Paul F. Hillman
Veteran

Michael Russert
Ashley (no last name noted)
Interviewers

New York State Military Museum
Saratoga Springs, NY
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PH: What questions you have, I can answer for you.

Q: What is your name?
PH: Paul F. Hillman.

Q: What branch of the service were you in?
PH: Ordnance officer.

Q: So, Army Ordnance Officer?
PH: Army Ordnance Officer?

Q: What is your highest rank achieved? Your rank in the Army?
PH: I was a captain.

Q: When were you born? Date of birth?
PH: December 5, 1904.

Q: You're ninety-nine?
PH: Will be. I have two birthdays. The family one is the second and the town one is the fifth.

Q: You don't know which one?
PH: I don't remember. [laughs] But one is the family and one is the town. No telephones to speak of then in 1904. No one telephoned. You had to go to the town hall to put it in. That's where the difference is.

Q: What town were you born in?

PH: The town of Easton. Washington County.

Q: Did you have brothers and sisters?
PH: Oh, yes. I had one sister. There were seven in our family. They are all gone now.

Q: Were you the oldest one?
PH: No. I was next to the last. I had one younger brother, but he is gone too. They are all gone but me.

Q: What did you father and mother do for a living?
PH: They ran a family farm. Been in our family since 1800. Down in Easton; my mother's farm. I have been working on genealogy. I got it up to fifty years ago. I am bringing it up to date. I have papers all over the place. And I have a niece in Pennsylvania helping me. She's retired. I have to go down in a couple weeks with a lot of stuff. We have everything. My ancestor arrived here as a boy in about 1787 down in Martha's Vineyard. They came up to Washington County. How we got there we couldn't tell. I don't know. He got a farm on the mountain. There is a road there; I don't remember the name of it. It is between Greenwich and Cambridge. He cleared the land all off. There are two farms there now. Everything is there. The building had a fire but they rebuilt it. Now there are other people on it. This is in the town records of course. He married a local girl and they had four boys. Three of the boys had girls. One of the boys had two kids. Of the four of them, three of them had girls and one of them was a boy. His farm is over there east of Greenwich right now. Right on the land. He had two wives and about twelve or thirteen kids. They traveled all over the United States. Don't you think I don't have fun…

Q: Trying to track them down.
PH: …with the history. We are getting that all brought up to date. A lot of them didn't have any money. The only thing they had was ambition.

Q: That's a good thing to have.
PH: They had ambition. They didn't have a thing. They started out the two of them and went out to Minneapolis. One of them in Greenwich did this early mathematics. What do they call that? Oh, shorthand. Hey, if you knew shorthand, you had a job. They did shorthand. The two brothers went out to Minneapolis. They got into business out there. One of them was to be a lawyer and his brother was a shorthand expert. He was his bookkeeper. So they had families and

everything, the whole house. I've been in there. One of them didn't have any children; the other one did. But they are all gone. The last one was ninety-three. She died here about two-months ago. She passed away. She had been right there.

Q: That's too bad. What about your dad? When did he pass away?
PH: He's been gone about ten to twelve years. He died a while ago.

Q: Ten or twelve, your father? How old was your father when he passed away?
PH: He was right up in his nineties. And my mother was ninety-five.

Q: It runs in the family, then?
PH: Yes. Oh, yes. All the family members lived a long while.

Q: That's great. Let's get back to our paper here. What were your dates of service for the war? When did you go in?
PH: Mine is different from anybody else's.

Q: Well, tell us about that.
PH: I got a call one day from the Mack Truck Company in Albany. They were having trouble in Pine Camp with equipment in the winter of 1942.

Q: Where is this?
PH: My office down here. Fort Edward Express office.

Q: What camp were they having problems in?
PH: Pine Camp. That's Watertown. That's what it was called. Now they have another name for it. They changed it. It was originally Pine Camp. They had a lot of troops up there. They had trouble with engines freezing up. A big problem. These were greenhorns who didn't know anything about cold weather. And they had thirty-degree below-zero weather up there. They had an ordnance officer who came from down south and he had never been in cold weather. I think he had been in Cuba before Castro got in. See, going back quite a ways. I even tried to tell him what to do. He didn't know anything about cold weather. They were medical.

Q: You had a company at the time?
PH: I was sure helping around the company.

Q: What was your company about?

PH: Wheel. Fort Edward Express. We did gasoline, fuel oil, propane, and cement. I started a milk business in 1932, my brother Frank and I. We revolutionized the hauling of milk in this United States.

Q: How did you do that?
PH: We had the first Dellwood Dairy Company. They started a new plant in Fort Edward. We had been hauling milk before. We got a 1920 truck right out of the garage on the farm. We hauled one-hundred-fifty cans going twenty-miles-an-hour. [laughs] That was fast. Faster than horses. But anyway, we did a little bit of the hauling. So my brother Frank went up and met him. They said, if you could help us buy the milk, you could haul it to New York. Now, this is a crazy deal because it's never been done. Everything was all on trains back in 1932. So we said, we'll help you buy it. We can get a tank. No money. But anyway, we figured we'd get a tank. Got to get the milk first. So we went all through Washington County and Saratoga. I used to go ahead of my brother Frank. We had to get the farmers to agree to go because the local milk companies, like Hood in Boston, had it sewn up. If you didn't sell to them, you didn't have anybody. This was competition for them. And these two fellows, they came from Europe. Jewish fellas. Good business owners. Mr. Rubenfeld [?] Two nice, good, honest guys. Their word was great. And their big company ended up being awful big. Biggest in New York today. But anyway, they had to have milk. We were there to help. We knew the farmers. And you know my father sold a lot of equipment and higher silos around Washington county. And the farmers all knew him. Well, if he said it was all right, the farmers would believe us to sell their milk. Because you have a month's milk and no money, what are you going to do? So we were taking milk away from Hood and Borden's. Borden's had it sewn up along the railroads, you see, all went in day cars. That's the way it always went in. Brought it in cans with horse and wagons first, and then he had a ton of trucks to haul it in. So when they came up here and they had pieces of paper, my brother Frank told him we'd help him. Didn't need us all on the farm down there. Well, anyway, we had a good idea because we hauled milk before. [laughs] Six miles with horses, wagons and then this truck. This was pretty new in those days.

Q: So you built up a fleet of trucks?
PH: So anyway, we started with the trucking business there, and first we had to get the milk, get the farmers to bring it in, or had to get it brought in. And then we would have to help young guys, help finance them to buy a truck so they could pick it up. See, we gradually picked up over seven-hundred cans of milk, and we used to have Ford trucks ourselves with a ton-and-a half Chevy to pick up the

milk and bring it in. We had to be at the farmer's house at seven o'clock. You had to get it by ten o'clock for the New York City Board of Health. Well, when we did that, they brought it right into the milk plant, weighed it, tested it, and cooled it. So then we had to get a tank and a truck to take it to New York City. See, this had never been done before. Nothing like this had been done. Crazy idea. Well, but anyway, we got the [unclear] company to build a two-hundred can tank for us. And they did. And nobody had any money. Everybody was on credit.

