

# PRITZKER MILITARY MUSEUM & LIBRARY

## Richard Duchossois Oral History Interview

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Interviewee: Richard Duchossois

Interviewed by John Schwan

Transcribed & Edited by Teri Embrey & Ella Hester

Schwan: My name is John Schwan. I'm a board member of the Pritzker Library, and it's my pleasure to have a conversation with Mr. Richard Duchossois, who is a veteran of the Army in the Second World War, and a very, very significant contributor to our community and a philanthropist, if I may be allowed to say this. Thank you, Dick.

Duchossois: Thank you, John. But I'm not that significant, I'm just another person.

Schwan: We all are, but you are that significant. Dick is going to...Dick and I have a lot in common he doesn't know about. I went to Lane Tech [Chicago High School], and was born and raised in Uptown. Dick went to Morgan Park Military Academy, when it was a military academy, and was raised in Beverly. Is that correct?

Duchossois: That is correct.

Schwan: We will get into where you went from there. But, do you want to tell us a little bit about Morgan Park Academy?

Duchossois: We had two high schools in [the] Chicagoland area, Morgan Park High School and Morgan Park Academy. I don't know why, but it was always obvious that I was going to go [to] the Academy. My brothers went to the Academy, and that was just part of life. I think that that did a great deal in changing my life for the future. It changed my life for college, the short time I was there, and I think that I carried on an awful lot of the things into combat that I had learned at Morgan Park. I really didn't stop to think about it at the time, but when I look back, that's where I got my education, between there and the year and a half in college before I got called into the service, and my college education was really started in Normandy and finished up then. I had no more college.

Schwan: Obviously, it worked well for you, so that's fine. Was Morgan Park a pure military academy? Did you live on the campus?

Duchossois: We had boarders and we had day students. I was a day student most of the time; if you were a day student you still live like the military. The only thing is you didn't sleep there

at night. You went home if you were in the community, and we lived in Beverly and that was a short way from the Academy.

Schwan: So you basically had four years in high school of that discipline?

Duchossois: Yes. Yes sir. I learned my right foot from my left foot.

Schwan: You learned how to march, etc.

Duchossois: I learned a lot of other things there, too. Maybe not so much on the grade, but I learned a lot of things about life.

Schwan: I'm sure. And when did you get your first exposure to the military? Were you in the reserves?

Duchossois: Yes. Some of us at the Academy...we would do certain things, and if you were an honors student, in the honors school, we were eligible to get a second lieutenant position in the reserve when we were 21. When the war broke out, it dropped down to 18, and I had just turned 19. War broke out in December, and I got called in January.

Schwan: And where did you get called to [for] your first assignment?

Duchossois: First assignment? Well...we all had to go down to...from all our area, went to Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas. I was only there a few days; then a number of us were assigned to the 610th Tank Destroyer battalion, which was being formed down at Camp Hood, which is now Fort Hood, down in Abilene, Texas.

Schwan: So you went down to be in that specific unit?

Duchossois: I was in that unit until I got out. I never changed.

Schwan: And they were forming that unit?

Duchossois: Yes. Well, tank destroyers were just being formed at that time. Nobody really knew the full mission of tank destroyers. They'd experimented with similar type operations in Africa. There [were] a number of different thoughts, just like the tanks...the infantry wanted to stay infantry, and the cavalry with cavalry with the horses, and the artillery...The army was just in the process of turning over into the new way of fighting. When I went in, we still had...officers had the sand brown belt, you still wore the old campaign hat. It changed within a few months after I was in the service.

Schwan: I understand. So you went into that unit as an officer.

Duchossois: Yes, sir.

Schwan: And you were...what was your...you were a company commander, you were an executive officer. What was your title when you started?

Duchossois: Well, I was a second lieutenant when I went in. I was just another lieutenant in a group. Then you start out with training; you have a platoon. Because we had a lot of people from the Oklahoma area, the Oklahoma National Guard [was] in that category, the rest of them were basically draftees, civilians you might say. We didn't fill out until we got down to another camp later on, with all the draftees. And that group of draftees basically came from the East coast- New Jersey, Brooklyn, and through that area. The first group [was] basically from Oklahoma.

Schwan: How many men were in the unit initially before you deployed?

Duchossois: I'm not sure. A company was 198 men. We had 3 companies: gun companies, one company of reconnaissance, which was a little bit less, and a headquarters company. That consisted of our entire battalion. We were never, in the beginning- when I say the beginning, the first year- we were never at full capacity. We didn't even have the guns and things; we had artificial things, whatever we could get for training. The army just wasn't equipped for war.

Schwan: So you were, in essence, the headquarters operation, and then they filled in the troops for you?

Duchossois: Well, the cavalry already had been established, the unit. We were the first filled in group, our officer group...the first officer group to get there. We didn't have all of the enlisted men at the time, a long way short of that. But they gradually started filtering in.

Schwan: And you were the company commander, or--?

Duchossois: Not at that time.

Schwan: A platoon leader?

Duchossois: Well, we sort of switched around, we did a little bit of everything. It started in training, we were training the troops. We technically had a job, but it was with different troops, or different sections of the company.

Schwan: So after college you were drafted?

Duchossois: No, I was never drafted. I had never signed up for the draft. I had my certificate to become a second lieutenant in the reserve when I was twenty-one, and I got called in on that certificate.

Schwan: When did you go to Little Rock?

Duchossois: I'm not sure when that was. But it was probably early March.

Schwan: And you were activated when? Or, you went in when?

Duchossois: Well, I was called into service, then you get thirty or sixty days, whatever, to get your uniforms and all of the other things. Then I went in with a group of eight, we got on the train in Chicago, they sent us down to Little Rock. We didn't know where we were going; we were just on the train.

Schwan: Ok, that makes sense.

Duchossois: Well, that was the army.

Schwan: They still, I think, don't tell you anything.

Duchossois: Well, it's better than people say. You can kid about it, but it's pretty good, very good.

Schwan: And then you went from there to Fort Hood?

Duchossois: Well, it was Camp Hood, then. We used to joke about it; it was just being built. It was the only place in the world where we could sit in the mud up to our waist and have the dust blow in our eyes. We lived in tents. But there had been barracks, but there were other people in the barracks.

Schwan: And your unit was part of what larger unit?

Duchossois: Well at that time, we were just in the army. What we were assigned to, as far as what part of the army, I don't know. Everything had sections, everything was training. It was the beginning of the war, there was a great deal of confusion. The top officers were changed quite frequently. Generally speaking, when we had a battalion commander, it was a regular army officer that had been transferred from some place. Usually they didn't stay too long because they went on to other things. As the army got organized, we got organized.

Schwan: Do you have a rough idea of what the size of the army was then?

Duchossois: It was small; it was building. But it was building very fast. An example: the first day I was in, we got down to Little Rock, Arkansas, Camp Robinson. I was assigned to a company which I didn't know. But I was to teach bayonet training at eight o'clock the next morning. I had never seen a bayonet. So the sergeant of that company, who had been regular army, we spent half the night learning bayonet training. I had my classes in bayonet training. I didn't see another one until after the war was over, and I saw that in a museum. So it was like Morse code that I had to take.

Schwan: And what vehicles were you training in at that time?

Duchossois: Well, we had a few half-tracks. We had some Jeeps. And we had whatever trucks they could pick up. We weren't equipped with anything, really. We had whatever they could get.

Schwan: Whose concept was it for the tank destroyer battalion?

