

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

Center for Pacific War Studies  
Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview with

Rudolph W. "Sam" Winter  
Palmer, Kansas  
January 19, 2010  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 376<sup>th</sup> Regiment, 94<sup>th</sup> Infantry  
Switchboard Operator

My name is Richard Misenhimer, and today is January 19th, 2010. I am interviewing Mr. Rudolph W. "Sam" Winter, W-I-N-T-E-R, by telephone. His address is 301 N. Indiana, Palmer, Kansas 66692. His phone number is 785-692-4337. This interview is in support of the National Museum of Pacific War, Center for Pacific War Studies, for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Sam, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today, and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II. The first thing I'd like to do is read to you this agreement with the museum. When I do this in person, of course, I let the man read it and sign it. Since this is by phone, let me read this to you on the phone and see if it's okay with you.

"Agreement Read"

Mr. Winter

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, the next thing I'd like to do is get an alternative contact. We find out that sometimes several years down the road, we try to get back in touch with a veteran he's moved or something. So, do you have a son or a daughter or someone that would know where you are if we needed to find you?

Mr. Winter

Well, no, I'm at home here in this little town, and my wife's living here. The kids are in Manhattan, that ain't too far from here, about sixty(?) miles. They come home quite often.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Why don't you give me one of their names and phone numbers?

Mr. Winter

Oh shoot.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have that information available there. All right. What is your birth date then?

Mr. Winter

February the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1918.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Winter

Right here in Palmer, Kansas.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You had several brothers and sisters, is that right?

Mr. Winter

There was eight of us boys and four sisters. A huge family but there's just a few left. I just have one brother left and two sisters, the rest have all died. I've outlived them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Norman is your brother. I've talked with him.

Mr. Winter

He's the only I have left.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were your other brothers in World War II?

Mr. Winter

No. I think him and I were the only brothers. The others left (?) but they got sent home because of their health or something.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you grew up during the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Winter

It sure did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did it affect you?

Mr. Winter

Well, I never knew I was hurting because everybody else was hurting the same way. We just didn't know that, you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your father's occupation there?

Mr. Winter

We're all farmers(?)

Mr. Misenhimer:

Farmers, okay.

Mr. Winter

Immigrants. My folks was immigrants.

Mr. Misenhimer:

From where?

Mr. Winter

From Germany, but they were citizens (?).

Mr. Misenhimer:

Your father moved over from Germany?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, my mother, too. I speak German, too. I used the German language quite a bit during the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Winter

I didn't go to high school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, what was your last year of school?

Mr. Winter

Eighth grade. The road was bad and there was no transportation, so I just didn't get to go to high school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do when you finished school?

Mr. Winter

I worked on the farm and around(?), and I done that till I was drafted. I was working by the month \_\_\_\_\_ and getting twenty-one dollars a month and something to eat. Then when I got in the service, it was still twenty-one dollars and something to eat. It took me quite a while to figure out I was worth more than twenty-one dollars.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What would have been your last year in school?

Mr. Winter

The date? Oh, I was fourteen or thirteen or fifteen(?) when I quit school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That'd be '32 or '33 somewhere in that range.

Mr. Winter

Yeah, that's about right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when did you go into the service?

Mr. Winter

Three months before Pearl Harbor, let's put it that way.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay. September '41.

Mr. Winter

Somewhere like that. It was almost exactly three months before Pearl Harbor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

September 7<sup>th</sup> would have been exactly three months before.

Mr. Winter

Yeah, that's about the time I went in. That's pretty close.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where you drafted or did you volunteer?

Mr. Winter

I was drafted. I was going to volunteer, but I was working up in Iowa and I wanted to leave from my home state. I got drafted up there, though. They wouldn't release me so I could go home. I was going to enlist in Kansas, but they wouldn't let me do it. They said, "You're registered here in Iowa so you stay here." That's the way it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What branch did you go into?

Mr. Winter

Well, it was really the Coast Guard. I was stationed down there close to Galveston, Texas when Pearl Harbor broke out, so within a few days, I was on a little banana boat headed for Panama. We were supposed to protect Panama after the Japanese hit. It was ridiculous. We didn't have nothing. We didn't have nothing, I mean, to protect it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, let me back up. When you first went in, you went to Galveston then?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, that's where I was \_\_\_\_\_ attack on Pearl Harbor happened.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any kind of boot camp or anything?

