

Video Recording Log Veteran Earl Swanson

Name of Interviewer: Dee Breeding

Name of Veteran/Civilian: Earl R. Swanson

Birth Date: 05/26/1921

Recording format: Mini DVD

Estimated length of recording (in minutes): 80 minutes **Date of recording:** 09/06/2007

Location of recording: WILL AM-FM-TV, 300 N. Goodwin Ave, Urbana, IL 61801

Recording log:

00:00 Introduction
00:30 Background—farming—University of Illinois—ROTC 1939-1941—training with WWI guns in horse-drawn unit—Advanced ROTC changed to motorized artillery
04:15 105 howitzers—used all the way through tour of Philippines—training—maneuvers
05:15 Officers usually commissioned upon graduation—when war started, sent to basic after graduation and then to Officers Candidate School
06:10 Campus life during War—Pearl Harbor—marched to University President’s house—gave speech to students saying to stay in school—many signed up anyway—students wanted to be patriotic but also finish education—Advanced ROTC
08:25 Graduated on time in 1943—called to active duty at Camp Grant, IL—basic training for infantry at Camp McCoy, WI
09:20 Officer Candidate School—Fort Sill, OK
09:35 Friends in basic training
10:45 Fort Sill—OCS—Class of 90—August to December, 1943—demerits—classmates
15:45 Assigned back to Fort Sill in post-graduation post—training replacement unit—junior officers did most of the work—had to be ready to give instruction with 10 minutes notice
16:35 Assigned to 135-mm howitzer—“Long Tom”
17:25 Conducting fire at Fort Sill—cease fire order—January, 1944
18:40 Army training very good—no limit on training aides—many instructors from combat
19:50 Reported to Camp Adaberry, Indiana —592nd Battalion, 106th Division—field artillery—too many officers in Division
21:20 Ordered to infantry school—retreading—changed to infantry officers—10-week course
21:45 At Camp Adaberry as Junior Officer—assignments—guarding POWs—taking troops from 106th Division to port of embarkation—going out as individual replacements
23:00 106th Division—unit would have done better if stayed together instead of sent out as individuals—1/3 of unit died in Battle of the Bulge—young ASTP men from universities with very little training
24:50 Sent to Fort Benning, GA to infantry school—artillery officers with him not happy
25:50 Fort Benning—friends

- 26:30 Difference between artillery and infantry—infantry hand-to-hand and rifles, artillery firing and adjusting big guns
- 27:45 Ordered to replacement training depot—Camp Landing, FL—training soldiers
- 28:40 Fort Benning—learned about invasion of Allied troops in Southern France—learned about D-Day while at Adaberry —aware War wasn't over yet, 106th knew they were going to Europe
- 29:25 Fort Benning to Camp Landing—bus to Jacksonville, FL—cockroaches everywhere
- 30:45 Assigned training unit at Camp Landing—about 80 men in unit, 3 officers—he was 2nd Lieutenant—promoted in Philippines
- 31:15 Rigorous training—bivouac—25-mile marches—20 weeks—snakes—deciding Christmas promotions
- 33:50 Put on temporary hold because someone in military government wanted agricultural economist—reverted back to available
- 34:30 Not anxious to get overseas—confident U.S. was doing the right thing
- 35:15 Duty to give weekly orientation on war—location of fighting—followed goings on
- 36:05 Order to report to Fort Ord, CA for Pacific Theatre, 1945—long wait at Fort Ord—sightseeing for one month—United Nations getting started in San Francisco—waiting
- 38:50 People not completely aware of war—some idea
- 39:25 Orders to report to San Francisco—issued mosquito nets—joined 25th Division in Philippines—orders to report to replacement depot—went over in APA Carrier
- 40:55 Philippines—replacement depot at Los Baños, outside Manila—June, 1945
- 41:50 Reported to Canon Company—needed artillery to be allocated to battalion commander for quicker response—25th Division awarded Presidential Citation for Battle of San Manuel
- 43:20 Reporting to Commander, Lieutenant Green
- 44:15 Joined platoon—was replacement for Clark Clemons—had been friend in ROTC—was killed a month before—helped establish rapport with new men
- 45:00 Canon Company had been through a lot
- 45:50 33rd Division of IL National Guard stationed at Baguio—met friend from H.S.—letters with classmates, family during War
- 47:35 When war ended, each gun fired 20 rounds into cliff—one man killed in rifle company
- 48:35 Censoring mail in his unit
- 49:35 Buried a lot of ammunition near farm land
- 50:15 Japan's surrender—was in combat very short period—scouting after surrender because fragments of Japanese Army still around islands
- 50:50 Tarlac, Philippines
- 51:10 Went to Japan—105 howitzers on M-7 tanks—whole 25th Division sent to occupy—had been preparing for invasion
- 52:30 Atomic bombs—Truman
- 53:05 AKA cargo ship U.S.S. Trego—Navy not hospitable—sailors stole gun quadrants
- 55:05 Typhoon at Okinawa—went into Japan at Wakayama—port for Nagoya—80% destroyed by U.S. bombs—Japanese Navy Air Station nearby—took over as HQ—nice accommodations
- 56:30 Platoon sent to Sato, Japan to keep order—independent—contact with Mayor, Police Chief—living in pottery building—things went well—training

58:15 Sato—needed paper—went to newspaper office—editor wrote article about him
59:35 Dinner at the Mayor's house
01:00:40 [Tape transfer]
01:00:55 [Reads aforementioned editorial]
01:02:45 Left Sato, Japan—nothing to do—Mayor held party
01:03:40 Went with 25th Division to Osaka, Japan—took over commercial school
building—close to Kyoto, Japan—spraying DDT for control of typhus
01:05:35 Canon Company sent to Awajishima island in Osaka harbor—resort island—
occupied hotel—enjoyed independence again
01:06:45 Getting replacements of enlisted men and officers—orders to collect all
weapons—found corpse in river—met Norwegian man with Japanese wife, sent
letter to their daughter in Oslo
01:09:50 Found hidden airplane fuel in caves in mountains, stored food
01:10:30 Back to U.S. in May—Zama, port city—met IL friend
01:11:15 Cousin a Naval Corps man on U.S.S. Bliss—his return ship
01:12:10 Arrived and discharged in Seattle, WA—chose to stay in Reserves at rank of 1st
Lieutenant—made Captain 2-3 years later
01:14:15 Time in Japan
01:15:45 Went back to Japan to teach summer school in 1950's
01:16:15 Called up for Korean War—just earned PhD in Economics, faculty at University
of Illinois—called into Office of Chief of Staff, G4—served at Pentagon 2 years
01:17:15 Experiences influenced later decisions—grew up—world-traveled
01:19:05 [Wrap up]