

Wisconsin Veterans Museum  
Research Center

Transcript of an  
Oral History Interview with

CARL H. MAPPS

Forward Observer and Quartermaster, Cavalry, Army, World War II.

2000

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**Mapps, Carl H.**, (1917- ). Oral History Interview, 2000.

User Copy: 2 sound cassettes (ca. 70 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Master Copy: 1 sound cassette (ca. 70 min.), analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Video Recording: 1 videorecordings (ca. 70 min.); ½ inch, color.

Transcript: 0.1 linear ft. (1 folder).

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

**Abstract:**

Carl H. Mapps, a Green Lake, Wisconsin native, discusses his World War II service with the 272nd Field Artillery Regiment, 1st and 5th Cavalry as a forward observer in the Pacific theater. Mapps talks about volunteering for service in 1941 and having three months of basic training with horses. Assigned to the 2nd Cavalry, he touches on duty as a mounted messenger at Fort Riley and the disbandment of the unit after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He speaks of duty with the remount service, caring for the horses that were being sent overseas and, as vehicles replaced horses, caring for horses that were returned. He touches on the types of horses and breeding programs used by the Army. Mapps comments on feeling that stateside service was not helping the war effort and volunteering to serve overseas. Sent to Australia with the 82<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery, 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division, he describes being put in a security section on the Admiralty Islands, being trained in the field as a forward observer, landing on Leyte with the fifth wave of troops, and providing artillery support for the 5<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Division in the Philippines. Mapps touches on hurting his back while getting off a boat with a heavy radio. He describes the casualties he saw in the hospital tent and recalls seeing Navy airplanes whose carriers had been damaged doing emergency landings in the rice paddies. He portrays seeing Filipinos carrying heavy supplies up the mountains, and he recalls volunteering to work in a mule pack bringing supplies to the front. Mapps discusses duty transporting supplies in trucks on Luzon. He tells of people getting killed by falling coconuts, and he portrays the fate of his cousin and brother-in-law, who were held as prisoners of war aboard a Japanese ship that was sunk by the American Navy. Mapps touches on hearing about the liberation of the Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison Camps in Manila and his discharge from the service. He mentions attending the University of Wisconsin using the GI Bill, getting married, working for the city of Iron Mountain (Michigan), and returning to Green Lake (Wisconsin).

**Biographical Sketch:**

Mapps (B. March 7, 1917) served from 1941 to 1945 during World War II with the 1st, 2nd, and 5th Cavalry Divisions. He was a forward observer for the 272nd Field Artillery, attached to the 5th Cavalry, during the Battle for Leyte. After the war, Mapps earned an animal science degree from the University of Wisconsin, worked on several ranches, had a job at a wastewater treatment plant in Iron Mountain (Michigan), and became a writer.

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2000  
Transcribed by Hannah Goodno, 2010  
Corrected by Channing Welch, 2010  
Corrections typed by Erin Dix, 2010  
Abstract written by Susan Krueger, 2010

**Interview Transcript:**

Jim: Okay, off and running. Talking to Carl Mapps. 12 July in the year 2000. Now, where were you born?

Carl: Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Jim: Okay, and you grew up in Green Lake?

Carl: Green Lake.

Jim: And you entered the service when?

Carl: In March of 1941.

Jim: Okay. What unit did you join? The Regular Army?

Carl: I volunteered for the draft for one year. I took my training in Fort Riley, Kansas. In the Cavalry. 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry.

Jim: With horses? Old fashioned horses?

Carl: 5000 men had never rode, and 5000 horses that had never been rode. And we had lots of fun. But I had experience with horses so they sent me out there.

Jim: And did you have to take care of your horse?

Carl: Yes, we did. We did a lot of that, both individually and in groups. And we had to learn horsemanship. Period.

Jim: Who taught you that?

Carl: We had officers that were very good horsemen and very experienced. They knew what they were doing.

Jim: Was that hard to learn?

Carl: Not for me, because I was already experienced, but it was—of course it was hard for people that had never been near a horse. There were troubles and accidents.

Jim: From what? From inexperience?

Carl: Yes, horses running off with people—little things like that.

- Jim: Broken legs and things?
- Carl: Oh, the hospital was pretty full there for a while. [both laugh]
- Jim: With broken bones?
- Carl: Yes, yes. Horses ran off, people fell off. Yes, it was a joke, but it was also true that a lot of the horses were not that calm and gentle, and these boys were all inexperienced. But they made horsemen out of them.
- Jim: When they trained you for this, did they do it in groups?
- Carl: Yes.
- Jim: In groups of 50 or so?
- Carl: Yes, by in troops. A troop would represent the same as a company and infantry. Troops were broken up into platoons, and we took our training mostly in platoons.
- Jim: About 30 in a platoon?
- Carl: Yeah, that's about right.
- Jim: And how long before the boys became accustomed to riding?
- Carl: Well, it varied a great deal on the individual, but in the three months of basic training they all got to be good riders.
- Jim: Generally it took three months?
- Carl: Well, it was a gradual process and some learned faster than others, but we were there three months and they were good cavalymen at the end of that time.
- Jim: How much care did you have to give your own horse?
- Carl: Well, we—in basic training, I didn't have my own horse. I had a horse assigned to me, but they were kept in stables and treated as a group by whoever was on stable duty, and that was rotated around. When we rode, we took our own horse—we took him out, tied him in around along the fences in the corrals, and we groomed a horse. Then we saddled 'em, and we bridled 'em. And then after the exercise we unsaddled, and then we again groomed our horses. And then we saddle soaped all our equipment. After I went to regular duty, I was assigned to 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry division headquarters at Camp Funston which is also part of Fort Riley. And there

I was a mounted messenger, and I was given a horse, and I was responsible for that horse. I fed him and did all the care of that horse.

