

ORAL MEMOIRS

OF

Richard Baggett

An interview conducted on

October 12th, 2022

Interviewers: Dr. Allison D. Huntley, Camille Huffman

Angelo State University

West Texas Collection

“William and Don Griffis Vietnam War Oral History Archive”

LEGAL STATUS: The oral memoirs of Richard Baggett are unrestricted. The interview agreement was signed on October 12th, 2022.

Interviewers: Dr. Allison D. Huntley, Camille Huffman

Transcriber: Daisy Herr

Editor: Joel Durham

The electronic file and complete transcript of this interview were processed in the Department of History at Angelo State University and are available at the Dr. Ralph R. Chase West Texas Collection, Angelo State University, San Angelo, Texas.

ALLISON HUNTLEY: Okay, so this is, uh, Dr. Allison Huntley here at the home of Mr. and Mrs., um, Baggett. Uh, we've got, um, also, uh, student worker, um- what's your last name again?

CAMILLE HUFFMAN: Huffman.

HUNTLEY: Uh, Camille Huffman, um, joining us today. The- uh, so it's October 12th, um, and the time's about 10:40. Alright, um, so, um, Mr. Baggett if you'll, uh, introduce yourself for us.

RICHARD BAGGETT: Okay, I'm Richard Baggett. Um, hometown's Fort Worth, Texas. [clears throat] I was reared there, went to undergraduate school there, TCU. Uh, got my degree in 1969 which is extremely important to the overall Vietnamese story for me.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And uh, I served for over four years in the Air Force. And after I got back home from Vietnam and Thailand, I was- got out of the military, and because I had a graduate school appointment waiting for me, and so since then I feel I rushed in, I guess, a little bit late. Um, I had one brother who- an older brother- who was a physician, actually was in the Navy during the Vietnam time as a physician on one of the ships. My sister-in-law had two children and four granddaughters- no grandsons.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: We've lived in- we met at Eglin Air Force Base in Fort Walton Beach, Florida. Then we- after Vietnam, we moved to San Antonio, Texas, where I got my master's degree in Trinity University. And after serving in some hospitals, um, in Georgia, Tennessee, we returned to Texas, and, uh came to San Angelo as a vice-president of Shannon Medical Center. And after a couple or so years there, I realized that 25 years on hospital administration was enough and it wasn't fun anymore. [laughs]

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: And so I reached out, and I, uh, picked up numerous certifications in the area of human resource management, and became my own self-employer HR consultant for the last thirty years or so.

HUNTLEY: Yes, sir. Well, thank you for that introduction. Um, so we're just going to go through the, um, questions. So as I was saying, that the first set that they deal with your background and then military service, and then talking about um, after the military.

BAGGETT: Okay.

HUNTLEY: Alright. So for the first question there, if you'll give us your, um, your full name.

BAGGETT: Richard Glenn Baggett.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Um, and then when and where were you born?

BAGGETT: Fort Worth, Texas, May 20, 1945.

HUNTLEY: Okay. [pause]

BAGGETT: On a Sunday.

HUFFMAN: [chuckles]

HUNTLEY: [chuckles] Uh, what year did you say again?

BAGGETT: Say what now?

HUNTLEY: What year did you say again?

BAGGETT: '45.

HUNTLEY: 1945. Okay. Um, and then you said that you grew up in Fort Worth?

BAGGETT: Grew up in Fort Worth.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: I think.

HUFFMAN & HUNTLEY: [laughs]

HUNTLEY: It's hard to remember these things sometimes. [laughs] Um, okay, so when and where did you enter the Armed Forces?

BAGGETT: I entered the, uh, Armed Forces while I was finishing my last year at TCU, in June of 1969. Was about only nine months past the end of the Tet Offensive in September of 1968, and the U.S. had been highly embarrassed by that event and caught off guard and they were recruiting and drafting all over the place. I had a high school friend who had ended up in officer training school in the Army as a forward observer. He was standing on a hill with his captain and another lieutenant. A sniper killed the captain, sniper killed the other lieutenant. And orders came in, and he got chewed up some. And I realized from that, if I can avoid the Army, that's what I want to do.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Living in Fort Worth, at Carson Air Force Base, I knew that there were openings in the hospitals- there was a major hospital there, and so I thought, hopefully I get in the Air Force military via the hospital there, which solved an ethical dilemma cause at that time, our nation

was highly split between support Vietnam or don't support Vietnam, and I could not turn my back on orders to Vietnam because I had uncles in World War II, and I was not going to embarrass them by doing something stupid for the family. So I went into the Air Force in the enlistment center in, uh, Dallas, Texas.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Um, and then what were your years of service?

BAGGETT: 1969 through 1973.

HUNTLEY: Okay, 1969 through 1973. Alright. Um, and then, which military conflicts did you serve during?

BAGGETT: [clears throat] Vietnam.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: It's the only one, fortunately.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Um, and then, what units did you- what unit or units did you serve in?

BAGGETT: I was in, uh, the 377th U.S.A. Hospital at Tan Son Nhut Air Base, at Saigon.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: And the 432nd U.S.A Hospital in northern Thailand-

MRS.BAGGETT: Udorn

BAGGETT: Udorn, Thailand. U-D-O-R-N

HUNTLEY: Okay, okay, so you touched on why you enlisted. Um, would you like to tell us what your training was like?

