

Long: I am Edith Long, sister of Charles Richard Long, who was killed in Korea in 1951.

[0:00:29] I had two brothers. Robert was the oldest, and then Richard. Of course the military always refers to the first name and middle initial, but Charles is so foreign to me. He was always Richard or Buddy. We grew up in a time when things were hard.

[0:00:54] We were poor, but we really didn't know we were poor because everyone else was too. We had a great time. We had a great set of parents. And our growing up years cannot be compared to anything today. Richard and Robert, the only people in our neighborhood were boys. Consequently, if I wanted to do anything, I had to go with the boys, which made me a great, great tomboy.

[0:01:29] But we had fun, and my parents always knew where we were, and it was just such a pleasant growing up period. As I said, my folks were poor, and they took in boarders to help make ends meet. And it was great. We had nine people living in a three bedroom house with one bathroom.

[0:01:59] Nowadays, you have to have nine people and nine bedrooms and nine bathrooms, but that's not the way it was then. We never had a problem, and we just didn't have anything but a great time. Then as we all got older, things happened and the boys went to the service and Richard was a member of the Second World War.

[0:02:26] The Battle of the Bulge, the crossing of the Rhine. And I remember so well when he came home around the Fourth of July. He would get under the bed because he could not stand the firecrackers. And when he was discharged, he came home on Christmas Eve day, and he and my mother went downtown and did all his Christmas shopping. And I just could go on and on and on about what a great time we had and what great parents we had.

[0:03:02] And we went to school like we were supposed to, and we graduated from high school. I went to junior college for a couple semesters and that was it. Richard never went to anything beyond high school. But it was just great.

[0:03:28] And I wish that the kids nowadays could see what we did and what they could do and what they're going to think about in ten years down the road. But we always went to church on Sunday morning, and my brothers and my dad always wore a shirt and a tie. We had no air conditioning at church.

[0:04:00] But that was the dress of the day. And we could all go out on Saturday night if we wanted to, but we must remember, we get up and go to church regardless of what time we got home. And we were all active in church. And I think that's another thing that the kids nowadays don't understand. But maybe they will before it's too late.

[0:04:29]

Interviewer: Tell me about Richard. Was he drafted, or did he enlist? Was Richard drafted?

Long: Yes, for the Second World War. And then when he was discharged, he stayed in the Reserves. And he wanted to be an escort.

[0:05:03] And by an escort, was to accompany bodies back to the United States. And they would not take him because of high blood pressure. But it was not very many months until they said, we need you to go to Korea. So he went to Korea.

[0:05:26] That is where he spent his final days. He was a great soldier. And as one woman told my mother, your son always wanted to do something big, and he did. He gave everything that he had. And of course we were most proud of that. People would say, when his body came back, how do you know it's him?

[0:05:58] Well, if it wasn't him, it was some other mother's son. So you did what you should do. And then of course he's buried in the Mount Washington Cemetery. And then he was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously. He received lots of medals, purple hearts, Medal of Honor, good conduct, Bronze Star.

[0:06:28] All of them. And he was entitled to every one of them. But he did what he wanted to do, and he saved many men. And so how can you be anything but proud?

Interviewer: Tell us about the letters, when he wrote home, what he had to say to his family.

[0:07:03]

Long: The letters coming home to the family were always "Hi Mom and Sis." And he would talk about the weather, how cold it was. And he would sleep in frozen clothing. But they knew that that was all they had, and so they made the best of it.

[0:07:34] Showers, of course, were out of the question because of the cold. But he weathered the storm just like the rest of them.

Interviewer: Was your other brother enlisted also?

Long: Yes, he was in the Air Corps, Second World War.

[0:08:02]

Interviewer: Tell me who was. Because my question isn't heard. So tell me who you were talking about.

