

VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

VETERAN: ACE HILL

BRANCH OF SERVICE: ARMY

INTERVIEWER(S): KAYLA FISHER AND JESSICA CHAPPELL

MAY 13, 2005

And this is the beginning of an interview with Ace Hill at his grandson's home at 110 Skyline Drive in Portage, Pennsylvania. Mr. Hill is 69 years old having been born on July 12, 1935 my name is Kayla Fisher and my partners name is Jessica Chappell and we will be the interviewers.

Q. Mr. Hill could you state for the recording what branch of service you served in what war you served in and where did you serve.

A. Korean War I was in the army and went to the air force when I got out of the army I was stationed at Fort Benning, GA [something unintelligible] airborne infantry I went into Special Forces from there it seemed like when you're 17 years old you can whip the world and a bunch of guys there were 44 in a platoon you could you just couldn't be beat but that's not true.

Q. Where you drafted, recalled to duty, or volunteered during the war?

A. I volunteered I was raised in an orphanage and it was either be a farmer or so I went into the military at 17.

Q. Why did you pick the service branch that you joined?

A. Well, there was no money around for a young man I was just a kid myself.

Q. Where was your training conducted?

A. Fort Benning, GA flyaways[?] airborne infantry.

Q. Tell me about your boot camp training.

A. Oh, my lord...you wasn't allow to walk nowhere you had to trot everywhere you went being in the paratroopers we had to make three jumps a month to make \$50 and they signed papers so you could jump the drill instructors boy if you goofed up you were in trouble with your DI, drill instructor.

Q. What information were you given about Korea?

A. We just thought it was, they just told us was a conflict we just going to go over there and push some Chinese

people back above the 38<sup>th</sup> parallel and we just thought we go over there and they'd see our uniforms and they'd just back up boy was we surprised.

Q. How well did you training prepare you for service in Korea?

A. The harder you trained it seemed like the less you learned you don't know there should never be no wars ah...they could never have trained you there you'd have done it in another manner anything like that.

Q. What further training if any did you receive in Korea?

A. Oh, boy...keep low, sometime we'd only be 100 yards from the enemy they'd be in trenches, we'd be in trenches and if you stuck your head up a sniper would pick you off one minute you'd be talking to your friend the next minute he'd be dead. Don't snap your finger or blink your eye you never know what's coming.

Q. What did you think of the equipment, clothing, and rations you were issued.

A. You was never warm in the winter time. 40 below is 40 below and everything was uphill and you could never keep warm we used newspaper a lot of times to wrap our feet because we learned that from the bums in New York. Wind can't blow through newspaper so they that's what they did but we had hardy clothing to keep warm

Q. How did soldiers entertain themselves?

A. We played cards we played games, baseball, different games, mostly cards though tried to keep inside in your space during the wintertime because in the summertime boy that place was rank boy it never smelled good and everything like I said was uphill it seemed like you never went down.

Q. What were some pranks you and some others would pull?

A. Ah I wouldn't want to say that on this tape honestly. [laughs] We would put water in helmets and the guy would put his helmet on and get splashed and he'd be mad about this or your take shaving cream and squirt it in his hands and tickle him with a feather or something a twig and he'd slap his face like it was a mosquito and he'd get it all over his face.

Q. What did you think of your officers and fellow soldiers?

A. We had some pretty good officers and had some very, very good men that served with us very good men course once in a while you have an one 8-ball one guy will try pull something he ain't supposed to and get the

whole bunch in trouble but then he didn't like the results of that either.

Q. Who were some of your good friends in the service and did you continue any of these friendships after the service and did you attend any reunions?

A. No, I had a lot of good friends and I left all of them over there.

Q. What was your job or assignment in Korea?

A. Well, I was I went from a squad leader with 6 to 8 men when out on patrols and stuff mostly we did a lot of night patrols trying to find out where the enemy was tray to find out what they had you know bring back communications sometimes we'd get cut off and have to stay longer that we presumed.

Q. Did you take part in any combat action, if so, where, when, and against whom and describe your baptism by fire.

A. I'd rather not answer that because I lost too many friends over there.

[Interviewer] O.K.

Q. Could you please describe your experience with going with winter warfare?

A. Keeping warm mostly our weapons would never jam or nothing just keeping warm because the cold it was so bitter cold that if you didn't keep you nose and ears covered in the cold over there in Korea they could turn to [unintelligible] and they would fall off your nose your ears.

Q. Where there many casualties in your unit or were your or your friends wounded?

A. Nine men came back from my company.

Q. Did you know anyone who became a prisoner of war?

A. No.

Q. What are your remembrances of the country of Korea?

A. Mostly rocky.

Q. Do you recall the day your service ended?

A. Yeah, I was at Fort Benning, GA and we waited and waited and got all our physicals and cleared the base of our securities and everything and weapons and everything and made sure everything was A-OK. Like I said we got our physicals to make sure we was in just as good a shape going out as we were coming out that was about

it I got my discharge and packed up all my uniforms left them at the main gate got on the bus and left and joined the air force went to Texas and then I went to Fairbanks, Alaska for four years in the air force I lost one stripe I was a staff sergeant for four years [unintelligible] sergeant first class in the army

Q. Did you join any veteran's organizations?

A. No, Nope.

Q. What did you go on to do as a career after the war?

A. Well, I joined the air force and went up to Fairbanks, Alaska in the air force for four years and I took went to Point Barrow I felt all over closed the drill line at Nome, Alaska most of it you do every kind of job you can because there's not much to do up there you got like 6, 7 months of wintertime and the snow's like powder you can't make snowballs or nothing you can't run either or your lungs'll freeze its that bad.

Q. How did your service or experiences affect your life?

A. Well, um...well when you're a kid growing up you don't believe life can be so short so quick and makes a stronger person out of you. It made you grow up quick.

[Interviewer] This concludes the interview with Mr. Ace Hill. Thank you for you time.

[Interviewee] You're welcome and II hope you get a half decent grade for this.