

T. Harry Williams Center for Oral History Collection

ABSTRACT

INTERVIEWEE NAME: Ronald D. Posey

COLLECTION: 4700.0976

IDENTIFICATION: Vietnam veteran

INTERVIEWER: Dudley R. Meier, Jr.

SERIES: Americans in Vietnam

INTERVIEW DATE: 5/12/75

FOCUS DATES: March 19, 1968-April 13, 1970; Oct. 13, 1968-Aug. 18, 1969

ABSTRACT:

Tape 1425, Side A

Born in Philadelphia, Mississippi; conservative, law-abiding upbringing; education; drafted in March, 1968, right out of college; looked upon his service as an adventure; basic training at Fort Polk, LA; didn't expect to get infantry position; military discouraged individualism; arrival in Vietnam; terror of being maimed; fighting guerilla war against Viet Cong, no front lines; WWII was a more clear cut war; back in college now; poor American military leaders in Vietnam; Hamburger Hill; expendability of soldiers; military doesn't tell you reasons for its actions; description of battle of Hamburger Hill, site, weaponry; strategy at Hamburger Hill; realized what a mess US was making in Vietnam; Vietnam is a beautiful country, but less beautiful after 20 years of war; worked as door gunner; worked on supply ship; description of pilots; respected bravery of pilots; importance of helicopters in Vietnam war; intelligent people in military; Medevac pilots; weaponry in Vietnam, preferences in rifles; effectiveness of gunships; opinion of ARVNs; ARVNs left fighting to Americans; war could have been over much sooner.

Tape 1425, Side B

Had little contact with black market; prevalence of prostitution, prices; families forcing daughters into prostitution; marijuana use among enlisted men and officers; military waste ; envied people that had better jobs than him in military; "mad minutes; "test firing weapon for entertainment; Vietnamese military was very wasteful; contact with higher ranking officers; impressions of Vietnamese people; US damaged a lot of Vietnam, Vietnamese rightfully resented US; majority of Vietnamese are primitive, don't care about ideologies; ignorance can lead to dictatorships; travels in Vietnam, R&R; children in Vietnam, not much education; saw girl killed by land mine; never went to Saigon; American bases he visited in Vietnam, amenities; didn't know if US in Vietnam was right or wrong, didn't care; believed that fighting war was just the American way of life; Vietnamese were just as confused as him, but they had a purpose; Communism will be good for Vietnamese; no longer believes US needed to be in Vietnam; would never choose to return to military; got news of anti war demonstrations while in Vietnam; no one tried hard to win war, just went through motions of fighting; North Vietnamese Army

superior to South Vietnamese; NVA were outstanding soldiers; Viet Cong; NVA were perfectly willing to die; Vietnamese didn't understand democracy; Vietnamese orphans; refugees are a leech on America; advantages of Communism to Vietnamese; doesn't expect Communists to conduct mass slaughter; Vietnamese aren't interested in their leadership in Saigon; speculation on future of Southeast Asia; simple desires of Vietnamese peasants; people don't know good from bad in Vietnam, Communism will help them.

TAPES: 1 (T1425)

TOTAL PLAYING TIME: 1 hour, 30 minutes

PAGES INDEX: 3 pages

RESTRICTIONS: None