Duchossois: Well, I think, from what I understand--and I'm not sure I understand everything--down in Africa they had a lot of tank warfare down there. They experimented quite a bit with a 3-inch gun on the back of a half-track. A half-track, you know that? And they started developing maneuvers, and it was working quite well. But, like everything else in the army, some of the senior officers, they thought it to be cavalry with the horses, and other infantry. And no one really knew how to work with them. It evolved, more than anything else. And different battalions were trained a little bit different. And we got changing of equipment. It went from the half-track with the 76 mm gun on the back, then to the M10s, which was a 3-inch gun on a vehicle which looks very similar to a tank, except it doesn't have the heavy armor. Then we went to towed 3-inch guns; then we went back to the 90 mm gun. We got the 90 mm gun when...after we got out of Normandy. I wasn't with the battalion at the time the 90 mm gun came to our battalion. I was in the hospital then. When I got back out, we already had the 90 mm. They were brand new.

Schwan: So were you trained on them? Or did you just...went and were trained as you go, kind of on the job?

Duchossois: You were expected to know what it was about. You trained yourself at that.

Schwan: They had that attitude.

Duchossois: I was a company commander then.

Schwan: It was assumed that you knew.

Duchossois: You learned fast.

Schwan: And your unit was in D-Day?

Duchossois: No, no. We fought in Normandy, but we didn't land with the troops. We were not in the invasion, but we were still fighting in Normandy. Our major, you might say baptism, was down at the counter attack going in to stop General Patton's 3rd army from going on up into breast. We were initially with the 1st army; that was our assignment. [We] didn't do much fighting with them, because they had already landed. Then we were assigned to the 3rd army, which was General Patton's army, and we stayed with the 3rd army until after the [Battle of the] Bulge. Our heaviest fighting in Normandy was in the Argentan-Falaise gap; that's where we lost the most of our men. And we lost our battalion commander and some of our battalion staff. From there we were reorganized to a great extent, because what was left of our operations-- our reconnaissance company--was broken up into 3 sections. Reconnaissance had three platoons. Each of the gun companies got one of those platoons. And from there on in, the 610th fought basically as individual companies, assigned to individual parts of the division that we were

assigned to. We were still a battalion, and got services as a battalion, and we were called a battalion, but we fought as individual companies most of the time. And a company would generally be assigned to an infantry regiment, whatever division we were with.

Schwan: Where did you see your first combat?

Duchossois: In Normandy, with the 80th Infantry Division.

Schwan: So you were attached to them, and that was your first combat experience?

Duchossois: Well, that was our first real combat experience. You know, you're always...once you land there's someone shooting at you. But our first really heavy combat was in the Argentan-Falaise gap.

Schwan: Were you support, or were you... what was your job really?

Duchossois: We were supporting the 318th infantry regiment, of the 80th infantry division. We were attached to them, supporting them. As you may know, the battle of Normandy--as troops tried to move out--was a mass slaughter. That was our heavy...that's where we had our heaviest fighting, in Normandy.

Schwan: So did you...when did they put you in Normandy? They were in Normandy when you got with them?

Duchossois: No, no, they weren't. We got in before the 3rd army did. The 3rd army came in, and then we were transferred from the 1st army to the 3rd army.

Schwan: And so you fought your way through the hedgerows and whatnot?

Duchossois: Not really. We were in them, but at that time they were concentrating a little farther away from us. We were in the southern end of that thing, and the Germans were pushed back. At Avranches [Normandy, France], they counterattacked us, the 90th infantry division took the brunt of that. We moved through there in that, but not really heavy. When I call heavy fighting...I call when they're loading you down with artillery fire, you have a lot of men going down. The sniper and the little things on the side of your tank, that's part of what you have to do. But being new, when you first get shot at, you really don't know. You don't learn until you've had two or three days of being shot at. You change.

Schwan: How did they utilize your guns in your unit? Were there tanks that you were attacking?

Duchossois: Every time we were with a different section--a different division, a different part of something--we were utilized different. Finally it got the point...as the company commander, I would get what the division responsibility...what their phase line...what they were trying to reach, I would [say], "Here, you do it." When we were new, they

didn't know how to use us; we didn't know how to work with them. They tried to tell us how we should be used. You'd always say, "Yes sir," then you'd do what you were supposed to do.

Schwan: Or what you decided to do.

Duchossois: Well, you know, we trained one way, they trained another way. Our people knew it; they remembered it. We had a good outfit.

Schwan: But you knew what you were supposed to do?

Duchossois: In a way. When you go to combat, it isn't one shoe fits all. And what the training taught you... it's like a quarterback in football game, you call **the audibles[??]**. Because it changes; there is no set pattern. You have to use your noodle. You have to understand where the enemy is coming from, what they're trying to do, and you have to be there to get them out of the way and not be noticed, you have to outsmart them. It's a matter of game, in your mind.

Schwan: Did the Germans have tanks at that point?

Duchossois: Oh yeah, they had a lot of tanks.

Schwan: So you were confronting the tanks?

Duchossois: Well, yes. Sometimes, we would be fighting tanks. Sometimes we would be working with the infantry going through a village, where maybe the Germans had the crossroads with machineguns and so forth on the corners. We would blow holes in the sides of the buildings so the infantry wouldn't have to go through there; they would go through the holes we blasted in the sides of the buildings and stay away from where the Germans had their guns. We did everything we could. None of that stuff was in the textbook or in training; we just did it because it had to be done.

Schwan: Right. So you were making the decisions, as the point.

Duchossois: To a great extent. That was what a company commander in the tank destroyers really had to make his own decisions. The regiments we were with and the battalions sometimes we were supporting, they were infantry. They had infantry tactics. We had to sort of clear the way for the infantry, and then when they'd finally gotten into their positions, we had defensive areas. Which we didn't like, we liked to keep moving. But when they had to stop, we had to protect them ... from tanks coming in.

Schwan: And did that occur frequently?

Duchossois: Always. That's what you do. That's our job.

Schwan: So always the German tanks would be around?

Duchossois: They were always around.

Schwan: And they would attack all the time?

Duchossois: Well, there [are] different ways to attack. You attack sometimes by the artillery coming in and blasting. You attack sometimes by their tanks sitting back in the woods and waiting for you to come there. Sometimes they're coming at you, sometimes it's just infantry. Every situation...I can't really think of too many. You might say skirmishes or battles or things that were absolutely identical to the other. In concept they were the same, but actually in the way they evolved it was different. You had to think on your feet.

Schwan: What type of intelligence reports was available to you?

Duchossois: Well, it would come down from division. But we would do...in my company, we would send our own patrols out. We relied on the information we got...that we developed ourselves. If we're going to be going someplace, our scouts would go out. Then like anything else, you have to have complete confidence in your people. My company...we had the very best of everything, but still I liked to go out with them so I could better understand what they were telling me when they came back because sometimes my eyes would see it different than their eyes would. It's not that they were giving me the wrong story, it's just different. Sometimes I'd see what I had to do, where the troops and the tank destroyers could move, where the best place to shoot at from. They wouldn't always see the same spots. They would look at...their mission was: what are they running into. My mission was finding out how we were going to get through it.

Schwan: Did you have a lot of contact with the infantry company commanders, or was it at the battalion level?

Duchossois: Both, both. Sometimes you'd work very close with the infantry company commanders, sometimes even with their platoon leader. We would do what we had to do. When you've been in combat for a while it becomes automatic. You start thinking that way, that's your job. There is nobody that tells you, "you move here" or, "you move there." You know what your mission is, you know what ground you're going over, theoretically you know what's in front of you. You try to find out; you get it from different sources.

Schwan: You made your own decisions?

Duchossois: Well, to a great extent. They would tell us what we had to do. But generally speaking we had to decide how we were going to get it done. That was our job.

