

Walter Clarence Aeilts Interview

80th Division Signal Battalion

(Library of Congress: Veterans History Project; interviewed by unknown)

(MS Word Audio Transcript)

00:00:01 Speaker 1

September 26th, 2005 and this is the beginning of an interview with Walter Iles.

00:00:07 Speaker 1

I'm his.

00:00:08 Speaker 1

We're in my home at 1183 Glendon St.

00:00:12 Speaker 1

Maplewood MN and.

00:00:15 Speaker 1

Walter is 82 years old, born on July 5th, 1923.

00:00:23 Speaker 1

And we will start out with.

00:00:27 Speaker 1

Having Walter Isle state.

00:00:30 Speaker 1

For the recording, what war and branch of service did you serve it?

00:00:38 Speaker 1

So you can start out and justice. Go ahead and talk about when you first went into the service and.

00:00:48 Speaker 1

Where you served at.

00:00:49 Speaker 1

Well, how you were first drafted or enlisted?

00:00:54 Speaker 2

I was drafted and.

00:01:00 Speaker 2

Had to report to the board the courthouse on February 18th, 1943, and I went to.

00:01:12 Speaker 2

Horse I was inducted.

00:01:16 Speaker 2

For snelling.

00:01:19

I.

00:01:20 Speaker 2

Don't know what day that was, but.

00:01:27 Speaker 2

Into the army and was sent to Cam, Camel, Kentucky.

00:01:30

I.

00:01:36 Speaker 2

And.

00:01:39 Speaker 2

I think it was the first week in March.

00:01:43 Speaker 2

They got.

00:01:47 Speaker 2

Separation.

00:01:51 Speaker 2

Entry 27th February 43 at Fort Stelling, and then it was sent from there to.

00:01:52

I.

00:02:00 Speaker 2

Camp Campbell, Kentucky.

00:02:04 Speaker 2

And was in training there.

00:02:08

For.

00:02:16 Speaker 2

Six months, I believe it was.

00:02:18 Speaker 2

And then I was sent to.

00:02:24 Speaker 2

Fort Meade in Maryland.

00:02:27 Speaker 2

Supposed to be.

00:02:29 Speaker 2

I was made a corporal and.

00:02:34 Speaker 2

Was betraying.

00:02:35 Speaker 2

But then they finally set me up as.

00:02:40 Speaker 2

Running the officers club.

00:02:44 Speaker 2

In Fort Meade and.

00:02:45

Yeah.

00:02:48 Speaker 2

This was my job.

00:02:51 Speaker 2

To.

00:02:55 Speaker 2

To run the club and keep it was a dance hall on a bar, and then there was a Barber shop in there.
Also for the officers.

00:02:55

Yeah.

00:03:06 Speaker 2

And that's what I did until.

00:03:10 Speaker 2

July.

00:03:12 Speaker 2

Of.

00:03:14 Speaker 2

40.

00:03:16 Speaker 2

44.

00:03:20 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:03:24 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:03:28 Speaker 2

And I left.

00:03:31 Speaker 2

Then I was sent to.

00:03:36 Speaker 2

Camp outside of New York.

00:03:41 Speaker 2

I was only there for a couple of weeks and then from there I was sent to the European Theater of Operations on the 15th of July 1944.

00:03:52 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:03:56 Speaker 2

And then it in three weeks it took us.

00:04:02 Speaker 2

We were on a ship.

00:04:04 Speaker 2

Was the Queen Mary of Queen Mary class ship and I I know, I know there was 10 to 12,000 of us on there and we had.

00:04:07

I.

00:04:18 Speaker 2

Airplane escort for the 1st.

00:04:22 Speaker 2

Day and a.

00:04:23 Speaker 2

And then for the next two days.

00:04:27 Speaker 2

We were without escort because they felt that it had enough speed to outrun the submarines, and then they by then, the next day after that, it took five days, five 5 1/2 days.

00:04:42 Speaker 2

To to get to England and.

00:04:46 Speaker 2

The last day and a half, then we got planes from from England. They were protecting us. And then I was in it was Landon. I think it was in Ireland. And then I went to England and then it was.

00:04:51

OK.

00:04:57

Yeah.

00:05:02 Speaker 2

Sent to.

00:05:05 Speaker 2

Sent to France.

00:05:07 Speaker 2

Umm.

00:05:10 Speaker 2

The first part of August.

00:05:11

I.

00:05:12 Speaker 2

And when they were still in the hedge rollers, then in France and I was in a replacement camp.

00:05:20 Speaker 2

Called I was we were called replacements and.

00:05:27 Speaker 2

They kept moving us up behind the.

00:05:31 Speaker 2

The regular army.

00:05:34 Speaker 2

And changed from.

00:05:37 Speaker 2

You were a day or two a place, and then gradually kept moving faster and faster, and until we came to Nancy and.

00:05:48 Speaker 2

Outside of Nancy, it was where they were stopped.

00:05:54 Speaker 1

Great. No, it's recording again and you just were saying that you had just gotten to Nancy.

00:06:01 Speaker 1

In France.

00:06:04 Speaker 2

Right. And then?

00:06:07 Speaker 2

We were.

00:06:09 Speaker 2

Were.

00:06:11 Speaker 2

Up on a hill outside of Nancy in the replacement camp and.

00:06:18 Speaker 2

That when moved again.

00:06:23 Speaker 2

To I don't know where that was, where I was called up to the idiot infantry division. I was called up to.

00:06:31 Speaker 2

Meet the driver of.

00:06:35 Speaker 2

Armored car with a General McBride of the 80th Division and this was in. This was in the first part.

00:06:45 Speaker 2

To last of October 1st part of November and.

00:06:52 Speaker 2

It might have been earlier than that, but I don't remember exactly.

00:06:55 Speaker 2

But I went to the I went to the company and I was.

00:07:02 Speaker 2

Put into the 80th.

00:07:04 Speaker 2

80th Infantry Signal battalion.

00:07:09 Speaker 2

You would have called the 80th, 80th Signal Battalion and these were the men that.

00:07:16 Speaker 2

Took care of the communications for the division and they had.

00:07:23 Speaker 2

Two large radios in the armored car and this is what the general wanted for communications when they were moving.

00:07:27

Yeah.

00:07:33 Speaker 2

And he would be.

00:07:34 Speaker 2

He would be riding in there but.

00:07:40 Speaker 2

These division they need to.

00:07:43 Speaker 2

It wasn't just direct communication, it was Morris code. A lot of it that they had to submit by.

00:07:51 Speaker 2

And.

00:07:54 Speaker 2

Then we.

00:07:59 Speaker 2

You know all the time that they had, you know, he rode in at one time.

00:08:04 Speaker 1

The entire time you were with him.

00:08:05

And.

00:08:06 Speaker 2

And all the time was with him. He only rode in the armored car one time, and otherwise he was riding in the Jeep ahead of us and we were following him.

00:08:19 Speaker 2

So he had the radios at his command if he wanted, if he needed them, and but.

00:08:22

Yeah.

00:08:27 Speaker 2

Then.

00:08:31 Speaker 2

Then we as it shows here we went from.

00:08:40 Speaker 2

We went from.

00:08:43 Speaker 2

September, October, November.

00:08:44

Yeah.

00:08:46 Speaker 2

December in Luxembourg went from, they say, binding France and.

00:08:54 Speaker 2

We.

00:08:57 Speaker 2

Went there, drove 35 miles of division, but then on the 20th of December we went into the 22nd.

00:09:06 Speaker 2

We drove 118 miles to Luxembourg City.

00:09:11 Speaker 2

We weren't the battalion.

00:09:16 Speaker 2

Our signal core was based not in Luxembourg City. It was in another city outside of outside of Luxembourg.

00:09:23 Speaker 2

Sure, I don't remember the name of the town.

00:09:27 Speaker 2

It might have been this.

00:09:31 Speaker 2

Merch that they have down here. I don't remember the names of those towns, but it was in Luxembourg and we were there then in Luxembourg until.

00:09:31

I.

00:09:44 Speaker 2

The the end of January, then until we started to drive.

00:09:48 Speaker 2

And drive the Germans out after.

00:09:51 Speaker 2

After the.

