

Department of the Army  
U.S. Army Military History Institute  
Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17013-5008



PLEASE NOTE, IF YOU NEED MORE ROOM TO FULLY ANSWER A QUESTION, USE THE CONTINUATION SHEET AT THE LAST PAGE AND NUMBER EACH CONTINUED RESPONSE TO CORRESPOND TO THE QUESTION. FEEL FREE TO ATTACH AS MANY CONTINUATION SHEETS AS YOU NEED.

ARMY SERVICE EXPERIENCES QUESTIONNAIRE

PART I - GENERAL MILITARY SERVICE

1. Name: John R. Shaw Highest rank or grade held: PFC  
Present Address: Rt. 90, Box 606 Apartment: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: Cayuga State: NY Zip Code: 13034  
Co/Trp/Btry you served in: \_\_\_\_\_ Commanded by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Of Battalion: \_\_\_\_\_ Commanded by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Of Regiment: 273rd Commanded by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Of Division: 69th Commanded by: \_\_\_\_\_
- 2a. Enlistment date: Dec 21, 1943 Age: 18 Length of Service: \_\_\_\_\_  
b. Place of enlistment: Auburn, NY  
c. Previous occupation? How useful was it to you in the Army, if at all?  
Linotype operator, none  
d. If you had previous service in the Regulars, Volunteers, National Guard, Organized Reserve, Civilian Military Training Camps, or Civilian Conservation Corps, please indicate when and where. \_\_\_\_\_  
e. How and why did you join the service? Drafted out of senior year of high school  
f. Please describe the local enlistment or draft process with which you were involved. don't remember  
g. At the time, did you feel that the 1940 draft was necessary and fair? yes  
h. What did you feel about later wartime draft policies? \_\_\_\_\_



i. Has your opinion of the World War II draft changed since then? If so, how? no

3a. Describe the circumstances in which you first heard of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

My older brother was stationed at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii

b. What was your reaction to that attack? surprise. I was in school

4a. What were your initial reactions to entering military service? Dread

b. Please recount your leave-taking from family and friends. Was under quarantine for scarlet fever so could not go with unit. Had to go alone, by train, to New York City.

5a. Where did you train as a recruit? Camp Craft, SC; Camp Shelby, Miss.

b. In what specialties were you trained? Rifleman

c. Were you trained in first aid, signalling, radio, or the use of any special equipment? If so, what kind? no

d(1). Did you apply for Ranger, Paratroop, or other voluntary additional training? If so, what kind? No - One thing you learned was not to

volunteer for anything!

(2). Why did you seek such training? \_\_\_\_\_

(3). What were your experiences while undergoing such special training? \_\_\_\_\_

e(1). If you entered an Officers' training program, how were you selected for it? \_\_\_\_\_

(2). What were your experiences while undergoing such training? \_\_\_\_\_



f(1). If you were ever enrolled in the Army Specialized Training Program, where did you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

(2). How did you feel about its cancellation? \_\_\_\_\_

g. Did your training prepare you for your service overseas? yes

h. What further training, if any, did you receive overseas? more of same

6. At what posts were you stationed during your stateside service? \_\_\_\_\_

7a. If you were shown the film series "Why We Fight," what was your reaction to it? \_\_\_\_\_

don't remember

b. Why did you fight? Had no choice

8a. What was your opinion of the weapons you saw or used in the service? Good

b. Were they reliable? yes

9a. What were your opinions of the equipment, clothing, and rations you were issued? \_\_\_\_\_

Good. I really liked spam. Nobody else liked the food but I lived in an orphanage and the food was better in the Army,

b. How adequate were they for the climate and weather conditions you encountered? \_\_\_\_\_

Adequate

c. How responsive were the supply services to your unit's needs? \_\_\_\_\_

Adequate



10a. What did you think of the quality of leadership while you were in the service? \_\_\_\_\_

Adequate

b. How did officers commissioned through various means (service academies, ROTC, OCS, National Guard, and battlefield promotions) compare? \_\_\_\_\_

"Ninety Day Wonders" (2nd lieutenants) were good at marching and drilling.

c. Please describe instances of particularly good or bad leadership? \_\_\_\_\_

one 2nd Lt had a BAR ahead of him and his rear covered. Took care of himself!

d. Who were the "real" leaders -- officers, noncoms, or enlisted men? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

noncoms. More experience <sup>with</sup> and understanding of enlisted men.

