

**Wisconsin Veterans Museum
Research Center**

Transcript of an
Oral History Interview with
ANTON MILLER
Sergeant 1st Class, Army National Guard, Korea

2002

OH
7

OH
7

Anton Miller, (b. 1931) Oral History Interview, 2002

Master: 1 video recording (ca. 35 min.); ½ inch, color.

User: 1 audio cassette (ca. 35 min.); analog, 1 7/8 ips, mono.

Abstract:

Anton Miller is North Dakota native who moved to Wisconsin to start a family after fighting in the Korean War with the U.S. Army National Guard out of North Dakota. He describes a tedious hillside combat situation that unfolded for him, and dozens of men under his command, throughout his one-year deployment. He talks about the patrols, the hospital care and the food. He also talks about coming back to the United States to be discharged from the military at Camp Carson in Colorado before working in the oil and logging industries. Miller went on to earn a degree from the University of Wisconsin at Eau Claire and retired as a school teacher who had worked in Chippewa Falls and Sun Prairie. He has three children and two grandchildren.

Biographical Sketch:

Miller was born in Dickinson, North Dakota, in 1931. He joined the National Guard in 1949, was activated in 1950 and deployed as a combat leader to an area known as Hill 3-5-5 in the warzone of the Korean conflict. He left the military in 1951 as a Sergeant 1st Class.

Interviewed by James McIntosh, 2002

Transcribed by Matthew Flunker, 2012

Reviewed and Corrected by Amanda Axel, 2012

Abstract by David Hunt, 2015.

Interview Transcript:

McIntosh: Okay, the date is 11th of April, 2002, talking to Anton Miller. Where were you born, sir?

Miller: I was born in Dickinson, North Dakota.

McIntosh: Dickinson?

Miller: Yeah, in North Dakota.

McIntosh: And when was that?

Miller: 1931.

McIntosh: And when did you enter the military?

Miller: Uh, it was the National Guard.

McIntosh: Oh, when did you join that?

Miller: I joined that when I musta been 17 or something like that. I must of, well let me see, it would be, 19, probably, 1949 or '50. I joined the National Guard.

McIntosh: 1949.

Miller: It was the Viking Division. That's what it was.

McIntosh: The North Dakota National Guard?

Miller: Yeah, but we were attached to the Minnesota Viking Division, somewhere.

McIntosh: As a Reservist?

Miller: Ah--

McIntosh: No, just as a rider. And without military training, previous military experience, you joined the National Guard?

Miller: Yeah, I had no military experience before that.

McIntosh: And so how did you get to gain your military experience?

Miller: Okay, I was in the National Guard and I was, I remember the December evening a bunch of us young bucks, so to speak, were driving around and the radio, ya know, was going. We broke in news that said that we had been activated as a unit and that was the beginning of it. That was in December. Then on January, I think, 15th.

McIntosh: That was in December, of '50?

Miller: '50, yeah. Let me see, yeah '50, December.

McIntosh: What unit then, what did you join in?

Miller: Uh, well we just had the National Guard.

McIntosh: Yeah, but when you went in the service you had a different designation.

Miller: Yah, okay we were, I don't know if we were still with the with the Viking's Division.

McIntosh: What number was that, that division?

Miller: I think that's 49. [actually the 47th Infantry Division]

McIntosh: 49th Division?

Miller: Yeah

McIntosh: And what was your MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) then?

Miller: MOS, I'm not sure what the MOS was when I went in, but when I went to Korea, my MOS was 1745, which I think is combat leader.

McIntosh: Combat leader?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: But you were an infantry--

Miller: Yeah, right.

McIntosh: So where did you go first?

Miller: Camp Rucker, Alabama. It's now Fort Rucker, I guess. We were there--

McIntosh: You did basic training?

Miller: Yeah, that's where we did basic training.

McIntosh: Tell that to me again. That was in Alabama?

Miller: Yeah, Fort Rucker, R-U-C-K-E-R, Rucker.

McIntosh: Fort Rucker?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: I've never heard of that one.