00:09:54 Speaker 2

After the 6th of January, we started to push them out and that's when you broke.

00:10:02 Speaker 2

That attack that they'd made. What was it called?

00:10:11 Speaker 2

In fact, that the Germans made the then desperate attempt to break up.

00:10:18 Speaker 2

Can you think of the name of it anymore?

00:10:21 Speaker 1

Is it?

00:10:21 Speaker 2

Then battled.

00:10:26 Speaker 2

Best home?

00:10:26 Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah and.

00:10:26 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:10:30 Speaker 2

But.

00:10:32 Speaker 2

Then we then we kept on driving.

00:10:35 Speaker 2

Through Luxembourg and then into into Germany.

00:10:45 Speaker 2

Into Germany and in February and we just kept.

00:10:51 Speaker 2

Moving, moving, continually forward, there it was.

00:10:56 Speaker 2

50 miles, 22 miles, 45 miles. We were advancing at a quite a rate. And then we ended up in.

00:11:08 Speaker 2

Austria and.

00:11:13 Speaker 2

That was the 5th of May.

00:11:23 Speaker 2

Chairman and that's.

00:11:26 Speaker 2

That is the end basically.

00:11:29 Speaker 2

Where we were based then towards the end of the war in Austria, I thought it was Czechoslovakia, but we might have been in Czechoslovakia too, but.

00:11:41 Speaker 2

I'm sure we were tagging.

00:11:42 Speaker 2

Was.

00:11:44 Speaker 2

It was based in Czechoslovakia and.

00:11:47

Mm.

00:11:48 Speaker 2

So I don't know how that all worked with headquarters and so forth, where we were considering the infancy division we were, we must have been covering quite a territory at that time.

00:12:02 Speaker 2

And they we were all based in different cities, so.

00:12:07 Speaker 2

But.

00:12:10 Speaker 2

We were there until the end of the war until the.

00:12:17 Speaker 2

Until.

00:12:19 Speaker 2

In December, when I was, I was.

00:12:24 Speaker 2

Had enough points and they shipped me out.

00:12:26 Speaker 2

Hadn't been with the company.

00:12:28 Speaker 2

Hadn't been.

00:12:29 Speaker 2

I was a replacement and so they sent me out separately because the company was going to be go home all together later on in January and I I went home ahead of them.

00:12:40 Speaker 2

I would wanted to stay with them, but they said no I.

00:12:45 Speaker 2

The way they set it up and and you got the points and you can go home so.

00:12:50 Speaker 1

So even if you requested to stay and stay with the group that you've been fighting with, they still send you home.

00:12:55 Speaker 2

Josen you.

00:12:57 Speaker 1

Were there others that were replacements that were sent home at earlier too?

00:13:01 Speaker 2

I don't know doing whether they were not there might have.

00:13:03 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:13:04 Speaker 2

But well, I'm sure there were because you had had a lot of replacement.

00:13:08 Speaker 2

The signal battalion probably didn't have that many.

00:13:11 Speaker 2

Replacements in it.

00:13:12 Speaker 2

Probably because.

00:13:16 Speaker 2

They're they're battle casualties were a lot less than an infantry squad or battalion, so.

00:13:22

Yeah.

00:13:24 Speaker 2

But.

00:13:26 Speaker 2

I was with these guys for at least, well, a year just about a year or over a year now, so.

00:13:31

Yeah.

00:13:35 Speaker 1

Spending that much time together in that close to quarters, you get to know people.

00:13:39 Speaker 1

Well.

00:13:40 Speaker 2

Right. Yeah, yeah. I don't. The Sergeant of the of the Armored car, Sergeant.

00:13:48 Speaker 2

Ray Creative was from Long Island and and I know.

00:13:54

And.

00:13:54 Speaker 2

Well, Paul king. I know him well. Well, he.

00:13:59 Speaker 2

We associated altogether and he was from Boston, but he was in another part of the company.

00:14:06 Speaker 2

And then Charlie Houseman was the gunner on.

00:14:10 Speaker 2

The on the Armory car and he was.

00:14:16 Speaker 2

I got a letter from him sometime after I got home and I never never kept going corresponding with him I should have but.

00:14:23

Yeah.

00:14:25 Speaker 2

Ray and pawn.

00:14:28 Speaker 2

Paul.

00:14:29 Speaker 2

Never ever corresponded with him again. So.

00:14:33 Speaker 2

But it would have been if we would have went home together.

00:14:36 Speaker 2

Probably would have made a big difference.

00:14:38 Speaker 1

Yeah, definitely.

00:14:39 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:14:39 Speaker 2

No.

00:14:40 Speaker 1

Maintain the connection there, yeah.

00:14:42 Speaker 2

Right.

00:14:43 Speaker 2

But.

00:14:46 Speaker 2

No, there's many, many things that I don't.

00:14:50 Speaker 2

You'll remember about it's just.

00:14:53 Speaker 2

Don't.

00:14:54 Speaker 2

I just don't remember.

00:14:55 Speaker 1

Yeah, it's such a.

00:14:56 Speaker 1

So much happened in such a compressed.

00:14:58 Speaker 2

Don't think she remember.

00:14:58 Speaker 1

Of time.

00:14:59 Speaker 2

Remember the hedge rows and when you got into France, how thick they were and how they had to breakthrough them with the tanks and stuff and.

00:15:10 Speaker 2

I remember walking up to the beach at Omaha.

00:15:16 Speaker 2

That day, when we came off of the ship and I couldn't imagine how they spent.

00:15:22 Speaker 2

Even they had a road up there now we were walking up a road that they that they made so the vehicle could come up but.

00:15:30 Speaker 2

You know, there's still a very steep climb, and I couldn't imagine trying fighting at the same time trying to.

00:15:33

Yeah.

00:15:37 Speaker 2

Up.

00:15:37 Speaker 2

Hill and that had to be terrible.

00:15:38

No.

00:15:40 Speaker 1

Day trying to imagine the D-Day invasion had to be just.

00:15:43 Speaker 2

Right.

00:15:44 Speaker 2

Out.

00:15:44 Speaker 2

And this was just a few few weeks afterward from because I went in and then in the first part of August.

00:15:48

Yeah.

00:15:52 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:15:53 Speaker 2

They were still in the hedgerows and then they didn't break out hedgerows until the middle of August. I think it was so when Pat and you.

00:15:59

Yeah.

00:16:01 Speaker 2

To roll 1.

00:16:02

But.

00:16:03 Speaker 2

But.

00:16:07 Speaker 2

Other things like.

00:16:12 Speaker 2

Like when I was inducted and it was in February here and it was man, I think it was awful cold and everybody we were and they said, well, we were going to Camp Campbell.

00:16:24 Speaker 2

Boy, that was going to be warm.

00:16:27 Speaker 2

It wasn't warm.

00:16:30 Speaker 2

It was still chilly there and.

00:16:31 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:16:35 Speaker 2

Basic training was.

00:16:38 Speaker 2

Was something else again.

00:16:40 Speaker 2

You know under can't imagine trying to crawl under underneath the barbed wire and and they have. You do this on your crawling on your belly, in the mud and.

00:16:42

I.

00:16:51

Yeah.

00:16:52 Speaker 2

Put you through a lot. Yeah, but.

00:16:56 Speaker 1

Everybody learned to follow orders very quickly, right? Yeah.

00:17:00 Speaker 2

I am.

00:17:01 Speaker 2

Basically, because of the fact that I had been in CC camp, I had some idea of the regimentation and so forth because of the fact that I've been in there and I knew the bunkhouses and stuff like that. And.

00:17:16 Speaker 2

Barracks and that we had in the CC camp basically basically the same as.

00:17:22 Speaker 2

As in the army, so.

00:17:25 Speaker 2

But.

00:17:27 Speaker 1

Now did the training at CC Campbell also help you when you got to Fort Meade? As far as being put in charge of the officers club, do you think that had anything to do with it?

00:17:37 Speaker 2

Know I have no.

00:17:38 Speaker 2

I would, but I have been had been a company clerk at the CC camp at New Orleans, so I was.

00:17:48 Speaker 2

I knew something about it in that office work and so forth. I had typing in high school and could type.

00:17:49

I.

