

## **Transcription: Herbert Wegworth**

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*Today is Friday, November 30, 2012. My name is James Crabtree, and this morning I'll be interviewing Mr. Herbert Wegworth. We're at the Courtney Home here in Temple, Texas, and this interview is being conducted in support of the Voices of Veterans Oral History Program. Sir, thank you very much for taking the time to talk to me today.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I'm feeling quite up in age for this. I'm 92. I'll be 92 shortly.

*Well, you're doing great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** This is my last year. I don't wanna go any longer.

*You don't want to go to 100? That's my goal. I want to hit three digits at least. Well, sir, tell me. It's an honor first of all to be able to interview you this morning. Tell me a little bit about where you're from and your childhood.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, yeah, okay. Originally born in Wisconsin in 1921.

*Where in Wisconsin?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It would be called, it's a funny name, it's Marquette, Wisconsin. It's not Marquette, Michigan, it's Marquette, Wisconsin.

*Okay, great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Actually, you better put down Montello.

*Montello, Wisconsin?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** M-o-n-t-e-l-l-o. Montello, Wisconsin.

*Okay, where is that in relation to Milwaukee and Madison?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That would be, if you take St. Paul, Minnesota, Twin Cities, and Milwaukee, it would be right in that line.

*Right about halfway?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, it's about 80 miles from Milwaukee.

*Okay, 80 miles from Milwaukee to the west.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, it's closer to Milwaukee than the Twin Cities.

*Okay, so you're kind of over by, I guess, Lacrosse was in that area?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, and I moved to Minnesota in 1939.

*Yeah, because I noticed you've got that kind of Minnesota accent.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, they're all Scandinavian people there, you know.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** All those people are Scandinavian, you know.

*So you grew up then primarily in Minnesota?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, I would say probably Wisconsin for 18 years.

*Oh, okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** From then I went to Minnesota, and I stayed there until we moved to Texas in '81. My wife and I, yeah.

*What branch of the military were you in?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** The Army.

*You were in the Army.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** We were under General Patton.

*Okay. When did you go in?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** In '42.

*In 1942.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I was drafted August 12<sup>th</sup> of 1942.

*August 12<sup>th</sup>, 1942, in the Army.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And that was Africa, North Africa. And we were under General Patton at the time.

*When you were drafted, did you expect to be drafted or was it a surprise to you? You knew it was coming?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, when Pearl Harbor was, I was two months short of 21. I was right in that age. And when I was drafted, they lowered the age down to 19. But I was already 21.

*When you got your draft notice, were you excited? Were you afraid? What were your thoughts?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I supposed as a young fellow, I was all excited. We went to Camp Stewart, Georgia, now it's a fort, but Camp Stewart. I said, "Oh, yeah." I said, "Wow, this is the life for me."

*Really?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, things change, you know.

*How did your family feel when you got . . . ?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, it was pretty rough on my mother.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I have two brothers, they're older though. My one brother was, he actually was drafted in the winter of 1945. He has about five and a half years older than I am. But I was right in the draft age, right in the draft age, yeah.

*Did you have many friends that went in the service too?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Of course, after you get in, yeah. But I didn't know anybody when I went in.

*That you went to high school with and that sort of thing?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, nobody at all, no.

*So you got to Camp Stewart, Georgia, and they told you, I guess, at that point you're going to be in the Tank Corps? Armor?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** You know, it was kind of a funny thing. I wasn't really in the Tank Corps. See, Patton later became the tank commander but I was in what was called the Research Battalion. Lights, they had big lights, you know, to spot out, see, at first. To spot the aircraft as they came over.

*Spotlights.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, spotlights, before they hit us. We had to spotlight them, you see. And I was on the big globe directing it, you see.

*Were you able to spotlight them very well?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** The one thing we had at that time, we used to get a lot of Italian planes, that which was called a three-motor plane, and we had to spot them. But the Italians were never overly anxious for the war.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** They were a poor partner for Hitler, they were. Mussolini, you know, later on they crucified him by hanging him up.

*Yeah, they strung him up in that town, that's right.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Upside down.

*That's right. Yeah, the Italians didn't do all that well. I know they had gone into Ethiopia and pushed around Ethiopians but they didn't do very well once the real war started.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** They actually, the Italians really were not war-minded I think very much.

