

**Video Recording Log**  
**Veteran Hale Burge**

Name of Interviewer: Nancy Rotzoll

Name of Veteran/Civilian: Hale Francis Burge

Birth Date: 05/21/1922

**Recording format**

VIDEO type: Mini DVD

**Estimated length of recording (in minutes):** 60 minutes    **Date of recording:** 11/08/2007

**Location of recording:** Hoopston Public Library, 110 N. Fourth St., Hoopston, IL 60942

**Recording log:**

00:01 Introduction  
00:18 Personal experiences at beginning of War; Hearing about Pearl Harbor on radio  
01:33 Working before War: railroad, printing company  
01:43 Draft notice in Spring, 1942  
01:58 Working on railroad  
02:05 Physical in Danville, IL in July  
02:15 Inducted to Army in October, 1942  
02:28 Physical in Chicago  
02:45 Reported to Camp Grant in Rockford, IL in November  
03:00 Testing at Camp Grant: Tank Core, Medics, Air Force  
03:39 Childhood love of airplanes  
03:47 Traveling by train in S.E. United States  
04:00 Basic Training in South  
04:10 Wanted to be gunner in order to be on airplanes  
04:12 Passed high on automotive exam  
04:35 Jefferson Barracks, MO  
04:50 Growing up: guns, hunting  
05:20 Departed Jefferson Barracks from Saint Louis in 1943 to Fort Lawton, WA  
05:35 Hospital stay 10 days  
06:12 Boarded Troop Ship March 18, 1943 from Seattle, WA to Alaska, trains through Alaska  
06:45 Boarded ship with 5,000 men  
07:00 Ordinance men  
07:15 Traveling through islands by ship  
07:35 Adak Island  
07:45 Major Taylor  
07:50 Driving supply trucks for Major Taylor  
08:08 Hauling bombs  
08:25 Unloading barges, fear of Japanese torpedoes, Tokyo Rose propaganda  
08:50 Boarded boat to Attu

08:52 Battle of Attu, hearing battle from boat in dock  
09:40 Boarded barge to Shemya  
10:00 Describing island and wildlife, blue fox  
10:18 Runway on Shemya  
10:35 Sleeping in tents by runway  
10:50 Outfit went back, only 50 people stayed on island  
11:13 Working in supply, salvaging wrecked planes  
11:30 Lieutenant Ernest Taylor  
11:45 Became airplane mechanic  
12:02 P-40 fighter planes, working on  
13:26 Fighter squadrons meddling with airplanes, causing crashes  
14:00 Describing runway crash  
16:35 Major Tracy  
16:45 Saving lives, airplanes  
17:42 Describing crash, bomb detonating, 9 casualties  
19:15 Cleaning up crash and explosion  
19:38 Generator House boy killed by concussion  
20:32 Crash crew, fighting fires, disarming and deactivating planes  
21:18 Describing crash of B-24: pilot crashed in fog, fell out of hatch and into propeller, died.  
24:25 Airplane ruined from crash and fire  
24:30 Breakwater built, Baring Sea, rough wind and weather  
25:02 Waves broke down Breakwater  
25:07 Mainland Recoup Furlough, 1944  
25:35 Soldiers' concern about furlough affecting rotation date  
25:50 Vacation  
26:03 Boarded civilian boat hired by military to Attu, Waiting to get back to Shemya  
26:26 B-24's painted black for radar resistance: photo recon squadron flying missions to Japan  
26:48 Asked mail boy to fly him to Shemya  
27:05 Flying in fog  
27:28 Planes out of Shemya flying bombs to North Japan and Korean Islands  
27:33 B-24's with oil tanks for photo recon: Bombay fuel tanks: flew 24 hours without landing  
28:00 Plane from Shemya shot during combat, flew back with many injuries to plane, pilot and co pilot, technical sergeant flew and landed it.  
29:19 Sitting up at night when mission was out  
29:45 Waiting to turn on runway lights until plane was close  
30:00 Planes would get close, signal the base for landing, then run out of fuel and crash into the Baring Sea/North Pacific, all eleven men on board dead from crash and cold temperatures of water.  
30:20 Planes landing in Russia as last resort, getting interned like a P.O.W., Russia kept plane  
30:45 Russia, cold war  
31:15 Friends in service  
31:45 Working on planes, B-45 from Attu, engine trouble  
32:15 Captain Boatright, the cold shoulder  
32:45 Captain Boatright, fixing airplane  
36:10 Purpose of campaign in Aleutian islands