Mr. Winter

Well, yeah, just like they do today. I had that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where was that at?

Mr. Winter

In Galveston. There was a little island made into a military situation(?)  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do in boot camp?

Mr. Winter

Well, it was rifles, we fired the rifles and stuff like that. Done KP and everything that goes with it(?). A lot like they do today, it might not have been quite as rough as what they do today.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any training in ships there in boot camp?

Mr. Winter

No. I was on a lot of different ships because they moved me around so much, but I never was a sailor.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you live in there?

Mr. Winter

Well, after we got down into Panama, we lived in the jungle. They've got real hilly jungles there, and they set up post on the top of highest place. We were supposed to watch for the Japanese planes. I don't know what we'd have done if they come in. We



were supposed to identify and send in \_\_\_\_\_ what we thought they was, but we didn't no idea where they was. We didn't have no radar or nothing.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Had you been trained in the plane identification?

Mr. Winter

Well, not very much. We just kind of had to pick it up as we were down there. We had a book on it; we could look in the book, but there was no time for training much, you know. It all happened so fast.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long did it take you to go from Galveston to Panama?

Mr. Winter

Oh, on that old banana boat, that's all they had. They'd dumped the bananas out of the hold(?) and put a few \_\_\_\_\_ in there and that's where we traveled. They were real old clunkers. Anyway, that's the way it was. We didn't know where we was going until we landed down there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in Panama, did you have a rifle or anything like that?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, we had old World War II rifles. They weren't fit to fire. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was that the Springfield 03(?)?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, the old ones.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, the bolt action.

Mr. Winter

Yeah. \_\_\_\_\_ submachine guns \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long were you there in Panama?

Mr. Winter

Not quite two years. Then they decided the Japs probably wasn't going hit there, and the Puerto Ricans, you know we owned that outfit but they couldn't use them in combat. But they could(?) use them in a place like Panama after they were quite sure they wasn't going to be hit by the Japs anymore. Them Puerto Ricans, they come in and then they busted all our ranks \_\_\_\_\_ down there from sergeant and down and moved us to Mississippi. An infantry outfit that was just ready to ship out for Europe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get any kind of infantry training, then?

Mr. Winter

They didn't have the time for it there. They were just about ready to ship out. They busted all our ranks – we were all privates. \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What outfit did you join there?

Mr. Winter

It was the 94<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And that would have been sometime in '43 or '44?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, it was after the landing was made in Europe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, that was June 6<sup>th</sup> of '44.

Mr. Winter

This was after that. The landing already had made, but when we got there we helped drive them \_\_\_\_\_. They were still hanging on in France a lot of place. We cleaned that up.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were with the 94<sup>th</sup> there in Mississippi or someplace before you went overseas.

Mr. Winter

Yeah. We went overseas in the *Queen Elizabeth*, the largest passenger \_\_\_\_\_ ever built.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how many on that ship going over?

Mr. Winter

Oh, boy. You got me. Our infantry division was on there plus other outfits.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Probably something fifteen, twenty thousand people, I imagine.

Mr. Winter

Oh, there was a lot of people on there. You couldn't tell you was on the ocean, because I rode on other ships, you know, but you couldn't tell you was on the ocean with that thing.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What infantry regiment were you in?

Mr. Winter

376<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What battalion?

Mr. Winter

That was the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, I think.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What company?

Mr. Winter

Headquarters Company.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you land in Europe?

Mr. Winter

We landed, this *Queen Elizabeth* couldn't dock any place but stayed out in the ocean and then they took us off on barges at \_\_\_\_\_ Scotland.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In Scotland, okay.

Mr. Winter

Then they put us on trains and shipped us into England near the \_\_\_\_\_  
London, \_\_\_\_\_ Le Havre and then there \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I think the 94<sup>th</sup> Division went down to Salisbury Plain in England for a while ther.

Mr. Winter

Well, anyway, then we shipped across one regiment to a ship. That's three ships – small ships across the Channel. I got to tell you, after we crossed another division crossed the Channel with three ships and one of them went down. I talked to the sailors from those ships. They told me they'd just lost all their guys \_\_\_\_\_ water that drowned(?) in the Channel. They kept right on a chugging. They couldn't stop.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did a submarine torpedo it or what?

