingman: No. Your footlockers will stay laying in the warehouse. When I was in Washington D.C., I mentioned that to one of the generals, and he said, "I'll get your footlocker." That's when I found out that all our footlockers were shipped back from Japan, and stored in a big warehouse in Texas.

McIntosh: From your Regimental Combat Team.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. And so, I got my stuff. Nothing military. I didn't get –

McIntosh: Personal things.

Ingman: All my personal stuff, I got. And I got buddies right now – two of 'em right over in Antigo, have never seen their footlocker. And I told 'em, write the Department of the Army in Washington D.C., and they will get you your footlocker. You won't get the footlocker. They chop the lock off. I got even the lock. They just cut the rivets right off, you know, and then put it all in a box and shipped it to you. So I got my stuff, and so I tell these guys all they got to do is contact Washington. Your footlockers are laying in a warehouse. So –

McIntosh: These guys in Antigo – were they with you in Korea?

Ingman: Oh yeah. One right in Antigo – well, both of them over there were with me in Japan.

McIntosh: Are they still alive?

Ingman: Oh yeah.

McIntosh: I should be interviewing them. Were they in the field with you?

Ingman: Yeah, the one in Antigo, he was in F Company. I was in E Company, in Japan. And the other one, he joined us shortly in Japan, just before we moved out to Korea. He was with me. I don't remember their names, but Margelle's knows, and their addresses, I guess. They've came up – I've –

McIntosh: When we're through here, I'll get the names.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: And I'll speak to them, because maybe I should be interviewing them if they've had an interesting experience.

Ingman: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. They went through what I did all the way.

McIntosh: So the commander in the hospital says, “We’ve gotta get you a uniform.”

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: So how’d they go about that?

Ingman: So I went out to the camp, out of Battle Creek, Michigan army camp. I don’t remember no more what the name of that camp was.

McIntosh: Something in there.

Ingman: And they got me a uniform, got me all set up so the next day or so – I don’t know how close it was to the date, I contacted my mother and dad. They flew, I think in a military plane, but they were flown to Washington.

McIntosh: And they had to fly you down there.

Ingman: Oh yeah, they flew me from Battle Creek down there, air – military Air Force plane. And put me in a hotel.

McIntosh: With your parents, too?

Ingman: They were in a different hotel, but they were there. And then the next – well, it was a couple days later, it seemed like, they went down to some supply building and got me a N.C.O. dress uniform, the light tan uniform. And they had that tailored for me because I lost a lot of weight, right down to a 29 waist. Same waist that I went into the service with. And 148 pounds – I went into the army 148, and when I came back I was 148 pounds. So then they got that all fixed up, and then it was a couple days after that, my parents were there. We went to the White House. On the front lawn of the White House, they had this ceremony, and presented me with a medal. And there was three other ones, also.

McIntosh: And this is President – ?

Ingman: Truman.

McIntosh: Truman.

Ingman: President Truman.

McIntosh: Did he chat with you at all?

Ingman: Just a minute, you know.

McIntosh: Where you're from,

[both talking at the same time]

Ingman: And he most likely read the whole history of what I did, and everything, so. So then, after that, it was all over. They gave me a thousand dollars to spend. I had a lieutenant assigned to me. Each Medal of Honor holder had a lieutenant assigned to him that knew the city, knew the entertainment places.

McIntosh: And that's what the thousand dollars was for?

Ingman: Yeah, to spend there in that one week.

McIntosh: With your parents.

Ingman: Yeah. That was there.

McIntosh: What year was this, do you recall? '52?

Ingman: '51.

McIntosh: Oh, it's still in '51?

Ingman: Oh yeah. July 5th.

McIntosh: It must have been '52.

Ingman: Of '51.

McIntosh: Of '51, OK.

Ingman: See, I got shot in February of '51 –

McIntosh: OK.

Ingman: And then I was awarded July 5th.

McIntosh: OK.

Ingman: And at the end of the week, then we flew back.

McIntosh: And you went back to Battle Creek.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: What did they do for you, medically, in Battle Creek?

Ingman: Oh, there I had 20 –

McIntosh: Must have had a lot of plastic surgery.

Ingman: 21 operations.

McIntosh: For your face.

Ingman: All transplants of bone. I got both of my hips, they took bone off, put that in my face.

McIntosh: To reconstruct your jaw.

