

Veteran: **ROWE, Lynn E., Jr.**
Service Branch: **ARMY**
Interviewer: Whatley, Jeff
Date of Interview: April 17, 2004
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Terry Moore
Highlights of Service: **Korea and Cold War; Sergeant E5; D Company, 5th Battalion, 2nd Armored Division**

Interviewer: My name is Jeff Whatley. I am interviewing Lynn Rowe, Jr. Today is April 17, 2004. The interview is being conducted at the home of Lynn Rowe, Jr.

To start off with, are you aware that our conversation will be recorded and the tape and transcription will be placed in the Lee College library, and do I have your permission to do that?

Veteran: Yes.

Interviewer: First, please state your full name.

Veteran: Lynn Edward Rowe, Jr.

Interviewer: What was the highest rank you held while you were in the service?

Veteran: Sergeant, E5.

Interviewer: What is your present address?

Veteran: _____ Staples Drive, Baytown, TX 77520

Interviewer: What company did you serve in.

Veteran: I served in D Company of the 5th Battalion of the 2nd Armored Division, as well as others.

Interviewer: Do you remember the name of your commander at the time?

Veteran: Yes. Captain Dandridge M. Malone was the company commander.

Interviewer: What was your date of enlistment?

Veteran: August 30, 1960.

Interviewer: What age were you at that time?

Veteran: I was 21 years old.

Interviewer: How long were enlisted for?

Veteran: I was enlisted for three years, Regular Army.

Interviewer: At the time of enlistment, were you married or single?

Veteran: I was single.

Interviewer: Where did you go to enlist?

Veteran: I went to the office in Baytown.

Interviewer: Did you hold a previous occupation prior to this, or was this right out of high school?

Veteran: This was after I had been out of high school for about two years.

Interviewer: And were you employed at this time prior to enlistment?

Veteran: Yes, I was.

Interviewer: Was this job at all helpful to your enlistment?

Veteran: No, it was not.

Interviewer: How and why did you join the service?

Veteran: I joined the service for two reasons. Number one, the economy in our country was in a recession. Decent jobs were hard to come by, so that was reason Number 1, but reason Number 2 is that there had been just worldwide trouble and unrest. I knew that I had an obligation, because the military draft was in effect at that time, and I figured I would go ahead and go in at a time that I chose to go in and get my military obligation done.

Interviewer: If you could, please describe the local enlistment process in which you were involved.

Veteran: That's been a number of years back, but we went to the recruiter's office and he described what was available in the armed forces. I investigated actually all branches of the service before I enlisted, but I decided on the Army and decided to go in that way.

Interviewer: You spoke of the draft. What is your opinion of wartime draft and its policies?

Veteran: I think it's necessary. I think that we need to have a draft to keep our military strong and to keep the quality of the draftees high. I feel like if it's an all volunteer Army, you just get a certain quality that goes into the service, and you do not get representative of what the American people are like when you do when you have a draft.

Interviewer: What was your initial reaction to entering the military?

Veteran: I was excited. I was looking forward to a time of training, of personal development. I feel like I took good, full advantage of it.

Interviewer: Where did you train as a recruit?

Veteran: I trained at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Interviewer: Did you receive any specialized training during this time?

Veteran: Yes. They put me into an experimental unit in which they used the pentomic concept of warfare. It was a battle group with five line companies, headquarters company, and a combat support company. This group was highly trained in every facet of warfare. They were to be trained all together to be shipped overseas together as one unit, along with the same people who trained us and would possibly have fight beside us. So the training was intense, it was thorough, and in-depth.

Interviewer: Did you receive any training in first aid, signaling, radio usage, or any other specialized equipment?

Veteran: All of the above was included in our training. We got training in every aspect of going to war. We were not exactly specialists in signaling; we were more specialists in combat. The different ones that carry out the different missions of a combat unit were specially trained in those areas.

Interviewer: Did your training prepare you for the services overseas?

Veteran: Absolutely.

Interviewer: Did you receive any additional training while stationed overseas?

