Transcription: Troyce Scogin

Today is Friday, March 16th, 2012. My name is James Crabtree, and this afternoon I'll be interviewing Mr. Troyce Scogin. This interview is being conducted by telephone. I'm in the General Land Office Building in Austin, Texas, and Mr. Scogin is at his home in Waxahachie. This interview is being conducted in support of the Texas Veterans Land Board Voices of Veterans Oral History Program. Sir, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us. It's certainly an honor. The first question, sir, that we pretty much always start off with is please tell us a little bit about your childhood and your life before you went in the military.

Troyce Scogin: I was working on a farm. I started working about 8 years old as a regular hand on a farm. Back then, it brought a dollar a day, from can to cane, that's sunup to sundown. Nobody had any money, but they had plenty to eat, so we stored up everything we'd eat, can it and put it up.

Was this in Waxahachie?

Troyce Scogin: It was in Foreston.

Where is that?

Troyce Scogin: It's 9 miles south of Waxahachie.

Did you have a lot of brothers and sisters?

Troyce Scogin: I had one brother and two sisters, and I got one sister living now.

So you grew up on a farm and lived through the Great Depression I take it.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah, we started out in east Texas, but daddy come to Ellis County askin' he wanted to buy a black man's farm. He heard it had rich soil. So he had the money for the little farm he had in east Texas, and he brought it out here, and leased the farm for the first year, and put the money in the bank, and the next year he's gonna buy the farm.

What type of crops did you grow?

Troyce Scogin: Mostly corn and cotton.

So you worked on the farm from the age of 8 years old on.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah.

Did you enjoy it?

Troyce Scogin: Oh yeah, I like, of course back then we worked with mules. We didn't have no tractors.

So it was definitely hard work.

Troyce Scogin: Oh it was hard work, bailin' hay, bailin' hay all summer and pick cotton in the fall, pull corn. I could make more money pullin' corn than I could pickin' cotton because I got a dollar a load for a load of corn and put it in the barn, and I'd put four loads a day in the barn.

Did you have a chance to go to school?

Troyce Scogin: I went to school and back then 11 grades is all they had in school, and it took me 13 years to get it. I wouldn't have done that if I hadn't had a good superintendent. He told me I was gonna finish school or he was gonna kill me, and he'd come out at night and tutor me, you know, on days I couldn't go to school.

That's great.

Troyce Scogin: And he was a real guy. Right after I got out of school, the drafts got around and got me. I was thinkin' about going into farming myself, gettin' me a farm, but I couldn't do it on account I had to go to the Army.

I see here on the card that you sent us that you joined the Army on January 14th of 1942, which was really not that long after Pearl Harbor Day. Were you drafted into the Army?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah, had 9 days left at home, so I volunteered 9 days ahead of time. And I joined, sign up for the Air Force, Army Air Corps. They sent me to Wichita Falls, and the school up there goin' to was F___. They said well, they'd send me down to El Paso in horse cavalry for 6-week training while I was waitin' for the school to open.

Did they send you to Fort Bliss?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah.

In El Paso?

Troyce Scogin: And then from there, I woke up one morning and they put us on a train and we was on the train four days and four nights and ended up in Bangor, Maine. So we never did get to go to school, and I got into the 101st Cavalry up there, and we pulled guard duty out on runways for bombers to take off overseas, you know, big bombers. The runways weren't long enough, so we had to make 'em bigger and we had to stand guard over 'em.

That was in Maine.

Troyce Scogin: It was up in Bangor, Maine.

Let me ask you, sir, to back up a little bit, were you working on the farm when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah.

Do you remember that day? Do you remember learning about the attack?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah. We was going from Foreston we was going down to ___ cemetery to visit down there, at the folks buried there, and Dr. Stiller station, this guy come out and hear on

the radio Pearl Harbor was bombed. So a few days after that, they called me up for a physical. I took one physical in Waxahachie, and a week later I had to go to Dallas to take a physical and passed both times. They classified me 1A. That's when I decided to go ahead and just go on, because I'd have to go anyway. You couldn't plan nothing.