00:17:54 Speaker 2

Not very fast, but still could type but.

00:17:59 Speaker 2

I mean, they just, they just didn't know where to put me they.

00:18:02

Yeah.

00:18:05 Speaker 2

They didn't think they could. I don't know whether they didn't want to be a head of a squad or training a squad or what, but.

00:18:13 Speaker 2

They finally decided to put me in this office and it was it was a good job and I'd have probably stayed there the whole war. If I went to shot my mouth off.

00:18:18 Speaker 1

Oh yeah.

00:18:23 Speaker 1

Did you say the wrong thing to the wrong person?

00:18:25 Speaker 2

I did, yeah, right.

00:18:27 Speaker 2

And officer tried to make me sit.

00:18:30 Speaker 2

One night in the officers club was cross the bar from and he was. Was he drunk and he wanted me to smoke.

00:18:42

I.

00:18:42 Speaker 2

I said no way and I didn't and he reported it and it wasn't a few weeks later, I was on my way to Europe.

00:18:52 Speaker 1

Oh my.

00:18:55 Speaker 1

Sometimes we learn the hard way, yeah.

00:18:58 Speaker 2

When you're young like that.

00:18:59 Speaker 1

Yeah. Oh, yeah.

00:19:00 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:19:00 Speaker 2

Should just should just salute him, and that would've been there.

00:19:03 Speaker 2

Would've probably stayed there until the end of the war.

00:19:06 Speaker 2

Would have never been over into your into Europe.

00:19:09 Speaker 2

Yeah, and put in harm's way, so.

00:19:11

Yeah.

00:19:14 Speaker 2

But because it was a good job and I I did agree.

00:19:17 Speaker 2

Did a good job at it.

00:19:18 Speaker 2

Mean, yeah.

00:19:19 Speaker 2

And they and they were making money the first time they'd ever had anybody in there to take a day that had made money for the club. So.

00:19:27 Speaker 1

Oh, that's wonderful. Do you think?

00:19:28 Speaker 2

Yeah. So.

00:19:29 Speaker 1

Math skills came in handy.

00:19:31 Speaker 2

A little bit, yeah, yeah.

00:19:32

Yeah.

00:19:33 Speaker 1

Made a difference.

00:19:35 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:19:36 Speaker 2

And.

00:19:37 Speaker 2

Just doing the job the way it's supposed to be.

00:19:39

Yeah.

00:19:40 Speaker 2

And and but.

00:19:43 Speaker 2

I got in an argument with another officer on time too about using using a floor.

00:19:49 Speaker 2

He wanted to use it one day and I I told him I figured he couldn't have it because I had to have to get the use in the in the club to get ready for the dance that night.

00:19:57

I.

00:20:00 Speaker 2

And oh man, he was really teed off. Me too, but.

00:20:04 Speaker 1

You're just doing your job.

00:20:05 Speaker 2

Right, I'm doing my job that time but.

00:20:07

Yeah.

00:20:07 Speaker 1

Yeah. Oh, gosh.

00:20:09 Speaker 2

But.

00:20:11 Speaker 2

No, it's.

00:20:14 Speaker 2

Thing is, you remember you remember something and then you remember and none of what you remember at.

00:20:15

And.

00:20:17

None.

00:20:20 Speaker 2

You know.

00:20:20 Speaker 1

Yeah, big sections, yeah.

00:20:22 Speaker 2

Right now.

00:20:23 Speaker 1

When did you learn how to drive the armored car?

00:20:28 Speaker 2

I learned in tanks that I trained in M fifteens in a tank in Camp Campbell, Kentucky, and Go Army drove a tank.

00:20:31

I.

00:20:38 Speaker 1

OK.

00:20:39 Speaker 2

That's what my training was, the tanks.

00:20:41 Speaker 1

No. OK.

00:20:42 Speaker 2

And what was the light light tank?

00:20:47 Speaker 2

But if I went to war and that thing one little shell wouldn't move well around there, all because it didn't have hardly any armor on it.

00:20:55 Speaker 2

A 15 ton machine. So very light. Yeah, fast.

00:20:58 Speaker 1

Pretty light.

00:21:01 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:21:01 Speaker 2

Had a.

00:21:03 Speaker 2

I know what size done 37mm I think.

00:21:07 Speaker 2

No.

00:21:09 Speaker 2

Gun. Yeah. Yeah, that was a main gun, I think or.

00:21:14 Speaker 2

Else did have on it.

00:21:15 Speaker 2

Don't know.

00:21:18 Speaker 2

Had one one gun, you know? And I don't know what size that was, but.

00:21:24

Yeah.

00:21:25 Speaker 2

75 You know there were 80 ones on.

00:21:29 Speaker 2

On a German tanks, I think this was 75 or whatever, but basically it was a light tank and but it was made for speed.

00:21:33 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:21:39 Speaker 1

Get you in as quick as possible.

00:21:41 Speaker 2

Right.

00:21:42 Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, no, that's what I trained in with tanks and they thought I could. If I trained tanks, I could drive an hour car, you know?

00:21:50 Speaker 2

And you could report.

00:21:52 Speaker 2

It was completely different.

00:21:54 Speaker 2

It was shifting more in there in the armored car and so and then the Sergeant that was the head of the 80th.

00:22:07 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:22:09 Speaker 2

Battalion.

00:22:10

That.

00:22:10 Speaker 2

Was the head of the company our in our company was our head of our squad or whatever and he went out with me to drive to see how I could drive and.

00:22:24 Speaker 2

Here I get in a rut and I hit a tree.

00:22:29 Speaker 2

And he was he was.

00:22:32 Speaker 2

He was in the seat next to me and he was standing up in there and.

00:22:36 Speaker 2

Kind of shook him up a little bit.

00:22:40 Speaker 2

But it got into a rut and I couldn't get out of it and.

00:22:43

Oh.

00:22:44 Speaker 2

He said.

00:22:45 Speaker 2

Fine.

00:22:46 Speaker 2

So I was driving but side path didn't have anybody else.

00:22:48 Speaker 1

Apparently you passed.

00:22:49 Speaker 1

So, oh, buddy. Yeah.

00:22:52 Speaker 1

Oh gosh.

00:22:53 Speaker 2

So but.

00:22:55 Speaker 1

Oh.

00:22:57 Speaker 2

Those are some of the things you remember.

00:22:59 Speaker 1

So now when you went over with 10 or 12,000 people on the ship, did they drop off people at different locations when you stopped, when you got to your?

00:23:09 Speaker 1

Or.

00:23:10 Speaker 2

Oh no.

00:23:10 Speaker 2

We went right to we all unloaded and I think I think we went to Fort in Ireland.

00:23:16 Speaker 1

OK.

00:23:17 Speaker 2

I think so.

00:23:18 Speaker 2

And then from there we went to England and then.

00:23:22 Speaker 2

Went across the channel.

00:23:23 Speaker 1

And then there was a group of you that were replacements or were was it all replacements?

00:23:30 Speaker 2

All replacement check out.

00:23:31 Speaker 1

OK.

00:23:31 Speaker 2

Right.

00:23:32 Speaker 1

All right.

00:23:32 Speaker 2

Might have been there might have been companies and stuff in there and divisions there might have been a division in Arizona too, you know or company or whatever.

00:23:41 Speaker 2

But I think they're all a tremendous number of replacements.

00:23:45 Speaker 2

Because they were using them in a hurry, you know.

00:23:48 Speaker 2

Somebody played and when they got into France there they knew that they have a lot of casualties and then they have to have a lot of lot of men to go replace them right away and.

00:24:00 Speaker 2

When I was in a replacement company.

00:24:04 Speaker 2

I I just didn't make myself known to anybody.

00:24:07 Speaker 2

Mean I just kept my mouth shut.

00:24:09 Speaker 2

And so you don't get.

00:24:12 Speaker 2

Otherwise you get somebody's going to remember your name and you're going to be the one stand up to the front line.

00:24:17

Yeah.

00:24:18 Speaker 2

Way that I want to go.

00:24:19

Yeah.

00:24:20 Speaker 2

And I was went, but I was.

00:24:22

Yeah.

00:24:23 Speaker 2

I had no idea.

00:24:24 Speaker 2

And then when they said.