*I think you're right. What was it like though, dealing with the Germans? They were pretty tough, weren't they?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Well, I'm of German descent, you see, and, of course, I had a lot of German relatives over there. In fact, I had more over there than I had in Wisconsin, because I was only the second generation. My mother spoke only German at one time.

*Wow.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And my father, of course, he was born in the Twin Cities. He already spoke English but my mother spoke only German. She read only the German Bible, and she couldn't . . . But after a while she spoke English.

*So you grew up speaking German as well I guess?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Not very good.

*Not really, okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** When the war was just about over with, we were behind the lines then, and they asked me to become an interpreter, and I'd have been in on these Nuremberg trials, but I had to go to Paris for six months to learn to read, write and speak it but I didn't do it. My mother was getting more sick at the time.

*So you got out at that point?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah.

*Now, your last name is Wegworth, right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Wegworth, yeah.

*That doesn't sound really like . . . That's not really a German name though, is it?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Well, actually in German it's Weckworth with a K.

*With a K, okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It is W-e-g-w-e-r-t-h. Actually it's Weckwerth, in German it would be Weckwerth.

*Okay. So you spell it now Wegworth.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Wegwerth, Herbert G. My middle name was Russof.

*But the way you spell it now is Wegworth? Yeah, because if you look at that name, you wouldn't think it's German, but the other spelling you would. So what was your first impression? You said when you got to Camp Stewart, you thought this would be a good life for you. You were excited to be there.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Wow. Boy, man alive. Things change.

*What was it like when you first got to Africa? Where did you go when you first got to Africa? You land in Morocco?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** When we got on the ship, we got on the ship in February. We had to go down the coast and come to Africa because of the submarines. Oh, those submarines.

*Yeah, the U-boats.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, U-boats. And, of course, we had a couple British, I can't think of the name of it but they were watching us all the time, and an aircraft carrier.

*Where did you land in Africa? Did you go to Morocco first?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** We went to Oran, O-r-a-n.

*That's in Morocco?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah. We were stationed there.

*Once you got off the ship, you're in Morocco, you had to know then, I guess, ultimately you're going to be facing the Germans in North Africa.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, right.

*How long was it before you started seeing combat?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** We didn't see any combat. All we saw was they bombed us and that was all. But actually we didn't see bombing until . . . Then we went from there to Corsica, the island of Corsica.

*Sure, okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And then we were under the 7<sup>th</sup> Army, General Patch. And from then on through, and then a short while later, we were put up to the front lines.

*In Africa?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** In France, and in Germany. France and Germany, yeah.

*Okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** First France and then Germany.

*What are some memories that really stand out to you during that time? Certain periods?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I guess one of the big memories was I spent my first Christmas in Africa, and then we were stationed on the island of Corsica. We could see Italy if it were a clear day. We could see Italy. And from there we went to southern France which is called the Green Beach near Marseilles, and from then on it was all the way through, you know, Germany. First France and then Germany and then Austria. We ended up in Austria.

*Was France . . . What was the reaction of people in France, the French, when they would see you there as an American?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That was a different kind of life. Their style of privacy is not the best, you know. They had the, in Paris, now it's changed, but in Paris they had outside latrines, and you could see your feet, you know. That was different. But anyway, we were in Paris and then we went all the way through to Tunis, and then we came back to Algiers, and went from there to Corsica.

*When you were in France, were you well received by the French citizens as liberators, pushing the Nazis out?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I would say so, yes, very much so. Yeah, they showed us . . . Very much so. But, actually to be truth about it, the Germans were more gracious about it. They were so tired of war, the German people themselves. And then, of course, I saw all the . . . Where they cremated the Jews, you know.

*Really?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It was terrible.

*So you saw some of the concentration camps?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, wow. It was kinda rough, you know. Of course, what made it so bad is that I'm of German descent, and from my own people, and my mother, of course, that would bother her because I am a full-blooded German American, you see. And you learn by experience about how everything is, and the most outstanding experience would be, I think, probably when we ended up in Tunis, and when we came back to Algiers and went into southern France, the Green Beach it was called near Marseilles, and then, I guess the most outstanding situation was . . . We were behind the lines then and so consequently they had what they call in Germany concentration camps. They had the Poles and the Russians and such as that. I was a young fellow, only 23 years old or 24. And so consequently, a buddy and I went in there, you see, and we got mixed up with a couple Russians, vodka, and the next day I had a tooth pulled, and the dentist says, "Oh, my God. You think you need Novocain?" I says, "I don't think so." He pulled the tooth and I don't remember it.