Schwan: Did you have specific targets or cities that you were supposed to take? Or villages?



Duchossois: Yeah, but everyone was different. Everyone was different. They would tell us what was in there, what infantry we had, what the engineers would be doing. "Here's what we're doing. You're a part of it. Work with the closest troops."

Schwan: At that point, what type of German soldier were you in combat against?

Duchossois: Oh we ran the full gauntlet. In Normandy, through the Argentan-Falaise gap, they were very, very good, top troops. As the war progressed later on, we ran into good and we ran into bad. After the Bulge, you saw some of the older men on bicycles and so forth. You knew that they were running out of men and they were running out of material at that time. You knew they weren't going to be good soldiers, you knew you could push fast or you could scare them. General Patton always had the idea that you keep pushing them and never let them turn around and look back. And that was how we went across France. Then we got held up at the Moselle [River] because there was other fighting up north and they took the equipment, and I got shot down there. I was in the hospital between Moselle and Metz. I was shot during the crossing of the Moselle River, and I didn't get back until after Metz had fallen.

Schwan: And you were at the Battle of the Bulge?

Duchossois: Yes, we were headed due east. We had been...my company had been in contact with the enemy. We were finally given a rest period, I guess, we had been maybe... most of us had been maybe a day, day and a half without any sleep. Finally we got a chance to be brought back to be re-equipped. [We] got security out, I asked our people to shut off your radios. Just keep one open I'll be in contact with you. Our battalion got word that we were to move directly north and move quick. Well I had my radio off, and they came and got me. I would say within two hours of when we started to get our rest period, we were headed to the Battle of the Bulge. We were right on the front.

Schwan: So you were at the front of the Battle?

Duchossois: Well, we went a long time without sleep. So you learn to sleep while you're walking, you learn to sleep for fifteen minutes here, half hour there. You never get more than an hour.

Schwan: So when you were in the Battle of the Bulge, you were really absorbing the initial shock of the Germans?

Duchossois: No, we didn't have the initial shock. The Battle of the Bulge was going on when we got up there. We hit them from the south. It was the 1st army that took the initial shock--and those were basically new troops that hadn't had combat experience--when the Germans hit. They were very smart in where they hit, it was the weakest part of the whole front, sort of a rest area if you could call it that. An area to get used to hearing the guns go off. That's why they got so far.

Schwan: Ok. And that was in the winter?

Duchossois: It was cold, yeah. It wasn't too cold when we first moved, but it got cold after. I understand it was one of the coldest winters they had on record.

Schwan: And you really were in combat against the Germans best troops.

Duchossois: Yeah, they had the best troops, they had good troops. I won't say they had the best. We were better.

Schwan: Understand. Now at that time did they have their tiger tanks?

Duchossois: Yeah.

Schwan: So they had all the heavy stuff?

Duchossois: They had the best there was, they put on their point, yeah.

Schwan: Just as a minor aside, did you ever get to meet General Patton?

Duchossois: No. I saw him a couple of times. We knew who he was. We worshiped the ground he walked on, because we moved forward. We were so proud of what we were doing. We were at a place called New Elm, which was way east of...I think it was New Elm. No it wasn't, I can't think of the name now. But we were way east of Paris when Paris fell. We were down on the Moselle when we read in the Stars and Stripes how the British had taken the town that we had left.

Schwan: So that was Montgomery, with the Brits?

Duchossois: Well, he was a good commander too, but they were different. You know, you can't say one was good and one was bad, but there were differences of opinions as to what your tactics should be and how you fought. Patton was very, very aggressive, and we were too because he built that into us. We didn't develop that, he did, and he taught us.

Schwan: So you were totally imbued with his spirit.

Duchossois: Well, let me say this: when you're successful at something, you start to say, "It works," and you get cocky. We knew that we were the best, he told us we were the best, and we were the best and we were the fastest. And I think history has proven that.

Schwan: No question. Did you move with American tanks or you were on your own?

Duchossois: Sometimes we had American tanks with us, and sometimes they were ahead of us. Each area and each combat that we had, every fight you might say, was different. Now, when we got down into the Moselle, we didn't have any American tanks with us, but other places we did.

Schwan: So you... again, I'm trying to equate my experiences in Vietnam with yours, of kind of being on your own...

Duchossois: Well, to a great extent, I was back at the 70th anniversary of D-Day. I was with a small group of people, and they had some wonderful guides that were showing us how they landed and so forth. I should have kept my mouth shut but I didn't. After one guy told us how great it was, I asked him, "Are you talking now about high tide or low tide?" He looked at me, he didn't know what I was talking about, then he said, "Oh yeah, well I can't tell you." Because you know if it's low tide, you have about 300 yards to cross that beach, and you're under fire for longer. If it's high tide you have about 50 yards for the Germans to shoot. So it made a big difference as to how you went across. But what I really learned in there was that many of the guides and many of the people who write about it... just reading I could tell if they were talking to a private, were they talking to a corporal, were they talking to a platoon leader, were they talking to a company commander or a battalion commander? Because each of the people in there--like in any part of the war--you had different responsibilities. As I would look at it as a company commander, I'm trying to get my strategy, I'm trying to move my troops, so I don't have time to think about other things. A fellow in the tank, a tank destroyer or an infantryman... in the foxholes in the places you can't see...he's worried about his particular small unit. So the stories you would hear depend upon what the rank was and the responsibilities of that rank; that would tell you how the battle went. In other words, and I hadn't thought of this until a few years back when reminiscing about some of the things, you can tell what the responsibility was of the people giving you the story, if they were a private in a foxhole or if they were a company commander out there doing his reconnaissance and moving forward. It's that simple, and I had never thought of that until I got back to Normandy.

Schwan: Well, it's an utterly personal experience, isn't it, war is?

Duchossois: I had a year and a half of college, and when people ask me where I went to college I just say Europe. They start naming the different colleges, "Nope, nope, nope, nope." So finally they give up asking. But that was the end of my education, though I had a half a year at the University of Chicago. But I wasn't a very good student in high school, but I was getting straight A's in that business school for half a year. I know as much as they know, as far as the little parts of the business that we have, because business and fighting in a war are very, very closely related. Very closely related. And neither one can use a textbook. There is no such thing in either as one shoe fits all. You get the tools but you have to know how to use the tools. Some use them one way, some use them another. Some are successful, some aren't successful; it's how you interpret what your responsibility [is] and how well you're going to carry it out...the what are people around you... what is their responsibility...it's like risk. Risk isn't the mission; the risk is the people you have completing the mission. And that's the one thing I learned that I carry through to today.

Schwan: No question. So you really were out there, on your own, basically.

Duchossois: Well, you're never really on your own.

Schwan: But you were your own scout.

Duchossois: To a degree.

Schwan: You were your own intelligence gatherer.

Duchossois: Well, we always got the intelligence reports, but after a while I never really believed them because I didn't know if there was some staff sergeant or some officer back there. We developed a way in our company. We said, "Don't expect what you didn't inspect." That happened to me down on the Moselle; I didn't do that and we paid for it. [We] didn't lose any men, but the Germans lost a lot. They came in at the wrong time, and I carried that thing thinking, "Jeez, that's pretty smart of me to think of that". I got back home and everyone used that same expression. You have to. It's too normal.

Schwan: Absolutely. What was your relationship with your men? Let me preface that with them coming to get you out of the hospital, and bring you back to the unit. That shows immense respect, as an infantry officer.