Jim: Just one horse?

Carl: One horse. We each did our own. And after—in 1942 after Pearl Harbor they disbanded the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Division and were sending people all over wherever they were needed, and my captain asked me if I thought I would like to be in the remount service. He said they needed somebody up there, and that sounded good to me so I went.

Jim: What was that duty?

Carl: Basically, the remount was a place where the Army buyers had gone out and bought horses and brought them into the remount. And there, they were processed and shipped out to cavalry, artillery, anyone that needed horses. But after I was there for a couple of months that was reversed. Cavalries and artilleries were mechanizing, and getting vehicles and sending the horses back to the remount. So we became more or less just a holding station. We had—when I left there we had 18,000 animals that we were caring for. It was a wonderful place to be and a lot of fun, but some of us just felt like the less qualified people that had some disabilities could do this same work, and some of us felt like we ought to be doing a little more so we volunteered for active duty overseas.

Jim: Okay, now, tell me about these horses. Were they a special type of horse—these Army horses?

Carl: Yes. Between World War I and II, the Army remount put out good stallions with ranchers to upgrade the quality of the horses that the ranchers' [unintelligible]. Then they would be available when the Army needed them. And these buyers went out and they selected horses according to the need. For instance, cavalry horse, light artillery horse, a pack animal—we had mules, too, and wagon horses, and they were all classified.

Jim: They were all different?

Carl: A little different, a little different size or quality.

Jim: One with more speed and one with more power. Would that be a—

Carl: The wagon horses would be bigger and stronger, the artillery horses were—again, they had to not only be ridden, but they had to pull the artillery guns. And then the cavalry horses were all ridden. But they were quite uniform. They picked 'em for uniformity and for size and color.

- Jim: These cavalry horses—were they basically Quarter Horses?
- Carl: No. Mostly—Quarter Horses weren't that well known or that popular in that time there. They were mostly had a lot of Thoroughbred breeding in 'em, but they were—they had a lot of very good horses in the cavalry.
- Jim: But they didn't have a name for that. It wasn't a special breed.
- Carl: No, they didn't care if they were registered or any particular breed. Now, we had stallions at the remount, we had Morgans, we had Arab stallions, and we had Thoroughbred stallions to cross on different types of mares.
- Jim: Did the remount people do their own breeding?
- Carl: Some of it. Some of it, but up until that time they had put stallions out with ranchers, just gave them to the ranchers temporarily to keep as long as he wanted and needed 'em. And he used them—
- Jim: He bred 'em.
- Carl: And he in turn raised a better quality horse. And then when the Army needed them they knew where to go.
- Jim: Did you only use stallions? Or what? Mares? Stallions or mares?
- Carl: Oh, no. We didn't use any stallions in the service. We used almost all geldings. There were some mares.
- Jim: Stallions were too hard to manage?
- Carl: Yes, they'd be trouble. In a bunch. They would fight and so on.
- Jim: Sure. Did you learn to call them by whistle?
- Carl: No. Our horses were never simply turned loose to be caught. They were always in control. When we went on maneuvers, for instance, when we stopped anywhere, we'd put up a picket line of heavy rope stretched between trees and horses were tied to the picket line. And they were there, we fed them, and we had to untie them and lead 'em to water, but then we retied them. When we wanted them they were there. We didn't have to call them or chase 'em.
- Jim: Did you happen to see that movie about moving all these horses from a disbanded cavalry unit up into Canada?

- Carl: No, I didn't see that.
- Jim: You should see that.
- Carl: I would like to. Did they drive them?
- Jim: I have to stop, because this is off the subject. Okay, tell me what finally happened to your horses.
- Carl: We just kept them. They kept coming back, and one example was the 4<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Brigade. They sent their horses by rail, and then the whole brigade came in trucks, and they had a final review when they gave up their horses. And many of those men stood there and cried at that review.
- Jim: Tough, tough moment for them.
- Carl: Yes. They loved their horses.
- Jim: Sure.
- Carl: What we did then, was we—as we did with every horse that came into the remount, we put them into the quarantine for three months so the veterinarians could check them, make sure of their health. Then they were just turned out in big pastures, and they kept all those horses until the end of the war. And my understanding—and this was Fort Robinson, Nebraska—and it's my understanding that after the war they had a big auction, and they sold all the horses. And they took very good care of those horses. And it's a good memory of mine was the remount service.
- Jim: What was your horse's name?
- Carl: Oh, I had a number of horses in the remount. But on maneuvers, before maneuvers I was riding a lieutenant's horse for him. This lieutenant was a big man, and he had a rather small, 4-year-old horse—they owned their own horses. And he thought—
- Jim: The officers?
- Carl: The officers did. They owned their own—they had to buy and own their own horse.
- Jim: Personally?
- Carl: Yes. And this horse was a little small for a 4-year-old—he thought he was a little heavy so he asked me to ride it a lot. Exercise it, and work it. But when I went on maneuvers, I looked around the corrals, and I took the



sleepiest one I could find [both laugh]. And I called him Jughead. He didn't look like much, but I knew he wouldn't be any trouble on maneuvers. He just—he'd go to sleep every chance he got. He wouldn't be any trouble. Then later, a friend of mine that had never been a horseman, he had a horse on maneuvers and outguessed him. The horse was giving him trouble. And he—it finally got to where it bit him [laughs]—

Jim: Oh, my!