Mr. Winter

Oh, \_\_\_\_\_ everything \_\_\_\_\_ happened there in the Channel.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were crossing the Channel, were you attacked by enemy forces at all?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. There was \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of things there, just \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. A lot of stuff went down there. \_\_\_didn't all get across that channel safely.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you landed in France, what did you do then?

Mr. Winter

Well, we marched in to land(?) quite a ways. They kinda got organized as much as possible, started moving up.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your job in Headquarters Company?

Mr. Winter

I was in the switchboard – a switchboard operator most of the time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Let me back up. When you were in England, did you get any kind of training when you were in England?

Mr. Winter

No. The first thing when I got to England, they set us up in(?) a(?) temporary switchboard. We didn't know who was talking to a darn thing(?). It was kind of ridiculous. The Army does things that way.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, in the switchboard, how far back from front lines where you?

Mr. Winter

Well, what we done we sat down at the switchboard and started ringing around and got the territory I was interested in and got their numbers so I had them anyway. That wasn't a long range deal anyway. We didn't do that very long(?). They \_\_\_\_\_ it across the ground.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In France, what was your switchboard in?

Mr. Winter

It was a small outfit. I carried it just like a rifle. It was just a little thing, you know, but it was a switchboard. They used that much more – they didn't use radio hardly at all, it was too dangerous. So, the switchboard and telephone was pretty important.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you say your switchboard looked like?

Mr. Winter

Oh, it was about two feet wide and about \_\_\_ feet or so. \_\_\_\_\_ it had this \_\_\_\_\_ lines. A real simple outfit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So someone would call in to you and tell you what you wanted and you'd connect the two together, is that right?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, yeah, that's right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, how far back from the front lines would you be?

Mr. Winter

Well, it depended on \_\_\_\_\_ when we first moved up there, I had that switchboard and I thought well, there's this farmhouse there. That'd be an ideal place for me to go to get the lines over \_\_\_\_\_. And, I got in that farmhouse and they shot the windows. There were birds flying around \_\_\_\_\_. Come to find out, there was heavy artillery coming in. So, I moved that switchboard into the basement of that house in a hurry, I tell you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then the wiremen, the linemen, would bring in the lines to you, then?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, they'd throw them through the window up near wherever I was and I'd plug them in \_\_\_\_\_ that I had. Maybe I had something for a while, maybe none(?).

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Winter

A lot of things happened.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you in France.

Mr. Winter

Since I spoke German, I found out a lot of stuff a lot of guys didn't find out over there.

All I had to do was listen a lot because I understood the German language.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And you'd listen to who?

Mr. Winter

The German population and anybody. You could find out more from civilians than you could from any military corps. \_\_\_\_\_ listen to a civilian.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, what part of France were you all in?

Mr. Winter



Oh, gosh. You know, names of town and stuff they slip away from me. I never kept track of them; all of them little villages you go through and everything.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I think the 94<sup>th</sup> Division was up around the Brittany Peninsula, wasn't it?

Mr. Winter

\_\_\_\_\_ where the Bulge was \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Before that, I thought you were holding the Germans up there in the Brittany Peninsula.

Mr. Winter

Yeah, they was. We were doing that for a while, then this outfit come over that lost a third of their division in England there, in the canal, they took over then and we moved on to the Bulge area.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do during the Bulge?

Mr. Winter

Well, tried to save my hide, mostly. I saw a lot of bodies there, let's put it that way.

After a while we got so disorganized old Patton sent us back to reorganize. Can you imagine an outfit getting that bad? \_\_\_\_\_ it gets totally confusing, so that's

what it was. Patton came and chewed \_\_\_\_\_ our(?) their(?) butt out. \_\_\_\_\_

dig in. "Move up," he said. "Move up on the \_\_\_\_\_, don't dig in. You're a target \_\_\_\_\_."

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you hear Patton say that?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, I saw him there. He was making that speech and giving us the dickens.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever fire your rifle at the Germans?

Mr. Winter

No, I got along with the Germans pretty good. With the prisoners I could always question them to find out stuff.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But you didn't actually have to fight the Germans then directly?

Mr. Winter

No, not hand-to-hand. That didn't happen \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No, I mean, did you shoot at them?

