William Roberson

Private First Class, Army, 1944-1946

CONTRIBUTED BY: PAT ROBERSON STEPHENSON, DAUGHTER

William Roberson was born in Rutherford County, NC. Prior to joining the service, he was a merchant mariner. He joined the merchant marines when he was 16 because he was too young to go into the military, and both of his older brothers had already joined the military. Later, he enlisted in the Army, choosing this military branch partially due to his desire to jump from planes!



During paratrooper training, he had a blast jumping. He had a buddy who didn't like to jump, but needed the extra pay for completing all jumps. So, my dad completed the last 2 for him so he could earn the bonus. He couldn't get in paratroopers on his first try due to failing the eye test, and, when he was in Japan, he tried again and memorized the eye chart so he could pass.

He was stationed in Japan for most of his career. During this time, he lost some friends during the war but he never saw action himself. After his service ended, he went home and attended the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He didn't talk about the service until he was really old so he had forgotten most of it.

He told a story of getting vaccinated where they were all lined up and had someone on both sides giving shots at the same time. He said a big guy acted all tough and flexed his arms even though he was told to relax his arms. When the shots hit, the tough guy passed out! He said everyone after that relaxed their arms.