Carl: Once in awhile, and so we got together and he asked me if we'd trade horses. So we traded horses, and I had done some horse training even before I got in the service, and I got along just fine with that horse because I wasn't afraid of him. He knew it, and we got along just fine. But, to start with, I picked what I thought was the sleepiest horse in the bunch because I knew that he wouldn't give me trouble when we were out in the field.

Jim: Oh, okay, so when this transfer came—what time and what year was that in? The end of '42?

Carl: When I left there and I went to California and was at Camp Stoneman for a few months waiting to be assigned, and because of my cavalry and remount classification I was classified as stable sergeant. They waited 'til the first cavalry station came through—they came up there to be shipped out of the bay up there, and they came to Camp Stoneman, and so I was assigned to them. They put me in the field artillery, and I went overseas with the First Cavalry Division.

Jim: When did you go overseas? '42 probably?

Carl: '43, the summer of '43.

Jim: And what was the designation of your unit?

Carl: We first went to Australia—but you mean my classification?

Jim: No—yeah, that too, but you were with what unit now? What was your unit? What regiment?

Carl: Oh, I went overseas in the 2<sup>nd</sup>—82<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery in the First Cavalry Division.

Jim: In the 32<sup>nd</sup>—oh—

Carl: 82<sup>nd</sup> Field Artillery, but when I got over there, they formed—to start with, we had three regiments of cavalry and three brigades of artillery, and they

changed that to the, as I understand, the old infantry format. They had four regiments of cavalry, and so we needed a fourth brigade of artillery, so they started the 271<sup>st</sup>, of which I went into.

Jim: In the artillery?

Carl: In the artillery.

Jim: This is part of the 32<sup>nd</sup> Division?

Carl: No, that was part of the First Cavalry Division.

Jim: First Cavalry. So what was your job then?

Carl: I was a forward observer in the artillery.

Jim: What kind of experience did you need to get that job?

Carl: Apparently none. They didn't know what else to do with me because I was a stable sergeant.

Jim: They didn't have much need for one.

Carl: No, but I had had a little education, and I was able to learn to read coordinates on a map and to figure mathematics. We had what we called computer [unintelligible] and these were real live persons. And they took that with the forward observer setback and they computed it with the gunners. And they told the gunners how to adjust their sights, and they gave the data to the gunners, and the gunners took it from there. And so we were all called computers. And a friend of mine there had tried to make a computer out of me and decided that's what—but they didn't know what else to do with me because of my sergeant training. And I asked them to make me a private and give me a good job, but they didn't want to do that [laughs] so they put me up front. Maybe they thought I wouldn't last too long up there. But I went up front with the—in the forward observer, and I was with Fifth Cavalry Regiment when I was up front. And the artillery supported the cavalry—

Jim: Where was this?

Carl: On Leyte Island in the Philippines.

Jim: How long were you in Australia before you went to Leyte?

Carl: Six months.

- Jim: Six months. You made the Leyte landing [unintelligible]?
- Carl: We went to the Admiralty Islands first and had a campaign there.
- Jim: How long were you there?
- Carl: From—we went up there in March. I remember I landed on my birthday, March the 7<sup>th</sup>—
- Jim: Of '44?
- Carl: Yes, and we stayed there until October when we made the landing at Leyte.
- Jim: Right. Now, tell me about your activity on the Admiralty Islands. What was this like?
- Carl: In the Admiralty Islands I was not a forward observer. I had a section for security. I was in the division headquarters, and when we went into action, the headquarters had their camp, and I had security. We would establish a ring of foxholes around there, and we pulled all kinds of duty in the daytime and at night we stood guard.
- Jim: Did anything exciting happen during that time? You weren't overrun or anything?
- Carl: No, we weren't. The cavalry boys had some very exciting times. Very exciting times. That was—to start with, that was a tough role for them.
- Jim: The cavalry by this time was using—
- Carl: They were infantry. They had become infantry.
- Jim: They didn't have tanks then?
- Carl: When we could—yes, we had tanks, but we couldn't use tanks of any size until we got to the Philippines where there was more room and there were few roads, and we even used small artillery in the Admiralty Islands. We had 105's which were pulled by vehicles, but we also had the old 75 millimeter mule pack artillery, which we didn't have the mules, but you could handle them—manhandle them, and we used the 75's and 105's and when we got to the Philippines after the Leyte Campaign which was fought mostly in the mountains in the rainy season. Then they got rid of all the smaller artillery. They went to 1-5-5's and bigger, and there we had tanks. We had much machinery, and it looked to me like it was heavy equipment that was winning the war.