At that time what were your emotions? Were you excited or scared?

Troyce Scogin: Oh, I didn't know what to think because I had never been out of Texas. We didn't travel around then much. So I just was strictly a farm boy.

What were most of the men like in your unit when you got to Maine? Were they from all over the country?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah. The first place they send you is Mineral Wells, the induction center.

OK, is that old Fort Walters?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah.

I've been there. I know what you're talking about.

Troyce Scogin: We spent I think two nights there. Then they give us a bunch of shots and all that stuff and sent us to Wichita Falls, to the air base up there. We took close order drill up there for three weeks and they sent us to El Paso, waiting for school to open up. So I never did get to see the Air Force.

Now when was it that your unit left to go overseas?

Troyce Scogin: Well, I can't remember what year it was or the date, because they moved us from Bangor, Maine to New Hampshire for two days to give us a haircut and more shots, and to Fort Dixon.

Down in New Jersey?

Troyce Scogin: Rifle range. Issued us carbines. You laid that out there and laid on your belly and shoot those guns, and it was muddy and wet, and we went back and climbed up on this 30-foot wall rope ladder, and full field pack, and jumped off of the side in a hole of water. As you got out of there, they put you on a train car, show you how to load on a train car. I don't know why because we didn't ride before they took us over to Hudson Bay, New York, and we were standing on a platform. I thought it was a pier, you know. All lined up there and all at once the whole thing started moving, and moved over to the big barge looking thing. You couldn't see these ships. They were back in a big shed. They had 7 doctors lined up there and they checked you for different things as you got on the ship. They put you on the ship and sealed it up. It was a transport ship. It converted into a troop carrier. And they put 8 boxes, have 'em stacked 6 high, and you crowded in there and you stayed in a bunk 12 hours and then you'd get up for 12 hours, and another guy would take your place. That's how many people they had on the boat. And it was a British ship, and all we had to eat was stewed tomatoes and bacon. You were lucky if you got one meal a day. And it took 28 days on that ship without taking a bath or changing clothes, anything.

That's a long time.

Troyce Scogin: Zig-zagging, you know. The U-boats were all around us out there, and battleship Texas running around there dropping them ash cans all around. That old ship would jump up out of the water and then fall back down. You didn't get much rest and didn't get nothing to eat and didn't get cleaned up, so it was a rough trip.

I'm sure you and your fellow soldiers were glad when you finally got off that ship.

Troyce Scogin: We pulled into Liverpool, England, and they bombed it the night before and every ship out there in the channel, point was sticking up. We had to wait out there two days. They moved that so we could get in. And we unloaded and slept in the streets of Liverpool the first night in England because the railroad station had been bombed out. And we walked 25 miles out in the country to catch a train. We rode that train to a little place, Eston, England. It was a replacement depot, you know, where they sent in different groups to different places. And no tellin' who you get with. You didn't know nobody. And so they sent us to another little town, Charlie, England. There they had some draftees over there in England that were American citizens but they drafted them in England, you know, and I had to give them basic training for three weeks. Six weeks training was supposed to have, but they give it to them in three weeks. After that I joined an MP company, and pulled guard around the house where Eisenhower was planning the invasion. It was out in the country, he had a house out in the country, where he headquartered. He come in one morning and you couldn't see far around you because it was foggy over there. It was so foggy you couldn't see him. He come in one morning and two of us guys on the front gate guarding it. He asked, you boys want a cup of coffee? And we said yeah. So he went and got coffee, two cups of coffee, brought it out there, and stood out there while we drank it.

Wow.

Troyce Scogin: That's the only time I ever met Eisenhower face to face.

That's a great story though.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah. Moved down to, my whole company didn't go overseas, they just picked 11 of us for a squad to lead convoys and direct traffic, and carry supplies up to the front line, and stuff like that. 11 boys.

How do you think you got picked?

