

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

The Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With
Dr. George Burnet V
Ames, Iowa
March 16, 2021
99th Field Arty Bn
1st Cavalry Div.

My name is Richard Misenhimer: Today is March 16, 2021. I am interviewing Dr. George Burnet V by telephone. His phone number is 515-520-3031. His address is 2310 Hamilton Drive, Ames, IA 50014. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the preservation of historical information related to World War II. His birthdate is January 30, 1924.

Mr. Misenhimer:

George, 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.

Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the museum to make sure this OK with you. (agreement read)

Dr. Burnet:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Fine, thank you. Now. What is your birthdate?

Dr. Burnet:

January 30, 1924.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Dr. Burnet:

Fort Dodge, Iowa.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. I have three sisters, one older and two younger.

Mr. Misenhimer:

No brothers?

Dr. Burnet:

No brothers.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What were your mother's and father's first names?

Dr. Burnet:

He was George Burnet, IV and I am George Burnet, V.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh, OK. Your mother's first name?

Dr. Burnet:

Myrtle.

Mr. Misenhimer:

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

Dr. Burnet:

It had very serious effects on the family. My father's employment's salary was reduced. We had to be very careful about what we ate. My sister and I would come home from grade school for lunch and lunch would be a bowl of milk and a couple of slices of bread that we would break up in the milk and put a little sugar on it. On Sunday we would have a chicken dinner and that was always the highlight of the week.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you made though it OK, then?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to high school?

Dr. Burnet:

I went to high school in Fort Dodge, Iowa. I graduated in 1941.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you enter the service?

Dr. Burnet:

I went into the military on May 16, 1944.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What branch was that?

Dr. Burnet:

I went into the chemical warfare service because I was studying chemical engineering.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is that the Army or which branch?

Dr. Burnet:

That was the Army.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That was on May 16, 1944.

Dr. Burnet:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go for basic training?

Dr. Burnet:

At Camp Sibert, Alabama.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that basic training?

Dr. Burnet:

The chemical warfare service was headquartered at Camp Sibert.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all did you do in the basic training?

Dr. Burnet:

The basic training we were trained as a 4.2 inch mortar battalion. Mortar battalions of that size, big mortars, were capable of firing chemical weapons, smoke, other munitions like that and they had a battalion, chemical warfare service battalion, that was trained to do that and was deployed in support of the infantry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you do a lot of marching and that sort of thing?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. We did the complete infantry training, small arms, grenades, the whole thing just like we were in the infantry.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then after basic training, what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, it was a 17-week basic training program and we got through about two-thirds of that when the military decided they didn't need any more 4.2 inch mortar battalions. They had enough of them and so the personnel like myself who were part-way through a training cycle were shipped off to other places where there was a need. They went through alphabetically and the first eight people alphabetically, my name Burnett, I was in that group where I was sent to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina where we joined a quarter-master railhead company. It was a group. The mission on the company was to take all the supplies needed into a combat zone and offload them from a train and allocate them to the units that were on the front and transport them to the front, a railhead company.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, about eight weeks into the training cycle at Ft. Bragg, we were out on the firing range one day and the Adjutant General set up a tent out there with an officer in it and the purpose was to receive any complaints or suggestions that the troops in training had. In my group of eight people, there were people that had degrees in chemistry, chemical engineering. One of them was superintendent of schools from Georgia and we designated him as our speaker and he went over and saw the Adjutant General officer and told him that the eight of us wanted to serve our country in the best way possible but with the educations we had, there might be something we could be doing that would be more useful. This officer was very surprised that we were even

there and in a couple of days we were all shipped off to other training sites and I was shipped out to the Fitzsimmons General Hospital in Denver and was enrolled in an x-ray technician school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, I wanted to get into Officers Candidate School and at Iowa State in my three years at Iowa State I had been in the artillery R.O.T.C. I knew something about artillery and at each of the places where I was, like Camp Sibert and Camp Bragg, I applied to get to Officers Candidate School but in each place you had to go through various levels of approval, like at the regiment and then at the post and then at the Army and I was never in one place long enough to complete that process but at Fitzsimmons General Hospital there was a board there at Fitzsimmons that reported directly to the Army that was in charge of that area and so I was able to get through the process out there and was accepted for Officers Candidate School and was sent to Ft. Sill, Oklahoma.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

I completed the Officers Candidate School and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant. I was married at the time and I was assigned to a training battery at Ft. Sill for several weeks. My wife was with me down there and then I was sent to California for overseas shipment. She went with me out there and I was in the process of preparation for three or four weeks and then I shipped out for the Philippines and my wife went back home.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now what date were you commissioned a Second Lieutenant? Roughly, it doesn't have to be exact.

