

## **ORAL HISTORY PROJECT**

**NARRATOR:** Eugene McAdam

**BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:** Eugene McAdam was born and raised in Kingman Kansas in the early 1920s. He is from a family of nine children. He spent a time in the United States Air Force during World War II and now lives in Cimarron, Kansas.

**DATE OF INTERVIEW:** January 14, 2003

**INTERVIEWER:** Jake Renstrom

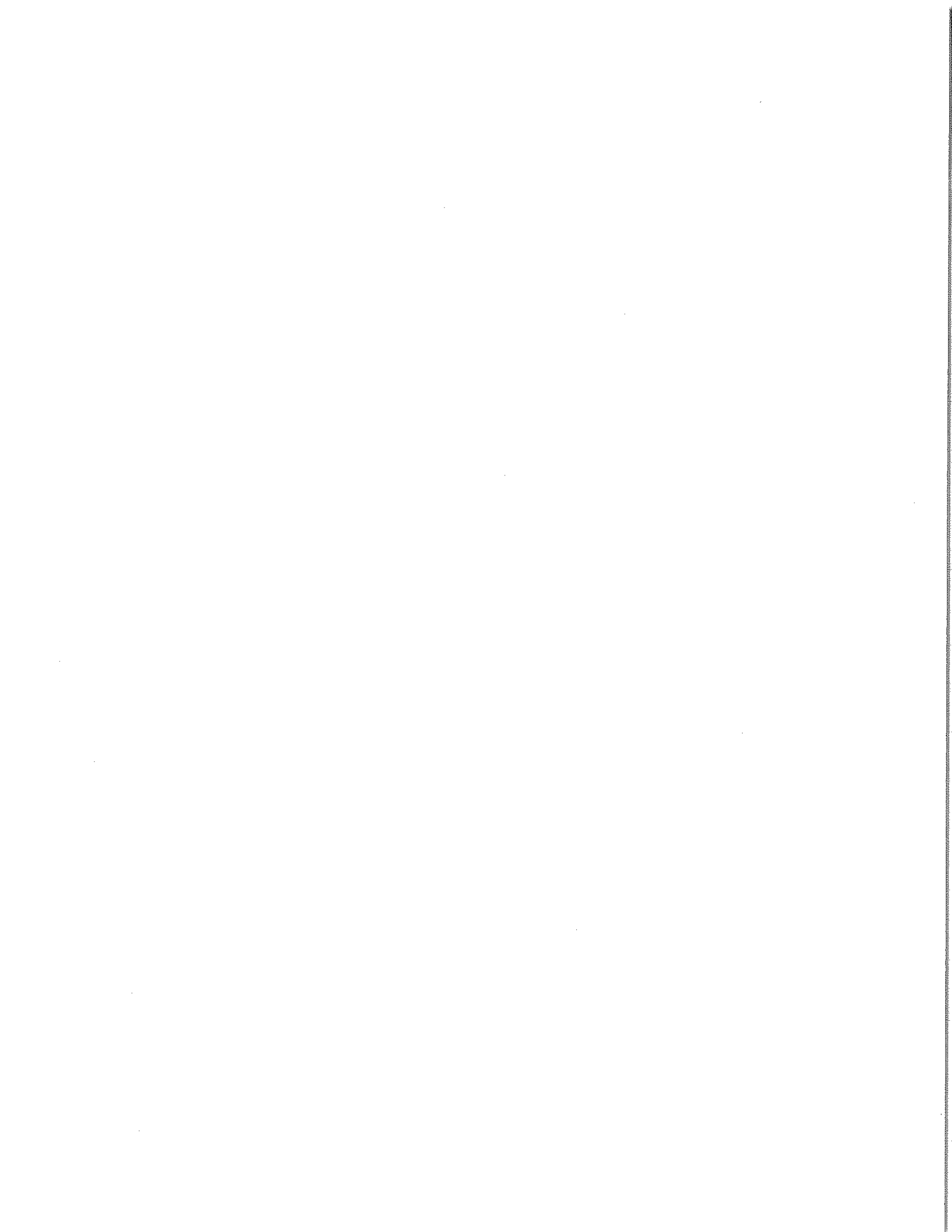
**LOCATION OF INTERVIEW:** Cimarron, Kansas