Veteran: Yes. We received field training in advanced combat techniques. First, in the United States, we went from recruit to combat-ready as a unit and then shipped overseas as a unit, which is not the norm in the military. We were considered to be a fully operational combat-ready unit whenever we shipped over to Korea.

Interviewer: What was your opinion of the weapons you saw and used while you were in the service?

Veteran: I thought they were second to none. We saw the fire power that could be pulled out of the M-1 rifle, the Browning automatic rifle, the 30 caliber machine gun, the 81mm mortar, the 106 recoilless rifle, the hand grenades—the different things the infantry soldier had was a formidable array of weapons at that time.

Interviewer: Were all the weapons fairly reliable?

Veteran: Absolutely reliable. The M-1 rifle was very rugged. It could take abuse. It could take dirt and grime and still fire. We were taught all the techniques for cleaning in the field and doing the preparation and the things that we needed to do in the field to maintain our equipment.

Interviewer: What was your opinion of the equipment, clothing, and the rations that you were issued?

Veteran: They were great. I thought the quality of the food that they served us was plenty, and it was good. The rations—while C-rations are not everybody's idea of a feast, nevertheless, they filled us, they satisfied us, they gave us the energy that

we needed in the field when we had C-rations. Otherwise, they more than often had hot food in the field for us, no matter where we went.

Interviewer: Were the equipment and the clothing adequate for the climate and weather conditions that you encountered?

Veteran: Yes, they were. Korea, which was our destination, was about the same climate as you would find in say Fort Riley, Kansas, or some area in Kansas, and that's rather cold there. The altitude that we were at in Korea was like that. They had what we called the 'Mickey Mouse,' which was the thermal insulated rubber boot that you wore in the field for the wintertime and then the regular G.I. boots. They had the undergarments and the layers and layers of insulated clothing, parkas, and mittens, and all the things that you would need in the field to help you survive and do well in the field.

Interviewer: What did you think at the time of the quality of leadership while you were in the service?

Veteran: The leadership that we had in pantomic combat unit was extremely good. Our company commander was Captain Dandridge M. Malone, and he was formerly the commandant of the Ranger Academy at Fort Benning, Georgia. All of our cadre were either Ranger or Airborne or both, and very experienced and knowledgeable. They were hand-picked to train us. We understood that the people that trained us, and experience bore it out, each one of them was an expert in their own field, and they were hand-picked to train us and accompany us overseas, which was something new. I have not seen the like of it since.

Interviewer: In your opinion, who were the real leaders—the officers, noncoms, or enlisted men?

Veteran: The backbone of the military is the sergeant. He's the man that makes everything happen. You cannot function well in the military in the field without competent non-commissioned officers, but the leadership at the top is just as important in that where we go and what we do, and the tactics that are used come from skilled, highly-trained officers who have both courage and fortitude.

Interviewer: During your off-duty time, what forms of recreation were common to take place?

Veteran: During the time I was in Korea, there were a number of activities. They had non-commissioned officers clubs you could go to, if you wanted to go to a club. They had gymnasiums there, and I started to take judo when I first got there. For sixteen months, I took judo and went to a third degree brown belt while I was there, and was fortunate enough to be taught by a former Korean national champion in judo. It was extremely interesting, and it was a six and seven day a week activity in addition to my military operations training. When we were not in the field on a maneuver, which was very often in that field of service, we would hang around the gym. We became 'gym rats' and would do that kind of thing.

Interviewer: What if any materials did you read in your leisure time?

Veteran: Other than field manuals and the occasional magazine, I myself did not do a lot of reading. We had a lot of our people that did. There were libraries on the post where you could check out like a public library. By the time I got to Korea—this was six years after the actual conflict had ceased (this was 1960, and I think the war was stopped around 1954)—there was an occasional skirmish here and there, but they did have libraries on post there.

Interviewer: Did you have access to any newspapers or news articles overseas from stateside?

