

INTERVIEW

Guy H. Reed

YEAR

2006

GRAY COUNTY ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

NAME: Guy H. Reed

DATE: June 20, 2006

PLACE: Kalvesta, Kansas

INTERVIEWER: Joyce Suellentrop

PROJECT SERIES: Veterans Oral History Project for Gray County

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION:

Guy Reed and his friend Claude Stiawalt were drafted and went to Fort Leavenworth for physical hoping to stay together. Because they passed different tests they were separated and Guy went into the Army Air Force. He later was transferred to a Truck Company and trained in California and Florida before being sent back to California to be shipped to India. While there he trucked various supplies to the Air Force by driving in India, Burma and China. His two and a half years in the Orient was a learning experience for him as he had never been far from home until then. After the war ended he spent a winter in India and was shipped back home and has farmed in the Kalvesta area since that time.

SUBJECTS DISCUSSED: Entering the service and training and life as a part of a Truck Company and his journey to India. His experience in India, Burma and China and his knowledge of their customs was discussed.

COMMENTS ON INTERVIEW:

SOUND RECORDINGS: 2- 60 minute tapes

LENGTH OF INTERVIEW: 1 1/3 hours

RESTRICTIONS ON USE: none

TRANSCRIPT: 15 pages

ORAL HISTORY
Reed, Guy H
Interview Date: June 20, 2006

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Guy Reed (GR)

Tape 1 of 2

Side A

JS - The first question that we ask is: World War Two started in 1939 and then we got in with the bombing of Pearl Harbor in 1941. Do you remember hearing about the war going on, hearing about Pearl Harbor and what did you think or what did your parents think?

GR - Yes, we had a radio and we would sit there and dial in and listen to it. We were aware that they were having trouble with Germany and with Japan, I guess. That evening, Dad turned on the radio and said Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor. I didn't know where Pearl Harbor even was. The next day I was going to school at Beeler and the professor there got us all in a room there. Roosevelt gave a speech about Japan stabbed US in the back or something like that, and a state of war was going on. Professor Bollinger was a World War One veteran and he had been to France. In fact, he almost died three times over there. We had a talk about it and said it was pretty serious. My cousin and I went to school together.

JS - When were you born?

GR - 1924.

JS - You would have been seventeen at the time. Did you think at the time that that happened that you probably would have to go to war?

GR - No, I never even thought much about it. We were all upset and disgusted, except nobody knew what war was about. It is all together different and you really don't have an idea. And I didn't have any idea. Later on, Claude Stiawalt and I were talking about going to the Army. I had to go out of Finney and he had to go out of Ness so we were going at the same time so we could stay together. He was a pretty good kid, and we thought we would stick together and we would make it pretty good. Well, they induct you into the Army and then you take some tests and you get in the Army Air Force. The Air Force was in the Army. We went through that deal and he didn't get through it. That threw me into the Air Force and him in the Army so we were separated just like that.

JS - Where did you go to be inducted, to Kansas City?

GR - No, Leavenworth, I think it was.

JS - You enlisted or were you drafted?

GR - I was kind of drafted. We had it so they would draft us at the same time. We were ready, so we got in so they sent us down there at the same time. The two draft boards were good to do that for us, but we found out that when we were in the Army, they didn't care. We found they were the doggone dictator and they would tell you. My dad had been in the Army and he told me some of the stuff you had to do, but I guess it never soaked in.

JS - Once you were in the Army Air Force, you went to basic training? Where was that?

GR - That would be Shepherd Field, Texas.

JS - What did you do there?

GR - Just marched and learned how to take orders.

JS - Was it hard to take orders?

GR - Yeah, it was kind of hard for me when they tell you to do something and do it now. You finally learn to say, "Yes sir." That is the best way to do it. You get along better. It wasn't all that bad.

JS - Was that the first time you had been away from home?

GR - More or less, I hadn't been on any extended trips anywhere. I stayed three years with my grandparents when I went to high school. I had been away from home, but not really out. It was the first time where you were with strange guys all the time.

JS - What was that like to be with young men from all over the United States?