Dr. Burnet:

Let's see. I went to Officers Candidate School in February of 1945. So, 17 weeks after that date.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Probably about April then.

Dr. Burnet:

February, March, April. Wouldn't it be closer to four months?

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

I shipped out on a troop ship. There were three hundred Second Lieutenants on this ship and we were heading for the Philippines. We were in a convoy. The convoy took a good time to get from the West Coast to Manila and got to the Hawaiian Islands to restock the ship, refuel but we did not get off. We were on that ship for 43 days and arrived in Manila Harbor which was badly damaged from bombing and fighting that had taken place there and were then assigned to units that were in the Philippines and I was assigned to the First Cavalry which was in Mindanao area.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I didn't quite catch what you said. Where did you land at in the Philippines?

Dr. Burnet:

At Manila.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Manila, OK. Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

I was assigned to the 99th Field Artillery Battalion, Battery C, like in Charlie. Each division of artillery had four battalions, three were 105mm howitzers, one was 155mm howitzer and the division artillery was commanded by a Brigadier General. That was the unit I was with and I was in the battalion and there were three batteries, A, B, and C, of 105mm howitzers and what you were trained for in the Officers Candidate School was to be a forward observer. So I was forward observer with the 99th field artillery battalion. Wasn't there very long, maybe two or three weeks or something like that and in spite of atropine, that I was given every time I went through the food line, I came down with malaria. I was sent to a field hospital that was all under tents and I was there for about six weeks to recover from the malaria. Sent back to the unit and about that time the first atom bomb was dropped.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, of course the troops were very, very excited and happy about the possible ending of hostilities and you may recall that Japan did not do anything after the bombing, and the second bomb was dropped a few days later and Japan did surrender and then the peace treaty was signed on the deck of the Missouri and while all that was going on, the military in the Philippines commandeered every plane they could find that was capable of carrying personnel whether assigned or not. They knew it was in Japan where there was a large number of men on Bataan and the combat in the South Pacific. They were in just the position and the idea was to fly them

out of Japan and it was a high priority. So I was assigned to the advance party from the 99th Battalion and flew up to camp in one of these planes that were commandeered to evacuate the POWs and we had an LST, landing ship tank, that was carrying mobile vehicles and it arrived in Yokohama about the time we flew in there, loaded with two and a half ton trucks. Two and a half ton trucks off-loaded, went to the airport, where our plane was and we, the advance party, the division, was loaded into these trucks and MacArthur was very clever, I thought, very astute in what he did and he had these trucks roll down the streets of Tokyo and as they rolled down the street, a convoy of trucks, the Japanese people were lined up many deep on each side of the street. It was almost like a parade, and they had _____ a Japanese soldier about every fifty feet along each side of the street. Then as the convoy reached a soldier, he was facing the street, and then he did an about-face so his back was to the street as a show of respect. He wasn't looking upon these Americans and we went to a Japanese training post a few miles from Tokyo that became the headquarters for the 1st Cavalry Division. That event was to get that facility ready for the full division to move in and undertake the demilitarization of Japan. This was all happening in Japan.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened? Go ahead.

Dr. Burnet:

Well, while we were there the Japanese training post was a big one, had wooden barracks that looked not unlike those that we had in this country. But the wooden barracks had tatami mats made out of light straw on the floor and the personnel when they were using those, the soldiers would take their shoes off and they slept and did everything else they needed with the mats that were an inch and a half thick and the first thing we did was tear up those mats and burn them and

as we took up the mats there was an infestation of insects underneath the mats. We got DDT which we would place in heating oil and then spray it on the floors to take care of these insects. We did that in a day or two, cleaned the place up, moved in canvas Army cots with folding wooden legs. Each room had space for about ten men.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, go ahead.