Troyce Scogin: I don't know. I guess they had a black ball or something, I don't know why. They just called my name and I went. Didn't ask me. And we were around London, around there, oh six weeks I guess before the invasion. They were landing every day, bad weather. And everybody was getting cross and wanted to do something.

When was it, sir, that you figured out that this was going to be something big, that it was going to be more than just a normal operation?

Troyce Scogin: Well, I didn't really know where we were going until, see, we got on those ships out there and they'd take you out so far and bring you back, two or three times before we actually went. We didn't know we were going the day we went. We got out there in the Atlantic

and a barge brought upside the boat and it dropped a rope ladder. We went down that ladder, and that English Channel is the roughest piece of water there is, and the landing board just jumped up and down, and you had to get on down there because the guy up above you would step on your hands if you didn't get on down in a hurry. So that boat come up and I just dropped in it. We run right out there in the Channel from the landing boards for oh, an hour or two. We were the second wave that went in on Omaha Beach. The first wave got knocked out. We jumped off into that landing board and there was bodies floating in the water, walking on dead people. I drug my little buddy all the way across that beach and he expected me to take care of him because I was squad leader.

What was his name, sir?

Troyce Scogin: Harold Finks.

Where was he from?

Troyce Scogin: Out in west Texas. His mother was a widow, and I used to write letters to her but she passed away. He was little. He didn't have to go in the Army, he volunteered. But he wanted to be a soldier, and he kind of thought I'd take care of him, you know. He hung onto me real tight. We got over there across the beach. I often wondered how far it was because it looked like it was 10 miles to me. We had to go across sand, and loaded down with your gun and all your pack and everything. So we got over there and I just dropped it down against a pile of rock, and the captain come along and looked at him and pulled the dog tags off and put one on his toe, and took one in his pocket. That's when I knew he was gone. He drowned I guess when we dropped off the end of that landing board. I thought, maybe we'll get hit, and birds were flying around everywhere, but our captain got killed before he got off the landing board. We were on that beach four days, and I was gone to the lieutenant colonel, and he give me a message on a motorcycle to deliver down close to St. Lo where they were running the signal lines, and a big shell, I heard it coming but I said must be nothing, it hit behind me. I should've slowed down and it missed me. But the concussion blowed me up. I remember going up but I don't remember coming down. When I come to I was laying on the front of a Jeep on a stretcher, and they took me to the medical tent and it was raining, water running through the tent, the doctor wading around in the water, the doctor people. The guy in a bunk next to me, he was taking his leg off and they needed blood and they hooked me up to him, and give it direct to him. Then we went back to England and I thought I was going home. Six weeks I was back there with a big cast on my left side and the leg broke in two places, two ribs broke, my arm broke, and soon as I got the cast off, about three days exercise, I headed back over to get to my outfit. It took me three weeks to catch 'em, find 'em. We just lead, like the load of ammunition going up the front lines to the soldiers up there, we'd take that up there, new recruits up there. Another convoy would bring back the dead bodies. We directed traffic a lot, and stood guard at the crossroads and directed traffic.

Sir, let me ask you if we can go back to the Normandy invasion, the landing that day, at some point I guess you knew that you were going to be taking part in a landing. Do you remember what your thoughts were at that time, kind of what was going through your mind?

Troyce Scogin: Kind of froze. You kind of get numb. You figure well you ain't gonna make it no way, so no use to worry about it. That's the way I felt. I don't know, just numb like a zombie walking around scared to death. Guy that tells you he didn't get scared, he's lying. You couldn't help from being scared. We were at a crossroads, two of us directing traffic, and we'd

take turns standing out there waving them on. I was setting down behind a tree, laid my gun down and my helmet, and a sniper up on a hill, he shot a hole in my helmet. He thought I was in it. I had that helmet on out there and here come old Patton along. He seen that whole in that helmet, and he told his aids "get that boy a helmet!" He made 'em give me a new helmet. But I was gonna bring that helmet home with me. But they took it and give me a new one. Then we were going to Baston Canyon, to load the ammunition. The 101st was housed up there in Baston. It was the one part of the line that held in that Bulge.