Q: This is the depression time isn't it.
PH: You had to work.

Q: The Great Depression. You guys made this happen during the Great Depression?
PH: Yeah, sure. 1932 Depression.

Q: Wow, that was the bottom. Go ahead, I'm sorry.
PH: Anyway, we got the milk. Had to go through the Board of Health of New York City. Got it going, and we had two-hundred cans that we started with. We had a [unclear] tank and a Mack truck, and got it on credit. Everybody wanted to sell, hoping the guys are going to make some money for it. So anyway, my brother Frank took the first load, two-hundred cans to Yonkers. Now, this has revolutionized the business, and it was upsetting the other milk companies in New York because they had it sewn right up. Farmers didn't have anywhere else to buy.

Q: The big ones, yeah.
PH: I went the second day, twenty-five miles an hour one-hundred-seventy-two miles. From Fort Edward down there. Mostly went well. We got so we had to buy another tank. And we got a trailer and a tractor for that. A two compartment. Two hundred in one. They wanted to have cream, so we put cream in the front compartment, fifty-can compartment. That was good for farmers. They paid a little more money to the farmers that sold it to them. Then we had to get another tank. And that was a three-hundred-seventeen can tank. Another tractor. Now we had to get help. We've already got two boys in Fort Edward. They're all gone now. Then other companies saw what's going on. Then they got us to haul milk for them. Then competitors got in. There were haulers like we were, had a good idea up in Mohawk Valley and they started hauling milk down to New York. And that's the way these things started. No money, but you had ambition to work. So we hauled it to New York City and we had a lot of milk tanks. We hauled plants out

of Chateauguay, New York to New York City. Took two trailers for a tank and we hauled from Ogdensburg down to New York City.

Q: And that was before the Northway and the Thruway?
PH: Oh, this is before. It was country with no roads like that, no throughways all over. No, fat old roads, thirty-five miles an hour, forty was going wide open. [laughs] It revolutionized the hauling of milk in the United States.

Q: So you got a reputation for being able to handle it? You said you got a call?
PH: And then we got a call from the Shell Oil Company. They wanted us to put a tank on and haul some gasoline for them.

Q: No kidding.
PH: Oh, sure. Because they were big in Albany. None of them are here anymore. Everybody's gone. Oil companies at Albany. Well, we started it with one, let me see, I think it was a thirty-two-hundred gallon gasoline tanker. We picked it up at Albany and took it right out, right to where they wanted to go in the city. And that worked out well. And then we started picking up at the terminals of Albany and delivered around to different places. Some of them had two-thousand gallon tanks. This was working. This was new and different. Albany became a place where other people got into it, competition got right after it. So we had competitors and we hauled gasoline all the way up to Plattsburgh, Chateauguay, Malone, all through there from Albany. Today it all comes out of Canada on account of regulation. Everything has changed today. Size of tanks and everything. And then when they closed the canal that put us out of the petroleum hauling to a certain extent, because they changed the regulations. They were getting it out of Canada. And everything changed right around. Modernizing, you know.

Q: So getting back to how you got into World War II, they called you up because you know how to maintain the…
PH: Well, the Mack Company had an ad from the war Department. I don't know what section. They were having a pile of trouble at Pine Camp. They had their engines all frozen up, so they wanted to know if the Mack Company knew somebody. The War Department called Mack, and then Mack called us up and they came up and talked about it. And so I said, well, I'll take it. I went up there and helped them out for a couple of weeks.

Q: What year was this?

PH: 1942. I went to help them out for a couple of weeks. Well, that couple of weeks lasted quite a while. But anyway, I went up, introduced myself to General Henry [Welles] Baird, and I was there before his letter from the War Department got in. And I worked for the war department for about maybe two to three months. And then General Baird said to me, why don't you go with us. Sign right here. [laughs]

Q: And that's how you got in?
PH: I signed right there. And one day I'm a civilian walking around. It was summertime. The next day I had captain bars on.

Q: They made you a captain right away?
PH: Right off the bat.

Q: A big officer.
PH: Oh, I was an officer then. And don't you think there are a lot of envious people, and I can't do about-face. I never had any military training at all. I learned from being there. Well, I was going to be there for a couple of weeks. Well, a couple of weeks kept right on going. We got the problem straight, and it cost all the government a lot of money. This colonel, an ordnance officer, but he didn't know what it was all about. Never been in any cold weather, didn't know anything. So I had to get people from General Motors, not repair people but maintenance people. Maintenance people had a man come out here. I called him on the phone and talked to him, told him, better get out here, all this trouble. Well, he came out here and I showed him around. He couldn't believe what he saw. It was a lot of money, a lot of money. The bases didn't have any trucks to run. Only those that didn't do this foolishness. They had to come in with a big gang of men. I think it was one-hundred-fifty men. A good crowd came right in. They had to rebuild all these engines. All these engines. And I can always remember one of the arguments. It was an officer, even if he's an ordnance officer, but he didn't know anything about what he was doing. And he had these engines taken out. I can all remember showing this top man at General Motors, this whole pit full of engines. I won't repeat what he said. [laughs]

Q: That were destroyed?
PH: Sure. Well, what they had to do. The pistons were all spoiled. Some ditches. Well, they brought sixty men and went through and rebuilt all the engines. But whatever was necessary, they did that.

Q: That cost the government a lot of money.
PH: Oh, sure. Just because one guy didn't know his business. Now how many times has that happened with other people?

Q: Probably a lot.
PH: Probably a lot of people have had that happen.

Q: So what happened to him?
PH: That officer eventually left the division anyway.

MR Did you replace him?
PH: I wasn't the captain at that time. I was captain later on, I guess three months or so. I worked for the general, the chief of staff in G4. They put me in the G4 office. They had charge of the maintenance and repairs and vehicles and all of that then. With the general, when I signed that paper, I didn't realize I would be in the Army. [laughs] And I didn't have any military training.

Q: How old were you?
PH: I was 38.

Q: And were you married then?
PH: Yes.

Q: Did you have children?
PH: No, I wasn't married.

Q: Weren't married yet?
PH: No, I wasn't married until 1938, out in California. But anyway, there were a lot of things like that that happened in the Army.

Q: So did you go overseas shortly thereafter?
PH: Oh, yes. Well, I went from here. I stayed with the division, 4th Armored, all the while. The only division I was in. And we went down on Tennessee maneuvers down there. And then, incidentally, the government those days, they had individuals, they had hired a lot of individuals to help educate these soldiers on maintenance of vehicles. And we had like thirteen or fourteen in our division that came in after I got in there. They got the government to send people in, and they did it with other divisions, guys that had retired. They came out and helped them up to this north country. And I guess in other parts of the country too. They were

mechanics, maintenance people that knew about equipment. Because these soldiers didn't know anything about equipment. How would they know anything?