00:24:27 Speaker 2

He told me that I was going to idiot infantry division.

00:24:30 Speaker 2

Oh man, my heart got sank because they had been in some of the heavy fighting and I knew that they were had to suffer a lot of casualties.

00:24:40

No.

00:24:41 Speaker 2

And I had no way that I want to go there and I had no idea what. When they said 80th single battalion, I was going to. I didn't.

00:24:50 Speaker 2

I had no idea what that was, what I was going to do so, but when I got there said to drive this armored car for the general.

00:24:52

Yeah. Umm.

00:24:58 Speaker 2

That was that was a good deal for me.

00:25:00 Speaker 1

No, not a problem, no.

00:25:02 Speaker 1

Yeah. How many groups were with Patton then at that?

00:25:02 Speaker 2

No, that was lucky.

00:25:06 Speaker 1

Many divisions were with him. Do you know?

00:25:09 Speaker 2

I don't know how many divisions were in that 3rd army.

00:25:12 Speaker 2

Yeah. And there's there's several divisions. Yeah. Yeah.

00:25:16 Speaker 1

Yeah, a lot of people you were with? Yeah.

00:25:17 Speaker 2

A lot of people know right now.

00:25:20 Speaker 2

No.

00:25:21 Speaker 2

But when we started rolling across France, why?

00:25:25 Speaker 2

There was nothing stopping us, just kept going and going and going and.

00:25:31 Speaker 2

It was.

00:25:32 Speaker 2

You didn't hear?

00:25:35 Speaker 2

When he first first got into France, then we heard a lot of gunfire then and but.

00:25:44 Speaker 2

The faster we went, the less you heard. You know, because it was just it was just capturing the territory and and they were.

00:25:50 Speaker 2

Germans were just giving up so.

00:25:54 Speaker 2

But.

00:25:57 Speaker 2

Battle of the Bulge is why I was saying that it's all right.

00:25:59 Speaker 1

Oh, OK, all right.

00:26:00 Speaker 2

One is always when that happened, yeah.

00:26:02 Speaker 1

When they did the last.

00:26:05 Speaker 2

Chat. Go, go, go.

00:26:05 Speaker 1

Trying to attack.

00:26:06 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:26:07 Speaker 1

And that would have been when you already were into Germany or?

00:26:12 Speaker 2

No, we, they they attacked and Patton said he could move the division up there in 24 hours and they thought he was crazy. And but he wasn't.

00:26:23 Speaker 2

Moved them.

00:26:23 Speaker 1

He knew, yeah.

00:26:24 Speaker 2

Yeah, right.

00:26:25 Speaker 2

He.

00:26:25 Speaker 2

He had been fighting on it before that.

00:26:28 Speaker 2

Got.

00:26:28 Speaker 2

He had to.

00:26:31 Speaker 2

Because he figured something was going to.

00:26:33 Speaker 2

And he had been planning on it. And well, it tells like it tells in the movie.

00:26:37 Speaker 2

Know that that he says.

00:26:40 Speaker 2

We'll be there in 24 hours. You know, he was crazy, but.

00:26:42

Yeah.

00:26:45 Speaker 1

He knew what he was.

00:26:46 Speaker 1

Did you just travel night and day, then all 24 hours?

00:26:49 Speaker 1

Just kept moving.

00:26:49 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:26:49 Speaker 2

Oh, yeah, yeah, no, I got lost.

00:26:52 Speaker 2

When we moved to Division, I got.

00:26:55 Speaker 2

I was in Belgium that night. I was in Netherlands and I was in France and.

00:27:04 Speaker 2

Then we got. I don't how we lost the the column.

00:27:07 Speaker 2

Have no idea how we what happened but.

00:27:13 Speaker 2

We got away from them some way on these little or God, these roads were just wide enough for for the column to go down and and you had no lights and no lights on and we can see.

00:27:27 Speaker 2

The one ahead of you, they'd have a little, little little light on it. As you can see, but I don't know.

00:27:33 Speaker 2

I don't remember how we got lost, but we got we got a wait phone. We made a wrong turn and then they wouldn't let us into.

00:27:43 Speaker 2

Into Belgium, I think it was.

00:27:48 Speaker 2

Stone.

00:27:51 Speaker 2

Belichick.

00:27:53 Speaker 1

Best on I think so, yeah.

00:27:55 Speaker 2

Yeah, but.

00:27:57 Speaker 2

Where we run into some guards and they wouldn't let us in. And then we had and then we were going all the way to noticed.

00:28:07 Speaker 2

The machine got so hot the motor got hot.

00:28:10 Speaker 2

And here a belt buckle had busted my radiator and clipped in there, and then we had to stop and get water. We kept getting stopping at places and getting water farm houses.

00:28:23 Speaker 2

I turned the lights on, man.

00:28:25 Speaker 2

Can't believe I'll.

00:28:26 Speaker 2

That is, when it's total darkness and then.

00:28:29 Speaker 2

Turn on those hide highlights on the thing and we finally caught up to I have I still to this day I don't know how we caught up to it.

00:28:37

Yeah.

00:28:38 Speaker 1

Hand of God.

00:28:39 Speaker 2

But Mystery Man had to be something because I could have run right into the Germans just as well.

00:28:41

Yeah.

00:28:44

Yeah, could.

00:28:45 Speaker 1

Have been right behind German lines and never known it.

00:28:47 Speaker 2

Right. Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:28:50 Speaker 1

How scary.

00:28:51 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, that night.

00:28:53 Speaker 2

I'll never forget that night. But like I say, I know that we were turned away. But he's one set of guards. They wouldn't let us in and.

00:29:05 Speaker 2

Yeah, we went and we finally caught up to where? Stop at a farmhouse and got water and had the big had the five gallon cans of water and then we left off every once in awhile to fill up the radiator. So.

00:29:15

Yeah.

00:29:17 Speaker 2

But.

00:29:20 Speaker 2

That's I like I say that that was a scary night and I've never seen lights so bright in in a night.

00:29:28

Yeah.

00:29:30 Speaker 1

How many people were with you in the armored car it.

00:29:32 Speaker 1

You and.

00:29:33 Speaker 2

Ray and.

00:29:38 Speaker 2

C3 of us no.

00:29:38

Yeah.

00:29:42 Speaker 1

Oh gosh, yeah.

00:29:44 Speaker 1

Well, and then when you got into, so you're past the battle of the bulge and.

00:29:51 Speaker 1

When you ended up, where were you when they finally declared the end of the war in Yemen?

00:29:57 Speaker 1

Europe.

00:30:00 Speaker 1

OK. And that was after you had.

00:30:03 Speaker 2

Car over.

00:30:04 Speaker 1

OK.

00:30:06 Speaker 2

That just a week before the war was over, we were going up to the front lines and that was the third time we were going up there that morning behind the general and.

00:30:19 Speaker 2

At 1 curve and.

00:30:22 Speaker 2

Flipped it over so.

00:30:23 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:30:26 Speaker 2

Charlie gokas? Yep, way up high.

00:30:29 Speaker 2

And he went and I got to cut on the head and.

00:30:34 Speaker 2

Had blood running down and they sent me to the hospital and there's what I was when the war ended so.

00:30:42 Speaker 1

Where did you go to the hospital then?

00:30:45 Speaker 2

Right near there.

00:30:46 Speaker 1

Right near.

00:30:47 Speaker 1

They didn't ship you out someplace else? No.

00:30:48 Speaker 2

No. Oh.

00:30:50 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:30:50 Speaker 2

Oh no. And and.

00:30:53 Speaker 2

Hospital set up in the in the Lion Center area and and that's where you go and intense pain. They keep moving too with them.

00:31:00 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:31:01 Speaker 1

So why was the general going back and forth from the front lines like that that day?

00:31:06 Speaker 2

Just checking on the troopers and seeing what they were doing, where they were at and that's generally how he did it.

00:31:08 Speaker 1

OK.

00:31:12 Speaker 2

We never got right.

00:31:14 Speaker 2

Clear up to the lines, I never.

00:31:17 Speaker 2

Saw any tank battles or anything like that, but we got within probably a mile or two of them in the front and then they would stop and then add the radio communications.