Ingman: And I – 14 inches of muscle taken out of my legs, and they strung that through my whole face. It was tied – they put one down through here, and they tied all these strings of muscle –

McIntosh: Tendons. Heh.

Ingman: And I think they said they'd take it out – they strip it, and then they put it in a liquid before they use a regular big needle. They froze my face, kept me awake, and then they run down along my nose in. Around my eye, they put a gold wire to hold that eye in, and bring that bottom lid up as far as they did there. But that had to be done because you could lay your finger right in there. It laid that far away from the eye.

McIntosh: There's so much space there.

Ingman: So they had to put a wire around that. And over the top in here, I don't know what the deal was, but that was all one piece that they put in. Then they put this bone in –

McIntosh: From your hip, or your shin, or your leg bone

Ingman: They took that out. And then they put one in along here, around my mouth, to here. And then they run a strand from here to here, and they come in here to here it raised up. I don't know – there's so many. In here, they put a piece across.

McIntosh: You had a nice result.

Ingman: It came out good. It sure did.

McIntosh: This is what I used to – after I left Korea and I came back to the Great Lakes, I was doing plastic surgery.

Ingman: Oh.

McIntosh: I rebuilt a couple heroes.

Ingman: Oh yeah?

McIntosh: Yeah.

Ingman: Oh, you were a doctor then, huh?

McIntosh: Mm-hmm.

Ingman: Well, yeah.

McIntosh: I know about reconstructive surgery.

Ingman: You did a lot of it, then. They said they could have took my ear.

McIntosh: I was gonna say, what was left of your ear after your injury? How much of – I see now, but is it?

Ingman: It's there.

McIntosh: That's not your ear, is it?

Ingman: Yeah!

McIntosh: It came back from where? That's the original?

Ingman: This here, should be up here.

McIntosh: Right.

Ingman: They just brought that down.

McIntosh: Then you had to put cartilage in it, too. I see they did that.

Ingman: Sewed it together.

McIntosh: It's a nice result. And it's hard work. Ears are hard.

Ingman: Oh yeah, I know.

McIntosh: Because they bend in so many different angles, and they've got cartilage in there and there's no real blood supply.

Ingman: That's right. Yeah.

McIntosh: It's very difficult.

Ingman: I imagine. They told me after I was awarded, "You want that ear made to this?" I said, "No." I said, "I can't hear out of it anyways." So I said, "Why monkey around with cuttin that all open again? Just leave it alone." Because so many things are done and they end up taking it all out anyways because it didn't grow or anything, you know. So I just as soon not have anything done.

McIntosh: Other than the – the only problems you have now then if you get any pressure in that soft area up there, you get a lot of pain from that.

Ingman: Oh yeah.

McIntosh: But that's your only real medical concern now?

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. That's the main thing. They didn't – really didn't expect me to live as long as I lived. When I –

McIntosh: Well, they certainly didn't in Korea.

Ingman: When I came home – over in Battle Creek, they said, just before I got out, they said "We would advise you not to get married for at least five years. In the meantime, you don't know what's going to happen." So, I thought, "well, I'll just take it as it comes." And I told my wife at the time – we were single – and I said, "It's up to you. If you want to get married, we'll get married."

McIntosh: Take a chance.

Ingman: We ain't gonna wait.

McIntosh: Sure. So you got married right away.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: Of course. I don't know why they said that. That's dumb.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. July 5th of '52.

McIntosh: Especially if they have no idea.

Ingman: Yeah. '52 we got married, the 5th of July, so we always know when our wedding anniversary is. Always on the 5th of July. And so, I've never had any problems. I spent a long time in the VA Hospital here.

McIntosh: When you came back?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: What did they do for you?

Ingman: Operated.

McIntosh: Oh, some more plastic surgery?

Ingman: Did here, kept growing shut. I was going – I went to the VA –

McIntosh: In Milwaukee?

Ingman: At Wood, for many, many years, every three months. And I kept watching. All of a sudden, one day, it would be closed tight. Gotta operate on it right away. And I said, “You’ve gotta have an open channel there.”

McIntosh: Yeah, but you can’t hear out of it.

Ingman: No, but you’ve still got to have an open channel for the stuff that comes out –

McIntosh: Oh yeah.

Ingman: In the ear.

McIntosh: So, is it draining off, then?

Ingman: Yeah, all the time. And so then they go in and they just cut a channel in there, cut it open in a circle, and then they made a plastic mold and they put it right in there.

McIntosh: Plugged that.

Ingman: To hold it open, with a hole in the center, and that would hold it open.