Q: You had to keep it running.
PH: Oh, yes. Had to keep it all running. And in the cold winter at Pine Camp. Thirty below zero. That was cold. That's what made it so expensive.

Q: So when did you go overseas?
PH: Well, then we went to Texas. And then I applied for the job of division ordnance maintenance officer G4. And then we were shipped to Camp Bowie, Texas, our whole division. And I was doing the same job down there. Then they changed their organization all around and they put me under the ordnance officer of the maintenance battalion. I'd worked with him before, but he was kind of envious because I had better relations with the generals. General Baird and [John Shirley] Wood. He was kind of envious of that, you can see why.

Q: Oh, I bet.
PH: Oh, yes. But then in Texas we're getting ready to go overseas. But before that, this character put me in as company commander. Took me out of G4 and put me in as company commander. I can't do right-face. I never had any military training. I hadn't done anything in the service at all, except the office work that you might call the maintenance for the division on tanks and jeeps and everything like that. I worked on a different thing. The other guy had that. But anyway, I was appointed company commander. Well, the company commander was supposed to get up and order up to two-hundred-thirty men and line them up and put them out and get seven to eight-hundred men. And then you get the orders of the commanding officer to march your people out. I never did a bit of that. What am I going to do? So anyway, I said, I got my Dutch up and I said, I'll fool them. I took two good training sergeants and we went away from the camp down in Texas where nobody could see us. And we gave the orders on what to do. I gathered the men up, lined them all up. Two-hundred men. Lined them up, marched them over, put them against the other men. So I said after four days, I better take over. Well, being in this Army, everybody bets, you know. They were all betting whether Hillman would make it or not. Oh, they had a great time in the whole battalion, eight-hundred men in the battalion. And everybody knew everybody. Because you live right together. Well, I never heard who made out. They wouldn't tell me, but I knew they were doing it. [laughs] So I said, I'm going to fool them. I had good relations with all the soldiers. A lot of officers looked down on the soldier. Anyway, I went out, ordered them right up. If I hadn't used

the right words, they still would have done it because I got along well with the boys. Marched them right over. Put them up against the other. Marched up to the commanding officer. Reported and all this. [salutes] He'd call you up and he always had some stupid thing to get you to get back. Well, I'd been a salesman long enough, I knew not to let him do that. Well, after I did it for a week, it was old hat.

Then one day they took me out of command of the company and I wasn't doing a darn thing. Meantime, I got married. I'd been married eighteen days when they took me out of command of the company. I wondered where they're going to send me. Another training company? Well, it wasn't that at all. I had to go up to see the chief of staff. I had to report to him. Then he handed me a sheet of paper and he said, well, I know you wouldn't want to stay home. And I had three-hundred-thirty men. This is early 1943. In five days, I went by train to New York City, then England. Just like that. I'd been married. We had a little apartment. One and a half room apartment. Because with fifty-thousand troops, there were a lot of married people there. They were a premium to get them, but we were lucky. We were married for eighteen days..

Q:... and you got your orders.
PH: It was top secret on the paper they gave you. Nobody could say anything.

Q: Did you tell your wife?
PH: No, sir, didn't tell her damn thing. Top secret means top secret.

Q: She didn't know where you're going?
PH: No. Well, anyway, we were going to do something. I don't remember what it was. When I got this notice, I said we have to cancel it, I can't do it. So here, I got to get some of my clothes out of our apartment, back to my tent where I had some other clothes. I needed to get everything out and not let her know what I was doing. Taking them to the cleaner. Anything but telling her what was going on. You don't dare. And there were three-hundred-thirty guys who were going too from the battalion. And they couldn't say anything. So anyway, she was in on a Friday. I remember she said she had a good supper fixed for me that night. I said, that's great, I'll enjoy it like the dickens. Couldn't tell her what I was doing. She had my Chrysler and everything I owned was there. I took it from my tent that I had down to the apartment. I got it in there, but she didn't realize what I was doing. I didn't come home Friday night, but being in the service, she didn't think anything about that. I was on the train heading for New York with all these

soldiers in the city. And the next morning, I found this out, afterwards, she went in there looking for me. Nobody knew me. Nobody knew anything about me. She couldn't understand it. Well, she went home. I don't know how perturbed she was. And she had a good dinner cooked for me. I said I would be home for dinner. I didn't tell her what year. She had it all ready. She was a good cook.

Q: She must have been worried.
PH: Well, I never dared to ask her how worried she was. But anyway, on the train, it's five o'clock with all these men on the train heading for New York City. Never went to New York City and England. We got into where we would go to stay there. I'll tell you it is some different place than what we were used to. Big change, big change and they had blackout. Let me tell you. Well, you had blackout, you had blackout.

Q: What does that mean?
PH: You were running with no lights. Like we got lights here. You wouldn't have a light in here. You had to have special curtains for your windows so the light wouldn't show up. Because you got fined. There were airplanes going over, dropping bombs. If they saw a light they knew there was a town below. That's what happened, you see, all over England.
Their blackout was blackout.

Q: Where were you in England? Southern England?
PH: I was in Cheltenham. It was about fourteen miles from the coast. Devizes [?] That area. Traveled all around there, you see, because I had a lot of men with me, and we're getting everything organized there.

Q: You were gearing up for the invasion.
PH: Oh, yes. These other people came from other parts of the…they were coming in, too. And I used to have to go out with this maintenance battalion I had there then. These were all maintenance guys. We had to get our equipment, tune up trucks. And then when the trains would come in and everything was blackout. So I knew they got messages that came through division headquarters, a little office area, and went to them. I was there every day. Then I had to take the soldiers and trucks I had and go at nighttime, all blackout, and meet the trains and take them to the place where they were going to live. And they were not very happy soldiers. They came over on the boat and were sick, tired and all this. Nobody told you anything, nobody told you a thing. And I used to have to know where they were

going to go and then I'd make a map of it. I met the train, used this map, and went through these little dirt towns to where these guys are going to stay.

Q:With no lights?
PH: No, just a thing like that on your truck. [motions the size of a quarter] No lights at all. Blackout was blackout over there. Oh, sure. They had to have it because the planes went right over. If they saw a light down here, the Germans dropped bombs.

Q: Did those movements of troops always happen at night?
PH: Oh, yes.

Q: Never in the day?
PH: Well, our division happened at night, I'll say that. So I'd have to meet them and take them to where they were going to live. Then after a while, everybody got over here and got in their place. Then we had maneuvers and everything else, and I still stayed on the G4 section. I didn't have any troops under me, and I was doing inspection, old equipment and everything like that around in England. Then I ran a waterproof school, like you see right down there. I had to go to a waterproofing school down in Wales and came back. All the vehicles going into France drove off the ships and went through the water. Some of them were pretty deep until they were able to get in further. Or they made a big ramp. We were there for fourteen days and we didn't have any of that. We had to go right into the water. Your jeep. And you were sitting in the jeep. The water came right up on you, you better have had it running. I went to an English waterproofing school and they had a salve or grease that you had to put on all your electrical stuff. That's the main thing. We had a whole division that had their vehicles waterproofed, and everybody had to know how to do it. So I wrote a waterproofing school. And I can always remember General Patton. I had a call from headquarters to report to the general. I got the notice and I had to get men to come with me. And make sure his division of six-hundred vehicles were all waterproofed to go in. He sent his men down there to the school so they knew how to do it. We were just checking them over, to make sure it was done right. But you'd be surprised, with that waterproofing, this most stupid little thing would stop your engine.

