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The interviewer, Charles G. Roland, M.D., and
 the interviewee, E.L. Hurd, hereby
 agree and give their assent that the interview(s) conducted
 on 30 May 1989 at SAWYERVILLE, PQ. on the
 (date) (location)

subject of POW EXPERIENCES IN THE FAR EAST,
1941-1945

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INTERVIEWER: 

INTERVIEWEE: 

HANNAH PROFESSOR: Charles G. Roland, M.D.

DATE: 30 May 1989

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Ex-Prisoner-of-War Questionnaire

Full name: HURD, E.L.

Birthplace & date: 3 Feb 1907

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Telephone (home) 889-2970 (work) Area Code 819

Service number:

Date of enlistment; Militia 7th Hussars 1940

Name of Regiment or Unit, Company, etc.: HQ Staff MB#5

Date & place captured:

Rank at time of capture:

Wounded at time of capture: Yes No

Date & place released:

Would you give me permission to examine your service record (in government files) in order to obtain additional information (having to do with exact dates, etc.), for my research?

(Yes No)

Signed: _____

Please return to

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E. LIONEL HURD

Experiences as a POW in World War 2 in Hong Kong

Interviewed by

Charles G. Roland, MD

30 May 1989

Oral History Archives

Hannah Chair for the History of Medicine

McMaster University

Hamilton, Ontario

L8N 3Z5

Interview No. HCM 9-89

E.L. Hurd:

...And they gave him quite a lot of the regimental documents. But there is always a sealed package not to be opened. And if you think that's a....we hear about cover-ups today, that was the biggest cover-up, I imagine, in political history. They must have known that when we sailed from Vancouver, that the war was liable to break out at any time. They must have known. And the Prime Minister and all of them, they denied that. And they must have perjured themselves to do it, because it was a hot potato. Whether you want that recorded or not I don't know. It's only, I haven't seen it. But it comes from a very reliable source. Cliff Chadderton, you perhaps have heard of him. He's worked very closely with Hong Kong Veterans. This is what they opened up. And they were even going to put George Drew in internment camp. They were thinking of doing that because he was "obstructing the war effort." Louis St. Laurent, who was the Minister of Justice -- afterwards the Prime Minister, he was born just over here -- Louis St. Laurent advised them not to. They'd only make matters worse if they did that. So that correspondence was opened up just a short time ago. But whether we should record that or not I don't know.

Charles G. Roland, MD:

Well, at any rate we'll go back and start at the beginning and then we'll just see, perhaps. Do you mind if I just take a photograph?

E.L.H.:

Why yes. I'll try and smarten up a little bit.

[Tape off briefly.]

C.G.R.:

Perhaps you would begin, as I asked, just by telling me a bit about your background. Where were you born? When were you born? Who your parents were?

E.L.H.:

I'm fifth generation, born here near Sawyerville. My ancestors were Empire Loyalists that got grants to the land and they founded what is the township of Newport.

Along with Sawyer -- they came together, Sawyer founded Eaton -- which is the village where Sawyerville gets its name from -- a man with the name of Josiah Sawyer. He was not a loyalist he was a rebel in our way of thinking. He fought for the other side.

That's the strange thing, many of these people who got grants of land in the Eastern townships were not all fighting for King George. This was known as the wastelands of Lower Canada, and there was such a pressure on for unhappy people in the States at the time. Taxes were high there after the revolution. The land was getting scarce. They couldn't go west on account of the Indians. There was sort of a population explosion. And that's what brought them into the Eastern township, this area East of the Richelieu River, and goes to the main border. Well, where do we go from here?

How I got involved, I expect with.....

C.G.R.:

Perhaps you'd tell me your birthdate.

E.L.H.:

I was born February 3rd, 1907.

C.G.R.:

OK. And here in Sawyerville?

E.L.H.:

Right near Sawyerville here, yes. I was born on the farm; most of us, we came from farm backgrounds, naturally.

C.G.R.:

Right. Was your father a farmer?

E.L.H.:

My father was a farmer. His grandfather and there was four generations lived on the one farm, which sold a little while ago. We lived there and grew up there.

C.G.R.:

OK. And a little bit about your education. Were you educated in the schools?

E.L.H.:

Well education wasn't so easy to get. The high school was here in Sawyerville, and there was no bus in those days. We had to get there the best way we could, to high school. I got high school education. I didn't get to university. The depression was on then and the money was scarce, and I regret I hadn't. But I managed to survive without it.

C.G.R.:

OK. Do you have brothers and sisters?

E.L.H.:

I had two brothers, yes.

C.G.R.:

Where did you fit in that?

E.L.H.:

I'm the eldest of the three. My second brother is dead. I have another brother, Arthur, ten years younger, he was in the air force. He lives in Vancouver.

C.G.R.:

OK. Tell me then about your connection with the Royal Rifles. How did this all come about? Where you in the militia?

E.L.H.:

Well, I started in the militia in the days of the horse calvary. The farmer boys took the horses to camp and got a little out of it and it usually lasts a week to ten days. That's how I started. A lot of my generation were in the militia. It was known then as the 7th Hussars, the calvary unit. And we trained in various places, at St. John's, Quebec. That is an old garrison town, St. John's, where the Royal Canadian Dragoons -- naturally we were affiliated one way or another for training with them. They furnished the instructors.

We had horse calvary until about 1932. Of course it was obsolete -- horses were World War 1, they became obsolete. You couldn't fight from a horse. Machine guns would mow you down so fast, especially after machine guns were used. So the role in all the countries in the Western World, what to do with the horse calvary. Well, they became tank units and they played much the same role in the military service as well. They were reconnaissance and they were first used to brush with the enemy.

When war broke out the Hussars did not mobilize, largely for political reasons. We had a unit that was pretty well qualified.

So they wanted an English-speaking unit about 1940, and the Royal Rifles of Canada in Quebec City, that's an old English-speaking unit, probably goes back to the days of colonial days. Sir Guy Carleton had an English-speaking unit and a French-speaking unit. And that's where the Royal Rifles claim that that's their ancestral unit, was this English-speaking unit which fought during 1812 against the Americans.

So we amalgamated with them, the 7th Hussars. There were fourteen officers and about three hundred other ranks, a lot from the Eastern townships. And fellows like Reggie Law [RRC, E30006] down on the Bay of Chaleur area, which you met. We had a lot of men come from down in that area. There probably were one hundred maybe from the Bay of Chaleur, and north of New Brunswick. That is where we were recruited from mostly. Strange thing is that it's a Quebec City unit but there weren't so many came from Quebec City. Other units had mobilized the English population before -- artillery and air force and so on. So we got quite a few of the officers who are still living were from Quebec City.