**NUMBER OF CASSETTES:** 1 video cassette  
1 audio cassette

**LENGTH OF CASSETTES:** 60 min.

**LENGTH OF INTERVIEW:** 15 min.

**SUBJECTS DISCUSSED:** Pearl Harbor and World War II



**Eugene McAdam**  
**Narrator**

**Jake Renstrom**  
**Interviewer**

**January 14, 2003**  
**Cimarron, Kansas**

Eugene McAdam – **EM**  
Jake Renstrom – **JR**

**(Side A)**

**JR:** My name is Jake Renstrom. I'm doing a documentary on Pearl Harbor with Eugene McAdam. He's going to be telling me about what his experiences were through the mid-1940s during Pearl Harbor.

Ok, can you tell me what age were you when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

**EM:** Uh, nineteen.

**JR:** Nineteen. Ok, where were you when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

**EM:** I lived in Kingman, Kansas at that time and uh, just hanging around town on that day, on that Sunday.

**JR:** 'K, can you tell me a little bit about your family background?

**EM:** Uh, I grew up in Kingman. Uh, my parents were [unclear] in that area and I had uh, six brothers and three sisters.

**JR:** 'K, can you tell me where you were when you first heard about the war?

**EM:** Uh, I was downtown in Kingman . . .

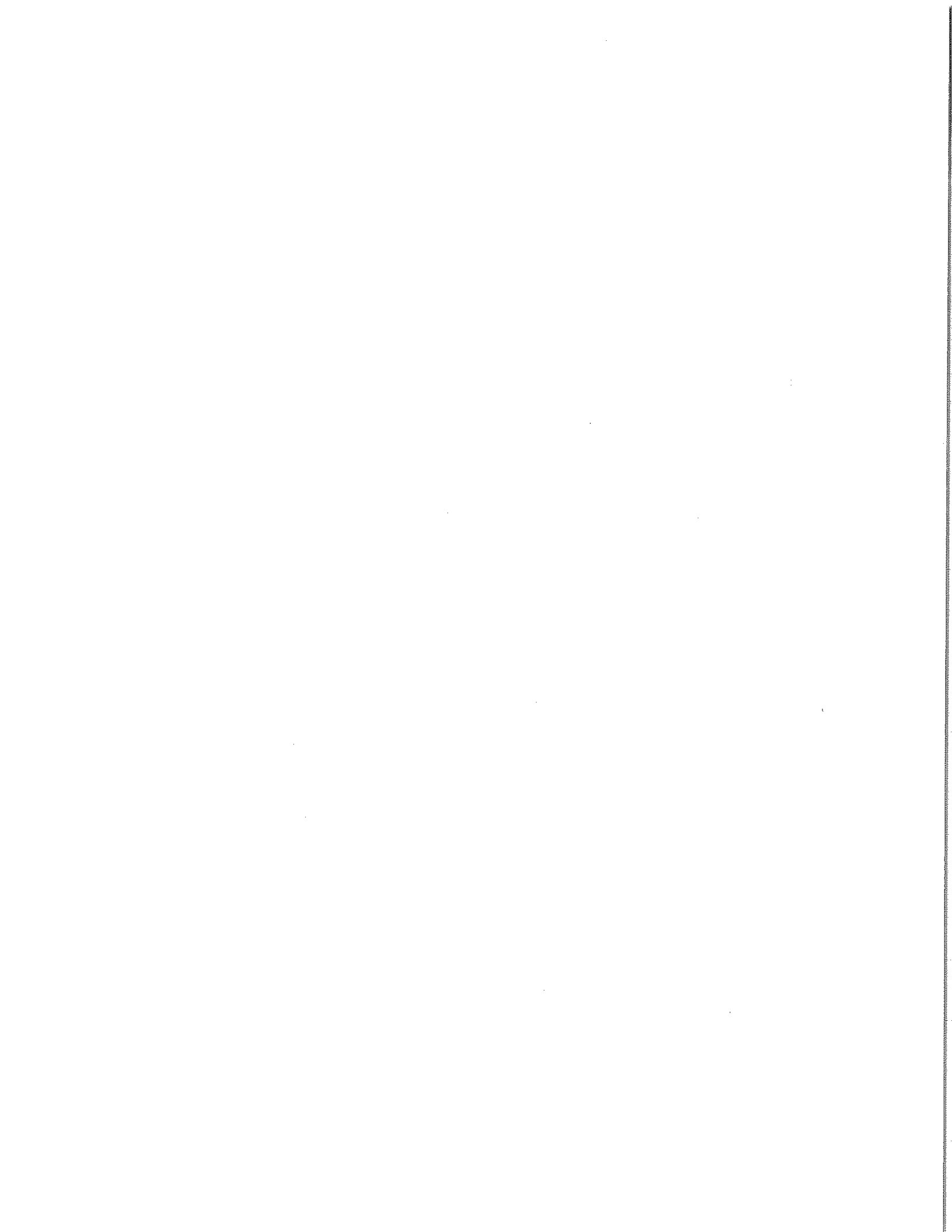
**JR:** Downtown in Kingman?