- Long: My older brother Robert enlisted and was in the Second World War, and he was in the Air Corps. He never had to go overseas.
- [0:08:27] He was, of course, honorably discharged, and he did not stay in the Reserves. And he married while he was in the service in Boston, where he met this young lady and came back here and was married. And by that marriage, they had two children. And my brother Richard never had any children.
- [0:08:56] Maybe that's best. The only thing that I wish that he had had a son, because being a Medal of Honor recipient, the son would have been eligible for West Point. And of course that didn't happen, but some other son got that privilege.
- [0:09:28] So it was quite an experience for my family. And my father died in May of 1950. And Richard was killed in February of 1951. So that was quite a blow to my mother, losing a husband and a son within a 12 month period. But she carried on and was still a good mother.
- [0:10:02] Proud of her son, proud of all of her children. But it was just different after that.
- Interviewer: How did your family learn about his last battle?
- Long: Learning of his last battle was by, I guess, the officer that recommended him for the Medal of Honor. As I say, he was entitled to what he got, and he gave everything he had.
- [0:11:00] And the officer – you have to be recommended for the Medal of Honor by a captain or above. And Captain Lively was the one that recommended him, and he wrote the recommendation on a piece of toilet paper that he had in his helmet. And Captain Lively is still living. He lives in Arkansas.
- [0:11:27] And I hear from him occasionally. And I have thanked him many times. My mother wrote to him before she passed away, right after what he did for my brother, and thanked him for doing that. And I just can't say enough about a brother that would go to war and literally kill himself for the fellas that were behind him.
- [0:12:08] And as the Kansas City Star wrote in one of their articles at the time, he guides his own doom. And it was quite an article. Very good and very, very much to the point.
- [0:12:29] And a lot of articles were written, being a hometown boy. What was then the Intercity News carried a lot of articles. He was a member of the Kiwanis Club and executive board of the Boy Scouts. And he sang in his church choir. He became an officer while in high school in the ROTC.

- [0:12:56] And he was just a great, great guy. I miss him. I miss both of my brothers. I miss my parents. But they're all in a better place. And I sometimes wonder why I am still here with the rest of my family gone. But I took care of my mother, and I think that what I did pleased my brothers.
- [0:13:30] So that was how that happened.
- I would like to say something here about Doyle Parman.
- [0:13:58] Several years ago, the Truman Library had a display on Korea. And it was well written up in the paper. Doyle found out about it, and he and his wife Carol came down. And it was a nice display, a wonderful display, and he took it all in.
- [0:14:23] And when it comes to seeing the Medal of Honor and who it was presented to, his wife said that he was just really "got," because he was at that place, at that time. And from that time forward, I have been friends with the Parmans, and they have been in my home.
- [0:14:58] I have been in their home. He was a pallbearer at my mother's funeral. And he is such a great man and such a believer and supporter of the military. We visit on the phone at least once a month and maybe more. And I never, never fail to get a phone call from him the night before February 12.
- [0:15:35] And he would say, I remember. I would say, Doyle, so do I, and I appreciate your calling. And when they come to town, he always goes to the cemetery, and that means a great deal to me, to know that people have not forgotten.
- [0:16:00] And I am sure that Doyle is very, very interested in what is being put together and will open, if you will, on November 9. And I'm sure that he and his wife will be here, because as I say, he is very, very interested in the Korean War, and he is almost obsessed with the Korean War.
- [0:16:27] He has talked to people all over the world about the Korean War, and he has made a lot of friends. And he won the trip to Korea three years ago for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Korean War, and he and his wife went. I was going. I had my passport, my airline ticket and everything, and then they decided that I should have heart surgery.
- [0:16:59] So I did not get to go, but he did. And they took a lot of pictures, which they gave to me and told me all about it. And I was very grateful that they took the time to do that. So they're just great, great people, and I'm really glad that I am privileged to know them.
- [0:17:35] As I said previously, Richard, my brother, is buried in Mount Washington Cemetery. He's in section 118, and his marker gives his name, where he was

killed, dates and so forth. And I had put at the top of that a big brass plate which says, Medal of Honor Recipient.

[0:18:06] I think that it's a nice looking piece, and I'm sure that it pleases him. And anybody that's ever in the cemetery, please go up and look at it, because I think you will agree that it's like it should be.

[0:18:31] I really don't know what else to say about my brother, my other brother, my parents, other than I appreciated each and every one of them so much. And I feel that I am probably a better person for having been with them the years that I was.