**HMONG KEEB KWM**

**Chia Yang and Choua Tong Xiong- Interviewees**

**Touger Vang- Catawba County Library, Interviewer**

**Chia Yang- CY**

**Choua Tong Xiong- TX**

**Touger Vang- TV**

**This is an oral history recorded on February 24, 2018 at the Newton Library in Newton, North Carolina as part of Hmong Keeb Kwm, a grant project awarded by the National Endowment for the Humanities in partnership between the Catawba County Library, the Historical Society of Catawba County, and North Carolina Digital Heritage Center for the purposes of collecting and preserving the history of the Hmong in Catawba County and the surrounding area.**

**Total length of interview: 21 minutes and 41 seconds**

**Available format(s): Audio recorded on Audacity® available as a .WAV file, and video available as a .MOV file in two parts**

**Transcription and translation by: Houa Yang- Catawba County Library**

**TV:** Nyob zoo, kuv lub npe hu ua Tub Ntxawg Vaj. Kuv ua hauj lwm rau hau lub tsev Catawba County Library nov. Hnub no peb ua txog Hmoob Keeb Kwm. Qhov no yog ib qho tseem ceeb. Peb xav nrog neb cov ua niam ua txiv tham txog nej txoj cev los ua lub neej nyob lub zos Catawba County no. Kuv qhia koj lub npe thiab koj tsa koj nraim nruab peb thaij.

*(Hello, my name is Touger Vang.I work at the Catawba County Library. Today our project is about Hmong Keeb Kwm.This is an important endeavor. We want you to share your story and tell how you came to settle in Catawba County. Please state your name and show your ID tag.)*

**CY:** Kuv yog Ntxiab Yaj, ua yog Niam Ntsuab Toog Xyooj. Es kuv tuaj tom Charlotte tuaj.

*(I am Ntxiab Yaj (Chia Yang) or Niam Ntsuab Toog Xyooj (Mrs. Choua Tong Xiong). I am from Charlotte.)*

**TX:** Kuv yog Ntsuab Toog Xyooj. *(I am Ntsuab Toog Xyooj (Choua Tong Xiong).)*

**TV:** Neb piav mi ntsis txog neb tus keej yom? Neb yog leeg twg, neb tuaj qhov twg tuaj, thiab neb ho nyob qhov twg tom teb chaws Nplog tuaj?

*(Will you please tell us a bit about yourself? Where do you live, where are you from, where in Laos did you live?)*

**CY:** Kuv li, ces kuv niam kuv txiv yug kuv rau teb chaws Oudomxay nyob rau sab pem Luang Namtha.

*(For me, my parents had me in Oudomxay on the side near Luang Namtha.)*

**TX:** Kuv ces, kuv nyob rau Muang Xai thiab. Kuv ua mi nyuam ntsuag thaum kuv muaj kaum tsib xyoos xwb ces kuv tau mus ua tub nrog ces kuv ua tsoos cuaj uas peb tau los tom teb chaws Thaib. Thaum thawg rog ces peb ho los ua piv xais rau hauv Luang Prabang. Xyoo ntawv ces peb nyiag khiav los nyob rau tom Thaib.

*(As for me, I also lived in Muang Xai. I was orphaned when I was only fifteen years old so I became a soldier and was a soldier all the way until we moved to Thailand. After the war, we moved to Luang Prabang and lived there. The year after that, we escaped into Thailand.)*

**TV:** Hnub nos neb nqa dab tsi tuaj qhia txog los ua keeb kwm? *(What items did you bring today?)*

**CY:** Cov koom hnub no nqa tuaj mas yog thaum peb nyob sab teb chaws los tsuas tiv, peb tsuas siv tej nyuag vuv, tej nyuag ntawv los zom nplej, ces ho nqa tej nyuag vuv. Peb ho los txog rau Thaib teb no ces peb tseem pej ua thiab pheej siv ces thiaj nqa tuaj. Ua tsaug no, wb nyob tom church, ces wb hnov ib tug ntxhais tuaj tshaj tawm. Ces wb thiaj li xav tias, laus laus lawm, xyov yuav nyob tshawg hnub ces cia wb kom ob niag ntxhais coj wb tuaj.

