

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Lawrence “Larry” Curtin”

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

Interview # VRK-A-L-2012-009

Lawrence (Larry) Curtin, a farm youth from central Illinois, who served in the Army in the Korean 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: March 14, 2012 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Date: April 9, 2012 Location: Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

Interview Format: Digital audio

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

Transcription by: Audio Transcription Center, Boston, MA

Edited by: Betty Workman & Jan Culp, ALPL volunteers

Total Pages: 88 pgs Total Time: 2:06 + 1:55 / 2.10 + 1.92 = 4.02 hrs

Session 1: Growing up on a farm in central Illinois, during Depression & WW II

Session 2: Service in the Army as a radio operator, during the Korean War

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on May 3, 2012.

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

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Abstract

Lawrence Curtin, *Veterans Remember*, VRK-A-L-2012-009

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Lawrence B. (Larry) Curtin was born on April 5th, 1926 in Taylorville, Illinois, and grew up on the family farm in rural Stonington, Illinois. Larry attended a one room school for many years and did chores on the farm, during the depression years and into World War II, when farming became more profitable. He discussed his life on the family farm in considerable detail, including haying, shucking corn, hog butchering day and the coming of electricity. By the time Curtin graduated from high school in May, 1943, he knew he wanted to be a farmer and was able to stay in farming, throughout the war.

In December of 1950, after the beginning of the Korean War, Curtin was drafted and shipped to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, where he received his basic training and also attended a short leadership school. He assisted in training an African-American platoon going through basic training, then traveled by train to Ft. Walton in Seattle, Washington. He shipped to Korea in June of 1951. Once there, he was given the opportunity to attend a radio school, after which he was assigned to the 3rd Infantry Division's 3rd Signal Company. Curtin performed a variety of duties, including a stint with a Belgian Infantry battalion, work as a radio operator in the communications center at the Division Main, and duty with the unit's sound truck, assisting unit chaplains and public affairs officers. Although very near the front, Curtin never saw combat. He returned home in April, 1952 and, while finishing up his military tour at Ft. Sheridan, Illinois, he met his future wife, Pat Biehle. He has spent the rest of his life as a successful farmer and was involved in a number of civic activities. He recorded his life stories in the book, *It All Started in Bear Creek*.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Farm life in central Illinois, during the depression; rural electrification; farm chores, during 1930s and 40s; one room schools; farm life, during WW II; radio operator, during the Korean War; 3rd Signal Company, 3rd Infantry Division, during the Korean War; segregation and integration, during the Korean War; *It All Started in Bear Creek*; Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri.

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