Miller: Yeah, its, ah, just outside of Dothan.

McIntosh: Okay and that was an eight week or a twelve [?] report?

Miller: Woo, man. Let's see. I'm trying to think.

McIntosh: If you can recall.

Miller: It was probably eight weeks. I know. To go without beer all that time.
[laughs]

McIntosh: So and then where did they put ya?

Miller: Then, by that time, let me see, eight weeks, then we had advanced training, all types of advanced training. And then, ah--

McIntosh: For combat infantry?

Miller: Yeah, and then my MOS, well, I became staff sergeant. I went from private, you know, to staff sergeant in six months. I thought they were trying to tell me that I was that good.

McIntosh: A born leader?

Miller: Yeah, except that I think they were probably trying to get rid of me, because what they wanted was non-coms [non-commissioned officers] for Korea. [laughs] So, they made me a non-com and shipped me out right away and gave me my travel orders.

McIntosh: You fly over?

Miller: No. Went by ship.

McIntosh: Oh, ship.

Miller: Took us 11 days.

McIntosh: Must have been one of those general ships.

Miller: Yeah, it had about 3,600 soldiers on there.

McIntosh: And when did you go over to Korea?

Miller: Ah, let me see, it would be September of '51.

McIntosh: September '51.

Miller: There was another question preceding that, what did I say that one, forty now? Oh no I joined the guard.

McIntosh: Yes, you said you joined in '49 and were activated in December of '50.

Miller: Yeah, right, right, right.

McIntosh: And you said seven months later you were shipped over seas.

Miller: Right.

McIntosh: Okay and where did you go in Korea?

Miller: Well, I was with the 3rd Division that was there.

McIntosh: Alright, 3rd Division.

Miller: And, ah, we were in numerous places. The only one that I really remember is the Hill 3-5-5, which was probably the last. Maybe there was one other battle yet, but it was sorta the last major battle.

McIntosh: That you were involved in?

Miller: Yeah, the meetings were being held at Panmunjom. And Hill 3-5-5 the Chinese claimed, and we claimed it, and nobody was lying. So we went up on November 24th, I think of 1950.

McIntosh: That's when the battle was?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: November of 1951?

Miller: Right.

McIntosh: That's about the time I was coming home.

Miller: Is that right?

McIntosh: I was there in November of '50 'til November of '51

Miller: Those were the rough years.

McIntosh: I was on a ship.

Miller: Oh, I think I would have stayed there.

McIntosh: A hospital ship there. It was interesting. So, you're a squad leader by this time?

Miller: I started out as squad leader and then I became a platoon sergeant.

McIntosh: Platoon sergeant, and help clarify: were you against Chinese or were you against North Koreans?

Miller: Chinese and I think Mongolians. Mongolian units, these were big guys.

McIntosh: They tend to be tall.

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: Of course, Koreans are tall because they are really basically Chinese anyway.

Miller: Right and we fought them. Ya know the odd thing about it is that someone stayed at our house, a foreign student. She's from China and her mother and father fought against me over there.

McIntosh: Oh my goodness.

Miller: Yeah. That was kind of a different approach on it.

McIntosh: Sure, and how did the battle go?

Miller: Well the 7th Regiment was up there on November 23rd and they just got the hell pounded out of them. I mean, we were right in back of it and, ah, I remember they told us we wouldn't be on the front line for another four or five days. All of sudden this hill, just like somebody laid dynamite right on top of it, instantaneously blew it up. And the Chinese weren't supposed

to have any artillery. Then I saw that and then it got dark. My telephone rang in my bunker, I ran over there and they said, "Get your squad ready we're going up the 3-5-5."

McIntosh: How many in your group?