Kuv nqa kuv cov paj ntaub, es thaum nyob tim xum Vinai, es kuv yog tus nay-khru uas txiav cov qauv ntawv rau peb lub zos Vinai cov poj niam. Es kuv yuav tsum tau txiav cov qauv ntawv mam coj mus ua.

*(The things we brought today are from when we lived in the mountains. We used these blades to cut rice and these were really the only tools we took with us [when moving].When we got to Thailand, we continued to used them so that’s why we brought them.Thank you [for today] we were at church and we heard this girl make an announcement [about this event]. We thought, we’re old and don’t know how many days we have left, so we asked our daughters to bring us here today.*

*I brought sewing from when I lived in the Vinai refugee camp. I was a teacher in charge of creating samples for the women in our camp, Vinai. I had to make these samples and then the women would take it and reproduce it.)*

**TV:** Muab paj ntaub peb saib. *(Can we see the sewing?)*

[CY takes out sewing/embroidery.]

**CY:** Txiav cov me ces yog cov li no xwb. *(The smaller ones are like these.)*

[Shows blue embroidery with a swirling pattern.]

**TV:** Koj nyob Vinai, cov nyob xoom dabtsi? *(When you lived in Vinai, what zone were you in?)*

**CY:** Kuv nyob xoom cuaj. *(I lived in zone 9.)*

**TV:** Xyoo twg rau xyoo twg? *(Between what years?)*

**CY:** Yog xyoo yim caum tsib. *(It was ‘85.)*

**CY:** Ces thaum peb mus txog rau Phanat Nikhom [Thai refugee camp] ces tsis muaj ntaub lawm ces kuv cia li ua daim no tsis muaj ntug. [Holds up and shows white cloth of embroidery depicting animals.] Daim no ces yog kuv kom menyuam tiab es kuv ua. Kuv ua paj ntaub tsiaj.

*(When we were transferred to Phanat Nikhom [Thai refugee camp] there wasn’t much cloth so I made this one [embroidery] without a border. I told the children to draw it and I embroidered it. I embroidered the animals.)*

**TV:** Neb tuaj teb chaws Miskas no xyoo twg? *(What year did you both come to America?)*

**CY:** Wb tuaj cuaj caum ob os. *(We came in 1992.)*

**CY:** Nov ces yog peb Hmoob daim nyias ev mi nyuam. [Shows child carrier with embroidery.] Thaum kuv tuaj txog teb chaws Miskas no ces kuv mam ua. Kuv xaws tau ob peb daib no rau mi nyuam. Kuv coj tuaj rau peb tau saib cia.

*(This is a Hmong child carrier. I made this after I came to America. I made a few of these for my children. I brought them to show and preserve today.)*

**CY:** [Shows large round black cloth with red embroidery.] Qhov no yog peb cov paj ntaub uas peb ua thaum Miskas tuaj order. Ces lawv kom kuv txiav cov qauv no. Lawv nyiam cov qauv twg ces lawv kom kuv ua. Kuv txiav daim ntawv ces lawv mas coj mus uas.

*(This is embroidery that Americans would order. They would pick a design. I would create a sample and then others would reproduce embroideries from that sample.)*

**CY:** [Shows square pillow with embroidered pillow case.] Cov paj ntaub me me ces ua tau ces lawv yuav kom coj mus ua lis no. Ces ua nyuag tog hauv ncoo eb rau ntawm nrooj kom zoo nkauj.

*(The smaller embroideries were made into things like this. Like pillows to put on couches for decoration.)*

**TV:** Koj piav seb neb tuaj poob rau ntawm lub lav twg thiab lub lav twg es neb thiaj li los txog rau hauv lub lav North Carolina?

*(Can you tell a little bit about where you lived when you arrived [in America] and how you ended up in North Carolina?)*

**CY:** Thaum wb tuaj ces wb tsuav nqe rau kuv txiv lawv ces lawv tsis pub wb tuaj ces wb nyob nyob them nqe tas ces xyoo yim caum cuaj ces wb mam mus Chiang Kham [Thai refugee camp]. Ces wb mus nyob peb xyoos pev ces wb ho xam phaj kho nwb lub qub npe tabhaam ces wb mam tuaj. Ces wb tuaj txog Meskas teb no yog xyoo cuaj caum ob lub cuaj hli ntuj vaas thiv kaum yim ‘92 September 18.

