

Harry W. Athenas
Narrator

Wayne Clark
Interviewer

New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center
Saratoga Springs, New York

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American Legion Post 216
Margaretville, New York

Harry W. Athenas **HA**
Wayne Clark **WC**

WC: Today is the 11th of August, 2009. We are in Margaretville, New York at the American Legion Post, Number 216. My name is Wayne Clark; I'm with the New York State Military Museum in Saratoga Springs. Sir, for the record, would you please state your full name and your date and place of birth, please?

HA: My name is Harry Walter Athenas. I was born in Englewood, New Jersey.

WC: Ok, and when were you born?

HA: January 8, 1923.

WC: Ok. Did you attend school there?

HA: No, I attended school on Long Island. We moved, my folks, when I was just a baby, moved from New Jersey to Long Island, and I grew up on Long Island my whole life, really.

WC: Did you graduate from high school?

HA: No, I never went to high school. I never graduated. I [unclear] school, either.

WC: Ok. When did you go into the service?

HA: I went into the service in 1943.

WC: Were you drafted, or did you enlist?

HA: I was drafted.

WC: Whereabouts did you go for your basic training?

HA: My basic training took place in Miami Beach, Florida. I was inducted in Camp Upton, and then we went to Miami Beach, Florida; that's where we took our basic training.

WC: Now, was that an Air Corps basic training?

HA: I imagine it was, I imagine I was in the Air Corps.

WC: The reason I ask, most of the guys that went to Miami Beach ended up in the Air Corps.

HA: I imagine it was Air Corps training, because when I left there I went to Jefferson Barracks, Missouri, and that's where they trained young men to become flyers. That's where they took their basic training.

WC: Now, how long were you there?

HA: At Jefferson Barracks?

WC: Yeah.

HA: Jefferson Barracks, I was there until 1943, and then I shipped to Scott Field, Illinois for overseas shipment.

WC: What was your job specialty?

HA: Well, when I was at Jefferson Barracks, I had signed up for truck driver school, which was at Camp Lee, Virginia, and I spent, I think, nine weeks at Camp Lee, Virginia, becoming a truck driver.

WC: What type of vehicles did you drive?

HA: Mostly GMC six-by-six, big trucks.

WC: Did you learn any kind of mechanics also?

HA: We went through a mechanics course before you started driving. You went through the whole mechanics course that was taught to us by civilians. They taught at the school, civilians. And I went there and I got my license to drive Army vehicles.

WC: Did you ever drive any Army motorcycles, too?

HA: No, not motorcycles. I didn't get that far; I didn't get to motorcycles.

WC: So you became a truck driver, and then you shipped overseas.

HA: Yeah, we shipped over—

WC: Did you go over with a unit, or as a replacement?

HA: On one single ship, SS Aquitania, was the name of the ship. No escort, no nothing, just a single ship. With thirty thousand men on that ship.

WC: Did you get seasick at all?

HA: No, a little bit when we got out in the North Atlantic, but not too bad. And we landed in Scotland. And we stayed in Scotland for a week or ten days, and then we shipped into England, and I was stationed at Ascot Race Track, and we were camped there. We had our camp at a race track.

WC: And how long were you there for?

HA: Let's see, we shipped in there.... I guess we were there until the invasion.

WC: Now, what unit were you assigned to?

HA: I was assigned to 1709 Signal Service Battalion, that's in the 9th Air Force. Our signals had to do with the 9th Air Force. Either fighters would come to our outfit, and we would in turn send them to England, because there were no airfields yet in France. So we would send to England for fighters, and fighters would come from England.

WC: I see

HA: But then later on, once we advanced, then we had airfields in France, and the fighters were in France.

WC: Ok. Tell me about the invasion. You obviously prepared for that—

HA: Well, I don't think anybody was prepared for it. Everybody's young boys, everything was confused.

WC: Now, were you a part of the first group on June—

HA: The second group, we came that night of the first day.

WC: What was that like for you?

HA: Well, confusing. There was so much going on, and so many people giving orders. The only person, I think, that really saved that whole invasion was an engineer in a bulldozer who made a road from the beach up onto the highway.

WC: Now, which beach did you land on?

HA: Omaha Beach.

WC: Were you under fire at all at that point?

HA: Mostly sniper fire, and you had some artillery fire that was coming in from a long distance off. They were back in off the beach, there was German artillery fire.

WC: Were you in a truck?

HA: Yes. We came right off the landing barge, came right off in the truck.

