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PROGRAM The History Channel **BGT**
Interviews **NO.**
Howard Margol Tp 1A-1B

TP 1A

[OFF CAMERA COMMENTS]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well uh, uh, I have a twin brother uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

His name is Hilbert Margol, H-I-L-B-E-R-T. And uh, of course been twins growing up. [INAUDIBLE] Before fertility drugs or anything like that, we were a little bit more unique uh, than most brothers and uh, so, sometimes it came in very handy and sometimes uh, it uh, was a negative. Uh, came in handy when we were in our uh, dating days and I would call uh, a girl to take her out on a date and she couldn't make it and then I'd uh, call her house and find out she was over at Mary's house, who I just called and ask. So I couldn't call her back and ask her for a date because she uh, already told her that I had

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called so I would just call and uh, use my brother's name and tell I was Hilbert. And uh, she would accept and we would go out and uh, they never caught on and never knew the difference because when we were uh, I think when we were teenagers uh, even pictures, uh, pictures that we had taken together, uh, we can't tell ourselves, who is who in the picture. Uh, we could remember which one was standing on the right or on the left, that kind of thing but we were, we were pretty identical.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, the negative part was uh, exactly one day after school I was heading to football practice and a long arm of one of the teachers reached out and grabbed me and pulled me into the room and asked me where I was going. I told her I was going to football practice and she said you are supposed to stay after school for me today and I said uh, no that's, that's my twin brother, evidently. She said I've been teaching school for thirty years, I've heard that story many times so I had no choice but uh, to sit in her class and –

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

No. Because, because he went onto football practice. And then I had to explain to the coach why I missed football practice so sometimes it was uh, a, a real positive but on occasion it was a negative uh, being a twin.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, an older brother who is no longer living and I have a younger sister who's still living. She lives in Tampa, Florida.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, Bernice. Wolf. Her married name is Wolf.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well. Uh. My brother and I, uh, we managed to finish high school uh, a little early. We graduated in January 1942, uh, instead of the regular June graduating class. And uh, because we were, we knew, it wasn't a question of if we were going to service, it was just a matter of when. And so we wanted to get as much college as we possibly

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could. We were, uh, in our freshman year at the University of Florida in Gainesville, Florida, the army came along and said that uh, if we were to enlist in the Army Reserve, we would uh, they would let us finish college. Well you know, that was three more years to go so we said, well by that time, the war should certainly be over. Uh, so a lot of us enlisted in the Army Reserve and uh, four months later we were all called back to duty. So uh, I went into the Army at Camp [NAME UNCLEAR] in Florida, April third, uh, 1943.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

My brother at the same time, yes, we both went in together, mm-hmm.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Yes, well we were in Camp _____ only for uh, uh, a few days. Uh, and uh, then we were uh, sent to uh, Fort Brogue [PH], North Carolina, uh, where our basic training and uh, uh, for our totally close-entry support on uh, 105 millimeter houses, uh, because uh, we, we had gotten a

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year, uh, one year of ROTC at the University of Florida in
uh, horse-drawn artillery. Uh. And uh, when we finished
basic training, uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

No confusion because uh, everybody was just a number.
[CHUCKLES] But uh, so there was really no, no confusion.
Uh, uh, the uh, uh, while, when we finished basic training
in three months at Fort Brogue, my brother and I were
scheduled to go to do officer candidate schooling and
become ninety-day wonders. Second lieutenants because
of one year of uh, college ROTC. And uh, one of a lifelong
friend of ours in uh, Jacksonville, Florida, that we grew up
with, he was uh, already at Fort Brogue and uh, in
Jacksonville, he was a, in civilian life, he was a fishing
expert for a local sporting goods company. So when a
commanding general at Fort Brogue found out that uh, he
was a fishing expert, he had him put on his uh, personal
staff. Uh, so he could uh, go with the general whenever
the general felt like going fishing.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, Morris, Morris [NAME UNCLEAR].

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

And uh, so he spent the entire war at Fort Brogue taking the general fishing but uh, generally he told us that his job at uh, at Fort Brogue was to make up the orders for, uh, everybody finishing their basic training. And uh, we, we had a choice. We could go off to candidate school like we were schedule to, uh, but he said uh, at that time uh, second lieutenants, uh, as soon as they graduated from, uh, from OCS after ninety days, they were shipping right over to North Africa. And the carrying weight among second lieutenants was running about eighty percent. Uh, so he said instead of that, uh, he could uh, change the orders and sent us somewhere else and uh, he told us the army was just starting a uh, Army Service Training Program, they called it ASTP. And uh, he could have us go into that and we'd go back into college. Well that, again that sounded like a pretty good idea. So uh, we said okay and we ended up uh, going to the city, gone for three weeks, uh, from [NAME UNCLEAR], then they sent us to Syracuse University for a couple months and then the

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University of Illinois for a couple of months and uh, that's when the army decided they needed cannon fire far more than they needed college students. So we uh, [CLEARSTHROAT], that's when they separated us because they had tried to separate us a, a few times before after the five Sullivan brothers all went down the ship in the Pacific. They would not allowed brothers uh, to serve uh, in the same combat unit together. So anyway, they did separate us and my brother ended up in the 42nd Infantry Rainbow Division in Cangrue [PH], Oklahoma. And I ended up in the 104 Temburo [PH] Division uh, in the infantry uh, in the Mohajo desert. I had desert training and uh, then uh, the North Africa campaign ended so then they, they uh, moved us to Camp Carson [PH], Colorado for mountain training. And uh, all -

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh yes, we, we wanted to be together, I mean we had spent our entire lives up to that point being very close and uh, and together all the time. And uh, so, uh, I kept putting in a request for transfer to Cangrue, Oklahoma, to the 42nd Division and uh, then I found out that uh, uh, that my request for transfer was just going in the captain's trash

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can. So uh, uh, the company clerk told me that uh, my mother could write a letter to contact Roosevelt and request that the two of us be put together. Uh, but she couldn't request that I be transferred to uh, uh, the 42nd Infantry Division. My brother could end up uh, where I was in the infantry. So I uh, [CLEARS THROAT], anyway, I called my brother in Oklahoma and ran it by him and he said well, we got a fifty-fifty chance at it so go ahead and go with it, and I called my mother and told her what to do. She wrote a letter to President Roosevelt, and uh, about three or four weeks later, she received a, a, a, a, a letter in which batched from President Roosevelt and in which he said that uh, among other things, he said that uh, his military address shared by Ma-major general so-and-so would take care of the matter, and that was it. We still didn't who was going where well.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Oh the, yes, yes, the letter was signed and uh, well –

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

My twin, my twin brother still has the copy of the letter.