e. How often did you see senior commanders in your company or battalion area? \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe such visits. seldom

f. Please recount any cases of soldier violence directed against officers. \_\_\_\_\_

none

11a. What did you think of the discipline at the time (lax, moderate, fair, strict, harsh)? Please comment. \_\_\_\_\_

Moderate

b. Please recount any particular punishments for breaches of discipline. \_\_\_\_\_

I never had any. Saw other people having a empty garbage

c. What did you think about military courts and justice? \_\_\_\_\_

12a. If there was any desertion in your unit, what caused it? \_\_\_\_\_

not that I knew of



- b. Was there much theft from one another in your unit? No
- 13a. What forms of off-duty recreation were common? Table Tennis, going to town. I drove the truck to town but didn't know how to drive. I learned on a half-track. I backed up into some German lady's porch.
- b. What was your opinion of Special Services (USO shows, movies, reading material, personal education opportunities)? never had any of these things.
- c. What, if any, materials did you read in your leisure time? didn't have any. I did a lot of pen + ink sketching.
14. How did you and your comrades get along with civilians in the US? Good
- 15a. How adequate was medical care? Good
- b. Describe the health of your unit. Good
16. For what did soldiers use their pay? Buy candy bars, others bought alcohol.
- 17a. Was drinking a problem in your unit? yes If so, how were the beverages obtained? PX
- b. Was drug use a problem in your unit? If so, which drugs and how were they obtained? NO
18. Was there much gambling? If so, what types? Dice
19. What songs were popular during your military service? Don't sit under the Apple Tree, Shrine of St. Cecilia.
20. What military slang words or phrases were popular during your military service? "90 day wonders."
21. Did you note any instances of ethnic, racial or religious discrimination? Please explain. No, except all the blacks were truck drivers



PART II - OVERSEAS SERVICE

22. When you first learned you would go overseas, what was your reaction? It had been inevitable
- 23a. At what point in your movement overseas did you learn your real destination? Before I left the states
- b. What difficulties, if any, did your unit experience in getting ready to move overseas? none
- 24a. Please identify your port of embarkation: not sure
- b. Please identify the name of your transport: Liberty Ship
- c. Please identify your port of arrival: Le Havre, France Belgium
- d. Please describe your travel experiences (by railroad, plane, truck, or ship): took truck from Le Havre to Belgium
25. What information, if any, did the Army give you about the countries in which you served? none
- 26a. What were your first impressions of service abroad? mostly farm towns
- b. How, if at all, did your views change? didn't
27. How did you and your comrades get along with civilians overseas before, during, and after hostilities? Only contact was when we went into people's homes and used their beds + food
28. Was there much fraternizing with local women? no
29. Please describe any looting by soldiers of which you are aware. Took people's alcohol from their wine cellars



30a. How was the morale of your unit? (Consider such things as mail from home, living conditions, general homesickness, etc.) got lots of letters from home.

b. What effect did combat have on morale? Helped, because we never had to retreat

c. What factors helped improve morale? good chow. Hot food came in (wormite or marmite?) cans

d. What factors contributed to a decline in morale? some days "lousy chow"

e. What was your opinion of Army Troop Information programs? always in the dark.

f(1). What enemy propaganda, if any, did you see or hear? none

(2). What was your reaction to it? \_\_\_\_\_

(3). What was its general effect on your unit? \_\_\_\_\_

31a. How and to what extent were religious convictions expressed in your unit? Church services out in the open - had Protestant & Catholic services

b. How, if at all, did these convictions seem to influence performance? Didn't see any difference.

32a. If you were sent forward as an individual replacement into a unit already at or near the front, what was your reaction on first joining that unit? N/A

b. How did the veterans receive you? \_\_\_\_\_



c. Please describe your "baptism of fire" and your reaction to that experience. in Leipzig, remember our regiment shooting into the air and bullets falling back on us + shattering glass all over. Retreated to a hospital with many dead German's for shelter.

d. Please describe a "typical" day when your unit was committed to the front lines. "waiting." "hurry up and wait."

e. How effective was the fire support your unit received from other combat arms (infantry, armor, artillery), from the air, and from naval gunfire? only had artillery behind us.

f. If you ever came under enemy air attack, please describe the circumstances and your reaction to that attack. never

37. How would you characterize your unit's combat performance? Was it the result of leadership, discipline, unit camaraderie and cohesion, individual courage or fear, or other factors? Please explain. adequate