McIntosh: Yeah, you were draining spinal fluid out of there, weren’t you?

Ingman: Yeah, sure, oh yeah.

McIntosh: I mean, it’s like water coming out.

Ingman: All the time. Oh, my eye?

McIntosh: No, your ear.

Ingman: Oh yeah, it *used* to.

McIntosh: That’s what I mean. See, that’s draining the spinal fluid.

Ingman: Is that what it is?

McIntosh: Yeah. That's why they had to plug it up.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: And that's why they were worried about you living, because if you got an infection in there. You see, you would have right in your brain, you have an infection then your chances of surviving –

Ingman: Kill you, yeah.

McIntosh: That's what they were worried about. I couldn't figure that out for a while, but now I realize.

Ingman: So they just kept cutting it open –

McIntosh: Until they plugged it and they closed it for good?

Ingman: And finally, I don't have anymore problems.

McIntosh: Well, they plugged it [chuckles].

Ingman: Yeah, it don't drain or nothin' anymore. It used to drain a little bit. I used to go to bed always with cotton in the ear.

McIntosh: And it would always be moist in the morning.

Ingman: But now I don't put nothin' in there. The only thing I have to do now, with this eye, I just got a tube of –

McIntosh: Ointment.

Ingman: Ointment. And every night I have to put some – fold the lid and put some in there to keep that eye lubricated during the night.

McIntosh: That's because you can't tear in there.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: No tears.

Ingman: Well, there's – drops of water will come out of that eye.

McIntosh: Oh, they will?

Ingman: Oh yeah, the problem is down in here, always. At different times –

[recording stops, then resumes]

Ingman: Then in the morning I wash it, but always at night I always put some of this salve in there. That keeps that eye lubricated all night, and I don't have any problems. When I don't do that, then the next day, that eye really bothers me. Boy, I put eye drops in there, and it takes a long time before it gets to the point where I can stand it. A lot of times I go over with a cover over it – can't stand the light.

McIntosh: Oh, really.

Ingman: Yeah. But now it ain't too bad. When I drive now, I wear dark sunglasses.

McIntosh: You don't need an eye patch?

Ingman: No. But I'm gonna get myself one when I go to the VA.

McIntosh: I think that'd be wise of you.

Ingman: I had a couple of them and I don't know what happened to them. But I want to get one for out in the garage so that when I weld, I put it on. Because when I weld, you know I'm wearing –

McIntosh: That's awful bright.

Ingman: I'm wearing them darkest glasses I can get for welding. That still affects that eye.

McIntosh: Yeah, I would think it was –

Ingman: So then I'm gonna patch it out, you know.

McIntosh: Yeah, you don't have depth perception anyways, so you might as well –

Ingman: It don't make any difference. You can cover it up. That way the flashing light from the welder won't bother any.

McIntosh: So after you got home, what? Did you get a job at the paper –

Ingman: Oh yeah, I went to work at the paper mill. Started out an hour late. Then they had a big lay-off.

McIntosh: In the mail room, you said?

Ingman: Yeah. No, I started in the mill at first.

McIntosh: Oh, in the mill. What did you do there, in the mill?

Ingman: Oh, directed traffic in the wood area - spot trucks and that. And at first when I first started there, I was just a general worker. Worked at a little bit of everyplace. Then I got put into the wood area where all I did spot trucks, and see that they were dumped right. And then they had a big layoff. Of course, I didn't have no seniority because I hadn't worked there before I went into the service. So then I got laid off. Of course then the next day, the second day, the plant manager called me up and he said, "I want you to come down." I didn't know what then. And he said "I'm gonna put you on salary," he said, "Put you back on the job."

McIntosh: Good.

Ingman: A lifetime job.

McIntosh: Hey.

Ingman: He said, "You will never be laid off."

McIntosh: Well, that's nice.

Ingman: So, that's what I did, then, thirty –

McIntosh: Thirty-some years.

Ingman: Thirty-two years.

McIntosh: We raised a family of how many kids?

Ingman: We've got seven.

McIntosh: Seven kids?

Ingman: And they're all gone.

McIntosh: So how many grandchildren do you have, Einar?

Ingman: Uh, let's see –

McIntosh: [laughs] Is that a tough question?

Ingman: Two, three, four, five, six. Yeah.

McIntosh: Yeah, I have six, too. I have one great-grandchild, too.

Ingman: Oh yeah? I don't have no great-grandchildren.