WC: Now, was your truck waterproofed at all?

HA: Yes. We waterproofed everything while we were in England. Then when we landed, the fellow who cut that road up off the beach so you could get up off the beach, he should have got a Congressional Medal of Honor for what he did; otherwise we never would have got off that beach.

WC: Was there still a lot of wreckage and wounded and dead?

HA: Yeah. Your order right there was get to where you're going. You knew where you had to go. When we landed, we de-waterproofed the trucks, and then went down along the coast to a town called Grandcamp, right along the coast of France. And we stayed there for, maybe four or five weeks. Then the main outfit came over from England. We were only a small group that went over. The main body came over later, and when they came we

moved over to a town called Ste.-Mere-Eglise. We moved up into that town and set up. What we had was all radio and telegraphic equipment in the trucks, that's what our main thing was. And we had the code deciphering truck also, to decipher codes. If we had been overrun by the Germans, we would have to destroy everything. That was the first order of the day, destroy everything if we should be ... Because we're sitting on the beach: we've got the English Channel (gestures to his right with one arm), and the Germans are just a few miles away (gestures to his left) at the time, so anything could have happened. They could have counterattacked, and where could you go? Your back was against the wall. Our orders were that if that would happen, to destroy everything, the trucks and all the equipment and everything.

WC: So obviously, that didn't happen. So eventually you moved inland?

HA: We stayed there at Grandcamp a good three, close to four weeks, set up everything in Grandcamp. A lot of things happened there, also. Every night a German fighter would come over just to harass us, come fly right at top-of-tree level, right over the top of us, out over the English Channel, he'd turn around, then come back over us. And the artillery outfit that was about four miles down the road from us would be shooting at him. They never hit him.

WC: Did you get strafed at all?

HA: No, he never shot anything. It was just harassment. So you couldn't sleep. You don't know what he's going to do. Is he going to shoot? Is he going drop bombs? You don't know. So you're sitting there, wondering what he's going to do tonight. And he came over the same time every night, 11:15. You could set your watch: 11:15, here he comes.

WC: Once you moved out of there, where were you sent next?

HA: Like I said, we went to Ste.-Mere-Eglise, and then from there we went to a town called Laval, France. After Laval, we moved up to the other side of Paris to a town called Chantilly. We stayed in Chantilly until the end of the war.

WC: And you continually moved equipment around?

HA: Oh yeah. After the war ended, then we moved up to Wiesbaden, Germany, that's where the headquarters is still today. We set up that headquarters in Wiesbaden. And then from Wiesbaden, we moved up into Bavaria, Bad Kissingen, and we stayed in occupation in Bad Kissingen. We left there, I think it was around the middle of October. We left there and shipped down to Antwerp, Belgium and waited for a ship to take us home.

WC: Now, during the time between the invasion and when the war ended, you were constantly moving equipment and driving—

HA: That's right. My job was always to find depots to get supplies.

WC: Were you ever under direct attack by the Germans?

HA: No, not after the first day. We had a lot of sniper fire in Grandcamp, but I think that was the French, not the Germans. Because you've got to understand, the French were doing all right with the Germans. And we come along and blow up their homes, kill their families, so they don't have much love for us. I'd be the same way, so would you. They had no use for the Americans. We suffered a lot of sniper fire. In fact, I almost got to get... the warrant officer was going to have me court martialed because I refused to climb up a pole and string telephone wires. I says, "Nobody else strings them up there; I'm not going to climb that pole with these snipers around." It was common sense. "Well, I could get you court martialed." I said, "You do what you got to do. I'll put the wires down where everybody else puts theirs, along the fences and right along the road; they don't climb poles when there's snipers around. "

WC: Now what about your clothing and equipment, was it adequate?

HA: Yes, I think all the stuff we had was adequate. I was always in charge of getting supplies. That was my job. Find out where the supplies are, and go get them, whether they're in Belgium, France, or wherever the supply depots are. One time I went to Cherbourg for supplies, I have a whole story there about Cherbourg.

WC: Do you want to read off any of those stories, or refer to them if you want to?

HA: I can if you want me to. (He picks up and reads through a paper in front of him.)

WC: Ok, whatever you want to tell us.

HA: Like I said, our first order of the day was to destroy all the equipment... Meeting up with my brother...

WC: Oh yeah, tell us about that.