**EM:** Yeah, just hanging around with some other guys.

**JR:** Hanging around with some other friends?

**EM:** Uh-huh.

**JR:** Ok, were there a lot of men enlisting in the draft?



**EM:** What?

**JR:** Was there a lot of men enlisting in the draft?

**EM:** Uh, oh yeah, there were some. There hadn't been too many then but there were right after. A lot of enlistments right after Pearl Harbor, but the draft was already in affect before that.

**JR:** Before Pearl Harbor.

**EM:** Yeah, and of course, your enlistments and the draft calls for heavier, right . . .

**JR:** Right as it was right after . . .

**EM:** Right after, yeah.

**JR:** Ok, were you ever forced into physical combat?

**EM:** No, I was never in combat.

**JR:** You were never in it?

**EM:** No.

**JR:** Ok.

**EM:** In fact I was never overseas during the war.

**JR:** Ok. (Pause) Ok, did you ever pilot any kind of air craft?

**EM:** A little bit. I was in the Air Force. At that time it was called the Air Corp and I know we got a pilot's license and get qualified to fly. I never piloted an airplane but I did have eight hours of pilot training to qualify.

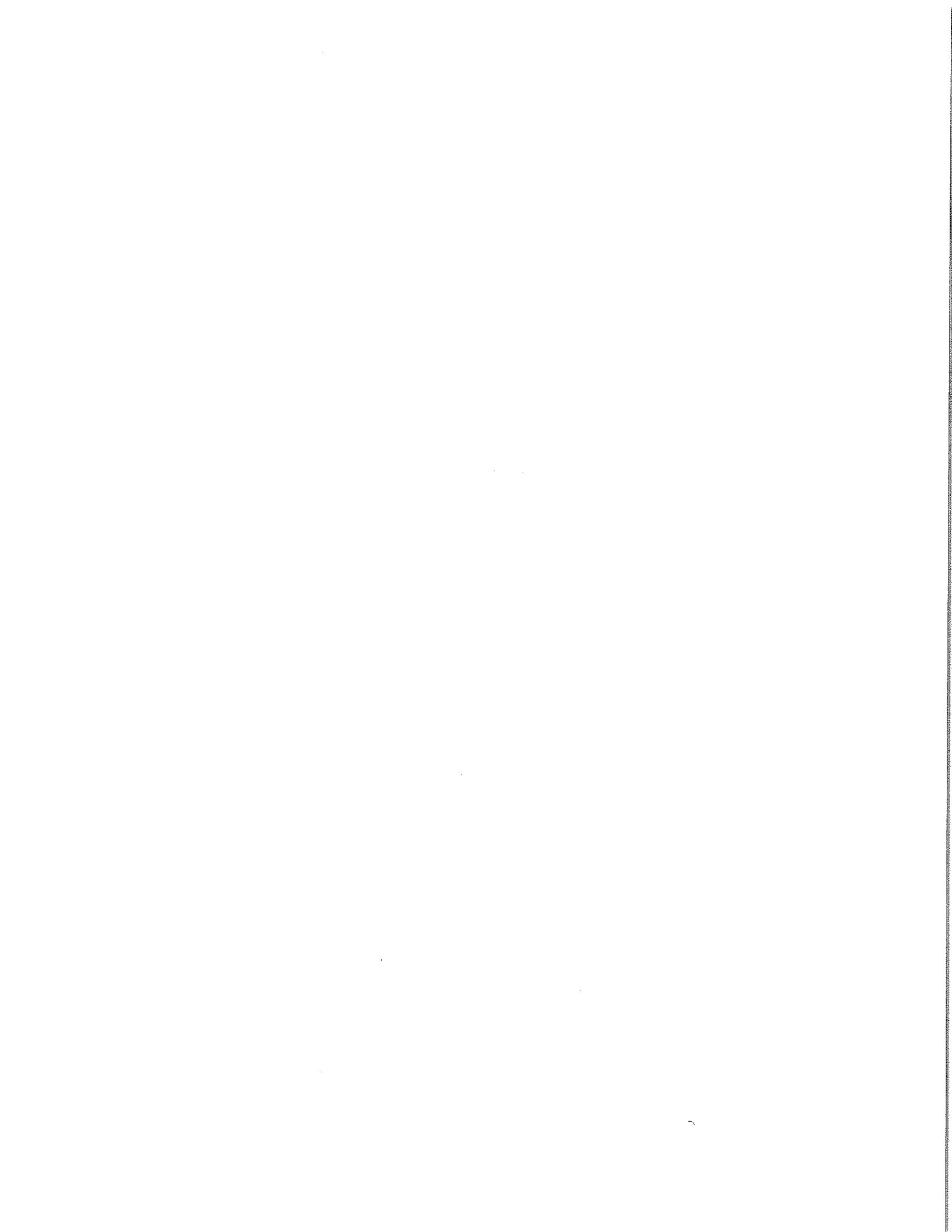
**JR:** Ok. Ok, what branch of military were you in any time?

**EM:** In the uh, Army Air Corp [unclear] changed the name. It would be Army Air Force and then [unclear] just dropped the Army altogether. It just Air Force.