McIntosh: Well, I'm a little older than you are, see.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. How old are you?

McIntosh: 77.

Ingman: Oh yeah, you're seven years older than I am. I'm 70.

McIntosh: Right, I was born in '23, and you were born in '29.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: So, anyway –

Ingman: You look good. You don't look like you should –

McIntosh: Well, thanks.

Ingman: You must be what, Swede?

McIntosh: No, I'm a Scotsman.

Ingman: Oh, a Scotsman? They don't show age, then, either?

McIntosh: No, we're not allowed to.

Ingman: Like a Swede. [laughs]. You know, my dad, when he died, he was –

McIntosh: Oh, you're a Swede, not a Norwegian?

Ingman: I'm a Norwegian Swede, yeah.

McIntosh: Oh.

Ingman: They're the same. My dad was born in Sweden and raised in Finland.

McIntosh: Oh, Finland! Oh my, you've touched all bases.

Ingman: And he came to the United States when he was 17 years old.

McIntosh: Your dad?

Ingman: My dad. His dad had been in here in the country already. His dad ran a logging camp in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. And then my dad came with him. My dad's mother – she never did come to this country.

McIntosh: Oh yeah?

Ingman: She's – my dad said when she finally decided she would come, she died. So she never did come.

McIntosh: My goodness.

Ingman: I've heard an account – thinking of that now – I've heard an account of re-enlisting in the army before the Korean War and going to Sweden. Because, I've got a lot of cousins over there. Never met 'em. Don't know anything about 'em.

McIntosh: You are not in contact with any of those relatives?

Ingman: No.

McIntosh: They don't know you, and you don't know them.

Ingman: No addresses.

McIntosh: Did you keep in contact with any of the 17th Combat?

Ingman: For a while, we did, but it's faded away. So many of them died.

McIntosh: That's right.

Ingman: The Medal of Honor, well that's crazy –

McIntosh: Yeah, what about that society, I don't know about that. Tell me about that.

Ingman: We're down to 140 men, out of 260.

McIntosh: You mean 140 Medal of Honor winners are still alive from all wars?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: From what –

Ingman: And I think our last one from World War I died. So there's none.

McIntosh: There's one World War I veteran in Wisconsin who was in the Mexican Expedition – do you know him?

Ingman: Yeah, yeah, sure.

McIntosh: Andrew Small?

Ingman: Oh, that's right.

McIntosh: Andrew Small, I've interviewed him.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: 107 years old. He must be the oldest veteran in the United States of America.

Ingman: Must be.

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: But anyways, then we got World War II, Korea, and Vietnam. And it's –

McIntosh: I don't know if any Desert Storm guys are around. I think there was a couple of medals –

Ingman: I think we've still got some.

McIntosh: I think there were a few awarded for that – during that conflict.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah.

McIntosh: But you have an organization that you get mail from on a regular basis?

Ingman: Oh yeah, we get bulletins, and –

McIntosh: Meetings?

Ingman: Oh yeah, we meet once a year, someplace within the United States, always.

McIntosh: Well, that's a pretty select group. Who puts that on, generally?

Ingman: Oh, we do. With the president and the vice president and the secretaries of the Medal of Honor Society. And they're the ones that go out and campaign for cities to see which one will give us the most for the time we're there – most entertainment or –

McIntosh: Hotel space, and all that.

Ingman: Hotel space. We have to pay for our hotel. Our flying is free – anyplace in the United States, we fly free.

McIntosh: Oh, it's automatic?

Ingman: Oh, you've gotta apply for it. But all you gotta do is go to the airport, like down in Wausau, and they – either I can call their headquarters of North Central, and they will OK the flight. And then I get my tickets in the mail, or else they're right at the airport, and we just fly out of there to wherever we're going, and fly back.

McIntosh: Who pays for that? Us taxpayers?

Ingman: The airlines, the airlines.

McIntosh: This is a service for Medal of Honor winners? You can fly free for the rest of your life anyplace in the United States? A free ride?

Ingman: Anyplace in the world by boat.

McIntosh: Ship. [chuckles]

Ingman: Oh, we get some Medal of Honor holders – they took their son and went by ship all over the world.

McIntosh: Will they pay for your wife?

Ingman: Oh yeah. Sure.

McIntosh: You and your wife can go anywhere in the country, and the airline will –

Ingman: Within the United States.

McIntosh: Well the airline must be reimbursed by the Pentagon in some way.