Veteran: I received my local paper, the Baytown *Sun*, about every day. My parents had arranged to have that sent to me. It might be a week, ten days, or two weeks old, but I was getting a regular newspaper to keep up with what was going on. We did watch sports in our day rooms and that kind of thing, so we had TV, and we also had libraries.

Interviewer: What was your opinion of the medical care that you received while you were enlisted?

Veteran: Oh, it was excellent. Of course, they kept our shots up to date, and we felt like we were pin cushions at times. Other than that, we had excellent military clinics where you could go if you were sick. Had a lot of fellas that did take advantage of it. I went a time or two. I had twisted an ankle very badly in my judo training.

I actually blew out the ankle, and it was badly sprained and in need of a lot of care, and I got proper care. They took care of me until they'd nursed me back to health, and I was able to resume my normal activities after about three or four weeks.

Interviewer: Would you describe the overall health of your unit as good, better than most, adequate?

Veteran: I think the health of our unit was better than most. We had excellent, excellent facilities there at the clinic, and were able to get excellent care.

Interviewer: What was the most common thing that soldiers use their pay for overseas?

Veteran: We had many different things. I knew some of our soldiers that were in my unit that came from extremely poverty-stricken families in the hills of Kentucky and those areas up there where there was just rampant poverty, and these fellas would virtually send all of their money home, and they very seldom had anything at all. That's on one end of the spectrum, and then on the other end of the spectrum, like myself, which I took all of my pay and we just enjoyed life right there on the post or in the area.

Interviewer: Was alcohol consumption a problem in the unit?

Veteran: Alcohol consumption is always a problem in the military. Even I, at that time, consumed alcohol pretty regularly, but I recognized that you could go too far with that, and you could become an alcoholic pretty easily because drinks were cheap. You know, you'd get a shot of Jack Daniels for twenty-five cents, which is just giving it away compared to today's prices. So, yes, the alcohol flowed freely during off hours, and there were some of the cadre that ended up having a problem with alcohol. I believe that alcohol has been a problem in the military probably since there has been a military.

Interviewer: How were the beverages obtained during off-duty time or otherwise?

Veteran: Anywhere that I was ever stationed, you were court-martialed if you were found with alcoholic beverages in your barracks. That was a court-martial offense. If you were intoxicated or had been drinking while on duty, it was a court-martial.

You'd get an Article 7 or an Article 14, or whatever, and be punished, so people didn't do that except on their off hours for the most part. There were exceptions, but the exceptions were few.

Interviewer: Did you notice if there was any gambling going on at this time, and if so, what types were they?

Veteran: Sure. Even I played poker in those days. We'd usually have a weekly poker game, and they usually had them in the barracks. It was just the fellas getting together for a friendly poker game, but there were times when they had some very serious poker games, and those most of us tried to stay away from. The small stakes games were just something to pass time, and we all enjoyed doing that.

Interviewer: What military slang words or phrases were popular at that time?

Veteran: Oh my. That's gonna be a tough one. I worked for many years to clean up my language, and today I do not use the slang language like we used when we were in the service.

Interviewer: This is not meant to be a question that makes you uncomfortable. Just short-cut words, and things of this nature. The swear words are still the same today

Veteran: Yes, the swear words were used a lot. Just sitting here right now, nothing comes to mind because it's been a long time ago, and I've pretty much purged myself of a lot of the things we used to use in the way of swearing. I guess time has just taken away a lot of those, because I can't remember any.

Interviewer: During your service, did you notice any ethnic, racial, or religious discrimination that went on?

Veteran: How long has racial prejudice been with us? I remember the times before I went into the military when segregation was in effect, and the blacks and the whites did not even serve in the same units, though during my time that was not the case. We had all ethnicities that were together in our units. I remember personally going out of my way to be a friend to everybody in the unit, whether he was black, white, or brown. I remember a number of individuals that I became very close to, that I felt like brothers with, and they were black people. A lot of the

times, I felt like some of the black people didn't like us either, and they preferred each other to us. I think there were exceptions in both areas, like myself in that I had made close friends with a number of the black fellas, and they were friendly with me. We respected one another, and yes, we noticed a man was black like they noticed a man was white, but we also are of the mindset of "what difference does it make," because we may fight and die beside one another, and we're gonna need one another perhaps in the future. We need to learn to trust one another and depend upon each other for survival, if nothing else. Along the way we made some dear friends from every race and culture.