Dr. Burnet:

Then there was about eight months of demilitarization. A rule was that the Japanese were to turn in any knife with a blade that was more than about eight inches long and this included samurai swords plus anything that they had that was a weapon. Truckloads of those things were picked up from the collecting points. The Japanese police were responsible for collecting them in their community and we would haul them away. I remember these big ditches that were about, oh, I'd guess fifteen wide, dug about 10 or 12 feet deep. We put these truckloads of weapons and swords and knives into a ditch until it got fairly full and then they would pour gasoline on them and burn them. The wooden stocks on the guns, etc. would burn and they would then bulldoze the soil back on top of them and bury them. While that sort of thing was going on, I remember distinctly going inland. You didn't have to go very far before you got up into the mountains, maybe about 75 miles, something like that. Up in the mountains you would drive on the roads and where there'd be a valley, up above that valley, you'd have a road, and you'd find a big tunnel (caves) dug back into the hillside and in these tunnels you would find the artillery pieces, ammunition and supplies, all prepared to oppose the invasion the Americans would have had to make if they hadn't dropped the bombs. Those were all collected and destroyed. After the eight months were over, my battalion, the 99th Field Artillery Battalion, was deployed to Yamanashi prefecture in

the central part of the Japanese island of Honshu. We occupied a Japanese military base in Kofu, the capital city of the prefecture where our mission was to provide military support to the U.S. military government team stationed there while continuing our own military training and any remaining demilitarization duties required. Mount Fujiyama is in Yamanashi prefecture and we had the pleasure of a close-up view each day.

About that time they began to separate people from the service and they did it on a point system. We got a point for every month in the military, a point for every month overseas, those kind of things and by that time I had a lot of points and besides, the 1st Cavalry Division was a Regular Army division so they were beginning to move recent West Point graduates into more permanent military divisions and I was sent down to Yokohama to a replacement depot waiting for a ship back to the States.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Dr. Burnet:

I wasn't at the depot very long before a roster showed up on the bulletin board one day with the names of about thirty officers who were there on it. They were ranked mostly 1st Lieutenants and Captains and the thing we had in common was we had an engineering MOS or Military Occupation Specialty. It didn't make any difference what kind of engineer as long as you were an engineer. There was a man by the name of Herbert Dolahite and he had been an assistant manager at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Captain Dolahite had made a name for himself in North Africa by identifying a number of fancy hotels and resort centers that were rehabilitated and set up as Rest and Recreation Centers for the military personnel in that theater. He had done that so well that they brought him to Japan where he had identified about thirty of the western style

hotels in Japan that had catered to the British and the other westerners who would vacation and spend time there before the war. There were some really nice hotels and these hotels had been allowed to sort of deteriorate during the war years and required restoration before being set up a chain of rest and recreation centers for the troops who were there. They had a Japanese contractor lined up to do the work under the supervision of the owners of the hotels and they were aware that the owners of the hotels would like to have everything done that they could possibly get done because it was being paid for by the Japanese government and so they wanted an engineer to be there to supervise the rehabilitation, deciding what had to be done, what didn't have to be done and in the matter of a few weeks to get the hotel ready for use as a rest and recreation center. I was assigned to the Mampei Hotel in Karuizawa, Nagano prefecture. That was about 75 miles inland from Tokyo and at an elevation of about 4,000 feet. The Japanese would go there during the summer when it was terribly hot and humid down in the coastal plains. This very nice hotel had about a hundred and fifty rooms, was located in Karuizawa. The manager and owner of the hotel was a man by the name of Taizo Satow, and he spoke excellent English and had gone to school at the University of Michigan in the United States where they had a hotel and hospitality curriculum. He was good to work with and they had an architect/construction firm called Shimizu Gumi on the site, all ready to go. Somebody was needed to tell them what to do. Structurally the hotel was in good shape. There was painting, plumbing, carpeting and details like that needed attention. We did a lot of things to get the hotel looking really nice again in all the various rooms. They had a bar, a big dining room that looked out on a Japanese garden, a lounge, large lobby, etc. The only problem was, it was a summer resort hotel. It was not intended for winter occupancy. It was not at a very high elevation so winters there were rather mild. Japan had a lot of electrical energy because of the water that was cascading down out of the mountains

and rivers and would generate electricity so there was a lot of electricity and we decided that we could heat the hotel electrically. So they wired the entire hotel. Had the electrical heaters in the rooms, the public and well as the individual sleeping rooms and we had to put in a water supply that would be able to operate during the winter months. I did all those things and completed it in about three months.