And sir, you were with the 101st, correct?

Troyce Scogin: I was attached at 94th Armored Division. I never was assigned to no one.

You were just an attachment, yes sir, I understand.

Troyce Scogin: We just did what you'd call guard duty I guess, and we started up there and it got to snowing and got so cold we bogged down and couldn't go backwards or forwards. We were about 20 miles out of Baston. We dug in there, and 6 weeks we stayed in a foxhole, same clothes, all dirty, no bath, and we packed that ammunition 10 miles. And this 101st comes in to meet us halfway. We were there 6 weeks. I remember the first day the sun come out and the planes started flying over again. There were no planes flying, nothing. All we had to eat was cold beans, couldn't have no fire. We'd do night patrol. Lot of times I'd check out German lines, and check out where they was at. I remember when they broke, pushed the Germans back after the Battle of the Bulge, and we went out one night on patrol, 11 of us, and one guy was in demolition. He could blow up anything. There was two big guns up on a hill and run on tracks, and they'd pull 'em back in the mountain, you know, and then come out, and they were knocking off our tanks. So this little guy went up there, and two German guards walking around them guns, and he put explosive all around them guns and run the wire down the hill, right around them guards. They never did see him. He got back down there and was setting up his plunger, and everyone else pulled their grenades, and whenever he mashed the plunger we all throwed the grenades and we started running back towards our company headquarters. You always had to report into the headquarters every time you come back from a trip leading a convoy out to the front lines and come back, and headquarters would be moved to a different place. They didn't stay long in one place. That was about the worst stuff that I went through. My feet hurt every day since that frostbite. My left leg hurts all the time. When they get broke, you don't ever get over it. If I'm movin', I do pretty good. If I set still, I get to hurtin' and I can't stand it.

Sir, I was going to ask you, I know on the card that you sent us it mentions you were awarded a Purple Heart. What did the Purple Heart come from? Was that from the concussion?

Troyce Scogin: No, it was from I was in a foxhole and Germans were crossing a field over there and I was shootin' at 'em, and I was into a gun I knew, a clip out on a log, and I reached up to get that clip and a bullet cut me right across the hand. It cut the leader in my left hand index finger. It was three days before we went to aid station. I had it wrapped up. We had a bandage on our belt with sulfur in it, put it on there, and the medic wrapped it up and three days later I went to the aid station and they sewed it up. Never did lose no time over that. All that stuff I had in a duffle bag when I come home and I left it with my mother. I guess my sister got all of it now. I never did go back and get it, except an old overcoat. I kept that. It's out here in a locker I got at the shop.

When all this was going on, sir, did you have a chance to get letters from back home?

Troyce Scogin: About every 6-8 weeks we'd get letters. I didn't have time to write.

I imagine that's right with all you were doing and where you were going.

Troyce Scogin: We were moving all the time. It'd take you sometimes two weeks to make a trip up to the front lines with a load and come back. We started out and used a motorcycle, but they had to get rid of them and the Jeep couldn't make it, so we got halftracks. Lead the cargo on the halftracks, no lights of no kind. Going up in those hills and mountains, you just had to try to feel your way along. But it was 9 months and we had one hot meal in 9 months. You'd go in the mess kit, fill your mess kit up and walk out in the rain and eat it. I took a bath in the Rhein River in an old barn, camped in there waiting for orders for where to go to. A guy come along in a GI truck, a major, and he said you guys want to see a movie? So we all jumped on that truck to go see a movie. Went over the Rhein River and they were pumping water out of that river on a bridge flow down there, and it was about a quarter of a mile down to there. Take all of your old clothes and burn 'em, and you'd go down through there and that cold water coming out of that river. There were icebergs in that river. Time you got through at the end, you turned purple. Then they gave you clean new clothes. It sure did feel good. That was about the worse experience. The day the war was over, I was sittin' on top of a hill overlooking Berlin. We weren't allowed to go in Berlin on account of they wrote about them Russians, they could have Berlin. We could see and they blew that town all to pieces. But the Russians never did make friends with the Americans. You couldn't go out nowhere by yourself with Russians around. They might kill you.