GR - It wasn't too bad, but it was kind of strange. We thought we would get to be pilots. I couldn't pass any pilots test they gave, so they said I could do mechanics. They shipped me to Nebraska to do mechanics. I was up there a few weeks when they closed the school. Then they shipped me to Fresno, California, and put me in a truck company. That was kind of a let down because back then MPs were the lowest and truck company was the next to lowest. You weren't high up on the list. It turned out to be real good. I was in that company for two years. It was good because we got to travel to Florida, China, India and drove through Burma. We were together for two years and you get to be close to those guys. We were good friends with most of them. There are exceptions, of course. The main thing is that they weren't shooting at us. A lot of guys were

getting killed and were shooting people. I always told people, I am glad that I never killed anybody or had them kill me.

JS - Was there special training for you in the truck company?

GR - Oh yes, they trained us all the time on driving. When I first got in, I was probably in the first twenty guys in that. Every time I got in with a whole new bunch of guys. They kept having more guys coming in. They needed more trucks so they took us out to Fort Ord, another place on the coast. There are a hundred men in a company. We got trucks and drove them back to Fresno. We were told not to drive the trucks till we had training and learned how to drive them. One training was convoy driving. Everything was hand signals then, so theoretically, when you drove through a town, the first truck slowed down and the others followed. Then they would open up and speed up. You would always have problems. When they gave the signals it was too late. The first truck would get through town, and the rest were trying to catch up and would speed through town, which you weren't supposed to do. We were training to get that down and another thing they trained you to check your oil and all that. You might drive five miles and check the oil. They had a lieutenant driving up and down the company. You had to pull up and lift the hood. You might as well go ahead and do it. You were pretty close to doing it and he wanted to see you do it. That was part of the training to keep the trucks running.

JS - While you were undergoing this training, did you know that you would be going overseas?

GR - No, but you always figure you probably will be. We were there awhile and they shipped us to Lakeland, Florida. We did some more training in night driving. We turned all the lights out and drove at night.

JS - How could you do that?

GR - It was pretty good. You had a little tail light that was four dots. If you were too far back you would see only one light so you came up. If you saw two you were just right. If you saw four you were too close. That made us think we were going to Europe were somebody would be shooting at us. Over where we went it didn't make any difference. The hard part was standing truck inspection. We washed all those trucks up and lined them up in a straight line, took the front seat out and line those up and stand at attention out there. We had to have everything lined up straight. It was hard to get them all lined up like they wanted. I don't know why they did that, just training, I guess. The Army wants everything to look alike, I think.

JS - Were they inspecting for cleanliness?

GR - Yeah, you had to have everything dressed up and looking alike. That was part of that. We thought they were overdoing it.

JS - Did you ship out from Florida, then?

GR - No, we were at Fresno, California, and they shipped us to Lakeland, Florida, on troop trains. I had come right through Garden and Dodge and went back to them. I didn't know when, so I couldn't tell anybody because I didn't know. We came back through to Camp Stillman in California, and went overseas.

JS - How many weeks were you in training before you went overseas?

GR - Probably three months. I am not sure.

JS - Did you still march and carry a pack and everything?

GR - Not much, we were lucky. We did some in basic and we had a rifle in the truck. We hauled a few soldiers down in Lakeland. We would load them up and take them out and I guess they walked back. We were in a big service group, two truck companies and the group had mechanics and everything. Whenever you needed a truck you would go there. Sometimes if you got orders to do something, you would go there and get a truck. You never knew exactly where it was going to be. For instance in Fresno they called a truck over there, the sergeant did. I would go over and get a little box and deliver it back over here. You never knew when you were called over what you would do. Sometimes you had to pick up trash, like all the trash cans. One time we got a load of beds and stuff, steel beds. In China we carried bottles of gasoline.

JS - Were you homesick while you were in training?

GR - Not too bad.

JS - So you went to Florida and back to California and you found out you were going overseas?

GR - They put us on a ship, but we didn't know where.

JS - They didn't tell you?