Ingman: I don't know.

McIntosh: I expect they are.

Ingman: That's something I don't know.

McIntosh: What else can you do? Other than get a salute from any general –

Ingman: Well –

McIntosh: Any other special benefits that you can think of?

Ingman: Not really anything else outside of – our governor, he told me that if I ever have any problems, to contact him.

McIntosh: But that's just sort of a general statement.

Ingman: Yeah, that's right. But there isn't anything else. They like over in Minnesota –

McIntosh: What's this?

Ingman: There are Medal of Honor holders in Minnesota. Their first \$3,600 or \$3,700 of their property tax is tax-free.

McIntosh: Forever.

Ingman: They pay no taxes up to \$3,600.

McIntosh: Of their property tax.

Ingman: Of the home that you live in.

McIntosh: Why couldn't you get that organized in this state? They don't have the right accounting –

Ingman: They don't go along with that. I was able to get free license plates on the car. I contacted one of our district –

McIntosh: What do you have on your license plate?

Ingman: Medal of Honor.

McIntosh: Medal of Honor? Just "Medal of Honor?" It says –

Ingman: Number 2.

McIntosh: Number 2.

Ingman: My license plate is red, white, and blue. And it has, if you're looking at the car, on your left, the state capitol is on there. And then right through the center is my medal, engraved right into the plate. And then it has a number 2 on it, and Wisconsin.

McIntosh: But that's free.

Ingman: That's free.

McIntosh: Well, that's another benefit.

Ingman: I can get a free license plate anytime I want. When they start getting a little beat up, then I just contact Department of the Army, I mean Motor Vehicle Department. And they send me two new plates for the car. So that's one thing I gained, because the price of license plates now –

McIntosh: They're \$60 now.

Ingman: When I put in for these plates, for all the Medal of Honor holders in the state, never knew about this till we were in Georgia, or in Battle Creek, Michigan – no, not Battle Creek, but Pennsylvania. One Medal of Honor holder was getting a free license plate. So, I thought “God darn, that’s something that we should get, is a free plate, to let people know who we are.” So then I contacted one of our senators and district representatives and he put in a bill right away. Soon as he had it all written up, he called me and read it to me. And I said, “That sounds good. See what happens. Put it in.” Went right through. Got that right off the bat. But the only thing is, he put it in for two license plates for a family. They wouldn’t go along with that.

McIntosh: Oh, just one?

Ingman: Just one. One plate. So, but I didn’t care. I got a pickup truck. I’ve got a regular license on that.

McIntosh: Where is your license now?

Ingman: On the car, in the garage.

McIntosh: OK, I want to take a picture of that when we’re done.

Ingman: Oh yeah? [laughs]

McIntosh: You just don’t see those.

Ingman: Oh yeah, it’s something –

McIntosh: It’s unusual.

Ingman: Yeah I have it happen a lot of times when I go someplace, and somebody will walk up to my car and take a look at the plate, “What does that plate mean?” They don’t know. They don’t know. I had one old lady one time, she comes up to me, and she says, “Oh, that’s a Medal of Honor plate! Give me that plate!” She said, “You can get another one, but I want that plate.” I said, “No. I said, “That plate nobody gets.”

[End Tape 1 Side B]

McIntosh: [laughs] How rude!

Ingman: Yeah! Boy, she was gutty! She was on older lady.

McIntosh: That’s really rude.

Ingman: But evidently, she knew the Medal of Honor plates. And there are collectors.

McIntosh: You ought to be a little more clever than that. At least, you ought to say “Hello,” first.

Ingman: Ain’t it?! God.

[both laugh]

Ingman: Autographs. I get ‘em in the mail continuously from people.

McIntosh: What – requests?

Ingman: Settin’ a card –

McIntosh: Oh, and they want your autograph?

Ingman: Signature on it, autograph on there, yeah. Signature. And send them back. They always send an envelope along with the stamp.

McIntosh: With the stamp? Otherwise you would not send them -

Ingman: I wouldn’t send them back at all.

McIntosh: [unintelligible]

Ingman: One guy, a long time ago, he sent a big envelope with a big 8 x 10 or 8 x 12 envelope stamped. He wanted me to send him two 8 x 10 pictures.

McIntosh: Oh, he gave you the envelope that you could have the pictures and put in there and send back –

Ingman: Yeah. [sighs] I said to my wife -

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: People get awful God damn gutty, you know, when they want pictures like that.