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The uh, [CLEARS THROAT], so another three or four weeks passed and uh, the captain called me into his office one morning and told me that a transfer had come through, transferring me to the 42nd Infantry Rainbow Division in Camgrue, Oklahoma and they wanted me to uh, refuse the transfer. And I, I told them sir, uh, I, I follow orders, whatever think army orders me to do, uh, I follow orders, And uh, and anyway, I ended up uh, I didn't know why he would want uh, me to refuse this transfer because I was a, really a nobody in the real ranks. I was not that important but I had been through all the uh, desert training and the mountain training in Colorado. And uh, I found out later that the 104 Tembuoro Division uh, was uh, shipping uh, over in three or four weeks and uh, uh, now I'm going to stay in it, I think none of the rear ranks knew about it that time, but uh, it was going to be the first America division to go straight from the United States to France without stopping in England first. And uh, they knew that anybody that was transferred out of the uh, division at that point would be produced by some poor kid, fresh out of basic training that really uh, had no experience other than uh, three months of basic training and uh, they didn't want to lose anybody, you know, that was already trained, uh, which was understandable. So. Anyway, um,

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I ended up uh, reporting to uh, my brothers about it and
uh about it being a 392nd field opportunity. And, and the
42nd Infantry Division in Camgrue, Oklahoma. And –

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh. Gee I don't remember the exact time. That was in uh,
in uh, 1944. Uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, it was uh, summertime.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well he wasn't there. [LAUGHS] He had, he had left uh,
the day before on a two-week furlow, and uh, here I walk
in and all the guys in the outfit uh, you know, the reaction
was Mark, oh, you left yesterday on a two-week furlow and
uh, you're back here today so you must be bucking for a
Section A discharge which means that I'm crazy. I told
them no, that was not me that left yesterday, that was my
twin brother that left yesterday. And they said now we
know you're bucking for a Section A discharge because uh,

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you're trying to prove that you, trying to, you're saying you had a twin brother uh, all along while you're trying to uh, uh, uh, get a discharge on the basis that you're crazy. And you know some of the guys they were, they were pretty rough, they said, lets step out behind the barracks and lets fight it out. They uh, they don't want any, uh, have anything to do with uh, anybody that was trying to get out of, going into combat or anything. Because my answer was I did so lets, lets save our fighting for when we really need to fight and no such reason in here uh, but uh, in return they gave me uh, uh, all kind of petty details and everything, everything that they could think of and uh. But [INAUDIBLE] and uh, and of course my brother returned two weeks later and uh, I've seen a, a lot of those guys at the army reunions afterwards and uh, they never apologized to me of course. [CHUCKLES] Uh, but uh. Uh, that's uh, a whole part of uh, being twins I guess, uh, uh, I don't know if this is X-rated or not but uh, I'll mention that uh, uh, my brother did make it up to me because uh, by that time he had a girlfriend in Tulsa, Oklahoma. And uh, so he would get a weekend pass and spend the weekend with his girlfriend in Tulsa. And Sunday evening he would tell her he is uh, going into town to get together and have a few beers with a few of his buddies from camp. He would

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meet me at the bus station, I would be coming in uh, from camp into Tulsa on a three-day pass and he would be going back to camp. So he would fill me in, tell me what movie they saw, what they did over the weekend and I would go to her house and spend the next three days with her. And uh. [LAUGHS] So. She never caught on, I'm sure she's still alive, she's still looking for that guy with all that stamina. [LAUGHS] But uh, so anyway, my brother did make it up to me so.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well um.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well we uh, we uh, in, in uh, December of uh 1944, uh, our division moved to uh, Ford Dixon [PH], Jersey. And uh we were there for uh, oh possibly, a week. And uh, then we uh, went overseas uh, on the uh, there's a uh, it was one of, one of the few regular troop ships, the *S.S. General Gordon*, uh, head of five thousand soldiers. And -

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

Um, that wasn't too good because uh, I was seasick most of the time. [CHUCKLES] First time in my life that I'd ever been on a ship. Uh, but a lot of the other guys were seasick as well. Uh, we went in a convoy and of course uh, uh, you know, certain times saw an excited uh, German submarine that kind of thing and uh, we could see that the, the destroyers uh, accompanying us dropping uh, death, death charges, things like that. But uh, uh, nothing really, really happened uh. Uh. We were in a convoy that had quite a few ships and it was pretty well protected.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

We landed in uh, Marseilles, France. And uh, uh, we were in Marseilles uh, for several weeks uh, cleaning uh, our guns, our _____, our carbines uh, living in little pop tents that were very cold, very windy. The army couldn't have found a more miserable place to put us. Uh, but uh -

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

1944.

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INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Right. And uh, unfortunately uh, they uh, sent our uh, infantry uh, regiment uh, on ahead of us. Uh. And uh, uh they, uh, told me that uh, there was a very light German force in, in front of the uh, empty regiments in front of us. And uh, um, uh, it wasn't true. Uh, it was some crack power, power troop German division, some other crack German divisions and uh, it was uh, more or less part of the Battle of the Bulge. It really received very little uh, notice, uh, because while the Battle of the Bulge was going on uh, north of there, uh, this was just south of Strasbourg, uh, France. Uh, so the Germans started a second offensive uh, layer, uh, and uh, that's' uh, when our infantry units had no alternative support because we were still uh, further back uh, cleaning our equipment. And uh, they, they got uh, they got clobbered pretty well. They, they lost a lot of men, killed and wounded and captured. But anyway, uh, of course then we, we uh, went up the Rhine river valley and uh, uh, went into [NAME UNCLEAR] and uh, [NAME UNCLEAR], France. And uh. We were actually on _____, then grew pretty quiet for about three weeks and then uh, that's when we uh,

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sort of kick, kicked off with, with a huge offense of uh,
along the entire track uh, of all the allowed uh, armies.
And uh, that was uh, that was in probably uh, um, uh,
mid-, uh, to late January of 1945. Uh, when we uh, when
we captured uh, dying Germany, uh, not too long after we
uh, entered Germany, after crossing the Rhine River, uh,
the 45 division was on our left. And the 36 uh, Texas
division was on our right. So we got um, squeezed out like
in a pincer movement because we were in the center. Uh,
so, the army decided that uh, that we'll let our division uh,
rest and re-equip and get resupplied and everything. Uh.
And we will remain there.