00:31:29 Speaker 2

Radio Sands, as far as you would go with them. And but he wanted to know where they were, I think, and this is what he was doing, you know.

00:31:39 Speaker 1

No.

00:31:40 Speaker 2

God, he got us up that morning and I think it was 4:00 in the morning. Something like that. And we went up. And then, like I said, that was the third time that morning. And we went out.

00:31:50 Speaker 2

And.

00:31:51 Speaker 2

I don't.

00:31:52 Speaker 2

He was driving.

00:31:53 Speaker 2

He was driving too fast and so I was driving too fast.

00:31:58 Speaker 1

But where he went, he went with him.

00:32:00 Speaker 1

Just stayed with him, yeah.

00:32:00 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, right.

00:32:01 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:32:03 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:32:04 Speaker 2

Stay right with him.

00:32:05 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:32:06 Speaker 1

Who did the communications?

00:32:08 Speaker 1

Who is in charge of like the Morse code and sending? And it was that on your car, then on the armoured car.

00:32:16 Speaker 2

No, usually they were able.

00:32:17 Speaker 2

He was able to use the radios in.

00:32:19 Speaker 2

Cheap.

00:32:20 Speaker 2

He really didn't need them. Big ones.

00:32:22 Speaker 2

He very used.

00:32:23 Speaker 2

I think he used them once, you know?

00:32:26 Speaker 2

But it was just a prestige.

00:32:28 Speaker 1

No.

00:32:28 Speaker 2

To.

00:32:29 Speaker 2

Everybody had an hour. All the generals had an hour so they could move faster.

00:32:34 Speaker 1

Yeah, well, lucky for you that they did. Yeah.

00:32:36 Speaker 2

Right, yeah.

00:32:37 Speaker 1

Oh gosh. So did you leave from the hospital then? After when the OR did what ended up happening after the end of the war? Then you were in the hospital.

00:32:47 Speaker 2

Well, that works for the back to the back to.

00:32:49 Speaker 2

Company and.

00:32:49 Speaker 1

OK.

00:32:52 Speaker 2

Then.

00:32:56 Speaker 2

After a while they didn't have nothing for me to do, you know? So it made me come to clerk and the company clerk went home.

00:33:03 Speaker 2

Then he he just tried to show me what to do and and.

00:33:08 Speaker 2

Man, I didn't.

00:33:10 Speaker 2

Well, we he showed me how to.

00:33:16 Speaker 2

Have.

00:33:20 Speaker 2

The day book.

00:33:21 Speaker 2

Yeah, every day I had to have make sure when they call.

00:33:25 Speaker 1

It order of the.

00:33:26 Speaker 2

Day. Well, in order of the day, but it had to had to tell how many troops you had in the in the company, how many the company.

00:33:35 Speaker 2

Company roster how many had on the company roster?

00:33:38 Speaker 2

How many men had shipped out or and how many went to hospital or whatever, and all of these things and and.

00:33:46 Speaker 2

He set it up. He would.

00:33:50 Speaker 2

Many times.

00:33:52 Speaker 2

10 coming in and eight going out.

00:33:55 Speaker 2

Then he put down.

00:33:59 Speaker 2

That only six in one house, you know. So he had more more in the company and then you get more company rations by the time I got done in the in the company of the company clerk in there, they had to have two trucks hauling all the R.

00:34:13 Speaker 2

For the kitchen.

00:34:15 Speaker 2

They had more coffee, and well then we. Then we could then sell those to get coffee and we can give it to the civilians. So on.

00:34:22 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:34:23 Speaker 1

Much better deal, right? Much bigger unit.

00:34:25 Speaker 2

Yeah, don't worry about it.

00:34:27 Speaker 2

Had a tremendous food.

00:34:28 Speaker 2

Yeah, lots of food never ran out. Yeah, so.

00:34:29 Speaker 1

Lots of good food.

00:34:34 Speaker 1

None of the instant stuff like they have now in the service actual food.

00:34:35 Speaker 2

No, no.

00:34:39 Speaker 1

Oh gosh.

00:34:40 Speaker 2

But he he had he had been doing that somewhat, you know. But I I enjoy just increase the figures a little bit more all the time.

00:34:48 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:34:49 Speaker 2

By the end, I really didn't have no idea how many we had in the company.

00:34:54 Speaker 2

Nobody questions it.

00:34:57 Speaker 1

You're doing your job.

00:35:00 Speaker 2

Repl.

00:35:02 Speaker 2

As long as it didn't hurt anybody, yeah.

00:35:04 Speaker 1

That's.

00:35:05 Speaker 1

Well, I was happy and fed.

00:35:08 Speaker 1

So did you end up?

00:35:10 Speaker 1

I know we've talked about with the concentration camps and the people coming out of the concentration camps. Where were you coming still in Germany?

00:35:17 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:35:21 Speaker 2

Right and.

00:35:26 Speaker 2

I understand now today that Patton had ordered that all all the troops had to be go in and see what they had done, that they had to take and show us the concentration camps, you know, before.

00:35:40 Speaker 2

Right after they were.

00:35:43 Speaker 2

Right after they were after liberate, yeah.

00:35:44 Speaker 1

Liberated.

00:35:46 Speaker 2

And so we were in this camp. I have no idea where it was. The name of it or anything, but it had all of the things. It had the shower rooms and the gas and and.

00:35:59 Speaker 2

And the furnaces.

00:36:00 Speaker 2

Shoved the bodies in and.

00:36:04 Speaker 2

Then this one had extra had one building and must have been about.

00:36:11 Speaker 2

Say 80 to 100 feet long and it might have been 30 to 40 feet wide and right down the center was a place where they could drop the bodies. They walk along on each side and you drop the bodies in and.

00:36:27 Speaker 2

Then they pull live over them.

00:36:29 Speaker 2

So that they that's the way they could get rid of fast.

00:36:33 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:36:33 Speaker 2

And then they took us out and showed us.

00:36:38 Speaker 2

Where they were burning them on the field, crisscrossing with logs and and then they also. Then there were 33 transfers there that must have each been 100.

00:36:50 Speaker 2

100 feet long.

00:36:53 Speaker 2

And.

00:36:54 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:36:55 Speaker 2

Probably 7-8 feet deep or more and long enough for a body.

00:36:59 Speaker 2

And they were.

00:37:00 Speaker 2

They were all full of bones.

00:37:02 Speaker 2

Oh, they were bodies all in there. And these are all full of bodies.

00:37:08 Speaker 2

But they were.

00:37:09 Speaker 2

Still burning them so that they could get.

00:37:11 Speaker 2

Get them down further. You know, get them down to ashes, but.

00:37:17 Speaker 1

Just unbelievable.

00:37:18 Speaker 2

Right.

00:37:19 Speaker 2

And it's something that I should, you know, today everybody would have had a camera with them, you know, and they would be taking pictures of stuff.

00:37:26 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:37:28 Speaker 2

That but.

00:37:28

No.

00:37:30 Speaker 2

At that time, nobody ever thought about it, but I I'm sure they recorded all this in the army.

00:37:35 Speaker 2

They had photographers too, you know.

00:37:37 Speaker 1

That we're traveling with different battalions, yeah.

00:37:40 Speaker 2

Right.

00:37:42 Speaker 1

Unbelievable. Had you heard about the concentration camps prior to that and knew what they were doing?

00:37:50 Speaker 2

Don't remember.

00:37:52 Speaker 2

I really don't remember whether we heard had heard about it.

00:37:56 Speaker 2

We.

00:37:57 Speaker 2

I'm sure we probably did, but pay no attention to it.

00:37:59

Mm.

00:38:02 Speaker 2

And we weren't concerned with it.

00:38:05 Speaker 2

Were just concerned with the.

00:38:09 Speaker 2

Figuring everybody would defeat Germany, you know, that's basically what.

00:38:11

Hmm.

00:38:14 Speaker 2

Mulots in the army would anyway, you know.

00:38:17 Speaker 1

That's what you were there for?

00:38:18 Speaker 2

Right. Yeah. And hoping that would be able to get through you.

00:38:24 Speaker 2

Without being shot but.

00:38:28 Speaker 2

No, and it's.

00:38:31 Speaker 2

It was just a terrible, terrible thing to see.