C.G.R.:

And was the unit largely English-speaking?

E.L.H.:

Largely English speaking, but we had French Canadians with us, but they spoke English. And a strange thing, they preferred to be with us, these French Canadians. There was no pressure put on them. They joined us voluntarily. At that time, you see, all those units were volunteers.

C.G.R.:

And why did they prefer, do you know why?

E.L.H.:

I suppose they had friends in it, I don't know. And some of them on the Gaspé coast, though the names are French, they are of Jersey Island descent with French names. Although they are all bilingual down there, more than we were here. So we had a unit something like that, that had French names, but really Anglos.

C.G.R.:

OK. Well then, if you'd tell me a little bit about how life went along in this new amalgamated regiment. Where did you go next? Was it Valcartier or...?

E.L.H.:

When they mobilized, they were at Valcartier first. I was in the army before they mobilized, a few weeks before. And the work I was doing, I was on headquarters staff at MD -- Military District -- No. 5. We were receiving at that time, I was on duty in internment camp for German prisoners of war but they were mostly Jewish, unfortunate Jewish people that were interned in England because they had German citizenship. And I think most of them were loyal to our cause. And they were very lenient with them.

That's what I did first until the fall of 1940, then I transferred to the Royal Rifles. They were on their way to Newfoundland. They had been at Valcartier and Sussex, New Brunswick. I caught up to them in Sussex, New Brunswick. And that's how I transferred to the Royal Rifles. There were vacancies there. I dropped from a Captain to a Lieutenant to go with them. And in six months I was back in the rank of Captain

again.

C.G.R.:

OK. What responsibilities did you have with the regiment?

E.L.H.:

Well, I was the battalion quartermaster. So that gave me the rank of Captain, that goes with it. And that's a very difficult job. It's not a very pleasant job. You have responsibilities, very, very heavy. Because you're responsible for everything, from every bit of food to every bit of equipment that you draw, and responsible for the accounting of it. It's not a job that anybody...that I'd recommend at all.

The strange thing -- in Hong Kong you think you're the quartermaster behind the lines, but we were right in the front line. That was one of the first places the Japanese bombed, was where all these depots were, and barracks and so on.

C.G.R.:

Tell me a bit, if you would, about your initial impression of Hong Kong. You hadn't, I think, seen anything like this before.

E.L.H.:

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Well no. When we landed there we were all in a different world, an oriental city. We were amazed at the population in a small area. You'd go down the street there was so many people the sidewalks wouldn't accommodate them. You'd drive a car through and the crowd would just open up and let you through and close in behind you. The streets were all just solid mass of humanity. The reason for a lot of it was that a lot of them were

refugees that fled the Japanese and came into Hong Kong. And, of course, it's always been a refuge for poor people, mostly Chinese who are having problems, and still is.

C.G.R.:

Still is.

E.L.H.:

Still is, and I guess it always will be because there is enough wealth there. Even the British had built special buildings for these refugees, very unfortunate people. And it's a problem -- they couldn't keep them out. Even with tight patrols, they worked in there. They were short of a bowl of rice, I guess, and the poverty naturally was frightening, the poverty was at that time. We don't know what poverty is like until you see those Oriental cities, particularly in wartime. And as you know they had, the Japanese had been fighting around there for two or three years, several years before the world war, the world war when they attacked the British colony in 1941.

C.G.R.:

OK. Well then, if you'd say a bit about the fighting war, the three weeks, and your own involvement in it in particular.

E.L.H.:

Well my involvement was the same thing: to keep the kitchens going and keep people in clothing. But most of the time, I spent a lot of the time moving from one place to the other what I could find and pick up, because we couldn't operate in a normal matter there with all that. We had to leave the main, we were on the mainland, on the Kowloon side of Hong Kong. The Canadians were the second line of defense on the Island side. One company saw

action on Kowloon, the Winnipeg Grenadiers sent one company across. But they only lasted four or five days on the Mainland. The British forces were driven off due to superiority in numbers and in equipment. It was terrible conditions to try and fight a battle in that thickly populated area.

The first morning the Japanese bombed, they wiped the air force out. Not one plane ever took off the ground. We never had them to do our reconnaissance work. We had no -- what we needed there was sort of some kind of a mountain cannon, which we didn't have. It was frightening, the shortages of weapons that we needed. The Japanese were superior in numbers, and weapons too, to what we had. We had our Bren guns which were very efficient. The rifles and bayonets, the light machine gun, as well as the Bren, the light automatics, and that's about it. We had very little artillery support any time during the battle, very very little.

C.G.R.:

Your motor transport never got there.

E.L.H.:

Well, they confiscated civilian trucks, the one I had would carry just about what a good pickup truck would today. That's what we had to put up with. And yes we lost, of course, a lot of our stores in the early days. We just simply couldn't hold the lines or didn't have the transport to move them.

C.G.R.:

Now were you responsible for all stores, including medical stores?

E.L.H.:

No, no, just the clothing, ammunition, and food. That worked very smoothly, as far as we could. I had excellent staff and they'd just go to the depot and load up with food and there was no formalities at all. There is no book-work when the battle starts. And that part worked very well. Every company quartermaster charges which Colin [Standish] was one of them, whom you'll meet shortly, Colin Standish. It was amazing how well and efficient they all functioned under those awful conditions that we had to put up with.

C.G.R.:

OK. Where were you when the war ended, when the fighting ended?

E.L.H.:

I was still in Hong Kong. There was only -- I was in the British Officer's camp. There were twenty Canadian officers, I was one of them, that was put in the British Officer's camp.

C.G.R.:

No, I'm sorry; I meant on Christmas Day in 1941.

E.L.H.:

Oh, we were on the Island, on the eastern part of the Island, right where, well the last days we were at this Stanley Fort. We were all pushed in there. So I was naturally with them. We held that little isthmus there for two or three days, and finally....We were several hours fighting after the government had surrendered the Island, but we didn't know it. They couldn't get a message to tell us to stop fighting until finally, eventually, they did get through on Christmas night, I

think it was, some British came through and the Japanese came in and we stopped. Everything was quiet all of a sudden.

C.G.R.:

OK. I'm going to ask you to stop for a minute.

E.L.H.:

That was our Christmas present.

C.G.R.:

Not much of a Christmas, not much of a Christmas.

E.L.H.:

And we stayed in that area for probably a week or ten days. Eventually they moved us to this horrible North Point Camp, which was used for Chinese refugees. Filthy, filthy dirty. Crawling with vermin.