Well, uh, our, uh, Jewish chaplain uh, Rabbi, uh, Eli
Bonen [PH] uh, who incidentally was the highest-ranking
divisional chaplain in the entire United States army, he
was a captain and all of the other chaplains were uh, first
or second lieutenants. Uh, I attribute that to our
commanding general, our major general uh, Harry Collins,
uh, because his nickname was Hollywood Harry. Uh, he
was a real publicity hound and he never came up to the
front without uh, a full uh, compliment of uh, war
correspondents and combat photographers. Uh, uh,
anyway uh, that's why he wanted uh, Rabbi Bonen to be

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the highest ranking chaplain in the United States army, in the div-, at the division level. Anyway, Rabbi uh, Bonen uh, uh, looked at the calendar and saw that uh, in uh, a couple of days uh, it would be the first night of Passover. So uh, uh, with uh, General Collins' help, uh, Rabbi Bonen and uhm uh, uh, his Jeep driver went back uh, to France. Uh, they rounded up uh, French wine. Uh, they rounded up uh, f-fresh chickens. Uh, a lot of fresh food that uh, we were, we were not able to have. And uh, we had a, a uh, regular Passover _____. And Don Germany uh, had even planted a, a special Passover _____, uh, like a little prayer book. Uh, uh, for the occasion and uh, I still have my copy. It's one of the few copies, probably, that's left in the world. Anyway uh, it was uh, I mean very interesting because uh, aside from the fact we had fresh food it was held in a uh, former of German school building in the cafeteria.

And uh, they brought in uh, Jewish soldiers from not only from the 42nd division but from other units in the area. And we had about fifteen hundred uh, soldiers, at that Passover _____. And they made uh, German civilians uh, wait on us. Uh, the army cooks prepared the food, of course, but uh, the civilians had to wait on us and serve

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us the food. They had to clean up afterwards, uh, so uh, it, it really uh, uh, struck me uh, somewhat emotionally in the respect that, uh that was in uh, in late March. And uh, uh about oh I don't know, twenty-eight days or so later, uh, April 29, 1945, uh, we liberated uh, the concentration camp of Dakau. So. Uh, I felt that here uh, uh, uh, a few weeks before we were celebrating the liberation of the Jews from Egypt and here uh, a few weeks later we liberated the Jews that were in the concentration camp of Dakau. Uh, so from that standpoint uh, it was very meaningful to me.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

The, the uh, well uh, one morning on the morning of April 29, as I said, 1945, uh, our, our unit moved forward that morning. And then we uh, set up a new gun position, fired up a few firing emissions and uh, I could uh, there was a very strange in a very strong, very strong odor in, in the air. And uh, some of the guys said well there must be a

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chemical factory around here or some kind of uh. I said no, uh it's not chemicals. It reminds me when I was a kid and my mother would go to the uh, uh, the local meat market and buy fresh-killed chickens uh, because in those days we didn't have supermarkets or uh, pre-packaged food or anything like that. Uh, and uh, she would take the chicken and uh, and wave it over the gas flame on the gas stove in our kitchen uh, to, to singe off the pen feathers of the chicken. Because the chicken had been cleaned and uh, feathers plucked and everything, but there's still pen feathers. And in being so, invariably uh, burnt some of the skin of the chicken, and it would give off a, a very strong odor. Well that was the odor that, that smell that my brother smelled, uh, when we moved into this new uh, forward gun position. And a few minutes later, one of our Jeep drivers uh, came by the gun position and uh told my brother and I that uh, that there was a very strange camp nearby. And he thought we might uh, be interested in taking a look at it. So uh, we said how far is it? And he said well you just walk through the woods there for five minutes and you'll be there at the main gate of the camp.

Uh, so we did that and uh, that turned out to be the concentration camp of Dakau. Uh, the first thing I

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remember seeing was only, there was a railroad sighting uh, right near the camp and uh, it was maybe anywhere from uh, twenty-five to thirty-five or forty uh, railroad freight cars. And uh, some of the doors have already been opened uh, to, to the cars and uh, you could see piles of dead bodies inside the, the freight cars. And uh, uh I took a couple of pictures of uh, one of the freight cars uh, because that particular car, you could, the bodies are inside but uh, when they opened the doors, uh, there would be a couple bodies that were uh, leaning up against the door with the, the arm flopped out or leg flopped out so uh, it was uh, a pretty good picture to take. And I'm sure many, many other GIs took the same picture because uh, I donated the picture I had to Emory University uh, years ago, uh, and uh, uh, in the Holocaust Museum in Washington D.C., that same picture is there in five or six different places. And I'm not sure which picture I took, but obviously a lot of people took that same, that same picture.

Anyway uh, at one end of the camp uh, saw the barracks uh, there was uh, I didn't know how many but I was told later on there was about thirty-thousand inmates, uh, mostly Jews but not all Jews. Uh, uh, there were other nationalities uh, there as well. And uh, I saw the uh, the ovens. Uh, and that's

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when I realized uh, and, and knew uh, what the odor uh, smelled, of, of the, uh, when my mother used to singe the pen feathers uh, that was the same odor of the burning flesh from the ovens. Um, my brother and I didn't stay in the camp for very long, we were in the camp, I'd say altogether, thirty, forty minutes uh, because we wanted to get back to our gun position because uh, we didn't want to, to move out and our parents get a message that uh, their sons were missing in action. [CHUCKLES] Um.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Oh yes, that was uh, actually uh, uh, those uh, not what I would call real combat as far as liberating the camp. Uh, before uh, we arrived, the day before, uh, Vincent Maurer [PH] who was a Red Cross representative, managed to get into the uh, camp at Dakau. And uh, he told the S.S. common then that he had a choice, he told them the American army was not too far away and uh, he had a choice, he could either fight and he and his men would all be killed or uh, he could surrender the camp. So he decided to surrender the camp. So uh, uh, the following morning uh, as we were moving forward uh, we didn't know this of course, at the time. But uh, the surrendering

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of the camp took place uh, our assistant division commander uh, brigade general uh, Lyndon uh, accepted to surrender the camp from uh, S.S. Lieutenant Wricard [PH]. And uh, uh, there was not supposed to be any fighting, but as the, see we, uh, most of the time we were in combat uh, uh, uh, 392nd _____ Battalion, we supported the 222nd Infantry Regiment. And uh, so the 222nd Infantry Regiment several companies were the ones that uh, actually entered the camp uh, after the surrender. Uh, as they entered the camp uh, I was told by one of the uh, uh, infantry men that uh, two of the German soldiers in the, one of the guard towers opened fire on them while they uh, quickly uh, pulled back and then had no trouble taking care of the two uh, German soldiers in the guard tower. I don't know whether those two soldiers were foolhardy, or whether they had not received the word that the camp had actually been surrendered, I don't know. Uh, but uh, that was the extent of the fighting in the concentration camp itself.