**JR:** Ok, it was Army Air Corp then. It changed up like a year later or . . .

**EM:** I don't remember exactly when the name of it changed. Nothing changed other than the name really.

**JR:** Ok. (Pause) Ok, where, were you in a particular squadron or group?



**EM:** No, I, uh, I never was permanently assigned. I was in schools all the time.

**JR:** Ok.

**EM:** In training. I was in training [unclear].

**JR:** They were permanently assigned to a certain group.

**EM:** Yeah, a certain group that was going anywhere.

**JR:** Ok, where were you stationed during the war?

**EM:** Which time?

**JR:** Uh, was there more than one time?

**EM:** Well, I mean which place? I was, was, station . . .

**JR:** What was the first place?

**EM:** Uh, Wichita Falls, Texas, Shepherd Field.

**JR:** Wichita, Wichita Falls, Texas?

**EM:** Uh-huh.

**JR:** How many, how many places were you stationed at?

**EM:** [unclear] . . . Florida, New Mexico, California, North Texas, back to California . . .

**JR:** Meaning, meaning more than you can count?

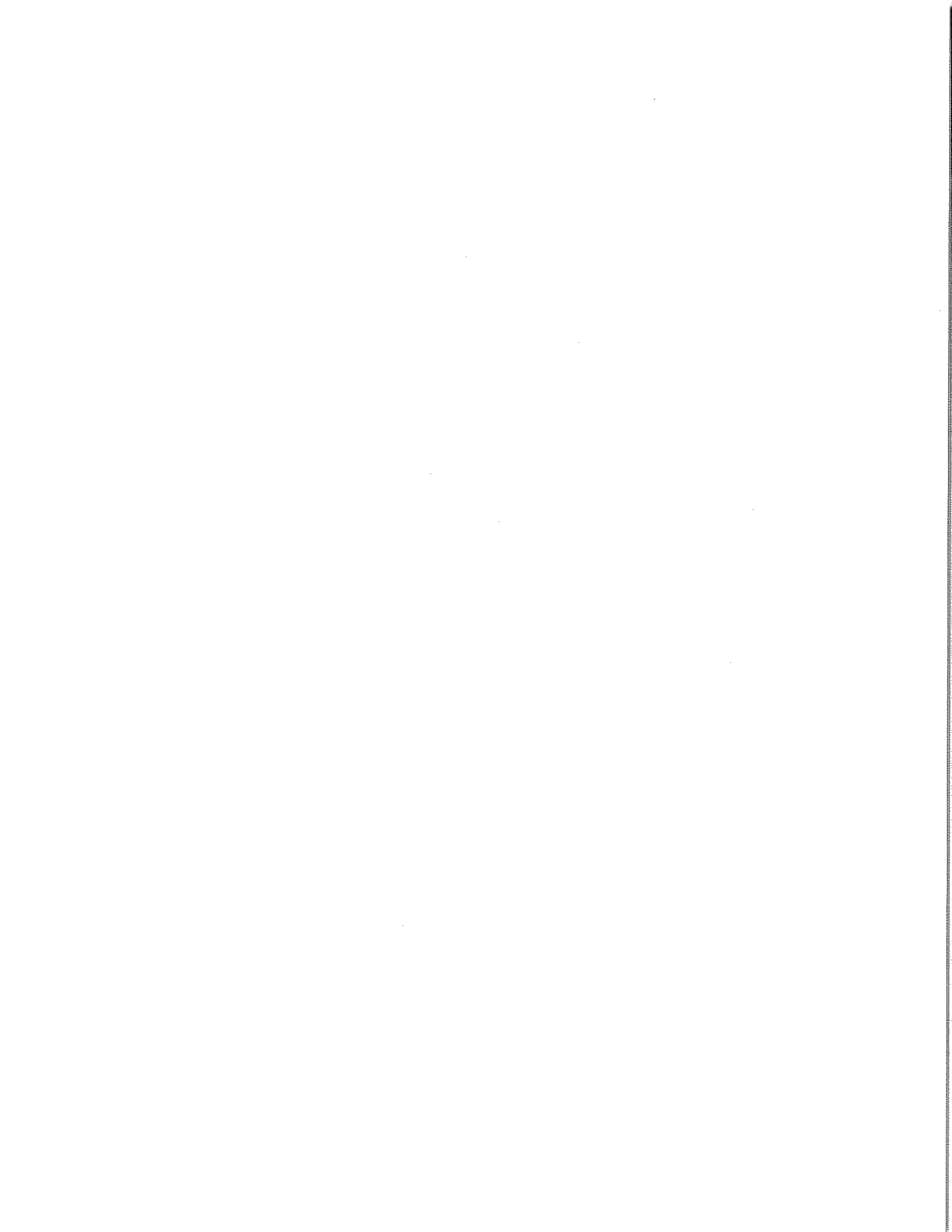
**EM:** Yeah, a dozen different, at least a dozen different places.

**JR:** Ok, did you ever agree, did you agree with all the things that happened in the war?

**EM:** No one ever agrees with every a hundred percent but uh, as far as being, a strongly against anything that the government did or anything, I wasn't. Things were . . . attitudes were much different than they are today.

