

Family and Military History of Eugene D. Hayden, I.D. 39-328-200

My grandparents, Oscar and Annie Hayden and their sons, William E. (my father) and Clark O., daughters, Dell, Edna, Emma and Cora lived in Joplin, Mo. when my father was born June 2, 1893. They later moved to Oklahoma City and my father was employed by the Railway Express Agency. My father served in the United States Army Infantry in Germany during WWI. He talked little about the war.

After the war he married Little Charlotte Chambless. The entire family migrated from Oklahoma on or about 1921 much like you see on the Beverly Hillbillies. There were others who made the trip also which included my grandmother's brother and sisters. They settled on a farm my grandfather homesteaded near Blaine, Oregon. Blaine is a very small town located near the upper reaches of the Nestucca river and had only a store and post office. It is located about 12 miles (6 miles in 2015 db) east of Beaver, a town of about 200 located 15 miles south of Tillamook, Or. on highway 101. I was born in Beaver December 13, 1923.

After a time my father became employed as "first helper" at the cheese factory in Hebo, Oregon, 4 miles south of Beaver. I attended Hebo Grade School and after eight years there attended Nestucca Union High School which is located in Cloverdale, Oregon, two miles south of Hebo. I graduated from NUHS in June of 1941.

The stock market crash of 1929 did not mean much to me at the age of 6 but it continued and from about the age of 10 I do remember those days and will share some of those memories with you. My father was laid off from his job, and in those days you did what you had to do; so during the blackberry season my mother and I picked blackberries and my father had the job as buyer. My mother also made pies and sold them to the restaurant for 25 cents per pie. During the hop season we packed up and went to a farm near the town of Independence, Oregon, where we lived in tents. There my mother and I picked hops and my father was employed picking up the hops from the field with horses and wagon. It was just like the song *Sixteen Tons*, "I owe my soul to the company store" as my parents had to charge the groceries. Then when you got paid the money went to the company store, but you did eat.

There were good times also. In the evenings the people gathered around a stage, and one of the group would play a guitar while everyone joined in singing the songs of the time. When you look back on those times it would be for the good as the people were actually being conditioned for what was to come although not by design.

Life improved for everyone when President Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected in 1936 as he started government programs to get the people working again. Two of the programs were the WPA and the CCC's. It was temporary fix that did bring back hope.

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I started high school in September of 1937, and it was February 8, 1938, that was to be the most tragic day of my life. I had only been home from school a short time, and my mother and I were cleaning up the yard when she screamed, "The house is on fire!"

We ran into the house, and the wall was on fire behind the wood burning heater. I turned on the water in the sink but there was no pressure as we got our water from a spring. It was useless, so we picked up the cedar chest and took it to the yard. She raced back in. I had stopped for some reason that I do not remember, but when I went to go back in the front of the house was a mass of flames.

I went to the side of the house and crawled through a window which was full of black smoke. I went as far as I could calling for her and feeling but did not know where to go. I went back out the window. Neighbors had arrived and had crawled as far as they could through the back door and then had to leave. The only fire department was the forest service. Houses in those days were like kindling. Nothing but boards and wallpaper. The hose had to come from the river. The house burned to the ground and I lost my mother.

My dad was working away from home in the cheese factory in Sandlake as the cheesemaker there had been stricken with polio. By the time he got there there was nothing left but ashes.

I then lived with my Aunt Emma and Uncle Dewey Saling and grandparents on a farm near Sandlake for a time. During that time on the farm I groomed and trained a calf. Every day after school I would head to the barn, get my calf and start the training. She had to stand with front feet stretched forward and back feet stretched backward. She responded well, and then it was fair time. Off to the fair we went. We slept in the barn with our calves, and the day came to show them. We all marched in a circle, on command stopped and the calves would respond as they had been trained. Finally there were only two, and mine was one of the two. We marched around many times, and finally they had to make a decision. I was a little disappointed as I got second place.