The hotel was prepared to take guests. You had two full-time Red Cross girls there that could take care of about twenty enlisted men. Some were trained to supervise food preparation. We had a complete motor pool, had mechanics and those in the motor pool, clerical personnel. The hotel was staffed with about twenty American enlisted men and two Red Cross girls that supervised all the entertainment and things for the Army personnel who would be there. The colonel who was the Special Services Officer for the 8th Army came up to the hotel and inspected it to be sure it was ready to go and after he had done that, he and I were talking, he said, "This looks great because I've been following your written reports and we were favorably enough impressed that we got the first guests coming in two weeks. And to have the staff to be here ready to move into the hotel and get things ready. The only problem is we don't have an officer in charge." He said, "Would you be interested in staying here and being the officer in charge?" I said, "Well, that sounds very interesting but I haven't seen my wife for a long time. I'd like to get home." He said, "What? You sign on. (I had to sign on for eighteen months.) You sign on and I'll have your wife over here in six weeks." I said, "Well, sir, I know you're sincere in saying that but the only wife I know about in Japan right now is Mrs. MacArthur." He said, "That would be no problem because she would stay here at the hotel. No problem with housing. I'll have her over here in six weeks." I said, "Sign me up." So I spent a year and a half as the officer in charge of a very, very fancy rest and recreation center and we would have enlisted

personnel there for several weeks and then switch over and have officer personnel there for several weeks. The hotel had the best golf course in Japan. Land up there around 4,000 feet up in the mountains wasn't particularly good for agriculture and they got Bobby Jones over there before the war and he laid out an 18-hole golf course with 400-450 yard fairways, beautiful golf course and the hotel had a half a million gallon swimming pool and eight tennis courts, riding stable. It was a really, really a nice place and I enjoyed having my wife over there in about six weeks. I went down and met her in Yokohama and they had a very nice suite in the hotel which they called the Ambassador Grew. Ambassador Grew was a very popular ambassador from the U.S. to Japan and he liked to get away up in the mountains there in the hot summer weather and he would stay in this Ambassador Grew suite. That was my wife's and my home for the year and a half that we were there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Go ahead.

Dr. Burnet:

This was a very interesting assignment. I was able to sharpen up my golf game. I enjoyed the horseback riding. There were very interesting civilian people in there. The homes up there were almost all western style. One of the families living there that I got particularly acquainted with were the Krusu. Ambassador Krusu was the individual who was in Washington and negotiating things when Pearl Harbor occurred. He was married to a woman that he'd met over here. She was from New York state and they had a son who was killed as a pilot, a Japanese pilot, in the war years and two daughters there at home. There were families like that that you got to meet and spend time with, making the assignment up there interesting.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you say you were discharged?

Dr. Burnet:

After my time was up, I came back to the States and I was separated from the service as they call it, in December of 1947.

Mr. Misenhimer:

December of 1947?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were in how long, total, then?

Dr. Burnet:

I went in in May 1944.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So, a little over three years.

Dr. Burnet:

My separation from the service was not complete because I signed up for the Army Reserve. I participated in a number of Reserve organizations until I had the necessary twenty years in for retirement. At which time I was retired.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you retire then?

Dr. Burnet:

I need to think about that. I don't have a date in mind. I can look it up for you.

Mr. Misenhimer:

About what year?

Dr. Burnet:

I'm not even sure. I stayed in...it would be about 17 or 18 years from 1947.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's when you retired?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes, that's when I retired. I retired at the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, how was the morale in your outfit when you were overseas?