Mr. Winter

No, see, I was in the switchboard and stuff. I was shot at plenty.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I understand it was pretty cold there during the Battle of the Bulge. Did you have any trouble with the cold weather?

Mr. Winter

It was nasty snow, and we couldn't get no air support because it was like a real foggy, nasty \_\_\_\_\_. We was wet all the time. That's the Germans had so much success against the Americans: we couldn't get no air support(?) to help us.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any trouble with frozen feet or anything like that?

Mr. Winter

Oh, well, yeah, I had plenty frost. I tell you, it was kind of funny they moved us in freight cars out to the front and it was real crowded in there. All we had was the darned old canned stuff, it broke you up and made you gas. \_\_\_\_\_ You can just imagine what it was like in that car. It was about three days. I got off of there and I was just loaded with crabs. I mean, I was loaded. \_\_\_\_\_ I saw him about three, four days later. I noticed he was still scratching. I said, "I'm going to tell you how I got rid of mine." I thought I'd be real smart. He said, "Who in the hell said I want to get rid of them?" He said, "I like them. I like the scratching."

Mr. Misenhimer:

Why were you in that rail car?

Mr. Winter

They were moving us. Moving the whole trainload of them, and then tracks wasn't running all the way through so we was on there long time. First thing you know, they had to go backwards a ways to find a track that wasn't blowed up, you know. The traffic was slow on there. Then there was snow outside. One time it stopped out there in the snow and kind of country, and they'd done that on purpose so people could get out of there and relieve themselves. You know, half of them in that snow, they jumped all \_\_\_\_\_ had to do it right there and the next guy'd step in and they'd come back in the cars. \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened?

Mr. Winter

I had a lot of fun with them. After war, we moved backwards to come back out of there. I got the job of kicking a lot of Germans out of their houses so we could sleep in their houses. \_\_\_\_\_ One city we went, \_\_\_\_\_, you know, they been kicked around to and were kind of tired and when they could get a little revenge they would ask us. Anyway, I noticed there were a couple of dead horses laying there in that city. The captain of mine he said, "I got a guy who can go in there and take care of that." So, of course, I was sent in there. I walked right in there \_\_\_\_\_ I know I did and had to stay for a while. I walked right in there and the \_\_\_\_\_, this building hadn't been \_\_\_\_\_ real fancy office. I went in that building \_\_\_\_\_ dead horses taken care of. \_\_\_\_\_ If you notice, I had that gun hanging on my \_\_\_\_\_. That must have been awful for that old guy to take that from a young kid.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, I understand that the 94<sup>th</sup> went up to the Siegfried Line, did it?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. We had to wait there for quite a while for the Russians to come in. We could have got there before the Russians, \_\_\_\_\_ Berlin and stuff. We didn't get there because we let the Russians \_\_\_\_\_. I always thought it was a mistake, but we had to wait there a couple of days for the Russians to take over Berlin. They were under \_\_\_\_\_ because we were coming(?).

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Winter

\_\_\_\_\_ The captain was a lawyer in civilian life. He liked to prove that he was still a lawyer. He'd pick out cases and I'd have to go with him \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, was this after the war?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. During the war, too. \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About how many in your outfit?

Mr. Winter

How many would that be?

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were there other people with switchboards besides you?

Mr. Winter

No. Well, I \_\_\_\_\_ once in a while. Once in \_\_\_\_\_ I had twenty-four hours on me where I didn't sleep or nothing. That was unusual, somebody would come to help.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Of course, Headquarters Company had a lot of people in Headquarters Company.

Mr. Winter

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In your particular company communications section or whatever?

Mr. Winter

You still got to \_\_\_\_\_ them in once in a while. I was sitting there by that switchboard and I was about \_\_\_\_\_ in the basement of this building and fire was coming in and was knocking dirt through the window down my back. You see, they've got \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the closest a shell ever came to you?

Mr. Winter

That was probably about as close as I could get to it without getting hit. I lost a friend right outside the window. He was supposed to be on guard out there. I don't know what they put him out there for, but he was there and \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of guns were these: German 88s or what?

Mr. Winter

That 88 is the one we feared most. You could hear that coming in. That \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. That great big \_\_\_\_\_, it made kind of a bubbling noise. You could always hear it go over us. It'd go over \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you ever attacked by German tanks?

Mr. Winter

Well, my company was, sure. It was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But you weren't.