I also had two banty chickens, a hen and a rooster. I cleaned them up, took them to the fair, and got first place two consecutive years. My dad bought a team of horses for the farm in appreciation for my grandparents making a home for me. One day I hooked the older and more gentle horse to a wagon, and a friend, Ross Price, and I went out amongst the tree stumps picking up knots for firewood. On the way back I turned to close to a stump and the wheel caught and the shaft poked the horse in the ribs as the wagon had not been built for a horse of his size. He took off and pulled the wagon apart. Ross fell off in the ferns but was not injured. I was hanging on to the reins on the

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ground but finally had to let go. The horse went to the barn and waited for us. Luckily it turned out to be humorous.

My dad quit the cheese factory and bought the Hebo Inn, a restaurant with a few rooms overhead. About a year after buying the inn my father married the waitress, Irene Harmel who had a son, Gayland, who was about 7 years of age. I lived there until I graduated in June of 1941. That summer I worked for the Forest Service on a tower on Bell Mountain, looking for smoke that might mean the beginning of a forest fire.

September 9, 1941, two of my friends, Keith Brandt and Jim Hatfield, and I left for Portland looking for work. We checked the classifieds in the newspaper and there was an advertisement for track workers on the Southern Pacific Railroad. We applied, but the fellow who interviewed us, Jim Crowley, realized that we were young boys that did not really know what we were applying for. He gave us jobs but not on the tracks. We were sent to Independence, Oregon, the hop capital of Oregon. We found ourselves piling two hundred pound bundles of hops from the farmers truck into a railroad warehouse and eventually to a railroad car. It was hard work but we worked hard, and the agent took a liking to all of us. We did not know it but we were on the Clerks Roster. One day he came to us and said there was a clerk's job in Willamina and we would have to decide who was going. We flipped a coin, and I was odd man out so to Willamina I went.

I had not yet turned 18. In those days messages came on the telegraph. The agent came to me one day about 10 days before my birthday and had a message in his hand that read, "Your clerk, Eugene Hayden, is under 18 years of age and must be terminated." He asked, "is this true?"

I said, "Yes," and he said, "Let me take care of it."

He did not answer until they pressed for an answer, and then he answered saying the message was garbled and he did not understand it. That went on until my birthday, December 13th, and he answered saying, "Dismissal not necessary - clerk has turned 18."

You will note that December 7, 1941, came in the midst of the time when the agent was doing all he could do to keep me from getting fired. It was a Sunday, December 7, 1941, and I was home at the Hebo Inn when the word came over the radio that Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor. We did not know it at the time, but John Collier, a young man who prior to his enlistment in the Navy lived on a farm about halfway between Hebo and Cloverdale, was aboard the Arizona when the Japs attacked. He still lies

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with his shipmates on the Arizona at the bottom of Pearl Harbor. I still recall having a flat tire while driving from Hebo to Cloverdale right in front of his house. I was about 16 years of age at the time, and he came out and helped me get the spare on.

President Franklin D. Roosevelt immediately asked Congress to declare war on Japan, and then Hitler declared war on the United States. Now we were in a war on two fronts with the battleships sunk in Pearl Harbor, and our military was ill-prepared for war. People were stunned and furious and became united as they have never been since. Sixty some years later there is a great deal of criticism of President Roosevelt for having interned the Japanese, but at the time there was no criticism at all. In fact he did them a great favor, in my opinion, as there is no doubt in my mind that they would have been shot on sight.

Sixteen million men and women were in uniform, but whether you were in uniform or not all were a part of the team. Women worked in the factories with the men. They built ships at an unbelievable pace. The people had been conditioned to being without, as I mentioned earlier, so when the gas, food, soap and other commodities were rationed they knew how to handle it.

The restaurant depended heavily on tourist trade, and that came to an end immediately after the war started. My father closed the restaurant, moved to Portland and was employed by Western Machinery Company where they converted to making ship anchors.

I left Willamina and went to Portland. My job was mostly outside in the winter cold and snow. I worked there for a time but soon decided that this was not going to be my life's work. A new army base near Corvallis, Oregon, was built which was named Camp Adair. The railroad ran through the camp, so there was an agency on the base. An office job came open there for which I applied and received. It was there where Keith Brandt and I were working when we both received "Greetings from the President." Jim Hatfield had quit and went to work for the telephone company, and he was also called and spent his time in the Navy. All three of us survived the war and are still living at this time.