36:30 Adak island, building runway  
37:00 Battles in Kiska and Attu after runway was built, bombing campaigns before troops landed  
37:20 American presence in Aleutian islands to keep Japanese forces from moving forward, going to South Pacific, tie up troops.  
37:35 Orientation movies about war elsewhere once a month or so  
37:58 Living in tents, then Pacific huts, then Mess Halls  
38:15 Malcolm Ford from Sacramento, CA  
38:20 Watching 2-3 movies a night in Mess Hall: projector, Western movies, orientation movies  
39:10 Rotation of others on base to South Pacific, many casualties  
39:20 Shemya base not dangerous  
39:30 Japanese airplane raids on Attu, Japanese bombing techniques  
40:13 P-38's, P-40's on Shemya base not allowed to go to Attu to shoot down Japanese bombers  
41:15 After war, end of May, coded messages every afternoon from unknown source  
41:45 Japanese soldier found with hand-crank radio in a hole sending reports of runway activity  
42:37 Only Japanese soldier left on islands, all others died during war, "Harry Carey," Japanese evaded capture by Americans  
43:06 Japanese soldier stole food from mess hall for 2-3 months  
43:20 Stayed on island after war, May 1945  
43:35 Due to join outfit in Anchorage, AK: 39<sup>th</sup> Air Depot.  
43:50 C.O. had been Maintenance Officer at Shemya  
44:10 Waiting and doing nothing  
44:30 Didn't salute Second Lieutenant, reprimanded by Captain  
45:14 Family back home during war  
45:20 Writing letters, censorship  
46:15 A.P.O. Numbers, letters  
46:50 Returning from AK by train across Canada  
47:10 Telegram from Canada to parents announcing pending arrival  
47:25 Two Brothers in Navy  
47:40 Processing, Camp Grant  
48:25 Chicago  
48:28 Camp Grant  
48:30 New outfit was going to form in Roswell, NM  
48:45 Reporting back to Chicago  
48:50 War ended while at home in Hoopston, IL  
48:55 First Atomic Bomb while in Hoopston, IL  
49:00 Personal reflections on Atomic Bomb, A-Bomb protestors  
49:20 Would have been difficult to invade Japan  
49:33 Younger brother on duty in submarine in Tokyo Bay taking pictures at night  
49:50 Bombing campaigns in Japan  
50:03 Truman's order  
50:13 Second Atomic Bomb  
50:20 Looking back on experiences: best thing that ever happened to America

- 51:13 Family, childhood, Depression, welfare, W.P.A.s, War; Jerking sweet corn by hand as a child
- 51:42 Working inside plant
- 51:48 Quitting railroad job, railroad bosses
- 52:45 Cincinnati, OH: U.S. Printing Co.
- 52:51 Draft notice
- 52:55 After service
- 53:00 Rebuilding crashed planes, P-38s, Martin B-26
- 53:08 Describing crash
- 53:36 Rebuilding plane
- 53:55 Rebuilding P-40's
- 54:05 Moving airplanes when war winding down
- 54:20 When war ending, wouldn't repair crashed planes
- 54:28 In charge of crash crew, wrecker truck
- 54:35 Dropping crashed airplanes off of bluff into Bering Sea
- 55:05 Never returned to Aleutian Islands
- 55:15 Renamed island Eareckson Air Station, emergency landing site for commercial airlines
- 56:10 Civilian activities on island
- 56:20 Closing of Air Force base
- 56:26 Watching base grow over time
- 56:40 Blacktopping the runway: Tokyo Rose knew about it because machines made a lot of smoke
- 57:02 Could not get U.S. radio stations, listened to Tokyo Rose
- 57:15 Not worried for personal safety, Japanese forces concentrated more on South Pacific
- 57:25 Midway Island
- 57:35 Reflections on experiences
- 57:40 Loneliness, environment, climate
- 58:10 Story: bringing back milk to island from mainland, hiding in life boat, snow banks
- 59:49 Conclusion; best thing that ever happened to America