HA: We set up in Grandcamp, and I had to return to Omaha Beach for supplies. Mainly ration supplies – all we had was K rations. I don't know if you ever ate K rations – they're terrible! It's all dehydrated food, you know. So I went back to Omaha Beach to pick up some supplies and batteries, because they operated off of batteries, those telegraphs. Later on we had generators, but then they ran off of batteries. And right there on Omaha Beach there was an information booth: if you wanted to find out what outfit's where, you could ask them and they could tell you where they were. So I'll ask if they know where my brother's outfit was; I didn't know where my brother was at that time – did he come off at Omaha Beach? Did he come off at Utah Beach? I didn't know. So I asked them, and fortunately enough, I worked at the post office with him in Floral Park [Long Island, NY] in 1938, and he was in charge of that booth. And I told him I'm looking for my brother's outfit. And he said "Tell

me the number, and I'll find it for you." And he knew exactly where it was, at the town of Chef-du-Pont, and he told me the highway number and all, and he said "that's where your brother's outfit is right now." So next day, my good friend Nick Cicero – we were buddies through the whole war – we went and took a truck and we went to visit my brother, and that's where that picture was taken. And that's when that picture was taken (gestures to table, then picks up photograph).

WC: Do you want to hold that picture up? Now which one is your brother?

HA: (Holds photo up to camera) The smaller one (on the right). The bigger one is me.

WC: All right, got it.

HA: (Lays down the picture). So Nick and I went to see my brother. And when we got there, he was down on the beach picking up supplies. The sergeant said, "he'll be right back, wait here for him." So we waited, and he pulled in with his truck. And we were sitting around with the other guys in his outfit, and the sergeant. And the sergeant said, "Hey, Bill, come over here." So that's where we met, and we cried the both of us.

WC: How long had it been since you'd seen him?

HA: Let's see, my brother Bill, he went in the service before me. I guess it was two and a half years since I'd seen him. He went into Ireland, and from Ireland to England, and then he married a girl in England. Eventually he came back home. And he died in England. He went back later on, way after the war, and went to – my brother was big in the fire department, and he was made a fire marshal. They had a convention that went to Amsterdam, so they went to Amsterdam, and he figured that after the convention he would go to England and see his in-laws, and he got pneumonia and died.

WC: Oh, geez, that's too bad....

HA: After he went through everything, he dies in England from pneumonia.

WC: Was his wife with him at the time?

HA: No, his wife was here on Long Island at the time. I don't know if that has any part of this or not....

WC: Yeah, that's interesting. All right, and then what else do you have there?

HA: (Picks up another paper) My brother Bill.... And I talked about, every night the German fighter would come over to harass us. I don't know whether he was looking for our outfit or what, but he would fly directly over us every night. That went on for three weeks. They would shoot at him. I guess they would send like 5,000 rounds at him, and never hit him. Them shooting at him, kept us awake. He'd go out over the English Channel, turn around and come right back over the same route at us, and they would keep shooting at him. They never hit him.

Unidentified person off camera: What did they call him?

HA: Bed Check Charlie. His name was Bed Check Charlie. Then after that.... There was an artillery outfit, down about four miles from where we were, and one evening about 5:45, a P38 came over us, and the planes had to be on the ground at 6:00. That was the rule, all planes had to be on the ground by 6:00. Well, he didn't make 6:00, and our artillery shot him down, a P38. And we went over the field to pick him up because he parachuted out. He was mad as hell, he said he'd been shot down twice by our own guns. (Laughs) So he was pretty mad about that.

And there was a trip I made from Chantilly to Cherbourg to pick up supplies. I had to go to three different depots for what I was looking

for. I had to get oil, I had to get truck parts, and I had to get kerosene. And there was a shortage of kerosene, but I had to get it because it was for my colonel's kerosene heater, so he wanted the kerosene. So I picked up everything else, and the last thing I had to get was the kerosene. So I pulled up to a field where they told me the kerosene was, and there was a colored boy in charge of it. He says, "Well, the kerosene is way back over there in the field, but if you go in that field and you get stuck, no one's going to pull you back out. So make up your mind. If the kerosene is that important, and you go in that field and get stuck, you're on your own." So I went in, picked up the kerosene, and in fact, one colored fellow come with me and we loaded the kerosene onto the truck, and I got stuck. In France, when you're in the mud in France, that mud is like quicksand. I've seen Sherman tanks in Cherbourg harbor, and the only thing that was sticking out was the turret, the rest of the tank was down in the mud. So, I went in the field, got stuck, and he says, "I don't know how you're going to get out of here," and I say, "I'll get out of here." So I got my skid chains out. Put skid chains on my front wheels... I was laying in this mud, I mean I was mud from head to toe.... I got the skid chains on and I got out of the field. And the colored guy was there and he said, "Look at this guy eat up this field!" Only he didn't say guy, he said "Look at this mutha eat up this field." I got out and then took the chains off, and got back out on the road.