C.G.R.:

In the first few days, while you were still in the Stanley Peninsula, how were you treated? Was there any brutality or...?

E.L.H.:

No I didn't see any of it. One mission -- I got permission to go up, to take the truck, to where my last storage were at a place called Palm Villa, a Japanese officer spoke good English, good enough, and I found him very polite. It was this gang that took over as guards, they were the brutal ones. He told me in civilian life he was a teacher. Canadians, they didn't know much about us. They knew we weren't Americans, they knew we weren't English and they weren't just quite clear what we were. And they has asked me, this particular officer, I was with him an hour or two, he asked me quite a lot of questions about Canadians, why we

were there. And thought we were crazy to be there, I think, [laughter] I don't know what his views were.

But brutality started after these guards took over. They were, I don't know, they were fighting soldiers, and I suppose they had something more in common with us than these other second-rate people who took over. After us, I believe, they went to New Guinea, and there the Americans and the Australians just pretty well wiped those out, those units, those Japanese units that took Hong Kong. One of them kept a bit of a history of the fighting, and he made this remark --that as soon as they faced off with the Canadians, they had a tougher time than they did the others. I don't know what the Limeys would think of that remark. They didn't really fight hard, sometimes. So I don't know. That was something that came out in the last few years. Somebody picked that up, that wrote a history of the battle. I've forgotten which book I read that in.

C.G.R.:

It seems to me it's hard to get the British to admit that anyone is any better than a regular British regiment.

E.L.H.:

Oh no, no, it was definitely after that there as quite a lot of ill feelings between the Canadians and the British too. They sort of blamed us for it, for letting them down.

C.G.R.:

Perhaps you'd tell me something about North Point, would you? One of the things I'm particularly interested in is, how it was organized internally.

E.L.H.:

Well we carried on our internal organization units just the same as we would anywhere else. We dealt with the Japanese through an interpreter. But the horrible conditions there -- we were packed in like sardines into these camps. There wasn't space enough. And what we called the hospital was a horrible place. Just a cement floor for our men to lay on. We did be able to help a little. We could build up with rice sacks, with all this great big heavy rice sacks, it helped a little. It is a horrible, horrible situation. It's just a nightmare.

What helped a little bit, they took the British Navy personnel and went back to the big Sham Shui Po barracks where we, that was our home when we first landed there, and there was more space there. That relieved a lot. It left the Canadians for a few weeks, a few months to themselves in North Point. We got along better then.

Because with the Japanese commandant, why he was not an unreasonable person, but he'd have perhaps some of his others that would be brutal. They could be very brutal too. But his name was Wada, Lt. Wada. He spoke a little English. I had a few times that I was called to his headquarters, and I wasn't received by him rude in any way. I tried to be polite too, that's the main thing. If you want to get tough, they'll get tough. The best thing is to try to get along with them if possible, if you can.

C.G.R.:

Now, were you still carrying on some of your quartermaster duties? Were you still responsible for the food?

E.L.H.:

Yes, I was still was the quartermaster. I drew the rations and sometimes a little bit of clothing we'd get hold of. We had a little stores and I worked with the quartermaster of the Winnipeg Grenadiers. We got along very well what little things we had....

C.G.R.:

Who was that, incidentally?

E.L.H.:

I can't remember his name. Jack Norris was one of them.

C.G.R.:

That's fine. One of the things I'm curious about is, how did you actually get the food? I mean who brought the food in, and who decided how much you would get?

E.L.H.:

The first few days at North Point we had access to our own depots, we had our own food. But that played out. We'd send a party out, I never went out but Captain Bush, he was Army Service Corps, he'd go outside somewhere to these depots and draw the, it was mostly rice and very poor vegetables. And Quartermaster Sergeant Standish looked after our unit pretty well, and probably two or three others, you know, enough to, or approximately in a party there would be four or five altogether. But Bush was in charge of our drawing the rations for our camp at North Point. He's dead now.

C.G.R.:

Yes. As a matter of fact I just missed interviewing him. He was in his final illness when I made contact.

So basically then -- I want to be sure I have this correct -
- the Japanese would let Captain Bush go out of the camp....

E.L.H.:

Well, he'd be under an escort. There'd be a Japanese soldier or two with a rifle and bayonet with them. You didn't tear off on your own anywhere. You were under guard all the time.

C.G.R.:

And they went in trucks.

E.L.H.:

Yes, there'd be trucks and the drivers were probably Chinese.

C.G.R.:

The trucks the Japanese supplied I assume. I mean you didn't have any.

E.L.H.:

Yes. Some that did work, some probably, some of them were ours. They weren't military vehicles. I didn't see many Japanese military vehicles. They lived off the land. I suppose they had confiscated them wherever they found them. Same as we had to, because the military vehicles, even at the beginning of the war were very few there in Hong Kong. We didn't have what we should have. We should have had Bren gun carriers, like that. There was one or two, but ours hadn't arrived then.

C.G.R.:

Then when Captain Bush went out, presumably he went to storage places, he was told by the Japanese to go to "X" place.

E.L.H.:

Oh yes, oh yes, they had their organized depot.

C.G.R.:

He didn't go out and just shop around.

E.L.H.:

No. Colin, you'll meet him, he can elaborate more on that than I can.

C.G.R.:

OK, well I'll ask him.

E.L.H.:

Yes, he can give you first hand information on that.

C.G.R.:

Right, OK. I'm trying to think of what more I wanted to ask about North Point before we go over to Sham Shui Po.

E.L.H.:

We were there for about a year and then the Japanese started taking drafts of people to Japan. They started with the British first. That left vacancies in Sham Shui Po. And I went, we were, I can't remember the date, in that book it tells the date we went.

C.G.R.:

It was late September, I know, of 1942.

E.L.H.:

Yes. A lot of us were sick, a lot of us were sick. I had dengue fever at the time. I was miserable. We went to Sham Shui Po, which was our old barracks in the beginning. That's across on the mainland, in the city of Kowloon. It's just on the outskirts of Kowloon.

C.G.R.:

I should say I've been to Hong Kong. I have a mental picture of a lot of these places.

Tell me about dengue fever. What does it feel like? What do you experience?

E.L.H.:

Well, as I know about it, it is something like malaria only it was just as uncomfortable with it. It only lasted, I didn't have malaria, but it's something like malaria, only it doesn't leave any, like malaria leaves you with something.

C.G.R.:

It keeps coming back.

E.L.H.:

It keeps coming back, it repeats, but I don't think dengue fever did. I believe you get it the same way from mosquito. The doctors say it's serious, but while you have it it's a fever, and you don't feel very well naturally. Anybody would with a fever.