Although there's a camp uh, next to the concentration camp uh, where the German soldiers uh, uh, uh, were, and where, where their bags were and everything. Uh, the 41 division uh, they, they were on our left most of the time,

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they were the ones that had actually went through that uh, camp. They uh, they did not actually uh, uh, go into the concentration camp itself. That was strictly the 42nd division and uh, General Lyndon, it has been in argument for years about who liberated Dakau. [CHUCKLES] And uh, well the 45 and the 42nd, well a few years ago, General Lyndon's son uh, who was also in the army, uh, he did extensive research on all the war department records and everything and uh, has composed a proof that the 42nd liberated Dakau concentration camp itself and the 45 division actually captured the uh, the camp next door to it which was the uh, was the German army camp and uh, and there was some uh, uh, some, a little bit of fighting took place there.

Uh, as far as uh, Dakau is concerned uh, a lot of people have asked me wasn't it a, a gut-wrenching experience and uh, extreme, very emotional to see uh, uh, the dead bodies the, the half-style people. I mean a lot of the, a lot of the uh, people, and particular the men were like skeletons. Uh. And I said no. It, it really uh, was not that emotional an experience for me simply because uh, we knew nothing about these camps. Uh, I didn't know whether uh, this was the only camp like it. I didn't know how long the

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camp had been there, I didn't know the history of the camp. Uh. I didn't know uh, whether there were other camps like it. Uh, I knew uh, I really knew nothing about the camp. I'm sure the, the generals and everything they knew uh, about these camps, but the average soldier knew uh, nothing about the camp and so we were not there to liberate camps. We were there to, to fight the German army and that's what we were doing. Uh.

So it was really uh, it was only uh, a few weeks later when I found out really what the, the, the Dakau uh, concentration camp was all about. Uh, that really understand uh, the whole picture, uh, so but that was several weeks later, uh that Apr-April 29, 1945 and uh, the war ended on May 8, 1945. So um, more, a more emotional experience for me personally was, uh, later on while we were on occupational duty in Austria, we were in [NAME UNCLEAR], Austria and we were ordered to uh, pick up uh, several thousand Jews who had uh, recently come out of a concentration camp and transport them to uh, the Austrian Alps. Uh, [NAME UNCLEAR] and [NAME UNCLEAR], uh, two of the finest uh, resort centers in Europe before World War II. And uh, so uh, one more and then we loaded up uh, uh, several thousand Jews and a,

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and a whole convoy of army trucks. And we were um, driving most of the day and uh, late that afternoon, uh, all of a sudden throughout the entire convoy we heard uh, all kinds of screaming and hollering going on. Well all the trucks stopped to find out what the problem was.

Well uh, the leaders of the uh, group of Jews said that it was Friday uh, the sun was going down, particularly in the Austrian Alps in the afternoon the sun went down uh, early. Uh, the sun was going down and the Sabbath would start. Uh, they would not travel on the Sabbath. So uh, those of us who uh, we're, uh, Jewish soldiers, we told them we understand but another twenty minutes or so we'll have them in uh, in very fine hotels with uh, uh, hot baths and uh, and uh, hot food and all the comforts and everything and uh, so wait until then and then another twenty minutes or so and uh, they refused to go, so uh, they just sat down on the side of the road and the army brought out blankets and uh, uh kitchens and uh, managed to fix uh, food for them and everything, and they remained there Friday night and all day Saturday and when the sun went down Saturday, they got back in the trucks and we took them uh, uh, uh, the rest of the way.

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INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Yes. Yes. I'm sure it was. Yeah.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Right.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Right.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Right and you know, so to me that was a more emotional experience than entering Dakau because I felt that at least in the case of these Jews, one of the things that uh, probably helped them to survive was the fact that they had something to hold on to. They held onto their beliefs and

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uh, and that was something that uh, evidently gave them strength to, to hold on. And uh, it uh, it turned out very good because uh, uh, uh, later on, uh, Rabbi Bonen, our, our uh, chaplain set up uh, a school's phone uh, to teach those who wanted to learn English and other things that, whatever we could do to start preparing them for a return to civilian life. Uh. So anyway uh, that was my experience as far as Dakau uh, and, and the later event uh, in my opinion uh, was more emotional uh, to me than, than Dakau itself.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well. Uh. From Dakau we moved south to Munich and we captured Munich uh, a few days later. And uh, then we were still proceeding south and then I set home May eighth when the war ended. Uh, our division was ordered to uh, seal off the border between Germany and Austria uh, south of Munich, because the word was that uh, a lot of the uh, Nazi officials, S.S. and everything uh, were going to try to make it into Austria and uh, set up a uh, defense or whatever they could do there. So we sealed off the border at a town called Cushtan [PH] which uh, that was where the main railroad line uh, coming from uh, Italy into

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Austria and, and then onto uh, Germany had to come through, so uh, we uh, spent some time there uh, uh, checking everybody, going back and forth across the border and trying to find out uh, who they were and so forth and uh, and uh, also uh, making arrangements uh, to get them back to where they originally came from if, if that's what they want to do.

Uh, for instance in that area of Austria there were salt mines. And uh, the Germans had uh, uh, put a lot of uh, thousands of slave laborers from all over Europe and Russia uh, working in those salt mines making uh, small arms, ammunition, things like that because uh, the Allied uh, forces, uh, could have bombed those salt mines all day long and nothing would bother them because they were deep underground. Uh, so these people, all nationalities uh, from all over Europe uh, I don't say uh, not, not Jews because they were all, had been put in the, in the camps. Uh, but these slave laborers were I'd say Russians and Norwegians uh, Danish, uh, Belgium uh, French uh, you name it, just from all over, all over Europe uh, that, so we spent time doing that.