Dr. Burnet:

It was very positive both before the war ended and after it ended. The troops in Japan, of course, were under intensive training during those years of occupation but they were very well cared for as you would surmise from the fact that they set up these rest and recreation centers so that periodically the troops were given a week's leave. I forgot to mention that these enlisted men and officers that would come to my hotel would be there for a whole week. Up in the mountains they had hot springs, hot springs hotels, and all of the features the hotel offered and the Red Cross girls organized lots of very interesting excursions and activities that were part of the week that the personnel would be at the hotel. They gave us a ration and a half if we'd have 150 or 200 guests there we would get say 200 rations plus a half. We'd get 300 rations for to feed 200 people. The Japanese guests would take the American rations. They wouldn't have to follow the meal plans. They could use them anyway they wanted to and the food at the hotel was just

magnificent.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you were in the Pacific were you ever in any typhoons?

Dr. Burnet:

No. I did not experience anything like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

There were a lot of them down there.

Dr. Burnet:

But I did become very aware of was the frequency of earthquakes in Japan. It wouldn't be unusual to be sitting in a dining room and look up and see the chandeliers swinging back and forth. That happened frequently.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Since you've been out, have you had any reunions with anybody you were in the service with?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes, for a short time after I got out of the military I kept in touch. One of the Red Cross girls was from New York City and I would go out there on business trips and she and I would have a meal together and reminisce about old times. That sort of thing I did do.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were in the service, did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, the Red Cross girls that were trained to do the sort of things we needed there at the hotel were just outstanding. They were very creative and they interacted with the military personnel very, very well for rehearsal and taking advantage of the local possibilities there and making a

rest and recreation program out of what was available and that sort of thing. I think I had the highest regard for what they did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see any U.S.O. shows anywhere?

Dr. Burnet:

No, being somewhat isolated up in the mountains as we were, what we did get were American films. We'd get two or three of those a week and we would be able to set up the dining room like a little theater and had a projector and would show those American films and the dining room was large enough that most of the staff at the hotel was Japanese staff and sat in the back and watched the movies. So it was the highlight of the week for all the people at the hotel.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home from World War II with any souvenirs?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. The Army realized that as the demilitarization was taking place, that the military personnel would like to have some of those samurai swords and guns as souvenirs and so they set up places under the supervision of the military government where they would dump these swords and things that had been picked up and you could go up there and select two or three things that you might want to have sent home. I went up there and got two samurai swords and I got a Japanese military rifle and a Japanese carbine. Those four items and then they had some military personnel there with lumber and they would build a box that would be just the right size to accommodate whatever you wanted to send home. You would address it and it would go in the military transport to the States and be delivered. So that box of souvenirs was delivered to my home address at that time in Fort Dodge.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now when you were overseas did you ever hear Tokyo Rose on the radio?

Dr. Burnet:

No. I did not. Not when I was overseas. I remember hearing Tokyo Rose on the radio when I was home before I went into the military. They played Tokyo Rose.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you all think of her?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, at the time the purpose of playing it on the radio here in the States, of course, was to improve the response to the war effort that there would be someone like that would be so disloyal to the United States and would be involved and not be like that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever cross the equator?

Dr. Burnet:

Let's see. Between here and Japan I'm sure that...I don't believe you would cross the equator getting to Japan. I did not do it during my military service but I did cross the equator later on when my wife and I went on a cruise to the southern part of the hemisphere.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But not when you were in the service?

Dr. Burnet:

Not when I was in the service.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. On April 12, 1945 President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. That was especially a tragedy in the eyes of the military personnel who had a lot of respect for his leadership and what he'd done to take our country in and through those war years.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then on May 8, 1945, Germany surrendered. Did you all hear about that?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes, there was an interesting thing. When my wife and I became quite well acquainted with Mr. Sato. We were managing the hotel and his wife also spoke English but not as well as he did but we would spend time with them and when we left over there after my eighteen months at the hotel, one of the things that Mr. Sato gave me was a hard-covered book that was written in Japanese and was written as a propaganda item. You remember the Japanese and the Germans were allies and this was a book about a half-inch thick that had pictures and stories that were written in Japanese about how great the Germans were. That was an item that occurs to me. I have that book yet. I've been in touch with a museum in Fredericksburg, Texas that was interested in getting it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then on August 14, 1945 Japan surrendered. Did you have any kind of celebration then?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, I don't remember any formal celebration. No, it had been in the process for maybe I think about 12 days or something like that from the time the Japanese surrendered until the peace treaty was signed with all the dignitaries on the deck of the U.S.S. Missouri at the ceremony. That was during the time that they prepared to go into Japan that I told you about.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Yeah, OK. What ribbons and medals did you get?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, I didn't get anything really special like the bronze star or any of those things. All I got was evidence of my service. I got stars and battle stars. That sort of thing on your ribbons. I did not get any of the Japanese occupation ribbon and things like that but I consider those routine.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you been on the Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.?