- Jim: At the Leyte landing, did you go ashore the first day or the second day or what?
- Carl: The first day. The First Cavalry Division all went in the first day. I was in the fifth wave and one thing of memory is that I was in a landing barge with General Mudge who became—who had a very good record in the war. Became wounded, but you asked—I was in the fifth wave, and I walked ashore without any trouble. We had our cruisers and our bombers had really worked over that beach all night long, and so we went ashore with no trouble. The Japs had retreated and were up in the mountains a little bit(??). It was rainy season and the campaign didn't last much more—I think it was right after New Year's the next year that—it was only about four months and we ended that campaign.
- Jim: You were in tents then? While you were in that four months in the Philippines you lived in tents?
- Carl: No. We lived in foxholes. I was in a forward observer—yes, we had tents back behind the line, but I was up front most all that time as a forward observer.
- Jim: Oh, that's where you got your forward observer experience.
- Carl: Yeah, and then my hearing got bad.
- Jim: From the big guns?
- Carl: Gunfire. I didn't hear the big guns. I was miles from the big guns, but my hearing started to get a little—I think it was originally affected on the rifle range at home, training. I was an acting corporal, they called me. I would fire first, then I'd lay there beside the rest of 'em and coach 'em. I spent two weeks doing that. But even rifle fire—
- Jim: It's pretty sharp.
- Carl: It always affected my ears. And I was afraid—and I got an infection in my ears, and I know I wasn't doing a good job on the radio when I did not want to make a mistake because we often put our artillery shells right down within 50 yards of our own lines. You could not make a mistake, and so when I was up there pretty close to the end of the campaign our army came across some U.S. Army horses that the Japanese had captured when they took the Philippines. And so they took those horses, and they had a terrible time sending supplies up to the front lines. They were in the mountains, and they used Filipinos for that. But the Filipinos would make one trip and disappear. It was not good going up there. And once in

awhile they got shot at. So they decided to form a mule pack, and they wanted volunteers.

Jim: Well, you were an expert.

Carl: I volunteered. I didn't want to work that radio anymore, and I volunteered and I went as a grade of a private. And they made me a technician 5<sup>th</sup> grade right away. And we made one trip with horses up to the front lines, but then the campaign was over.

Jim: How did that go? Using those pack horses?

Carl: Well, it worked just fine.

Jim: You controlled them okay?

Carl: Oh, yes. They were old, old cavalry horses.

Jim: Oh, they knew what to do.

Carl: Yeah, they were old cavalry horses and—

Jim: Well, that was a surprise adventure(??) [laughs]. You thought you were out of the cavalry and all of a sudden there you are.

Carl: We were experienced, and it worked just fine. Then when we went to Leyte, from Leyte to Luzon, the rainy season was over, and we had good gravel roads and even some blacktop roads. And then I was quartermaster.

Jim: You left the horses?

Carl: We didn't bother with them, we left them behind. I don't know what happened to them.

Jim: Well, I'm sure the Filipinos ate 'em. [Laughs]

Carl: [Laughs] Maybe, but they hadn't had much to eat while the Japs were there.

Jim: Right, that's what I mean.

Carl: And then what I did—I was in a troop that supplied the front lines but we did it with trucks. We went to the beaches, to the seaboard and picked up supplies that had been shipped in, and we hauled those supplies up to the front lines with trucks. That was just a nice job to finish the war.

- Jim: Right. You didn't get shot at much then?
- Carl: No, well, once in a while, a Jap—see, when the First Cavalry Division and there was an infantry division, we landed in the northern tip of Luzon, and they never stopped to fight any Japs unless they got right out in front of them and fought back, tried to stop us. Then we fought 'em, but otherwise, we'd just drove straight to Manila. And General MacArthur knew that the Japanese would destroy Manila if they had the chance. And he had been raised in that, lived many years in there, and he was trying to, hoping to save Manila. Couldn't do it.
- Jim: That was a bad deal down there.
- Carl: Very bad.
- Jim: I felt especially sorry for those civilians who were cooped up in that one compound. Terrible.
- Carl: I had a brother-in-law and a cousin that had been prisoners there.
- Jim: In that group?
- Carl: In one of those camps, I don't know which one, but they made the mistake of staying healthy, relatively healthy. Just before we got there the Japanese had taken all the able bodied men and put them on a ship and were going to take them to Japan for labor. Work in the mines and things like that. But it was after, during the—right after we landed on Leyte, our Navy steamed north. I don't know why. But they by accident ran into the Japanese Navy and had this big naval battle, and they destroyed the Japanese Navy. And that was the end of the Japanese Navy right there, but they had all these Americans in an unmarked ship which we sunk.
- Jim: Right, I know that.
- Carl: And I happened to—and there were some survivors, so we found out later that my brother-in-law went down with the ship, and my cousin managed to swim to shore to an island but that the Japanese killed him there. But we—the First Cavalry Division liberated the prison at Cabanatuan and Bilibid Prison, two prisons in Manila. And those civilians and people had been there for years and they were—it was a wonderful experience liberating them. They were grateful.
- Jim: Oh, I'm sure they were. When you walked in there, I bet they just were overjoyed.

