

Edward Daniel Boston Interview

80th Infantry Division

(Library of Congress: Veterans History Project; interviewed by Edward B. Williams)

(MS Word Audio Transcript)

00:00:03 Speaker 1

Good afternoon. My name is Edward B Williams. I'm a military historian. I live in Cold Spring, TX area code 77331.

00:00:13 Speaker 1

Today is Tuesday 15 April in the year 2003.

00:00:21 Speaker 1

I'm at the memorial Dr. Presbyterian Church in Houston, TX to interview at this time.

00:00:29 Speaker 1

Mr. Edward D, Boston.

00:00:33 Speaker 1

Mr. Boston's birth date is 30 March 1923.

00:00:39 Speaker 1

Current address is 201 Vanderpool.

00:00:43 Speaker 1

#51.

00:00:45 Speaker 1

Houston, TX ZIP 77024 tax 6125.

00:00:53 Speaker 1

Mr. Boston served in World War 2.

00:01:00 Speaker 1

He was in the 80th Infantry Division of the United States Army and then participated in the occupation as a member of the 9th Infantry Division.

00:01:11 Speaker 1

And the.

00:01:12 Speaker 1

Highest rank attained during World War 2 was that of tech Sergeant 2 rockers.

00:01:19 Speaker 1

And uh.

00:01:22 Speaker 1

Welcome pleasure to.

00:01:23 Speaker 1

Have you here, Mr. BLOB? Thank you.

00:01:28 Speaker 1

Let's talk just a little bit about what your life was like prior to World War 2. Where were you born and educated? Etcetera.

00:01:37 Speaker 2

When I was born in Columbus, IN and.

00:01:41 Speaker 2

Grew up in Louisville, KY, where I was in the ROTC for all four years.

00:01:48 Speaker 1

All four years of high school, OK? They had artistic programs in high school. OK, I wonder where that.

00:01:50 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:01:52 Speaker 2

Oh yes, and.

00:01:56 Speaker 2

I got second highest rank. There's Lieutenant Colonel. OK.

00:02:00 Speaker 1

Hey.

00:02:02 Speaker 2

Then I went to Purdue University and was in the ROTC there for the first two years.

00:02:08 Speaker 1

When was that time?

00:02:09 Speaker 2

Frame the I went to Purdue in 1941, September 41 and was there until May of 1943.

00:02:23 Speaker 2

When?

00:02:25 Speaker 2

I joined the Army specialized training program.

00:02:29 Speaker 1

What's that? I haven't heard of that.

00:02:30 Speaker 2

Well.

00:02:32 Speaker 2

Apparently it's something you you could volunteer and they were going to specially train us to do some work as engineers. So they sent us off to the school after.

00:02:46 Speaker 1

Basic training. Were you in an engineering program? OK, you were majoring in what? OK.

00:02:52 Speaker 2

Chemical engineering, yeah.

00:02:55 Speaker 1

So that probably had a lot to.

00:02:56 Speaker 1

Do.

00:02:56 Speaker 1

With you being children for that.

00:02:58 Speaker 2

Program. Yes, that's right. And I knew my eyes were not good enough for the Navy or some of the other programs at that point. So I volunteered to get into this.

00:03:09 Speaker 2

Program.

00:03:10 Speaker 2

And they sent us to to Louisiana State University.

00:03:15 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's right. And we did.

00:03:18 Speaker 2

Very.

00:03:19 Speaker 2

Concentrated program was mostly mechanical engineering was what they were training us for was to be able to fix the vehicles and everything. When we landed in Japan that.

00:03:30 Speaker 2

Any idea?

00:03:31 Speaker 1

Oh, OK. So you were initially thinking you're going to the city here?

00:03:35 Speaker 2

Well, we didn't know what that point, but they they were. They applied that right now, some of the people that were in the specialized training program with me.

00:03:38 Speaker 1

Implied that.

00:03:49 Speaker 2

Didn't have quite as big or long a time at LSU. They pulled them out and sent them up to.

00:03:55 Speaker 2

Well.

00:03:57 Speaker 2

Where is the place in Tennessee where they developed the bomb? Oak Ridge. Yeah. But they after I was down there almost a year, and then they sent us to ordinance over in Maryland.

00:04:01 Speaker 1

Ohh great.

00:04:14 Speaker 1

I'm assuming then, that you were. This would sound like a very specialized program, so you really and having your ROTC background.

00:04:22 Speaker 1

You really didn't go through like a basic training. Where did that happen?

00:04:25 Speaker 2

Oh yes, we did.

00:04:28 Speaker 2

It was over in Cape Wheeler, Georgia.

00:04:31 Speaker 1

When did that happen prior to the?

00:04:32 Speaker 2

That was in May. That was in May of 43 until.