My orders were to report to Tillamook, Oregon, and from there to Portland, Oregon. We were told that we had a choice of which branch of the Armed Services we wished to serve. They asked me and I said, "Navy." I was sent to the next room, and I found out I was in the Army. I was inducted March 5, 1943. So much for choice.

After a physical and a swearing in ceremony I was ordered to Fort Lewis, Washington. There we were issued clothing and a barracks bag and of course more medical exams

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and shots, and it was not long before we were on a troop train heading for Abilene, Texas.

Upon arrival there basic training started. Up at dawn, morning exercises, drills, and twenty-mile marches with sand blowing all day and all night. After a time I was sent to clerks school. Finally the day came to ship out. The next stop, Camp Wheeler, Georgia, was located 10 miles from Macon, Georgia. You boarded the train with your barracks bag and it was your job to find a place to put it which was not an easy task as everyone had one. It was hot, and we had the windows open to keep from suffocating. The black smoke and soot from the engine had us covered from the top of our head to our waists.

We were assigned to the 325th Station Hospital, and now the training started for real. We participated in marches into the countryside in the summer heat of Georgia. We erected large hospital tents, mess hall tents, and our own private tents. There were orders to fall back, take it all down, pack it, load it into trucks, get our personal packs ready and march until told to set it all up again. Many times the first sergeant would bark, "Double time!" One time a medical officer, holding the rank of major, said, in a very loud voice, "What are trying to do--kill these men!" It was not long before the major was transferred.

Later, training in the Camp Wheeler hospital, my duty was in the receiving office where we admitted the patients. There was a lake close by where soldiers went when off duty, and one day lightning struck a tree. Soldiers there were hit, and finally one fellow was able to get up and go for help. The ambulances brought them in, and they were blue and seemed to be lifeless. But every one of them survived.

Our unit was changed from the 325th Station hospital to the 154th General Hospital. We were about to ship out, and it was time for a physical. I was found to have a hernia. Off to the hospital I went for an operation. I was worried that I would not get to go with my unit, but I was out and recovered before we got our orders.

There was an incident that occurred during my stay at Camp Wheeler that stays in my memory. We were not located on the main base, and there was a steak house about a mile up the road from our quarters. It was very popular, and another fellow and I walked there one evening, had our steak dinner and started our walk back. We were walking on the left side of the road, and I was on the left of my friend. A car approaching from our rear swerved across the road, hit my friend, knocked him down and then continued on. His leg was hurt but not broken so with my help he made it back to camp. We immediately called the Military Police. He, the driver of the car, entered the main gate and was caught. My friend took it court, but he did not get anywhere with his complaint. They fined the character, and that was the end of it.

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We shipped out to the New Orleans staging area about 10 miles out of New Orleans in the swamps. The training got serious then. First you had to deal with the weather. It was very hot, and the humidity was unbearable. Mosquitoes had to be reckoned with. The barracks had mosquito nets around each bunk. The stench was obnoxious. Cold showers were hot showers. We were given salt tablets, but I could not keep them down so had to salt my food heavily.

We lined up four deep to get to the mess hall a block away. By the time you got in you were completely wet from head to foot. Once in and seated with your meal the perspiration dripped into your food, but if you did not want to go hungry you ate it. Cockroaches were everywhere.

We were trained to respond to gas attacks which meant wearing gas masks which made it all the more unbearable. We had night marches in the swamps, the release of tear gas, and then on with the gas masks. Yes, they were getting us ready to go overseas.

We did have good times there as well. We were given passes to go to New Orleans where we spent a lot of time in the French Quarter seeing the sights. We also frequented the theaters as they were air-conditioned.

The day came to ship out, and our next stop was Fort Dix, New Jersey. The training there consisted of climbing up and down ropes simulating abandoning ship. Of course more shots and medical exams were received. We were given passes and took the train to New York City. There I saw my first "zoot suiter" with the baggy pants and a long chain hanging down the leg. It's much like what you see on the streets today. Of course it is worse, much worse now.

