

October 3, 1991

Slate #1349-028

Interviewee: Mr. Henry Allen

Interviewer: Sue Sussman

Notetaker: Rose Shames

1:04- Henry S. Allen born in Horry County, South Carolina on September 3, 1924.

2:00 - Went into the Army -Fort Bragg to Camp Shelby, Mississippi. Recon Unit training. Sent to Europe on January 22, 1945.

4:00 - Jeep driver and mortar gunner. Camp Lucky Strike, Le Harve, France then on to Mainz and across Germany to Frankfurt, Austria and final destination Linz. VE Day on May 7, 1945.

5:00 - April 1945 was assigned to liberate POW camps and camp Ordsdorf. Description of this process ( same day that FDR died)

11:28 - Description of prisoners in Ordsdorf - malnutrition, skeletons, different ages and nationalities. Was a labor camp.

13:12 - Near Linz, Austria was Mauthausen concentration camp. Wagons loaded with bodies, stacked like cord wood. Crematorium, gas chambers which looked like shower stall.

15:10 - People were skeleton and bones.

15:55 - Not first to arrive in Mauthausen.

17:30 - Linked with Russians after VE Day. Secured Hirshen airfield near Linz.

19:00 - Central receiving place for POW and camp survivors. Served as temporary hospital. Stayed there 4 months and saw hundreds of thousands coming through. Displaced persons trying to get home.

22:13 - "Tooth Shop" at Mauthausen; "Tattoo Shop at Mauthausen"; thousands of articles of clothing

24:16 - Feelings on seeing these things - wanted to forget, sympathy for people, it could have been me or my family, would not talk about it for many years

28:00 - Words to children; stay in school, get involved in government, prevent dictatorship

32:55 - Did Austrians and Germans know what was happening? They said no, but Henry did not believe them. They had to know!