*(When we were about to come [to America], we still owed debt to my father so they wouldn’t let us come so we stayed and paid off our debt. Then in ‘89 we were resettled in Chiang Kham [Thai refugee camp]. We lived there for three years and applied for his [husband, Choua Tong] status as a soldier to be recognized, then we finally got to come. We came to America in ‘92, September the 18th.)*

**TV:** Ces neb tuaj poob rau qho twb? *(Where did you end up?)*

**CY:** Wb tuaj poom rau Yuba City [California]. *(We ended up in Yuba City [California].)*

**TV:** Ces neb mam los ntawm nov los? *(Then you came here?)*

**CY:** [Nods in agreement] Wb tuaj lig lig ces wb tsis txawj ntawv tabsis lawv tias tom no ces luav tsis nij diploma dab tsi li, kom cia li los ua hauj lwm nruam ces wb thiaj los pem no.Wb los pem no ces yog xyoo cuaj caum caum xya. Yog thaum wb los rau North Carolina no.

*(We came so late [to America] and didn’t have any education but they said you could come work here [North Carolina] without any diploma and for us to come work jobs that didn’t require any education, so that’s why we came. When we came, it was ‘97...when we came to North Carolina.)*

**TV:** Tamsim no neb nyob hauv lub zos no, neb pab kwvtij neej tsa li cas, neb mus church los nej coj kev cai li cas?

*(How do you participate in your community? Do you attend church or what traditions do you practice?)*

**CY:** Wb yeej mus church. Nyob tom Vinai wb yeej mus church. Wb tuaj nram no ces wb tsis muaj kwvtij ces wb yeej mus church li qub xwb.

*(Yes, we go to church. Even when we lived in Vinai, we went to church. We don’t have any close relatives so we’ve always gone to church.)*

**TV:** Neb mus lub church ab tsi? *(What church do you go to?)*

**CY:** Wb mus Xib fwb Nyiaj Vaj lawv lub. *(We go to Pastor Nhia Vang’s church.)*

**TV:** Lub npe hus lis cas? *(What is the name?)*

**CY:** Hu ua Hmoob Alliance Church. *(It’s called the Hmong Alliance Church.)*

**TV:** Tom ntej no, neb ua niam ua txiv, neb xav kom neb cov mi nyuam paub Hmoob kev cai yog dabtsi thiab Hmong keeb kwm yog dabtsi? Koj piav txiv ntxawm yom?

*(As parents, what do you want your children to know about Hmong culture and history? Can you tell about that \*Uncle? [\*respectful term for calling an elder])*

**TX:** [inaudible 6:46- 7:03]

**TV:** Koj ne, koj ua niam koj ho xav li cas? Kev cai Hmoob no, tsis yog hais tias ib sab qhig yom? Kev cais Hmoob no hais tias peb Hmoob sib hlub sib pab, yog dabtsi, tej keeb kwm uas koj xav kom koj mi tub mi nyuam paub yog dabtsi?

*(What about you, as mom, what do you think? Hmong traditions aren’t divided but they teach us to love and help one another. What of these traditions to you want your children to know about?)*

**CY:** Nyob ntawm kuv ua niam mas kuv txoj kev ntshaw, tsis hais tub tsis hais ntxhais li os, nim no mas peb muaj feem ua dej num ib yam, ces kuv cov ntxhais los yog nws muaj peev xwm kuv yeej xav kom nws ua kawg li nws siab nyiam, kom nws pab kwv tij neej tsa. Kom yog muaj dabtsi los yus yuav ntawm mus pab luag thiab es yus muaj dabtsi los luag thiaj paub tias yus yog leej tws es luag thiaj pab yus thiab. Peb tiam no ces peb mus church. Txawm koj mus church tsis mus los peb yog Hmoob ib yam ces peb yeej yuav tau sib hlub sib pab. Xav kom txhob xav txog yus xwb yuav tsum xav txog lwm tus thiab.