00:04:39 Speaker 2

June, I get it. No, no. We were there about 3-4 months, I guess until September 43, something like that. But we had the basic training over there and man, it was hot.

00:04:52 Speaker 1

Training.

00:04:53

Right.

00:04:53 Speaker 2

That's right.

00:04:54 Speaker 1

So you had a lot of close order drill and a lot of physical training and.

00:04:59 Speaker 2

That's it. And you know some rifle training and.

00:05:03 Speaker 1

Rifle range firing.

00:05:05 Speaker 2

Right. But it was just general basic training and everybody in the specialized training program went through this.

00:05:12 Speaker 1

Everybody had to go through the very basic training, even though, OK?

00:05:14 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:05:17 Speaker 1

Well, that makes sense because I think you were probably very unique among most of those people that were involved there because you had had ROTC in high school and then at Purdue and then the but most of those guys probably had never had any military training at all. How did you, did you enjoy that?

00:05:26 Speaker 2

Here.

00:05:33

Yes.

00:05:36 Speaker 2

No, no, it was very hot and very hard and you sure learned discipline. I'll tell you it.

00:05:43 Speaker 1

What was the typical day like? Do you remember?

00:05:46 Speaker 1

I know you were very.

00:05:46 Speaker 2

Not very much. I mean, you know, you'd go on these long hikes after they get longer and longer. And I remember the some of the 20.

00:05:54 Speaker 2

Mile hikes in the heat.

00:05:57 Speaker 2

With packs and weapons and fetish salt tablets, because we perspired so much, of course.

00:05:58 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:06:04 Speaker 2

And.

00:06:06 Speaker 2

You remember KP duty and all those good things and car guard duty.

00:06:08 Speaker 1

You did all of that? Yeah.

00:06:10 Speaker 2

And stuff, yeah.

00:06:12 Speaker 1

Just the just the general lack of act, in other words, to acclimate you to the military million more or less.

00:06:23 Speaker 1

Uh.

00:06:25 Speaker 1

So you got through that. OK and then what happens?

00:06:29 Speaker 2

Well, when we when we were transferred out to various universities and so forth, we went to LSU and we lived under the.

00:06:40 Speaker 2

Stadium. There they had barracks underneath the stadium, which was unusual, and we had this very.

00:06:46 Speaker 2

Hurried up program. I mean, we studied like crazy and.

00:06:50 Speaker 1

What were the subjects you were studying? Your memory, you know specifically?

00:06:54 Speaker 2

Well, it was basically what you would do for mechanical engineering courses, but there was aerodynamics and a bunch of things like that.

00:07:06 Speaker 2

Just mostly engineering.

00:07:09 Speaker 1

So what you were training to be, you were. This was a technical training course to deal with various stuff.

00:07:15 Speaker 2

But we still were in the military there. I mean, we weren't in uniform all the time.

00:07:21 Speaker 1

And you had to get a pass in the evening, and if you wanted to go, or if you had the opportunity to go home.

00:07:28 Speaker 1

Lord, you have to to have. Or did you ever have any opportunities to to furlough during your training?

00:07:34 Speaker 2

Period.

00:07:36 Speaker 2

I don't remember going home. I had a short furlough and my mother came down and we went to new.

00:07:41 Speaker 2

Orleans.

00:07:43 Speaker 2

So only when I really remember.

00:07:45 Speaker 2

Prior to going, you know, because some of the, you know, my grandfather died and so forth, I could.

00:07:49 Speaker 2

Never go home for anything like that.

00:07:50 Speaker 1

You couldn't get loose for that, right?

00:07:54 Speaker 1

OK, you get through all of this training and what have you and did was all of this sort of training a conference right there at the LSU and then from there, where did you go?

00:08:07 Speaker 2

Well, we went for a couple of weeks up to the Mississippi somewhere or something, but then we they did send us to Oregon, so.

00:08:12 Speaker 2

Over in Maryland.

00:08:14 Speaker 1

Ohh yeah right.

00:08:15 Speaker 2

And that's where we really started our training on fixing vehicles of all kinds learning to.

00:08:25 Speaker 2

Be careful of booby traps and how you.

00:08:30 Speaker 2

Take, you know, take booby traps apart so they don't blow up. And they would.

00:08:35 Speaker 1

Well, was this just all types of vehicles? Anything from Jeep to tank?

00:08:41 Speaker 2

I don't really remember. I think of more of the tank type things. I mean, I don't think we jeeps you don't need that much training then they.

00:08:42 Speaker 1

Precisely probably was.

00:08:54 Speaker 2

I remember 1 bivouac out near the the Bay. Boy was it cold and wind and.

00:09:03 Speaker 1

Then where was it?