BAGGETT: Yeah. [clears throat] Basic training was at, uh, Lackland Air Force Base, San Antonio, Texas. I knew that if I had done well in the courses, I could get a pick of my tech school area, okay, and so I was the top of my class. And I got to pick medical- medical training, at least at the time, was in Wichita Falls, Texas. And so I left San Antonio, and reported to Wichita Falls. [clears throat] First thing you do back then was, you take what's called a med helper course. Med helper is to train everybody from the basic level of treating wounds, injections, bandages, anatomy, and physiology, et cetera.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Once you finish there, then you go to your first designation career ride.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Another friend and I tied for top of the class, and they gave us a choice. They said they have an opening in occupational therapy and one in medical administration, and I looked at him and I said, 'my brother's a doctor, I can't stand blood myself so I'd like to do the administrative level.' And he said, 'doesn't make any difference to me'.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: So I went in to being an administration specialist, and I was assigned to Eglin Air-Air Force Base. Um, there wasn't- I did not go through a training program for medical administration. It was an OJT thing.

HUNTLEY: Mhm. Okay, um, so how, uh, how would that training have differed, um, so you said it wasn't a medical training but like, what did your training look like?

BAGGETT: What- a- what?

HUNTLEY: Your training.

BAGGETT: Uh, reading the regulations.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Okay.

BAGGETT: About the certain level of administration that I was at in the beginning. Uh, being demonstrated what to do.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And uh, then being observed doing it.

HUNTLEY: Okay. I just- just curiosity. [laughs]

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Um, let's see, so, um, so in- in these questions about your military service, so the next question is: what conception did you have of the United States at the time of your enlistment? Um, and then also, what did America symbolize to you or what did you think that stood for- so your conceptions of the military, or America, uh, going into the military?

BAGGETT: Historically, um, my conception of the military at the time was drawn from stories recog- remembrances, pictures of my uncles in either Europe or southeast Asia. Uh, my uncle in southeast Asia didn't mind talking about his job. He had a- he had a noncombat support position although at times he was involved in firing his weapon. He was in Guadalcanal, and some other place.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: The uncles in Europe did not talk much at all about that experience.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So I just picked up from here to there a little bit about it. I knew that [pause] uh, visually, joining the military's not too much different from joining a large corporation. They all have a chain of command.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: They all have jobs you might like or find hard to do.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: [phone ringer] Most of them large corporations gonna have a dress code you've to adhere to.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Et cetera. And that, I understood. Really a parallel between military and large corporations.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Culture-wise. The difference was, as I explained to a nephew later- years later who was thinking about going in- the difference is this: that you don't have to give up your life in a large corporation. You can resign. [laughs]

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: But you get in hard to do something with the military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: You had not an option of doing it. And so, I- I did know 'cause of Vietnam and the reports of deaths et cetera, that we were at war with Vietnam. By a chance, perhaps, I would be obviously in a warzone. And from that, I may or may not come back home and see my wife everyday.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Through one particular rocket attack, I thought I was going to be killed. It was just loud and close.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: And I was kissing the dirt, trying to become as transparent as possible. I mean, y'know, [clears throat] invisible as possible. And my brain rel-relived my life in just seconds-shunk! And it stopped and focused on my wife. We'd only been married two years, and I thought, I'm never going to see her again. So, that's my recollection of military service.

MRS.BAGGETT: [laughs]

HUNTLEY: Do you have anything, uh, have you heard this story before, Mrs. Baggett-

MRS.BAGGETT: [laughs] Oh, yes.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] Okay, um.

BAGGETT: I had a my- that and a few years ago, I had, um, E. Coli.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And came very close to dying. And between those two near death experiences, I ended up with mild PTSD.

HUNTLEY: Huh.

BAGGETT: Fortunately, it's mild.

HUNTLEY: Yeah, um, so since your time in the military, has your conception of the United States changed any?

BAGGETT: Aspects became disappointing. Um, we coulda won Vietnam. We just didn't want to throw it all- all the business end to get it done.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So we just fid- fiddled with it for a decade. Uh, in the process we lost 58,220 lives and 1,650 or so still missing. But it was the- the longest silly war we've ever been in and probably the only one with the most significance that we really did care to win.

HUNTLEY: Hmm.

BAGGETT: That was disappointing. That has not affected my loyalty to the country. Has not affected neither my historical or my theological concept of why the United States is important-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -or us and the world. But it is somewhat changed with a little discipline in our leadership.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Umm, so to the next question- uhh, you- you've already touched on this but just, uh, to bring it back together-

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: So, uh, were you deployed overseas, um, and while- while you were deployed overseas- well, let me ask you- let me try again.

BAGGETT: Okay.

HUNTLEY: So were you deployed overseas- we'll just start there.

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: Deployed overseas to Saigon, Vietnam, to the hospital- aerovac medivac hospital-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -based at Ton Son Nhut Air Base and then I happened to be there when they si-when the Paris Peace Accords were announced.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

[clock chimes in background]

BAGGETT: And, uh, I was one of those last to leave the country. I was moved up to U- Udorn, Thailand, in the air base there for the remainder. Um, when the Paris Peace Accords were signed, the announcement was made, 'we will come up soon with a date' if you've been in um, southeast asian theater for six months plus, and- and then you need early out for some reason, then uh, you'll probably get it. If you've been in southeast asia theater less than six months, you'll be reassigned somewhere to finish it, okay?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: The date that they, um, picked was on a Friday, and my six month date was the next Monday.

HUNTLEY: Oh. [laughs] Isn't that the way of it?

BAGGETT: So I went up to Udorn, Thailand.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay, and that was- that was the, um, end of your overseas deployment?

BAGGETT: Yes, left there, came back to Travis Air Force Base, and was processed out.

HUNTLEY: Okay, uh, so while you were overseas did you reflect much about your unit's mission, and how much you believed in it while you were deployed overseas?