*You don't remember or feel it or . . . Wow.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I had too much vodka in me.

*That was towards the end of the war though, right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That was when the war was over.

*The war was over, yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I guess it was the most outstanding situation of all is one we left Le Havre, France, to go back home. We were on what we call a banana boat. You know they had those small boats. But the British had that big boat, you know. And we left way ahead of them, and by golly, you know something? That British boat was fast. When we landed at New Jersey, and when we got in New Jersey, that boat was already unloading. It passed us up on the ocean.

*Yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It passed us up and then, of course, you went through the Camp Dix.

*Yeah, because Fort Dix is a big base in New Jersey still today.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Then, of course, when I was there, being of German descent, I could speak German so consequently they had German cooks and such as that, you see. And so then they would see me and in German “der wissende deutsch?” And I said, “Yeah.” And I ate so much I vomited it. I wasn’t used to it. And then I came to Camp McCoy, Wisconsin, and that’s where I was discharged. And I have a back injury, a pretty bad back injury, and I still have problems with it.

*That happened in the Army?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, that happened.

*What caused it?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** You know, born on the farm I was always kind of the working type, and I got it when we left Algiers. That’s where I got it in. I still have trouble with it, quite a bit of trouble.

*Just from lifting things?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah. Of course, we went over on a French boat. We went on a French boat. What a mess. They never clean ’em, you know, when I was young. But anyway, we went over on a French boat and from there, from Corsica we went to southern France.

*Now the whole time you were in a section that did the spotlighting, is that right? Even when you got into Europe, you were still doing the spotlighting?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, no. Then we were just more or less security police, that’s about all.

*Okay, that was your job at that point?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, until later on.

*So the spotlighting really only took place then in Africa?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Right, right.

*Why do you think it was they did that in Africa but not in Europe?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Because the situation was the Germans used to hit the coast guards of Corsica an awful lot you see, and so consequently in order to do . . . We had what you call the Arab people . . . They call ’em smoke pot details. They sent ’em to smoke so the Germans could not see. And at that time I drove a truck, and I had to go from Corsica for one side to the other side, and in Corsica, of course, the roads aren’t very good, you know. And it was very mountainous you see, and I hardly knew how to drive a truck. I really didn’t. I could drive it. I knew how to shift up for uphill but I didn’t know how to shift downhill. And the Arabs knew I was ready to jump off of that. The hell with it, you know. But I made it, I made it. And when we were on the other side of the island, I had what was called a seven-course dinner, a French dinner

where you eat and then drink wine, eat and drink. It was when we left Le Havre, France. Of course, we slept in big tents. It was pretty . . . Of course, I was used to the cold, you know, the cold and ice and everything else. But we slept in big tents. But I was stationed in Paris. I was a truck driver in Paris while we were there, you see. We had to drive . . . We pulled guard duty by the Eiffel Tower.

*That's not too bad, right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, that was kind of different though for us, you see. And we pulled guard duty, and then I was stationed in . . . Of course, Paris is so different then from what it is now. But I would say that the people that were really the happiest were the Germans. The people themselves. They were so tired of the war. The only thing that Hitler did that was a peculiar thing, he saved all the churches. He used to put white flags out on the church, big cathedrals and all, so they wouldn't . . . None of the churches were injured. None of them were. They were all protected. But I guess the biggest thing was when we left the Le Havre, France.

*You said you got ultimately all the way into Austria, is that right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** All the way in to Austria.

*What was it like in Austria?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, gosh, it was wunderbar. It was very good, yeah, in Austria and Germany you know.

*And the people there were pretty pleasant towards you?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Very pleasant, very pleasant. And Austria, it was very nice, yeah. Maybe because of my German descent, I don't know.

*Because you could speak to all of them pretty easily then?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Of course, my wife and I, we visited them in Austria two times. So we had quite a time there.

*That's great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I have a pacemaker, of course. I've had this quite a while, and then my hearing, my hearing loss . . . I've lost about 60 percent of my hearing.

*You seem to hear me okay right now.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I got my hearing aids. They're pretty good. Like I can hear you.

*Yeah, that's all that matters then, as long as you can fix it.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** In a big crowd, I can't do it.