C.G.R.:

But that's the main symptom, is fever, is it?

E.L.H.:

Yes, it's something similar to malaria. It's not considered as serious.

C.G.R.:

OK. Well then at Sham Shui Po you came into quite a different set-up.

E.L.H.:

Yes, the guards were more miserable at that place. Then

they began taking more Canadians to Japan. There was only one Canadian officer ever went to Japan; Jack Reid was a doctor, they took him.

C.G.R.:

I've heard that, yes.

E.L.H.:

He's dead now. It's too bad you couldn't have met him.

C.G.R.:

Yes, I didn't meet him and I didn't meet Dr. Gray either. I missed him.

E.L.H.:

Yes, he's dead also. Gray used to come down and visit us at our little reunions. He was living in Edmonton.

C.G.R.:

I gather toward the end he became depressed.

E.L.H.:

I understand he did.

C.G.R.:

I talked to him at that time but he didn't want to see me. And he apparently he died a year or so later.

E.L.H.:

Well that's not like him. He was once in a while, because normally he's a very friendly gentleman. He really was, a great guy, everybody liked him. And we were fortunate our Canadian doctors were good. We had two dentists.

C.G.R.:

Yes, I've interviewed Winston Cunningham.

E.L.H.:

I thought you'd meet him, yes. I met him twice in Florida, once by accident. I just happened to be in the same restaurant in Clearwater and here was his wife sitting over across. The world is pretty small sometimes.

C.G.R.:

Yes, yes indeed.

E.L.H.:

So we got together a few evenings. Oh yes, he's a marvelous fellow, Winston.

C.G.R.:

How did the intermixing of the different groups go at Sham Shui Po? I mean did the Canadians get on well with the British, and so on? You were all together there.

E.L.H.:

Well, I can't think of anything very serious happened. I think they got along as well there as they did anywhere else. Of course there is always a little friction -- "the colonials," you know, they just wondered who we were and what we were like. I've made a lot of good friends amongst the British. We weren't all enemies. Sometimes relations weren't as good as they should have been. Under those conditions it wouldn't improve you, you know.

Of course, if had it been a great victory I suppose relations would have been better, maybe. I think the mistake was made, which they shouldn't have done, they should have left the two Canadian units together under their own command. The British seemed to always want to break them up, and that's always been their great resistance, especially in the last two wars. And it

doesn't work. Just to think because they have the right to break us up and use us as reinforcements. And of course that started back in 1914; Sir Sam Hughes didn't agree with Kitchener. You probably read that story. He had had experience with that in the, I suppose, in the South African War. Apparently he saw that that wasn't going to work, and history has proved he was right. History has proved that. You shouldn't break them up -- leave them alone. Give them a job to do and leave them alone, the best thing to do.

C.G.R.:

Well, the Canadian army that fought in Europe in World War 2 did a pretty good job.

E.L.H.:

Well after they were put together. Vimy Ridge, you read that story, eh? The Battle of Vimy Ridge, I have it here. They did outstanding work at Vimy Ridge.

C.G.R.:

Now, did you stay at Sham Shui Po or did you go to Argyle Street?

E.L.H.:

I went eventually to Argyle Street. There were twenty Canadian officers that went to Argyle Street. The Japanese had a vacancy there. They had taken twenty senior British officers and I think they took them to Taiwan, the Brigadiers and the Generals and the Governors and all that. So they seemed to think they should fill that up with twenty more. So that's how the two Colonels went, all the Majors, and I think we were down to about three Captains in each of the Winnipeg Grenadiers and the Royal

Rifles. As far as I know, I'm the last one of the group that's living, except Jack Price is living, but his mind is gone. He's just a vegetable. He's way in his middle 90s. He's a first war veteran. He and I are the only ones, I think, that are living that were in that group.

C.G.R.:

Tell me more about Sham Shui Po as far as its day-to-day activities. Again, were you still doing your job?

E.L.H.:

Well, no, I had, about the second year I had a hard time. I have a big sore on my leg, the scar is there yet, and that sort of put me out of, I couldn't carry on efficiently and Lieutenant MacMillan took over from me. By that time our group was getting smaller, with drafts in Japan. And the tragedy that sticks in my mind most in Sham Shui Po is our men dying with diphtheria. I imagine Dr. Crawford, he probably explained that awful situation pretty well. So I don't think we need to go into that. That was one of the worst things that happened.

C.G.R.:

I'd be glad to hear anything you have to say about it. It's like a big jigsaw puzzle, you know, with pieces put....

E.L.H.:

I can remember one horrible experience. They'd always send a padre out with a burial party, and one officer. One day, I forget how many boxes were on this truck, but seven of them were Canadians, one a lad from right here. That is a day that I didn't, it was a very very sad day for me because some of them

were my own men. One was one from my home town here. I don't think I'll ever forget that.

Another thing, sometimes this little Jap, the little Japanese sentry, came with us. He stopped at a store and bought us each a banana. So there's, sometimes you see the worst in the brutality, and yet some of them could be human.

C.G.R.:

Human beings, sure.

E.L.H.:

Yes, they could. I remember, this is what I remember pretty well. Nobody cared very much what the, under those conditions, whether you had your own, whether the padre was of your own religious persuasion or not. The padre that day was Captain Green of the British Chaplain Service. He was an RC but that didn't involve them. Men liked to see a christian. They did no way care whether he was an Anglican, whether he was a RC, that didn't come into the picture at all. If one of them was absent, the other took over, and that was a kind of a nice thing about the chaplain services there. We didn't worry too much -- one of our own were fine.

C.G.R.:

Where were the burials actually done? Where was the cemetery at that time?

E.L.H.:

The ones when we were at Sham Shui Po, they were taken, there was a temporary cemetery, I believe they were moved, right opposite the officers' camp, on Argyle Street. I remember that's where we went because we could look into the street. You

couldn't wave at anybody, but there was people I'd recognize at the wire watching us when we went in this place. But they are all taken now under one common cemetery. Right by the...

C.G.R.:

Yes, I know where they are now.

E.L.H.:

You saw that, visited that. We fought right around where that cemetery is with Major Bishop in that Tai Tam area.

C.G.R.:

Well yes, that's not too far.

E.L.H.:

That is where the Bishop first contacted the Japanese, Major Bishop. And he was ready for them too. He caught them right in the gap there. They really got an awful beating there for a little while. Major Bishop was a very efficient officer. He was, he really was. He was my friend up until the time he died. He died right in this area. He died in the hospital but he was living here.

C.G.R.:

One of the things that Dr. Banfill talked about in connection with the diphtheria was the use of the volunteer orderlies in the Jubilee Building and so on. Did you have any connection at all with that? Did you know anything about that other than the fact that it happened?

