



ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM
INTERVIEW ABSTRACT

CONSULTANT: E. Earl Hickam

DATE OF BIRTH: October 2, 1928 GENDER: Male

DATE(S) OF INTERVIEW: July 8, 2000

LOCATION OF INTERVIEW: N.M. Farm & Ranch Heritage Museum

INTERVIEWER: Cameron L. Saffell

SOURCE OF INTERVIEW: NMF&RHM X OTHER _____

TRANSCRIBED: Yes: July 25, 2000

NUMBER OF TAPES: One

ABTRACTOR: Cameron L. Saffell

DATE ABSTRATED: October 13, 2000

QUALITY OF RECORDING (SPECIFY): Good

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE: E. Earl Hickam briefly discusses his family and early childhood before talking at length about his father's use of Italian prisoners of war (POWs) in the Dawn, Tex., area and of working with German POWs in the Albuquerque, N.M. area during World War II.

DATE RANGE: 1930s – 1945

ABSTRACT (IMPORTANT TOPICS IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

TAPE ONE, SIDE A:

Attending school in Dawn and Canyon, Texas, where his family lived while he was growing up. Origins of Furr's grocery store chain. Parents and siblings listed and discussed. Moves to Dawn in late 1930s; describes agriculture in that area.

Recalls beginning of World War II and getting war news on radio. Describes how he purchased a radio for his family. Probably learned about availability of POWs from Cal Farley's radio show (Amarillo). Distance to Italian POW camp near Hereford. Father bought work gloves for POWs to do farm jobs.

Family moves to near Albuquerque, N.M., about 1942. Family worked on Dennison Brothers Farm. Describes condition of home and land on property.

TAPE ONE, SIDE B:

Describes occupations of German POWs who worked for them. Germans built a shop with Teroni blocks. POWs managed ditches for irrigation that sometimes would seep, had to be constantly monitored. One POW, Fritz, helped identify for father which POWs would be good workers. Family furnished gloves, lunch desserts, cigarettes, etc. Transporting POWs to and from camp. How Hitler managed the German people. Lunch arrangements and meals described.

Communicating tasks to POWs with sign language and broken English and German. Father spoke a little German learned while working at Dawn, Texas. Guards accompanying the POWs. Other laborers on farm in addition to POWs. Uses dump truck with three POWs to load and move sheep manure, without a guard present. POW camp described. End of war and how long POWs were employed and remained in the area. Post-war contact with Fritz.