- Carl: It couldn't be described. On the one, Cabanatuan was right in town, and we sent a—I wasn't with them, but the Cavalry sent a troop in there with vehicles, and they just literally raced through town and got into the prison and just surprised the Japanese. There was no battle.
- Jim: Fortunately.
- Carl: Fortunately there was no battle. The Japanese just probably killed some, and the rest ran, and they took it by surprise because MacArthur knew that the Japanese as they—whenever they retreated—**[End of Tape 1, Side A]**
- Jim: They'd kill everybody.
- Carl: They just destroyed everything.
- Jim: And people.
- Carl: And they would blow up bridges and just dynamite the buildings. It was—and he tried everything to preserve the city, but it didn't work very well.
- Jim: He declared it an open city, but the Japanese paid no attention to that.
- Carl: Yeah, that's the way they were. That's the way they were.
- Jim: So you avoided being shot while you were on the front lines being an observer?
- Carl: I was small, and I hid a lot. [Both laugh]
- Jim: Did you use binoculars?
- Carl: Oh, yes.
- Jim: That's what—you needed to.
- Carl: Yes, and we had to judge distances and directions. We had a map, of course. And we'd get to the cavalry, we'd go with the cavalry, they'd get to a new position, they'd dig in at night, and we'd look out. They'd look out ahead, and there's a little gully there, or a little something here where the Japanese could—might be. Or they might use that area to come in on us at night. So before dark we would call back for some smoke rounds. The artillery would fire some smoke rounds, and of course the first one would be off, and then we would work it in to where it went where it was supposed to. Then they recorded that setting—gun setting. And at night if we heard anything down there or if we had any reason to suspect the Japanese were coming through there we just could call out for a round in

that setting. And then we also tried to determine where the Japanese might be—might be camped. And then at night we would call for harassing fire from time to time out there. So, we never know whether we were killing Japs or not [laughs].

Jim: Now, you say you didn't have any radio contact or return back, so you made switches?

Carl: Oh, yes, we were on radio contact all the time. And we could hear—or you could hear those artillery shells going over you. It was a lot like a bunch of birds fluttering.

Jim: The 1-5-5s?

Carl: Mm-hmm.

Jim: Big shell.

Carl: Miles away. But they were good. The First Cavalry Division had an excellent record with their artillery, and the cavalry boys just loved the artillery boys [laughs].

Jim: Sure, you bet. So did you win any medals over there, Carl?

Carl: No, I just got things like automatic—like good conduct medals. I kinda kept a low profile. [Laughs]

Jim: Winning medals wasn't one of your—

Carl: No, no. But I wasn't in a position—I never was in a position where I took part in an attack or anything like that. I carried a carbine for self-defense. And that was it. And a coconut fell on it one night in a typhoon and broke it [laughs]. That was the most dangerous night I spent.

Jim: It could've been your head.

Carl: Oh, a whole cluster of five coconuts landed close enough to me to break my rifle, but it missed me. They missed me.

Jim: That would've conked you right out.

Carl: Oh, why coconuts killed a few people.

Jim: Oh, really?



- Carl: Oh, yes, those big coconuts with the entire husk and everything falling from a tall tree.
- Jim: Like a big brick.
- Carl: Oh, man, it was something, yeah.
- Jim: So after the war—you ended the war on that island?
- Carl: The war ended when I was in Luzon, and just about a week before they dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima I had enough points to be rotated back to the States. I considered volunteering to go to Japan. I didn't know the fate of my brother-in-law or my cousin at the time. I considered volunteering to go to Japan. The cavalry divisions were already taking amphibious training for that invasion. But then I thought better of it. I knew I'd been pretty lucky so far, and I decided I—
- Jim: Stretched it enough.
- Carl: And I had left, been taken out of my unit, and was in a little holding area, and I remember the night that Japan surrendered—or the bombs were dropped, and the war was over. And there was a big—a lot of celebrating.
- Jim: Oh, yes.
- Carl: And then, of course, all transportation was frozen because we had to move troops to Japan of occupation.
- Jim: Oh, that's right.
- Carl: And so, we waited about a month for a ship to take us home.
- Jim: Did you—were you in on the liberation of those prisoner of war camps?
- Carl: Not personally. The cavalry units did, but I was not—I did not go with them.
- Jim: I see. How about disease? Malaria?
- Carl: It was bad, but now my friend and neighbor that lives next door was in the 32<sup>nd</sup> Division—they were pioneers in jungle warfare in New Guinea. And they got hit very badly with malaria and other things. But by the time I was in we were taking these Atabrine tablets, putting them in our water, and we—we did experience—some of the boys got what we call “Jungle Rot.” They got this bad skin thing that made sores, and some of them got bad enough they had to be evacuated. Some of 'em was just not—didn't

amount to much, but for some reason I didn't get it. And now I think it might be because I love to swim, and I'd swim in—instead of taking a shower, if I had a chance I'd take a swim in the ocean, and I think that saltwater was good because I think all the fresh water in the tropics in those islands—

Jim: Was infected.

Carl: Had a lot of stuff in it that was bad for us.

Jim: Exactly right.

Carl: I'm not sure what it was, but I never missed a day of duty and I had a couple close calls, but I have to say I was just plain lucky.

Jim: Right. But in your group—your platoon—were a lot of men sick? With diarrhea?

Carl: We had a lot of that, but it didn't make us go on sick call because everybody had it, and we didn't put up with it—didn't affect us that much(??).

Jim: Right. It was—

Carl: It was bad, but it [laughs]—

Jim: Not that bad?

Carl: We couldn't—we didn't go on sick call for it because everybody had it.

Jim: How did you get home?

Carl: Took a ship to Los Angeles and a train into a camp out in California, and—

Jim: Did you come home with your whole division?

Carl: No.

Jim: Individually?

Carl: I didn't—there were only three or four people that had—that I knew. Because it was all point system and you were lumped with a whole bunch of people. Then I came from a train to what we called Camp McCoy—now I guess it's called Fort McCoy—Camp McCoy, and there I got my discharge.