Interviewer: When you first learned you were going to go overseas, what was your initial reaction?

Veteran: I was excited. I had felt like an overseas tour was something to be desired, and it turned out to be true in a lot of ways. It turned out to be a nightmare in other ways. The excitement of going to a foreign country and being exposed to a culture that is totally different than what I've ever seen or been around was the experience of a lifetime, and I would not take anything for that. We learned to respect and understand those people, and while I was there, I studied their culture and the way they lived their life, and how they had done so in Korea for thousands of years. I was in the field enough to see these people as they actually lived, and some of them had changed very little in thousands of years. It was a very respectable way of survival, and it was very efficient, and it was actually pleasant. They had good lives. We just have a different way of looking at success. We think that if you don't have things, you have nothing, but those people had a lot, but yet they had nothing that we would consider valuable. Yet they had a good life, and they lived a good life.

Interviewer: What point during your enlistment were you notified that you were going overseas?

Veteran: I had been in the service about three months. We went through different phases of individual training getting the skills of the armed forces, the various things that we would be doing, and then we started going through unit training. While we were going through unit training, they did explain to us that this battle group was

going to ship overseas, that the cadre that trained us would be the ones that would have to fight with us. This caused the cadre to be very thorough and demanding in our training. They did not let us slide with anything, get by with anything, or just drift us like driftwood on through. They made absolutely certain that we understood everything they were trying to teach us so we could use it in the field, and it turned out that we ended up being one of the elite corps in the armed forces at that time, because we had skills from Ranger, to Airborne, to just whatever. We had great skills, and it proved out later in our military service.

Interviewer: Where was your point of embarkation?

Veteran: Going overseas, we embarked from Oakland, California.

Interviewer: Can you remember the name of your transport?

Veteran: I think it was the USS *Johnston*. It was a troop ship, made a stop by Okinawa, made a stop in Yokohama where we had a pass, and from there we came in at Inchon, where MacArthur came in and surrounded the troops that were in South Korea. We actually made the same landing that the troops made at Inchon. We had to come in on the high tide and go in in a small craft, go to the piers and unload our things there, and then we were transported from there further up north to our destination.

Interviewer: What information, if any at all, did the Army give you about Korea, where you served?

Veteran: Oh, they thoroughly briefed us on Korea. They briefed us on the customs of the people. They briefed us on do's and don't's in that country. They explained some about military history, about what had happened in Korea at that particular time, and we were fully aware of what we were getting into when we got over there.

Interviewer: What was your first impression when you got off the ship overseas?

Veteran: I thought it was a great experience, because I remembered what MacArthur had done, and how impressive and what a great military maneuver that was that boggled the minds of the military people all of the world at that time. To me, it

was just retracing his steps, and it was a feeling of a new chapter in my life. I felt like the old chapter was over with. The first part of my life and the beginning of this military tour was just another chapter in my life, and I looked forward to it.

Interviewer: How, if at all, have your views changed since then?

Veteran: My views are basically the same as they were. They have not changed that much. My tour in Korea opened my eyes to other cultures, to their dignity, to their way of life. Though vastly different from our own, it was still respectable. I held them in awe. They were so different, and I just could not absorb it fast enough. I was an observer of everything they did, and I would always think 'why do they do this,' and 'why do they do that.' As time went on, I learned, so that part of it was great.

Interviewer: How did the other personnel in the unit get along with the civilians overseas?

Veteran: Most of them got along well. There were some that had no respect for them, that looked down upon them, that wanted to take advantage of them when they were off duty, and these people had those personal agendas and their own personal problems that they had just brought with them. I tried to leave all of my opinions and my social and other things behind, and just have an open mind to 'em. I actually learned to truly like them and developed a very close friend in Mr. Che Hu, the one I mentioned earlier that was the former Korean national champion in karate, and he also was a judo expert that taught me judo. I just made a very dear of him, and he and I became personal friends and spent time together in Seoul and traveled around together to different places and did things together. It was just a wonderful experience.