Duchossois: I would like to think it's respect. They didn't always have that. I was the youngest in the company; everyone was older than I was, the men and the officers. Behind my back they called me little Napoleon. I had learned in military academy, you have to have the discipline, and if you have enough discipline it becomes automatic, you're thinking. But when we got to combat, one of the companies...our company commander was the most popular captain in our group, but they always had the highest AWOL, the highest VD rate. Under first fire, they broke. I didn't lose a man. From then on, they almost surrounded me. I think it was more the respect of knowing we had a job to do, we knew how to do it, and we'd get it done. And if we did it right, we wouldn't lose many men. If we didn't have the discipline, if we didn't have the tightness, we were going to get our people shot up because no one would know really what they had to do. We took a great deal of pride in being able to be the first on there; we always figured second isn't good enough. There is no second. You're alive or you're dead. That's how it went. Our men got that in their heads. We had discipline; it was just absolute discipline. And you were never questioned on anything. Every once in a while you would get some replacements but that soon got straightened out.

Schwan: How did you get wounded?

Duchossois: Well, we were overrun pretty bad. I had to send my driver back. I thought I'd try to hold off one part of the group coming through. I was there alone, trying to spray the field where they were coming in. And as you're running, shooting with your tommy gun, you're always looking a little to your right to see where it is, [and] I saw the guy; he was

maybe 30 yards away from me. I couldn't get around fast enough, so he shot me. I just wasn't fast enough.

Schwan: You were fast enough, you're doing this interview.

Duchossois: Well, it isn't knowing and being smart, it's knowing what the instincts are. And the longer you're fighting...it's just like the longer you're an accountant the more work you do, you learn it. Things become automatic. If you stop to think about, are you going to shoot that guy or not shoot him, your gun goes down, you're dead. You have to do it by instinct to a great extent. And the longer you're in combat, the more you got that way. Towards the end of the war, because we were a pretty good operation--and we didn't have a battalion commander because ours had been gone--they would send different people in, so on their 201 files they would have their command. Well you'd see somebody come over from the states; a lieutenant colonel was usually a battalion commander. And they hadn't been in combat and we had for a long time. When the music started coming our way, we would know when to duck and when not to duck, and when it was coming over or going in. When they heard that stuff coming, they would take shelter, and we would just stand around and watch. But, it wasn't that we were brave, it was [that] we were used to knowing, we had learned to survive. And you learned when you should duck and when you shouldn't duck.

Schwan: How many men did you have in your company, at most? I know it varied depending on contact.

Duchossois: When we first hit combat and we were with the 3-inch towed guns, we had 189 men in a company, and had a company commander, and four lieutenants. Each platoon had one and then you had an executive officer. When we went into the M36s we dropped about 156 men, because we didn't need as many.

Schwan: How were you resupplied?

Duchossois: With men?

Schwan: No, with...well, both... with men and with ammunition, food, etc.? What [were] the logistics of it?

Duchossois: You always had a headquarters section. The way we operated in the company I commanded, we had a lieutenant back there. It was his job to make sure we had the fuel first. We had the equipment and ammunition second, and then the food, and other accessories third. And I would tell him what we needed, when we needed [it]. I wouldn't have to tell him, he would know, you get to know. That was his job. I tried not to over micromanage. They didn't use that word then, but when you give a man a responsibility and you watch him carefully, and he's doing that responsibility right, you don't try to tell him to do too many things. They'd start doing what I would do: I'd get my instructions

and so forth, but if I didn't think they were giving the right ones, I did what I wanted. He had to do the same thing. I didn't know every move he that was going to make, I didn't know who was going to be shooting at him; he had to call his signal as he saw it on the ground. I think that's what most American troops did. German troops, I don't think they went that way. They were so disciplined that if someone said "jump" they wouldn't ask why, they just say, "How high?" That's the discipline they had. That was good for them, because everyone in their operation was that way. Our guys weren't, the Americans want to think for themselves. And you have to let them think for themselves, but you have to make sure that they think in the right direction. If they're people that can't do it, maybe they'd be better off in some other operation, or out of the company. We were very, very fortunate; when we had people that really couldn't quite make it, we were able to get them moved and transferred out. So we had pretty good guys. Very good.

Schwan: So how many replacements did you have on a regular basis?

Duchossois: I don't know.

Schwan: But not many? You were able to hold your unit intact for most of the--?

Duchossois: Well, we would...if we were short, we would tell battalions--our headquarters--we were short. They would put in a requisition to wherever the replacement depot was. Then they would ship guys up to us. If we were short in the first platoon, they'd put some in the first platoon, or the second, wherever they had to go. We very seldom got anything but privates. We got some second lieutenants; we didn't like them. Well, most of them that we were getting at that time were really good people, but they had been enlisted men and gone to OCS-- Officer Candidate School-- and got a second lieutenant commission in 90 days. They hadn't had combat experience. And experience, the longer you're there, the longer you're going to survive. The shorter you're there, the shorter the time you're going to survive. But if you're in a command, and you haven't learned those things, you aren't going to be able to give the right commands and take care of your people. So we tried to keep switching around within our battalion, from one company to another if necessary, to make sure that the three platoon leaders of the tank platoons were experienced people. We didn't like to put a new man there. But sometimes we didn't have any choice.

Schwan: It had to be very tough on a new man, when you're moving all the time.

Duchossois: Ah, they don't have time to think about it. When they're shooting at you, you move. And if you've got a mission to get your guys there, you know what your mission is, you do it. Combat and business are very, very similar. You can go to business school, learn all of the book-learning, but if you don't know how to translate that into what you have to do, it's worthless. All business schools do is give you the training and the tools to work with, then you have to know how to use those tools. In combat, you know all the things to do with your gun and attack and so forth; you know the tactics. But when you're on the

battlefield, everything changes. You have to know how to use the things you had learned before, and put the different combinations together. If you don't, you're going to lose. It's very simple. The two are very much alike.

Schwan: And you were in this combat role for a couple of years.

Duchossois: Well, I don't know when you call the combat world and training. Sometimes training was more difficult than combat, you know.

Schwan: I understand that. I liked it better in the jungle.

Duchossois: Well, you take what you can get.

Schwan: I didn't like the other stuff. Did the... your vehicles that you used, did they change in the course of your combat experience?

Duchossois: Yes. We went into Normandy... we had half-tracks with towed 3-inch guns. Down in Nantes after the Moselle crossing, the battalion switched over to 90 mm guns on mobile tanks. Our tank destroyer looks very much like a Sherman Tank. The difference basically is, a tank destroyer doesn't have much armor. It would return of a 50 caliber machine gun. So if you get hit by another tank, it goes right through you, and takes out whatever is in there. In a tank, which has the thick armor plate, generally the German ammunition can burn through that armor on one side, but the molten side from where it's burning through is scattering around inside the tank, and it takes out most of the tank people. So we might get hit and it would go right through us. But if it's a fuel tank or something then of course you're going to be on fire. But if it doesn't, it goes straight through. That's the difference. And we're faster because we're lighter. We don't carry as much weight.

Schwan: And you were able to destroy Tiger Tanks?

Duchossois: With the 90 mm we could. With the 3-inch gun, if you hit it in the sponce --between the track, there [are] weak spots in there. Or if you could get them going up a bit of a mound and you could get them in the belly. Other than that, it would bounce off. Now when you had the lighter things, like some of the tanks had, their guns would bounce off them. The Germans had pretty good armor. In fact, it wasn't pretty good, it was darn good. You had to know where to hit the tank. Now when they were moving, you don't have much choice in that. And when it's out at a distance, you're lucky if you hit them in the sponce. You have to give those tankers just a whale of a lot of credit. They never turned back. They were good. They'd stay there; they'd sacrifice their tank if they thought they could take a German tank. They were good. We had the best. I think that's one of the reasons why we could move so fast, why Patton kept it moving. Our guys knew what they were doing.