*Sure, all the ambient noise, that's right. What brought you to Texas? What was it that caused you and your wife to move to Texas?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** My wife. She hates the . . . She was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, and she hated cold weather.

*There's a lot of that up there too.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, yeah. And we were married 43 years. "I wanna move." And, of course, Texas was the best place. We had Alabama, the northern part of Alabama was a nice place, but she liked it in Texas here, you know. And so consequently, we moved here. We moved . . . It would probably be outside of the Austin, northwest of Austin, about 20 miles from Austin, Texas.

*What town was that?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That was in '81.

*What town? Did you move to Sun City in Georgetown?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, it was Lago Vista.

*Lago Vista. I know that area well because I live near Leander now, and that's not all that far from Lago Vista.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, boy. That's a growing place.

*It is. It's really booming a lot. All of it's growing a lot.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Golfing, oh, that's a big thing there now.

*It is, yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Of course, things have changed quite a bit.

*Sure, yeah. But you retired, moved to Lago Vista.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, I worked 30 years for 3M company, and then after the 30 years, I had to be 60 years old when I retired which I was. So when my wife passed away September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2005. It was quite a blow to me.

*Did you and your wife have any children?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No.

*No kids?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, no we didn't. The middle one, she had Alzheimer's but the one to the right is our wedding picture.

*That's great. You got married after the war?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, yeah. In '47. October of '47.

*That's great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** October 25<sup>th</sup> of '47.

*And you lived in Minnesota then at that point?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, I was in Minnesota all that time until I turned to be 60 years old.

*Working for 3M which is based out of Minnesota, right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Well, at first I became a tailor. I was a tailor for five years, and then I was able to get in the 3M company, and then I worked for them for 30 years.

*What did you do with 3M?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** What was called the laboratory. I was very interested in research. Laboratory was my position. I studied it very serious, you know.

*They're a good company to work for, right? Big company.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Big company, yeah. Of course, they've changed an awful lot. And, of course, it's quite a big company, you know. Very large, yeah. But it was a good company but after I had my 30 years in, I figured, "Well, might as well retire." And I could retire. You had to be 60 years old, and you had to have 30 years in, and I retired then.

*When did you come here to the Courtney Home?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** You know, I'm trying to figure that out. I was 91 when I moved in. You know, I cannot name the month but I've been here about three-quarters of a year.

*Okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Because I was 91 when I was still driving my car.

*Okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Then I had to give up the car. I couldn't drive anymore. And it's because my reflexes have slowed down quite a bit.

*That happens to everybody.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And then I got knee trouble, you see, here. I wear a patch over here.

*Were you living in Lago Vista still at the time?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, we were actually living in Temple, right here.

*Okay, so you moved up to Temple then?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah. Well, we lived in Austin . . .

*In Lago Vista?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, for four and a half years. My wife wanted to move to Austin so I moved to Austin which I regretted. I don't like Austin. Austin is too big. It's too fast. And then when she died, and then I moved back to Temple here. I like it here in Temple.

*Oh, good.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I go to church here in Temple. Grace Presbyterian Church.

*That's great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Otherwise everything is going pretty good. And, of course, they take care of all my pills and all that. And I get along pretty good here.

*Oh, great. The food here is pretty good? How's the food here?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, the breakfasts are very good. And then the noon luncheon, of course, I'm not much of a meat eater anymore. I eat a lot of vegetables, and I would say that overall it's pretty darn good. Pretty darn good. I wish I had a little bit more fruit. Then, of course, there's a lady that goes around passing fruit so I always make sure to get some oranges.

*Yeah, you got some oranges up there. Good.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I love fruit. And, of course, I have, because of my age, I have a bowel problem, so I gotta eat a lot of fruit and prune juice.

*Yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** But it's part of life, you know.

*Sure, sure. That's great. I really enjoyed being able to talk to you about your time in the service. You mentioned that Patton was in charge of the forces you were with in Africa. Did you ever hear him or see him at all over there?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, since that time, no. Well, a buddy of mine did, when I came home. But, of course, he died. I think most of them are dead.

*When you were in Africa, did you ever hear anything from General Patton? Did he ever address like a formation you were in or that sort of thing?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** He had a beautiful home in Algiers, you know, as a general, you know. Beautiful home, boy it was. Then he got in trouble when he slapped a soldier, you know.