BAGGETT: This goes all the way back to why and how I joined the Air Force.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: I was caught up in the ethical debate about Vietnam- yes or no, good or bad, right or wrong- and the resolution for me was to not carry a gun, but do a hospital.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So rather than creating death and havoc, I created health and wellness.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so my feelings about my duty in Vietnam was, although it's a bad deal, I'm doing a good job.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We had U.S., probably Korea, and others coming through our hospital.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Chewed up, injured, dead. We got them, bandaged them as best we could, shipped them to a hospital in the Philippines or Guam for other care.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: Um, and so I felt given a new view of a bad, bad thing happening.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And lots of trauma occurring. My role was to help people in the ending cycle, live, return to their families, get on with their lives just like I was gonna- intending to do.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And from that, I felt good about it.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah.

BAGGETT: Politically, it's still a mixed bag.

HUNTLEY: Yeah. Um, so while you were deployed overseas, what did you think of, um, local inhabitants that you encountered?

BAGGETT: Inhabitants?

HUNTLEY: Yeah, like local people- um, the local population.

BAGGETT: I would say overall [clears throat] they were very pleasant to be with.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We, uh, we were treated, uh, politely most of the time.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We were treated kindly, particularly those civilians employed at the hospital.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We- we had a good relationship. We had a Papa-san, uh, that helped in the office.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: He was an old- older Vietnamese man, and it wasn't unusual for him to bring to work for us- find on our desk some kind of French-based, uh, pastry-

HUNTLEY: Oh.

BAGGETT: -that he had cooked or one of the Vietnam bananas which we brought back at home.

HUNTLEY: Were they yellow still?

BAGGETT: What?

HUNTLEY: Were they still yellow? The bananas?

BAGGETT: The what?

HUNTLEY: You said the bananas- they were this long. Were they still yellow?

BAGGETT: Oh. No they were- they were getting green to yellow.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay.

BAGGETT: But then growth went up five, six inches. But them bananas tasted good.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay

BAGGETT: Um, I had one incident with a secretary in our office that angered me greatly, and I thought that boy, that was ridiculous, but other than that, uh, I really didn't have any difficulties.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Civilian or- or governmental or military. Or with inhabitants.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Um, so when you interacted with the local- the local population, um, what do you think their conceptions were of the United States? And did you ever engage in any conversations about the United States with them?

BAGGETT: I don't really remember any specifics about discussing national events, things, countries, and culture. I found it very interesting that as the Paris Peace Accords had been signed, and people were beginning to be pulled out within that thirty day period it read that it would, Papa-san came to me one morning, and we were visiting. And he said everybody knows it's just a matter of time. North Vietnam will be back and we will all be North Vietnamese.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Everybody knows that.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And I thought, wow, that- that- that brought me back on my heel a little bit to think about the future that they're expecting, and it's only a matter of time till it happens. Two years later, it did.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm

BAGGETT: That was to me a very interesting short revelation.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. So, when he was saying that, did it- was it kind of, like a- like he had accepted it or was he kind of disappointed or what seemed to be his, like, tone as he was saying that?

BAGGETT: I think he was disappointed that we were pulling out and that we hadn't won.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That we took the negotiated way out.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: But at the same time, he- he- it was just kind of a resolute.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Here's how's it's gonna be. Kind of an ending.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That's- that's it. We had to accept it.

HUNTLEY: Hm, okay. Um, let's see, so, um, while you were in the military, did you receive any special medals or recognitions for your service such as a purple heart, and if you did, what were the circumstances?

BAGGETT: I didn't receive anything special other than what the unit did.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: Et cetera.

HUNTLEY: Okay, and what did your unit-

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: You said your unit got a-

BAGGETT: The Hospital Unit- the 377th and 432nd.

HUNTLEY: Oh okay, they got recog- they got a recognition?

BAGGETT: I believe they did.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay, okay. Um, what sorts of technologies did you use in your service?

BAGGETT: [laughs] Oh that's funny.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: Looking back right now, asking that question today- it's funny.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: Well, let's see. We had telephones, yeah.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Not cell.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: It cost me three dollars and thirty cents a minute to call my wife every once in a while just to hear her voices, and let her know we're okay. Um, I envy the guys with cell phones now, satellite phones. So what an incredibly wonderful thing that would've been. We had uh- [laughs] I had the Young selector typewriter.

HUNTLEY: Uh-huh.

BAGGETT: We were fancy. Y'know? [chuckles]

HUNTLEY: Yeah. [laughs]

BAGGETT: And that was the extent pretty well. Fax machine, uh, copy machine. And that was it. I mean, IBM selector was pretty fancy.

HUNTLEY: So all of your record keeping- it was all paper done with typewriter?

BAGGETT: Yeah. Everything paper based.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Alright then. [laughs] Um, you must've have had a very good filing system.

BAGGETT: [laughs] Well it was- it was according to military regulations.

HUNTLEY: There you go. Um, let's see- uh, so what were race and/or gender relations like in your unit? So race or gender relations?

BAGGETT: [clears throat] Um, there were a mixture of, uh, white Americans, black Americans.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: In our unit there was a mixture of male female. Um, most of the time you saw a female, uh, she was gonna be an officer.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: Few enlisted females, here and there.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And um, their life weren't particularly happy-

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: -in Vietnam; I don't know about the rest of their service. But, the ones I know [pause] were harassed sexually.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Okay? [smacks lips] Uh, the lady officers were usually- the ones that I knew- were going to be career professionals: lab techs, nurses, et cetera.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. And then, um, were there any- so you talked about that there was sexual harassment for female, um, servicemembers, and then what about when it came to, uh, race relations?