E.L.H.:

I know it happened. All I did was, at that time I was still the Quartermaster and was concerned about trying to get what we

could -- a little better food for them, a little more. That's about all I remember. I didn't have much to do with it. Only responsible for them to have their rations down there, such as they were. But I wouldn't have much to do with that, no.

C.G.R.:

Did the men and the officers eat more or less the same?

E.L.H.:

At Sham Shui Po, as far as I know, they were practically the same. But I felt when I went to the officers' camp in Argyle Street, the rations were less. I'm sure they were. They didn't make the officers do physical work for some reason. But some places they did. In Japan I heard they did. They made the American officers work like the men. So we didn't have as rough a time as the men did. I think the ones that had the worst time, were certainly those ones that went to Japan, they had it, went up into the mines. The climate, Japan is not as nice a climate, as warm a climate as Hong Kong. They worked in the snow up there and practically bare-footed. That's another story.

C.G.R.:

Yes, people at Niigata, in particular, had a terrible time.

E.L.H.:

Yes. Colin and those fellows that were up there can tell you more about it than I can. But we can imagine; there was quite a difference from Hong Kong. It never freezes in Hong Kong. Although the weather can be chilly something like today. And you need a little bit of fire to keep the chill off, but it's nothing like the climate in Northern Japan.

C.G.R.:

Were the relationships between the men and the officers, did they stay generally good or were there difficulties?

E.L.H.:

I think the Royal Rifles, as far as I know our relationships were always excellent. We were quite proud of that. I think they were. You asked the men, probably. But I had feeling of all this. In fact I've always stayed with them since the war, more or less. I've always been active in the veteran's legion and the Hong Kong Veterans Association. I've been in contact with them always. Sometimes I've had a few little digs, you know, you expect that, but no, nothing serious. I always felt that we liked each other very much and respected each other. That's my feeling and I think the other's will tell you the same.

C.G.R.:

I've heard of some instances, particularly in American groups, where the men felt they didn't owe allegiance to the officers anymore, they didn't have to obey their orders, you know, there was this kind of trouble.

E.L.H.:

As far as the Royal Rifles was concerned, I think that was the opposite. I think that they, generally speaking, there may have been a few incidents, but generally speaking I'm sure the relationship was very good, up to this day.

C.G.R.:

Yes, that's the impression I get, I must say.

E.L.H.:

I think maybe we were fortunate that we didn't have any

serious friction at all.

I always thought Colonel Home, with his discipline, he was very fair for some of the ones that committed minor crimes, he was very fair with them. And I think they respected him very very highly, they did. I remember one day he fainted out in front of them, we were just being dismissed from parade, and they were concerned, they were concerned how the Colonel was coming, you know. Yes, they were, I know that. You could see that they were concerned that he was sick.

C.G.R.:

Tell me about your own health during this time. Now you've mentioned the dengue fever and the ulcer on your leg.

E.L.H.:

Well, that is the only thing. There's still a big scar there, a tropical ulcer [front of right thigh]. If you are doctor, would you like me to show you what it looks like?

C.G.R.:

Fine, sure.

[Tape off briefly.]

E.L.H.:

I don't mind. It was twice that size once, and down nearly to the bone. And all the treatment I had was salt and water.

C.G.R.:

It's still bigger than a quarter, isn't it.

E.L.H.:

Yes, it is.

C.G.R.:

Does it stay like that, it doesn't open up anywhere?

E.L.H.:

I think it's irritated, why it's red. I wonder if it isn't detergents or something in my laundry. It is a little red now, it didn't used to be that way. But it's nothing I'm going to worry much about, I don't think. That was one of the worst tropical ulcers I had. I had some others along the leg, smaller. That, you'd see amongst the coolie class, the people that were badly fed, you'd see it on them. Their legs would have these awful sores. I think it's the same disease as pellagra, I think it is. I believe pellagra means Spanish for rough skin.

C.G.R.:

Certainly pellagra has a large component of skin disease, although true tropical ulcer is usually considered quite a different disease from pellagra. Characteristically pellagra gives you, actually, a lesion that looks much like that, not a real ulcer, but it looks like that, but it a much deeper red and tends to spread over a lot of the body. It often involves the face and upper chest and so on.

E.L.H.:

And of course we all had this beriberi, but I didn't have it so severe as our men. I've seen men sit with so much pain all night, with their feet in hot water, or cold water to cool them down. I didn't suffer as much as that. I think, health-wise, I'm probably one of these exceptions. My health was not nearly as bad as a lot of the others were. And here I'm one of the oldest ones in Sawyerville here. There was 12 of us that went through the Royal Rifles to Hong Kong and there's only 2 of us

living now, Rene Bedard [E30066] and I. So that speaks for itself.

C.G.R.:

How many came back of that dozen or eleven?

E.L.H.:

We lost three over there. One I buried that night I was telling you about, Leo Dubois [E30057, died of diphtheria, 10 October 1942], a French-Canadian.

C.G.R.:

You said you had beriberi; did you have the "happy feet," the electric feet, the tingling and so on?

E.L.H.:

Yes, in fact I felt that up to a few years ago, you'd occasionally feel it. I don't have it now but I had it for about 15 years. I'd notice it a little bit. I didn't suffer a lot of pain with it, but it was there, you knew it was there.

C.G.R.:

Yes. Reg Law as telling me that he still has it.

E.L.H.:

Yes, I think he does. No, I don't have it.

C.G.R.:

Not often, but he has it still.

E.L.H.:

Yes, I imagine he would, yes.

C.G.R.:

OK. How about weight loss, what did you normally weigh?

E.L.H.:

I was down to 115 pounds at one time.

C.G.R.:

And your normal weight would be?

E.L.H.:

Then it would be about 150 or 60.

C.G.R.:

Yes, that's quite a substantial....

E.L.H.:

Oh yes. I know some men that lost a hundred pounds. They weren't Canadians but business men, they were great big men and they had these middle-aged men with....They certainly suffered with that. I hadn't so much lose at that time, but they did, some of those business men that lived high all their lives.

C.G.R.:

Perhaps it did some good.

E.L.H.:

I think it did them good for awhile.

C.G.R.:

As long as they survived.

E.L.H.:

It certainly didn't hurt them.

C.G.R.:

In a group of basically young men like this, one of the questions that I think comes naturally to mind is what about sex? Was there concern with sexuality? Was homosexuality or....?

E.L.H.:

I don't think that existed. I never knew of it. I think they were so darn, they were more concerned with hunger. I don't

think that was the problem. I don't know what others will tell you but I don't know of any cases where there was homo practiced at all. I never heard of it.