*Yeah, that's right.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And then, of course, he . . . They transferred him. He became a tank commander. Oh, he was good then, oh, boy. You know, he was the kind to jump in a tank himself.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** He'd get out there, you see. He was in the battle right now, in the battle, yeah. He was a good tank commander.

*Did you ever see him at all?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, I never did.

*Never saw him?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, never saw him, no. And I never saw General Patch either. But after General Patton took over, after he left, then we were under a British general, Montgomery.

*Under Montgomery, okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** He was kind of a screwball.

*Yeah, he kind of had his own rivalry with a lot of the other generals.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Well, you see, Churchill, that was between Eisenhower and Montgomery. Churchill liked Eisenhower. Eisenhower was a good commander, oh, yeah. I voted for him. He was a good commander, and he was the kind that had a real hard concern. It was really hard for him to do what he had to do, but he did it, you know. And he went in there, and, of course, I thought very highly of him.

*I think everybody did.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** A really good job consequently, but I would say that, for instance, the whole time was when we left Le Havre and headed home. And then we came to Camp Dix, New Jersey. I guess it's still going there, I don't know.

*It is. Fort Dix is a big base. I've got a friend that's stationed there now, and they've made it, they've joined it with McGuire Air Force Base and Lakehurst Naval Air Station so it's a big huge joint base. It's a big, big base. They call it Dix-Lakehurst-McGuire. It's a joint military base of all three of them combined so it's a big, big place on the east coast now.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That was very recent. You know, on the train from Fort Dix back to Chicago, a couple of them got snookered. They got themselves drunk as could be, you know. I didn't, not me, but they got a lot of drinking but I didn't do it. And since that time, of course, I don't drink at all because of a heart problem.

*What was it like when you got back home and got to see your parents again? I know you said your mom was worried.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** My mother, yeah. It was wonderful to see my mother. She didn't last too much longer but it was an awful blow to her, you see.

*Just because she was worried about you?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, she always . . . I was the perfect draft age, you see. I was, as I said before, two months short of 21 when the war broke out. December 7<sup>th</sup>, you know. But it was an

awful hard blow. I remember leaving on the train for Georgia, and my mother there. Oh, her tears were running down her face and all because I was young, you know, 21 years old.

*And she was born in Germany, is that right?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, she was born in Wisconsin.

*But she only spoke German up until a certain age.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, because my grandparents only spoke German, you see. Of course, she read from the old German bible too, you know, and so consequently . . . We had mail then at that time, they reduced our mail to a small piece, you know.

*That's right, the V-mail?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, V-mail, that's right.

*Yeah, they'd shrink it down.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And, of course, she would write. And sometimes I had trouble figuring out what she said. She got a little mixed up there, you know.

*Between the German and the English?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** And I said, "Ma," I says, "Stop once in a while. Put a period so I can draw the next breath."

*Yeah. So before the war had started, I know there was a lot of German ancestry folks that were opposed to the idea of going in the war, the German Bund movement and America First, and Charles Lindberg and that sort of thing. Was she supportive of that? Was she kind of worried about you going and fighting against the old homeland?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** My mother remarried in 1922, and my stepfather, he was an old German, I tell you. And he got a little bit of trouble there. He kind of sympathized with them, you see.

*Yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** But my mother, she never mentioned it. Not one time did she ever mention it.

*How did he get in trouble? Was he involved with the German Bund?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Well, he worked . . . He quit farming and he worked at what was called a P factory where they had a lot of German ex-prisoners there, you see. And, of course, they were real happy they didn't have to be in a war.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** So he spoke German to them all the time, and he was able to do that, you know. So he kind of sympathized with them but he was never reprimanded or nothing.

*That's good.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** But he got along pretty well in that way.

*When the war was started, was your mom disappointed or kind of upset? I know she was worried about you personally but was she also kind of like, "Well, we should fight the Japanese. We shouldn't mess with the Germans."*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yes, very much so. It was . . . She wasn't in favor of any war, and I think was more so with her because of me. I was, actually of the three brothers, I was of the actual draft age so she was . . . And I being the youngest, you see and . . . Of course, my brother died, my oldest brother died, he was only 75, and my other brother died when he was 86.

*Were they in the service during the war too?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, yeah.