What was your impression, sir, of the German soldiers?

Troyce Scogin: The German soldiers were real soldiers, except right there at the last they had kids come out there and I wouldn't shoot at 'em. It was just a little old kid and I just couldn't kill 'em.

Did you encounter many German prisoners of war?

Troyce Scogin: Oh yeah.

What were they like?

Troyce Scogin: Oh they were pretty good.

Were they scared of you?

Troyce Scogin: No. The regular German soldier, now he was a real soldier. They trained all their lives from kids up to be soldiers. They were friendly enough. They all wanted to surrender, you see, to the Americans. They didn't want to surrender to Russia.

Oh, I think you're right. I think it's pretty well documented if they surrendered to the Russians, there's a good likelihood they would be killed.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah, well all of them, well they come in droves there at the last. Couldn't hardly take care of all of 'em. But what made me the maddest about the war, I got back home, and we come to Fort Dix right off a ship, and had the ____ and dinner, and walked in there and

these Italian prisoners of war was in there having a big time, and our prisoners over there were starving to death. We went into that Belsom prison camp over there and Eisenhower come out there and made all of us guys go downtown and get all the civilians and make 'em march through there and see what was going on there. I just can't tell you the smell of burnt flesh. I still smell it. Where they burned them in those ovens, and these big pits out there where a lot of people throwed in there, they stripped 'em naked, took all their clothes, knocked all the gold teeth out, and a lot of them was still breathing. But the hip bones cut through the skin they were so poor. It slaughtered them to death. And our men were getting civilians and made them come through there and see what was going on right at their back door.

That's right. I'm sure, sir, after you got home I imagine you felt like you'd certainly seen a lot.

Troyce Scogin: Oh, I never did mention it to nobody. The first thing, you can't believe it unless you see it actually. That's why I wouldn't tell nobody because they'd say don't know what he's talkin' about, or laugh at you.

I agree, sir. I think it's probably something that's almost indescribable, and to try to describe it to somebody who wasn't where you were is probably pretty hard.

Troyce Scogin: You can't do it. You can explain how it was. You got to see it. I couldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it. Like these war movies they have on show, I don't even watch them.

So you never watched Saving Private Ryan?

Troyce Scogin: No, my granddaughter give me a tape of that, and I haven't even watched it. But it's nothing like that. Part of it was, but actually unless you live it, you never know it because you can't sit down and tell somebody how it was because it's too horrible to describe. My kids, I went to Washington DC and a news reporter got a hold of me and got a lot out of me. They read it in the paper. My grandson used to ask me about all this stuff. I couldn't tell him. Buddy, I'll tell you one of these days when you get grown. So after I come back from Washington DC, me and him went out to the lake fishing. I set out there and I told him about it. He listened, just set right there and didn't say a word, just listened. So I can remember it now better than I could back then because I put it out of my mind when I was younger. I had to or I'd go crazy. I'd seen people coming home. We were in Munich three months waiting to get ready to go into Japan, and then they dropped that bomb and we didn't have to go. I seen those guys in the night get up screaming like everything. They'd have a nightmare, you know. I've had a lot of nightmares. I have more now than I did when I was young.

Why do you think that is?

Troyce Scogin: I don't know, it comes back to you. What happened back then is more plainer to me than what happened yesterday.

That makes sense. It's certainly a moment or experience that is probably more powerful than anything you'd ever seen before or since, so that makes sense that it would be something that stays with you, a definitive experience.

Troyce Scogin: Since I've been by myself as I lost my wife, it's been worse. I have too much time by myself, and you know how people are. The first two or three weeks that she passed

away, there was somebody here every day. And the gradually quit coming. I got two buddies stuck with me still come to see me and call me every day.

That's great.

Troyce Scogin: But there's nobody, I don't care who it is, if they hadn't been there that can imagine what it was, because war is hell. I got a buddy over here who was in that Baton death march over in the islands.