GR - No, they don't tell you anything. You just keep your mouth shut. They said loose lips sink ships. I guess it was true, they weren't even supposed to tell the color of the water. I watched the history channel later and figured out part of the reason why. I didn't know then. The ship I was on was the Anderson and had five thousand soldiers and a couple thousand sailors. If they had of sunk that

ship it would have been bad. We had to go clear down around Australia because they couldn't go through because of Japanese submarines.

JS - What was your impression of the ocean once you got out on it?

GR - It was awful big.

JS - Did you get seasick?

GR - Once or twice, most of the ocean is smooth, but beside Australia we got big old waves. We would go up and down and after about a day of it you would get queasy or something. Some guys got real sick, but it didn't really bother me very much.

JS - Did you run into any bad weather?

GR - It wasn't really bad, just cloudy with big old waves near Australia, but the rest was pretty smooth. The ship would zigzag so they can't torpedo you. I was in "dog" like ABCD. I was below the waterline so if we got hit by a torpedo, I would be in bad shape down there. Even though you were on a ship they made you do a little guard duty. They put me on guard duty one morning and I was up in the head. It is where people go to the bathroom or if they are sick. Those four hours I spent up there, I just sat there sick. That's because all those other guys were sick in there.

JS - How did you pass the time on the ship? Did you play cards or what?

GR - Talked, cussed and argued, a lot of guys played cards, but I was never a card player. I didn't gamble so I was different than a lot of them. I had this friend from Pennsylvania who gambled all the time. He used me for a banker because I never did charge him. I kept telling him he was losing money, but he said he was ahead. Sometimes you would sleep.

JS - Was it a long voyage?

GR - Thirty-four days, quite a while.

JS - Where did you land?

GR - We landed in Bombay, India. It was a heck of a long way down and around. We went and got trucks and hauled things around there.

JS - Did you go over the Himalayan Mountains or where would you haul things to?

GR - We just went over there one time. We went up in Northern India and went to China. It took about ten days to drive over to mainland China. India had gas stations to get gas and China hardly had any gas. We had about sixty trucks and twenty of them were hauling fifty-five gallon barrels of gas to get it over there. We just filled up with gas at night and drove it over there. All the other times they had to fly it in there. Chinese didn't have anything; they were using alcohol back then. This one place we had to haul from Airfield 83 to Airfield 13 which ran three or four miles so we would get a load of bombs or load of gasoline and drive it over here. We'd unload them and come back and keep that up going back and forth.

JS - When you were in China, how did the bombs get to where you would pick them up?

GR - They were flown from India. There may have been to more than one place, I don't know. "83" is where we were most of the time in China. They had a big receptacle, they called it, where they kept bombs and they would bring them in. Planes would bring them in and we would load them up and take them over there and dump them out.

JS - Were you in danger?

GR - No, a bomb could have blown up.

JS - I mean from the Japanese?

GR - No, even when we got clear over there, there were no Japanese there. Then the planes would load up and go on somewhere else, I don't know where. We had to take them aviation gasoline and we had our own gasoline.

JS - What did you think of India? When you were there were you just driving or did you get to experience places in India?

GR - Yeah, I had quite a lot of experience in India.

JS - It was an entirely different culture.

GR - Millions of people, poor, so poor that you couldn't believe it. I goofed up a time or two in India. I bought a baby. It was stupid. The Indians were begging and begging. Here were these kids out there begging and this little girl had this little baby and she came by and we were starting to move on the train and I pulled a real dumb stunt. I had what amounted to six cents and I gave it to her and she handed me the baby and I said, "Here, wait, here's your baby." There were a bunch of Indians around there and they started saying something. She started to leave and I stopped her and tried to give her the baby. It was scaring me because she was going to let me have the baby. The rest of them thought I