And then uh, later on was when we moved to uh, Salzburg

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[PH] uh because Salzburg became the uh, headquarters for the American occupation uh, district of Austria. Uh. After that uh, we spent time I'd say uh, doing occupation duty uh, doing such things as uh, for instance uh, outside of Salzburg there was a former German army camp that uh, the army took over, American army took over of course, and uh, turned it into a uh, displacement camp. A D.P. camp. And uh, uh, I guess it was maybe five thousand uh, displaced persons uh, in that camp. Uh, some Jews and none Jews uh, and that's when they were being uh, arrangements made for them to leave and go to wherever they were going to go to but uh, we would uh, uh, take uh, uh, groups of German soldiers and uh, we would treat them as prisoners of war. And uh, we would take them out in uh, into the woods and have them uh, uh, cut down trees, chop up the trees for firewood because uh, uh, you know the, the uh, the civilians as well as the American army, we, we had to have uh, heat for the wintertime. Uh, that was of course the uh, winter of 1945, uh, 1946.

So uh, uh, we, everyday we would take uh, uh, I'd say each of us, each soldier would have ten German prisoners and uh, they were under our command and we would just take them up into the woods and have them cut down uh, trees and cut up for

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firewood, and then we would uh, distribute the firewood amongst the civilian population as well as for army use, and then that type of thing. Uh. We, we uh, personally uh, my unit, a little bit of monastery just outside of uh, Salzburg, an old monastery that was built in probably the 1500s. And nothing had changed since the 1500s on that monastery, I can assure you. [CHUCKLES] Uh. And uh, and –

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well Salzburg was a very uh, pretty city. Uh, it was really not touched by the woods as far as any uh, destruction was concerned. It uh, [CLEARS THROAT], the um, and the center of Salzburg uh, there's a small uh, mountain like a hill. On top of the hill is a uh, castle that was built hundreds of years ago. And uh, at the bottom of that hill uh, there was a small uh, church and a cemetery. And in the cemetery is buried all of the uh, all or most of the former _____ of uh, Salzburg district going back uh, all the way to the uh, eleven, twelve hundreds. And uh, when General Collins our general command, uh, our, uh division commander, when he died, he left in his will that he wanted to be buried in that cemetery uh because uh,

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the occupation of the Salzburg district by the American military lasted ten years. And general Collins uh, he was uh, head, he was a ruler so to speak of the Salzburg district for ten years, so uh, that gave him a place uh, along with all the other previous leaders of the Salzburg district going back uh, for centuries. Many centuries. So uh, that's why he wanted to be buried there. And uh, he is buried there.

And uh, uh the first time uh, my brother and I went back to Salzburg uh, many years later, we had no trouble finding his grave uh, because uh, his grave was uh, located at the uh, the main intersection of the main paths going through the uh, cemetery. And uh, above his grave was a, an eternal flame uh, on, and uh, uh, I mean it was an outstanding burial plot. You, you couldn't miss it from uh, a hundred yards away. But that was why we called him Hollywood Harry. [CHUCKLES] Um. In nineteen, uh, April, late March I should say, or sometime in March of 1946, that's when my brother and I received letters that uh, to get back to uh, the United States and uh, and be discharged. So uh, we uh, we went uh, joined the 83rd uh, Infantry Division to, to come home with them. Uh, we went to uh, [NAME UNCLEAR] in Germany and then uh,

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came back home on the uh, uh, uh, an *S.S. Marinaska*
[PH]. It was a liberty ship. And uh. That was my second
uh, trip on a, on a ship and uh, again uh, we had North
Atlantic storms uh, for the entire ten days of the trip. We
were all seasick the whole time, so after a while I vowed
uh, I wouldn't go on another cruise and I've stuck to that
all these years. Uh. But we were discharged at uh, Fort
Brogue on April 6, 1946. After that uh, my brother and I
returned to uh, the University of Florida uh, to finish
college and get our degree which we did.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well um -

END OF TP 1A

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TP 1B

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well she, she well, the both of us because we were side by side, I, I was in uh, in uh, uh, in uh, B Battery and my brother was in C Battery and our gun positions were maybe twenty-five yards apart. So she would um, send one letter um, to both of us, um, she uh, uh, uh, would send us uh, uh, food, and uh, uh, she would go to in those days in Jacksonville at the farmers' market, uh, they had a uh, canning facility, where you could go there, buy uh, fresh vegetables and things like that and uh, and, and, and actually cook them and can them. Um, so she would send us cans of food and uh, it was also a, a welcomed package when we would get a package from home and it was uh, cans of uh, food or uh, uh, or cookies, things like that. And of course naturally we were pretty popular with the, with the rest of the guys. Uh. Uh. I uh, and not too long after we went into combat uh, I liberated uh, uh, a camera. [CHUCKLES] Uh, we were allowed to uh, liberate cameras, guns, uh, anything into nature. I uh, we were told the idea was that uh, if the Germans had a camera uh, they might use that camera to photograph American

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troops uh, their gun positions or whatever. And we were allowed to um, to, to take them over.

So I did liberate a uh, a little [NAME UNCLEAR] camera. And I did take a lot of pictures while we were in combat. Uh, unfortunately uh, well I, I made a big mistake later on uh, and in all my letters home I would uh, I couldn't send a picture but I would describe uh, where we were at and, and uh, like picture number one was so and so, picture number two was so and so, a description of every single picture that I took. Uh, and then uh, after the war ended I got all my rolls of films processed in, in Austria. And uh, when I got, and I sent out, then I sent those pictures all home. Well when I got home, my younger had uh, created a scrapbook. And she put all the pictures in the scrapbook, and beneath each picture she cut out the portion of my letter explaining uh, the picture, who it's about. What uh, the date the picture was taken and, and an inscription of what it was. Well I took one look at it and I realized she got a lot of that stuff out of sequence. Uh, I'm going to rearrange the whole thing, put it in the proper sequence. So I took all the pictures out, I took all the explanations out. Uh.

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To this day I have, I still have the pictures but I don't know whatever happened to the explanations, I don't know whatever happened to the negatives uh, because the pictures were very, very small. They were like um, oh, maybe two by four. And if I still had the negatives, I could have had them enlarged and, and made a uh, a good picture out of it. But I mean I still have the, all the pictures I took but uh, a lot of it I don't remember myself uh, what the event was or, or where we were or, or that kind of thing. Um. After uh, like I said, after the war and we got back, my brother and I, like I said, we were discharged and went back to the University of Florida. We, we uh, completed our education and uh, while we were going to uh -

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Yes. Uh. Fortunately we were able to go to school on the G.I. Bill because our parents could never have afforded to uh, give us a college education.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, we majored in uh, we both majored in accounting. Uh, even though we, we really didn't plan on becoming CPAs after we graduated because uh, we had an older brother uh, Melvin. Uh, who was _____ uh, during the war. He was not physically fit because of uh, some surgery he had had before he got drafted and the army turned him down. Uh, anyway he had started a business in Jacksonville so uh, my brother and I uh, during the summer we would uh, work with him in the business and uh, some weekends we'd come home from college and work with him in the business so, we knew that when we graduated in 1948, we had a business already established that uh, we were going to go into. So. Uh. But we felt that uh, learning uh, uh, accounting and business law and all the subjects that went with it, uh, would uh, uh, really be an advantage for us, uh, in business and it turned out that way. Uh, and uh, [CLEARS THROAT].