Over in the Philippines, yes sir.

Troyce Scogin: He drinks a beer every night. He's a painter and paints houses and stuff, and every night he comes home he drinks a beer. A preacher told him, said buddy, you're going to hell if you keep drinking that beer. He said buddy, I've been there. So that's the best way I can describe it. But it has been harder on me since I lost my wife. Me and her, she was jolly, and we had lots of fun together.

Did you meet her before or after the war?

Troyce Scogin: After. I met her downtown, I was living on one side of town and she was on the other working, and we'd eat breakfast at the same place and we got to talkin'.

So after the war was over and you got back home, you came back to Waxahachie?

Troyce Scogin: Yeah, I never did go back to the farm. I got a job at a company just started up here. I didn't take off very long before I went to work. I had to go to work. I couldn't just set around because I worked all my life and I had to do something.

Did you ever talk to your wife about your war time experiences?

Troyce Scogin: No, I never did. Very little. She was a lifesaver. She was jolly, and she was a baby of 12 kids.

That's a lot of kids.

Troyce Scogin: She'd get the family together around Christmas, and boy, she'd have everybody laughing all the time. We'd go on a trip. We used to go to California a whole lot. She had a brother lived out there, and we'd laugh all the way out there. 63 years we were together. It's so hard.

I can only imagine.

Troyce Scogin: We started out when we got married we had $7 between us. And we rented, well she kept her apartment and we moved in there for a little while. Then we rented a duplex. I said ah, I can't stand this, living close to everybody. So we rented a house that year about a block from where I live now, bought this lot up here and built a house. Been here 65, about 68 years in this house.

How many kids did you have?

Troyce Scogin: Two. I got one great grandson leaving today for Afghanistan.

OK, what branch of service is he in?

Troyce Scogin: He's in Tank Corps.

He's in the Army.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah. My oldest granddaughter has three boys, and all three of them went in the service, and two of them are making a career out of it. The other one was in the Air Force for six years and then he got out and he's going to college now.

That's good. And did they talk to you at all about your time in the military?

Troyce Scogin: Not too much. One of them was over there when they captured Saddam Hussein. He went down in that hole. We got a picture of him down in that hole.

Oh that's great, that little spider hole in the ground.

Troyce Scogin: I tell you, the biggest problem I had, people must've thought I liked cold weather. Everywhere they sent me it was cold. Bangor, Maine, you know, it was about 30 below zero the day we got up there.

Yeah, it can get very cold there.

Troyce Scogin: Then got around in Germany, and Germany is colder than Maine. That was the coldest winter they had on record over there.

Especially at the time you were there.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah. A guy last year down here at my church, he went in over there 9 days after the invasion, and he went back over last year and he was gonna pay my way if I'd go with him. I said no, buddy, I ain't goin' back.

Now tell us, sir, you did get to go to D.C. though on one of those honor flights, if you could tell us a little bit about that.

Troyce Scogin: That was pretty good. I met a whole lot of guys that had been through a lot, and some of them actually got in the Air Force and went to school, you know, and they were mechanics, worked on the planes and stuff, and they had it pretty good. They wasn't up front. But I was unlucky. There was four of us volunteered the same day and every one of us went different ways. One of them got killed over on the coast of St. Lo, run over a mine. They said they sent his body back home, but couldn't have. I seen the Jeep. He was driving a Jeep, driving his lieutenant, he was in Signal Corps, and I was carrying a message when I got hit. And I seen that Jeep and there wasn't but a grease spot left. But they sent it back after I come home and they had his funeral here. It had a casket and his belongings in it, but I know there was no body in it. It's just too hard to talk about.

Sure. Well sir, tell me about the World War II memorial in Washington. What did you think of that memorial?

Troyce Scogin: Well, I liked it but I got around over there and it's kind of a monument for, it says Omaha Beach and St. Lo, they mentioned at the same time. I got lost. Had to get the wheelchair to move me. Lot of memories flashed right in my face. But I have nightmares.