Orders were received and we departed on the train, June 22, 1944, from Camp Kilmer to the New York dock where we boarded with our duffel bags aboard the Queen Elizabeth. There were 15,000 troops aboard ship. My bunk was 4 decks below sea level. There were canvas bunks four high. The swimming pool was used as a mess hall. We spent a lot of time on top deck just standing against the rail gazing across the water. There was one gun on the stern. We zig-zagged to avoid Nazi U-boats. There was a lot of gambling on deck. Piles of money in front of players had to be held down to keep it from blowing away.

When the call came for chow the lines were long and kept moving. When we finished we stood in another line to wash our mess gear. Washing it is stretching it a bit as the water became greasy and you could not stop. 'Keep the line moving' was the order.

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After you got back to your bunk you got some toilet paper and wiped the mess gear off the best you could.

The ship was huge and it did not rock but there was plenty of sea sickness for reasons that I did not understand. It took us eight days to cross because of the zig-zagging and we landed in Glasgow, Scotland, June 28, 1944. We disembarked and were met by the Scottish people with crumpets and tea. It really impressed me as I was thinking, " We have more food than they have, but they are sharing what they have." It would have been unthinkable to turn it down.

It was not long before we boarded a train and soon we found ourselves in a tent camp somewhere in England. We were just getting settled in when we were welcomed by our fighter jets flying so low that they would have hit a train if it was in front of them. We dove for cover as a natural reaction. I am sure they had a good laugh, but we thought we had had it.

We were then moved to a hospital located in Burderop Park south of Swendon, England, where we relieved the 217th General Hospital. Our hospital had 834 beds. After a time we became a transit hospital. Our ambulances transported the wounded from Wroughton Airfield. If it was determined that their injuries were such that they should not be moved they stayed and were treated there. If they could be moved the diagnosis determined to which hospital they would be transported as various hospitals were equipped to specialize.

It was my duty, along with several others, to admit the patient and keep his records. I recall one day a crew from a B-17 bomber was brought in with various injuries. Their plane had been badly damaged from enemy fire. There was a huge hole in the side. The plane had to be landed, and their pilot managed to land it on a fighter strip which was far too small for a bomber. But land it he did, and the crew could not say enough good things about him. One of the fellows was from Klamath Falls, Oregon, and I have always regretted that I did not keep his name.

I also quite vividly remember a patient with a severed spinal cord. In those days there was not much hope for any extended life. It was my duty to go to his bedside, interview him, and let him know that he was headed home trying the best one could to make like it was his lucky day and at the same time knowing that his future was bleak.

During the battle of the bulge ambulances were arriving one behind the other. We admitted them through the front, determined if they could be moved, and if so, took them directly to the back and re-loaded them into ambulances going to hospitals pertinent to their particular injuries.

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There were many patients who were diagnosed as having "combat exhaustion". This diagnosis was very applicable, and in no way should they be criticized. They had been under fire for so long and under such conditions that they could take it no longer and their nerves were shattered. Long periods of rest and rehabilitation was needed and received.

We had a number of Italian prisoners on the grounds that policed the area. By that I mean they picked up the litter and did such other duties that they might be assigned. They were good at making rings and one of them made me a ring from a nickel, and I have it to this day.

There was a house a short distance from our Quonset huts, and the lady took in washing and ironing. When we took our laundry over we also took soap. We had plenty of it, and she had none except what we provided. She had a wood stove, and flat irons were heated on the stove. She was a very nice lady, and it was nice to go over and visit for a while. We always marveled at all the labor she had to do to get the job done as the clothes had to be washed by hand. We paid her the best we could with the limited money we had. There was also a pub up the road that we visited fairly often. I sometimes wonder if it is still there.

When we were on leave we either went to Swindon or London. Swindon is a good-sized city with theaters and pubs which we frequented often. Dark beer was served and we came to like it. The only things you could get at a restaurant were fish and chips.

When darkness came in London there was a complete blackout. There was no smoking except for pipes which had to be upside down. V-2 rockets from Germany would hit somewhere in the city on a regular basis. We rode the subways. I do not remember where but somehow, someway, we found our way back from wherever we were going.

During the battle of the bulge there was a shortage of soldiers on the front lines, and they were pulling troops stationed in England. Every day you checked the bulletin board to see if your name was there. Mine was not, but my friend, Robert Weyenberg, was called. I got a letter from him, and he said he was wounded but not seriously. They handed him a purple heart and sent him back to duty. He was from Appleton, Wisconsin, but I have not had any communication other than that one letter.