Q: If you missed just a little section, you'd be in trouble.
PH: Well, if you had any electrical short, you'd be in trouble.

Q: It shorted it out, right?
PH: Shorted it right out.

Q: And that would be it. You'd be sitting ducks.
PH: I am sure. And they knew that for everything going into Europe. It had to be done well. And I had [unclear] and [unclear]. He drove a half track for me from the engineer battalion. And I had another soldier from the maintenance battalion. And I used to have these boys come down. They'd had school. They'd all taught at their school. A certain number came down, I'd take them and see if they ran through my test. They dried right off. Water right up your stomach. Well, you'd be surprised by the guys that didn't get through. The water didn't bother halftracks. They hauled them right out. Had them do it again and check them. And I knew people are so anxious to want to pass and get through that they didn't listen to what you told them. You probably had that?

MR In school?
PH: In school. They just don't. They were so anxious to get it, they didn't get it. And I can always remember one Sunday morning, a major called me up. I said, I'm going into London Saturday afternoon. He begged me to have him pass the test. So I said, all right, get down here. So he came down and I checked it all over. He had to do what he was supposed to do. And he got it. Drove right into the water. We got to him. I told him, so he would know. And twice he did it. Same thing. Stupid thing. That's the funny part of it. And so finally, on the third try, I said, I'm going to London. I said, I ain't fooling around with you anymore, major. He started up, the third time, and did the same thing. I said, come on, I'll show you what to do. Take it. You just touch your starter and you touch that metal there. And your starter took the protection right off from it. Now just get out and take and cover that up with your finger. I'm going on. [laughs] So we had to run a waterproofing school for the whole division. I had a lot of boys there doing it because they all had to drive through water with equipment. Two and a half [trucks] weren't too bad. But you take a jeep, that was the one that was hard. Water went right up to your stomach. They drove it right straight in. Later on they started bringing…after you got ashore in four or five miles, they started filling in. They eventually made it, where a big ocean going ship could pull right in and drive right ashore. That's the way that worked. It worked well.

Q: Big LSTs with the door that dropped down on the beach.

PH: Oh, yeah. Sure. So they got right off the ships. Right off the ships, drive them right off. And one other thing I had. My job, I was traveling all over on the maintenance deal and I wanted to get something for myself. And I stopped at this English plant. So I went in and saw the fellow there. The watchman or whatever he was working there. And I wanted to get something. He had to go and have tea. So I was sitting in the chair there and I looked around, I saw a great big aircraft engine. He came out and I said, what are you doing with an aircraft engine? He said, all the plants around here have them. I said, why did they do that? They didn't want to put them all in one place. Gosh, if you bomb the plant, you only lose one engine. You wouldn't lose them all. And I said, what are you going to do with it? He said, I would like to get rid of it. Well, I really looked it over and it was like our first tanks. I said, that has got to be that same engine. So I asked if he wanted to get rid of it? He said sure. I said, I'll be up tomorrow with a couple soldiers with me and we will look it over. If it's good, we'll take it. He said, that'd be great. No paperwork. So we did just that, just like we got our tanks. So we drove to them right in our pickup, took it down to our maintenance battalion. We got an extra engine. And I said to him, do other plants around here have them? [He said] Oh, yes. And he names the plants. I said, write the names down. So he did. So I got a pickup [truck] and a soldier and we went to these plants and asked them if they have engines. They all wanted to get rid of them. And we took them and we ended up with thirteen engines. And when we went into the bases, into Europe, this is right after the infantry went through first. We spent about thirteen or fourteen days. We drove through the water, then you had to take off. We were about five miles in. I was going through that. Well, there was an old engine by the side of the road. One of those new ones. They took their wrecker, because these were big heavy things, picked it up, brought it over, put it in the tank and put it together. The boys took off, and went with their outfit.

Q: No kidding?
PH: Oh, yes. But you see the big trouble with the ordnance and the service. A lot of guys get into ordnance and they don't know anything about equipment. That's the biggest thing. They didn't know anything about it.

Q: So that was key with you?
PH: Well, it was easy for me because that was my business.

Q: But it sounds like you also were thinking a lot about how to improve things.
PH: Oh, yeah,

Q: That was the nature of your business back home, too?
PH: Oh, yeah. See, I was right back home again.

Q: The ambition.
PH: Running the business, you might say. [laughs] Sure. All the way through Europe. Then after everybody got to Europe, I was on supply, tanks and jeeps and guns and all of that. Not rifles or pistols, but automotive equipment. My job for the ordnance was to take maybe sixty or seventy men, go back to a depot, get the equipment, and bring it back to the ordnance. And then the line companies came down and picked their equipment up. And you had to have men who knew what they were doing. And you didn't want to get lost, and you had to have fuel oil and everything. Sometimes you went one-hundred miles, maybe one-hundred-ten miles. Once I had fifteen guys right out in one big area. In the field, you have to be careful on account of mines. So I tried to get where somebody had it cleared. Only once or twice I stayed overnight at some guy's place. Then see the commanding officer, get bathed, get food for yourself, and maybe fifteen or twenty men.

Q: So you were following the tanks and the troops?
PH: Oh, yes. I had to keep them supplied with all their equipment. In Europe, that's what I did, took care of getting the supplies, because I knew the equipment. The railroad trains.
They used to bring them into Metz, France. That was a big hub. I pulled in there one day. There was an old crate full of new tanks. Seventy-six [unclear] wide track, made in Schenectady. A lot of them over there were from Schenectady.

Q: Watervliet?
PH: No, no, Schenectady. When you get over going into Schenectady, the road that heads east and goes over the Hudson. When you get down there, before you get to the Hudson. And it's a big house down there now. Well, there was a factory down there. They built these tanks, put them together, Ford engines and everything. But they had a lot of trouble with them. Somebody over here should have been shot because they weren't doing a good inspection. And I found it cost a lot of money because most people weren't any good with engines. And I can brag about this. I know the first new ones we got off, they were right off the train, came right in from the ships, and they put them on the train and they could ride right off. And they couldn't tell if they're missing or not. But anyway, the ones we backed off the train, we had, three of them come off and boy those engines sounded good. Another one came off and I said to the soldiers that were with me,

I said, well, guess what? I guess we got a job. You got a bad spark plug. [They said] I will bet you a cognac, captain, that it is all right. I said, I'll bet you the bottle of cognac if it isn't. Well, they could taste the cognac. I could tell. My ear was good because I worked on Chevrolet and Ford engines. I could tell in the old days if it was missing or not. Most people couldn't do that. So anyway, boy, they could taste the cognac. They pulled a big plate. There's a lot of work involved. About three and a half feet square and five-eighth bolts. That had to be taken off; it's heavy. It's on the back end of a tank. If shells hit there, it wouldn't go through like that. Well, so we got it off and we started on the left bank on a V-eight Ford. And they get the plug. They get four of them, they can taste the cognac and then they go down the other side. Go down the other side. Now they're assured they're going to have it, and they touch that fourth cylinder and up she came. I said, boys, I guess I have to drink all that cognac myself. [laughs] But they got so they wouldn't question me. But I see a [unclear] armored captain. This happened a lot. This one I knew personally. I said, captain, you got a bad cylinder, you better work on it. [He said] I know what I know. The people on the engines, they didn't know a damn thing about engines. How could they know? They never worked on them. If they ran, they ran. Well, with my ear I could tell right away if that H cylinder was missing. I had one tank, with four spark plugs missing.