Miller: Well, I think the platoon that I was in had about between 30 and 36. It varied depending on how much time you spent in combat. They came down and drove them and they were really kicked off. I mean they just came and they were crying. It was mayhem. They were coming this way; we were going that way. So we got up there about right behind Hill 3-5-5, right behind it. We got up there at about, oh, 10, 11 o'clock. The orders came, we move out at 12 midnight. And 12 midnight came and he said, "No, we'll postpone it." So I went over to a bunker which had eleven people crowded in it laying over the top of each other to get some rest. Then at 8 o'clock in the morning they woke us up, ya know. Somebody had already started moving up the hill, so we took the hill. The hill was also named Dagmar because Dagmar had very huge busts at that time; well this hill had two big knobs. The Chinese had one and we had one. So that night--

McIntosh: You worked that way up the hill with a machine gun and a mortar?

Miller: Uh, mostly we opened up with artillery. When the artillery stopped then we took off, yeah. But they didn't resist except on that one knob. They wouldn't let us take that one knob. Nightfall came. Everything was quiet. You could hear a pin drop. All of a sudden, I don't know where they got these New Year's noisemakers. [laughs] I don't know where they got them but, ya know, psychologically, I tell ya it was something else, and all of a sudden just a chorus of these things.

McIntosh: The Mongolians too?

Miller: Everything, ya know.

McIntosh: They're coming at you?

Miller: Well, not yet. Then the giggling started. Then they came. Then they came.

McIntosh: Must have provoked them.

Miller: Yah probably and then the machine guns and everything opened up. We were firing. There was about three huge rocks right below the second knob there. I thought, "Boy that'd be a nice place for a Chinese to hide and shoot us."

McIntosh: Sure.

Miller: So I started shooting into that pile of rocks and of course, *zingininining*, ya know the ricochets. It was very unsafe for whoever was in there. Then all of a sudden there's a mortar shell ahead of me, the next one closer. The next one a little closer and then all of a sudden, *chh*, it hit behind and it didn't go off.

McIntosh: Oh my.

Miller: [Laughs] Can you imagine? Oh man, but, ya, we held them off mainly, I think, through artillery. Because when I went back up in January there were still bodies of Chinese around the finger of this one hill. But the enemy got caught with the variable [?] time because some of these people were leaning against trees and stuff and were still there on the finger and they were frozen. They were not to be moved until spring when the Koreans came there to cart them away.

McIntosh: Did the cold weather bother your weapons?

Miller: I didn't have any problems with weapons at all over there. The M1 B.A.R. [Browning Automatic Rifle], the M1 carbines, they were all excellent. They really worked well.

McIntosh: And did you have a lot of wounded in your platoon?

Miller: Well, yeah, in the platoon. I made sort of a pledge when I became a squad leader and said that I would never lose a man while I was over there. As squad leader I lost one, but he was no longer assigned to me at the time. He had been put back into my thing, but in a way he didn't because he got captured. We went into the Imjin River and that was the border line of the Chinese. We crossed that, and before we crossed we met with the four squad leaders and the platoon leader. I said that Samuel Landpheir should not be going alone over to the right, which was over the cliff there. He shouldn't be going there by himself, and they overruled me and took him over. Fourth Squad was supposed to pick him up. Fourth Squad leader, Sergeant, um, I can't remember his name right off hand. Anyway, he didn't and the Chinese, I think they plucked him. I think, there had been two of us that might have been able to fight and we were stuck on the river.

McIntosh: Right.

Miller: They were shooting down. [pause] We lost one man there. Well it was our platoon sergeant. We lost Sergeant Kennedy. He was a medic and he stepped on a land mine. I don't know why; I went through those mine

fields I don't know how many dozens of times. I never ever came close to one. Three patrols go out that I'm not in charge of, because I more or less took over patrols.

McIntosh: I see.

Miller: The first one was Sergeant Kennedy. The second one there was nobody injured. The third one nine, nine wounded and one dead. "Bouncing Betty" [S-mine], they tripped a "Bouncing Betty." They had just integrated the unit and we had the black sergeant who had been there ten years. He's the one that caught it. He's the one that tripped it. I don't think anybody survives the "Bouncing Betty".

McIntosh: From the pieces of metal?

Miller: Yeah. Then we never lost another man, not in my unit. There were some in the company that were lost on Hill 3-5-5. There was nobody in the platoon that was lost. There was one man that received a Silver Star.