After that, I left there and I hit a detour and I got turned around in the detour. You can't use headlights, so I got turned around in the detour, and I really got lost. I didn't know where the hell I was. I says, "Well I'll keep driving and find my way out of here." And I look in a field, and there was a truck and a trailer out in the field, Army stuff. And I thought I'll stop there and maybe they can put me on the road to Paris. Once I get to Paris, I can find my way out. So I go in there, and I stopped and there was a sergeant there and he asked what I wanted. And I said "I need the right road to get me to Paris. That's all I need." So a door opens up, and who do you think walks in, General Patton, with his guns on. I knew who he was. And he says "Sergeant, what's going on here?" The sergeant says, "Well, this corporal's lost and we have to get him on the road to Paris."

And he says, "I'll tell you what, you feed that man, you give him a whole change of clothes, and you send him on his way." That's his exact words.

WC: Now you were covered with mud at that time?

HA: Mud, head to toe. He said "You give him all clean clothes and shoes, and feed him and send him on his way." (Laughs)

WC: That's quite the story! Did you actually get to talk to Patton at all?

HA: No, I talked to the sergeant. That was another event.

WC: While you were overseas, did you get to see any USO shows, or anything like that?

HA: Yes, we had USO shows, with Bob Hope, that was in Chantilly. He put on a show for us. Chantilly's a pretty big size town, compared to the other towns in France. We set up our main headquarters in Chantilly. I've got some more stories; you want more?

WC: Sure...

HA: (Refers to paper) You know how you stick your neck out sometimes? I stuck my neck out. Let me see.... The WACS joined our outfit when we were in Chantilly, France. We had a whole company of WACS came, which were radio operators, teletype and they took over that part, the WACS.

WC: Was fraternization allowed, with the WACS?

HA: Well, no. It really wasn't, but you know that doesn't work out, either.

WC: When they first came over, I was given a job, because they were bivouacked in town, that's where their quarters were. But the headquarters was about five miles outside of town. My job was to pick them up at their quarters and take them to headquarters. And after that shift, bring the next shift and then take that shift back home. We had three shifts. We called it the WAC run. So, I was on the WAC run. Sometimes I would go on trips, maybe I'd have to go to Liege, Belgium. Liege had mostly engines and big parts. Small parts you'd get in Cherbourg. So one WAC always sat up front with me. She was telling me about her brother, he was in a replacement depot. So she gave me his name and the outfit. I said if I run across him, maybe I can do something for you. So I found his outfit, and I went in; when you're young, you got a lot of..... I went in there and I asked the sergeant, and he said "You'll have to ask the captain, I can't give you any permission." So I went and talked to the captain, and I told the captain about his sister working back in our outfit, and it would be nice if she could – I know how I felt when I met my brother – how it would be for her if she could meet her brother. So I talked my ass off to the captain, and he give me a 24 hour pass for this kid. So I took him back, he stayed with his sister. Next day I had to pick him up and take him back – he only had 24 hours – and I got him back on time.

WC: That was a nice thing you did.

HA: Well, I know how I felt when I met my brother, and how she would feel if she met her brother, would be the same kind of a feeling. He was in [unclear] replacement depot, so who the hell knows where he's--the Battle of the Bulge hadn't even taken place yet – or whether he made it or not. His name was Jimmy Connelly. You know sometimes you do good deeds and you wonder why you get whacked? Well on my way back from taking him back there, I crashed the jeep up. I got hurt, myself, pretty bad. I got thrown out of the jeep and landed on my head.

WC: Were you in the hospital?

HA: Well, what happened is I was laying out in the middle of the road. I was knocked out. A truck comes down with some colored boys in it, and lucky enough, they see me – they don't have any lights, so I don't know how the heck they see me, but they did. They come up and said "What happened?" And I was so groggy, I look up and the first thing I said to myself: "The angels are calling!" (Laughs) That's the first thing that come into my mind – I'm hurt, and the angels are calling. So they took me down to the town and they called up my outfit, and they came and picked me up, and then I went for x-rays. I had a concussion, that's all, wasn't a fracture. I had too hard a head to fracture (laughs). But that was another event.