Then came VE day, May 8, 1945, but it was tempered with the fact that the war in the Pacific was still raging. We still had patients in the hospital, and our duties continued

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on but on a more relaxed day-to-day routine. I do not remember the details or how we finally disposed of the patients, but the word was that we would soon be going back to the mainland and then be re-deployed to the Pacific theatre.

Then on August 6, 1945, the first atomic bomb fell on Hiroshima. The Japanese needed more convincing, and the second bomb August 9, 1945, was dropped on Nagasaki. We were now not going to be re-deployed. We and millions of others were going home.

There are those today that think the bombs were not necessary. Those making that claim may have never been born had they not dropped the bombs. Seven thousand American men died on the small island of Iwo Jima and 20,000 Japanese. That should give some idea of what would have happened had the invasion of Japan have occurred. Some argue diplomacy could have ended the war. Not so; they would have fought to the bitter end. I may well have not been here to write this story as I may not have been as fortunate on my next tour of duty. There is no doubt that there would have been untold thousands of both Americans and Japanese that would not have written any story. Millions that have been born since would never have seen the light of day. President Truman, you made the right call.

We departed from Southampton, England, August 19, 1945, aboard the Queen Mary and arrived in New York Harbor August 21, 1945, no zig-zagging, and what a sight as the Statue of Liberty came into view.

As it was so many years ago it is hard to remember how many days it took or how we got there, but I was assigned to Fort McClellan, near Anniston, Alabama. I was there for a few months, more or less, and while there I purchased a 1940 Chevrolet black coupe. They had price controls in effect that did not work. The fellow who sold me the car said he could not buy the car for the price that he was supposed to sell it for. I paid \$700 in cash for the car, or thereabouts.

We had no particular duties while there and after a time I received orders to report to Headquarters Company, Fort Benning, Georgia. I worked in the office there and was quartered in Headquarters barracks. It was there I met Billy Treglown, and we became friends. He had a home in Macon, Georgia, and I had a car. We would go to his home every week-end. His mother, Pauline, cooked a big platter of shrimp for us each and every time. Billy had a cousin, Ruth Lindsey. He introduced me and we dated every week-end.

After another few months orders came for me to report to Fort McPherson, Georgia, for discharge. After receiving my discharge I headed back to Oregon in my Chevy. I soon

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reported to my employer, the Southern Pacific Railroad and was assigned to the agency at Willamina, Oregon.

I began writing to Ruth, and when vacation time arrived I was on the train heading for Macon, Georgia. We dated, and I asked her to marry me. She agreed. I now had to face her father, B (initial only) and her mother Ola. When I informed her father of our intentions his first response was, "Have you lost your mind!" He relented though, and we were married in their home, 140 Ridgeland Ave, January 23, 1947.

Ruth had a large family, brothers Bernard, Fred, James and Milton; sisters Martha, Joyce and Gracille. Every one of them was very friendly to me as were Mr. and Mrs. Lindsey. All have passed on except Ruth and Joyce. Ruth and I returned home on the train and lived in Willamina for several months. During the war there was not any construction of housing as all efforts were directed at winning the war. Now with the troops being discharged there was a huge demand for housing and it was almost impossible to find a decent place to live.

Our first place was above a tavern. We had a kitchen, living room and bedroom, no bathroom. The toilet was down the hall. We made our own shower by attaching a hose with a sprinkler to the kitchen sink faucet. We made a circle from wire and attached a shower curtain. We had a galvanized tub to stand in. We had a ice box but no refrigerator. Ruth must have wondered, "What did I get myself into?"

A few months later I was a successful bidder on a position in Portland. It was not much better there at first. We lived in the upstairs of a private home. The community bath was downstairs. We had a kitchen and bedroom. We finally did find a basement apartment which was much nicer than anything we had before. We lived there another few months and then we finally rented a house located at 61st and NE Glisan. It was in this house that Ruth became pregnant with our first born. Ruth's mother made the trip from Georgia to be with Ruth prior to and after the birth. Ruth, her mother and I were taking a walk in a Rose garden when Ruth gave the word that it was time to go to the hospital. Dennis Lindsey was born April 8, 1949, in Good Samaritan (Wilcox Memorial) Hospital.

