

Interviewee: **Virgil Avery Thompson**

Interviewer: Reid Chapman

Date of interview: 2003-04-23

Location: Crescent View Retirement Center, Arden, NC

Audio and Video Log

00.13 (1.5 minutes) 1937- Joined local National Guard unit with friends. He was sent to Louisiana Maneuvers. "Largest assembly of soldiers since WWI"

00.90 (2 minute mark) Auburn College. R.O.T.C. (artillery)

3:00 Pearl Harbor "Here we go!"

3:30 Drafted, February, Age 30, even men his age were drafted. "They knew it would be a long one!"

5:00 Fort McPerson, GA. Air Force. He wanted to fly but he was too old.

5:10 Kessler Field, Biloxi, Miss. Basic training

5:20 Wanted aerial photography, but it was too full - in waiting list after basic

5:30 Chemical Warfare School. Edgewood, MD

5:40 Loaded planes with incendiaries

6:00 Incendiary bombs. "Incendiary bombs killed more people in Japan than the Atomic bomb did."

7:00 Fort Worth, TX Moorefield. Chemical Officer for post.

8:00 trained troops to defend against chemical warfare

9:00 Acceptance in social life

9:10 Met wife, issued her gas mask, nurse

9:20 Tribute to wife. "All the time spent in service and off my career – meeting my wife, getting married, that made up for any trouble I ever had. She died two years ago. We were married for 58 years and have two lovely children."

10:00 Married February 12, 1944

10:20 To Colorado – waited for orders – canceled.

10:40 Feared North Japan –too cold.

10:50 No Anti-war demonstrations like Vietnam

12:00 Son –Vietnam Chemical Officer

12:20 Son's Experiences

13.9 Biological warfare –eliminate man

14:10 “Have to keep on top of countries.”

15:00 Lesson learned “believe in your country. Perform duty to best of your ability.”

Biographical data:

Battalion: Army Air Force, Chemical Officer

Highest Rank: Captain

Date of Enlistment: February 6, 1942 through February 2, 1946

Stationed: Moorefield, TX

Medals: Victory medal

Born in Sheffield, AL 03-14-1912

SEE ALSO: Additional written log [includes more material, but different counter numbers]