McIntosh: That’s awful.

Ingman: So just threw it in the garbage can.

McIntosh: Of course.

Ingman: Steamed off the stamps –

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: My wife re-glued them on another envelope –

McIntosh: [laughs harder]

Ingman: They didn't get wasted. But, I said, "When they start asking for things," I said, "Forget it." If they send a card –

McIntosh: Well, certainly, if it's polite, then sure.

Ingman: Then I sign my signature to – sometimes they have maybe four or five of them. But they always write in there, "One is for me, and one is for my grandkids or my own children."

McIntosh: These must be people around here who knows you. Total strangers?

Ingman: All over the state.

McIntosh: How many of these do you get in a week?

Ingman: [laughs] At least one.

McIntosh: Oh, one a week? I'm sure it's a lot less than it was.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. Oh, years back, cripe, half our mail was all for me. That's all slacked off.

McIntosh: When you go to these – when you went to the meeting with the other guys, did they all have the same problem?

Ingman: Oh yeah, it runs the same all over.

McIntosh: So your problem is not unique.

Ingman: It's a routine that people want your signature, or they want a picture. You know, if I got some 8 x 10 pictures of me right now, I'll give you one.

McIntosh: Oh, in uniform?

Ingman: No, it's in civilian clothes.

McIntosh: Oh.

Ingman: A suit, with the medal.

McIntosh: With the medal? Oh, that'd be nice. The museum would like that. They'd like to have it for their records.

Ingman: Oh, that'd be nice to put – yeah.

McIntosh: Sure, that'd be very nice.

Ingman: Because I give one to each one of our VFW, American Legion, they have a picture of me in there.

McIntosh: Uh-huh, sure.

Ingman: Because I was made a free life member of the VFW and the American Legion.

McIntosh: Sure, I'm sure. Well, you're a poster boy for them.

Ingman: I'm a – [both laugh]. I'm a life member of so many places that I don't even know where they're at.

McIntosh: Well, see, they want to use you.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: That's all.

Ingman: What's the name in Milwaukee – it has this night club right on the Wisconsin River [Milwaukee River], down Capitol, you go down Wisconsin Avenue, and you cross over the bridge –

McIntosh: I know there's a night club there, but I don't know –

Ingman: I can't remember what the name is, but he's got one of my license plates.

McIntosh: Oh, he does?

Ingman: I gave him a plate –

McIntosh: Oh, that was nice.

Ingman: And he put it on display. And Gary Wetzel, Medal of Honor holder from Vietnam –

McIntosh: Yeah, I haven't interviewed him.

Ingman: He's got his picture in there.

McIntosh: I should interview him. Do you know him?

Ingman: Yeah. He lives in South Milwaukee.

McIntosh: South Milwaukee. I suppose I can find him in the phone book.

Ingman: Gary Wetzel. Oh yeah, sure. Oh yeah. Margelle's got his address -

McIntosh: I'm sorry? Oh she's got it - yeah. Well I can just look -

Ingman: Phone number.

McIntosh: Yeah, I'd like to get that. I'd like to get the names of those Antigo guys, too.

Ingman: And we've got another Vietnam vet over at Tomah. I can't think of his name, I never can. Margelle, she - For some reason, Gary Wetzel was the only one that - I never did lose his name. I don't know why.

McIntosh: Easier name to remember.

Ingman: Could be, I don't know.

McIntosh: Well, you see him because he's on that video down at our museum. You know, we have that video of him -

Ingman: Oh yeah, I remember that!

McIntosh: Describing how he was wounded. He lost an arm -

Ingman: Yeah, when I was in there, I seen that. Yeah he has one arm gone. But I kind of get a kick out of him. He kind of pushes that a little bit.

McIntosh: Does he?

Ingman: That one arm. You know, he'll wear a t-shirt with the false arm on, all right out in the open, so everybody sees that he's got a false arm. And when he first got his medal - see this, how things come back when I start talking about them - He just figured everybody was supposed to wait on him 100%. He didn't have to work. His money was coming in. And he found out after a while, that didn't work.

McIntosh: Doesn't last.

Ingman: Just because you got a medal, you ain't gonna get everything for nothin'. And we kept telling him, "You gotta back off." The Medal of Honor Society, you know, they're real touchy.

McIntosh: Oh?

Ingman: They don't want you bragging about your medal or anything.

McIntosh: They want you to cool it?