Q: They weren't even in the tank?
PH: They were loose in the tank and we tried to get information.

Q: They were brand new tanks?
PH: Brand new? Sure, brand new. And we tried to get information. I've got the 3rd Army ordnance officer to get a hold of the colonel there. I said, you got to get a hold of him. You got too many tanks you're going to be losing here. Other battalions going in. Their guys didn't know anything, but they lost them. How many tanks were lost? I don't know.
Just like this guy from 10th armor, he didn't know about the engine. I said, you got a bad engine there, captain. He said, I know what I'm doing. I said, ten-thousand dollars, you better. He drove it a mile. It was a brand new tank. But somebody in the factory right here in Schenectady right near me. That's all covered up now with houses. They didn't check those. Or it was sabotaged intentionally. That's what I told the ordnance colonel, maybe it was sabotage. They tried to get it over to check them, but all those had been shipped. Didn't have anybody that knew damn thing about them. So when the war was going on, I kept them supplied with tanks and jeeps and two-and-a-half tons and all of that. Across here, you were living on your own.

Q: How did you help out at the situation at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge? I saw you have a citation down there for that?
PH: I kept them supplied with equipment. That's what I had. I wasn't shooting the guns. I had to have them there for them to use.

Q: Well, they had to have the equipment in order to win the battle.
PH: Oh, yes. I was bringing the equipment into the 3rd Army to our division ordnance office. They were in charge of giving you tanks and jeeps or whatever it was. As soon as they lost them, I went right out and got them. My last big order was for sixty-two pieces of equipment. Brought in brand new because they lost it. You see, this is getting into Germany. Getting into Germany. You were losing [equipment]. Boy. I was busy all the while picking up the equipment. Had a driver with me, had to take a truck, take men because I had to go to pick up six or seven pieces. I had six men with me.

Q: Where did you pick it up? At Metz?
PH: At the 3rd Army Depot. They had made them in Metz, France. We got as far as Metz. That was great for the railroads. Helped them move. On the railroad and right into Metz. The maintenance battalion there was an ordnance battalion. It was a 3rd Army Ordnance Battalion. They had a good colonel, colonel [unclear] Nice fella. They had twenty officers there. This had supply of all kinds of ordnance from the Army. All the divisions came in there to get it, same as I was doing. I know it cost me seven, eight bottles of cognac to get a big wrecker away from somebody else. [laughs] You had to deal with all these ordnance officers who are in there and they are sergeants and everything. And you don't go in and try to throw your weight around. If you do…

Q: …forget it.
PH: Absolutely.

Q: You'd be at the end of the line.
PH: And I used to go in for small parts sometimes and I would get some of them. I knew one guy there. I went in and eight or nine officers started picking up equipment. So anyway, it was my turn. I said to the private in the back, help these other fellows, I'm in no hurry. soldier. Well boy, those other guys were happy to get their stuff and get out.

When the last guy was gone, I was reading the paper there, not doing anything, sitting in the chair and waiting for them to get their stuff and go. Then I went up to him and he said, captain, I got everything here for you. [laughs] I didn't want to have him hand it to me in front of all these other people. But then those poor guys didn't have any refreshments. So I used to carry some cognac with me. Boys got mad, they had to have something. A lot of people went there. Here's a poor private. He didn't have any chance to get anything or any other guys working with him. So it didn't cost me anything. If I needed some cognac, the guys knew where I could get it. It was all free cognac. Liberated. Liberated cognac. And I used to have a box in my jeep like that. And that wide. [gestures about three feet by two feet]. Cognac in it right to the bottom with hay or oats all over it. People came up and put their hands through it. [gestures scooping] So you do it like that and you wouldn't touch a bottle. We got that off a farm in New York state. It was good. I was trying to keep it right here with me. [laughs] I carried a lot of booze in there because I'd have to give it out. Then I'd get it replaced again. I knew how to do that.

Q: How to wheel and deal?
PH: Oh, you had to wheel and deal. But the Army had a lot of poor guys. They were lieutenants, sergeants and captains. All in ordnance and didn't know a darn thing about equipment. Some of them were great on guns. I didn't know a stupid thing about a gun or how to fire her. But that's what happened in the Army service. And the ones that I felt sorry for in the service… and I was in all branches of it. And in fact, New Year's… New Year's of 1945, 1946… New year's before the war ended, I'll put it that way.

Q: 1945.
PH: 1945. And the colonel, who was head of the 317th Ordnance battalion. A big one. A lot of men, twenty officers plus all the soldiers. Big layout. Took over a German plant and all the bookkeeping, everything you got to keep track of everything. No easy deal. And he was a good colonel, he knew his business and he had good officers with him too. They knew their business and of course he had soldiers who could do anything. But I went to see him one day and he put down [unclear] and I introduced myself. I will be coming here a lot. I moved in from the coast right into Metz. And the place is still there. So anyway he brought out a bottle of Canadian Club and stuck it down on the table. There was about that much in it. [gestures about two inches]. Gotta have a drink with me. [I said] I don't want to take your booze here colonel. [He said] Oh, you're going to have a drink with me. So I had a drink with him. And he was a good man at it. He knew