*(As for me, my desire, no matter if you are a son or a daughter, we now all have equal opportunities so if my daughters have ambitions, I want them to achieve whatever they want. But I do want them to help the community. Whatever they do, I want them to help others because whenever you need it, others will help you. For us, we have the church but even if you go to church or not, we are all Hmong so we all have to love one another. You shouldn’t only think about yourself but you should think about others as well.)*

**TV:** Neb ua niam ua txiv, lub sij hawm uas neb zoo siab tshaj plaws hauv neb lub neej yog dabtsi? *(What are you happiest about in your life?)*

**CY:** Yam uas wb zoo siab tshaj plaws ces yog wb muaj ib pab mi nyuam thiab, wb kuj muaj ib lub cuab lub yig thiab. Xav hais tias txom txom nyem li yus ces yuav tsis txawj tsav tseb li no tabsis Vajtswv kuj hlub kuj coj wb tuaj txog Miskas teb es kuj txawj tsav tseb nrhiav noj nrhiav haus thiab. Kuv zoo siab kawg li.

*(The thing we are most happy about is that we have children and a family of our own. We thought that we were poor and we would never be able to drive a car [etc...] but God loved us and brought us to America and we’re able to drive and earn a living for ourselves. I’m so happy about that.)*

**TV:** Koj piav seb koj muaj peb tsawg tus mi nyuam yom? Pes tsawg tus ntxhais, pes tsawg tus tub, thiab xeeb ntxwv yom? *(Can you tell us how many children you have? How many daughters, sons, or grandchildren?)*

**CY:** Kuv muaj tsib tug ntxhais, kuv muaj peb tug tub. Cov xeeb ntxwv ces muaj kaum xya tus. (*I have five daughters and I have three sons. As for grandchildren, I have seventeen.)*

**TV:** Peb Hmoob pauv pauv mus pauv los, neb ua niam ua txiv neb xav kom neb cov mi nyuam kawm dabtsi los khaws dabtsi cia us yog Hmoob?

*(As Hmong, we [our culture] are constantly changing. As parents, what do you want your children to learn or keep as Hmong?)*

**CY:** Yus ua niam mas yus yeej xav kom lawv thaij yus cias hais lus rau lawv qhia tias yus lub neej thaum pib zoo lis cas, es yus ho tau zoo li cas, txom nyem li cas, yus xav kom lawv thaij yus tej no cia rau lawv thiab. Tsis tas li los hnub kawg los yus ntseeg Vajtswv lawm ces yeej xav kom yus cov mi nyuam mob siab rau ntseeg Vajtswv, hlub Vajtswv, ua Vajtswv dej num, pab zej pab zos pab teb pab chaw.

*(As a mom, I do want my children to record me and my words so they can know how life was and how I was poor and how my life changed. Not only that, I believe in God and want my children to desire to follow God, serve God, and serve the community and the world.)*

**TV:** Neb puas muaj dabtsi uas kuv tsis tau noog neb es neb xav piav kom tag rau qho no? Vim peb yuav muab qho no khaws cia es tsis muaj neb lawm los neb tej mi tub mi nyuam, tej xeeb ntxwv thiaj tau pom tias kuv pog kuv yawg kuv niam tais yawm txiv zoo li no. Nws lub suab zoo li no. Peb tsis kaw cia ces lwm hnub ploj zus li cov laus uas twb mus lawm. Peb twb tsis nco qab txog. Tshuav li ob peb nanthi, es neb piav kom tag. Koj muaj lus faj li cas rau koj mi tub mi nyuam los faj tau. Tsis tau xav txog los tsis ua cas tab sis koj kaw rau hauv no es peb muab kaw cia. Peb muaj khaws cia es lwm hnub koj tej xeeb ntxwv thiaj tshawb tau.

*(Is there anything else that I didn’t ask you that you want to talk about? We are recording this and it will be preserved so when you’re gone, your grandchildren can listen to this. They can see that this is how grandma and grandpa used to look and how they sounded. If we don’t record these things, they’ll disappear like all of those who have gone before us and we don’t even remember them. We have a few minutes left so if there’s anything you would like to say to your grandchildren in the future, you can say it. If you haven’t thought of anything to say, that’s alright too but this recording will be preservation so please feel free to say anything so your grandchildren can see it in the future.)*

**CY:** Peb cov laus ces kuv xav yeej ntshaw ib yam rau qhov thaum yus hluas ces xav tias yus yuav tsis txawj tuag. Yus tsis tau paub Vajtswv ces yus xav tias yus yuav tsis txawj tuag es yus yuav muaj zog mus tabsis yus laus zuj zus yus lub zog ntaug zuj zus es yug tau ib pab mi nyuam los yus yeej ntshaw kom lawv txawj hlub yus.