Mr. Winter

No, I wasn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have quite a few casualties in your company?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, we had a number of them killed.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's in Headquarters Company?

Mr. Winter

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was Headquarters Company anywhere close to the general in charge of the 94<sup>th</sup> Division?

Mr. Winter

I tell you, it was pretty close. There wasn't too much distance(?) between the Headquarters Company and the rest of the outfit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Winter

Well, I had quite a bit of fun with them people \_\_\_\_\_ that one house I kicked them out of after the war. I went to sneak in the house and there was a store

connected to it. I was standing there behind the counter the next morning. A lady walked in there and I asked her in German what she wanted. She was real surprised to see I was talking German to her. She wanted to buy a loaf of bread. I gave her the bread. I acted as if I owned the dang place. She was digging in her pocketbook for money. I said, “keep your money, we’re having a special offer today: it’s all free.” She gave me some odd looks, some funny looks when she walked out.

One day I was walking down the city \_\_\_\_\_, I was walking down this city street and I had new boots. I had managed to get some new boots. Two old gals were walking behind me and they were talking about how the American had such nice boots. I finally turned around and showed them my boots \_\_\_\_\_ were so embarrassed.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you have for footwear over there?

Mr. Winter

The newer ones would have been leather with a strap around the ankle. They were pretty much just leather shoes. You always wet feet. In that Bulge area you couldn’t keep dry feet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

A lot of people got frozen feet over there.

Mr. Winter

It’s surprising that more of them didn’t get pneumonia and stuff, but they didn’t \_\_\_\_\_.



Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you have for food during the Bulge?

Mr. Winter

Sometimes we lost the kitchen. We'd have the dang old stuff in the boxes and stuff \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. I got to tell you, our kitchen got lost with the trucks. They pulled into this little town and nobody else, Americans, had been there. Here come the white cloths out of the windows. They was all surrounding to a kitchen. I get quite a kick out of that. It was always a job keeping up with the kitchen or knowing where they was or anything like that. Eating wasn't too good, but we never starved.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get hot food most days?

Mr. Winter

Well, no. Very seldom. If you got a hot cup of coffee you were lucky. I wasn't \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. I mean, I never starved or anything like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have enough warm clothes?

Mr. Winter

Well, yeah, but like in that boxcar I was telling you about, I had a big overcoat on and everything else, but it was colder than hell in there anyway. You thought you was getting warm \_\_\_\_\_ somebody had to pee out the door and open that big door and you'd get cold again. It's a wonder I didn't get sick.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What are some other things that happened?

Mr. Winter

I tell you, what gets me to this day you hear people talk about them Germans not knowing what went on. I never believed that. I always said, you got a train go through here anyplace loaded with prisoners all dressed up, girls and women and everything on them, they're packed in there, and then not know what's going on? After the war there, I found a guy there he was an electrician. He was telling me he had a buddy he worked with for years, a fellow electrician. He said he was as good a German citizen as you ever saw. Anyway, one morning he didn't show up for work. He said that was the last time he heard of him. So, he knew what happened to him.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you see any of the concentration camps?

Mr. Winter

I didn't get over there, no. \_\_\_\_\_ I did not want to see it anyway. I know what it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you all capture many German prisoners?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, we had quite a few. Quite a few got shot, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that?

Mr. Winter

They said Americans didn't shoot prisoners, there was quite a few of them shot.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Why did they shoot them?

Mr. Winter

Well, just the easiest way to get rid of them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any of the SS Germans? Did you have any experience with the German SS?

Mr. Winter

Oh yeah, we had this one prisoner he was an SS one of them. He kept going, "Heil Hitler!" Raising his hand and all. I didn't even know that guard, and he kept cussing him out and telling him to quit it. I knew what was going to happen so I left and five minutes later I come back and there he was laying. He did shoot him. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ end of the war, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about the Hitler Youth. Have any experience with them?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. Not too much, but you know, I picked up a certificate there on the street. I wish I'd have saved it. It said this woman had ten kids for the Reich, for the Fuhrer. It was a big honor and it was signed 'Adolf Hitler.' I was disgusted and threw it away. Ever since, I'd wished I'd have folded it up and taken it along. I just threw it away. He handled the whole human race like he was going to raise a super race. Just like a cattleman. I knew one couple they were both neutered. They were kinda lame up stairs a little bit, and \_\_\_\_\_ neutered both of them. \_\_\_\_\_ I know that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you when Germany surrendered on May the 8<sup>th</sup>?