- Jim: Right. And after the war did you use your G.I. Bill?
- Carl: Yes I did. I went to the University of Wisconsin, and they asked me why, and I said just because I think I ought to go, but I didn't know what I wanted—why. I was gone almost five years, and, oh, I'd lost track of everything. But I always liked animals and country life, and so I went to the College of Agriculture.
- Jim: And you finished your—get your degree there?
- Carl: I was afraid of it, so I signed up for the two year course, and I struggled through that and realized I had the hard part down so I signed up for the rest of it. And I [laughs] did graduate.
- Jim: And what specially?
- Carl: A degree in animal science.
- Jim: Animal science, okay. Now, what did you do with this degree?
- Carl: Well, I worked on ranches.
- Jim: Where?
- Carl: Well, several states, because I worked on other people's ranches. Some of them were—well, most of them there were more or less hobby ranches by absentee owners, and they would—
- Jim: Were these cattle ranches or—?
- Carl: Cattle and horse ranches. I was a horse trainer, and I also worked with cattle and even some sheep. Then these people would—one ranch had to quit being a ranch because the city limits grew up around it. One rancher was an older man, put his ranch up for sale, and so we drifted around. I lived in California, Idaho, Montana, and had a lot of good experiences, and never made any money, but we—the kids all loved it, and they still miss riding horses.
- Jim: That's good. So then you got married?
- Carl: I got married the last semester of college. My wife had one semester to finish her college, and so we got married, and we finished college. And along with raising a family she was also a physical education teacher, and I worked on these ranches. And there was no security there, and so I was offered a job in Iron Mountain, Michigan working for the city, and I was

very much surprised—I did something I never would have ever dreamed I might be doing. I worked in a wastewater treatment plant. And I found out that my agriculture courses—I studied bacteriology, some chemistry, zoology—and those things all fit in very well with that profession, and I also had some experience with farm machinery. So we had pumps and things like that to operate and maintain, and so I found out that I was pretty well prepared for it. I had a good career, I worked there for—and my wife taught school, and we got the kids all through high school up there, and then at 65 I retired from there.

Jim: Great career.

Carl: It was. It was very interesting.

Jim: Is there anything that you missed in your career that you felt you could have enjoyed more?

Carl: Oh, I think I'm like everybody. I made lots of mistakes. If I had to do it over [laughs], but you can't control that when you go along. You do—you gotta make a decision, and so you do.

Jim: One guy told me, he said, "The answer is I made a lot of mistakes, and if I had to do it all over I'd probably make the same mistakes" [laughs].

Carl: Yeah, well either that, or if you decided differently, that'd be a mistake too.

Jim: [Laughs] Right, and I don't think that there's any getting away from that. Now, tell me about being a writer. When did this come up?

Carl: Well, I always liked to do that, and I had a kind of a mind that would sort of store a lot of information that other people wouldn't necessarily think too much of. When I got retired I began writing, and I wrote from experience, but it was all fiction. And finally, I wrote one military experience, and then I wrote animal stories and ranch stories.

Jim: Is that what this is? "The Shadow Horse?"

Carl: Yes.

Jim: That's fiction?

Carl: Yes, it's fiction. But I lived in Colorado for fifteen years, and it takes place in the White River National Forest, and the localities are actual. The people are fictional, but I borrowed from experiences that I had. And I worked—I was very lucky. I was looking for a place to send my story,

and I found the Council for Indian and Education building in Montana. So I inquired with them, and to make a long story short, I worked with them, and the head of the Council is a Dr. Hap Gilliland. He teaches literature at Montana University, and he was raised in Colorado in the same general area I was. We got to be friends, he edited for me, he gave me some good advice and content, and we put it together, and it was published by the Native American publishing company which is in Billings, and so I got a good start.

Jim: Where can I find one of those books?

Carl: Well, I'm gonna give you one.

Jim: Oh, my.

Carl: Don't let me forget.

Jim: [Laughs] I won't.

Carl: [Laughs] I've got a good forgetter.

Jim: I'll trade it for a tape of this interview and then that horse [unintelligible]. That'd be a good trade.

Carl: I'm gonna get the best of ya, I'm sure [laughs].

Jim: Well, I look forward to that.

Carl: Yes, I'll be glad to let you have one.

Jim: Well, I also can send you a copy of my book. I wrote a book, too.

Carl: Oh, you did? Well, I'd be glad to have it then.

Jim: Okay, it's about the practice of medicine in Madison and my experience on a hospital ship in the Korean War.

Carl: Oh, in the Korean War?

Jim: Right.

Carl: Well, that's interesting. I saw from time to time—in ports I saw a hospital ship—it was all white.

Jim: They're all white. All hospital ships are white.

Carl: They were white, and I saw them, and yes, well that's interesting. Oh, when I went to shore both times—when I went to shore in the Admiralties, cavalry, what we called a reinforced patrol had gone in, gotten in a big fight, hung on, and they 'til they rushed more troops in there, and I was in the second—[Pause in tape for approx. 15 sec.]

