

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with William “Bill” Phillips

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRV-A-L-2013-019

William Phillips, a medic with the 4th Infantry Division during the Vietnam War, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library’s *Veterans Remember* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Mar 27, 2013 Location: IASA Building in Springfield, Illinois

Date: Apr 2, 2013 Location: IASA Building in Springfield, Illinois

Date: Apr 11, 2013 Location: IASA Building in Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Transcription by: Susan Burke, ALPL volunteer

Edited by: Roberta Volkmann & Janice Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 119 pgs Total Time: 2:11 + 2:12 + 1:27 / 2.18 + 2.2 + 1.45 = 5.83 hrs

Session 1: Growing up in Chenoa, Illinois, and initial training in the U.S. Army

Session 2: Experiences in Vietnam with the 4th Infantry Division

Session 3: Vietnam, malaria, and working for a General in Hawaii

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on April 25, 2013.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

William Phillips, *Veterans Remember*, VRV-A-L-2013-019

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Bill Phillips was born in June 1946 in Benton, Illinois, and grew up in Chenoa, the son of school teachers. He spent a few months in Norway as a foreign exchange student during high school and attended Illinois State University, where he majored in history and German. Upon graduation in 1968, he got married, taught school in Pontiac for a year, then was drafted into the United States Army. Phillips went through basic training at Fort Polk, Louisiana and then received training as a medic at Ft. Sam Houston, Texas. He flew to Vietnam in January 1970.

Phillips was initially assigned as a medic to the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, 4th Infantry Division. When the 4th Division turned in its tanks, he was reassigned to a medical evacuation hospital in Pleiku, South Vietnam. In that position he served as a dust-off medic for helicopter medivac flights, which exposed him to enemy fire on many missions. When the 1st Battalion, 11th Infantry Regiment, another 4th ID unit, lost all of its medics, he was transferred to that unit. Once there, he went on numerous foot patrols and participated in the invasion of Cambodia in May 1970. During his time in Vietnam, Phillips earned a Silver Star and a Bronze Star for valor. In August he went on R&R in Hawaii, where he spent time with his wife until he contracted malaria. While recuperating from that, he began working as a personnel clerk and did so well in the job that he was reassigned to the Tripler Medical Center in Honolulu and never returned to Vietnam. He was asked to tutor the commanding general's daughter and soon was reassigned to the general's staff. Despite the general's offer to help him get an officer's commission, Phillips elected to leave the army at the end of his tour. Bill Phillips was also interviewed for the *School District Reorganization* oral history project.

Subject Headings/Key Words: medic during the Vietnam War; 4th Infantry Division during Vietnam War; invasion of Cambodia in 1970; medivac flights during Vietnam War; Tripler Army Medical Center during Vietnam War; Chenoa, Illinois in 1950s and 60s; foreign exchange student in Norway; 1st BN, 11th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division; MGen Conn Milburn; Silver Star; 1st BN, 69th Armor, 4th Infantry Division

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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