Interviewer: Did you notice if there was any fraternizing with any of the local women?

Veteran: Yes, that was commonly done. I can't say that I myself didn't, because we occasionally went to town and they had nightclubs in the towns that catered to G.I.s.

Interviewer: How was the morale of your unit while you were stationed overseas?

Veteran: The morale of my unit was always good. There are always times in the field when it becomes miserable. The weather may turn terribly, terribly cold, or you may be given an assignment in the infantry. {END OF SIDE A }

{SIDE B BEGINS} Captain Malone decided that we needed to take a twenty mile, nighttime forced march and end up climbing the highest mountain in Korea, which we ended up above the clouds about one o'clock in the morning, having left about dark, or five o'clock in the evening. It was tough, however, we decided anywhere he could go, we were going to go, too. He couldn't go anywhere that we couldn't go with him. We made it up to the top, and they had hot soup up there that they had taken with helicopters. They had a soup line and fed us hot soup at the top of that thing, and we were cold. It was wet and damp and in the middle of the night. Then we walked home at not such a fast pace, but made the whole thing averaging about four miles an hour walking. Let me tell you, across rough terrain like that, it's tough. They used to give us things like that to do to hone us and sharpen us to make us the kind of troops that could win a battle and hold out in hard times, so that was part of the thinking behind that.

Interviewer: What were some of the factors that helped to improve the morale?

Veteran: Competition. The different squads within a platoon would be in a friendly competition with each other, or each company would want to out-do the other company to get their first or just out-do the other guy. That was always a part of the game, and if you just played the game, you would survive a lot better than if you were trying to resist everything that was going on. The quality of life was good and your morale was high.

Interviewer: You touch on the forced marches. Were there any other factors that would cause a decline in morale?

Veteran: Yeah. Guys would get tired. They would get blisters, and that's always tough with an infantry soldier. If your feet give out, you're in trouble, obviously. This would commonly be a problem, because it caused people a great deal of pain and suffering if they did not take proper care of their feet. This was a high priority

with infantry soldiers. On a forced march, you have to gut it up and go, and you have to find some fortitude to keep each other going.

Interviewer: During your time overseas, were you ever a part of any combat action?

Veteran: No, I was not. I was, however, part of the military games that they played, and these military games very nearly cost me my life at one point. I was sent on an aggressor detail against an American combat company that was in their training phase. They have an Army training test that they have to take, and they have to have aggressors to probe and hit them to make them react in the proper way. We went to the field to execute this and had already planned it out and knew what we were going to do and exactly where we were going. In the meantime, the Korean army had preempted the American army and had taken up the sight that our subject company was supposed to be in. Our company that we were supposed to hit was not in the field that night, and in fact the Republic of Korea division headquarters was put there. When we arrived on the scene, we had waded across a shallow river—all of them are shallow over there—and had spent hours gaining this place, and my partner and I, who was a full-blooded Indian from Oklahoma, had crawled in about three hundred yards flat on the ground, and under the biggest tent we could find, we lobbed in tear gas, and then we threw artillery simulators and had bandoliers of blank ammunition that we fired and raised cane as we ran out of the company area that was actually a division headquarters. We didn't know that. We just thought it was a little big to be a company headquarters. We caused a lot of damage to the Korean generals. Two of them ended up in the hospital, and we had approximately six hundred mad South Koreans chasing us, and they had live ammo in the field, and they were doing their very best to catch us. We were in their county. We were on their turf. We did evade them and got back to our jeep, and thankfully got back alive. The repercussions of it went up and down through channels all the way to Washington, D.C. When it got back to us, of course they couldn't say anything to us because somebody from I-Corps had dropped the ball and had not let us know that our maneuver had been cancelled. Escaping that one with my life was a function of the exceptional training that we had had, because we tried for four hours to evade these people, and they were right behind us. They were looking

all over for us, and we were hiding while they were looking, and we evaded them. That's the closest I came to combat and the closest I ever came to being killed over there, because we could hear the bolts sliding and the live rounds going into their machine guns and their shoulder weapons, and they were seriously trying to catch us. If they had caught us, who knows what would have happened?