00:38:35 Speaker 2

And then you'd then like some of these.

00:38:41 Speaker 2

Guys spoke German.

00:38:42

I.

00:38:44 Speaker 2

In.

00:38:44 Speaker 2

Service, you know and they.

00:38:46 Speaker 2

They were asking the Germans around there in the towns where they didn't know anything about it.

00:38:50 Speaker 2

No, they didn't know anything about it, so.

00:38:53 Speaker 2

You know, they they had to.

00:38:55 Speaker 2

They could smell.

00:38:56 Speaker 2

They it was in the air and in the furnace and in the in those piles of lumber and where they are wood, where they burned them on wood piles and and they knew all about it. But well, they couldn't do anything either they they had.

00:38:56

Yeah.

00:39:05

Go.

00:39:14 Speaker 2

They could have rebelled against him, but I don't know. I it would be a.

00:39:21 Speaker 2

They figured Hitler was doing good for Germany so.

00:39:26

Yeah, yeah.

00:39:28 Speaker 2

Go.

00:39:29 Speaker 2

All.

00:39:33 Speaker 2

But like I've told you before about this one, the guy that uh and his son that were borrowed a gun from the 4th Harwood.

00:39:44 Speaker 2

Guy. And then they went out and saw this new this where this trooper was hiding in the woods and caught him and shot him and then slapped his throat and made him on the road.

00:39:56 Speaker 2

Then we drove by after the afternoon pulled him out there.

00:40:01

No.

00:40:02 Speaker 2

They were still there and they were gave the gun back.

00:40:06 Speaker 1

They did what they had to do.

00:40:07 Speaker 2

Right. Yeah, and got at least got one.

00:40:09

You know.

00:40:10 Speaker 1

Yeah. And I'm sure that's what it felt like.

00:40:13 Speaker 1

Them, yeah.

00:40:13 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:40:14 Speaker 2

Oh, they're with.

00:40:15 Speaker 2

Oh man, can't imagine how tall they were.

00:40:18 Speaker 1

No.

00:40:20 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:40:20 Speaker 2

Terrible.

00:40:21 Speaker 1

And did you see the people after they had liberated the ones who were able to be transported out of the concentration camps then?

00:40:29 Speaker 1

Were they all empty by the time you got there?

00:40:31 Speaker 2

They were empty that time we got.

00:40:33 Speaker 2

They were like these two there I saw.

00:40:35 Speaker 2

They were still there and I don't know why that was why they were still there, but otherwise there weren't.

00:40:42 Speaker 2

Anybody else, as far as I remember, we're there.

00:40:45 Speaker 2

Know that they're taking them all out.

00:40:45

Yeah.

00:40:47

No.

00:40:48 Speaker 2

So.

00:40:49 Speaker 1

Thank God.

00:40:51 Speaker 1

Yeah, I think it's just such a hard chapter to.

00:40:55 Speaker 1

Talk about and. Remember and you know it just you just. Yeah. You can't even even your wildest imagination. Imagine anybody doing that to another person. Yeah.

00:40:58 Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, I think that people could do that.

00:41:10 Speaker 2

Go.

00:41:12 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:41:13 Speaker 1

Did you stay in Germany then? Or did you end up going on to where did you end up after?

00:41:20 Speaker 2

Czech, Slovakia.

00:41:21 Speaker 1

Czechoslovakia. OK. And so that was.

00:41:21 Speaker 2

No, right now, no.

00:41:25 Speaker 2

That's what it.

00:41:26 Speaker 2

That's what I thought. But it says in here Austria.

00:41:28 Speaker 1

OK.

00:41:32 Speaker 2

Austria the last.

00:41:36 Speaker 2

5th of May 1945.

00:41:38 Speaker 1

OK.

00:41:39 Speaker 2

But then we then that's that was the end of the war then too, so.

00:41:45 Speaker 2

A.

00:41:47 Speaker 2

We went into Czechoslovakia. I'm sure it was in a town there and I don't know if have no idea the neighborhood or anything.

00:41:55 Speaker 2

And then we were there.

00:41:57 Speaker 2

And.

00:42:08 Speaker 2

Earlier in the year, before, before the war ended, we went to.

00:42:18 Speaker 2

There's one resort.

00:42:19 Speaker 2

We were stationed there for a while and before the war ended.

00:42:25 Speaker 2

I was right after the war ended.

00:42:28 Speaker 2

I'm not.

00:42:29 Speaker 2

I'm not sure about these things, but.

00:42:36 Speaker 2

It had to be after the war we ended because I was a county clerk and we were had all the rations and then they couldn't get them all in two trucks and.

00:42:39 Speaker 1

OK.

00:42:46 Speaker 2

We've been eating meat and well there too. And then we then they sent us into Czechoslovakia.

00:42:51 Speaker 1

OK.

00:42:52 Speaker 2

And then we went there.

00:42:54 Speaker 1

What was the resort?

00:42:55 Speaker 1

It was right on the coast then or.

00:42:58 Speaker 2

No, it was in the.

00:43:02 Speaker 2

It's a famous famous resort town up in the mountains.

00:43:10 Speaker 2

Part and Kurt garbage garbage.

00:43:11 Speaker 1

OK.

00:43:12 Speaker 2

I.

00:43:13 Speaker 2

Yeah, now.

00:43:13 Speaker 2

Yeah, right. Yeah, and.

00:43:19 Speaker 2

Had they could go up the top of the mountain there, you know, skiing and stuff. And they had a had a one of these.

00:43:23

Down.

00:43:25 Speaker 1

Wow.

00:43:29 Speaker 1

Ski lifts.

00:43:30 Speaker 2

Shot you didn't get to go out, but, but that was a beautiful topic, you know, so.

00:43:32 Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah.

00:43:34

Repl.

00:43:40 Speaker 2

But.

00:43:43 Speaker 2

Then and then we were saying occupation forces. I think you know how there was. I don't remember the.

00:43:53 Speaker 2

All the details about it but.

00:43:58 Speaker 1

And I know you talked before about the Group of African American troops that were serving or serving in either in your group or near your group.

00:44:10 Speaker 1

I I remember you talking about him playing cards.

00:44:13 Speaker 2

There. Well, there's two dice.

00:44:14 Speaker 1

Oh, OK.

00:44:17 Speaker 2

Hundreds of dollars in there.

00:44:19 Speaker 2

And the dice game.

00:44:20 Speaker 2

Yeah, the dice are was a poker.

00:44:26 Speaker 2

Dice ending. They were shooting nights, but.

00:44:30 Speaker 2

They were replacement people too, but they were the only ones that ever seen. Had seen, you know, and.

00:44:35

Yeah.

00:44:37 Speaker 2

They.

00:44:42 Speaker 2

They act well.

00:44:44 Speaker 2

They acted like they didn't want anything to do with us either, you know.

00:44:47

Yeah.

00:44:49 Speaker 2

And because.

00:44:51 Speaker 2

They they were in the army and they weren't and.

00:44:52

I.

00:44:56 Speaker 2

They hadn't had been serving the army in the army, but most of them had been.

00:45:04 Speaker 2

Driving trucks. You know, the Red Bull Express, that's what they. That's what they were in there for.

00:45:07

Mm.

00:45:11 Speaker 2

And I think a lot of the guys were resentful that they had, they weren't in the.

00:45:15

I.

00:45:20 Speaker 2

When serving in combat, you know when all these guys that came into place go to if they would have been called out and and that was that was outside of Nancy too.

00:45:30 Speaker 2

Think it was.

00:45:32 Speaker 2

Whether or no that was outside of the others town, they were in the barracks there and.

00:45:42 Speaker 2

That was they would have been called up into the into the combat zones, you know, so.

00:45:47 Speaker 1

They would have gone to the front lines just like anybody else would have.

00:45:50 Speaker 2

Yeah, right.

00:45:50 Speaker 1

Yeah, but you're still dealing with segregation at the time in the service, right? Yeah.

00:45:51 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:45:55 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:45:55 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:45:56 Speaker 2

Yeah. And I really did.

00:45:57 Speaker 2

You know, I I didn't know nothing.

00:46:00 Speaker 2

Black people, they were completely foreign to me, you know.