Schwan: Well, you had to be if you're confronting someone who could destroy you.

Duchossois: Well, that's just it. They could destroy us. And we knew that; it was either them or us. And as Patton used to say, he didn't like the guy that was going to give his life for his country. He wanted you to kill the other damn guy so you could kill more people later. And our people believed that because it was true. He didn't tell us one thing that wasn't true. And his way and his tactics are what won the war in our area. I don't know what the other armies did; we weren't with them.

Schwan: So his style... how would you compare his style of leadership to yours?

Duchossois: I think all of us who had the privilege of fighting with General Patton adapted to his. We had no choice. But his was right, and we knew it was right. We tried our very best. And I think if you build the morale up, you know you're on the winning team, you move ahead a lot faster. And we knew we were on the winning team. We knew we were the best; we knew we could kill more Germans than they could kill us if we did what he told us to do. That was in our minds, there was never any question about it, and that's how we reacted

Schwan: Was he visible to you?

Duchossois: Yeah, I wouldn't say frequently, but we would see him or his people a fair amount. And what he did...he had regimental commanders and battalion commanders that got up front. His top officers would be there.

Schwan: So he was leading from the front?

Duchossois: Yes, he was. And when you've got a special set of orders coming down, you knew that he knew what he was doing. They didn't come down through a bunch of staff people, they came from him. Or we assumed they had come from him. They originated from him.

Schwan: So your belief in him made you more effective?

Duchossois: Yeah.

Schwan: And your men's belief in you is what made you effective?

Duchossois: Well is it any different from, say, a football team? You've got a quarterback that, you know when he throws a pass where it's going to be; you have confidence in him. It's just a spirit, I guess, a way of life. But if you got a quarterback that's missing and so forth, calling the wrong plays, you don't have confidence, you don't play your hardest. We fought our hardest because we were fighting for a cause. Believe me, everyone that was in that war fighting wasn't fighting for liberty and everyone at home. We had a mission and we had to win. And if they were going to be taken care of we'd better take care of what he told us to take care of.



Schwan: He doesn't really get credit for that.

Duchossois: He gets credit from us.

Schwan: Yes, which is the only place it counted.

Duchossois: Yeah. Well...yeah.

Schwan: Right?

Duchossois: I guess you're right. I didn't look at it that way.

Schwan: Well, I just think in terms of the movie and all of that other phony crap. You're the testament to Patton. And your men are the testament to you, because they did what you said.

Duchossois: I think that if you really looked at what happened in the war, and you talk to people from different armies, different divisions and so forth...Those who were most aggressive...division commanders, regimental commanders, even the army commanders, that were the aggressive people. I think if, in business, if you have your CEO as an aggressive, successful guy who's pushing forward, and your company's a success, your people--all the way down the line--they become better people. You take on the personality, I think, of your leaders. I think. I don't think you try to do that, it just happens.

Schwan: That's true. And you then...when did the war end for you?

Duchossois: We were with another army at that time. We were halfway between... can't think of the name of the town now, where all the beer is. Where do they have the beer fest?

Schwan: Munich?

Duchossois: Yeah, Munich. We were halfway between Munich and the Alps, we were going down there. It was May, I'll never forget, it was snowing in May. But we knew it was over about a week before, because most of the guards at the German camps and so forth had left; they were afraid of the Russians. And the inmates kept coming back, and they were just a horrible sight. And if they weren't being guarded and they were coming back, there weren't many Germans. A few die-hards, but nothing big. So the war really, for us, ended a week, oh, maybe a week, 10 days before the armistice was signed. We got word to cease fire maybe 10, 11 o'clock in the morning. By noon we were headed back north again. There was no jumping [or] happy days or one thing or another. We were tired, we were worn out. All we wanted to do was get a place to lie down and sleep a little bit, and get our...well, first we had to take care of our guns and our equipment. And then we would sleep. But we wanted rest more than anything else. There was no big celebration where we were. Our people didn't celebrate.

Schwan: And you were in combat for about two years?

Duchossois: Oh no, the war didn't last that long really. We were in combat from July until the following May.

Schwan: Ok.

Duchossois: The war was over in May, and it started in June, but the June before.

Schwan: So one year?

Duchossois: Roughly, roughly. But that was long enough.

Schwan: I was gonna say.

Duchossois: I wasn't in that long, I had hospital time.

Schwan: Not that much.

Duchossois: Yeah, well, at least you slept. You learned that the body can get along without much sleep. All you have to do is keep the adrenaline up. If your adrenaline is up you can keep going.

Schwan: Well you can doze off, can't you? You can take a 10 minute break and nod off?

Duchossois: Well you can't take it at your leisure. You can take it when they tell you [that] you can.

Schwan: When they tell you [that] you can, absolutely.

Duchossois: When things die down a little bit, you can rest your head a little bit.

Schwan: And you saw the difference in the German troops? They went to the old people on bicycles?

Duchossois: Oh yeah, towards the end of the war, we really weren't...after the Bulge we weren't really fighting against any hard guys. There are always some die-hards, there always will be on there, but they weren't always troops. Sometimes they were civilians fighting for their homeland, but even before the Bulge...because a lot of the good troops had been pulled back, getting ready to go into the bulge. We started seeing some of the bicycle people, older people. You know that the better troops are either getting ready to attack someplace else, or they're quitting, or they don't have them. You can tell about where you are by what the troops are, how well they're trained, those in front of you.

Schwan: So you made it all the way to Munich, and then it was over?

Duchossois: Well after Munich...there wasn't much after Munich. It was... from down there, I guess if you're brand new coming into what little stuff we had, you'd think it was pretty bad. But

you're sort of used to people shooting at you. You get used to it. Well, I shouldn't say it that way. You never get used to it, but you learn to live with it.

Schwan: How do you evaluate the Germans as soldiers?

Duchossois: Depends upon which troops you were with. In the Bulge, we knocked out a tiger tank, from the Hermann Goering Division. That was the one the division that was for the parades and all that. And I had never been in a tiger tank, and I looked at it, got up there, and, of course the whole crew was dead. There were three guys and two gals. The big blonde people in there, very attractive, that was the first time I saw women in a tank. The German army, towards the end, had women soldiers too. I think a lot of people didn't understand that.

Schwan: No, I didn't either.

Duchossois: I don't know what all they did. But that's not surprising, because they were running out of men. But think about this. We as veterans had a job to do, in fighting. But back home, everyone had a job to do to support those that were fighting. So we get credit for a lot of things, the credit really belongs to the women, the truck drivers, the people that were developing munitions and doing all those things. We never could have won the war if we didn't have the people back here. Look at Higgins building the landing craft, Kaiser building the liberty boat. Look at the people that were doing...if they weren't there, we wouldn't have been where we were. So it isn't just the veterans. We were sort of, you might say, the sign out in the front, the frosting on the cake. And they were the cake.

Schwan: You were the point, the tip of the spear.

Duchossois: But it was a whole nation working together that won that war. It wasn't just the veterans. But you can't really say...talk to everyone on there, so you have to have someone that's in front. That happens to be us because we were in the Army, or the Navy, and we were in uniform. Most of the others weren't. We used to figure there was somewhere near 30 civilians behind every guy that was on the front. Making the munitions, food, uniforms, everything, the vehicles. How could we have done anything without them?

Schwan: The Army travels on its stomach.