Interviewer: Did you ever participate in a cooperative operation with any other branch of the military?

Veteran: No, we did not. Most of our operations were limited to Army. However, I do recall that on a number of occasions we did have air strikes that came in when we were doing field operations when we were "taking a hill," that we would actually have the Air Force come in and drop ordnance on a hill that we were taking in training. We had that happen a number of times.

Interviewer: What awards and decorations did you receive?

Veteran: I got the Good Conduct Medal, of course, when I got out, but while I was in the service I did earn a coveted thing, and that was the Expert Infantryman's badge. It's the peacetime equivalent to the Combat Infantryman badge. Of course, those guys are the more glamorous people because they've been in combat. However, to get the Expert Infantryman's badge by learning it, you've got to go through extensive tests, and they flunk people out of those tests. Probably only ten percent of the people that take that test ever get the badge. I managed to get it and scored the second highest score in my battalion. The only person that beat me was my company commander.

Interviewer: Describe your return to the United States.

Veteran: Coming back to the United States we left Inchon on a troop ship, and just retraced the steps we'd made going over. From there we went to Yokohama, and again they let us stay overnight there. Then we sailed back across to Okinawa and picked up a contingent of Seabees that were rotating home, and then we came back home. Both going home and coming over, we did have the experience of going through a typhoon. On the way over, we went through a typhoon, and that's the first time I'd ever seen seventy foot waves with the wind blowing so

hard it blew the tops off, and it was like raining salt water sideways at about seventy miles an hour. If you stuck your head above deck, you just couldn't see because it would absolutely sting and burn you. It's awesome what happens in those things. We skirted the edge of typhoons going over and coming back, and we had about five thousand soldiers that were seasick at the same time, and that is an experience that is NOT worth repeating. All the ramifications of it are something you would see in a nightmare. I never got sick from the swells, but I got sick from what I saw and smelled on that ship, both going and coming back. It was something you'd love to forget. Even now it has an effect, all these years later. You never forget it.

Interviewer: On what date and where were you discharged from the service?

Veteran: I was discharged from Fort Hood, Texas, August 30, 1963. When I got back, my tour was not over and we were in the Cuban Missile Crisis at that time. Should I talk about that or just wait?

Interviewer: This was when you came back from overseas. You stayed in the military for a period of time after that?

Veteran: Yes, I did. It wasn't August of '63 when I got back. It was November or December of '62 when I got back. I was assigned to duty with the 2nd Armored Division that was stationed at Fort Hood, Texas, there at Killeen, because it was near my home, and they were in the habit of doing that. They tried to let you be close to home. Shortly after I got back to the states, I was still on my thirty day leave, but it was cut short because of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and I had to report to Fort Hood. This was the first time I had been there. They assigned me to a unit, and I had not been there two days before we were shipping out to go to Savannah, Georgia. We loaded all of the armored personnel carriers and the tanks, the artillery, and everything that is part of an armored division, and we put it on railcars. The railcars moved by night, because the Cuban Missile Crisis was in full bloom by then, and that is the closest we ever came to nuclear war—time has proven that. We got to Fort Stewart in Savannah, Georgia, which is where we actually bivouacked, and we started preparing for combat. We got our equipment and the equipment they already had ready for the division to be ready