C.G.R.:

I've heard that from many people.

E.L.H.:

Did they tell you that too?

C.G.R.:

In a sense that seems surprising, but I understand what you're saying.

E.L.H.:

Yes. We were thinking of hunger all the time. This was on our mind.

C.G.R.:

And the absence of sex, that wasn't a bother?

E.L.H.:

I don't think that bothered them, no. They were so run down, hungry. Oh yes, you would have nice memories of your life at home, and longed for that, to be back, naturally, but I don't think it became a problem. I don't know of it ever, I can't recall of it ever being practiced. I never knew of it in any way at all. We were so hungry, you don't think of that.

C.G.R.:

Is this an experience that you expected to survive, at the time? Did you ever think you weren't going to make it?

E.L.H.:

Well, I was, I felt, if anybody gets through I would, but I had doubts. If the war had lasted another year or two the death

rate would have been tremendous, I'm sure. There would have been some survivors but....So was it right to use the atomic bomb? I think it saved lives, both the Japanese. It brought the war to an end quickly. But I don't, whether it was an immoral thing to do I'll leave it to somebody else to judge that. Because I was the beneficiary of it, so....

C.G.R.:

Right, that's a tough one.

E.L.H.:

Whether we were worth saving, I don't know. I just feel that that's kept the world at peace up till this time. It's a horrible thing to have over your head. I just think we'd been a big wars again if we hadn't had it.

C.G.R.:

It could well be the case.

E.L.H.:

It could well be. Nobody dares to start it. No sane man would ever start it, but of course still the hazards there. Some fanatic get hold of it and it would be lots of trouble then.

C.G.R.:

What about coping with this experience amongst the men? Did you find differences in those who could cope and those who didn't? I'm thinking that you often hear of two men who seem identical, with the same background, they're eating the same food, they seem equally healthy, and yet one of them sort of caves in and doesn't make it and the other does. Do you have any feelings about this?

E.L.H.:

Oh yes I think that was very noticeable at the beginning there. There'd be, some fellow would die very suddenly. Of course I don't think it was...I think it was mental, not physical, because I remember one or two cases, one of my fellows, a great big powerful man, I don't think he, he certainly didn't die of disease, of starvation. I can't remember what he died of, but he died very suddenly, a great big powerful man, he just gave up and died. I think a lot of it was mental. What do the Canadian doctors tell you? Did you discuss that with them?

C.G.R.:

Oh yes, yes. It's a very difficult question of course and theories vary a great deal. Some people said, well, the really young ones didn't do well. Perhaps because they didn't back down...?

E.L.H.:

Well, I discussed that with Martin [Banfill] one time. Yes, but remember there is more of them. So there you are. I don't think there was any scientific records of....

[End of side one]

....he lives down near Reggie Law, he was my orderly, he wasn't old enough to shave when the war was over -- he survived.

C.G.R.:

Well that's it, all of these theories are just that. They are easily proven and yet you can find the opposite case very easily.

E.L.H.:

I do think that the ones that had more courage are the ones

that survived. I do think that was it. I don't know what you would call it from a scientific point of view. I think so. I think you will find that in your practice, with the patients you've had; there are some that have more courage and others in the same conditions existed there, the same kind of people. You must have noticed that in your practice, eh, when some people would just give up.

C.G.R.:

Yes, and some would put up enormous fights.

E.L.H.:

Yes, it was up to the individual a lot too, wasn't it?

C.G.R.:

Yes, indeed.

In Sham Shui Po, after you stopped being quartermaster, how would you spend the day, normally? What did you do?

E.L.H.:

Well, I went to the British officers' camp and I got very active, doing maintenance around the camp. What I did was, these were old tarred-paper roofs, so we could cut grass, use it for fuel, and some old tin cans, and I'd melt that for more roofing, make it back into liquid. And another fellow would keep a hot iron, and like a soldering iron, and for a long time, for a year or two, I did a lot of maintenance work on camps. Some fellow would say, "Hey, Lionel, there's a leak over my bed," and we'd go down and perhaps keep, stop this leak -- it would last a few months. That's what I did a lot.

I worked in the garden a lot too. I got better after I went

to Argyle street and I worked in the garden. They knew I was a farmer, so of course they thought I must be an expert in gardening. That got us out of the camp. We'd go down to this garden. It was right under the Indian prison camp was right next by, it was right under the century box, where our garden was. And this Indian officer, who was British, everybody was in the Indian army, probably one of his men would be in the cemetery up above there. So they'd talk away in Hindustani, very low, and they'd pass information by. If the Japs had caught on, of course, there would have been the devil to pay over that. We smuggled in the parts of a radio, come in with this produce we'd have from the garden. I knew it was going on, I didn't get caught in it, but it would be buried at night there. Finally we got a radio put together and the British officers -- we had some pretty talented ones in electronics -- we were getting news from the BBC in London.

That's another sad story. That got found out and those officers had it terrible. It's mentioned in our book there. They had a pretty rough time, now I'll tell you. They survived. Commander Craven was one, and the other one, Charlie Boxer was the Intelligence Officer. They took him to Hong Kong. They survived but they were used terribly over there.

C.G.R.:

Was Boxer the one who had a mistress?

E.L.H.:

Oh yes, yes. Micky Hahn.

C.G.R.:

Micky Hahn, I was trying to think of the name.

E.L.H.:

Yes, yes. They visited after the war, they visited Major McAuley, Tom McAuley in Quebec City. I knew Boxer, I was with him when they arrested him. He said to me, he said, "I guess I'm for it now." I said, "Oh, I wish you the best." But I never saw him, I don't think I saw him after he was released. I don't remember. I guess he was in the hospital -- they took him right to the hospital. They brought him down from Canton. One of the first things, they ordered the Japs to get these men back, these officers that were under punishment in Canton, that's one of the first things, I guess, they did. I guess they got them out in a hurry. There was Craven, and Boxer, and I can't think of the other one's name. I was right with him when they arrested him. They said, "Come down to the canteen." The Japanese said, "You come down to the....," and then you right perhaps never saw them again.

C.G.R.:

Argyle Street was that all officers?

E.L.H.:

Yes, yes. All officers. They had batmen for awhile, but that was soon done away with. I guess they went on drafts to Japan. Oh, the officers were cooks and everything, they did their own.

C.G.R.:

Argyle Street is still standing, did you know that?

E.L.H.:

It is eh? What is it used for now?

