

William Warner Student Worksheet 4- The Time Stamped Transcript

Directions: As you view your assigned section of the transcript, type each word uttered by your veteran interviewee. Words like “um or so”, or colloquialisms like “you know what I mean?” do not need to be included.

| Transcription of Words | Time ended |
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| <p>My name is William Warner, better known as Bill and I was an lieutenant in the United States Army. I was an infantry officer, what I was sent to Vietnam as. I ended up performing another job there. I ended up being a public information officer because I had minored in radio television and journalism. I happened to get the luck of the draw. I got there and they needed someone in the information office. I avoided being a platoon leader in the field and getting shot at for the most part.</p> | <p>1:05 Minute</p> |
| <p>I graduated from college in June of 1968, with a draft notice in one hand and a diploma in the other. And went to talk to my friend the recruiter. Well I went home first and said what are my options. There were few at the time, since the draft lottery was not in existence then. Basically my 2 esk collet referment ran out and Uncle Sam said that I need you. Options were limited at that point. I went to talk with the army recruiter and i said this war can't go on forever, I said to myself confidently. And went in under what they called a delayed enlistment program to go to officer school. Which buyed me about another two years and I said sorely the war would be over by then. I was wrong. I entered the basic training on March the 12th of 1969.</p> | <p>2:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>And basic training then base training and then August I went to the infantry officer school in Fort Bennings Georgia. That lasted until February of 1970. At which point I was assigned as a training officer to Fort Lewis Washington. I had never seen the state of Washington before since I was an East coast boy. And I had a good</p> | <p>3:01 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>time at Fort Lewis. The bad news was that it ended quickly and went to Vietnam in January of 1971. And spent 9 months there and came home in November. What did I do in basic training? I basically did what everyone else does there. You learn how to be a soldier and how to stand in formation, how to march, stay on time, how to shoot a rifle. Basically do the essential things that anybody in the military has to do.</p> | |
| <p>That's an eight week training course and since I was going to infantry officer school the next eight weeks was what they call advanced individual training or advanced infantry training depending on what you had enlisted for. I had advanced infantry training. I was also at Fort Dix from roughly June until August. An infantry officer's main job is to be a platoon leader. You'll have a full platoon about forty men and they would be divided into 4 to 10 men squads. so you generally if it was full strength you would have a sergeant that would have to be in charge of a squad. And further broken down into a team leader. And then you have a senior sergeant. The platoon leader would be another officer if in fact you have one.</p> | <p>4:01 Minutes</p> |
| <p>They are generally like a second lieutenant or a first lieutenant. And then you have four platoons would make up a company. And a captain would be the company commander. I essentially was the platoon leader and rarely you would have a full strength of forty men. They said they someone somewhere else. I got to work in the information officer. Helping to edit publications for the hundred and first airborne division. Which is where I was assigned. Hundred and first airborne division, the army is divided into a number of divisions. I don't know how many they have today, maybe 5 or 6. But, the hundred and first airborne division has been around for years and years and years. It was famous in world war two.</p> | <p>5:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>Parachute airborne means that they would have paratroopers that would jump out of a plane. There were a number of combat missions in Europe. Where the hundred and first division were stationed during world war two. They had combat jumps there. When the hundred and first division were sent to vietnam they didn't have parachute jumpers as much. They tried out one. Long before I got there and it was a disaster . They reconfigured it to be an airmobile division and that meant that everything in the division could be transported by helicopter big helicopters, little helicopters. They could haul around big cannons with a helicopter. Things of that nature. The hundred and first airborne division functioned more as a straight infantry division. There was the 1st infantry division, the ninth infantry division, and the mary cow division. A number of divisions depending on where the senior leadership decided you needed to be stationed. That was a very permanent installation.</p> | <p>6:01 Minutes</p> |
| <p>And the rule of thumb used to be that for every soldier in the field you had ten people in the rear supporting him. You had to have books. You had to have logistic people getting supplies out to them, all sorts of different jobs in the Army. Anyway the 101st division was stationed about twenty-five or thirty miles south of the DMZ in 1971, when I was there. That was when there were serious major conflicts were still going on. The war really didn't wind down for a couple more years much to my dismay. A normal day for me was like going to the office. I said I was an information officer. I was in charge of a team of writers and editors. I would supervise what they would do. We would have a meeting in the morning and decide what the assignments would be.</p> | <p>7:01 Minutes</p> |