--they were bringing wounded out to the ship, and these guys, I think must've been all drugged. They lay there like zombies, you know, unmoving, not talking, not speaking. And they were all bandaged up, bloody, and then the same thing when I landed on Leyte Island. I was carrying a heavy radio. We had a wild dream of getting ashore and setting up a forward observation if needed, and we had artillery guns on a cruiser out in the harbor. We thought we'd fire from out there. Well, I slipped down, the barge couldn't get quite into shore, and the ramp was down at quite an angle, and I was going down the ramp, and when I hit the wet part, I went into the water up to my chest. And I had the weight of the radio on my one shoulder, and it put an S-curve in my back. Well, I was uncomfortable, but I was still walking, and we got to shore, and it had a hospital tent, but it was unbelievable in there—the casualties and everything. I was not gonna walk in there and say I hurt my back. And I waited for about a week. I finally went in because I thought it'd be a good idea. I didn't know how bad it might turn out to be. But then, about that same time, we saw all these carrier-based fighter planes circling, and circling, and circling, and finally belly-landing in the rice paddies. And we didn't know there was a big naval battle going on out there, but their carriers were hit, and they couldn't land on their carriers, and they had to come down, and that's what they did. Well, a couple days later—this is when I had come back down from the front because our radio after all that didn't work [Laughs], and they had brought in the casualties from this naval battle—and I mean, it was a fright. And we had to help bury them. And that naval battle was really, really bad.

And those things, when you saw how bad it was—and I mean, it was—it was—well, none of us thought we were gonna live through it, really. We didn't—that's what made a soldier what he was because he quit being afraid, really, because he'd come to the conclusion—he would prepare that he wasn't gonna make it. He might get injured and sent home—that was the best thing that could happen, but you weren't gonna live through too many of those campaigns. So it was—it was exciting, you might say.

And I was very lucky. I was coming down from the front one time and my section chief picked us up in a jeep, and we came to a crossroads and he said—we met another vehicle, and they talked a while. And this other vehicle was going down to our camp, and he was going on over the airstrip, and I decided to change vehicles. And he and the lieutenant went over to the other airstrip, and we had taken over this—this was a Japanese

airstrip on Leyte Island, and we had taken over the airstrip, of course. But at the airstrip the Japs had planted mines. He ran over a landmine and was killed. If I had been in that jeep, I'd have been killed, too. Now, those are the kind of things that happen, and it's only luck. Only luck. It either happens or doesn't, and I helped bury him that night with those other Navy casualties.

Jim: So they awarded you some medals? You didn't list any of those.

Carl: I didn't get any, and the cavalry boys would—one friend of mine went through a night that if anyone deserved a medal, he did. But after, the medal became sort of a joke. Some of them—a lot of them were awarded legitimately and deservedly, but it seemed like they would—after a campaign, they would allot a certain amount of medals to each unit. And I remember a captain asking this friend of mine, saying, "I've got a medal for ya. I've got a Silver Star. I think you should have it." He [laughs] said, "I don't want a Silver Star." And he just laughed about it. He didn't think much of the whole procedure. But then when the point system came out, to go home, you got points for medals, [laughs] and he knew he'd made a mistake then. But he did go home, anyway.

Jim: You must've gotten a unit citation. Or don't you remember?

Carl: I don't think any unit I was in got a citation. One of the things that made me very satisfied was on Leyte Island, they assigned a boy to me that they didn't think was a very good soldier. He wasn't—they didn't—he just was just a guy that didn't look much like a soldier. He's kind of a hillbilly-type guy. They assigned him to me because somebody else didn't think much of him, but he and I got along real good together, and I befriended him, and he was a big, strong, sturdy hillbilly-type guy. And I had him in my foxhole with me, and we became good friends. Well then, then I went up front in Leyte, and when I came back from the front line because my radio wasn't working I met him on the beach. He spotted me, and he came running over to me, and he said he had shotten down, got a Japanese Zero and gotten credit for it—official credit.

Jim: With a rifle?

Carl: With a 50-caliber machine gun mounted on a vehicle.

Jim: Very good.

Carl: And he had gotten in a reconnaissance outfit, and every night, and when I was up in the hills, we used to watch these Jap Zeros and their two engine bombers come down the beach and strafe, make a couple strafing runs, and then drop their bombs and leave. And there was millions of tracer(??)

bullets going up, and they never seemed to hit any of 'em. But he came running up to me, and he got official credit for shooting down a Jap Zero, and I thought, "Well, now there's a kid that nobody liked and he did more for winning the war than most people do" [laughs].

Jim: Right. That's wonderful.

Carl: I've never seen him since, but I've always—

Jim: Oh, you never kept track of him?

Carl: No, I lost track of him. We didn't come home together, and I've often wondered about him.

Jim: You ever meet with your unit?

Carl: No, I never—we haven't had any reunions that I know of. We just never did. I have a book that the First Cavalry Division put out at the end of the war with their war history.

Jim: With anybody listed?

Carl: Everybody's listed, and it's a very good book.

Jim: But that's about the end of it. You didn't—

Carl: No, I never was much for one to go to reunions and things. Maybe it'd been good to do so, but I'm the kind of a guy when there's something to be done, I do it, but when I'm done, I'm done, and then I do something else.

Jim: On to something else.

Carl: [Laughs] I don't think too much about it anymore.

Jim: You didn't join any veterans organizations?