On April 11th Ruth was in her room at the hospital, Dennis was in the nursery, Ruth's mother was at our house, and I was at work in the round house office in Brooklyn yard. It was on this day that Portland was hit with an earthquake. Ruth was terrified as her new son was not with her and her thoughts were for his safety. For Ruth's mother she was home alone, the chandelier was swinging to and fro, and she, of course, was frightened. For me I thought at first that a railroad engine was causing the shaking. I

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soon realized that the whole building was moving, and I was frightened as well as you feel so helpless. No serious damage resulted, however.

Our rent was \$50 per month at the time, and that was a lot of money in those days. The neighbor directly behind us was paying \$20 per month. I asked him to let me know if he was to ever move. He did, and we moved across the fence. We were now living at 6110 N.E. Hoyt Street. We were living in this house when our second son, Daniel Wayne was born December 18, 1952, and our third son, Steven Eugene was born February 8 1956. Both were also born in Good Samaritan (Wilcox Memorial) Hospital.

We were living at this address when Ruth's father and mother came to visit. This was a very small house, and Mr. Lindsey took a few steps through the living room and suddenly found himself in the kitchen. He remarked, "Are we in the kitchen already?" During this visit we made a trip up the Columbia river to Celilo Falls. This was an Indian fishing area at the time. They had wooden bridges from one rock to another, and Mr. Lindsey walked out with them. They netted a fish, and he bought it from them. We cooked it that evening. This was the highlight of his trip.

Shortly after they returned home they offered to help us buy a house by loaning us a down payment, and we accepted the offer and bought a house at 4325 N.E. Davis St., I believe, in 1958. During our time there Ruth's mother and father visited again, and their grandson, Bernard Jr. visited at the same time. We took a trip to Victoria B.C. At that time the dollar was worth less than the Canadian dollar, and when Mr. Lindsey traded his \$20 bill he got back \$19. That did not set well. We had a great time nevertheless.

The Southern Pacific Railroad, my employer, began consolidating in the 1960s and built a large yard in Eugene where the trains were made up, and also it was the main office for Oregon and northern California. I made the decision to move to Eugene, and we bought a house at 2805 Calla St. and have lived here since.

Our three sons, Dennis, Daniel and Steven are all very successful. I write the following on May 15, 2005. Dennis is a doctor, a pathologist, in the Army and holds the rank of full Colonel and is presently stationed at the Armed Forces Institute of Pathology in Washington D.C. He and his wife, Laura, reside in Olney, Maryland. Daniel is an Engineer on the Union Pacific Railroad (formerly the Southern Pacific) and his run is from Dunsmuir, Ca. to Klamath Falls, Or. and then a return trip to Dunsmuir. He and his wife, Marsha reside in Castella, California. Steven is an Airline Mechanic employed by United Airlines at the Flight Center in Denver, Co. He, his wife, Jeanne, daughter, Lindsey and son Adam reside in Westminster, Colorado. Steve is also a private pilot and instructor.

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Dennis and Laura have one child, Jenny Marie. Jenny married David Hamilton and they have three children, daughter Jessica, son Tanner and daughter Madison. David is a dentist and they also live in Olney, Maryland.

One might ask: What does all this have to do with military history? It has a lot to do with it not only for me but for millions of others. What we do decides who is to be born. Had there not been a war I would have not met Ruth and had that not happened none of the rest would exist except Ruth, Laura, Marsha, Jeanne and David.

I sometimes hear how terrible we were to drop the bomb on Hiroshima. If it had not been dropped this letter may have never been written. Who knows as our next deployment was to be to the Pacific. Millions of others could say the same. As I see it, my friend, John Collier, and his shipmates, still aboard the battleship Arizona are just as dead as those in Hiroshima. Thank you, President Truman, you made the right call. I conclude this on Memorial Day, May 30, 2005, and have this day attended the very impressive Memorial Service at West Lawn Memorial on Danebo, Eugene, Oregon.