A few weeks after I got uh, discharged from the army uh, I looked at my little black book of all my dates and everything I'd had uh, in the real life and uh, it was pretty outdated. [CHUCKLES] In fact it was almost worthless. So, but a good friend of mine in Jacksonville who I grown

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up with uh, told me that uh, my fraternity in the University of Florida that uh, that a member of before I went in the service uh, was having a spring dance in Jacksonville in a few weeks. And well I don't know anybody to, to invite to the dance. Uh, well, there was a girl in Violessa [PH], Georgia that uh, he thinks I would like. And uh, and what that resulted in is he uh, fixed us up with a blind date and uh, uh the result is uh, uh, we uh, in June we celebrated our fifty-fifth wedding anniversary.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Thank you. Pi Lambda Phi. [CHUCKLES]

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, Esther uh, Landy [PH].

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well uh. It took a few days after that but uh, it sort of went that way and uh...

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INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh she was going to uh, well at that time it was Violessa State uh, for women. Or Violessa College for women and today it's Violessa State. And uh, her parents owned uh, at least her mother, her father died when she was eight years old but uh, her mother owned a grocery store in Violessa, a small grocery store. And her mother couldn't afford to send her to the University of Georgia where all the other kids were going so she had to stay home uh, but she went and graduated from Violessa College for Women.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

My wedding date? Uh, June uh, 28, 1946. I graduated the first part of June and uh, three weeks later we got married.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Pardon?

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

We were married in Violessa yes, but we lived in
Jacksonville and then uh...

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, we have four children.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, the oldest son is Bruce and then Gary and then our
daughter Felice, and our youngest son is Maury.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh, we have nine grandchildren and fortunately for us, all
of our children and all of our grandchildren live in Atlanta.
So we, we're very fortunate in that respect.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh we uh, uh, hoping the furniture business in
Jacksonville and then we uh, became partners with uh,
two brothers from Ohio that we knew. And so we start

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expanding. Uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

My twin brother and my older brother, we were in business together. And uh, so anyway we, we had a uh, a location uh, here in Atlanta that's called Giant Furniture Warehouse uh, we were the first uh, discount furniture warehouse uh, to exist in uh, in Atlanta. And uh, it was uh, in fact it was on the corner of Maryola [PH] Street and Alexander Street. It, it's a big warehouse we had built and it's still there today. And I think today they use it for record storage. In any event, uh, we had a partner and we were not satisfied with uh, uh, the results from the partner, so uh, we bought out the partner and one of us, either me or my brother, uh, one of my brothers or myself had to move to Atlanta. Uh, we flipped a coin and I lost. [CHUCKLES] So I moved to Atlanta. And uh, quite frankly, the first five years in Atlanta I had one foot in Atlanta and one foot back in Jacksonville. Uh, I felt that it was temporary but after five years I had decided uh, Atlanta would be my home and I, I wouldn't, never have lived anywhere else and I've been, been here ever since.

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INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Giant Furniture Warehouse. Yes.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Right.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Well, uh, we were very successful in, in, in uh that location and uh, we did a, a, had a very successful business there but then the neighborhood changed. Uh, uh, Maryola Street, particularly in that area uh, started uh, being downgraded. It became uh, somewhat dangerous. Uh, and uh, so uh, we uh, plus our business conditions changed. And uh, so we closed that location and uh, opened up uh, sleep shops, called Royal Mattress. And uh, we had sleep shops uh, Royal Mattress Sleep Shops here in Atlanta, oh, oh I'm sorry, before that there was Furniture City. We opened Furniture City and I don't know uh, if anyone of you uh, remember but uh, we used to do a lot of advertising on uh, channel seventeen, when

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Ted Turner owned channel seventeen and nothing else.
And uh, we used to make a lot of our commercials uh,
channel seventeen there on uh, West Pastry [PH] Street.
And uh, uh, being twins uh, uh, that was uh, we tied being
twins into our uh, commercials. And uh. [SMACKS LIPS]
For instance uh, we would uh, give away uh, if you buy
uh, a three room uh, suite of furniture uh, like a stove or a
refrigerator, uh, living room suit or a bedroom suit, uh, we
would give away a free pony. Actually a Chetlin [PH] pony
or uh, free electric guitars were very popular in those days.
Uh, uh, we gave away free cars, used cars.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Uh. This was in the sixties, uh, mostly the sixties, yes.
And uh -

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Our, our theme song, song was *Mama Got Two for the Price
of One and So Can You*, that was our theme song. And uh,
Ted Turner used to come out of his office and watch us
make our commercials [CHUCKLES] and uh, he always
told us that uh, he liked them because they were real

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hooky. [LAUGHS] That was the term he used. And uh, anyway uh, that was uh, very successful for a while and uh, you know, one funny incident I remember about that, uh, my brother and I were in uh, in uh, Houston, Texas one day. Uh, we were at a factory there in Houston. And uh, uh all of a sudden the uh manager of the factory said uh, he excused himself, uh, uh, a whole group of, of, of workers in the factory. It looked like they were on strike or something. I mean it was a big commotion going on so he went over and he, he uh spent five or ten minutes with a group of uh, employees. And they came back to us, he was laughing and we said uh, what's the problem? He said, no problem. He said uh, you and your brother being on television because we were on location in Houston, Texas, and our commercials used to show in Houston. And they were all excited to hear these television stars were there, you see. [LAUGHS] So. But, so shut the factory down for about an hour. Uh. [OVERLAPPING VOICES]

And some of, some of our commercials we used to make them at uh, channel seventeen. We also made them at uh, channel twelve in Jacksonville. And channel twelve in Jacksonville uh, did all of the filming uh, at Cape Carnival [PH] uh, from NASA, uh, when the rockets would go up

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and the space shuttles and everything would go up so uh, uh, they uh, one of our uh, commercials that we made uh, was selected by a television station in uh, in, or in a newspaper, whatever it was in Cincinnati, Ohio one year. Uh, our top, our commercial got the turkey of the year award. Uh, well it wasn't too bad because uh, the three other commercials that got the turkey of the year award were all uh, national commercials from uh, very large companies, so we felt we were in, we were in good company. And anyway, uh, channel twelve in Jacksonville had put the plaque we received as uh, uh, the turkey of the year commercial, they put it on the wall along with all these plaques they had received from NASA for all these space shots and everything. [CHUCKLES] So, oh well we, we felt pretty good about that but uh.