(Picks up papers and reads through) You had some questions on here... The only injury I ever got was when I smashed up that jeep. And you asked about the equipment, if our equipment was better than theirs. Our equipment was good, but theirs was better. They had good equipment.

WC: What kind of weapon did you carry?

HA: I had a machine gun, I had a .45. That's what I'm wearing here (points to photo of his brother and himself, shown earlier).

WC: Did you have the grease gun machine gun, or the Thompson?

HA: No, the old .45s. And my brother had a carbine.

WC: Now, when the war had ended, whereabouts were you at that point?

HA: Bad Kissingen in Germany. No, when the war ended I was in Chantilly, France. That's when the war actually ended. And then we shipped from Chantilly we shipped up into Wiesbaden, Germany, made up the headquarters at Wiesbaden and then moved on to Bad Kissingen, occupation.

WC: How did you get along with the German population after the war?

HA: No problem. No problem at all. At Bad Kissingen it was like being up here in the Catskill Mountains, you don't know what the hell's going on outside the Catskill Mountains, you know what I mean? Bad Kissingen was the same way. We had Germans working for us, in the motor pool.

WC: Now when did they ship you back to the States?

HA: Now, that was another story. They give us orders to pack up our stuff and get down to the railroad station in Bad Kissingen, and we're heading for home. So man, we packed up all our stuff. And then... First of all, did you have enough points to go home? You know, the point system, you had to have enough points. If you didn't you'd be shipped out to another outfit. Our outfit went home with the 101st Airborne. What we did, we packed up all our stuff, went down to the railroad station, no train. No train came. So we went back, unpacked our stuff. Waited about another week, got the orders to go again. So we packed up our stuff again--oh boy!--went down to the railroad station, again no train. The third time was the charm, the third time the train came, boxcars. Forty-and-eight boxcars. And we went to Antwerp, Belgium. And there was no ship to take us home. So we sat in Antwerp almost three weeks before a ship came. I said, "You had no trouble finding a ship to take me over here, now you can't find a ship to take me home!"

Well, they got a ship came in, but the ship was only half converted to a troop carrier. So the captain of the ship said, "I could take you all home; we're only half converted, but you can sleep in the holds," the open holds, you know. "You can bunk in there if you want to. I think I've got enough food for everybody. Does anybody want to stay here, or do you want to go home?" Only one guy wanted to stay. We got on, and we left there October 31st, we pulled out of Antwerp and went out into the North Atlantic. And boy, that was an experience.

WC: Was it really rough?

HA: Oh man! (Shakes head) I'd never seen that much water in my whole life. I never thought waves could get that big (laughs). We were on a Liberty ship, and I thought "I went through this whole war and didn't get killed, and now you're going to drown me?" That's what it felt like. I never thought we were going to make it—I never seen waves that big.

WC: So obviously, you made it back to the States.

HA: We landed in New York on the 11th of November, Armistice Day--they changed it to Veterans Day now, but then it was Armistice Day. We landed in New York.

WC: Was there a lot of celebration?

HA: Oh yeah. When I see that Statue of Liberty, I think everybody on board that ship cried when they see the Statue of Liberty. You know, you're home now, you're home free. It was a great experience.

WC: Whereabouts did you get discharged from?

HA: First they took us to Camp Drum over in New Jersey.

WC: Oh, you mean Fort Dix?

HA: No, not Fort Dix, Fort Dix is where I got mustered out, Fort Dix. When we first landed they took us to Camp Drum over in New Jersey. Then you shipped from there to the different states where you'd be discharged. I was discharged at Fort Dix, New Jersey.

WC: Ok.

HA: Everybody else... like my buddy Nick he lived in Louisiana, so he had to go to Louisiana to be discharged.

WC: Once you were discharged, did you make use of the GI Bill at all?

HA: No, not really. [unclear]

WC: Let me ask you, did you make use of that 52-20 club?

HA: I was on that for about maybe two months, and I thought I could... Because you know, coming home... When I went into the service I was working for Grumman Aircraft. Coming back out, Grumman was laying off people, but they had to give you your job back, that was what the story was. You would go back to Grumman where you were working before you went in, and they were [unclear] to hire you back. But they were laying off everybody, so what was the sense trying to get your job there? You'd probably work a couple weeks and then you'd get laid off.