for combat. We had elements of 2nd Armored Division that were on landing craft off the beaches of Cuba, as close as four hundred yards from the beach, to where they could see the lights of the vehicles patrolling the beaches, and that kind of thing just waiting on word to land. We didn't have to do that. That is where I received my promotion to Spec. 4, in a sergeant position, which I had had all along but I just didn't have enough time in. By then, after being in the service twenty six months I became a buck sergeant, or a Sergeant E-5, and actually took over as the section leader of an 81mm mortar section, which is a staff sergeant job, but it commands half of a platoon. Had to get them ready to hit the beaches and go to work, because a lot of my training was in mortars, and 81mm was my specialty. We were ready to go and ran a few field maneuvers over there in Savannah at Fort Stewart, and then were standing by for the missile crisis. That's where I got to see John F. Kennedy when he came during the height of the crisis to talk to the troops there, and he spoke and it was a very inspiring thing. It was not published in the news. This was a private thing where he came to talk us, and he passed within two or three feet of me when he reviewed us. At that particular time, he could do no wrong, especially to the military. He was our commander-in-chief, and we had one hundred percent loyalty and admiration for him, even though he was a Democrat. {Laughter} That's another time we came very close to being in combat, and fortunately they were able to steer us out of it. We finally packed our things up and sent 'em back to Fort Hood, Texas. We stayed there and did the normal thing that soldiers do in garrison until such time that my time was up and I was released. I chose not to reenlist and instead to live a civilian life.

Interviewer: And that brings us to this next segment. What did you do after you were discharged?

Veteran: I came back home, and I hunted for a job, and I got a job with an office supply company selling office supplies—the first job you could get, and still times were not good. Jobs were not easy to get in those days. I worked for them for about a year, and then I went to work for a fence company selling fences, but during this whole time I was looking in the plants around the Houston Ship Channel area for a job. I had done a lot of interviewing and a lot of application work during that

time, and finally all that paid off. I got three offers from three plants at the same time, so I picked one, and I worked for them for twenty-seven years until I left them.

Interviewer: How, if at all, were your military skills transferable in training and education to the civilian life?

Veteran: When I left home, I'd had a little bit of college and some experiences, but I was still a boy. But when I came home, people that used to know me said, "You're not a boy anymore, Lynn Rowe. You're a man," and from that day on, I was a man. I had gained my manhood in the military service.

Interviewer: If you could, describe the ease or difficulty with which you readapted to civilian life and to the influence your overall military experience had on readjusting.

Veteran: The overall military experience that I had developed my people skills. It enabled me to interact with other men and to understand people of difficult cultures, to see life as they do, to give them respect. It gave me an insight into human nature and what to expect of people in hard times. Also, it gave me just a keen love for my fellow man. I learned to really know what real friendship was like in the military service and what loyalties were, and how important they were. Those served me well since I've been out of the service. I would not take anything for that experience. There were times when I was in there that I was bored, I was miserable, I would love to get out and just to cry and carry on like some people would do. But you know, at the bottom of all of that there was a lot of esprit de corps, and it is a real thing. You had a lot of solidarity that you were in a great unit of men that knew how to do what they do and were willing and able to do it, and there's a sense of pride that comes with that. The interactions that you have change you from a boy to a man and stay with you.

Interviewer: So all this was pretty transferable.

Interviewer: I think absolutely it was.

Interviewer: What was the highest grade you completed before you entered the service?

Veteran: Twelfth grade. I had started to college on a football scholarship, and I didn't do well in college. I was not mature enough at that time. I think in those days that I had some emotional problems—girl related—and I let that get the best of me at that particular time, and it more or less kept me from concentrating on what I needed to concentrate on. Life was just not a successful thing prior to me going into the military.

Interviewer: Did you attend any type of college or trade school after returning?

Veteran: Yes. After I got out of the service and got back in the workforce and was an operator in a chemical plant, I went back to Lee College and got an Associate of Arts in business administration, and that's about the highest I obtained. I would like to have gone on, but I did well in my job and the money was good, and I was supporting my family quite handily, so at that particular time I just didn't see the need to spend that much more time that it would have taken to get a degree. It wouldn't have caused me to make that much more money than I was already making, so I opted not to do it.

Interviewer: Did you use the G.I. Bill to go to college?

Veteran: Yes, I did.

Interviewer: What is your opinion of the G.I. Bill program?

Veteran: It's good. It paid for virtually all of my college and most of the expenses. Some of the things came out of pocket, but it was more than worth it to me.