his business. Anyway we went along for a month and I talked with some soldiers and I asked, where can I get some Canadian Club around here? And he was one of these soldiers, a sergeant, who was into everything. He was a swapper and all of it. He said maybe I can get you a couple of bottles. And he said I got to have some cognac. So I said help yourself to my cognac. Didn't cost me anything. So I got two bottles of Canadian Club. Where he picked it up from, I don't know. Didn't care. So when I had to go in I got an old one of those musette bags you carry stuff with. Put it right in that so he wouldn't see it. I said I was a captain to see the colonel. I walked right in and put the thing on the table. Opened it up and put those two bottles right on his desk. [laughs] You could see the smile on his face? Where did he have a chance to get it? He can't ask anybody. He's the top dog. But he was a great ordnance officer and a good one. And then on New Year's of 1945, he asked, do you know those nurses down that evac hospital? I said oh yes. I go down there. That was some big place. A hundred EVAC [?] they called it. The boys were brought in on trucks. On jeeps, they carried them on stretchers right on the side of the jeep. Poor guys wounded. Brought them in. They had a tough job, those nurses. The boys, they may save them, they might not save them. Some banged up. Tough job. Boys getting smashed up, you know. You don't really know if they will live or not. Real tough. You had to have a tough stomach. But anyway he said we want to have a Christmas party. Ride over to the Rhine River and he said do you suppose you could get those nurses down there to come up. They had about twenty of them. Well, I knew the head nurse. So I said, for this New Year's Eve party, that'll be great. So anyway, I went over and saw her. I said, how about I pick up twenty girls here. We are going to have a party at the 317th. Oh, she was all for that. And then the officers at 317th; there were a lot of officers there. So I said, I'll pick you girls up. I got over there about six o'clock at night. I had a driver and a two-and-a-half-ton. Put the girls right up in it. Got seats in it for soldiers. We went right over. The head nurse had the other girls. Well, we had a big party because he had invited all the fellows that worked at picking up stuff like I was doing. He called them in and talked with them and told them we were going to have a party. Invited them to come in, brought a couple of bottles of cognac or wine. We had it. Well, let me tell you, we had some, never forget that 1945 New Year's party we had. That was a good party. Supposed to have the girls back early. I did. I got them back at six o'clock in the morning. We had an all-night party. Oh, that was a real ring-ding party. He had turkey there. He had turkey and some other kind of meat that the colonel had. He wanted all this. He wanted something for his boys to do. They met these nurses. Because this officer's party was safe. How are you going to meet people if you can't get away from the job you're in and you don't have any transportation, how are you going

to do it? You've got a problem. He wanted to keep the morale and spirit up. So he had a good orchestra. I said, I'll get these girls for you. And the head nurse was happy about that. I can all remember they were all dressed in their best finery climbing up that two-and-a-half-ton truck. [laughs] We helped them get in and sit down on the side. But nobody thought anything of it. No, that's what you did. Took them back about six o'clock in the morning. Never saw one of them since. [laughs] I don't know what their commanding officer said either. I didn't go back to ask. But that was a lot of fun. Lots of fun times.

Q: So you had some fun times, too?
PH: Sure. You had to make your own fun.

Q: Did you make it into Germany? Crossed the Rhine river, right?
PH: Oh, yes. I was way over into…what do you call it? Beyond Germany. Can't say the name of the state. Beyond Germany?

Q: Czechoslovakia.
PH: South of Czechoslovakia. Austria. I was in Austria. The last duty I had over there was in Austria. And that's where the Germans came down, though. And people can't believe that. There was a German checkpoint there. Took them prisoners. American soldiers out there, you see, the Russians came down there. Patton lost his generalship because he said we should drag the Russians back into Russia. Two days later, he's not a general anymore. He didn't use good politics. He was a great general, but he wasn't any politician. He shouldn't have said that. But anyway, that's what happened. While we're there at this place, I had a Mercedes Benz touring car that was liberated. And I had the gas. A couple other officers and myself drove right around.

Q: Did you really?
PH: Austria. Oh, it's a nice country. Nice homes.

Q: You weren't afraid of getting shot at?
PH: The war was all over? This war is over. Before, you couldn't touch it, you'd be shot. But this was after the war was all over.

Q: On your way to Austria, did you go to Munich, Germany?
PH: I've been to Munich, yeah, I was there three or four times.

Q: Did you see any of the concentration camps?

PH: I can tell you a good story. In Luxembourg, my office was right next to where the German Gestapo had their office. Nice office. So we took it right over. Well, that was fine. Well, right next door to it was a mother and three or four boys, three or four people. And I didn't know if they were hers or not. You couldn't tell. She could speak a little English. One of the kids could, too. One of the girls could. And anyway, they had a son who said something against the Gestapo, and they put him in a concentration camp. And I took his number down, wrote the name of the concentration number. No name, just the number. And I said, if I get near that camp, I'm going to retake it. I'm going to get up and see it. Well, this is across the Rhine river, east side. A ways over. The middle of Germany. And twenty-five thousand people in it. When we got over there, our ordnance had headquarters right near there. So I went up to the concentration camp to see what happened. The prisoners had to stay there. The first ones the Army let them go free. And boy, if that didn't cause a lot of trouble.

Q: Why?
PH: These people were hungry. Where are they going to get anything to eat? Nothing to feed them. They were stealing, going in, doing everything to get something to eat.
And so after that first fracas, they had let about four to five-thousand guys loose. These concentration camps had twenty to thirty thousand people in them. These were big affairs. No little bit of a thing. They were big. And what we had to do, take their guards off and put ours on. Got a hold of people in there, so we could control them. They got to have food, they got water, doctors, the whole thing. Well, I went up to the gate there and had them call for this number, this kid, I didn't know his name, just a number. Finally this young guy came down and I had a letter to show him and he smiled right up. He'd never seen me before, but that was his mother's handwriting. And I told him that I was going to get him home. So I got it across to him. So I took him down to our camp in our battalion.

Q: How old was the boy?
PH: Sixteen, seventeen. Just about that age. And I was going to feed him up. Potatoes. The doctor said, what do you want to do? Do you want to kill that kid? Just give him the same as he was having. So what you had to do we found out. People get out of the concentration camp, they go out, steal or eat too much because they are so hungry, they die. Can't do that. So I just gave him a little bit, so he had something to eat. Well, then I got him. Now, how am I going to get him from eastern Germany or middle of Germany, over to where he lived outside Luxembourg. So I finally had a sergeant who had to go to Paris to turn things in

now that the war was all over. We got a word out, the Germans all gave up. Then we had to take care of the people there, the towns and everything. It was a big operation, no little deal. So anyway, Sergeant King had to take some old watches and stuff that were turned into the service back to Paris, to headquarters. They had a reception where you took them, signed for them, all paperwork, how many watches you turned in, binoculars and all of this stuff. Being ordnance, we got that stuff in. So I had him go take this kid and gave him extra gas cans because where is he going to get gas? He took four or five extra cans and put it in that jeep, because he knew where the place was. He had been there the same as I was, and he took the kid home. Then went on to Paris for me and delivered this stuff. Well, about fifteen or eighteen years afterwards, our division had a tour of the battlefield of Europe, of where we landed to the end of war. So we stopped at Luxembourg, and I went to the house. The old grandmother was still there. She was so happy to see me. This boy was there, too. Well, I'll tell you, I stayed there the rest of the night. Too much food, too much drink. [laughs]

Q: How long after the war was that? Twenty years?
PH: Sixteen or twenty years. Yeah, I've got the date here someplace. We have had two trips over there since. That first trip and the second one. And a lot of people in different towns knew the people that were there then. The wives of their grandfathers or somebody they knew. And some had gotten back to their homes from the Army when the shooting was over. So they met these new [unclear] who were staying in the house there. All this kind of business, and this was when they're going through and people were shooting. A lot of shooting was going on. A lot of poor guys like you read about. Those seventy-five guys that the German colonel had them shot. You read it in the paper.