BAGGETT: [clears throat] I really, really don't remember-

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: -any racial problems.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah.

BAGGETT: Um, my roommate that was supposed to be on the top bunk- but never there, he was downtown-

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: -was a black guy-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -that I knew-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -and we got along very well.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We had some good laughs with things with each other back then.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: But uh, I don't remember any racial problems-

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: -that occurred around me.

HUNTLEY: Okay. No, I was just- just following, uh, um, yeah, we usually when we do these, people can't always speak too much to gender relations, um, so that, uh, your discussion of gender relations, that'll be, um, a big help to the overall project.

BAGGETT: Good.

HUNTLEY: Um, okay, so what are your most vivid memories of your time in service?
[chuckles]

BAGGETT: I reported to Vietnam [clears throat] after, I dunno, eleven or twelve hours on a cramped plane- I, uh- I was picked up by one of the enlisted guys at the hospital, in a slideline in an ambulance, driven to the hospital.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. [chuckles]

BAGGETT: I reported in to this major who was the administrator not the commander- commander is always a doctor. So the administrator, [clears throat] other than medical professional. I reported in, and said, "Sgt. Baggett, reporting for duty." And somewhere in the first two or three paragraphs of this conversation, is "Sgt. Baggett, you need to shave." And I thought, I just left my wife, eleven hours on a cramped plane, to be at a place I did not volunteer, and the first thing this jackass says is you need to shave. Which turned out to be an intro to what his personality was going to be like the whole time.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] Fair enough. Um, let's see, uh, so to follow up-

BAGGETT: That's one- that's my first memory of Vietnam.

HUNTLEY: Do you have, uh, any other, like, vivid memories you would like to-

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: Yeah. Um, we were- uh, the hospital's on a perimeter of part of the area where the Tet Offensive overran the Tan Son Nhut Air Base. Behind the hospital were some, um, created works- kinda of a bunker so if they were attacked again, uh, you could go to the bunker and it was a dirt bunker with a window in it, and that would be a defensive position. That got my attention. The other thing that got- this hospital was a, uh, typical finger- mobile home brought in, hooked together hospital. Central hall- things left and right down the hall. Since it was an elevated building- about three feet cause a was mobile trailer- it was surrounded by concertina wire. We all had an assigned duty in case of attack. And I was part of the 'sapper' squad. My duty was to crawl under the hospital, and see if there were any sapper explosive charges and pull them out and do something with them.

HUNTLEY: Oh.

BAGGETT: That was a memory, to tell you the least. [laughs] Another memory was we would occasionally get a rocket attack from Viet Cong who had infiltrated- filter- filtered down, and- from the North, and positioned close enough to- to send rockets in. [clock chimes in background] They- one of those happened while we had an ambulance at the flight line, and when the rocket attack was over, the guys in the ambulance discovered there was a shrapnel shred of part of the housing of the rocket, 'kay? It was there, kinda gnarled obviously, but they brought it back to the hospital. I have a picture of it somewhere in my memoir. Here was this silver part of the hull of this rocket with huge red letters, U-S-S-R.

HUNTLEY: Oh. [laughs] Oh, man.

BAGGETT: And I thought, who the heck are we fighting here, exactly, y'know? [clears throat] That was a revelation.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: The other time, was I mentioned earlier, the first time my near death experience- you could hear these rockets coming in. They had a hiss to their motors. And so this starts off [making noise] shhhhhh-shew. Get loud, y'know?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: [claps hands] And when the- the hissing stopped, you just hoped you weren't under cause that's when it dropped on us and exploded. One particular rocket attack, this hiss started loud, and got louder, and I thought, that particular time, I'm gone. I'm history. And that's when my brain relived my wife- my life in seconds and stopped and focused on Miwes and not ever seeing her again. Another one memory was R&R coming back home, I think, I believe.

MRS.BAGGETT: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Hmm?

MRS.BAGGETT: Airplane.

BAGGETT: The what?

MRS.BAGGETT: There was an airplane or a jet or something like that.

BAGGETT: Oh yeah, thank you.

MRS.BAGGETT: Cause we were in the flight line too.

BAGGETT: We had bought a house thinking we'd be there cause I was moving in my last year at the Fort- the base was a prep base- one of those prep bases for Vietnam. And so they had these little small jets that they'd practice. They'd all come in the north end of the runway, take off at

the south end of the runway which is right at highway 90- the old highway 90 which was the only one there before you got I-10. Okay, they'd go over the Gulf, form, and come back. And it came right over little houses- subdivisions you call Mary Esther, Florida-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -was where our house was. So one night on R&R, we'd gone to bed, and I heard this- these rocket- these- planes forming, going out, their formation all got together, and they were coming back in. And all I heard was the hiss of these rockets- of the jet motor.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: Mel- Miwes felt a- some kind of movement in the bed and woke her up and so she wanted to check what and she- she didn't know what the movement was. Thought I disappeared. She said, where are you? I was on the floor. I had got out of that bed and hit the floor cause I was thinking we're in rockets time.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Another time we were having dinner- we were having dinner and some fool drove by and his vehicle backfires, and she looked around- I was gone. Under the table.

MRS.BAGGETT: He was under the table.

BAGGETT: Huh?

MRS.BAGGETT: Under the table. [chuckles]

BAGGETT: She looked under the table, and there I was on the floor.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

HUFFMAN: Oh.