| <p>We would make story assignments and send someone to be a reporter, work for me as an Army person generally an enlisted person might send them out to</p> | <p>8:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>talk to a platoon that's out in the field on maneuvers. We would also send a photographer if we happen to have one. We do that and when they come back we would look at their stories when they wrote them or the pictures when they were developed and we would do a couple things with that. If there was an important thing we would put out a press release, to give to the commercial media to tell them our perspective on what was going on in the war. Some of the better ones we would gather and put into a magazine which came out about four times a year. I'm not sure what the distribution was every time I turned around nobody had one or saw one, but anyway. Once a year they would put out a yearbook which was interesting.</p> | |
| <p>It was like you were running a newspaper office and you are an Editor, I was the City Editor. there were some interesting things that went on once in awhile. you would get some people from NBC and CBS. The big networks would come in with a reporter. We would have to escort them out of our divisions policies on public relations was a little bit different from most. In that our commanding general did not want reporters wandering around talking to anybody, they had to have an escort no matter where they went. Basically they were under house arrest, until me or one of my other colleagues would take them around and sometimes say you know they are fighting over in this part of the country right now. Can you take us there?</p> | <p>9:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>We would take them to somewhere they weren't firing bullets or the last thing the general wanted was to have done was to have a reporter from NBC shot under his command. We would be a little devious on that stuff. The most interesting was that and there was one reporter from CBS that kept running off. We had to literally put him under house arrest for a while</p> | <p>10:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>and he finally said that he gave up and I'm going home. There were some other unique things. There was an airline in Vietnam in-country airline one of those Vietnamese airlines or something like that. They would take troops and fly them from where they were stationed to as long as they were stationed...</p> | |
| <p>Bob hope?anybody know bob hope? He was a famous comedian back in the 50's, a legendary comedian. every year he would take some famous entertainers,so I got to meet Mr. Hope and mrs.america for that year. was phyllis george, going on to become a famous Tv journalist. I believe in her own right afterwards, so I got to meet them. so, that was kind of unique. Did I enjoy doing it well it was better than being shot at. Ill tell you that, I mean I dont think anyone really enjoyed being in vietnam under those conditions.It's changed quite a bit right now, now, there's some fancy resorts, and a lot of people want to go to vietnam.but in the 60's, I don't think there were too many men my age really looking forward to vietnam under those conditions.</p> | <p>11:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>no, there was some serious conflicts, you know unfortunately several of my best mates from officer school were killed in action over there. which is unfortunate so, they were still firing live ammunition and aiming at people.so, yeah there were people killed every day.for the most part not necessarily on the one hundred and first deviation, but in nam, i mean that was for many weeks and years, the tv news would lead with today-x- number of servicemen were killed in vietnam. and at the end they totaled up and there's over 58,000 names engraved on the wall in washington d.c. and veterans day is coming up soon and I volunteered to read 30 names, every year they read all 58,000 names so it takes a number of days so on friday...</p> | <p>12:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>one of the things in vietnam 58,000 men were killed in</p> | <p>13:00</p> |

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| <p>action, many more wounded, some missing, so the k.i.a.'s got killed in action, and the m.i.a.'s missing in action their names are engraved on the wall in Washington D.C. and I had the privilege one Veterans Day of reading 30 of the names every year they read all 58 thousand of the names it takes a number of days to do that, so it happens before and after Veterans Day every year. So I happened to do it on the 35th anniversary of the creation of the Vietnam Wall.</p> | <p>Minutes</p> |
| <p>Tried to keep in the right tense there, ok. Would I do anything different you know I went over with not many positive thoughts in mind and I fully expected to be leading a platoon of men, on missions out to fight in a war and I got lucky. It ended up being an interesting job and an interesting service stance and I couldn't recreate that again. And I had no idea what I was getting into when they said, we have a job for you, lieutenant, since your background you're gonna be an information officer.</p> | <p>14:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>My job I think I got lucky, in that I had majored in political science in college and I minored in radio and television journalism and my aspirations were to become a radio T.V. reporter when I got out. So fortunately two things came together and when I got to Vietnam they looked at my background and said we happen to need some of your skills in our information office so I was very fortunate. And I met some good people got the opportunity to meet people from other parts of the country, I grew up outside of Philadelphia and I got to know a lot of people from California, Michigan, and Texas if it hadn't been for that I wouldn't have met those people. I lost contact with most of them, but you're all there kind of hugging each other...</p> | <p>15:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>and trying to get through the next year. In the same condition you went over, so it was a unique experience, would I do it again? No, did I have a</p> | <p>16:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>choice?no, did I enjoy it? yeah there were some very enjoyable moments, you know we had some good times I had it much better than many other armie people that went there. now the air force they had it much better than I did they get to sleep in air conditioned quarters at night and fly airplanes around and go back home and have a drink at the officers club at the end of the day we didn't see to much of the officers club, although we did have one. happiest memory,getting on that plane and coming home I'm sure that you've heard that from many others, right? second one was the...</p> | |