McIntosh: How'd you get any food up there?

Miller: I'll tell ya it's surprising, but I don't think I missed more than four or five days where we didn't at least have one hot meal a day.

McIntosh: That's amazing.

Miller: I couldn't believe they brought it up right on line, ya know.

McIntosh: That's unusual. Most guys in Korea at that time did not see hot meals.

Miller: Oh is that right? We saw it. They came up with the canisters. Hill 3-5-5, they'd circle and bring it right on up to the top. Certainly good enough food, because if you're over there, you're hungry. I never had any complaints about the food. I thought they were lying to me twice. They said I'd be home in a year and that I'd have a hot meal almost every day. I thought no way you're gonna have either one of those. Well eleven months, twenty eight days, so they were within a few.

McIntosh: Yeah they were pretty good about rotating people.

Miller: Yeah. I think a few people got wounded that they left. The Chinese tank had been trying to kill Sergeant Mitchell and myself. We gave up our platoons the last six days on line. The people that were there before left a .50 caliber machine gun with just stacks of ammo. In front of us was Kelly. Kelly was the outpost that the Chinese had during the night and we had it during the day. In the morning we'd get up and we'd take that

machine gun and, ya know if the Chinese were up and we'd just start rattling that. Those little guys were running like hell over the other side.

McIntosh: That was when your designation at that point was Kelly?

Miller: Yeah, Kelly was an outpost which constantly changed hands. A lot of people lost their lives on that one. The Chinese by the end of my term over there were pretty well getting us one for one. They were very cautious about exposing themselves in large groups. They were well dug in. I was lucky I got there that second half. That first half would have been rough.

McIntosh: You never got wounded?

Miller: Nope. No wounds.

McIntosh: You're lucky.

Miller: Yeah, I sometimes felt I should have got one. When you're up a steep hill and you fall, oh God, you fall so hard.

McIntosh: What was your medical attachment there?

Miller: Oh, I wouldn't know. All I know is--

McIntosh: Were you near a MASH unit [Mobile Army Surgical Hospital]?

Miller: I was in a few miles. They took you back. In fact this one guy got shot right through the abdomen, it didn't hit anything. He walked back there [laughs]. All of a sudden it's like, what the hell is this guy doing here? We never knew anything about it. By God, about 30 days later he's back again on the line. The medicine or the treatment over there was outstanding. If you made it alive to the MASH your chances of survival were 98 percent. That's pretty doggone good.

McIntosh: So your main problem other than the Chinese was the cold weather?

Miller: The cold weather did bother some, but we had good clothing. By that time the supply was good. We got a new shoe pack. "Snowpack" is what it was called, in January of '52. We got just after we went back on Hill 3-5-5, and those kept you so warm. When we crossed the Imjin we'd cross it where the rapids were. Where the water was not very deep and the water of course gets in your boots and within a few minutes it was lukewarm. Now the old shoe pack, oh, that was--

McIntosh: That was tough.

Miller: One of them cracked on me. We were out on an ambush, so you have to lie there and it is *cold*. I got up and boom, the thing just split wide open. It had frozen.

McIntosh: What was this ambush business?

Miller: Well, occasionally we'd simply, from our outpost--

McIntosh: That's a patrol.

Miller: Yah, we'd go out and lay around somewhere where we thought the Chinese might want to walk through, a valley or whatever. I never planned to do any ambush that we had. We would sometimes probe and we'd draw fire. They'd get up there and draw fire. I did a lot of those, but never got hit. Nobody got hit. I think they were saying, "Well if you're that dumb you deserve to stay alive."

McIntosh: Was there much sickness in your outfit? Did any guys get ill?

Miller: Gee, that was very uncommon. I don't think the illness came until we came back home. We stopped at Inchon.

McIntosh: Uh-huh.

Miller: Tainted chicken, I think is what it was. So you had hundreds of guys having diarrhea and the repo-depo had 28 seats. You had to have reservations. [laughs] It didn't bother me, but for some reason--

McIntosh: The other guys got the trots.