Interviewer: Would you have pursued that type of schooling without the G.I. Bill?

Veteran: Probably not. I made full use of the G.I. Bill, and it got me through at least two years. I could have gotten some more, except I had three children at home and was working shift work, and a demanding wife at that time, so college became too much of a drag on the rest of the family, is basically what caused me to stop.

Interviewer: After you were discharged, or left the Army, what were your expectations of civilian life, as far as plans for a career, and education, and marriage, and family? Kind of outline the order that "this is the direction I need to head."

Veteran: The first thing I thought as I was being discharged from the Army was I thought it was time for me to settle down and raise a family. I was in a mood to meet someone permanent and have a permanent relationship. Not having been in the states in a long time, all the girls in the United States sure did look good after being in Korea for nearly two years. I wanted to come home and start a serious life and raise a family.

Interviewer: To what extent were those expectations realized?

Veteran: I did complete that. I had met someone and got married and had children and raised a family.

Interviewer: Were you a member of the National Guard or the reserves after military service?

Veteran: Having served three years active duty, the draft system only required two years. If you were Regular Army, as I was, you were in the inactive reserves. Yes, I was in the reserves for another three full years, but I did not have to serve any active duty or training. It was just there on paper that I could be recalled to active duty. A total of six years had passed from the time I had enlisted and my obligation was over with.

Interviewer: Do you, or have you, belonged to any veterans organizations?

Veteran: No, I have not.

Interviewer: What were your expectations after getting out of the military as to prospects for world stability?

Veteran: I knew when I came back from Korea that the world situation was only gonna get worse. They were beginning to ask for volunteers for Vietnam for advisors, and that was the period when we only had advisors over there, and they tried to glamorize it by saying, "You would receive \$45 extra a day combat pay." Big deal. We didn't go for that, but there were a few that did who signed up to go on over there, but by this time I had made my mind up that I did not want to spend my life in the military. I wanted to get out and raise a family and be close to home. That's just exactly what I did.

Interviewer: What were your expectations about America's place and influence in the world?

Veteran: I knew that we had a leadership place in the world, and that the world really needed the influence that we exerted. Remember that at that time we were still in the very worst of the Cold War. The threat from the Soviet Union and from Red China was very real and very ominous, and we know that had it not been for the United States influence in the world, there is no telling where that would have gone. We served to actually save the world from that, and time has borne it out, of course. The Soviet Union has disintegrated, and they always thought that capitalism would defeat itself, but that was not the case, was it? We prevailed, and even China today is changing in the face of our success. They looked across the border at Shanghai, and it has become the Mecca of China, and they're seeing what the free world has to offer. They're slowly but surely changing.

Interviewer: One final question. You spoke briefly that upon returning from the military you thought that after going in as a boy and coming out as a man, you felt it was your obligation to join the military. There are currently several countries overseas that mandate military service. Do you foresee in the future that that will be a necessity in the United States?

Veteran: I most certainly believe that it will be. My opinion is that the draft gives training to all—right across the board—of the men of this country. Much needed military training that makes men out of boys. It changes people into something that they maybe never dreamed they could be. I have seen weak boys in that military that have no idea of what success was like find success and find themselves, as I did, when they were in the military service. They come out with self esteem, they come out with self confidence, and a sense that they belong and are worthwhile people, and that's something that everyone needs. So, yeah, the draft is needed. I know that there are many people that would not agree with me.

Interviewer: It's not necessarily the draft, but mandatory service.

Veteran: Yes, I see that in the future we will probably need it again depending on the world situation.

Interviewer: Even during non-conflict times.

Veteran: I still have my opinion that the draft does bring in a quality cross-section of the cultures rather than a concentration of cultures like we have had in the military in recent years, so to me it brings a diversity to the military, but more than that it brings a learning experience to a cross-section of the military.

Interviewer: With that said, this concludes the interview. Once again, I'd like to thank you on behalf of the Lee College history department for your time and your cooperation.

{TAPE STOPPED—END OF INTERVIEW}