| <p>going to r and r and meeting my future wife in hawaii for a week, so that was right up there too. second only to coming home. you know the bad news of going o r and r was that at the end of seven days you gotta turn around and go back again. hopefully you can make it through whatever time you have left remaining. and going back again,a couple things that I wanna also mention that one of the people I had working for me, technically, I mean he was another college graduate, he majored in journalism too and he was a porter just because he was an enlisted man and he tried not to go to officer school, he compiled a notes during his whole time there, stories but he also kept notes on what he saw and everything else. and when he came back he wrote a book,about himself, called the thirteenth valley. A guy named john delvecchio, it,s out of print for now but you may be able to find it on amazon, or in your library, but...</p> | <p>17:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>It was kind of a composite of what he saw through the eyes of one or two people and as they went through an operation, you know, crawling through the mud, having your rifle jam up in a firefight and things like that,so it was interesting read. I talked to him a couple times after I came back and he said you know, I almost couldn't finish writing the book. It was just dredging</p> | <p>18:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>up up so many bad memories, but he stuck with it, took about three or four, but I knew the guy that did it read his book and, it was pretty good. there were some other interesting people there, one guy, he was not in my unit, but he was I went through o.c.s with him, he was a backup singer in a rock and roll group,</p> | |
| <p>He was kinda fun, He was in charge of leading the kings for marching you know, 1 2 3 4? he could sing pretty good. so he would lead a song around the airborne track around singing out different songs, that was kind fun. a little interesting. and then my best friend another just a little side here, my best friend in officer school, my roommate he graduated from harvard, with a degree in russian language, so we opted two graduates in each class. he graduated number two and you got to pick your branch, the industry is a branch, transportation is a branch, (drinks water)</p> | <p>19:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>Ready? One of the more interesting people I got to know was my roommate from officer school. He was from St Mary's I was from outside of Philadelphia we never met before officer school. He graduated Harvard with a degree in language and in officer school the top two graduates get to pick what they want to do. Get out of the infantry, you can go to transportation, a number of different things. He chose intelligence, everyone knows what intelligence is you know gather information and interpret stuff. He chose that and went to advance school to become an intelligence officer and they sent him to Vietnam and we stayed in touch. It was a little more difficult because he was in another part of the country. He was down in what they call the tactical operation center which is basically a huge bunker down in the ground that is protected</p> | <p>20:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>from incoming artillery and other attacks by the enemy. So he would sit there all day looking at reports and stuff and at night it would be dark, so he'd go to</p> | <p>21:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>sleep. After six months he said he has not seen daylight except an afternoon a week, he was crazy enough to volunteer to go back to be a platoon officer. The good news is he survived that and came up got married, was a hunter, was 50 years old he accidentally shot, killed himself in a hunting accident. No good deed goes unpunished so, we'll leave that whole stuff out.</p> <p>How did you stay happy? You know keeping your chin up was difficult staying happy over there cause the weather's horrible you think it's just jungle stuff but it gets cold. Second month I was there I was sick for 4 weeks, I had basically the flu.</p> | |
| <p>so you're miserable to begin with but then when you're sick you just lay in bed and moan all day. so under those circumstances it would be difficult. They have the monsoon season which is when I got there: January, February, March and then monsoon the rains went away and then the heat camp. Summer was blistering hot and humid so the weather made it difficult to be cheerful about anything. You had to pick and choose your spots, what to complain about. If you moan all the time you will just drive yourself crazy. Things that made you happy a letter from home, that was always the highlight of the day. they didn't have cell phones back then, strangely enough, they barely had telephones. We had an interdivision telephone system you could get different parts</p> | <p>22:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>If you were lucky enough, once a month you could put in your request you could make a telephone call home and they called the Morris system. Military system basically operated like a walkie-talkie. So you'd say something and then you'd have to say "over" so the other person could talk then. You couldn't talk to one another at the same time cause the system would go</p> | <p>23:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>one way and have to stop and then back again so. That was always a highlight to be able to talk to somebody back home whether parents or your girlfriend, wife for whoever. Not everyone got to do that so that was more or less you had to know someone, like make a reservation for that one.</p> | |