BAGGETT: I thought, y'know, somebody was firing or there was another something- mortars or something coming at me. But I heard this boom! Right outside and I hit the floor.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: The other thing is as I mentioned, my roommate who was really never there, so he- he- his upper berth was vacant.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Our quonset hut was shielded with sandbags about three feet up the wall, and that's where the- the screen was that kept the bugs out but let the air through.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So the upper- my bunk was down under, no air- his bunk was getting nice and breezy so I occupied that bunk.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: Okay? And I have no idea how I did it today, but I got to where I can get into my flak jacket- I had a position in the bed- get into my flak jacket, and my helmet on before I hit the floor.

HUNTLEY: Oh, wow.

BAGGETT: From the top bunk.

HUFFMAN & HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: I did it several times.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: But before I hit the bed- floor, I had a helmet and flack jacket on.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: Crazy.

HUNTLEY: Yeah. So when you got back the- just right back into automatic?

BAGGETT: What?

HUNTLEY: Oh, right back into autopilot- like when you got-

BAGGETT: Oh.

HUNTLEY: -back to civilian life, it was just-

BAGGETT: Pretty well.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Pretty well. There were some- some memories here and there, but pretty well.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: I was really looking forward to it. A, Getting back alive and unscathed- only one thing I had lost was hearing. Um, I was looking back to getting into graduate school immediately, getting back and seeing my wife. And so, I had very high expectations that were realized since I got back.

HUNTLEY: Yeah, well I just mean like when you had those experiences when you came back or when you were in R&R, where you hit the floor so fast, it was after all those- like, after being able to do it so quickly when you were overseas.

BAGGETT: It was all overseas.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: I didn't have any instances that I remember when I got back.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay, I see.

MRS.BAGGETT: You mean that- you mean when you were out?

BAGGETT: Panicked, yeah.

MRS.BAGGETT: Well I don't remember any more.

BAGGETT: I don't remember any more about it.

HUNTLEY: Okay. Umm, let's see- so, uh, you've said some, but just to bring it back together- so what did you like or not like about your overall experience in the service?

[pause]

BAGGETT: [clears throat] Um, our commander, the doctor over our- our hospital, had my full, complete, deep respect.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: The administrator was a joke. And uh- and in fact, I almost took him to JAG one time, and report him for something he had done.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: And [pause] the- the thing that shocked me as far as another interesting cultural thing, uh, and it adjusted juxtaposition of what I- I discovered. I had just gotten there from being married two years, missing the heck out of my wife, hurting in a place as I said, I didn't volunteer for. I was supposed to be in the Fort Worth- in the hospital at Carswell Air Force Base,

instead of there. [clears throat] The thing that really shocked me was the number of career military, and I can speak predominantly for the enlisted 'cause that's who I worked with, that had families, wives, kids back home, but one of the first things they did was hook up with a Vietnamese lady and live with her for the time he was there in an obviously sexual relationship. And those guys- I had no respect for 'em. I thought, my gosh, does your wife know this, do your kids know you're doing this, did they really care- I don't know! But I- that was- I was not prepared for that. I was just not prepared for the sexual side of military U.S. in a foreign country.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: It really was distasteful to me. It still is.

HUNTLEY: Um, so that would be on the side of things that you didn't like and you talked about that. You've- but when it came to your commanding officer, you said that you had a lot of respect for him?

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Um, are there other things that you, like on the other side of the spectrum that you liked?

BAGGETT: What?

HUNTLEY: So, one the side of the spectrum there were things that you didn't like-

BAGGETT: Okay.

HUNTLEY: Are- is there any thing else that you did like?

BAGGETT: Yes, yeah. The dedication, uh, of the- of the doctors, dentist, and nurses.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Had great respect for them. I had really good respect for them. They were there, uh, they knew how to enjoy the good sides of what they had- what it had to offer.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Which significantly different from enlisted, young sargeants, uh, and, but, they were- they weren't career military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: You were enlisted, you had a job to do, and they were an officer and they had their job to do. But- but- but these people were not wrapped up into the social distance between the enlisted and the officer.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: To them, we were a team.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And I had a lot of respect for that. I knew who I was, where I was and all that.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: But being treated as part of a team, rather than you're an enlisted man-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Uh, I had- I had a great respect for that relationship.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And their dedication to being there- they could be home making a lot of money.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: But they were fulfilling a commitment, as my brother did. The Navy helped put him through med school.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so he owed the Navy some time.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Probably most of them did the same thing.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: 'Kay, and they were honoring that commitment. Uh, there was one- one doctor, Dan. He was- was a funny dude. He had one little way of showing his rebellion. He had rose-colored glasses.

HUNTLEY: Ah. [laughs] Literally. [laughs]

BAGGETT: Literally, his lenses were rose-colored.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so regardless of what he did or where he was, Dan saw the world through rose-colored glasses.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] Oh, I like that.

BAGGETT: He was a hoot.

MRS.BAGGETT: Hmm.

HUNTLEY: Yeah, um, alright, so we're going to talk about your, uh, transition back into civilian life. So coming back around to that again, um, so did you expect to face any challenges when you returned to civilian life and if yes, what challenges, um, were you expecting?

BAGGETT: No, I didn't expect any big challenges. I was, as I said, I was so much looking forward to being home with Miwes. I was so much looking forward to seeing my family, extended.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: I was so much thankful to get in to grad school. There's a story behind that, if you got a minute.

HUNTLEY: I believe we do. [chuckles]

HUFFMAN: Yeah.