00:46:03

Yeah.

00:46:03 Speaker 2

But they're black.

00:46:05 Speaker 2

What?

00:46:05 Speaker 2

But it didn't.

00:46:08 Speaker 2

I had no idea about all the things the segregation that had gone on with all these these black people. You know, I'm coming from a whole cohort.

00:46:19 Speaker 2

You know, only black people. We saw. You saw once in a while, you see a hobo.

00:46:23 Speaker 2

Know a black hobo?

00:46:24 Speaker 2

But that's the only time you ever saw a black person.

00:46:26

Go, go.

00:46:26 Speaker 2

Know I had no idea and.

00:46:30 Speaker 2

There was.

00:46:32 Speaker 2

Had no.

00:46:36 Speaker 2

Had no thoughts about being them being black, you know, I mean that they they weren't like.

00:46:45 Speaker 2

Like they had the Southerners, you know that they have the slaves and so forth. And you had known.

00:46:51 Speaker 2

You just thought of that as like the people you know.

00:46:54 Speaker 1

You had no concept of being segregated because you've never been with or without them. Yeah, yeah.

00:46:59 Speaker 2

No, no, no and no. I had been taught nothing about it either, really. Not even in.

00:47:03

Yeah.

00:47:05 Speaker 2

I don't remember T&M teaching about, except that they were going to free the slaves, you know, and.

00:47:13 Speaker 2

Beijing.

00:47:13 Speaker 1

That was the only reference to it. When you in history class, yeah.

00:47:16 Speaker 2

Right.

00:47:17 Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah. So but.

00:47:22 Speaker 2

These guys, these guys have a lot of money.

00:47:25 Speaker 2

They were playing for hundreds of dollars, you know, and Mike couldn't believe it and so.

00:47:32 Speaker 2

But.

00:47:33 Speaker 1

Now, what was the red Ball Express or the red ball?

00:47:36 Speaker 2

Well, that was that was that was the.

00:47:42 Speaker 2

That's what they call the trunk. Trucking, trucking.

00:47:45 Speaker 2

There was trucking and supplies up the front liner brought in from the from Omaha Beach. There, down from the beaches and they, they called it the red line.

00:47:48

No.

00:47:51 Speaker 1

OK.

00:47:55 Speaker 2

Sure. That's what they call it. The red ball express.

00:47:57 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:47:58 Speaker 2

And that they were. They had to keep up with.

00:48:03 Speaker 2

Patterson's divisions when he was moving lacrosse fans and that's the only thing that kept you going, you know, was truck line like that that they had these.

00:48:06 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:48:09 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:48:16 Speaker 2

Uh 6 by 6 as they call them two Naft on trucks that they drove and.

00:48:17

I.

00:48:22 Speaker 2

Carrying all the supplies and stuff and then they had and they had their gasoline too. And so gasoline trucks and everything, you know.

00:48:28 Speaker 1

Yeah. And if they didn't keep up, then Patton's army stopped.

00:48:32 Speaker 2

Right.

00:48:32 Speaker 2

And it did stop when it comes by them anymore.

00:48:35 Speaker 1

Yeah. So and then you waited until they caught up with you, right?

00:48:38 Speaker 2

Right.

00:48:39 Speaker 1

Yeah. Yeah, we.

00:48:40 Speaker 2

Would, if they would have been able to keep supplying them, he would have been.

00:48:45 Speaker 2

Would have been in Berlin before Christmas.

00:48:49 Speaker 2

Instead, you sat and waited. Yeah.

00:48:50 Speaker 2

Right.

00:48:53 Speaker 1

Yeah, made a big difference, yeah.

00:48:55 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:48:57 Speaker 1

Path. So then after you got to Czechoslovakia, and where did you end up going then when you were sent home back on the ship again, okay.

00:49:09 Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, it was on a ship.

00:49:13 Speaker 2

Coming out of where?

00:49:15 Speaker 2

I think.

00:49:16 Speaker 2

I don't remember, but it was in January. You know, when I came home, it was in January to see what it was that.

00:49:27 Speaker 1

And set up at the top like January 6th or something like that.

00:49:32 Speaker 1

I thought it was on the like the second.

00:49:32

Yeah.

00:49:34 Speaker 2

Date of departure, 18th of December and but I a date of arrival.

00:49:43 Speaker 2

30th of December 45.

00:49:45 Speaker 2

Yeah, because I was discharged on.

00:49:49 Speaker 2

The 5th of January of Cam McCoy.

00:49:54 Speaker 2

So.

00:49:56 Speaker 2

He was right at the end of December.

00:50:01 Speaker 2

Part of January we're playing.

00:50:04 Speaker 2

Say 30s December 25.

00:50:07 Speaker 2

Well, that might be, but still had a terrific storm when we were coming back and.

00:50:15 Speaker 2

We were blow decks for three days, and when I was on up one deck and it was a big ship, it was 10,010 thousand troops on it.

00:50:19

I.

00:50:23 Speaker 2

Wow and.

00:50:26 Speaker 2

The storm was so big.

00:50:26

Yeah.

00:50:28 Speaker 2

Yeah, I remember looking.

00:50:29 Speaker 2

And you look up at the top of the wave.

00:50:32 Speaker 1

Oh my gosh. Yeah.

00:50:34 Speaker 2

And this was a big show, yeah.

00:50:37

Umm.

00:50:37 Speaker 2

It was rough in and there was a light spotlight up on top that had broke loose and now kept spinning and spinning and spinning and so.

00:50:50 Speaker 2

Then, like I say, they kept us below decks for three days and we're solid deck. Was that rough?

00:50:54 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:50:56

Yeah.

00:50:57 Speaker 1

Did you come home as fast as or you went over? Or was it a much slower trip?

00:51:01 Speaker 2

It was just so fast to us and quick.

00:51:04 Speaker 2

It was four or five.

00:51:06 Speaker 2

Is all six days something like that.

00:51:07 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:51:08 Speaker 1

Yeah. And where did you dock then when you got here?

00:51:14 Speaker 2

New York, I think.

00:51:15 Speaker 1

OK.

00:51:16 Speaker 1

So you would have come past the Statue of Liberty.

00:51:19 Speaker 2

Far as I remember.

00:51:20 Speaker 1

Yeah. And then where did they send you a train, or how did they OK.

00:51:22

Yeah.

00:51:24 Speaker 2

Yeah, train.

00:51:25 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:51:26 Speaker 2

Train to Campbell coin.

00:51:28 Speaker 1

And where's that at Wisconsin?

00:51:30 Speaker 1

Oh, OK.

00:51:31 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:51:31 Speaker 1

So you're almost home by then.

00:51:32 Speaker 2

Yeah, right. Yeah, yeah.

00:51:35 Speaker 1

So how did you end up getting home after they left you out of Camp McCoy then? OK.

00:51:39 Speaker 2

Train I think.

00:51:41

Yeah.

00:51:42 Speaker 1

And where were grandma and grandpa?

00:51:43 Speaker 1

Mom and Dad by then.

00:51:45 Speaker 2

They were here in Saint Paul.

00:51:46 Speaker 1

Yeah. So you just came home to Saint Paul then? Yeah.

00:51:48 Speaker 2

Wait.

00:51:51 Speaker 1

No job waiting for you.

00:51:52 Speaker 2

No, no, no.

00:51:55 Speaker 2

5220 they give you.

00:51:58 Speaker 1

\$52.

00:51:59 Speaker 2

52 weeks, \$20 a week.

00:52:02 Speaker 1

Oh, OK.

00:52:03 Speaker 1

Yeah, I hadn't heard about this.

00:52:05 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, no.

00:52:06 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, I.

00:52:07 Speaker 2

That's what they called it 522052 weeks and \$20 a week. Unemployment and.

00:52:17 Speaker 2

Well, and then you could have I, I should have went to college.

00:52:21 Speaker 2

Because they paid for most of it, you know.

00:52:24 Speaker 1

You could have just gone on to college. Then when you got back, yeah.

00:52:25 Speaker 2

Right, right.

00:52:27 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:52:28 Speaker 1

So you're what, 20?

00:52:30 Speaker 1

How old were you at the time when you got out of the service?