They had in the Hong Kong Volunteers they had two companies that were Portuguese. They had their own officers. One of them, Chris Delmada, I knew him, he was a Captain, he afterwards became equivalent to Minister of Justice there in Hong Kong. Whether he is still living, I don't know. He was a lawyer then. They were sort of the middle-class people of Hong Kong. They were tri-lingual. They could speak Cantonese and they were very valuable people, the officers and so on, of the British companies. What's going to happen to Macao? Is that going to go like Hong Kong? I don't hear much about that.

C.G.R.:

I don't know. I haven't heard either. All the talk in Hong Kong was about Hong Kong. Of course it's the main subject of conversation right now, but I don't know about Macao.

E.L.H.:

You see, before the war Shanghai was the big city at that time. These International settlements were there. Well, the commies did away with that and that's why I think Hong Kong grew so after the war. It was the only opening there was to China then.

C.G.R.:

Tell me, if you would, what happened at Christmas time? Was there any celebration of Christmas?

E.L.H.:

Well, it's funny; I remember one time the Japanese brought us in a Christmas tree. It was a pretty scruffy-looking tree. And we had fellows who could make things out of nothing. Now we had some decorations made out of the Japanese cigarette boxes,

they were red. I remember that all strung around. In the officers camp we had a lot, of course, of very talented people there. All kinds -- screwballs and everything else, you know. They were, there were some very clever people there.

We had a band there, musicians. Naturally you'd find some very good musicians that used to put on concerts. We used to have some, at Sham Shui Po there, we used to put on plays. We had playwrights, it would be something involved in the camps, something humorous, you know, on somebody. We didn't just sit around crying all the time. The more amusement we could do the better it was for the morale of everyone.

C.G.R.:

Oh yes, yes. Was there a library?

E.L.H.:

Yes, we had a library sent in. Funny things, I read books, I've got one now, Kenneth Roberts book. Did you ever read them?

C.G.R.:

Northwest Passage.

E.L.H.:

Northwest Passage. I've got them now. I read them there first, and I've been picking them up at auctions, because you can't get them. And another one, I remember, I read a lot was considered a military manual, it's Colonel Henderson's two volumes on the American civil war. I read those a lot. Now I've traveled down through that country and witnessed where all these old battlefields were.

C.G.R.:

Oh yes, down to Gettysburg, and Antietam.

E.L.H.

Gettysburg, Antietam, and through the Shenandoah Valley there. Of course, you go down to the hotels there and the first picture you see is General Lee, a picture usually in a lot of those Southern hotels.

I learned to play cribbage pretty good there too. We used to pass away a lot of time playing cribbage in the officers camp there. And a few things came in from the Red Cross, I remember, there was some games.

C.G.R.:

Yes, I was going to ask about the Red Cross.

E.L.H.:

The tragedy, the food that was sent to us, it was only a trickle. You were probably told that before, so there is no use going into that, but we only got a trickle of the Red Cross food. Believe me, when you are down and you get a little bit of bully beef, it's amazing how it reacts to your body. It sort of replaces that starvation quickly. It's amazing what a meal will do, when you've got a good meal after being....I was careful not to overeat, some did maybe, but it's amazing how....Once in awhile we'd get an egg, maybe -- we could buy them through the wire or something. Just one egg would make you feel better right off.

It's very difficult to describe the menu everyday. We brought back the records, I started them in prison camp, the stories that were given about food. And that's in Ottawa. My records were started and Angus MacMillan continued them on. So

we had turned in a lot of information. What the strength was, the camp strength that day and what food we received.

C.G.R.:

I've seen those records.

E.L.H.:

You've probably seen those. Well, I started those. I don't know what they looked like now. They've probably been typed written over or something, I don't know. The one I had was sort of a brown book.

C.G.R.:

A lot of them are still in the original handwritten....

E.L.H.:

Yes, well some of my writing is in some of them. You must have read....

C.G.R.:

Dennison, is there an officer by the name of Dennison? He kept some records also.

E.L.H.:

Too bad he isn't living. He died two years ago. He lives in Lennoxville. He and I were always very close friends, and I miss Everett very much, even today. When they took these senior officers out of Sham Shui Po, Everett Dennison was put in command of the Canadians that were left. He was considered like a Brigade Major, almost. Everett did very well. Everett, the last few years, he had mental problems, he wasn't himself. That wasn't caused by the war, that's in his family.

C.G.R.:

Were there "bad apples" amongst the prisoners? You know, people who didn't do the things they were supposed to do, maybe collaborated with the Japanese, or were dishonest? I'm not interested in names.

E.L.H.:

No, no. I don't think there was a Canadian who collaborated with the Japanese. I don't know if anybody has ever told you this, the Britishers had them. Whoever told you about this Major [Cecil] Boone, he was the commandant, the prisoner commandant of Sham Shui Po, he collaborated with the Japs. We were more frightened of him than we were of the Japs, sometimes. He'd turn you over. He was court-martialed in England. The first time I ever saw an officer put under arrest. They arrested him just as soon as the Japs left, he was put under guard of our own people. I believe he got off. He shouldn't have. That son-of-a-gun. He was most miserable person I ever met. He collaborated with the Japs and some of his staff did.

But there's no Canadians ever been....There were two, something happened in Japan, there were two Winnipeg Grenadiers that were tried here in Canada, collaborating with the Japs and they got Dave Golden as their lawyer. Did you meet Dave?

C.G.R.:

Yes, I've interviewed him.

E.L.H.:

Well, he got them right off. I don't think it was serious anyway. Dave got them off. Wells Bishop, Major Bishop was on that too, on that trial, court-martial.

C.G.R.:

Yes, this is Tugby [CSM Marcus Charles Tugby, WG, H6020] and Harvey [Cpl. John Hugh Harvey, RAMC, 7260898], I think are their names.

E.L.H.:

I think so. But nothing was proven that they were ever, did anything very serious. Maybe they did a little, I don't know, but that's the only case I ever knew of.

C.G.R.:

That's the only one I've heard of too.

E.L.H.:

As far as I know that's all it was. It wasn't a very strong case, because Dave Golden -- they began quoting according to King's regulations and Orders -- Golden knocked that down, he said, "That didn't exist there. We were under the Japanese military law, and we had to do what they did or we'd get shot." Anyway I've never seen that. Was it ever published in any writing?

C.G.R.:

It might have been published, but interestingly enough I was in Ottawa in January or February and I finally tracked the records down. And I've had a lot of correspondence with the Judge Advocate's office and they now tell me that they are open for me to examine anytime I want. So the next time I'm in Ottawa....

E.L.H.:

Well you go and look, you look that up, because Grant Garneau wanted to get into that. I think he did a pretty good

job at it on his thesis he wrote for Bishop's. That wasn't available to him. I saw him the other day and I told him that it was open now. His brother lives across the road here.