BAGGETT: When I was at TCU, I did a directed study three hour course by one of the- the Christian professors at TCU. He was fixing to go to Yale on a sabbatical, and he was going to look at the medical sociology between Livefield and, uh, [smacks lips]. And so he said, Dick, uh, I'll give you a three hour course, okay, if you get me- help me get ready for my sabbatical so I did that, and so I ended up reading a lot of medical things for him, and summarizing it, writing reports, talking to him about it, answering questions. When I was- when we were just married, my first year, Jerry sent me a brochure from the American University Association of Schools in hospital administration. At that time, there were 19 schools- English, civilian schools-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -in the U.S. and Canada offering degree in hospital administration. I had arranged through Jerry who had a kid- had a student who was in that program contact- I had arra- oh and all these schools, I applied for three of them. All of them required a mandatory eye-to-eye interview.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That's gonna be real hard to do, yeah.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: So a year and a half in front of the class that I was applying for, I went for interviews. We drove- and through this contact, I had arranged a conference with the head of the department, Trinity University. [clock chimes in background] So we drove from [sighs] Eglin Air Force Base, Florida to San Antonio, Texas for an interview. 12,000 miles for an interview. Got there and this friend said I am so sorry. Today happens to be registration-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -for class and the chairman of the department is in the gym all day. And I said, go back, ask him- tell him this is a 25,000 mile round trip for me.

HUNTLEY: Huh.

BAGGETT: If I can just have fifteen minutes, it will be worth it. Come, my gpa undergraduate thing wasn't all that great. I had taken several courses in base education, and it was two different people when you look at the transcripts, okay? One of them was [makes pthg sound] and one of them was serious and the real thing. So the guy said, okay, meet him at noon in his office, and I said, we wanted to explain who the real Dick Baggett was. Here, you're looking at grades and stuff, plus I was not a good test taker back then, my GRE was not all fabulous. So I needed to give him a verbal, visual, oral concept of me. So we met him at noon for an hour and a half visit on his agenda. And, I did not know till later- when I was in grad school one of my professors said, you wanna know how you got into this program? And I said, I always wondered that, yes.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: He said, FYM. I said, FYM? He said, yeah, FYM scratched on the notes here and there all through your- your folder, interview particularly. And I said, what the heck does that stand for? He said, it's for- it was his shorthand for fine young man. Turned out, that he was a retired Air Force Colonel.

HUNTLEY: Oh, wow.

BAGGETT: Hospital administrator who had twice been the administrator at the hospital at Tan Son Nhut, Saigon.

HUNTLEY: Oh, wow

BAGGETT: Okay? Now, that- that's a theological intr- intervention to me. God sometimes comes to us manipulates us and goes what? Again for a while. This guy was an intervention in my life. I never saw him again, I have no idea whatever happened to him.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Had an hour and a half that changed my life for the future.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah.

BAGGETT: That gave me another when I found that out-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -that gave me another really nice humanistic side-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -to the officers once in- in the military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Um, so did you face any challenges when you returned to civilian life and if so, what challenges? So you talked about your expectations but when you returned what did you face? What were- did you face any challenges?

BAGGETT: [clears throat] I was college educated, graduated as we know-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -and enlisted.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That's the way it was back then.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Out of our flight of 24 people in basic training in Lackland, eight of us had a bachelors, masters, or doctorate degree.

HUNTLEY: Oh, wow.

BAGGETT: That's the way the Air Force works. Okay?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So, I was always surrounded- I had more to do with the position with the nurses than I did the enlisted people.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Because my brother was a doctor already- MD.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: I had been through a lot of medical school experiences and the cadaver lab and some other things with him, y'know?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So they knew a little bit about me and my background, and that I was headed to hospital administration.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: So in a large extent I was accepted more by the doctors and dentists-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -and the nurses than other people. And so when I got back, and I was in a class full of people that had a lot of health background- several of them were also just out of military, having been in a military hospital- then part of that was some comrad- comradery.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Which was probably in a way a little buffer zone, maybe.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Uh, and so I- I felt I had come from being associated with a professional group of people predominantly-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -in the medical field, and a month after I got home, I was back amongst a professional group of people, highly educated, headed to the medical field.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And I think there was a carryover effect that I've never been able to think about till now. But I think there was a carryover effect, transitioned from one culture to the other which made it link a little and smooth.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That answer your question?

HUNTLEY: Yeah. [clears throat] That's- so you felt that your time in the military it- it well equipped you for your transition back into civi-

BAGGETT: Yeah, yeah.

HUNTLEY: Okay, um, so [clears throat] how do you, uh, military- how do you believe that military service affected, um, influenced or affected your family?

BAGGETT: Influenced what?

HUNTLEY: Influenced or affected your family.

BAGGETT: When, uh, when I got back, the concept of family was [pause] special.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: The concept of being- having a family and being back with my family when the alternative with the rocket attack could've been different- was very special.

HUNTLEY: [clears throat]

BAGGETT: And my- I decided very quickly that we were going to have family.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Two years of marriage, and I'd gotten her pregnant and we'd taken care of it. But when I got back, we decided we wanted a family and so our son was born while I was still in graduate school. Um, that was to me one of the important things of getting back home. Anything else on that question you want to ask?

HUNTLEY: [chuckles] Um, [clicks tongue] well, we can move onto, uh, how well do you think you were received by- oh I'm sorry.

BAGGETT: What were you asking? The question was how the military prepared-

HUNTLEY: Um.

BAGGETT: I- I didn't answer that one fully.

HUNTLEY: No, I was just following up- like putting together what you had asked. So you said that you were saying that your experience in the military, um, working with doctors and nurses.

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: That that had prepared you well for transitioning back.

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Um, when you came back- so uh, um, how was that-

BAGGETT: Another thing-

HUNTLEY: - oh sorry, go ahead.