Q: The Malmedy Massacre, right?
PH: This German colonel didn't have anybody to take them to the concentration camp, so he had the soldiers shoot them. I got the history over here. They found the bodies right there in southern Greenwich. I think some local guys were there.

Q: Were they really?
PH: Yes. I wouldn't swear on it, but that's the way it was. Well, they had the Nuremberg trials. This colonel that ordered that was one of the twenty guys that they executed at the Nuremberg trial. He was one of them who was executed.

Q: Was he really?

PH: He was a tough German colonel coming in from the Russian front. And he didn't think anybody knew anything about it. But that's what happens. There's a lot of stuff that can happen, but the Army is so big, people don't have any idea. It's so big. There were a lot of people there. Today it is entirely different.

Q: So you weren't anywhere near Nuremberg at the end, were you?
PH: Well, I had been in Nuremberg. All over. Yes, towards. After the infantry had gone down through. I was way down in Metz. I went from Metz over into Germany and then went right down to Nuremberg. I was in Nuremberg, yes. I was all over Germany after the war. I was there about three weeks before I came home. They wanted to know if you wanted to sign up. I didn't want to sign up. I wanted to go home?

Q: When was that? Was that 46?
PH: That was when the war was over. Early 1946. Yes, war was all through. But there's a lot of fellows, young officers, captains, lieutenants, and even majors who didn't have any occupation. They were smart college people and they stayed in the Army for twenty years. I know a lot of the guys went right up the ladder.

Q: Made their career.
PH: Well, that fellow I showed you a picture of, he stayed over there in Germany for two years and he was all over the world. He made General out of it. He was a tank commander and knew him when he was a lieutenant. But that's the way it goes. The Army is so big, people don't have any idea. And a lot of boys got in the Army, did all right, and a lot never did get along. Yeah, human nature and everything.

Q: So when you came home, you were discharged?
PH: Yes.

Q: Is that when you started your family?
PH: Yes. I didn't have any. [I was] Married 18 days [laughs] and left for Europe. Four years later.

Q: Your wife was very glad to see you?
PH: Oh, yes. She came down to camp Dix to meet me, and her home was in Buffalo.

Q: Camp Dix is in New Jersey?

PH: Yes. Oh, that's a big camp. That was awfully big.

Q: Was that where they discharged a lot of them?
PH: Oh, a lot of boys were discharged from Dix. A lot of them went from there to Europe, too. They had a lot of places they shipped out of in New Jersey to go over to England. They couldn't have just one. They had different places. But I don't know how mad she was when she told me she had a good first class dinner for me. She was a good cook. I said, I'll be there. I didn't. I lied like hell. I couldn't tell her anything different. Nobody knew anything. Nobody told her anything.

Q: How many children did you have?
PH: One. He's running the business now.

Q: How old is he?
PH: Well, I guess he's fifty-one or fifty-two.

Q: Oh, he's a young man, isn't he?
PH: Yeah, I was with him all day yesterday. We went up to Canada. We have to go. He's running the business now. I came back and I got into business. And you'd be surprised. I knew a fellow before. Right at the beginning of the war, the motor truck association. I was one of the organizers of it. Years ago. I believe in associations. People work and do stuff together. Yeah, it was a good deal. And anyway, he said to me, I'm going over to Europe for a couple of weeks. He was the quartermaster. He represented one of the big trucking companies. This is New York City. I wrote his name down so I wouldn't forget it and put it in my pocketbook. So anyway, I was over in England before the division got there. And I was traveling around, getting acquainted with where to get these supplies and everything. Tanks and jeeps. I had to get all that stuff, get it into the division. That was my job, part of it. And it's not just all the maintenance. I have to get them and get set up. The troops picked them up. And all this business. Well, anyway, I went down to a quartermaster store. I wanted to get a raincoat. I paid five dollars for a raincoat in New York City. An Army raincoat. And anyway, during the course of time over in Europe, other officers couldn't get one. I knew a fellow quartermaster down in, I called it southeastern England. He was a quartermaster captain, and I knew him. So anyway, I went down there, I sold five raincoats. I made enough money for myself. Didn't cost me anything.

Q: You were good at that.

PH: I was good at that. I was a swapper. I can do that. I got in for lunch. [unclear] Okay, I'm having lunch. I was facing that way and behind me, all the officers were talking. And one said, they don't care who they let in the Army. I think the Army is going to hell. We wouldn't have anything to do here with all this going on. And the guys who were facing me, these other officers, had big grins on their faces. Finally, curiosity gets the best of me. I had to turn around and see. Here was my old buddy from New York. That's where he was stationed. Small world. Years afterwards. Then he told me, a good place to go was The Cross Hands [?] hotel for dinner. Well, I had to get somebody with a car. They just wanted me to go buy their dinner, take it out. But I couldn't take an Army vehicle and do that. If it was business, that's one thing, but not business, they got to watch it. But there were a lot of boys who went to service and did good. Then they had a lot of boys that decided they didn't want anything to do with the Army. You don't hear much about them.

Q: No.
PH: By traveling cross country, I learned all about what you had to watch out for. Because you don't know whether they're Frenchmen or whether they're American. How are you going to tell at night? They stole jeeps and everything. I know that happened.

MRL It did?
PH: Yes.

Q: The bad ones, huh?
PH: They had it happen. So when I took stuff back to the depot, I had my guards out. I said shoot and ask questions afterwards. Because they stole them. Sure. They were deserters. You don't hear much about it. But on my end of the business and what I was doing, you heard a lot of things that the ordinary officer soldier wouldn't know anything about.

Q: The bad apples?
PH: Bad apples? Oh, they had lots of bad apples. Oh, yes. But you don't hear anything. You don't hear anything about that, which is just as well off. I'm glad that it's that way. Sure, because everybody is a great hero. And you have to expect it with over thousands of people. That's the hard part.

Q: So, Ashley, do you have any other questions?
[Ashley] I kind of want to know what your parents thought about [unclear]

PH: . I got to tell you, I have to. Let's say this. I was going to say it. I tried to give advice, what I was going to tell you. But I couldn't say it. Well, I was the only one in the division that was a captain and never had any military training. Never. Had teach myself.

Q: How did your mom feel? Your mother was alive and father.
PH: I wrote them cards. That's the only way they knew where I was. I told them I was getting along fine.

Q: They didn't know exactly where you were, right?
PH: You couldn't tell anybody. I dropped Marie a letter. You had an APO number and that would work well. Oh, sure. Then you can send that. But they didn't know where you were. You eventually get your mail. Oh, they had great times with the mail. But you see, the Army is so big. The average person, even the average soldier knows it big. But they weren't around stuff like I was doing to see so much of it. That's what makes a difference.

Q: You were always on the move.
PH: I was with all kinds of people, all kinds of soldiers. See, my supply deal is different from a lot of the other stuff in maintenance. They had a maintenance battalion, but I was over them. I was on the staff, on the general staff, assistant ordnance officer.