really had bought it. I thought they probably wanted the baby to have a better life. It had a little tea towel thing on it. It came loose and it was a little girl. She started to take off and I finally got her stopped. Everybody was saying something to her, but I gave her the baby and said for her to go. I had goofed up. I didn't try that again. Those people are real serious, they have nothing. It taught me a lesson. I learned another lesson. We were hauling stuff. It wasn't that bad of a trouble, but we used to go around the barracks and haul stuff that had to be dumped in a ditch. It was trash cans with all the letters, all the jars, any kind of a can or anything they would gather it all up. Little old starving kids would run and jump on that stuff. This one little boy just had a string around him. That's all he had. I had another guy with me and I got a brilliant idea that didn't work very well. I thought I would give him a ride in the truck. They didn't want to do it, but I got four or five of them to get up in the truck and I drove them around a little and came back. After a while I had a whole truck full of kids and they wouldn't get out. They wanted to ride around all day. I wasn't supposed to stay and mess with those kids all day. I might goof off a little, but I couldn't goof off all the time. I suppose they had never been in a truck, they were so poor. I told them the word for go, but I couldn't translate that I had to get back and they had to get out. I didn't try that any more.

JS - You learned two things there.

GR - Yeah, I learned that those people were poor and they probably want a little help, but you can't help them.

JS - That was hard wasn't it?

GR - It was hard, yeah. It is hard to understand that you drive out and here is this little kind of lean-to full of Indians living there with nothing. It is hard to see the little old kids with hardly any clothes on. None of them have shoes. They are just poor people. You always want to give them something, but you can't. There are too many of them. There are thousands of them that way. I have often wondered if they have changed much.

JS - They still have a lot of people over there.

GR - They have more now, maybe a billion. China has a billion, three hundred million.

JS - And I think the poverty rate is still high. People who go over there say there are a lot of people begging.

GR - There are thousands of people begging.

JS - What else impressed you about India?

GR - It wasn't too bad. I was stationed at a place called Infall and they unloaded airplanes there. They sent us up there to load trucks and we got up here and it was right in town, two big houses. One guy just wasn't getting in the truck. We had trucks assigned to us. You had to take care of them so you didn't get anybody else's truck, so to speak. Here they had two trucks and they were just driving them. We went out to this airfield and a C47 came in with supplies on. There were two big warehouses and we took them and set them out. Then another plane came in and they were flying from Burma or somewhere. They sent two trucks from our company. And they told us to bring the trucks back. It was about 600 miles.

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

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Tape 1 of 2

Side B

GR- There was a place up in the mountains that was kind of a rest camp so we stopped there and ate dinner. We always had K-rations in our pack, but we liked to find an Army camp to stop and eat. While we were there the sergeant said we would be going by 01300 hours. That meant to get going. When we went out, we couldn't go down the mountain because the road was closed so we were to stay all night and go in the morning. While we were there, here came a Catholic Sister and said we should go to Sera Pundi. They had a big convent there and Catholic School and all that. The other driver was Catholic and I wasn't, but he said we ought to go. We drove to Sera Pundi and it was on higher ground. They told us how good all the stuff was and they were all English people and Australian Catholics. They had all these kids there and they had a big cable they used to send stuff in baskets with wheels up and down. We stayed all night there and they treated us real well. They just questioned us about United States. They gave us homemade bread and jelly and we stayed another night and went down to see some big caves with some of the kids. The trucks sunk down, the ground was soft. We worked all day getting that truck out of there. We had to just keep packing in rock and moving a little and packing it again. We worked till night getting that truck out of there. We were getting worried about getting in trouble. We weren't even supposed to be there. That was another experience where I learned. We never told anybody about it. Those kids sang songs for us in English. After I stayed in India for a while I realized the people don't like the English. Some Mohammedans don't like Hindus and they don't like English. All those people had religion and England came in and set up different religion and different language and took over. A lot of the people resented it and they still do. That is one of the reasons why all those places like Iraq and Iran aren't going to like us. We have different religion. I like ham and beans, but they don't want to eat it. That is their belief. We will never get together on that. Like Ben Laden, when Saudi Arabia let American troops in there he felt like the Moslem religion was being disintegrated so that is part of his reasoning. In India once I happened to be on KP and they had four Indians out there helping, washing up the

trashcans. One of them stayed over there and wouldn't do anything. He said he was Mohammedan and the others wouldn't work with him. They don't really like white people that well.

JS - You learned a lot, didn't you?

GR - Yes, I had to learn part of it later on because at the time I didn't quite understand it. Of course, I always believed English and Americans were great. Everybody doesn't agree with that. I can see that now.

JS - What was your impression of China?