BAGGETT: Well I was in Vietnam- after I got my acceptance to graduate school while I was there, I had- I realized how fortunate and blessed I was. I was accepted out of one school out of 19 in the United States and Canada.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: One of my choices- my number one preference- I have the right- the opportunity for my future to be very different from my unproductive, not particularly successful past.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And I made a promise to myself to go up and say, we're not gonna waste the future.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We're gonna make a contribution-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm

BAGGETT: -to it. First thing I ever thought. I was the president of the graduate student body at Trinity University.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And ever since then, I have pursued degrees, certifications all over the place. I had been a volunteer, problem saying- problem saying no to people.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: For 20 something years- 20- 21 years I was chairman of the Advisor Committee of the Business School at Howard College.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Ohh.

BAGGETT: Okay? I volunteer for all kinds of other things here and there- president of the Chamber of Commerce at one time.

MRS.BAGGETT: Not here.

BAGGETT: Not here, but president of Chamber of Commerce where we lived one time. Uh, I was- have always volunteered for things. Um, a Rotarian, I've been a Past District Governor-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -of [unintelligible]

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Way before at my age normally should've allowed me.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] Wow.

BAGGETT: It- but I have done my best to fulfill my promise in Vietnam that I would not waste the future like I did the past.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah. Um, so in this- well, my other question about returning back is how do you feel like you were received by communities in Texas when you got back?

BAGGETT: I was- I- I was received well.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Um, first of all, graduate school was in San Antonio, Texas. There are five military bases there.

HUNTLEY: Yeah. [chuckles]

BAGGETT: Okay? [laughs]

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: And San Antonio is big world in military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so where we went to church, and things we did, um, there was always military, ex-military, et cetera, there. Very rarely, I mean real rarely, did I ever receive a feeling like, y'know, you went to the dark side [chuckles] so to speak. Uh, most of the time anywhere we've been, all the people we've met, whether they're non-cons or civilians- uhh, civilian non-cons or if you're military, like here- we've been here for 35 years.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: It is a very military town in a big way.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: Employment-wise, money into that flow of the economy here, et cetera. Our city looks, respects, and honors the military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Okay? And so, I've been- I guess we've been fortunate that we've been in an area where overall there was a great respect.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Or active, former military, particularly if you were a war veteran.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. So to kinda follow up on that, um, what- what long term impact do you believe that veterans such as yourself, um, have had on communities in Texas, particularly west Texas?

BAGGETT: [takes a breath] One- number one, we understand war.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: I understood more, had more in kind, and more linkage to my uncles than my aunts cause they went through World War II, and the separation, and the service, and the war zone. After I got back, we had- I had a lot of new communication-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: -with my uncles, and tremendously greater respect for them-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm

BAGGETT: -than I had. [pause] My daughter and I used to ride motorcycles together, and when The Wall came to visit- be in, uh, be in San Angelo- San Angelo, we went over on our motorcycles to take a ride and we wanted to go the The Wall at the fort. I looked through the book. There are five Baggetts.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: In the Vietnam War.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: 58,220 people died U.S. in the war of Vietnam, ten years. We walked back to our motorcycles, and I had tears in my eyes.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And I looked at my daughter, and I said, Carrie, that war represents fifty-eight thousand people who never- never had a chance to ride a motorcycle with their daughter. I have a great appreciation for what people paid for our country.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: One of the reasons I guess, I love history. 'Cause you gain an understanding and appreciation for what this country started, its struggle, and what struggles it's been through to maintain one of the few seats of liberty, and few seats of choice. Citizens have choices in this whole globe, and I have never- will never, forget the fact that I- I gave a year of my life, could've given it all, came close, but overall I gave it for a cause. Theological, nationally, internationally, that this country will survive and it will be a model and an assistance to those who are now dear children.

HUNTLEY: Yeah. Um, do you have any advice for young men and women who are just entering the service?

BAGGETT: Just entered?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

[both chuckle]

BAGGETT: Enjoy it!

HUNTLEY: There you go.

BAGGETT: Uh, even if you're- most of them now are going to be- are thinking career-

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

Baggett: -anyway, okay?

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: They're not, uh, they're not drafted.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: Okay, so most of of them are volunteer, most of them are thinking career out of that.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Whether they are or not, they need to enjoy it.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Because it offers experiences that I would never had in civilian life.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: It offers- particularly if you're international- I got to see Singapore, Saigon, Thailand-

MRS.BAGGETT: Hong Kong.

BAGGETT: -Hong Kong.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. [clears throat]

BAGGETT: Okay?

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: I got to be places where ain't anybody has ever been.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Not to mention I'm one of the very few people who served in Vietnam and also Sai-uh, Laos.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so, I'mma say enjoy, it can afford you opportunities you will never have in another field of employment.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Secondly, I would say honor your history. Honor where you are because so many others are willing to be in that unit.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And contribute to the future.

HUNTLEY: Yeah, yeah, um, so do you have any objects, items or correspondence that you would like to share with the project?

BAGGETT: Well get that thing off the wall right there- picture- like on the wall?

MRS.BAGGETT: It's not there, Dick. You took the picture there.

BAGGETT: Oh that's right. It's upstairs.

MRS.BAGGETT: I don't know where it is.

BAGGETT: Nevermind.

HUNTLEY: We can get back with you.

[all laugh]

BAGGETT: I can send it to you.

MRS.BAGGETT: Well for months- there was a stack of pictures, and I, uh, about three weeks ago, I picked them up and I moved them, and I can't find them.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] That's all good.

MRS.BAGGETT: I did- I did my good organization. I put it somewhere I would remember.
[laughs]

HUNTLEY: That's why I don't bother cleaning.