00:09:04 Speaker 2

That's in Maryland there somewhere. You know, they took us on a overnight hike and we slept in tents. But it was cold, cold weather tonight.

00:09:13 Speaker 1

Right there, probably on Chesapeake Bay. I'm trying to remember what that would be. Fort Meade or the ordinance that I can't.

00:09:15

Here.

00:09:20 Speaker 2

Yeah, but I can't come up with it either.

00:09:22 Speaker 1

It totally eluded me right now, but there there's several large military lay still active there in Maryland.

00:09:27 Speaker 2

Right.

00:09:31 Speaker 1

But I cannot place for the life. I'm exactly where the ordinance part of.

00:09:35 Speaker 1

It.

00:09:37 Speaker 1

OK, from how long were you there?

00:09:40 Speaker 2

Well, I've got there about September and I was there until December.

00:09:48 Speaker 1

And and that would have been in 4440?

00:09:52 Speaker 2

4 right and.

00:09:56 Speaker 2

During that time, I made out all the papers to go to CVS because they've had a, you know, a couple of years of ROTC and then go to ordinance OCS, and then they had to battle the Bulls over there. And then all of a sudden they needed infantry.

00:10:12 Speaker 1

Beginning 16 December 1945 and suddenly.

00:10:17 Speaker 1

Everybody that could carry a rifle became an infantryman.

00:10:21 Speaker 2

Right. So they transferred me down to.

00:10:27 Speaker 2

Fort Benning, GA.

00:10:29 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:10:30 Speaker 2

Infantry school and we had several weeks of more basic training down there and I kept going in and saying where are my papers? I was going to ordinance. Let's see us. They got lost.

00:10:44 Speaker 2

So.

00:10:45 Speaker 2

Come February.

00:10:47 Speaker 2

We shipped out.

00:10:48 Speaker 1

February 45.

00:10:50 Speaker 2

4:45.

00:10:53 Speaker 1

So what you you were just going to once again? Well probably what that was then or depending was advanced temperature training you you go through basic training to to give you your basic military skill and then if you're going to be an infantryman, which you'll ordinarily do is go to advanced infantry training, that's where you practice squad.

00:11:11 Speaker 1

Tactics and probably more rifle range and you know that sort of thing. So you're down there in Fort.

00:11:17 Speaker 1

Benning.

00:11:18 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:11:19 Speaker 1

You complete that training and and then what happened?

00:11:23 Speaker 2

Well, we shipped out.

00:11:25 Speaker 1

Where'd you go to the ship?

00:11:28 Speaker 2

It went to it was a single ship. It didn't go on convoy. It was one of the bigger ships. I can't remember which one and went up to Glasgow, Scott.

00:11:38 Speaker 1

Where did you embark? From? You go to New York.

00:11:40 Speaker 2

Oh yeah, Staten Island.

00:11:42 Speaker 1

OK.

00:11:43 Speaker 2

And.

00:11:44 Speaker 1

I'll stop talked to a number of veterans that have had the experience of.

00:11:49 Speaker 1

Being transported to Europe via some of these faster peacetime passenger ship.

00:11:54 Speaker 2

Right.

00:11:55 Speaker 1

And I think by that period of the war, you're talking about the first part of 1945 that you vote Minutes have been pretty well eliminated. And also the fact of the matter is, is that those liners were capable of pretty great speed in in that particular area. I don't know what I'd say 20/21/22 not.

00:12:11

That's right.

00:12:15 Speaker 1

And they could outrun submarines. And. And of course, they were capable of evasive maneuvers. So you went on a.

00:12:21 Speaker 1

You went to New York, probably by train.

00:12:23 Speaker 1

Absolutely. Troop train I remember seeing.

00:12:25 Speaker 2

Sure.

00:12:26 Speaker 1

Those of the kid that.

00:12:27 Speaker 1

Come through and you know be loaded.

00:12:29

Yeah.

00:12:29 Speaker 1

The troop.

00:12:29 Speaker 2

Hello.

00:12:31 Speaker 1

So you went to New York and you embarked that Staten Island, what was the trip like?

00:12:38 Speaker 2

On the ship.

00:12:40 Speaker 1

Measurable.

00:12:41 Speaker 2

Yeah, it wasn't too bad. Ohh, it was one of the big liners so it wasn't, you know, it was pretty.

00:12:46 Speaker 2

Steady.

00:12:47 Speaker 2

And.

00:12:49 Speaker 2

I don't remember it being bad at all. It was.

00:12:52 Speaker 1

That N Atlantic can be really nasty. I don't care how big it is, you know, sometimes maybe just lucked out.

00:12:59 Speaker 1

So I guess they had it all set up at troop ship and you were probably down in the holes and.