**JR:** So, like, no one was a hundred percent on everything?

**EM:** Oh, no, any more than anybody's a hundred percent against anything today, you know. Everybody realizes that the people in charge have, have their duty to do, and they, what's, what they see as the best thing to do, is what they got to do, whether you agree with them or not.





**JR:** 'K, did you ever meet the president during the war?

**EM:** Did I meet?

**JR:** The president during the war?

**EM:** No.

**JR:** Ok.

**EM:** Unless you mean on the radio and saw him on the news reel but that's it.

**JR:** Yeah. Were there others in your family that served in the war?

**EM:** Yeah, there five of, I mean, four of my brothers were in it at the same time.

**JR:** How many brothers . . . You had six . . .

**EM:** Seven.

**JR:** Seven brothers.

**EM:** Seven brothers. There was seven of us and uh, five of us were in the service -

**JR:** Can you name the brothers that were in war.

**EM:** Yeah, Paul, Dick, Pat, Joe and myself.

**JR:** Ok, how did your family feel about you being called to the war?

**EM:** Oh, they like, any parents, they didn't want stay out but they really weren't that crazy about you going.

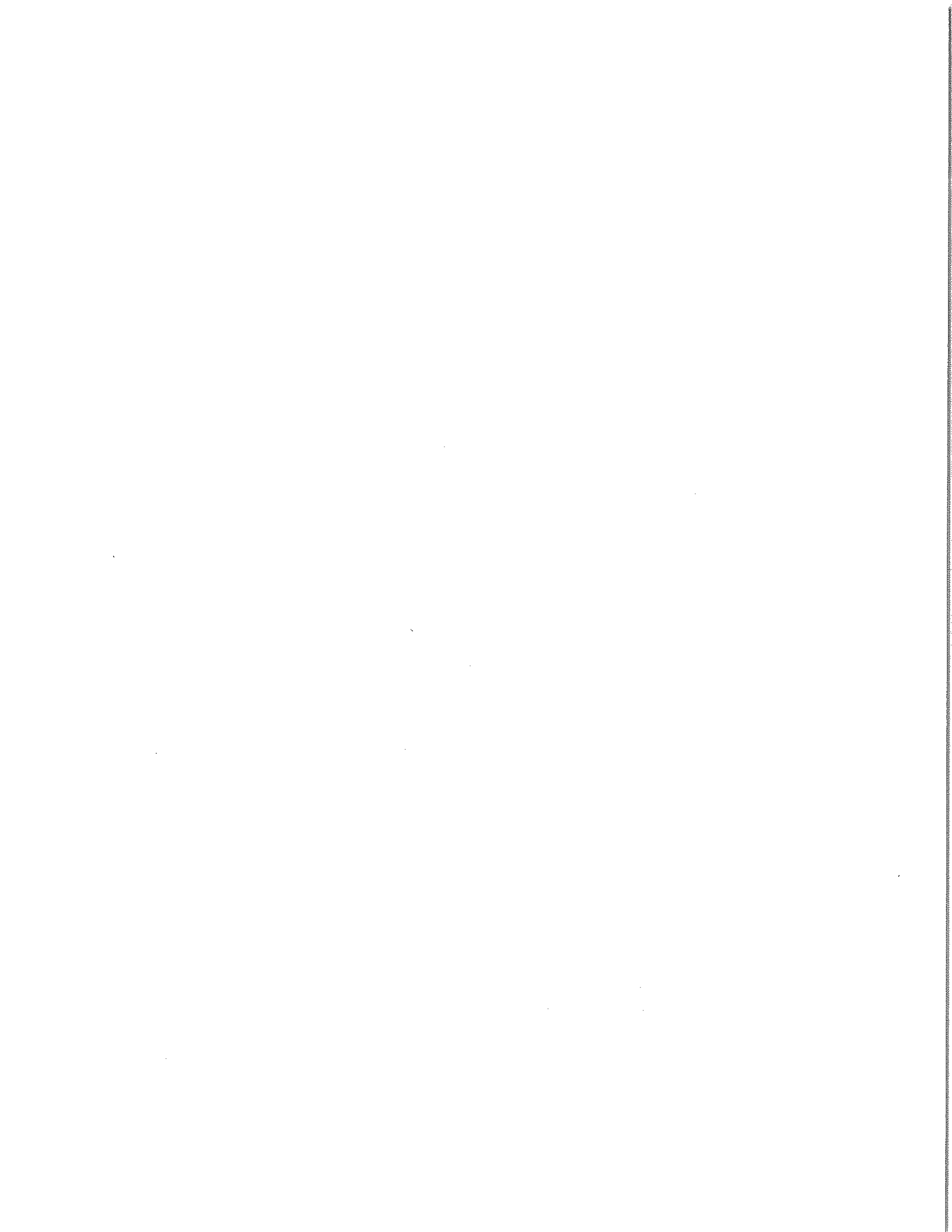
**JR:** Were they very emotional?

