



Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Edward Joseph Layden

Part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois
World War II Stories project

Interview # VR2-V-D-2007-057

Edward Joseph Layden, a World War II veteran, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois World War II Stories project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: 8 November 2007

Location: Hoopston Public Library, Hoopston, IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: David L. Noreen, Illinois Public Media affiliate

Technical Support (cameraman, etc):

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 44 min/ 0.73 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on (date).

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

Edward Joseph Layden, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-V-D-2007-57

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Edward Joseph Layden was born in Cheneyville, Illinois on May 23, 1919. Layden was drafted into the Army on April 1941; he was assigned to the 110th Regiment. However, due to a previously injured shoulder, Layden was discharged in November 1941. He was classified as 4F, meaning he was unfit for service. Layden returned to Hoopeston, Illinois to work on his family farm. A prisoner of war camp was established in Hoopeston in 1944 after the war in Europe had begun. Layden's family was able to employ the German prisoners as farm help

During World War II, labor was scarce and farms struggled to harvest on time. Therefore, the German prisoners, who were paid eighty cents day, helped with the harvest of sweet corn. Layden recalls the German captives as being good workers and having even better physical condition than Americans. Layden's farm also had a white Birch tree, which was rare in Hoopeston, but was very common in Germany. The prisoners appreciated Layden's farm because of his welcoming family and the Birch's tree reminiscent nature.

Overall, Layden believes the German prisoners helped save the harvest in 1944 and 1945. He never had any problems with the German captives, and he wishes that he had kept in touch with them.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Cheneyville, Illinois; 110th Infantry Regiment; 4F classification; Hoopeston, Illinois; German prisoners.

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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