| <p>When you first got to Vietnam was it hard to adjust your life to the new schedule and lifestyle?</p> <p>Getting there was not fun, I left out of Fort Dix on a charter aircraft a big DC8 or something like that, all one class tourist class and so we took off in the middle of the night and flew to Alaska and refueled in a air force base there then got back on the plane and flew to Japan got off the plane and refueled there flew down to Vietnam got off the plane there that was about 24 hours or less in the air and refueling. when i got off the plane the siren went off, we were under a mortar attack. So i'm in the country for less than five minutes and their already bombing me. that was my welcoming committee.</p> <p>Before you left what or who did you leave behind?</p> <p>Who did I leave behind well i left my college sweetheart we weren't engaged at the time. We had plans going forward but I said let's not do anything let's be sure I get home</p> | <p>24:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>in one piece and my parents of course and my sister, the rest of my family you know that kind of stuff. I left a job at a radio station that I was enjoying I was surprised they hired me I was there for only a few months but they needed somebody in a pinch. I was a radio announcer for about six months before I went in the army.</p> | <p>25:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>How did your family react when you told them you had to leave for Vietnam?</p> <p>i guess it's that they're not happy but its resignation there's not much you can do about it. they will never tell you what their true feelings are when they send their child off to war or even to infantry people coming back were a lot lower than some others.</p> | |
| <p>because those people in the navy, army, air force, are put into enemy fire they were quite apprehensive without that future. that was a difficult time to say the least not that i try to but if i were born a year later i would be under the lottery system. In fort Benning in officer school and they started their first lottery my number was 323 they would never have gotten to me so bad timing on my mothers part.</p> <p>How long were you in Vietnam?</p> <p>They asked me to bring in my discharge paper where it's a paper that includes all my military life but I don't know</p> | <p>26:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>when i came home it was around january but november was the day I left Vietnam. by the time you get back to the states and go through all the paperwork and meetings and discharge you get a few days until you are officially out of the army then they give you a plane ticket and you go home as a thanks for your service.</p> <p>What kind of discharge did you get?</p> <p>i had an honorable discharge i was a good person i was fighting for the country i performed my job. when i was traveling home i received a droast date.</p> | <p>27:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>a couple days earlier my lead officer called me from his office he was a nice guy but he said that he wanted</p> | <p>28:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>me as a honorable career officer or lieutenant and I said sorry sir I must decline the generous offer because I'm going home.</p> <p>How did you feel when you got back?</p> <p>it's hard to say how i felt when i got home it not like there was a big welcoming committee the war was not popular there was demonstrations on a daily basis especially in the midwest and in washington back in 67 and 68 there was not a whole lot of support for the war and so if you were a service man you were in a difficult position</p> | |
| <p>you are obligated to it and the other decision was desertion then you would go to jail or you run away to canada like some people. then you say ok service the country let's do that then people say how could you fight that war then you say i didn't have a choice i didn't want to do it and i didn't believe in it my options were very limited there was some people that enjoyed combat as a career and thank goodness for them. then when we had the draft going there were some reluctant warriors to say the least.</p> | <p>29:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>My training prepared me about as well as can be expected. By the time i went through basic and had advanced school and then officer school they had a lot of experience at this so this was tailored specifically for what they call jungle warfare which is basically what vietnam was. They tried to replicate the situations you would be in. As difficult as that can be you are not in a jungle environment in Georgia</p> | <p>30:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>although some people would disagree with that. It was hot and sweaty that's for sure but it wasn't a jungle. They tried to replicate situations that you would likely</p> | <p>31:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>run into as a platoon leader in vietnam. You cannot duplicate a live firefight in the jungle. They do the best they can but unless someone is actually firing bullets at you and you are trying to avoid getting hit you can't replicate that in training.</p> | |
| <p>Fortunately I was not subjected to that. I had different things to worry about.</p> | <p>32:00 Minutes</p> |
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| | <p>39:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>“There was a request to bring in some memorabilia I brought along. I hung on to a couple medals, but I had some of the publications since I was managing a group of writers. I saved some copies of the magazines and the newspapers and the yearbook we put out and then about five or six years ago, running through stuff that had accumulated in this box, I said I hadn't looked at that stuff in ten years. My children had seen it and I said that's fine, and so it went out the door. So I don't have that stuff to donate to the cause here.”</p> <p>“What did you bring with you?”