Miller: Yeah, oh they had 'em bad. I was lucky, but I still had to get up at 4 o'clock in the morning and take the two pills that they gave for everything, ya know, the cure-all.

McIntosh: More of a cancel malaria.

Miller: Yeah, sickness was not a big thing. Although there were some people, some units had hemorrhagic fever. They thought it was caused by rats.

McIntosh: Hantavirus disease.

Miller: Is that right?

McIntosh: Uh-huh. [affirmation]

Miller: I remember the Koreans just stood there and just could not believe. The Americans, they thought there was rat-infested depo that was filled with clothes and blankets. Something the Koreans could have made a bundle off of and the gasoline around it and poof. They're just not believe that. [laughs]

McIntosh: Why were you setting there on fire?

Miller: Pardon?

McIntosh: Why were you setting it on fire?

Miller: Hemorrhagic fever we thought was caused by rats and it was rat-infested.

McIntosh: Aha.

Miller: Rather than deal with it, just burn in it all, ya know. Americans are lucky that way. They have such a productive power. That they just drowned ya, ya know. Yeah, I can't complain about the clothes. I can't complain about the food. Generally, with a few exceptions we had very good leaders.

McIntosh: What was your rank?

Miller: Sergeant 1st Class.

McIntosh: Sergeant 1st Class, and when you left the service?

Miller: That's what I was.

McIntosh: When you left Korea in September of '51, where did you go?

Miller: We ended up in Camp Carson, Colorado, is where I was signed out. Actually I left there September 26th, which is my 21st birthday. But I was not legally discharged until September 28th.

McIntosh: Discharged then at Camp Carson?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: Okay, did you receive any decorations, Miller?

Miller: I should have gotten a Bronze Star. I think I may have Tammy trace it down. She's been tracing down some people and some of their medals.

McIntosh: Did your captain put you in for one?

Miller: Yes. He was a West Pointer, but, ah, Bronze Star for military service.

McIntosh: We need to have your signature, so we can publish any material that you give us okay?

Miller: Okay.

McIntosh: I don't know that we will, but we need your approval.

Miller: That's quite alright.

McIntosh: Thank you.

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: I appreciate that, and when you got out of the service, where did you go?

Miller: Well, just a brief sketch, I worked in the oil fields in North Dakota and Texas. Then I went out--

McIntosh: As a what?

Miller: What the heck did they call those? A seismographer, seismographing.

McIntosh: Where did you get that kind of training?

Miller: Well, it was just the job was open, and at that time if you were warm and regular breath they hired you, ya know?

McIntosh: Dakota and Texas both?

Miller: Yeah right. Then I went to Oregon. I was a logger and truck driver out there for five years.

McIntosh: How long were you in the oil business?

Miller: Let me see. One year. I also had worked on the Garrison Dam.

McIntosh: And then Oregon to do what?

Miller: Ah, truck driver and logger.

McIntosh: Up and down the West Coast?

Miller: Mainly around a little town called Florence, which is right on the coast. It's 80 miles west of Eugene. I drove through those mountains. Boy, I

didn't think I'd have the nerve to do it. It was in, I think, four months I was operating the truck. You had pile-driving to do and all kinds of things. Then the recession of '57...

McIntosh: You didn't plan to go back to school and use your G.I. Bill?

Miller: Well I started and then I quit 'cause by God, I had been outside for a full year and when that sun came up in spring I got the heck out of there and went into the seismographing. After the seismographing, they just didn't pay out enough money, so I went out to Oregon and, man, I was a rich man. I think the pay almost tripled.

McIntosh: Oh my. I didn't realize logging demanded that kind of salary.

Miller: Oh yeah, they had a good salary. We had a person the last year I worked at the logger, it was Compton Logging, and the old man, who was about 52, would come out and show us how it's really done. He was good. He was good. I remember we had a little union, about eight, nine of us. So Mr. Compton rented a motel room and said, "We'll meet there and negotiate and have a package ready for ya when you come in." We came in with a package and we gave him that. We traded and by God we looked at his and it was better than ours. [laughs] That's the type of guy he was. When he found out I was going back to go to college to take on teaching he gave me an extra week of vacation. There was a question you had asked?