*(I think all old people want the same thing. When you’re young, you don’t think about dying and you feel like you’re going to be strong forever. You don’t know God and you don’t think about death but when you get older and your strength wains, the thing you want is for your children to love you.*

[tears up, takes a moment to wipe her eyes]

**CY:** Peb cov laus ces nyob ntuj qub qab peb txom txom nyem tsis muaj dabtsis pab tej mi nyuam li. Es txog teb chaws no es yus tuaj lig lig thiab ces tsis tau kawm ntawv, tsis txawj ntaub tsis txawj ntawv es pab tsis tau yus tej mi nyuam. Peb tuaj txog lub teb chaws zoo los yus twb laus laus lawm es yus kawm tsis tau. Qho zoo siab ces yog yus coj yus tej mi nyuam tuaj txog teb chaws no.

Peb ua Vajtswv tsaug uas Vajtswv hlub peb es Vajtswv coj cov Miskas tuaj coj peb hau kev peb thiaj laib tua. Es tuaj txog teb chaws no yus xav kom yus tej mi nyuam ua neeg zoo txob ua neeg phem. Tej nom tej tswv zoo los yus yuav tsum ua pejxeem zoo es yus yuav hlub luag tej luag chaw. Es luag coj yus tuaj teb chaws zoo ces yus yuav tsum ua neeg zoo, txhob ua neeg phem. Peb txom nyem npaum li cas los peb kwv peb noj es peb tsis txhob mus ua tub sab tub nyiag.

Peb cov laus txoj kev ntshaw ces xav kom nej txua tus tsim txiaj tsis hais cov ua kuv yug, tag nrho peb yog Hmooob ces peb yeej ntshaw kom nej tsim txiaj. Txob sav tias koj yog hmoob Vaj kuv yog hmoob Xyooj ces peb yuav sib caiv, tsis yog li ntawv. Koj txawj los yeej yog kuv txawj, koj pab kuv kuv pab koj. Es qho ntawv peb siv lub xeem los ua neej ua tsav xwb peb yeej yog hmoob ib yam es zoo siab kawg li.

Kuv ua Vajtswv tsaug Vajtswv hlub peb. Vajtswv thiaj tso Miskas tuaj ncoj peb es peb thiaj tau tuaj teb chaws Miskas no. Peb cov Hmoob yuav tsum xyaum ua lub neej zoo kom thiaj li tsim nyog qho luag tos peb tuaj rau luag daim av. Zoo li yus twb tsis tsim nyog tuaj tsuj luag daim av los Vajtswv hlub es Vajtswv ho coj peb tuaj. Es kuv zoo siab ua Vajtswv tsaug kawg lis. Ua tsaug rau cov nom tswv Miskas. Lawv muaj siab dawb siab zoo. Peb kiav kiav laus li no tsaus pom Miskas thiaj li coj ncaj. Kuv ua Vajtswv tsaug rau tej uas Vajtswv tau pab kuv rhau los. Wb txom txom nyem es tuaj txog Miskas teb es Miskas thiaj lis hlub wb thiab pub nyiaj tuaj rau peb cov niag laus noj. Yog peb tsis tuaj tim no ces peb laus laus ua tsis tau los peb yeej tsis muaj nyiaj tuaj qho twg tau noj. Thov Vajtswv foom koob hmoov rau tej Miskas tej nom tej tswv kom lawv muaj laj lim tswv yim zoo es lawv yuav hlub peb cov neeg txom nyem mus yav tom ntej.

*(Us old people, we grew up backwards and poor with nothing to help our children. Even when we came to this country, we came so late and were already old so we couldn’t learn and couldn’t read or write. We couldn’t help our children. We were in a great country but we were old so we couldn’t learn anything but the good thing is that at least we brought our children to grow up in this country. We are so grateful that God loved us and brought the Americans to help us get to this country. We want our children to be good and not bad. We have a great country and government but we must be good citizens and contribute to society. No matter how poor you are, you must continue to strive and earn your living, don’t covet others or steal from others.*

*I don’t just want this for my own children but for all the Hmong people. We shouldn’t think that your last name is Vang and mine is Xiong and let that seperate us. Your accomplishments are mine and mine are yours. We should help each other. Surnames should only help us trace our families but we are all Hmong.*