Q: Any other questions? [question directed to Ashley]
PH: Well, you know, I think that a young fellow that doesn't know what he wants to do, ought to go and try the Army.

Q: You think it'd be good for a young man?
PH: I think so.

Q: You think every young man should do it?
PH: Well, I don't know about that. I think Lance would have liked to have done it, but I had work for him to do, that's the thing. But a young fellow that doesn't know what he wants to do, join the Army and you can educate him.

Q: Learn a trade.
PH: And you know what? People don't know this, but through our association, you hear a lot of stuff. A lot of people go through the government, spend a lot of

money. We're all paying for it, and they can't pass a test. They can't do anything. Now, you go down to Wilmington, don't put it through the paper on this, South Carolina, and that's big. Seventy-five-thousand troops go through there. We had a convention down there ten years ago. And riding down on the train, I saw the God awful set of young people. One kid had his hair way down here, big mustache, he had the whole works, black hair, and he was about eighteen or twenty. And I wondered what college these kids were going to school. Because I rode from, I think, Pittsburgh down there. We were getting off.

Q: Made an impression.
PH: On the airline, no, on the train. I had the train because I couldn't get down there the other way, so I had to take the train. But anyway, when I got down there, I got off and I was walking around waiting for a friend of mine to meet me. And in came these people. A little girl with a sergeant. The train took them over to this big air base down there, Wilmington.

Q: Fort Bragg?
PH: No, not Fort Bragg. It's another name. I never can remember that darn thing. It's a big air base, seventy-five-thousand people used to be there. But anyway, while we were staying in the hotel, we had about two-hundred 4th Army guys. So we went out and had lunch as guests of the general of the division that's out there. Army meals and all. We had a good time, good lunch. Well, three of us standing in a little hallway, in a little alcove. We were talking to different guys coming and going, all Army people. Well, while we're there, six of these people, and this fellow with a big goatee, the big black hair, came right in, set right down. Right over there is a barber shop. Three barbers. The other boy said let's hang around here. The bus hadn't come yet. I want to see that fellow again. He was the first one. He was kind of the boss of the group. You could see that. So anyway, three barbers were there, and when one of the barbers looked around, one of the boys pointed to this fellow. The kid didn't know what was going on. [laughs] So anyway, three of them went in. He's one of the first three of them. Right next to, not far from us. There's a big glass wall there. It's a barber shop. You got to go through the door over there to get in. You can see them. He was a character, that [unclear] barber. You could see that. And he asked this young fellow how he wanted his hair. Cut this way, down like this. One of the boys did this. [gestures cutting it all off] Big smile on his face, big bow. [laughs] Well, he listened to this kid. We can't hear him talk, but we can see what's going on. So the kid showed that he wanted it all like this and down. Well, he took his mowing machine and he

went right up front and right out back. Wide like that [gestures about four inches] all the way across. [laughs] You should have seen the look on that kid's face. I was watching his face.

Q: He didn't get it, huh?
PH: Was he some surprised kid when he got through. He was just as clean as my hand. We clapped like this. And the barber gave us a big bow. He's an Army barber, but that's what they had to do. Down in this is a big reception center. Still is, but there's a lot of people who can't go through it. I think they ought to have a separate school to teach these boys and girls to know something.

Q: Well, I think we have to go now to go get her supper.
PH: We give you a little idea of some of the things I hope. What I told you, they're all true stories. I don't make up stuff.

Q: Can I get you to just sign my release form?
PH: Sure.

Q: You got a pen on you? This just gives us permission to share it with some other kids.
Share your story.
PH: [signs release form] Okay. Well, if a boy wants to go into the Army...

Q: That's good. Thanks.
PH: ...if they don't have any education or don't have any money, they get a good education in the Army and they could get a job.

Q: Sure. Well, some of them don't want to work. That's the problem.
PH: Well, that's the whole thing. But they want to get ahead. You know, a soldier can go in as a private and he can end up as an officer and go to officer school if he wants to learn something. Another thing it does to kids. You're put in with two hundred people, all nationalities, all the stuff that goes on, all that, they get some change. If you are the only boy in the family, like my son is. Well, when you and your dad always had everything you wanted. You said please, you know. When you get in there, you get educated. You do like you're told and you don't say I want [something]. It gives a great education. It helps a lot of kids.

Q: Builds character.

PH: I know a lot of boys that have gone into service, and most of them turned out. Seldom… the only reason it doesn't turn out is if he doesn't know anything. That's the whole thing. So tell the kids that they have to have a good education if they want to get ahead in this world. And they better do it, do it now while they have the chance. Because, like driving our truck, you have to have a good education. And it's getting more so with the government regulation. We got a lot of government regulations going on, new ones, hours of service and all the red tape you have to have to go along. The regular bill of lading. You have to be able to talk to people. You've got to be able to remember what you're putting on your truck and everything. You have to be able to drive right. You have to be able to be on duty like you're supposed to be. You go to work at one o'clock in the morning. We have lots of guys go to work at one or two o'clock and they are home by noon time. Go home and go to sleep and do something the rest of the day. But we have boys coming in our place there. Don't know how to do a thing. How are they going to get a job? They don't have anything to commit. I'll just tell you a quick story. I know you got to go. Three years ago, we had two colored fellows. Well, they both have big jobs now. Anyway, they came and I talked with one of them. My guy that does a post hire was there and this boy said he was a mechanic. And this is what I liked about it. I didn't know they were living in Saratoga. The first one came in and wanted a job as a mechanic. So I talked to him, talked to the guy that hired him. I asked him when he wanted to go to work. He said, right now. I asked him, where are your tools? He said, in my car. Paul Lapointe, you might know him. He was an ex-trooper. He worked for me for a long time. So anyway, he takes him right out to the shop. That boy worked a year and a half for us. Well, in the meantime, another colored fellow came in, same procedure. We asked if he was a mechanic. He said, oh yes. I talked with him. I asked when he wanted to work? He said, right now. I asked if he had tools? He said, I got them. We put him out in our tank repair shop, and he worked there for a year and a half. This is another thing I liked about these fellows. These two of them came in one day to see me, and they said to me, Mr. Hillman, we got a job down here at one of these big trucking companies and I can get twenty dollars an hour. My sister got almost as much. Two of us. We were paying sixteen. I said, I can't go that high. [They said] We understand that. They said, we like everything here, but we've got to try to help ourselves. I said, that's alright with me. I hate to see you leave. If you need a recommendation, I'll give it to you. They went down and six months later the first one was head of hundred trucks and the other one was his assistant. Now if white boys had come in like that and these white boys came in, they don't have a damn. They don't know what to do.

Q: No ambition, they don't know what to do.
PH: They don't know what to do. That is a hard spot.

Q: They probably don't even know where to start.
PH: They never had to do anything. They never were hungry.

Q: They had everything handed to them.
PH: That's the way it goes.