</p> <p>“I brought metals, the few that I got, and I'm glad there were a couple I did not get. There was the purple heart, I'm sure some of the other folks that have been interviewed for this project got purple heart. That means you were wounded in combat, so to speak-</p> | <p>40:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>-I didn't get any of them, I didn't get that one. I have a bronze star, which I don't want to degrade it, but they're a little more stingy about giving bronze stars out now. Back then, If you survived your tour they gave you a bronze star on your way out, on the airplane to come home. I've got that one here and the other ones that you get for showing essentially showing up."</p> | <p>41:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>"The bronze star... this is a bronze star, it does not have a 'V' on it for valor. Basically, you had to be in a combat situation. Since my job was kind of what they call "in the rear", you're in a base camp... I don't want to degrade the importance of bronze stars but they would give those out to anybody who went home. It has a little higher degree of importance these days. People don't just automatically get them when they come back from Afghanistan, you had to do something to earn them. Just about everybody's got a 'V' on them for valor. So this is the one you would wear on your formal uniform, and there's one on your class A's. This one is the national defence medal, which you get for being in the army and not being a bad boy-</p> | <p>42:11 Minutes</p> |
| <p>-so to speak. And then, the other one that I have is the- this is the Vietnam service medal, that means I served in Vietnam. Didn't do anything in particular with this, I was there. So, again, it's what I managed to hang on to, I'm still not sure why I hung onto these but they seemed important. But, they're nothing extraordinary, let's put it that way. No silver stars, nothing that-no heroics in combat, this is basically I was there."</p> <p>"What do these medals mean to you?"</p> <p>"What do they mean to me? I guess they-</p> | <p>43:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>-I had to hunt to find them, there was no big ceremony. A commanding officer said 'Here lieutenant, thanks for your service here's a bronze star and the Vietnam service medal for being in country and the defence service medal for being in the military.' So I said 'Thanks a lot'... I didn't expect anything, I didn't think I deserved anything. It's there, so I said well, you take it for what it's worth. Somebody thought I did a decent job; I don't know anyone who didn't get one so- I'm sure there were some bad apples out there like in any situation like that. There were a lot of reluctant soldiers who said 'Don't give me anything, I don't want anything, I want to get out.'</p> | <p>44:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>-Vietnamese died. Both North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese in the army, civilians, men, women, children... In this situation it should have been avoided. That's my final thought on Vietnam."</p> | |
| <p>-They demonstrated that attitude every day. That's about what it means to me. I can't say it's held in the highest esteem. If I had been in a real combat situation, I suppose it would have been more to me but I honestly didn't think I deserved anything. I did my job to the best of my ability. Did I get a medal for doing my job? No, I didn't think so, the satisfaction of doing the job well is generally sufficient for my purposes."</p> <p>"What are the other papers or folders?"</p> <p>"The only other thing- this is the paper that goes along with the medal. That says bronze star was awarded to First Lieutenant William H Warner for meritorious achievement and ground operations against hostile forces-</p> | <p>45:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>-That's basically you survived. This one basically says I was in the army. I've got my discharge papers for which is the most coveted piece- I gave that away [to the teacher]. That's the most valuable piece of information you could have. Honorable discharge."</p> <p>"Anything else you could talk about that you'd like to talk about?"</p> <p>"No, I guess I'm still- the only thing that still bothers me is the futility of the war. It was an unpopular war and in retrospect, I don't know if anyone watched the Ken Burns-</p> | <p>46:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>-documentary on it, our involvement there goes way back before even President Kennedy. It was Truman and Eisenhower first tip-toed into this and it's a situation where the leadership, I don't know if they were misled or if they got bad intelligence, but everybody was coming off the successes of World War 2 and said 'we are the mightiest military force in the world, we can win any war, we can win this one!' The generals deluded themselves into thinking we can send more troops over there and the enemy will surrender. It was not fought like any of the battles in Europe in particular and that's where most of the</p> | <p>47:00 Minutes</p> |

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| <p>generals had come up being platoon leaders and company commanders in World War 2. Their training had been in a totally different type of war and they were convinced that if we just have enough bodies and enough bombs-</p> | |
| <p>-the other side will surrender. That was not the case. We lost a lot of good people and some of them were people I got to know pretty well and I am still disturbed that I go out to the Vietnam wall on occasion and see their name engraved on it. That's upsetting to me. It was one of those thing where some bad decisions about getting involved in a conflict and not knowing when to get out and just say 'No, this is futile.'" They kept feeding themselves- The definition of stupidity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. They deluded themselves into thinking more troops, more bombs, we can win this war. It ended up being a disaster. An awful lot of not only US people but there were hundreds of thousands [of Vietnamese people], they don't have an accurate count of how many-</p> | <p>48:00 Minutes</p> |
| <p>-Vietnamese died. Both North Vietnamese and South Vietnamese in the army, civilians, men, women, children... In this situation it should have been avoided. That's my final thought on Vietnam."</p> | <p>49:00-49:24 Minutes</p> |