*Thank God that God loved us and sent the Americans so that now we get to live in this country. We need to be good so we can be deserving of the blessing of living in this great country. It seems I’m not even deserving to set foot upon this great land but God loved me and brought me here. I thank God for their kindness and as old as I am, I’ve only ever seen such honor in the Americans. We are so poor but we are loved in America. If we were not in America, even though we are old and can’t work, we would have no money. God bless America and the government and may they would continue to love their citizens and the people in the future. )*

**TV:** Koj ua txiv, koj puas muaj dabtsi hais thiab? Koj hais tias koj ua thab ham no, koj ua rau qho twg? Koj hais rau peb thaum tsis muaj koj, tej mi nyuam thiaj paub koj tej keeb kwm thiab txiaj ntsig.

*(You [Choua Tong] as a father, do you have anything to add? You said you were a soldier, where did you serve? Please tell us so your children can know your history and how you’ve contributed.)*

**TX:** Zoo siab ua muaj koj kiav dej khiav num thiab es peb thiaj tuaj txog nov. Ua tsaug. Kuv ces, kuv yog mi nyuam ntsuag ces kuv muaj kaum tsib xyoos xwb ces lawv kom kuv mus ua tub rog ces kuv yeej ua txog xyoo ‘75 ces kuv yeej ua txog thaum peb tuaj teb chaws no. Ua li kuv hais, kuv yog mi nyuam ntsuag ces mus ua rog ces yeej tsis paub hnub los. Ib qho kuv tu siab tshaj mas, kuv mus ua tub rog lawm ces kuv niam lawv cias li khiav lawm ces lawv tsis tos kuv los. Thaum peb mus ces lawv tab tom laij teb hlawv hlab hlawv ntsuag. Peb mus rov los ces lawv twb noj peb caug. Ces kuv los txog ces kuv ncaj qa mus rau tom tsev ces kuv khob khob qhov rooj, thaum qhib no ces ho tsis yog kuv niam. Nws tias “Tub koj los lawv lod?” Kuv tias, “Hlob, kuv niam lawv rua twg lawm?” Nws tias “Tsis paub os. Koj niam lawv twb pais lawv. Lub tsev no lawv muab rau peb ces peb thiaj los nyob.” Kuv tias “Koj puas paub kuv niam lawv mus qho twg no?” “Tsis paub os. Nws tias nws mus nrog nws tus ntxhais tus vauv xwb no.” Thaum ntawv ces yus tu siab rau, zaum quaj ib pluag ces kuv cia li mus Thai lawm xwb.

*(I’m glad that you are doing this project so that we can be here today. Thank you. As for me, I am an orphan so when I was only fifteen years old they told me to become a soldier so I’ve been a soldier until ‘75 and until we came to this country. Like I said, I’m an orphan so when I went off to war, I didn’t know if I would ever return one day. One of the saddest things for me was that when I went off to be a soldier, my mom and family ran away and they didn’t wait for me to return. When we [soldiers] left, they were just starting to till the land for farming and burning the brush. When we returned, they were already celebrating the harvest and new year festival. I headed straight to my house and knocked on the door. When it open it wasn’t my mom. They said, “Son, you’re back?” I said, “Yes. Where is my mom and family?” They said, “We don’t know. Your mom left. They gave us this house so we moved in.” I asked, “Do you know where they went?” “We don’t know. She just said she was going to go live with her daughter and son-in-law.” I didn’t know what to do. I was so sad, I sat down and cried and afterwards, I fled to Thailand.)*

**TV:** Koj ua tab ham koj tus *nay khong-roy* [Lao word- “troop leader”] yog leej twg? *(When you were a soldier, who was your leader/general?)*