**EM:** Oh, no, not really. Tried not to be.

**JR:** Ok, they . . .

**EM:** But there were three . . . Three brothers were already in when I went into the service so of course, they hated to see more of us go but . . .

**JR:** Hated to see you go but you had to.



**EM:** Yeah, yeah right. They weren't against it but they . . . They wouldn't have wanted us to stay out either.

**JR:** Ok, did you know anyone who was killed in the war?

**EM:** Oh yeah several.

**JR:** Several? Could you name a few of them . . . Were they close friends or . . .

**EM:** Uh, not anyone real close but uh, like, I'd say there were, in Kingman there were oh, probably half a dozen or so [unclear] did get killed.

**JR:** Half a dozen kids that were in Kingman?

**EM:** Yeah, from there.

**JR:** Ok, what was the most depressing thing about Pearl Harbor?

**EM:** The what?

**JR:** What was the most depressing thing -?

**EM:** Depressing?

**JR:** Yeah, about Pearl Harbor?

**EM:** Oh, I think it uh, I don't know if it's depressing or not but it was . . .

**JR:** Well, emotional thing.

**EM:** Yeah, emotional thing was you were mad.

**JR:** About all the . . . Were you like, mad about all the ships that were getting downed.

**EM:** Yeah right, we didn't like that at all. You know, it was, it felt like it was a sneaky way of going about it. They didn't declare war, it was just, wham bam they were there.