Mr. Winter

I was back in England. I was supposed to be coming home and they was getting us ready to go to Japan if we didn't go home.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh, this is when the war ended?

Mr. Winter

After that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You left Germany before the war ended? Did you leave Germany before the war ended?

Mr. Winter

Well, it was ended in Germany, yeah. Then they shipped us to Bohemia. \_\_\_\_\_ set up some kind of government there because they \_\_\_\_\_ Germans had \_\_\_\_\_ our division \_\_\_\_\_ war. From there I went back to England.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Winter

I got caught under mortar fire. That'll scare the hell out of you. \_\_\_\_\_ hear that coming in. \_\_\_\_\_ like a slingshot, you know, and boy I tell you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did that happen?

Mr. Winter

We got caught on a road crossing, the trucks were tied up and stuff. We couldn't move our outfit. The Germans across the hill found that out and they had that mortar firing \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. That really scared me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

The Germans had some kind of a weapon they called the Nebelwerfer. What was that?

Mr. Winter

\_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Misenhimer:

This was something that shot a lot of rockets.

Mr. Winter

Oh you mean that tin pipe \_\_\_\_\_ had that back blast. You wouldn't want to stand in back of it if you fired it, but they never fired it when \_\_\_\_\_  
that much it. It could be pretty \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else happen in Germany there when you were over there?

Mr. Winter

There's a lot of things happened where they could have saved lives instead of killing them. I didn't always agree with that \_\_\_\_\_ Patton moved them tanks up way too fast and they ran out of fuel. I saw where they just stopped. After the war, I come by there and they was all dug in. \_\_\_\_\_ to the ground like \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. That's where they stayed because they ran out of fuel and then the Germans captured them. The tanks were still sitting there. That was silly. He'd outrun his fuel line.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of Patton?

Mr. Winter

He made a lot of dang mistakes, that's for sure, but I guess he must have been a good \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ or he wouldn't have had the job he had. \_\_\_\_\_ had to get  
killed in a \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about Eisenhower?

Mr. Winter

Well, I always thought that Montgomery the British had was a way better general than  
Eisenhower, but I guess Eisenhower was all right. He made mistakes, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

After the war you went back to England?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. From Bohemia, I had my time by the number system. They sent me to England,  
and there I was supposed to wait for a boat. While I was waiting there, they were giving  
us instructions on how to behave in Japan. About that time, the blasts happened there,  
you know. The bomb went off in Japan. I saw it in the English papers in great big  
headlines. I told the other guy that \_\_\_\_\_ strange sense  
of humor, look at this paper. I couldn't believe it. That made things \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ saved \_\_\_\_\_ lives. We'd had to go over to Japan and \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ I wonder what would have happened.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did y'all have occupation duty in Germany after the war?

Mr. Winter

Well, that's what we'd done in Bohemia. They had a huge German prisoner camp and we \_\_\_\_\_ they hated them Germans with a passion. There was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ when the Germans occupied the country. A German officer who \_\_\_\_\_ there  
in an open car, and some civilian in this little time popped him off. He had a gun and he  
killed him. This was one of Hitler's friends, and boy he was mad I guess. He said he  
would make an example of them. He sent his troops in there and they killed everybody in  
that little village. Everybody: women, kids, and everybody. \_\_\_\_\_ understand  
why they hated the Germans so bad. Even those Germans that lived there for a long time  
had to wear a yellow ribbon around their arm.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else happen when you were on occupation duty there?

Mr. Winter

Well, we were supposed to go back to England and then help get \_\_\_\_\_ stuff ready to  
ship back to the States. \_\_\_\_\_ put oil on the new trucks and everything. One place  
we had a quarter section that was all vehicles. We were supposed to get them ready to  
get back to the States. Of course, none of them ever went back. That was a joke. If we'd  
want to go to town, we'd just get our gas stick out and measure gas in them Jeeps and  
stuff and just take off with it. Everything was \_\_\_\_\_ there. They sold  
these vehicles to the Englishmen in big sections. They claimed the better ones as one  
bunch and the second grade the next bunch, but you know how GIs are, they lined them

up just the way they dang pleased. That's the way they sold them. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ it cost too much to ship them back, anyway.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in England, did you get a chance to go into any of the small towns, to the  
pubs, or anything?