*What branches were they in?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** My one brother, my younger, the one that's a little bit older than I am, he went in the service. He never left foreign soil. He stayed right in the United States, and he was in the part where they handle clothing.

*Okay.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That was his job, you know. But he never . . .

*What about your other brother?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, he didn't go in.

*He didn't go in?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, he didn't go in. He was married and had two boys.

*So he was old enough and had the exemption?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, his youngest son is still living, and he's 71 now.

*Seventy-one.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, he's had a heart problem, so consequently . . . But the oldest one, he died. And so consequently because of the situation about the war, my mother was, because of me, she didn't like it at all.

*So when you got home them, it was a great relief to her I'm sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It was, yeah. And then I went back to St. Paul, Minnesota. It was awfully hard. Of course, then she was already off the farm. They had moved to a small town, a town where I knew so well, you know. And her church, we were Lutheran by background, and her church was so close by, she didn't live long. Couldn't enjoy it much because she couldn't walk very well. My mother actually killed herself by work, you know. She did all the farm work, see?

One of those things, you know. But I'd say overall, I would say that the treatment here has been pretty good.

*Good. Well, you know, this interview, we're saving it for the archives so we've got documents that go back to the 1700s, and so our goal in doing these interviews and saving these so that future generations can listen to them and learn from them.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** If I live to be 92, I will be the second oldest of all my generation on both sides. Actually there are three sides, and I'll be the second oldest. I had a cousin that died not too long ago. She died at 97, and, of course, same age as my brother would have been, you see. But it's really been pretty good.

*But you don't want to get to 100 you said earlier?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** No, no. I said, "92 Lord, I wanna go home."

*All right. I guess, you know, whenever you're called to go, that's when you go.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, that's right. I figure, well, at 92, that brings me quite up in age, you know.

*Sure.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Because I can go way back to the first part of the last century. My birthday is the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February, and I can go way back when. And it's a long history.

*Sure, you can remember the 20s pretty well and the depression and all that sort of thing.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, I remember the first president, Coolidge.

*You remember Coolidge?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah. But actually when I was born, Woodrow Wilson was still president. And, of course, actually he wasn't really president. He was a very sick man, and his wife became more as the president, you know.

*Yeah, and then Harding took over.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Yeah, but I knew . . .

*You remember Coolidge.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** President Coolidge, yes. Remember him, yeah, all the way through.

*And then Hoover and all the rest. Being in Wisconsin, you probably remember Bob La Follette?*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, yes.

*When he ran for president.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Oh, yeah. I remember all that. You know, it's a long memory.

*Yeah, your wits are still sharp and that's the biggest thing. I've got a grandfather-in-law that was . . . He's still alive and he was a Marine in World War II but he has Alzheimer's as well. So when you talk to him, he repeats things, he can't remember things very well, and it's sad. It's really sad.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Where I eat, it's so sad. Oh, it's so sad. I see these poor people, their mind is barely working and some of them, OOOHH! It's sad. It's rough to see that. And here I am, of very sound mind yet, you see.

*Yeah.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** It's an amazing situation.

*I think of all the blessings, I think having your mind is probably the best.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** That's right.

*I really . . . Because I know with my grandfather-in-law, he just . . . A lot of times he doesn't know where he is anymore. He doesn't recognize his wife any longer, his children. It's heartbreaking for them, and it's scary for him because he's always wondering, "Where am I? I wanna go home," that sort of thing. They have to calm him down and tell him where he is, and I just think that's horrible.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** My wife, she had Alzheimer's. She just . . . She got lost.

*Yeah, that's tough.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** To be truthful, I was very happy when she died. And the reason is because she died a good death. No pain, and she died. I didn't want it but she died. And when they hauled her out that morning that she died, I was there with her while her body was cold, you know. It was rough but I was glad that she died. She didn't have no pain.

*And you had to have been grateful too that you outlived her, that you were there for her whole adult life.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** We were married two months short of 58 years.

*That's great.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** She was very good but she made out pretty good in life.

*Well, sir, I gotta go do this other interview but, again, I want to thank you for your time today and most of all, thank you for your service to our nation. In a couple weeks, I'm going to send you copies of this interview on CDs along with a nice letter and certificate from Commissioner Patterson as just a . . .*

**Herbert Wegworth:** I'm gonna read that.

*It will just be a small way of us to say thank you for your service.*

**Herbert Wegworth:** Thank you.

*Thank you.*