Ingman: Yeah. And so they got on him, too. And he's a lot different than he was. Oh, he's a lot older now. Kind of faded away, yeah. And he got himself – South Milwaukee gave him a nice car. It was kind of a fancy car. It wasn't too long, he had that wrecked in an accident. I got a new car when I came home.

McIntosh: Did you?

Ingman: A new Buick.

McIntosh: Who gave you that?

Ingman: City of Tomahawk.

McIntosh: Tomahawk.

Ingman: Car, boat, motor, and trailer, with a big muskie that was caught that morning.

McIntosh: They gave you the fish?

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: [laughs]

Ingman: Then they took it in and had it baked and –

McIntosh: Big feast for everybody.

Ingman: For the doing, we put it out all on the table, and everybody could eat fish.

McIntosh: Hey, fantastic.

Ingman: Yeah.

McIntosh: Boy.

Ingman: When I got awarded here, there was people – oh, our population in Tomahawk is 4,000, and I bet you there was over 20,000 people in town. The army came in on rail, their army vans. The troops, they stayed right on the railroad cars. Troop trains.

McIntosh: Then they had what, a parade for you?

Ingman: Oh, big parade. Oh. God, I thought that parade would never come to an end. [laughs]

McIntosh: Then you had to give speeches and all –

Ingman: Yeah!

McIntosh: And you didn't want to do that.

Ingman: No. No, cray, I was worse then.

McIntosh: I know, but they would want you to speak –

Ingman: Oh yeah.

McIntosh: You just told them you couldn't do it?

Ingman: They were told that right away.

McIntosh: Yeah, don't count on me.

Ingman: That I couldn't do it. I just couldn't. But they had just loads and loads of people. Military equipment, jets flying over. God. That was history for the town. Put the town on the map.

McIntosh: That was on a Saturday?

Ingman: That was on the 5th of July.

McIntosh: And what year was that? The same year that you got the medal?

Ingman: 1951. Yeah. Same time.

McIntosh: Did you save a lot of clippings in the newspaper?

Ingman: We got a suitcase, a big footlocker like years ago these old time ones you know that people used for travel, you know, big ones, full. Solid full of pictures. My wife has been going through it now and separating and putting them in a picture album for the kids.

McIntosh: Yeah.

Ingman: So that it gets all divided up. There's so many of them. I've got a picture of the whole parade – the whole thing.

McIntosh: Oh yeah?

Ingman: Yeah, he at the Tomahawk Drug Store took pictures of the whole parade.

McIntosh: You have that here?

Ingman: Yeah, she's got it someplace.

McIntosh: OK, when we're through, I'll take a look at that.

Ingman: Yeah, yeah. Oh yeah. Lot of history here. [laughs]

McIntosh: Well that's a huge – I'm sure you deserved it all.

Ingman: Well, I just never say much. I just figure I'm happy to be alive.

McIntosh: You're God damn lucky to kill a man. (??)

Ingman: Sure. Whew. Yeah, I'm lucky I've lived as long as I have. I just worried a year back that I would never see 70.

McIntosh: Why?

Ingman: Because of my head injuries, you know.

McIntosh: Yeah, but –

Ingman: Your head is the main part of your body.

McIntosh: Yeah, I know, but there's nothing the matter with that now.

Ingman: It don't give me no trouble, but you know, it's something that could happen overnight. All of a sudden.

McIntosh: It won't. That's not going to happen.

Ingman: I hope. I hope.

McIntosh: Naw, I wouldn't worry about that.

Ingman: I hope I hit 100 anyway.

McIntosh: Sure.

Ingman: No danger.

McIntosh: Well, you know, if you hit 100, that didn't make any difference.

Ingman: I know I'll never hit 100. But I'm just satisfied to have lived as long as I have.

McIntosh: Well, you've got a nice family –

Ingman: I take every day by day.

McIntosh: Of course. We all should do that.

Ingman: Like, I got a younger uncle. Him and his four brothers never got married. They lived together up here. They had a farm. And he's the only one left. Now he lives in Golden Age old folks' home on the river in Tomahawk, and he's been in there now, God, I don't know how many years. But his memory is startin' to disappear. He's 89 years old.

McIntosh: Most people's memories disappear as of age 89, right.

Ingman: Right, but otherwise he looks good. But when I come in to see him, he don't know me till I start talking to him.

McIntosh: "Ohhhh! Einar!"