McIntosh: Why didn't you go to college?

Miller: Oh! I started out and then I quit. Then I went out the West Coast and I bought myself a little Aeronca Chief, a little plane. Four hundred bucks.

McIntosh: Who was gonna fly it?

Miller: Well, I was gonna take air lessons under the G.I. Bill.

McIntosh: Ah, okay.

Miller: But, I bought the thing with another guy and we went and really fixed it up. We put leather on the inside, put prop spinners, and fenders, and put a new canvas on bottom and everything. Before that happened, I was up for a flight with the instructor who also owned the airport at that time, or was the manager of the airport. By God, all of sudden there's oil all over the windshield, and all I could think of was the Japanese plane going down in flames. [laughs] So we made an agreement. He wouldn't charge us anything for labor, but parts he would. When we got done he gave us a total bill of labor and everything else which was, I think, eighteen hundred

dollars. It was supposed to be four hundred. He goes, "I'll be a nice guy, I'll give you what you got in it."

McIntosh: So he got the plane?

Miller: He got the plane, so I quit flying and that cut me off there. I couldn't get my G.I. anymore. I had an adventurous life. [laughs]

McIntosh: I guess so. Then where did you go from Oregon?

Miller: Oh, from Oregon I went back to Dickinson and started teaching, not teaching, I went to college at Dickinson State Teacher College. Then I met my first wife, and she was gonna be working in Wisconsin, so we came out to Wisconsin. I attended school at Eau Claire and got my Bachelor's there. I taught school for thirty years.

McIntosh: Eau Claire UW?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: And what college or LS school? What was your degree in?

Miller: My degree was in social studies, education social studies.

McIntosh: And you taught where?

Miller: I taught in Chippewa for four years or five or six, I'm not sure of that. Then I finished off in Sun Prairie, at least twenty three years there.

McIntosh: Chippewa Falls and Sun Prairie?

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: Is that where you are now, in Sun Prairie?

Miller: No I'm retired. I retired seven years ago.

McIntosh: So, it was a long career?

Miller: Yeah, and a very good one.

McIntosh: Did you join any veteran's organization?

Miller: I belonged to the American Legion for some time. In fact, I did fish fries back in the eighties. I was teaching, I'd come down and feed three hundred people at the fish fry. That was, that's work.

McIntosh: I'm sure it is.

Miller: I might have belonged to the Veterans of Foreign Wars when I first got out.

McIntosh: Did you raise a big family?

Miller: I have three, three children. They're all here in Madison.

McIntosh: Oh, how nice. You get to see all of the grandchildren.

Miller: Yeah. We have two grandchildren. One we see every week, one day. We get to keep her.

McIntosh: Oh, how nice.

Miller: Yeah and she is a gem.

McIntosh: Yeah, how lucky.

Miller: Yeah. That's right. She has been a--

McIntosh: Now mine are all spread out so I never see them.

Miller: Uh huh. All of them are working here within the City of Madison. Well, Shawn works somewhere in Middleton, but that's just outside of Madison here **[End of Tape 1, Side A]**. We get together quite often.

McIntosh: That's nice.

Miller: Yeah.

McIntosh: Super. Okay anything you forgot to tell me?

Miller: No, I think probably in talking about the war experience, I think the most gratifying was a compliment that a piano teacher from New Jersey gave me who was one my people in my platoon. He says, "Ya know Miller, you're a dumb bastard but you get us back alive." [laughs]

McIntosh: That was worth it all?

Miller: Yeah, right.

McIntosh: But not forget as long as you got me back home all right.

Miller: We had a nice outfit. We all got along real well.

McIntosh: Do you keep in touch with these guys?

Miller: No, I'm going to Boston for somebody that was with me here in the States, by the way there eight seniors in high school that left with the National Guard.

McIntosh: That took basic with you?