GR - My impression was that everybody there worked hard all day. I wasn't there when they planted the rice, but I was there when they harvested it. See, they plant the rice in little fields and replant it after it gets so big in bigger fields. They are all doing it. They had deals to irrigate it. The thing I dislike about China is the fertilization.

JS - It is human manure, right?

GR - They clean out all the outhouses and dump that on there and it stinks so bad. I dislike that more than anything, but the Chinese did that. We had to drink hot water in China because everything was contaminated. If you had a pop, that was great. We were where they had a Chinese Army camp. Our truck company was close to it with the motor pool. We had eight man tents there. The wells were just hand dug wells. They dipped water out for everybody. When a rain would come, all that waste washed into the well. That's why we had to boil the water and drink it hot. We didn't particularly like it. That bothered me about as bad as anything.

JS - Did you ever get sick while you were there?

GR - About everybody caught the diarrhea even doing everything they could to keep from it. We still go it.

JS - What did you do then? Were you treated in any way?

GR - They had sulfa pills. One time we had to go clear up north of Han Chung. It was about a 500 mile trip. Coming back through this little town we got some ice cream. I wanted it so badly that we stopped there and it was sherbet, not even ice cream. I think that is where I got contaminated, I am not sure. The next morning we came back to thirteen and I got up throwing up and with diarrhea bad. At Han Chung they had a dispensary, not really a hospital. I drove up there to get something and they gave me this sulfa and said to drink a lot of water. I was too sick to go on and I lay there all day by that air field. I was too sick to

drive. I just kept throwing up. I thought I shouldn't have eaten that stuff. Even though we tried not to drink anything cold, a lot of guys got pretty sick.

JS - What was the climate like when you were there?

GR - It was summer. It was nice. India was warm so I was in warm climate all the time. I was two winters in India, but it is so far south it is warm and it was warm in China so I was never in a cold climate. I felt sorry for the people in China because they had to work all the time day after day. They cut all that rice by hand and put it in bundles and let it dry out. Then they took those big baskets and hit the rice out into those baskets to take it home. Everything is hard manual labor.

JS - They didn't have machinery?

GR - They had no machinery. They had nothing to work with.

JS - You were in India, then China; was that where you were when the war was over?

GR - I was in China when the war was over.

JS - Do you remember hearing about the war in Europe being over?

GR - Yes, they said the war in Europe was over. That was great, but it didn't impress us much because we were more worried about Japan.

JS - You were still there when they dropped the bombs?

GR - The Chinese told us Japan was finished with a big bomb. That's what they told us. We didn't know why the Chinese were celebrating. They knew it before we knew it. They had pretty good communications even though they seemed to have none. We were supposed to have the best communications. They didn't tell us for quite a while. We all knew something was up because they were all happy. When we heard we were all happy.

JS - What did you think that you would be going home then?

GR - Yeah, I thought we would go back to Shanghai and come on home, but they sent us back to India. We stayed there for the rest of the winter in India.

JS - What did you do there?

GR - They started cutting airplanes up there. They had these P30s and P17s and they just cut them up. Our job was to haul the pieces.

JS - Where did you haul them to?

GR - About six or eight miles to a big old field and dumped them. The war was over then and a lot of people had gone home. I was young and unmarried and the older men of thirty-five and forty were the first to go home. Some were married and might have had kids. It went by points and some of the guys had been in a lot longer than me. I was only in for two and a half years and some of them had been in four or five years. Some of them had been to Alaska for a year and a half and then were sent to China. They didn't like that, but that's the way it turned out. They had another outfit cutting the planes up and one of the planes blew up and sent two of them to the hospital. Those guys got together and decided they weren't cutting up anymore planes. They would just set fire to them. They quit and asked to be sent someplace else rather than risk their lives. A lot of them were sergeants. The officers decided they shouldn't risk anymore people with cutting the planes up. They deactivated the company I was in. I was in the first twenty in and the last thirty out. We were put in another company. I was in what they called a crash-crew. If there was a plane crash, we went out and put the fire out. Then I came home.

JS - When you look back on that experience in India and in China, do you think the training that you received before you went over there was adequate? When you look back at your experience, what do you think about that experience?