Carl: I joined the American Legion when I came home. And then when I left my home town I never kept up my membership anywhere. And when I came back, I've just been back a little while, and I didn't rejoin because I had too many things I was doing, and in a small town if you're a member of any organization that means you're always being called on for something. And I felt that I—I'm not one to say no, and I felt I was already too busy. And I sort of—but I help 'em. I help put up flags at the cemetery, and I'm friends with all of 'em. But I have other things that I do in the community and for myself and—



- Jim: Is there a VFW outfit around here?
- Carl: I'm not sure, but I contribute to them, because I've been using veterans hospitals off and on for little outpatient things, and they're always there. And I see how much good they do, and I can't contribute everywhere, but I've always contributed to them.
- Jim: I do, too. Did—what was I going to ask you? Oh, you'd no disability? You didn't get any permanent disability for your back?
- Carl: No, but it's on my service record. And a year ago I was having a lot of trouble with my back. And I went down there, and—to Madison to the hospital, and they took a bunch of X-rays, and they told me, "Well, you've got an S-curve in your spine, but you've been active, and by staying active and exercising, you've kept it from—you've overcome it." But it's on my service record.
- Jim: I don't think that from what you're telling me I don't think that falling into the water—I think it's just the way your back was built.
- Carl: Well, I had an 80 pound radio on my shoulder.
- Jim: Right, but no bones were broken.
- Carl: When I hit the bottom I just could feel my back going—oh, it just twisted my back. I know I'd done something to it. I couldn't sit down for a year. I could walk, and I could lie down, but I could not sit in a chair.
- Jim: You might've broken the tip end of that spine—the coccyx.
- Carl: When I got out I went to a chiropractor and took a series of treatments, and he kind of straightened me up a little bit, but he told me that—
- Jim: Did you see anything of the Red Cross when you were in the Philippines?
- Carl: Did I see what?
- Jim: Any of the Red Cross?
- Carl: A lot of it.
- Jim: They brought you some goodies?
- Carl: Oh, everywhere. In the United States and overseas and everywhere. I have a very high opinion of the Red Cross.

- Jim: But you got 'em in the Philippines though?
- Carl: Oh, yes.
- Jim: They brought you care packages?
- Carl: I have a very high opinion of the Red Cross.
- Jim: How about mail? Your mail was regular or pretty—
- Carl: As regular as you could possibly expect. Sometimes—sometimes you're up front and you wouldn't get mail for a few weeks—**[End of Tape 1, Side B]**
- Jim: Right.
- Carl: When I was up front, up in the mountains in Leyte, it was a Thanksgiving. We had taken a position up there and were holding it, waiting for a time when movements—final movement was gonna start. And I remember some of these statistics. They cooked 700 turkeys down below, and they were carried up front by Filipinos to feed us all turkey on Thanksgiving.
- Jim: Oh, I bet that tasted good.
- Carl: Well, actually—it did—but actually, I have to say, they came out—at that time they had what they called a 10-in-1 rations. It was a cardboard box, and it had all kinds of things in it. It had bacon in it, dehydrated potatoes, dehydrated eggs, and all that stuff. But you had enough in it that when you prepared it, it tasted pretty good. And a lot of canned stuff, and that was one reason why it was such a job to supply all those troops. It took two days to get up there carrying all the supplies. And the Filipinos would occasionally get shot at, and then when they got down they disappeared.
- Jim: And that's why you got your horses into there.
- Carl: That's why they decided to use those horses.
- Jim: Right. How many pounds could you put on the back of those horses?
- Carl: Well, you could put a couple hundred pounds. The 10-in-1 boxes were a carton, and it took two Filipinos for each one. One would carry it on his head for a while, and then the other one would carry it. They would change off. And then some places, the trail was very steep, and they'd have to kind of shove it up and shove each other and pull themselves up by the roots of trees and things. And when I was going up there the first

time there was a battle going on up there, and there were litter-bearers were bringing some people down. And I mean that was—looked like—it was bad enough gettin' shot, but to survive that trip down on a litter, I—

Jim: That was as big a test as getting shot.

Carl: [Laughs] I didn't think anybody was gonna survive that. Then they got halfway down, and it got dark, and they just had to set 'em down, and it rained all the time. They'd set 'em down in the rain. The next morning they went on down. And there was a lieutenant that joined us up there, and he was a lieutenant that stayed on the ship and was going to fire the artillery guns that we were going to direct the fire which never happened. But he never got off that ship. He got involved in that naval battle up there, and when he finally—about two months later it was, he finally got back and came up front with us, and he says, "Boy, I'd lot rather be up here in a foxhole. I never want to be on a ship again." [Laughs] That was a terrible ordeal for him, but he didn't think that living in a foxhole up front could compare with that experience on that ship.

Jim: Okay, I'm running out of questions. Can you think of any stories you didn't tell me yet?

Carl: Oh, I'm afraid I better not.

Jim: What's that mean?

Carl: Trying to think of any because I might talk all day.

Jim: Oh, well, that's what I'm here for.

Carl: Well, no, not really. A lot of silly little things happened that aren't really silly, but they're accidents. We see in the paper now where somebody in the military is accidentally killed in a vehicle accident or some kind of an accident, and when you have several million men in service, you can't avoid that. And I saw those things happen, and I was involved in a couple, and as I say, I was always lucky. And I can't give myself any credit at all for escaping whenever someone else died. I can't give myself any credit. It's just a matter of luck, and I don't know why. But I'm here, and there's nothing I can do about it.

Jim: Exactly. Okay, I think I've run out of soap here. I can't think of anything else to ask you.

Carl: Well, I think I've said plenty.

Jim: You've said a lot. Thank you.

Carl: [Laughs] I've enjoyed it anyway.

**[End of Interview]**