38a. If you were ever wounded in action, please recount the circumstances. never

b. Did you personally experience or know of others killed or injured as a result of "friendly" fire? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Did you personally experience or know of others who experienced "shell shock" or psychological stress in combat? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

d. How effective was medical care at the front and behind the lines? \_\_\_\_\_



e. Were you able to rejoin your unit? If so, when? \_\_\_\_\_

f. If you were not able to rejoin your unit, were you able to perform light military duty? If so, what and where? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

g. Do you still suffer any effects resulting from your wounds? \_\_\_\_\_

39. Did you ever participate in cooperative operations with a sister service? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

40a. Was your unit (Co/Bn/Regt/Div) ever attached to a regular Allied command? If so, which one, where, and when? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. What special procedures, if any, were adopted to facilitate operating with Allied troops? (Consider such things as attachment of interpreters, liaison officers or NCOs, special training, familiarization courses, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. How, if at all, did their arms and equipment differ from those of U.S. soldiers? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What problems, if any, did these differences in arms, equipment, communications, or staff procedures cause? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. Even if not attached to an Allied unit, did you meet Allied soldiers in staging areas or in post-war occupation service? If so, when, where, and which Allies (Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, England, France, Holland, New Zealand, South Africa, USSR)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

f. What were your opinions of the individual soldiers of our Allies? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

g. What were their opinions of U.S. forces? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



41a. Did you ever work with or alongside Allied or foreign auxiliary, irregular, resistance, or guerrilla troops? If so, when, where, and which ones? No

b. How effective were they? \_\_\_\_\_

c. What were your opinions of them? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What was their attitude toward U.S. forces? \_\_\_\_\_

e. What problems, if any, occurred between such troops and U.S. forces and why? \_\_\_\_\_

42. Please describe a "typical" day in reserve when your unit was not committed to the front lines. Care, and cleaning of equipment

43. Please recount your experiences, if any, in the gathering of intelligence. (Consider such activities as scouting, interrogating prisoners, patrolling, etc.)

none

44a. How did you and your comrades regard enemy troops (Germans, Italians, Japanese) as fighters? worthy opponents

b. How well-trained, well-led, and well-armed did they seem to be? well armed

c. How effective were their weapons? they worked. We all wanted to get their lugers.

d(1). What did you think about the enemy as people? \_\_\_\_\_

(2). How, if at all, did your original opinion of enemy soldiers change after you encountered them in battle? \_\_\_\_\_



(3). How, if at all, did your original opinion of enemy soldiers change after you encountered them in the post-war period? good workers

45a. Were you ever a prisoner of war? If so, when and where were you captured? [If not, please go to Question 46] No

b. How were you treated by the soldiers who captured you? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Where were you held? \_\_\_\_\_

d. How were you treated by the prison guards? \_\_\_\_\_

e. For how long were you a POW? \_\_\_\_\_

f. How, if at all, did your previous military training prepare you for prison life? \_\_\_\_\_

g. What factors influenced morale in the POW camp? \_\_\_\_\_

h. Please describe your experiences in captivity. \_\_\_\_\_

i. Did you ever try to escape from captivity? If so, please explain how and what happened? If not, please explain why. \_\_\_\_\_

j. How and when were you liberated? \_\_\_\_\_

k. What was your first reaction to being freed? \_\_\_\_\_



46a. Did you capture any enemy prisoners? If so, please describe the circumstances.

[If not, please go to Question 47] not that I remember

b. How were enemy prisoners treated by U.S. forces? \_\_\_\_\_

c. What training did you receive in regard to treating enemy POWs? \_\_\_\_\_

d. Was the training adequate? \_\_\_\_\_

e. How, if at all, did your contact with enemy POWs affect your view of that enemy? \_\_\_\_\_

47a. Did you help liberate enemy prison camps or concentration camps? If so, which ones? [If not, please go the Question 48] No

b. How had the enemy treated the U.S. and Allied prisoners you freed? \_\_\_\_\_

c. How had the enemy treated civilian internees you freed? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What were your initial reactions upon seeing conditions in enemy prison camps and concentration camps? \_\_\_\_\_

48a. What were your reactions and your unit's reactions to VE Day? \_\_\_\_\_

Relief

b. What were your reactions and your unit's reactions to VJ Day? \_\_\_\_\_

Don't remember

49a. Please describe any rumors you heard about the Atomic Bomb before its use. \_\_\_\_\_

None

b. What was your opinion in August, 1945, on the use of the Atomic Bomb? \_\_\_\_\_

Don't remember

c. Has that opinion since changed? If so, how? must have been a

better way than killing a lot of people.