Duchossois: Well another thing that they had, they called it the Red Ball express: the truckers that brought the food and stuff up from boats and they brought it up to us. Without them we couldn't have survived. We got credit, and they didn't, in many areas. But they're the ones that kept us going. And they were magnificent. Those truck drivers would drive and drive and drive in those convoys. They went through all sorts of things on there to get

the food and munitions, and they did a magnificent job. Without them we couldn't have done anything.

Schwan: Did you have different weapons as time went on?

Duchossois: Just our big weapons.

Schwan: Just the big ones.

Duchossois: The towed to the 90mm. But other than that we didn't have any weapons change.

Schwan: Does the military, to your knowledge, use tank destroyer units?

Duchossois: No, the tank destroyer units were all dissolved after the war. There are no tank destroyer units. What they have really done is take what was a tank destroyer unit, and put some of that equipment into the Army, infantry, where they had anti-tank weapons, a little 57 mm gun, a pop gun. So you're using more of a tank-destroyer and replacing them.

Schwan: We had the M72 Laws [Rocket].

Duchossois: Yeah. Well you had tank destroyers over where you were.

Schwan: Did we?

Duchossois: Yeah. And there were tank destroyers in Vietnam.

Schwan: But they were attached to our units.

Duchossois: They were attached. When you're in special troops, no one really pays any attention to you. You're talking about the division. The press wants to know where the division or where the army is going. The special troops, that's their job. It's like why you have shoelaces in your shoe. You have to have them, but who talks about shoelaces?

Schwan: What was the morale like when you went in?

Duchossois: Well I think what started...well I started when we first heard about Pearl Harbor. It was just before our Christmas exams. Walking up on a Sunday morning to the library--which normally we didn't do but we were getting ready for exams because then we were going to be going home for Christmas--and then we heard that Pearl Harbor had been bombed. Our first reaction is, "Where the hell is Pearl Harbor?" We didn't know. But by the end of the day we knew, everyone knew it. I think that that was pretty much a feeling, not just with us, but throughout the country, "Where is Pearl Harbor?" because we knew and all the politicians knew about all the fighting going on in Europe; we knew nothing about Pearl Harbor. We knew there was a war in Europe and everyone felt sorry, but I don't think people really were prepared for war. And I think that President Roosevelt at that time was waiting until the people would get prepared and want to

have to fight. It just seems that way. But then once we got into it, everyone got into [the war] full board. Because we had a draft at that time, and there was hardly a family in the country that didn't have a son or a daughter or relative in there. And everyone tried to support it. Then when the war did break out, if you saw somebody in civilian clothes you almost thought they were a slacker. The country came together as a team and everyone worked. The draft wasn't something you avoided. It was something that, if you didn't get into the Army, you were a slacker. Into one of the services, I saw the Army. The Navy or the Marines or the Merchant Marines, they all took a valuable part in the actual combat of the war. But those at home had to supply those that were fighting, and they worked just as hard as those who were fighting. And a lot of those who were fighting would have preferred to be home, but they were drafted. So...and once you got into it, the whole country was there. And you knew that the people at home were supporting you. Your war, in Korea, and the war in Vietnam, was entirely different. You had no one supporting you. So you had a different attitude then. We had a job to do. Most of the people in the country understood that we had a job to do and they did it. I don't think anyone, well I don't want to say "anyone," but the bulk of the people... you'll always have people that are against it, but a bulk of the people were in the spirit of the war. I shouldn't say "spirit," but were working for it.

Schwan: That's true, that's true; it was the spirit.

Duchossois: Well it was. You had the signs all over. "The slip of the lip."

Schwan: Loose lips sink ships.

Duchossois: Yeah. And the war bond posters and everything. We didn't see many of those because we were in camp, and you just didn't get home a lot.

Schwan: How did it change, and how do we get it back?

Duchossois: I don't know. From what I saw when I was at school, we didn't pay much attention to the war. It was someone else's war. I think now we've gone through several different generations, and I think that the thinking has changed, just like you go from jitterbug to waltzing to something else. The cultures change with each generation. I believe with the communications we have now, we have radio, television, the internet and everything. People as a whole are better educated because of the communications that we have. Those that are against something get their message out; those that are for something get their message out. You have a lot of conflict in there, because of communications and our "dot-com industry," you might call it. So to make a comparison would be unfair. I think if the people back in the 30s and the early parts of the 40s had the same communications, maybe they'd be thinking the same. If the people today were back then without the communications, it would probably be the same. If we have somebody that gets shot or a riot in x, y, z, halfway around the world, within thirty minutes it's on TV. It would have taken thirty days probably before the newspapers would have picked

it up. Our communications are so great today it changes the whole culture we live in, around the world. Around the world. I don't think you can make a comparison. People are people, they're going to go with what they see and think. And you get a different textbook now then we had then.

Schwan: Do you feel patriotism in our country now?

Duchossois: I feel there's a lot of it coming up. I always figure, there's 20% of the people that are against everything, 20% are for everything, and 60% haven't made up their mind. I'm a trustee at the WWII museum down at New Orleans, and we have just been over-swamped with people down there. And from the reaction that I see of people going down there, they're beginning to understand that freedom isn't free, that you have to fight for it, and maybe we don't have the freedom that we think we have. And too often because of television or other means of communication, we're listening to the one that yells the loudest, instead of what the reality is. And I think in England and here and other countries around the world, people now are beginning to say "hey, we were always listening to the top, but no one's listening to us." I think that's what's changing the culture of the world. England had it. Germany has it. We have it. Other countries are getting it. The people that are really making the world go round are now [are] getting vocal. They hadn't been vocal before. Just in small groups, but now it's spreading. So, we're going through different phases. Now, I'm not old enough to remember what happened back in the Revolution. Some people think I am, but I'm not.

Schwan: I think I'm old enough, Dick, so...

Duchossois: But you can compare that to what we have now. We have some real strong patriots, but we also had some revolutionists to that were the completely other way. Contentiously we haven't really changed that much. The weather's changed; its winter now and you're wearing a top coat. You'll be wearing shorts in the spring and in the summer. That's just how it goes.

Schwan: When you got home, what did you do? What was your attitude? Just kind of describe that period in your life.

Duchossois: I don't know. I guess I wanted to go back to school, but I couldn't afford it. My oldest son was a year and a half old, and I just saw him. They had a GI Bill of Rights, but I figured that unless I earned my way through school, I didn't want to borrow any money on there. My father in law, when I found out he had a small railroad freight car repair shop, out in Chicago Heights, he'd just bought his brother-in-law out, and he said, "You're going to work for me." I didn't have much choice. I had to get food, I had to take care of my family. So I started work there. We had 38 men out there and most of it was out in a field, so I started working for that. We built the company up to...it was one of the largest manufacturers of railroad freight cars in the world--and we were probably one of the most profitable ones in the world--but we built up over a period of time. It

got to a point where grandma died, grandpa died, my wife had died of cancer, and in a family company, when you're the outsider, everything doesn't always work as good as it should be. And I just had...my brother-in-law and myself were there, and I ended up buying the company, and then we built it with my family the rest of the way. Then when we...we were strictly in manufacturing of railroad freight cars, we weren't doing repair work then, it was the complete car. Then, after my wife died, I had never been to a Kentucky Derby, I went down there and ran into the former president of Arlington, and the executive vice president. The company was then owned by Madison Square Garden, they told me it was going to be sold, [that] they were putting together a syndicate to buy it, and would I join? I wanted nothing to do with it. But anyway, after the 5th race or so I said "10% and no more" and I forgot about it. Because we had a good business going, it was profitable, by then it was booming. Well I got a phone call about a month later, "Come on down and sign the papers, everything's all set." "Well just tell me what I owe and I'll send a check." "No, you got to be down here." Well I got down there and found out that nobody had any money. So I ended up financing the whole thing. I gave each of them 5%, 4.9% it was, for \$100 apiece, but they were to run it. I didn't go over there I don't think but 4 or 5 times, between the time we bought it until we had a fire that completely destroyed it. Well everyone wanted to take the insurance money and run. I felt, as a family owning that, we had an obligation because it was a major economic industry right within our state, and we ought to rebuild it. So I turned over the freight car operation--which had grown quite big--to others in the family, and I set about rebuilding the track. I never got back into the other, so our company just kept growing. Now we're 100% owned by the family, it's fair-sized and going pretty good.