Dr. Burnet:

No. I didn't do that. Probably should have. I would have enjoyed that but I did not go on any of those.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were never in any combat were you?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, no. To be honest, no I was not in combat. I was on Mindanao with the 1st Cavalry Division for about two or three months when the first atom bomb was dropped.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Of all the time you were in the service, what would you consider your worst time, your worst day?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, to be honest with you it was at basic training down at Camp Sibert, Alabama. They were training us to be tough infantry men basically with a specialty of operating these big 4.2 inch

mortar batteries. We'd go out for 17-mile forced marches, things like that. I admit that by the time that was over I was in great physical condition but getting there wasn't easy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got out, did you use your G.I. Bill for anything?

Dr. Burnet:

I sure did. It made all the difference in my life. It was a wonderful thing that our Congress did. I had completed three years of my engineering degree, had one left. I came back and was back in college in January 1948 and under the G.I. Bill. I was married. We had one child and I was able to live in a government barracks that had been converted into married student housing. The G.I. Bill saw me through my baccalaureate degree and then I stayed on for a master's degree and the PhD, all under the G.I. Bill. I was just very, very grateful for that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That was a good program, lot of help for the people who got out.

Dr. Burnet:

Yes, it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What you would consider your worst day while you were in the service?

Dr. Burnet:

The worst day?

Mr. Misenhimer:

The worst day, the worst time, yes.

Dr. Burnet:

Well, I'd go back to that basic training at Camp Sibert, Alabama. It was hot. Of course there was

no air-conditioning. The barracks were hot. You'd try to sleep at night and the purpose of the whole thing was to toughen you up and get you ready for combat and that was not easy. So those were my worst days.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Dr. Burnet:

When I left the service I was a 1st Lieutenant and after 17 years in the Army Reserve I was Lieutenant Colonel.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Oh, OK. All right. When did you get commissioned?

Dr. Burnet:

I got commissioned at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma and it would have been like in July or August of 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So after you went in, you got commissioned then?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. I got commissioned after I got into Officers Candidate School.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Right.

Dr. Burnet:

I went in as a buck private.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else you've thought of from your time in the service?

Dr. Burnet:

Well, let's see. I helped the Army Reserve service for 17 years, which was also a very good thing. It was a part of the readiness of our country and I served with the 103rd Infantry Division, was based in Ft. Des Moines, Iowa. Did two and three weeks of summer training at Ft. McCoy, Wisconsin. I was able to go to command and general staff schools down at Ft. Leavenworth. That was a great learning experience for anything a person wants to do. I felt that the Army Reserve years were very useful for me and I felt that the roll the Reserves played in our country's military program was a very strong one.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were overseas, could you get your mail with any regularity?

Dr. Burnet:

Yes. They gave a very high priority to that. My wife was very good about writing. I valued that so very, very much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, another thing I need to get is your daughter's name. What is your daughter's name?

Dr. Burnet:

I have five daughters.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Joann, or something like that.

Dr. Burnet:

Yes, Joan, spelled J-o-a-n. Joan and her married name is Bruns. She lives in Edmond, Oklahoma.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Sometimes we need an alternative contact because lot of times veterans move. So your daughter, Joan, would be a good contact. I have her phone number as 405-202-7226. Is that correct?

Dr. Burnet:

I'm not sure but if you want me to, I can check it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

She's in Oklahoma City, is she?

Dr. Burnet:

It's a suburb of Oklahoma City called Edmond.

Mr. Misenhimer:

All right. That's all the questions I have unless you've thought of something else.

Dr. Burnet:

No. I'm flattered that you feel that what I had to say is important and I'm glad to visit with you.

End of Interview

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