PART IV - OCCUPATION AND DEMOBILIZATION

50a. If you assisted in the establishment of Civil Affairs governments in liberated friendly countries, please describe your experiences. N/A

b. If you assisted in the establishment of Military Government in occupied enemy countries, please describe your experiences.

c(1). What efforts were made to root out the defeated enemy system of government such as the de-Nazification program in Germany?

(2). What part, if any, did you have in such efforts?

(3). What did you think about those efforts at the time?

(4). How do you feel about those efforts now?

51a. How were local civilians treated by American and other Allied soldiers?

b. How were local civilians treated by the Allied military administrations?

52a. If you encountered Displaced Persons, from which countries or ethnic groups did they predominantly come? None

b. How were they treated by American and other Allied soldiers?



c. How were they treated by the Allied military administrations? \_\_\_\_\_

d. What impression did the DPs make upon you. (Consider such things as living conditions and physical well-being). \_\_\_\_\_

53a. How was the morale and discipline of your unit after the end of hostilities? \_\_\_\_\_

"Matter of fact."

b. What efforts were made to maintain your unit's morale and discipline after the end of hostilities? \_\_\_\_\_

c. What demonstrations or disturbances, if any, did you witness by soldiers seeking to get home sooner? None

d(1). How did the "point system" for demobilization affect your unit and you personally? don't know what that was

(2). In your opinion, was the "point system" fair or unfair? Please explain. \_\_\_\_\_

54a. What awards and decorations did you receive? Sharpshooter bar

b. In your opinion, were awards and decorations distributed fairly? sure

55. Please describe your welcome home to the United States. I sailed into New York harbor and went past the Statue of Liberty. Had to go buy a pair of shoes. Wanted brown shoes and salesman said "nobody buys brown shoes."

56a. How long did you remain in service after the end of hostilities? got right out.

b. Why did you choose to remain in military service or to leave the service? \_\_\_\_\_

c. Please provide your date and place of discharge. \_\_\_\_\_



PART V - POSTWAR EXPERIENCES

57a. What did you do after you were discharged? Back to old job on  
linotype

b. How, if at all, were your military skills or military education transferrable to civilian life? N/A

c. Please describe the ease or difficulty with which you readapted to civilian life and the influence your overall military experience had on that readjustment.  
none

d.(1). Before the war, had you graduated from high school? No When? \_\_\_\_\_  
If you attended or graduated from college or trade school before the war, please name the school \_\_\_\_\_ Dates attended \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_

(2). If you went to college or trade school under the GI Bill after the war, please name the school \_\_\_\_\_ Dates attended \_\_\_\_\_ Degree \_\_\_\_\_

(3). Would you have pursued such postwar schooling without the GI Bill? \_\_\_\_\_

(4). What does the GI Bill mean to you? N/A

58a. What were your expectations of civilian life upon leaving service? (Consider such things as post-war America, GI benefits, educational and career opportunities, marriage, and family life). N/A

b. To what extent have those expectations been realized? \_\_\_\_\_

59a. Did you join the National Guard or Organized Reserves after the war? If so, how soon after the war did you join and for how long did you belong? No

b. Please identify your Guard or Reserve unit. \_\_\_\_\_

c. Were you ever called up for active service? \_\_\_\_\_

d. If yes, when were you called up, for how long, and with what unit? \_\_\_\_\_



60a. Please indicate any national or unit veterans' association(s) to which you have belonged. \_\_\_\_\_

b. How soon after the war did you join such association(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

c(1). To which association(s) do you still belong? \_\_\_\_\_

c(2). Why have you remained with it (them)? \_\_\_\_\_

c(3). If you have dropped membership in any such association, please explain why. \_\_\_\_\_

d. Please describe what your veterans' association(s) mean(s) to you. \_\_\_\_\_

61. With whom do you feel most comfortable discussing your wartime experiences? Why?

Children

62. If you have read any histories, articles, or other postwar writings on campaigns in which you participated, what is your opinion as to their accuracy? Not

accurate and don't like them.

63. World War II was a significant national experience. What, if anything, did it teach you about America or Americans? Freedom

64a. What were your expectations at the end of the war as to prospects for world stability? return to work + get married

64b. What were your expectations at the end of the war as to America's place and influence in the world? \_\_\_\_\_

64c. To what extent have those expectations been realized over the ensuing decades? \_\_\_\_\_

Fulfilled