C.G.R.:

That was one of the questions I wanted to ask, is where is he now? How can I get in touch with him? I have some questions about the book and so on.

E.L.H.:

I can get his address for you. He's down in Fredericton but I haven't his address. His brother is just across the street.

C.G.R.:

When we're finished perhaps I could even phone him. Perhaps you wouldn't mind phoning him.

E.L.H.:

Yes, we'll phone him.

C.G.R.:

Because I have a number of questions that I know he could answer just like that.

[Tape off briefly.]

Brutality, what was your personal experience in brutality?

E.L.H.:

Well I saw some bad beatings, witnessed them. Their brutality to the Chinese was terrible, outside the wire, I remember.

C.G.R.:

Could you tell me about some of the things you saw.

E.L.H.:

Well the one I saw, was we'd have this Swiss Consul, I

guess, in Hong Kong represented the International Red Cross. And of course he is supposed to inspect all prison camps. Well, he'd come in and you couldn't talk to him. He'd be surrounded by the Japanese and all these dignitaries and you couldn't even speak to him. And they'd put on a good show, they're bringing special rations in the kitchens when they were there and just as soon as they were gone they were taken out. I don't think they fooled them very much. But that went on.

One day he was going through this hut, this British officer, I forget his name, he shouted out, "We're starving, we're starving." And you could see the Japs give him a dirty look. They got the consul out of there. Then the Japanese started to come on and they beat him like the dickens with a bamboo stick. This is in Argyle Street. This along in the later few months of the war. I can't remember the date of it. Anyway Colonel White of the Royal Scots was the commandant, he went right over to the Japanese commander, he said, "You've beaten this man up and I want that [Japanese] sergeant taken out of this camp. He's not fit to be with us." Now it's amazing what he got away with. And it worked, it worked. They did replace him.

C.G.R.:

Is that right?

E.L.H.:

Yes.

C.G.R.:

A bold front sometimes works.

E.L.H.

Yes, they're unpredictable, the Japanese, they're unpredictable. Sometimes when the least little thing they'd beat you up for, they'd get you know some....I was slapped but I never was really beaten up. But if you got in wrong with their gestapo [Kempei Tai], no matter what, they'd put terrible abuse on anybody that got into their hands. It was awful. Those atrocities we've all read about, I'm sure were true.

C.G.R.:

What was the worst part of this experience for you? If you had to pick out one thing what bothered you most about being a prisoner of war in the 1940s?

E.L.H.:

I think what bothered me the most was those boys dying by diphtheria, several a day would die. That was one of the worst memories I have, I would say -- helpless: you couldn't do anything, there was nothing you could do for it. I would think that was the highlights of it. On the battlefield, anything can happen on the battlefield, but you expect today when a man surrenders, lays down his weapons, he shouldn't be abused, but the Japanese the way that they looked at that we didn't deserve nothing better than being slaves, we should fight to the bitter end -- they did. That was part of their religion. Where we have a different way -- we'll surrender this day and hope we can get out and fight again -- live. So that's the two points of view, the oriental and the western point of view of life. To them life is very cheap, they have so many of them. Where we are the opposite, we have to economize on man power. We don't want to lose anybody if we can help it. That's the big difference with

the orientals and the westerners.

C.G.R.:

Can I go back to that time, and the burials and the Macao sort of question, but I want to visualize all this as clearly as I can? Were there coffins for these men?

E.L.H.:

Yes, at the beginning they had wooden coffins. And they were just wooden boxes. They had some of the Chinese to dig the graves, we didn't have to dig graves. Because I, of course they wanted us out there too long. The graves would be ready, and there would be just a little ceremony. Sometimes they'd let us bring a bugler and blow Last Post. I think sometimes they did. But they'd always let an officer go out and a padre, chaplain.

C.G.R.:

Was there a flag over the coffin, any of that sort of thing?

E.L.H.:

No, I don't remember that, no.

C.G.R.:

And who carried the coffin?

E.L.H.:

We'd have personnel of our own to carry that -- four or five men were bearers. I guess that was it. I remember one time these fellows were sick and I'd go down and I'd help them too, to get the fellow down right. I believe that at the later part they didn't even have, I didn't go to any burials after I went to Argyle Street. So I don't know, but I guess they run out of wood sometimes for coffins, and I don't imagine, lots of places they

were just buried in a blanket or something.

Of course the Chinese way, the Japanese way of, they cremate, a lot of our people that go into the battlefield they cremated them, just burned them right out. You'd see this going for days. They'd use gasoline and their own too, they'd cremate --for sanitary reasons. And I could see it had a lot of logic in that climate.

C.G.R.:

And also for space reasons. In Japan....

E.L.H.:

Well we're getting to that here now. We're cremating here.

C.G.R.:

Anything else you can think of? We've sort of jumped around, are there aspects of this that I've missed? Are there things you'd like to talk about?

E.L.H.:

Well, you can ask me any questions you'd like, it doesn't bother me. Some people it would, I don't think it does now. It seems like a dream now. It's hard to realize that we survived that, that all that happened. Then, on second thought, you know it did.

C.G.R.:

Did it bother you after the war in the sense that some men had nightmares and things like that?

E.L.H.:

Not so much as some. I know that some people still have it. I can't say that I had severe nightmares, no. I was so happy to be home, I guess. But I know I did.

C.G.R.:

Were you married before the war?

E.L.H.:

Yes, I had an unfortunate, I had a divorce problem when I got home. I married again, and she's been dead, Irene's been dead nine years now. She was in the service, she was an Assistant Matron in South Africa. That's a little expedition that's almost forgotten today. There was 200 Canadian nurses were taken to South Africa and they were South African Army Nursing Service, it's called. There was two or three girls from out here. They had what they called a Starbuck Club. They had reunions at one time. But I'm out of touch with them all now. After Irene died some of her friends keep writing, and when she died I wrote and told them the story, and of course I don't hear from them now. There was one girl down in New Brunswick that was with Irene. There was one local one that died a few years ago. That is another thing that's almost forgotten today. You don't hear much about it.

C.G.R.:

The divorce -- I don't want to pry, but do you think this was principally because of the long absence?

E.L.H.:

Partly, yes. Or they didn't expect you'd be living, partly, I think so.

C.G.R.:

Yes, I guess a lot of men had that difficult situation.

E.L.H.:

Yes, that happened to a lot of our men, because they never thought they'd be back. And they had good reasons to think that too, after what the news they were getting.

C.G.R.:

Well, perhaps that's a good place to stop.

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