00:52:33 Speaker 2

I was 22.

00:52:36 Speaker 1

22, OK.

00:52:38 Speaker 2

'Cause, that's 40.

00:52:41 Speaker 2

It was 4646 after 23.

00:52:42 Speaker 1

What?

00:52:42 Speaker 1

What he said.

00:52:44 Speaker 1

OK.

00:52:45 Speaker 2

No, I was 22.

00:52:46 Speaker 2

Was 22.

00:52:47 Speaker 1

You'd have been 23 that summer, right?

00:52:49 Speaker 2

23 that summer. That's right, yeah.

00:52:53 Speaker 2

But.

00:52:55 Speaker 2

So I didn't.

00:53:00 Speaker 2

I didn't go into college. They went on and I started construction work.

00:53:06 Speaker 2

I was with some construction and then I went down to arbors and fifths and started down there and worked there so.

00:53:12 Speaker 1

OK. Yeah.

00:53:15

For her.

00:53:16 Speaker 1

Did you ever think about going to college?

00:53:18 Speaker 2

Thought about it, but I wasn't.

00:53:20 Speaker 2

I didn't know what to take or what to do, so I didn't didn't go.

00:53:24 Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah.

00:53:27 Speaker 1

Should well yeah.

00:53:28 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:53:30 Speaker 1

Ted, you made different choices.

00:53:31 Speaker 1

Wouldn't be here probably.

00:53:32 Speaker 2

Right, right.

00:53:38 Speaker 1

Oh gosh. Now do you remember?

00:53:40 Speaker 1

Now I seem to recall you talking when you were in France going to see the Bali Brazier.

00:53:47 Speaker 1

Is that?

00:53:48 Speaker 1

Am I remembering that correctly?

00:53:51 Speaker 1

A show in France, OK.

00:53:52 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:53:52 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah. We got a three day pass.

00:53:55 Speaker 2

When God did me, where was that from?

00:53:58 Speaker 2

Was from Nancy I think.

00:54:00 Speaker 2

Yeah. And then we got together three day passes and.

00:54:05 Speaker 2

You can go to.

00:54:08 Speaker 2

Go to Paris, you know and.

00:54:12

So.

00:54:13 Speaker 2

They took us there and and.

00:54:18 Speaker 2

Got a hotel?

00:54:18 Speaker 2

I was with a guy.

00:54:20 Speaker 2

God, I can't remember his name and but we went to.

00:54:25

Yeah.

00:54:28 Speaker 2

See the following forger. Yeah.

00:54:28

Yeah.

00:54:32 Speaker 2

But we their seats are a long ways away, but.

00:54:34

No.

00:54:36 Speaker 1

What was the place like that you that they had did in?

00:54:42 Speaker 2

I don't know, Doreen.

00:54:44 Speaker 2

There's a theater that they have over there that didn't perish, you know, so.

00:54:50 Speaker 1

Now, do you remember anything about Paris or being in there or what it looked like or?

00:54:55 Speaker 2

Yeah, I went up in the Arctic Ocean. Not for Octo trial, but the Eiffel Tower.

00:54:59 Speaker 1

Eiffel Tower.

00:55:01 Speaker 2

I went up there in there, which couldn't go, couldn't go up all the way.

00:55:04 Speaker 2

They had that all closed off, you know, during the war and.

00:55:06 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:55:09 Speaker 2

Except you go up could go up so far, but that's as far as you go.

00:55:12

OK.

00:55:13 Speaker 2

Couldn't go all the way up and so.

00:55:15 Speaker 1

Up.

00:55:17 Speaker 2

Like a.

00:55:20 Speaker 2

Really.

00:55:24 Speaker 2

Don't know that I remember.

00:55:25 Speaker 2

Remember that much about it? Either you know.

00:55:27 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:55:28 Speaker 1

Just nice to have a three day break.

00:55:30 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:55:30 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah. Should've write somebody to sell all this stuff down.

00:55:31 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:55:35 Speaker 2

Know should had a journal.

00:55:37 Speaker 1

Yes, well, and that that is 1.

00:55:39 Speaker 1

The.

00:55:39 Speaker 1

Did you have any kind of a journal that you kept?

00:55:42 Speaker 1

No, no.

00:55:42 Speaker 2

Never did never.

00:55:44 Speaker 1

And how about letters going back and forth to like your mom and dad or family?

00:55:50 Speaker 2

Well, I tried to write about once a week.

00:55:52 Speaker 2

Know. Yeah and.

00:55:56 Speaker 2

Mother, you know? But.

00:55:57 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:56:01 Speaker 2

That's about it. You know, I don't.

00:56:03 Speaker 2

I don't think mother ever kept those letters either, so.

00:56:06 Speaker 1

Yeah, I don't know.

00:56:07

I don't know.

00:56:09 Speaker 1

I thought at one time there was a box full of them, like in the back of.

00:56:12 Speaker 1

Of her closet. But.

00:56:14 Speaker 2

It might have been.

00:56:15 Speaker 1

Yeah, no idea what would have happened to her.

00:56:16 Speaker 2

Right. It's going on.

00:56:17 Speaker 1

Something to look.

00:56:18 Speaker 1

Probably gone now, but you know, maybe it's in one of the boxes still at your house now. Just have a look through it. Correct. Yeah.

00:56:23 Speaker 2

Yeah, right. Yeah.

00:56:27 Speaker 1

Well, but way different then then, especially with the news traveling and things so much slower and yeah.

00:56:33 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, yeah.

00:56:39 Speaker 2

Yeah. So.

00:56:42 Speaker 1

It's good to get home. I bet, right? Yeah.

00:56:44 Speaker 2

Help help.

00:56:46 Speaker 2

Religion.

00:56:49 Speaker 2

Just wanted to get out and get home.

00:56:51 Speaker 2

All you know.

00:56:55 Speaker 1

In one piece right now.

00:56:57 Speaker 2

Lucky to be there, yeah.

00:56:59 Speaker 1

Oh, yeah, yeah, most definitely.

00:57:05 Speaker 1

I saw in the papers have talked about you gotten a good conduct medal and yeah.

00:57:10 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, everybody got them.

00:57:14 Speaker 2

And then you get.

00:57:21 Speaker 2

American theater, European African, Middle Eastern Theatre service medals. I don't know where they're at, but.

00:57:28 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:57:33 Speaker 2

But.

00:57:38 Speaker 2

You know the ESR score that I had, 65.

00:57:44 Speaker 1

And what is that?

00:57:46 Speaker 2

That's that's how many points you had.

00:57:49 Speaker 2

You get out of the service.

00:57:51 Speaker 1

Oh.

00:57:52 Speaker 2

That's.

00:57:53 Speaker 2

That's why I.

00:57:56 Speaker 2

I got sent out, you know, instead of staying with the company.

00:57:57

I.

00:58:00 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:58:05 Speaker 1

So once you hit the magic number, you could go home right now.

00:58:09 Speaker 1

Wow.

00:58:15 Speaker 1

Or.

00:58:31 Speaker 2

Yeah, a lot of.

00:58:33 Speaker 2

You know, you look, think back and, but you just don't.

00:58:37 Speaker 2

Like I say, I just don't remember.

00:58:38 Speaker 2

Lot of it, yeah.

00:58:40 Speaker 1

One, I think a big part of it is that so much happened in such a short period of time that you just could never, even.

00:58:49 Speaker 1

I don't think you can kind of wrap your head around it at the time it's happening.

00:58:53 Speaker 2

Right.

00:58:54 Speaker 1

Yeah. You know, you get through every day and you get as much sleep as you can and you get through the next day.

00:59:00 Speaker 1

Yeah, yeah. You know the big events and the big moments certainly stay with you. But.

00:59:06 Speaker 1

You know.

00:59:06 Speaker 2

Keep other people's ways when they don't.

00:59:08 Speaker 2

You up?

00:59:08 Speaker 1

The frontline? Yeah. Make sure you're not noticed and doing a good job at whatever you are doing.

00:59:09

Yeah.

00:59:13 Speaker 2

Right.

00:59:14 Speaker 1

Oh.

00:59:15 Speaker 1

Well, this has been very.

00:59:17 Speaker 1

I'm going to stop the tape here and.