Schwan: And you have kept, however, all this time, your ideas of patriotism and belief in the country?

Duchossois: Well, I don't know if you'd call it patriotism. I understood what I was supposed to do as a citizen. I didn't really participate in any of the veteran type affairs; I was too busy working. Maybe 10 years ago or 15 years ago I started. We were flying down to...I can't think of the name of the camp now, I should, in Georgia.

Schwan: Fort Benning?

Duchossois: Fort Benning. They were giving me an award down there, and I had the family with me, and they started asking about the war. Up until then I didn't have time to think about it, didn't want to think about it because it brought back some bad memories as well as good. Since then I started thinking about it; "Gee, what am I doing? Not helping." Since then I've tried to do whatever I can. I'm on the board of the WWII museum. We like to, you know, try to support whatever the veterans operate. Because it was such a great lesson learned in WWII, it changed the whole world, and we were fortunate enough to be a part of that and living at that time, and I was fortunate enough not to get killed in the war. I thought I owed something back, and I was trying to put back what everyone

had done for me and my family. That's how we felt about it, and I think my family feels pretty much the same way about it. We try to support these things because a lot of the people now [haven't] experienced WWII. They didn't understand why we were fighting. They didn't understand that freedom doesn't come free. Now that isn't my thing. That's what the Medal of Honor people keep saying, and they're right. We take too much for granted now; we think too much about "what's in it for me?" rather than "what's in it for the people that make it available to me?" So there's a change to a certain extent in how a lot of people look at our government, and the management of business. I guess I'm the old-fashioned type.

Schwan: How would you describe your leadership style, and the basic precepts, going all the way back obviously to Morgan Park Academy? Yours is a progression.

Duchossois: At the Academy you learned discipline. We learned there is no such thing as second place, you win or you lose. You go into business, you take that with you. You go into combat, you take that with you. You get into business, you take that with you. Now, you have to then decide, and I'm not really sure I really got through that hump, you've got a family over here, you're going to take all the leadership in the family; you've got a business over here that's really very small and you're making it big so you can support the group over here, not only support that group, but their children and their children's children. I'm learning, it doesn't all mix together. You have to balance the thing out. I didn't balance as well as I could have, or I should have. So, we have some differences in the second, third, and fourth generations. We're down to four generations. I have thirteen great grandchildren. And I really don't know them as well as I should know them, because I've put too much effort into building for them. I passed everything, being 95 and I started way back when so they wouldn't have to pay a lot of death taxes. No one thought I would live this long. But the longer I live, the further I get away from the younger peoples' way of life, and I'm trying to live the other part of the life, and the two really don't combine. And I hadn't taken the time really to understand as much their way, and teach them some of the way of my way. So I think that there's differences in different companies and different families. Some are able to do it. But when you start with nothing, and you build it high, it just doesn't come that way. You've got to work awfully hard. And all my life I've been in a five/six day week, from military academy, the service, and in business. It's hard to sort of, well it becomes a way of life. And I think you're reflected on that way of life. When you talk about leadership, I learned a lot about leadership in building the company. Until the fire that burned the track down, I did one thing, and I stayed over there. There was a new generation that took leadership in our other company. It was 180 degrees different from what I had. I'm not saying I'm right and they're wrong, and they're not saying it the other way around either, but you have different types of leadership. I told you earlier, back in the war, during training behind my back I'd be little Napoleon. But then when we got into combat, when we didn't lose men like some of the others did, then they gathered around and protected



me. Now what is the leadership? I don't know. I think leadership is how you measure, at the end of the day when they're going to put you in that box and set you down, what did you accomplish? In the way of contributing to the world. You have to define leadership, I can't define it.

Schwan: No, but you live it.

Duchossois: If I had to live over again, would I do it differently? Probably. I think almost anything you do, if you had to live it over again, you'd do it a little different. You'd do it better than you did the first time, because you're breaking new ground all the time with the first time, you're learning. You'd do it a little bit different the next time. And if you did it a third time you'd still make it a little bit different. I think it's difficult to keep up with the way the world is changing. We're in the computer age. I keep telling people I'm middle aged, I'm too old to learn all that stuff on the computer, I'm too young to play golf, so I'm in the middle.

Schwan: I understand that, I'm a terrible golfer. I don't even bother.

Duchossois: Well, you're no old enough yet.

Schwan: Do you still golf?

Duchossois: No, I gave it up after a while because I didn't have time. If you don't have time to do [it], and do a good job, and you're just dumping along, you're wasting your time. I guess I don't like to be second.

Schwan: No, I don't think you do.

Duchossois: Well, I learned that in military academy. I learned that in the service. I think that the difference between combat and business is very similar. It's very similar. But we don't look at it that way. It's not similar in product, but it's similar in tactics. But they haven't had the experience of the war part. War is a dirty, ugly thing. And you hear and see the glamour part of it. You don't see the other part of it.

Schwan: There really isn't any glamour part of in my view.

Duchossois: There isn't any glamour part. You know, if my dog gets a cut in his food I look the other way. I'd make the worst doctor in the world. I saw enough of guts and glory type things, I don't even want to see it again; it just sticks in my mind. My wife tells me about this, that, and the next thing that someone's having, I don't have any idea what they're talking about. I had my first heart attack, my wife died in 1980 of cancer, and I went in in '81 for my first bypass. I've had heart trouble ever since. I've had cancer, it's under control, and my heart...I've had all sorts of operations and stuff. I think you can live through those things, but I've had enough of medical stuff in my life, I don't want to see any more about it, I don't even want to hear about it. And other people want to get into

it and understand it. I don't. That doesn't mean I'm right and they're wrong, it just means I don't understand it.

Schwan: What are you doing with the WWII museum, that's in New Orleans, right?

Duchossois: Yeah, I'm a trustee. That's about the only thing I'm doing with it. We make some donations to it, and things like that.

Schwan: I've never been there. Is it moving forward?

Duchossois: Oh everyone should see it. It's not all completed yet; there [are] still donations coming. We're going through from pre-war, WWII, through the different phases of the war. And each phase...this is a working museum. I call it a university not a museum. It's not displays; it's an active part of the thing. When you go see you'll see the scenery and so forth, not a bunch of cases, and you can put in your earphones and you'll hear somebody who has been there telling you what it's like in those particular places. That goes all the way through, well right through till the end of the war. Now when the campus is completed--about another two years before all of that stuff is completed--when you go through there—and it's just jammed now. Absolutely jammed. People come from all over the world to see it. And it's something everyone should see, because you're seeing WWII as it really was. You're not seeing the glossy thing, you're not seeing the blood and guts and that part in it, but you're not seeing all the polished glamour of it either. There's every sort of plane that fought in the war, there's every sort of uniform. The scene, the talking as you're going through, you actually walk on...it isn't sand but it feels like sand, the beaches as you're going through. You've got your earphones on if you want them, and you're listening to someone [who] was there telling you about what it is. So it's not just a bunch of exhibits. And you've got lessons down there, you can go to school on some of these things, we have people that are from around the country go down there to learn. We don't pick them out, the schools picks them out. Then they go over to Normandy, where we have a place, they go over and see the beaches. They come back and teach the kids back in high school what was happening. Somewhat similar to what the Medal of Honor people do, except we go into it a little bit deeper. We have more money than they do, for doing that. There [are] scholarships and people donated a lot more to it. It's just a wonderful, wonderful thing. It's something everyone should see. I keep saying if CNN had been on the beaches, and at some of the battles that were at WWII, we wouldn't have war now. It's a dirty... there is no glamour to it. None whatsoever. And the magazines and books and movies that show the glamour, I just don't read them anymore, I just sort of throw them away. That isn't what it was all about.