Ingman: He always calls me Junior, yeah. My name was Einar Harold Ingman, Jr., so he always calls me Junior. And he doesn't even know who I am. But just to walk up to him, he don't know who I am. It all disappears on him now.

McIntosh: Oh, I forgot to ask you. What about that Korean medal? When did you get that?

Ingman: Uhh – that one that you took a picture of?

McIntosh: Same time? Yeah.

Ingman: No, I got that – I think it was two, three weeks maybe after I got my medal from the president that I received that.

McIntosh: What is that award called? Just a Korean –

Ingman: Uh, my wife would know exactly what that's called. But it is the highest military award given by the president of Korea.

McIntosh: Of course, he didn't hand it to you, it was just sent in the mail?

Ingman: Yeah, it was sent to me, yeah.

[long pause]

Ingman: You know, I'm supposed to be going back. Got a bulletin on it.

McIntosh: Going back where?

Ingman: To Korea. We're at the 50th anniversary now of the Korean War. The 8th Army contacted me, and wanted me to come back.

McIntosh: I'm sure they do.

Ingman: So, I don't know what's going to happen. I haven't heard –

McIntosh: Well, they pay all expenses for you?

Ingman: Oh yeah. We can go –

McIntosh: Oh I know –

Ingman: I just went to a reunion of the 17th up in Fairbanks, Alaska. That's where my outfit is now, up in Fairbanks. It's separated from the 7th Division, and it's the 17th Regimental Combat Team, Buffaloes. And we had a little get-together up there with Buffalo Bill – General Buffalo Bill? He's 90-some years old and he flew yet, out there. And surprisingly, he knew me right away.

McIntosh: Oh really?

Ingman: Oh yeah. He knew who I was right away. And we were up there for two weeks. I went all over their camp, army camp. Flew me with a helicopter all around their land. You know how much land they got up there?

McIntosh: Huge.

Ingman: One million acres. I couldn't get over that. I never seen a camp like they got. Man!

McIntosh: It's huge.

Ingman: And from their barracks to their training centers is all closed in. They can go from their barracks –

McIntosh: They don't have to go outside?

Ingman: Without going outside to the chow hall, stores, everything is under cover. Because when they get so much snow, they can't get out no more, so then they just stay inside.

McIntosh: Well, that's terrific.

Ingman: And there's study rooms where they study. And that big building is also used for entertainment, and they got pool tables in there and ping pong and everything but baseball. But otherwise they got everything else in the line of sports inside. I couldn't get over it. Their own ski hill, right on the camp.

McIntosh: That's great.

Ingman: They took me out there to show it to me, and a lounge/entertainment building that sat at the bottom of the hill. I couldn't get over when I seen what they had up there.

McIntosh: Did they tell you what they want to do in Korea?

Ingman: I don't know what this deal is.

McIntosh: I'd check that out before I ever go back there.

Ingman: Yeah, well I've –

McIntosh: Korea is a restless place now. If there's any demonstration, you don't want to be in the middle of any of that.

Ingman: And I said it's all going to rely on what – my wife has got to go down to the heart doctor, and if it's OK for her to fly that far –

McIntosh: Sure.

Ingman: Maybe he might say "No, that's too far," we won't go. She and the kids said, "Well, you can go anyway." I said, "No, I ain't goin'." I said, "I get over there –"

McIntosh: You're lost.

Ingman: Not only that, if she were to have a heart attack or something –

McIntosh: Then how the hell would you get back?

Ingman: Yeah. Because she has a lot of trouble with her heart and her lungs. And she's just had one of those – not a pacemaker, but it's got a different name that has two lines that go right – well, the unit was put right here under the skin, and they went down into the heart, and there's two wings going into the heart, and that's what controls the blood pressure. Her blood pressure is so high all the time. How she made it this long, I don't know, with that. Boy oh boy, her heart gives her a lot of problems. And her heart was getting so big-

McIntosh: Oh, really?

Ingman: It was to the point where it couldn't stretch much more and it would have busted with this pressure. But now with this control unit her heart is more normal now. She can go up and down the stairs now, and walk with no problem. Long as she don't overdo it.

McIntosh: Yes.

Ingman: So, I don't know what they're going to do with it. If they're going to let her go that high, you know – 40,000 feet.

McIntosh: I bet you they don't.

Ingman: Time will tell. But if she can't go, I'm not going. I wouldn't go. No way. We've got enough to do here.

[An alarm goes off signaling to Ingman that the mailman has come, and they talk about that for a minute. The tape ends.]