GR - It was a great experience. There is so much stuff you don't learn and you can learn. I watch TV and you can't really tell what is going on. I can't really tell what is happening in Iraq.

JS - Did you learn a lot about people from the people you worked with?

GR - In fact, I learned a lot about different kinds of people. I had a good friend, Antonio, who was Italian and he was from Pennsylvania. He was born in Italy. He was born and raised Catholic and his dad became a priest and they went to an Italian Christian Church. He went around talking to all the Catholics and told them to get out of that Catholic Church because it was not good. He would argue about it and I was not even Catholic. He said they were too strict. He told that some mornings they wouldn't let them eat breakfast or something. The Italian Christian Church was great, he said. He would fuss with the other Italians in Italian and one of them would decide they should talk English so I could understand it. One of them would tell Tony he should come back in the church. Maybe he joined up later. When I got out I never did contact any of them.

JS - I was going to ask that.

GR - I did write two or three letters, but finally I just quit. One old boy was from Oregon and I about went out there. I was having trouble here, trying to make

money and he said I could make it in Oregon. I about drove out there, but I never got it done.

JS - When you came home on the ship, did you have any idea what you were going to do when you got home?

GR - I thought I was going to try to farm, but in the '30s my folks had a hard time making it like everybody did. I kept thinking if I had a farm out there, I could probably make it. My folks always managed and we always had plenty to eat. We may not have had everything, but it seemed like we got by. I liked farming better than anything so that's why I thought I wanted to be a farmer. I was lucky, I got to be that.

JS - Had you saved money while you were in the Army or did you spend money? Did you send it home?

GR - I saved just a little. I didn't save much. I was only making sixty dollars a month. I think a lot of the time I sent home twenty dollars or something like that. I saved a little bit, but it wasn't enough to do anything with. I think it was a pretty good experience, although at the time I thought it might not be. I more or less got into it by myself and I knew if you wanted to do anything you had to do it that way. My folks had taught me the world doesn't owe you anything. You have to get out and do something for yourself.

JS - If some young person asked you today about spending time in the Army, what would you say to them?

GR - I think it would be a good deal to spend a little time in there. One thing you learn is to take orders. It is a little hard to take orders a lot of times.

JS - Is there a particular person or a particular memory that you have; a particular officer or fellow serviceman that you have a particular memory of?

GR - Not really, I had a First Sergeant, who was an older man. He was probably in his forties. He had been in the National Guard for seventeen years. He had a wife and kids and he was with our truck company and he was the brains. We had three other officers, but he knew more than they knew. He knew the Army regulations. The Army has got thousands of regulations. I don't know how they ever knew them all. He kind of knew them and could work through them to get things the way he wanted it. He was, to a certain degree the one that kept us together. He stayed in there instead of going home and kind of looked after the rest of us. I didn't appreciate it as much then as I do now. He stayed and tried to help us and didn't really have to.

JS - Did you ever think of staying in the Army?

GR - No, a lot of my buddies said I would be good in the Army. I used to kid around about the food. Everybody griped about the food and I said I thought it was good food. I always kind of went the other way to say that it was darned good stuff whether I thought it or not. I asked them if they were griping about the food why they were first in line and going back for seconds.

JS - Were you able to write home and receive letters from home?

GR - Yes, they were all censored.

JS - Did you get any souvenirs from India or China to bring home with you?

GR - I brought a few coins, but I hardly got anything.

JS - If you had free time what did you do with your free time while you were there?

GR - We were mostly working like I do here.

JS - That was good training, then. Did it seem like a long time that you were there?

GR - It didn't seem too long. Seemed like time passed by pretty fast. We would always have something to do. See, where we used to run this trip was this wall. Seemed like Old China had just walls that were great big. While we were there a lot of some of the walls fell down. We could stay all night at this one town. I don't remember the name of it. We called it the one-ninety after the 190-Kiln. One day we backed this old truck up and were going to climb up on this wall. We got on top of the truck and climbed up on the wall. It was probably twenty foot across there. We walked clear around there that one evening. Turned out there were Chinese on both sides of the wall. Of course, they had a doorway where you could enter. It was just something to do.