Schwan: I never watch them.

Duchossois: The last movie that I saw was *Saving Private Ryan*. And that was very realistic. My wife asked me as I came out, she said, "Is that how it really was?" I said, "All but one thing: in

the movie you couldn't smell the blood, the guys, the ammunition, the smoke, and hear the same noises. Other than that, that's how it was."

Schwan: For Vietnam, I think, for the Cav, it's *When We Were Soldiers*. And the mobile, and the attacks...

Duchossois: I didn't see the *Band of Brothers* and some of those. I had no desire to see any more of it; I had seen enough. Just like the medical, I had seen enough of it. I didn't want to see anymore.

Schwan: Have you been to Cantigny?

Duchossois: I haven't. They keep inviting me down and I just...I guess I could make the time, I just haven't found the time to get down there.

Schwan: It's interesting.

Duchossois: I want to get down there and see it.

Schwan: It's worth seeing, particularly since outside of the museum buildings, they've got tanks that you would recognize.

Duchossois: The newer ones from WWII?

Schwan: Yes! They have WWII tanks there.

Duchossois: Germans, I imagine?

Schwan: Yes. And I can't tell you all that was there, because I was strictly a ground pounder.

Duchossois: I'll get down there this coming summer, because I'm running out of time.

Schwan: Well you're not running out of things you can contribute, and that's what's important. And you're still making a contribution. And hopefully, this video--which is in my opinion more than worth people watching...

Duchossois: You know, John, I think...and I can't stop admiring people who do what the Pritzker [has] done. This is part of the history that everyone should know about. If we're going to be American citizens, if we're going to preserve our way of life, we know that there is a cost to it. And the cost is generally war. People that are saying we're spending too much on defense, I think it was George Washington said "The way you prevent war, is be prepared stronger than anyone else". And he was so right. We have too many, I guess you'd call it "independent thinkers," and we have too many people that really don't understand the American way; they really don't understand how hard it was to get to where we are. They just assume that everything...they were born with entitlement. I think that word ought to be taken out of the dictionary. But too many people feel they have an entitlement. If they could only get down to work and understand those things.

Maybe places like the Pritzker Museum can bring them in to the point, because here you have all these books. But you have to do more than books, you can read about it here, but then you should see it at places like the WWII Museum. You should go to the Air Museum in Washington, see what it is there. You should understand how many people have given up their lives to preserve our way. If those people that had gave up their lives to preserve our way could see some of the things that are happening now, well they'd roll over in their grave.

Schwan: I'm sure you have seen what they're doing with the Army museum?

Duchossois: I haven't seen that.

Schwan: I haven't been there either, but I've been a contributor, I participate. When they asked me to join the board here, I jumped at it for the very reason that you're describing. People don't get it.

Duchossois: Well, I find, and I don't like much to talk about the war, other than to people who have been there. How do you describe that? How do you describe that you're running along, and the artillery goes over like that, and when it hits there, it goes out and there's a space of maybe eight to ten yards from how it goes over. You turn around and tug your runner, and you look for him, you've ducked and you think he had. But he's no longer there. You just see parts. How do you describe things like that? You don't. How do you describe some of the other things that you see and feel? You can't tell somebody about that. And you don't want to. You want to forget them. But they get back in that... you know, I think that your mind was put together well before the computer was, and that mind becomes a computer and sometimes you can pull things out and sometimes you can't. There are things that get indelibly stuck in that mind, and you can't help but think about them. Sometimes it's good to think about them, because it straightens you out.

Schwan: No question. And it's good to do an oral history like you're doing; it's extremely important.

Duchossois: Well if you're doing an oral history, I start thinking about things I hadn't thought about for a long time. It brings a lot of things back to you.

Schwan: And they're important.

Duchossois: Yeah. It's a small world, because I run into people every now and then whose fathers, or brothers, sometimes sons, were there. But I don't run into many veterans from WWII anymore.

Schwan: They're all gone, and there are hardly any veterans.

Duchossois: I'm not living longer than they lived; I was just younger than they were when I went in.

Schwan: You were twenty?

Duchossois: I was nineteen when I went in.

Schwan: Nineteen when you went in. And when you got out, twenty-two maybe?

Duchossois: Twenty-three. My birthday was in October, and I went in pretty quick, I'd just turned nineteen in October. But I wasn't the only one; there were a lot of them that did that. I was fortunate that my folks had sent me to a military academy, not to get ready for war...

Schwan: For the discipline?

Duchossois: No, it was the...going to a private school, where the classes are very small rather than going to a public school. I wasn't a very good student. I was there to get an education and to get to college. My kids knew I'd be goofing around when I was in high school if I had the opportunity. It wasn't discipline, it was just the way. My brothers went there too.

Schwan: Well that's good, but, you've contributed an awful lot, if I may say.

Duchossois: Well, I don't know if I've contributed. I've done... I've tried to do what I can do. And I've done as best I can. I'd like to give more, but I don't have more to give.

Schwan: You've contributed a lot.

Duchossois: I don't look at it as a contribution. I look at it as my responsibility.

Schwan: Want to give your final words that you want people to remember about this video, Dick?

Duchossois: Well I don't know. I'd have to think about that, any final words for the video. I'm just trying to tell you how I feel; that doesn't mean other people feel that way. But I think most of my generation that had the opportunity to fight for their country in the way we did. And the way the country supported the people that were doing the fighting, it united our people. And right now our country isn't united. And we shouldn't have to have a war to unite it. It should be something that we do because we have to do it to save our country. To a degree we may be in a war with ourselves at this particular point. If we just could get back to united, it would work out. We're no different in war than we are in business or we are in our regular life. If we aren't working together, we're all going to come apart. There are no winners the way we're going at this particular point now. We may think this group over here won or that group over there won or this group over here prevented something, but we have to learn to live together. If it takes a war, it takes a war. But the only way we're going to prevent a way is to be together. And be

stronger than the other guy. I don't go pick on you, you're bigger than I am, so I'd better go get an army!

Schwan: You would if you needed to, because it's the spirit that you have, that's important.

Duchossois: I think if you have a real strong position in defense, and it's logical, and it's not trying to conquer everyone else, no bully is going to pick on you. We have to be the nation that's strong and built up with the good defense, so any bully isn't going to come and try and knock us over. They know that they aren't going to do it. I don't pick on guys that are bigger than I am, I'm afraid of them.

Schwan: I want to thank you on behalf of the Pritzker Library for what you've done for us, and more importantly what you've done for the country. Thank you.

Duchossois: Well, I certainly appreciate you saying that, but, I want to thank you for what the Pritzker Library and what you're doing and all the other people. You're making everything available for people to understand it. You're putting it in a simple common language, and that's what we need today, we overcomplicate things.