**TX:** Kuv ua tab ham, peb tus nay yog Pov Lis Muas. *(I was a soldier under Pao Lee Moua.)*

**TV:** Nyob rau Luang Prabang? *(Was that in Luang Prabang?)*

**TX:** Aws, nyob rau Luang Prabang. Tiag mas peb nyob rau [unintelligble 16:40) tab sis mas Nyab-Laj tuaj tua peb ces peb tawg pev ces peb mas los rau Luang Prabang. Peb los nyob rau hauv ces peb ob *kong-roy* [Laos- “troop”] nyob ua ke. Peb kong-roy [unknown troop names in Laos] peb los nyob ua ke hauv. Kong-roy uas nyob hauv yog Vaj Xab Vaj tuaj Long Tiene tuaj. Thaum peb los nyob ntawv ces peb nyob tim tshav nyoob hoom. Nyab-Laj tuaj ces nyab-laj tuaj hlawv tom tshav nyoob hoom. Nplog tsis quav ntsej rau qho Nplog paub tias yog Nyab-Laj ces lawv thiaj hu kom peb mus kuaj. Lub pob bomb ces lawv ua siab siab xwb ces peb mus kuaj tabsis Nyab-Laj twb nyob ntev lawv ces mus txog ces twb xeb tas lawm. Peb thiaj mus caum Nyab-Laj ces Nyab-Laj khiav tawm. Ces niag huab tais thiaj li ntseeg peb siab lawm.

Nyob nyob ces xyoo ‘74/’75 Nplog pheej plua Nplog. Nplog yuav plua Nplog ces Nplog tsis pub Miskas nyob lawm. Lawv hais tias peb cov phooj ywg yog Nyab-Laj xwb. Ces peb thiaj khiav nrov los. Thaum ntawv ces kuv thiaj rov mus rau kuv niam lawv tabsis lawv khiav lawm ces kuv thiaj mus rau Thai. Thaum ntawv ces peb mus tos seb Miskas puas tuaj. Lawv twb khiav tag rau sab [unintelligible18:49) lawm. Peb tos tos ces Miskas tuaj ces lawv hais tias lawv tsis muab nyiaj hli rau nej lawm vim lawv twb yuav muab Miskas ncaws tawm. Ces lawv kom peb mus nyob zeb Thai teb es thaum twg yog teb chaws tsis zoo lawm ces nej khiav mus nyob Thai teb. Ces peb thiab Nay-Phon [General Vang Pao] thiaj li los nyob Thai teb. Ces los nyob Thai teb ces tsis muaj nyiaj los kuv thiaj li los yuav poj niam ces wb los nyob Vinai them wb nqi tag ces wb mam li tuaj ces wb tuaj lig lig.

Yus ua ntsuag thiab mus ua tub rog thaum yus laus lawm mam yuav poj niam xav tias lub neej ntse yuav caum tsis cuag tabsis yus ho tsis tuag. Peb mus ua tub rog ces raug kuv ib zaug thiab ces kuv sab qhov muag los puas, kuv lub hauv caug los mob mob thiab. Kuv ces niaj hnub quag mob xwb. Kuv zoo siab ua nej ho quag hu peb tuaj es peb thiaj tau tso tej lus no rau peb tej mi tub mi nyuam.

*(Yes, in Luang Prabang. Actually, we were in [unintelligible 16:40] but the Vietnamese attacked us so we were split up and then ended up in Luang Prabang. We had two troops that were together there. Troops [unknown troop names in Laos] we stayed together there. The leader in charge of the troops there was Vang Sao Vang, he was from Long Tiene. When we were there, we were stationed near the airport. The Vietnamese came and set fire to the airplanes. The Laotian government didn’t want to handle it because they knew it was the Vietnamese [this was due to Laos’ “neutrality”] so they sent us. They had dropped the bombs from high up but we didn’t know that. When we got there, everything was already rusted and burned away but the Vietnamese were still there so we chased the Vietnamese out. Then the King trusted us [the Hmong] after that.*

*We continued to stay there until around ‘73 or ‘74. The Laotian civil war was still happening and the [Pathet Lao] were friendly with the Vietnamese. The Laotian didn’t want American interference, so we went back. That’s when I returned to my mom but they had ran away so I went to Thailand. Before, we were waiting for the Americans but when the Americans came they said they weren’t paying us anymore because they were about to leave. They told us to go to stay close to Thailand so if the country fell, we could flee into Thailand. So General Vang Pao and us, we all went to Thailand. I didn’t have any money but I got married so we had to live in Vinai until we paid our debt then we finally were able to come [to America] and that’s why we came so late.*

*I was an orphan and a soldier and didn’t marry until I was old. I thought my life would always be behind but I’m grateful that at least I didn’t die. I was injured as a soldier, so one eye is injured and my knee hurts now too. I’m in pain everyday. I’m so glad to be here today to be able to leave these memories for my children.)*

**TV:** Ua ntsaug nawb...  *(Thank you.)*