[all laugh]

MRS.BAGGETT: Well I don't do it a whole lot till you notice.

HUNTLEY: No, no, it's lovely home. Um-

BAGGETT: This is Sergeant Bill Kwalabong. [spelling unsure]

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: Bill was a medical administration specialist officer.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: By the time I was in Vietnam, y'know, they had closed it down. Bill and I worked in the same office, did the same job, with each other. He was my best friend in Vietnam.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Okay?

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That was on a MEDCAP mission. Medical Civic Action Program mission.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We would go as a medical team out to the villagers in the jungle.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: We would have a military entourage with us. We would treat, pass out pills, and other things to the villagers to help them with their health.

HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: The joke was we would sure hope we got the schedule right. The Viet Cong's supposed to come next week. We're here this week, y'know.

HUNTLEY: [laughs]

BAGGETT: Be not good if they both showed up at the same place.

MRS.BAGGETT: He's got them, uh, um, a- a myriad of pictures. It's just-

BAGGETT: Yeah.

HUNTLEY: Yeah.

MRS.BAGGETT: Gotta find them.

HUFFMAN: [laughs]

HUNTLEY: Well, um-

BAGGETT: Forty something years later Bill Kwalabong and I got together.

HUNTLEY: Ohh, what about that? [chuckles] Oh, wow. Where did you get together?

BAGGETT: His home in South Carolina.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay. Um, yeah we can- we can stay in touch and everything. And if you-

MRS.BAGGETT: Okay [laughs]

HUNTLEY: Yeah, we scan them and uh, give you guys a digital copy and everything.

MRS.BAGGETT: Okay.

BAGGETT: We'll find some stuff and send it to you.

MRS.BAGGETT: We'll find it.

HUNTLEY: Well, no, no, no yeah. [laughs]

MRS.BAGGETT: It might be after Christmas.

HUNTLEY: It's fine, that's fine. We're- we're grateful.

BAGGETT: Those are, um, that's an important picture. This one I think is kinda interesting.

HUFFMAN& HUNTLEY: Mhm.

BAGGETT: That's at least me showing the military.

HUFFMAN & HUNTLEY: Yeah.

BAGGETT: And being out in the villages.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: That type of thing.

HUFFMAN: Yeah.

BAGGETT: I have a- a whole bunch more. We'll try to get something to send it to you.

HUNTLEY: Oh, okay.

HUFFMAN: Thank you.

MRS.BAGGETT: He's got- he's got three uniform shirts.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: That's my Vietnam shirt.

MRS.BAGGETT: Uhh, he- they wouldn't- they'd come up.

[all laugh]

BAGGETT: Yeah, don't ask me to put it on.

[all laugh]

BAGGETT: That's a shirt from Vietnam.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

MRS.BAGGETT: So, um, but-

BAGGETT: I have a keychain- grab my keychain, and my card. It's got the Baggett on it.

MRS.BAGGETT: Oh, you're talking about- okay.

BAGGETT: Yeah.

MRS.BAGGETT: The- like- like that.

HUNTLEY: Ohh, okay.

BAGGETT: Yeah. Uh, uh, this one's a blue and white one off the khaki uniform.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

BAGGETT: But it's a memento of Vietnam.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Uh, just the Air Force blue and silver.

HUNLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And Baggett. But it's my keychain.

HUNTLEY: Okay.

MRS.BAGGETT: But he didn't, y'know, he doesn't have a lot of medals, and uh, that kind of stuff. Yeah.

BAGGETT: The travels I thought were interesting. Looking up there, I went to Russia a few years ago actually. After the Iron Curtain fell.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: Bout two years later, I was in Russia for a humanitarian visit, a volunteer to do good.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: It's been a theme of my life.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: I blew the first twenty-five mercilessly. It could've been- that could've blown the rest of my life, but God gave me another chance and I was not going to screw it up.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah. No, yeah, that's- when you're talking about your experience with graduate school, I had a similar one where it's just like, the stars just kinda align for that moment, and yeah, that- it does make you feel grateful to have had that experience, so, yeah.

BAGGETT: Thank you.

HUNTLEY: Is there anything else you'd like to share about your military service?

BAGGETT: Um, in those enlisted did teach me to respect authority.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: I didn't understand authority. And I did- I didn't understand the division of labor real well.

HUNTLEY: [laughs] Yeah.

BAGGETT: Okay? It taught me good ideas of organization, management, division of labor, accountabilities in various capacities. About pulling together as a unit. I learned- I was exposed to that, um, like I had never been before, in the military.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And so, those are the lessons that leaned in a compressed time. Some people take a bucket or two to get to understand it.

HUNTLEY: Yeah

BAGGETT: Authority, respect, getting together as part of the big wheel.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm.

BAGGETT: And those were important for me when I soon- two years later I was in a hospital administration.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm

BAGGETT: And I understood everybody has a role. And it's all necessary and I'm the administrator. But everybody else in that hospital makes my living.

HUNTLEY: Mhm-hm. Yeah.

BAGGETT: Lab techs, nurses, RAs, LVNs, housekeeping. I may be top of the- top of the organizationship, but the only reason I'm there is because of what everybody else is doing and I got that out of that experience. And that is valuable.

HUNTLEY: Yeah. Well, um, Mr. and Mrs. Baggett, thank you so much for sharing your morning with us, um, we'll-

BAGGETT: Much pleasure.

HUNTLEY: - go ahead and uh-

BAGGETT: I hope it was helpful.

HUNTLEY: No absolutely. Um, we'll go ahead and- and sign off here. Uh, let's see.