Anyway then uh, our, uh, uh, business conditions changed again and uh, because Furniture City we were still in, in uh, pretty much a general furniture. Uh. But then uh, as they, uh, and then Lovett's [PH] Furniture opened up in Atlanta. And uh, uh, so I'll say that uh, business conditions changed until we felt, we always felt that uh, we had to change uh, along with uh, changes in the marketplace. So that's when we change from full around

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furniture to sleep shops. And that's when we opened up
uh, uh, Royal Mattress.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

No. Uh, uh, and again uh, uh, things change. In 1973,
uh, when we had the uh, uh, the Depression a, a big
recession in this country with the uh, with the oil shortage
and everything that went with it, um, uh, we were looking
for ways to increase our sales volume because our sales
volume was uh, going down. And uh, one thing we saw
was the farmers, uh, particular in South Georgia. Uh,
selling, uh, selling their cattle, uh, their cows to the
slaughterhouse and then the meat would end up in the
supermarket and the farmer saw that the price people had
to pay in a supermarket was far higher than what they
ever received for their cows in the first place, uh, they
started slaughtering their cows locally and selling the meat
uh, off the back end of the pick up truck. So when we saw
that we said well, why don't' we do the same thing except
we'll do it with mattresses. So uh, as an experiment we
uh, ran a weekend ad in Jacksonville, Florida. We ran it at
the Holiday Inn ballroom. In the ballroom we had six
different sets of um, mattress and boxed springs on

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display. On the, outside on the parking lot, uh, we had a trailer load of mattress and boxed spring sets uh, in a trailer, from the factory. Uh, we put an ad in the paper on Friday, and the sale was going to be on Saturday and Sunday. Uh, we opened uh, nine o'clock Saturday morning but by about two o'clock on Saturday afternoon we were completely sold out. Um, we were just overwhelmed, people would come in the showroom, pick out the mattress they want. They would pay for it, we would give them a receipt, they would go out to the truck. And uh, the truck driver would load the mattress and boxed spring in, in their station wagon or tie it on top of their vehicle, and away they would go. It was all cash and [INAUDIBLE]. Uh. We uh, we did accept uh, well that was the first time so we accepted cash or personal checks.

And after that we, we went national we set up uh, credit cards, we took credit cards and uh, and uh, did it on a national basis. And then uh, evolved from that, we uh, we, uh, set up uh permanent warehouse locations. And that was uh, nationwide furniture and warehouse. And uh, at one point when I retired uh, about uh, ten or eleven years ago uh, we had uh, uh forty-two locations on the East Coast from Miami up to Trenton, New Jersey. Uh, my twin

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brother and I, my older brother was no longer living. And uh, we had uh, uh, sons of our former business partner from Ohio who was no longer living, unfortunately, he, he, he died at the age of thirty-six from cancer. But uh, hey well we were uh, his sons uh, had the same identical business we had. Same name, same everything, we brought from the same manufacturers. Uh, you could go in their location and, and it'd be identical to our location. You wouldn't know uh, uh, which was which. Well they, we covered the eastern sea, they covered uh, the Midwest and uh, out west and uh, anyway uh, uh, I worked hard, I had uh, December 7, 1989, which uh, was a, a, a pretty important day on the account of December 7. I had emergency triple bypass heart surgery and uh, that's when I started thinking of retiring and uh, also I got a little guilty telling my wife, honey we want to just open a couple more locations this year and then I'm going to start taking things easy and spend more time with her and, and our kids and everything. Uh. So well I, I, I said well, it's time to smell the roses so I retired and had no regrets, haven't missed the furniture business at all.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

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HOWARD MARGOL

Well let me say this. Uh. I would not want to go through again what I went through, but I would not give anything in the world for having had the experience. I would not want any of my children or grandchildren uh, to have to go to war and go in combat. Uh, but uh, as far as I'm concerned uh, it was, it was just a fantastic experience. I mean before I went in the army, I'd never even seen snow before. Uh, never had a cup of coffee in my life. Uh.

INTERVIEWER

[QUESTION]

HOWARD MARGOL

Never been on a boat in my life. Uh, but so I say it was a, it was a wonderful experience, uh, it, it probably uh, uh... it matured me a little uh, quicker uh, than I really uh, matured otherwise. Uh. I saw you know, uh, all different uh, types of wife because uh, just because a guy went into the army uh, didn't change him that much from what he was like in civilian life. Uh, if he was involved in criminal activities in civilian life, uh, he was involved in criminal activities uh, in the army. The army didn't change him to that extent. Uh, uh, one kid in my, in my uh, unit, uh while we were on occupation duty, just as an example uh, suddenly uh, houses we lived in uh, local houses and uh,

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uh, some of the houses were on fire. Uh, every other day, another house would uh, be on fire and uh, the army finally uh, pinned it down to this uh, kid in my _____, uh, he was setting the fires. He was a fire bug. Uh, what did he do in civilian life? He was a member of the fire department in Newport [NAME UNCLEAR], Virginia. So you know, no telling what he might have done. He might have set fires so the fire department, he'd go out and put the fire out. You know, you don't know so, the point I'm making is, I, I, uh, I experienced uh, all walks of life. All type, all types of people uh, and uh, uh, uh, I'd give nothing lets say for uh, having had experience but uh, wouldn't want to go through it again. As far as uh, going out to save the world, uh, none of us were Don Quixote on uh, chasing windmills. Uh, we, we uh did what we did uh, because it was something we had to do. Uh, uh, we, you know we, we knew and heard about uh, little things going on and uh, we had seen uh movies. Uh, news reels in those days, you know, when you went to the movie theater, they always showed five or ten minutes of the latest news reel, uh, as a, as a film clip and that kind of thing.