JS - That is a specific memory that you have?

GR -Yeah, I wish we had had some film to take pictures. I saw a lot of big old mountains. Nobody has any pictures of us. They said the Air force was using all the film so even if guys had cameras there was no film. I had nothing.

JS - Any other specific memory that you think people should know about your experience?

GR - I don't suppose so. When you get about half way through Burma, they have the Saw Wing River and Burma has Japanese on the south. They had made a cable bridge down through there. It looked about an eighth of a mile across there and it was about 230 feet above the water.

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Guy Reed (GR)

Tape 2 of 2

Side A

GR - The Burma Road went from Rangoon up to China. That was blacktop and the Japanese got all that. Later what America had to do was build another road and it was pretty rough. There were guys up there with bulldozers smoothing that out. They just kicked the rocks off and tried to keep it so you could go. As you went through there, you saw Army trucks laying down there so somebody had run off. They just left them lay there because they couldn't get them out.

JS - Was this toward the end of the war?

GR - Yeah, it would be close to it.

JS - Was the geography different than China?

GR - Burma was just big mountains. When you first leave Ledo and come down to what they called Michinau. Merrill's Marauders took Michinau. We got down to Michinau and stayed all night there. It was kind of down in a valley and there wasn't one building standing. That is when you realize how bad war is because it was total destruction. You can't believe how badly things were torn up. I don't know if it was flame throwers or artillery or what did it. There were some Japanese tanks down there with big holes blown in them. Something hit them pretty hard. Then we went on to the next town of Bahlo and it was the same way, all blown to nothing. There were not any Burmese around there and I figured they had gotten killed or ran and hid somewhere. Burma has probably never gotten over that war. With those big mountains you can't go anywhere, but down to the coast. Charles Prost went to school with me and he was stationed at Ledo, India. He took care of the soldiers that were crazy. They had a big hospital there. When we stopped there he showed me what he had to do and he had a bad job. They had this one Chinese soldier there and all day long he just made his bed over and over talking Chinese. That is all he did every day. On the History Channel they said they had to take some Chinese to take the Japanese out of Michinau.

JS - A lot of your driving was mountain driving?

GR - Through Burma it was all mountain driving and most of India was mountain driving. The rest was level. Even when we drove in China we went over two mountain ridges, but they were not bad ones. In Burma the mountains would wind up high. They had a lot of big mountains there.

JS - Sometimes the trucks would break down on you, I assume?

GR - Our Company had six mechanics and they always tried to be out there all the time.

JS - They traveled with you?

GR - Some were around there close. Sometimes we had to fix our own tires. We had a lot of tire trouble.

JS - I would think on all those rocks.

GR - The roads were just built by hand by Chinese. Even in India they were built by hand. You were always blowing tires and ruining springs. I got so I could change springs or anything.

JS - You carried extra springs with you?

GR - When you got back you got a spring and put it in or fixed tires. On those sixty series, six cylinders if you blew enough tires, you had to take a chain and chain part of it up and come driving in that way. They were shipping tires in all the time to keep us in tires. Actually they were brand new trucks so should have needed nothing. Once, sixty or so of us went to India to get trucks. They had all these brand new trucks. I think the English handled that. We told them we were to get sixty of them and they gave us each a number. You would go find the truck with that number and take it out. The problem was brake fluid. They had gas and oil, but no brake fluid so you would have to try another one. They were brand new so mostly nothing broke except tires and brakes. Once in awhile, a U-joint would go out. If anything did go wrong one of the mechanics could fix it or they shipped something in by air to fix it. The mechanics were trained. We kept things like the oil up to date. That day in China I had to lay over a day sick, there was a guy there with a U-joint out. They were going to bring another truck in and change the U-joint. I was so doggone sick and they said to drink water so he got a big old kettle out there and filled it full of gas and boiled some water for us to drink. I appreciated him doing that.

JS - Is there anything else that you can think of?

GR - That is about all I can think of. I told you my life story.

JS - That's good.

Interviewer: Joyce Sullentrop (JS)

Interviewee: Guy Reed (GR)

Tape 2 of 2

END