Well sir, I want you to know though that everybody here at the Land Office from Commissioner Patterson on down, we all greatly appreciate what you did for our nation and I think it's no understatement to say that what you and your fellow troops did helped save the world. I don't think it can be overstated how important D-Day was and the entire operation and you were part of that and I think you and your family should always be proud of that.

Troyce Scogin: Yeah, but a lot of hard memories there.

Yes sir, oh I understand.

Troyce Scogin: I'm proud of serving my country, but I always hoped my kids wouldn't have to do that, them three boys. One of them is in Afghanistan twice, been in Iraq three times, and now going back again. His little baby is going to be born tomorrow. They had two plane loads going and the last I heard, they were trying to talk them out of letting him go in the second plane so he could go ahead and have that baby before he left. I don't know if they will or not. But he called his brother yesterday. He was over here and said he was crying when he talked to her. Hard soldier's ___. But I just want to forget about it. I just can't understand why we have to have war now like we do.

Sure, well there's been war since the dawn of time and I'm sure that it will keep going until there is finally peace on earth. I think that's the way it goes.

Troyce Scogin: Bible says there will be wars and rumors of wars, and they have ever since I can remember.

There's always been a conflict somewhere on the globe throughout history, but we are a free country today because of folks like yourself and this program, sir, is all about trying to preserve stories like yours so that future generations can hear them and understand and so they don't just take things for granted. The average person has no idea at all about really what happened in World War II and the sacrifices that our men and women made in the service. They have maybe a slight concept, but they don't really know the true details and I think if somebody sits down and listens to this interview, hopefully they will get a little bit out of it that they might not have known otherwise.

Troyce Scogin: A lot of these young people now, they don't stop to think about nothin' like that.

I think you're right. The average person, their life is consumed with things that are really pretty meaningless – the latest fashions or the latest music, or what type of car they're driving or that sort of thing – and they don't understand the big picture and some of the really important things.

Troyce Scogin: The Depression was hard, but we always endured, plenty to eat, they seen that we had plenty to eat all the time. We had no money, but we had plenty to eat and we had a good family. I was lucky. I see so many families bust up, and that tears me up every time I hear of that. I think the main thing, problem now is kids ain't allowed to go to work until they are 16

years old, and the parents don't teach them the value of working. My daddy told me and my brother, he said don't you ever take nothin' unless you earned it. He said if you promise to God a day's work for a dime and you don't give it to him, you lied to him. And he believed in us working and hard work I don't believe ever hurt nobody. I see I got oldest granddaughter's husband is a manager of a company and he's so lazy he can't do nothin', sit behind a desk all day, and he'll die before he gets older than I am because people that sit behind a desk all day, they don't get enough exercise.

That's probably right if that's all they do, I agree with you. Well sir, I really do appreciate you taking the time to talk with us and share with us some of your story.

Troyce Scogin: If it'll help anybody, I'm proud I done it, but you don't know how hard it is for me.

Yes sir, I do understand. With this interview, like I mentioned, we hope that people will listen to these interviews hundreds of years from now. With that in mind is there anything you'd want to say to somebody listening to this interview long after you and I are both gone?

Troyce Scogin: I tell you what, the best thing I can tell anybody to be honest. What they say, don't never tell an untruth and work hard. Hard work don't hurt nobody. And earn whatever you get. Don't ask for a handout, I mean work for it. Like my daddy said, if you work, you'll make it. If you don't , you won't.

That's good advice. Well sir, in about a week or so we'll send you copies of this interview on CD's that you can give to your friends and family, along with a letter and certificate from Commissioner Patterson. It's just a small token of our appreciation to thank you for your service to our nation.

Troyce Scogin: Well thank you.

Yes sir, and it's been an honor just being able to talk to you today. I greatly appreciate it.

Troyce Scogin: OK.

Yes sir, well take care and we'll be in touch again soon.

Troyce Scogin: OK. Thank you.

[End of recording]