So uh, well you know, we knew about all those things but uh, we didn't know about the, the camps. You know, lets

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face it, there was Jews, particularly uh, in Europe that uh, could have left and they didn't leave. They said well you know, nothing's going to happen. I mean you know, I was in the German army in World War I and Hitler would never do anything to a former soldier in the German army. Well they were wrong, of course, you know. Uh, but uh, so uh, I don't think any of us sought out to save the world. Uh, but uh, after it was all over with, I think we all felt really good at what we had done and, and uh, even though, you know, a lot of, a lot of men were lost and uh, a lot of mistakes were made, uh, uh, you know, but in combat situations uh, who knows? Uh, uh, it's just one experience I might mention uh, when uh, we were fighting in uh, Richburg [PH], Germany, uh, we were on the west side of the river of the, of the Main River, M-A-I-N. Uh, and uh, the Germans were still on the east side of the river. The uh, [CLEARS THROAT], uh, several of our uh, infantry companies managed to cross the river under heavy fire, and uh, they captured two German soldiers and two of the guys, uh, two American soldiers were ordered to take those two prisoners back across the river, uh, for interrogation. Well they got down to the bank of the river and the two GIs said, you know, we came, we crossed the river under heavy German fire and we made it across. Uh, we're not going

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across that river back. And uh, and risk getting killed crossing back and forth the river, so uh, they shot the two German prisoners, and dumped their bodies in the river. Uh, I didn't experience that personally. This is what you know a couple of the infantrymen told me, uh, the point I'm making is uh, a lot of things happened in in combat, uh—

[NOTE: SEGMENT OF AUDIO MISSING
DUE TO TWO-SIDED CASSETTE—A & B
SIDES OVERLAP IN UNINTELLIGIBLE
MIX—MISSING SEGMENT IS BRIEF]

—uh, so, you know, uh, all the times in combat was, uh, is not a hair-raising experience, uh, uh, there was times when, uh, we could, uh, have a little, uh, levity, uh—
When we captured Wertsburg [PH], the section of the city that we went through, uh, was evidently the, uh, the wealthy residential area of the, of the city because every house we went into, uh, had a well-stocked wine cellar, uh, music rooms, uh, with a grand piano in the room and that kinda thing. Anyway we, we decided that, uh, uh, the water, uh, the, the five-gallon water cans we had filled with water, for us to drink and for us to use to swab out the

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gun powder in our, our carbines and our, our .105 millimeter Howitzers, we decided that the, uh, wine, and everything, uh, in the, in the wine cellars would do a much better cleaning job. And we certainly could, uh, would rather drink the wine and the champagne rather than drinking water with chlorine, uh, tablets in it which tasted awful. So we loaded up our trucks with lots of wine, lots of champagne, and, uh, so...uh, about two days later, uh, if the Germans would've, uh, attacked, we'd have been in pretty sad shape because, uh, I think most of the guys in, in the outfit except my brother and I were drunk.

[LAUGHS] Uh, and, uh, the, uh, our truck was chasing Lieutenant Davis, uh, with his .45 pointed in his direction.

[LAUGHS] And, uh... [LAUGHS] So, uh, it wasn't, I say, sometimes in combat you did have an opportunity to, uh, have and plays— play, uh, fun and games so to speak. But, and we were right, the, the wine and the champagne did a much better cleaning job. [LAUGHS]

No, no, we used until—until it all gave out, in fact, uh, when, when, when we had, uh, finished drinking everything, it took a few days, uh, we were out but we heard that on the mess truck... Our mess truck would come up every few days, and, uh, and cook some hot food

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for us. Uh, in between we had C rations and K rations. So, uh, we found out that, uh, there was a couple cases of wine still on the mess truck. So, uh, that night, uh, one of the other guys and myself, we crawled underneath the mess truck. And on, on those, uh, Army trucks, uh, in the floorboard, there were several metal plates. And, uh, you could un...undo the screws and, uh, remove those metal plates that they had to, uh, get, uh, underneath to repair something or whatever so anyway we crawled under the mess truck and, we managed to remove one of those metal plates, and we managed to have a large enough opening where we removed two cases of wine, and, uh, and of course I'm sure—

Right, right, pure— [LAUGHS] Right. The mess sergeant never found out what happened to those two cases of wine, but... [LAUGHTER] You know, another funny incident that, uh, I would just mention briefly, uh, some mornings or...we were, uh, we would, uh...have a couple of guys volunteer to go out and scrounge around to try and find food. 'Cause, uh, we were mainly in Bavaria, which was, um, a farming com—area. And there was a lotta farm, farmhouses around and everything. Uh, so, we would scrounge around for food, uh, which was much better than

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our C rations or our Kat—K rations, which was, you know, packaged food and soluble coffee and stuff like that. Uh, so anyway, uh, one morning, uh, one of the other guys and myself, it was our turn to go out and scrounge around for food so, uh, we went to a farmhouse, maybe a half a mile away from our gun position. And, uh, the only one in the farmhouse was this German frau. And we told her we wanted some food so she took us down in the cellar. And in the cellar they had all these, uh, smoked hams and everything hanging up. 'Cause the cellar, they had no refrigeration in those days but the cellars were always very cool and, uh, and that was their refrigerator. So, uh, anyway, so we, we picked out a couple very nice large smoked hams and, uh, and then, she had this, a tremendous bowl of eggs, 'cause she had some chickens, laying eggs and, uh, so, she took a small bowl and she put about two dozen eggs in the small bowl and that left, oh, I don't know, about six, eight, ten dozen eggs in this huge bowl. So, she handed the small bowl to the buddy and...I was holding the hams and he took the bowl of eggs so, he told her danke schoen, thank you, he put the small bowl down, he picked up the big bowl, and, and out we went. [LAUGHS] So, course she...didn't have a happy look on her face. But, we had a lot more people to feed than she

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did. Uh, so that morning for breakfast we, we had fresh ham and eggs— [LAUGHS] Which, uh...uh, one other incident, uh—

Okay, one other incident, uh, while we were in combat, at one point in time, uh, General Patton's Third Army was getting all of the gasoline and all the ammunition. We were in the Seventh Army and, uh, we weren't getting, uh, resupplied. Well, we were, we were getting low on gasoline and, and low on ammunition and we thought we were just as deserving as, uh, as General Patton was and we needed it as bad as he needed it. So, uh, we took some of our trucks and, uh, painted out the Seventh Army and changed the seven to a three. And it was the Third Army and our trucks went over to the, uh, supply depot for the Third Army and loaded up with gasoline and ammunition and came back so then we were well-supplied so, uh— [LAUGHS] Some days you had to do that.

END TP 1B