So I went to work at a bus company at Floral Park, I went there as a body man at the bus company. My brother, Bill, worked for them. He drove a bus for them, and my brother-in-law was a mechanic there, and my other brother-in-law he was a helper. So they got me a job there for 95 cents an hour. I mean, coming out of the war, 95 cents an hour wasn't very much money. But again, that was after the war. They hadn't really changed over from wartime to peacetime. So 95 cents an hour didn't seem like a lot of money, but you had to do something if you had a wife and baby to take care of.

WC: Now, did you stay in touch with anyone you were in the service with?

HA: Yeah, my buddy Nick Cicero. I went down to Louisiana three or four times, and he came up to New York a couple of times to visit me. I went down there, I guess it was at least four times I went to Louisiana. He had a big place in Louisiana.

WC: Is he still alive?

HA: No, he died in 1992. My brother Bill, he's dead too.

WC: Did you join any veterans' organizations?

HA: I joined the Veterans of Foreign Wars in Floral Park, Barry Post I think was the name. But you know I don't like organizations where you get split: one half of the room is on one side (gestures to one side), and one half (gestures to the other side)... So anytime you want to do something... say this half wants to do something, and the other side would vote against it, and vice versa, the same way. You never got no where. I was made chaplain of the post. I was chaplain for a couple of years. Then I gave it up. This outfit ain't going to go nowhere, because they keep fighting against one another, they're not going to get no place. They had a big Las Vegas Night, they called it. They made up chance books, they sold chance books. So I took a bunch of chance books—I think it was 95 that I sold. There was only 101 sold complete, and I sold 95, so that's the kind of cooperation you're talking about. So I quit, that's enough for me.

After that, my brother Bill got me to join the Knights of Columbus. Well, I'll see what the Knights of Columbus has got to do. So things were going fine. Then my wife (Harry's mother)... Every month they would have a different night at the Knights of Columbus. It'd be German night, Polish night. Well on Ukrainian night, they would have kielbasa and stuff for the dinner. So at the meeting, they said that's what the Ukrainian night would be, and if you want to get tickets, go down to bar after the meeting and get tickets. So I thought, ok, I'll get tickets. So I go down there and they say "Oh, they're all gone." I said, "He just announced it upstairs, how can they all be gone already?" But that was just the thing, they kept everything for their friends, and you weren't in that crowd, so you didn't get in. So I said that's the end of the Knights of Columbus.

Then I joined this post, up here. Same stuff happens up here. That's enough for me. I can't stand an organization when they're fighting.

You're all in one organization, let's pull together, we'll get something done. But no....

WC: How do you think your time in the service changed or affected your life?

HA: Well, like I say, I was a young boy. I had got married in 1943, and I went overseas in 1943. And then my wife had a baby just before I was being shipped overseas, and I wanted to at least get home to see my wife and baby before I go overseas. Who knows if I'm ever going to see them again? So I was going to go AWOL out of Scott Field, Illinois, but you've got to remember, it ain't AWOL anymore, it's desertion, see, you're on overseas now. So this little Italian fellow came over to me and he came from another barracks, he wasn't even in our barracks, but he heard that I was going to try to get out to see my wife and baby, because they wouldn't give me a pass, they told me "No way, you can't even get a pass if your mother dies." That's the kind of people you deal with there. Well, there ain't no fence made I can't get over – now I couldn't, but then I could (laughs)... So he come over, this Italian fellow, and he says "Come here, I want to talk to you." And I don't even know this fellow. He says "I heard you're going over the fence, you're going to go home." I says "Yeah." He says, "Don't do that. You know where we're going next Tuesday? We're going to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey. Why don't you wait till we get to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey? Let them pay your fare to New Jersey, then you can go AWOL and go home and see your wife." Well, we got there, and I didn't have to. They gave weekend passes, so I was able to go see my wife. So it worked out anyway.

WC: All right, thank you very much for your interview.

HA: Now, you can have this picture. If you want these pictures, you can have them.

WC: All right. And this is your discharge?

HA: Yes, that's my discharge.

WC: Let me zoom right in on it. (Camera zooms in for close-up of discharge certificate) Ok, I got it.

HA: There was another time, too. I don't want to tell that story, but I'll just tell you part of it, and you can judge for yourself.

They came up with a thing that there was a shortage of gasoline, but there was no shortage of gasoline. There was enough gasoline in [unclear] Harbor to float the Atlantic fleet, that's how much gasoline there was. So I say, "Don't give me that stuff about a shortage of gasoline." That was just a front thing. So you can take it from there. I won't tell you the story because it's not a good story.

WC: Ok. Thank you!