Miller: Yeah. They missed the last half of their senior year.

McIntosh: You keep in touch with those guys?

Miller: Well, next month I'm going to visit one of my fellow students who was also in the Korean War. Not student, I should say colleague. I tried to trace him down. I saw Samuel Landphier. He made it back. He was a prisoner of war and he made it back. One thing that I couldn't quite figure out is that I knew Dwayne Lovedock was killed on Hill 3-5-5.

McIntosh: He was one of the eighteen?

Miller: Yeah, and by God I can't find a record of him. There's no record of him missing in action, killed in action. I've gone through all of them. I can't find him. I would love to see Carmen Luciano and Tony Detucci. For some reason Tony, I had dark hair at the time, took me as a pal and Italian. We had a good time. We had some good times.

McIntosh: They converted you into being Italian?

Miller: Right, yah, I don't know they had something about them, Carmen especially, you wouldn't say smooth but you trusted him almost immediately. We had a little club that had a dance floor built on the lake, Lake Geneva of all places, outside of Dothan, Alabama. I don't think we were there three or four times. They had a hamburger joint and pop and all that kind of stuff. The place danced over the top of the water. By God, here we were all of sudden running the place. We'd come out there Saturdays and do the hamburger, and they could take off. He was an unbelievable type of guy and Tony Detucci and Carmen Luciano and myself.

McIntosh: Sounds like a good time.

Miller: Yah. I can't complain about the army.

McIntosh: Did you think that your training was very good for what they asked you to do?

Miller: I don't know if you ever get very good.

McIntosh: Did you have to do a lot of learning on the job?

Miller: The only thing that I remember we had learning on the job is that when we got over there we had no bayonet experience. So we had to go through a couple briefs of bayonet training, which I was hoping we'd never use.

McIntosh: Why?

Miller: Ya know just in case.

McIntosh: You never had to use it?

Miller: No, never had to use it. The night of the story we were in that bunker on Hill 3-5-5 and there were three of us. It was just a mound in front of us and there was really nothing in back of us except the hill. At bout 4 o'clock in the morning one of the guys, Corporal Miner, he poked me and says, [whispers] "Hey you see that Chinese underage crawling towards us?" I says, "Guys, now quiet, quiet until he gets up here and we'll jump out and bayonet him." [laughs] This poor guy, ya know we thought this was as humorous as ever. It scared the heck out of him and finally he caught on. I've got some pictures of Hill 3-5-5. That place was strictly every--

McIntosh: I assumed pock marked from all the artillery shells.

Miller: All the shear rock. When I got up there in January I said, "This is no way to live." So I stole all the demolition I could from Fox Company, which was Easy, Fox, and then next us, and made bunkers for every two people with beds in it, a fireplace. It had the whole works.

McIntosh: That was pretty nice.

Miller: Yeah. They had good living there, because we were there for three months on one hill.

McIntosh: Never moved?

Miller: Never moved. Oh, I went off of the hill one time for a shower. We needed it too.

McIntosh: I imagine. I imagine.

Miller: Then it was integrated that somehow this young black was put into division.

McIntosh: The one that got killed?

Miller: No, he was taking care of the shower. The guy was not, the elevator didn't run quite to the top. Here they are at the foot of my bed and they're playing poker. This one guy is sneaking the money that the other guy had won back to his side. Finally, this guy looked and said, "By God, I've been winning all this time and I'm broke." [laughs] He runs over and gets his full automatic, gets his B.A.R. and starts shooting.

McIntosh: Shooting!?

Miller: In the tent! Ya know and I'm lying there, what do I do? If I grab my rifle by the time I get that thing loaded he's gonna blow me to shreds. It made all kinds of holes through the tent. But he was subdued and probably nothing ever came of it.

McIntosh: Did the guy get sent back?

Miller: I don't think so. I think they just made him take a shower.

McIntosh: I'd imagine they'd disciplined him, right?

Miller: I don't know. It seems like when I left next morning nothing was happening, ya know.

McIntosh: Fantastic.

[End of Interview]