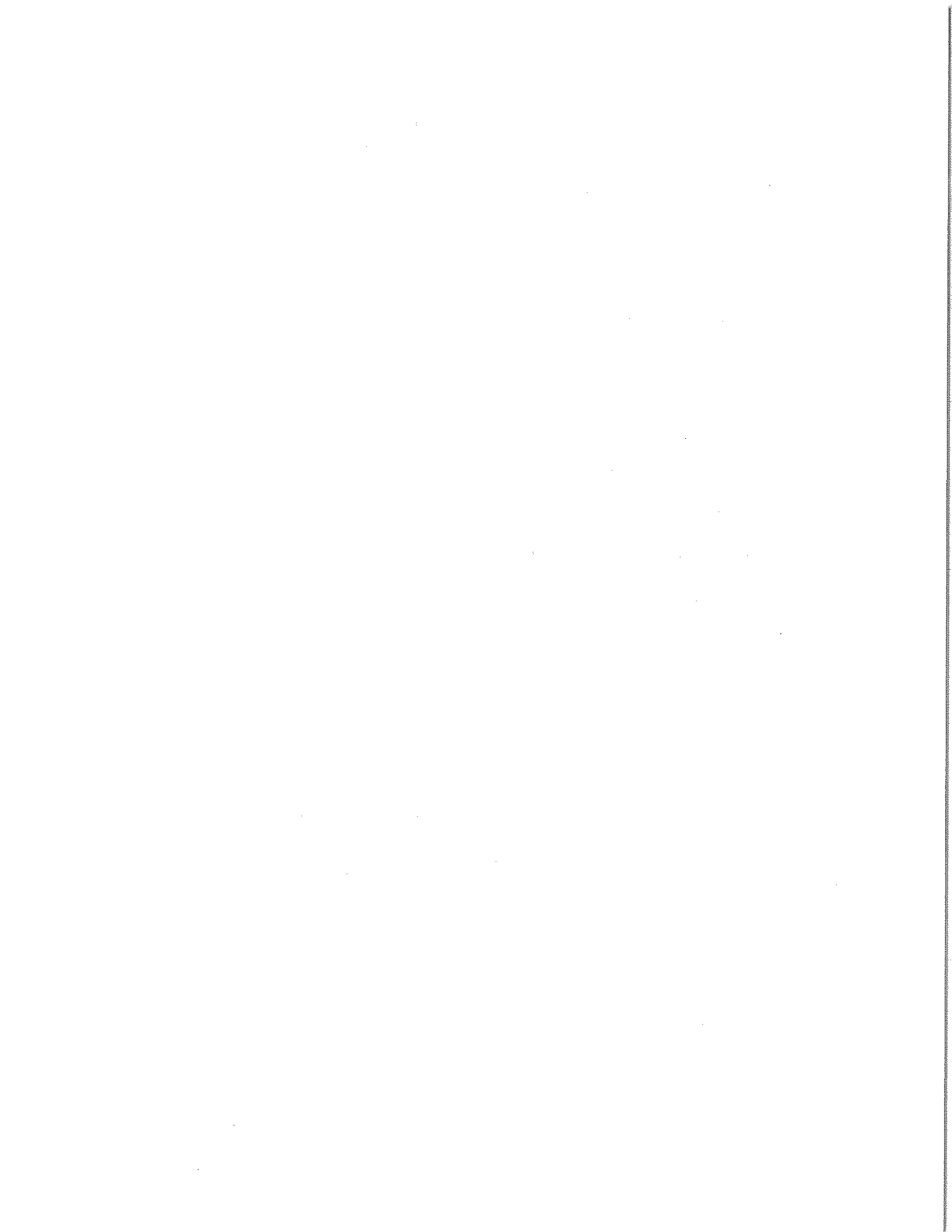
**JR:** Very cowardly.

**EM:** Yes, right. (Pause) Have you seen that movie, that "Pearl Harbor"?

**JR:** "Pearl Harbor"? Yeah, it's a really good movie.

**EM:** And it, you know, there's some phony stuff it like any movie . . .

**JR:** Oh yeah.



**EM:** - but it's pretty factual.

**JR:** Ok, were you, were you pulled out of school to fight in the war?

**EM:** For what?

**JR:** Where, were you pulled out of school to go in the war?

**EM:** I was, see I had graduated from high school the spring before that. And I wasn't in school. I was working, I think.

**JR:** What was the uh, what was it like, after everything had been done, looking at all the, uh, damage they had done to Pearl Harbor?

**EM:** You mean, what was it like . . . What was our action or feeling?

**JR:** Yeah.

**EM:** Well of course everybody was mad about that but uh, uh it woke this whole country up to the fact that they had to move. Uh, like I said, the draft was already in affect, but we were, I think most people, well I was a lot more concerned about Germany than we were about . . . I didn't even know Japan was a threat until Pearl Harbor. I don't think a lot of people, oh, I suppose the ones that, older people that kept track of things like that probably did, but people my age never thought much about Japan. [Unclear] and uh, the country was kind of on the edge whether to go into the war against Germany or not and then that made the decision for them. They went ahead and, seeing as their country had already been supplying material and uhm, help there to England, helping them. We were an ally but we weren't active in the war and then, kind of after we declared war on Germany, war with Japan the same time.

**JR:** Ok, well, I, I thank you for having me interview you here. It's been really interesting. Well, thank you for . . .

**(End of Interview)**