Mr. Winter

Well, yeah, I saw plenty pubs. I always enjoyed it. The fact is, I kind of liked the  
English people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were they friendly?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, they was. I kinda liked them. They'd really been through the mill, you know.  
You had to like them because they were a brave people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

They were tough.

Mr. Winter

They was tough.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get to London?

Mr. Winter

No, I didn't get to London. I was in Liverpool quite a bit and Le Havre.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then when did you come back to the States?



Mr. Winter

Well, after I had four years in, I just had four years in when I got my discharge. That's another thing I'd like to tell you. I was forever getting on to that ship we come back. They decked them off one at a time as they went on aboard. Of course, I was a tail-end with that 'W.' I got on, I went down to the hold. I thought I'd better find my bunk, but there wasn't no bunk. They'd put one too many aboard that ship, and it was me. I never said a word. I was mad at first, and I thought, "After four years of hell, I should have a bunk." But then I thought, "Heck, I'm going home. I'm not going to bother \_\_\_\_\_." I just slept on deck or wherever a couple find a place \_\_\_\_\_ dry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you came back in August or September of '45?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, it must have been there. It was almost four years to the day that I was in.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the trip coming back home?

Mr. Winter

Oh, it wasn't bad. \_\_\_\_\_

Mr. Misenhimer:

How big a ship was it?

Mr. Winter

It was oh \_\_\_\_\_, I don't remember. It had a lot of ammunition aboard, and they were dumping that all the way home from England. They dumped it overboard, that ammunition \_\_\_\_\_ shells(?).

Mr. Misenhimer:

It took you a while to get back, did it?

Mr. Winter

Well, it was quite a while. I wasn't in no hurry then.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the food on that ship?

Mr. Winter

Oh, it wasn't too good.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the food on the *Queen Elizabeth* going over?

Mr. Winter

That was bad. The English had done all the cooking. They'd never made a decent cup of coffee in their lives. They're tea drinkers, you know that. \_\_\_\_\_ the coffee they made, you couldn't believe it. They made it in this huge bunch you know, and they put a lot of sugar in it and a lot of milk. It looked like slop instead of coffee. You couldn't drink it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get a lot of mutton?

Mr. Winter

Oh, I don't know what it was, but \_\_\_\_\_. I wasn't hurting. I didn't like the food, I didn't like the coffee. The coffee \_\_\_\_\_ what everybody wanted then, couldn't get that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got back to the States, where did you land?

Mr. Winter

Boston.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Boston, okay. Then what happened?

Mr. Winter

They shipped me to Missouri, to Fort Leonard Wood. From there I got my discharge.

Then, I had to turn in what I had in my pack, and there was a \_\_\_\_\_ I had that darn shovel, that little \_\_\_\_\_ shovel. I'd be danged if they didn't make me pay for it. I got to figuring afterwards, hell, I'd have lent that to somebody else that needed to dig a hole in a hurry \_\_\_\_\_ brought it back to me. I paid for that sucker. I thought, well... I was real mad at first, but I thought, "What the heck am I mad about? I'm going home."

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home with any souvenirs?

Mr. Winter

No, I didn't do that. You know, we had guys and we'd sleep in them houses after the war. \_\_\_\_\_ to get the places that was locked up like the cabinets and places \_\_\_\_\_ break the locks to get the stuff out of \_\_\_\_\_. I never could do that. \_\_\_\_\_. I just couldn't do it, but there was plenty of it going on. Otherwise, they didn't wreck them houses much. \_\_\_\_\_ always after the valuables. Americans can't always be so nice, either.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see any USO shows anywhere?

Mr. Winter

No, no. I never did see one of them or had that. We had on T.V. all the time. Them T.V.

pictures of war, they kinda \_\_\_\_\_ me anyway. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ridiculous to me. \_\_\_\_\_ make it so romantic and all that stuff \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.it's all dirty.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see that movie *Saving Private Ryan*?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, I saw it. I thought that was kind of ridiculous, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You didn't that was very realistic?

Mr. Winter

Some of that action in there just couldn't really happen\_\_\_\_\_ . I

guess people like that \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Winter

Well, not really. But, that one place they would exchange prisoners for us. I saw that

happen. That's the only thing I saw. I saw their Jeep running around with the red cross

on it. They was bringing our American prisoners back and the Germans back to them,

doing some good there. But, that red cross, you know how that was terrible the Germans

had that painted on top of their pillboxes and everything else. \_\_\_\_\_ for that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, that big massacre at the Battle of the Bulge, the Malmedy Massacre, did you know anything about that when you were over there?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, it was terrible.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you know anything about that when you were over there?

Mr. Winter

Yeah. I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ done some terrible things, the Americans did, too, of course. \_\_\_\_\_ . There's nothing pleasant about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale in your outfit?

Mr. Winter

Oh, considering everything, I don't think it was too bad. You didn't hear too much complaining. I believe everybody knows it didn't do no good.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Axis Sally on the radio?

Mr. Winter

I know about, but I don't remember hearing her. We didn't have the radio much \_\_\_\_\_ kind of deal you didn't have. \_\_\_\_\_ even the ships wasn't using it. That's why the telephone got to be so important.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, April 12<sup>th</sup> of '45, President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, we knew about that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the reaction to that?

Mr. Winter

Oh, you know, politics don't enter in there. I would tell the guys getting out(?)  
\_\_\_\_\_. We's just all Americans then. Now they're fighting Republicans and  
Democrats. We didn't have that. I never found out who was a Democrat and who was a  
Republican there. We were just all Americans.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you got out, did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Winter

Oh, I did a little bit, I slammed around a while before I got married. Just like a canary  
getting out of a cage somewhat.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you join the 52-20 Club? Twenty dollars a week unemployment for 52 weeks.

Mr. Winter

I think I tried that, and I didn't last long in there. I went and got a job on the farm. I  
couldn't stand that \_\_\_\_\_ a few payments and then quit it. I  
didn't like the whole idea of it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Winter

I was a corporal. That's as high as I got. That's high enough. I didn't really want no rank during the war. I had enough trouble taking care of what I had to do.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your GI Bill for anything?

Mr. Winter

No. I never got nothing out of that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You didn't go to a farm school or anything like that?

Mr. Winter

No, no. I tried to buy a home through that \_\_\_\_\_ got married \_\_\_\_\_ couldn't get no money \_\_\_\_\_ I bought a brand new one, something I knew I couldn't \_\_\_\_\_ . So, that \_\_\_\_\_ . Then I was on the farm and I wanted to buy a little land, and I couldn't get no help there either. That wasn't so big as it is now. Guys that get out now they get all kind of help. It didn't do me \_\_\_\_\_ .

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was farming what you did for your career?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, I farmed and then I worked in town, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of work did you do in town?

Mr. Winter

I had the farm and then I had four boys. I had to go to work. I went to town to work, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do in town?

Mr. Winter

Factory work.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions?

Mr. Winter

What's that? I had to do my farming on the weekends

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\_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What medals and ribbons did you get?

Mr. Winter

The wages wasn't too good then, you know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What medals and ribbons did you get?

Mr. Winter

I never got no medal. The Bronze Stars, everybody had them. They didn't amount to nothing.



Mr. Misenhimer:

How many Bronze Stars did you get?

Mr. Winter

I didn't get any. I didn't want any either after I saw \_\_\_\_\_ joke.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How about battle stars?

Mr. Winter

\_\_\_\_\_ well, I got them marks \_\_\_\_\_ where my Infantry Badge is and stuff.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, you got the CIB.

Mr. Winter

I didn't get no badges, but the marks on the \_\_\_\_\_.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get the Combat Infantryman Badge?

Mr. Winter

Yeah, I had that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many marks did you get on it?

Mr. Winter

Well, I had four overseas stripes on my arm(s)(?). I kind of figured that was quite a bit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else you recall from your time in the service.

Mr. Winter

I was on six different ships and I wasn't in the Navy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that six different ships? How did that happen?

Mr. Winter

Well, I went to the Canal Zone first and then back. And then I went on the *Queen Elizabeth* to Scotland. Then I crossed the Channel twice. Then I come home on one.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Okay, that's six. That's right. Well, Sam, again, I want to thank you for your time today.

I want to thank you for your service to our country.

Mr. Winter

Okay, take care.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Right, and we'll be back in touch with you later. Have a good day.

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