00:13:05 Speaker 2

Yeah, we've spent most time up on the deck if you could, because it was smelly down there.

00:13:09 Speaker 1

Yeah, and the hot uncover the day before.

00:13:13 Speaker 2

Yeah, I never. I don't know.

00:13:15 Speaker 2

Several bumps deep about 3 bumps deep.

00:13:17 Speaker 2

Or something you.

00:13:18 Speaker 1

Know and there wasn't much room in between.

00:13:20 Speaker 1

Them.

00:13:21 Speaker 2

No.

00:13:21 Speaker 1

And you remember how long that trip took? Probably 5-6 days.

00:13:25 Speaker 2

I think about that. Yeah, absolutely.

00:13:28 Speaker 1

So I guess you were thankful when that was over. Did you get seasick at all or?

00:13:33 Speaker 2

No.

00:13:34 Speaker 2

No, no, that's it and.

00:13:38 Speaker 2

Then we got to Glasgow and we immediately got on a train and went right, right, straight down through Scotland and England and got on another shift.

00:13:47 Speaker 1

You didn't even camp. You just went right directly.

00:13:50 Speaker 2

Just right on the train, right, direct train down.

00:13:53 Speaker 1

On that you where did you embark from? And then you remember, maybe Plymouth or somewhere down there.

00:13:58 Speaker 2

Somewhere down the coast. Yeah. And then.

00:14:00 Speaker 2

They took us over to Lahara.

00:14:02 Speaker 1

OK, you did go to Lahar.

00:14:04 Speaker 2

Right.

00:14:05

And.

00:14:06 Speaker 2

Then we got on trains again.

00:14:08 Speaker 1

So they debarked that's a matter probably in a few hours.

00:14:12 Speaker 1

There to cross the channel to the heart one that's not a, you know, terribly long voice.

00:14:18 Speaker 1

So then you get on a train.

00:14:22 Speaker 2

And.

00:14:23 Speaker 2

We went through France and up into Belgium.

00:14:27 Speaker 2

And that's where I joined the 80th Infantry up there.

00:14:30 Speaker 1

Did you go to replacement depot up there somewhere?

00:14:33 Speaker 2

I'm sure I did, I just don't.

00:14:34 Speaker 1

Remember, I remember specifically well the way that ordinarily worked for replacement.

00:14:40 Speaker 1

And I thought that, you know, there's been a lot of criticism with regard to the way that was done instead of.

00:14:47 Speaker 1

You know, more or less trying to keep the same guys together. Say if somebody in a division was wounded and goes to a field hospital, he's not necessarily going to go back to that same unit. They might go somewhere else.

00:15:00 Speaker 1

And then replacements such as you were then in the early 45, you know you're going to go into a unit as a replacement.

00:15:07 Speaker 1

And a lot of times. Uh.

00:15:10 Speaker 1

There was some, I guess, disdain.

00:15:14 Speaker 1

Expressed because a lot of these guys figured, uh.

00:15:17 Speaker 1

You weren't going to last very long. They didn't. You know, you were inexperienced and they were very high attrition, high casualties among young replacements and experience replacement. So a lot of guys I've talked to.

00:15:29 Speaker 1

And read about over the years that they really want to meet the new men because they didn't figure they were going to live long enough to to make it worthwhile you.

00:15:36 Speaker 1

Hadn't heard that before.

00:15:38 Speaker 2

No, I didn't really. I don't remember experiencing.

00:15:39 Speaker 1

Yeah, I've read that.

00:15:41 Speaker 2

It.

00:15:41 Speaker 1

I have. I have read and seen that many many times, but maybe your experience with someone. But anyway what happened then? You're with the 80th whereabouts did you join?

00:15:52 Speaker 2

Oil was in the western part of Belgium and we they still hadn't gotten into the Siegfried Line.

00:15:59 Speaker 2

So it was our job.

00:16:00 Speaker 2

Have to blast through the secret line.

00:16:03 Speaker 1

Up on the German border there. Do you remember what that looked like? Might be of interest to somebody looking at this later on.

00:16:13 Speaker 2

The main thing I remember there, there was a lot of fighting and and we heard that the French weren't able to get through.

00:16:20 Speaker 2

South of us, so we had to go through and then cut behind the Siegfried Line to let them through. And that's where the most fighting that I saw was cutting behind the seafood line.

00:16:34 Speaker 1

So by the time you actually got there, the and went into the line.

00:16:40 Speaker 1

The bulge had been eliminated. They had put them back.

00:16:42 Speaker 2

Yes, they pushed them back and they were.

00:16:45 Speaker 2

Starting on the.

00:16:45 Speaker 1

Offensive again and had had restarted the offensive that they've been engaged in prior to the to the room.

00:16:54 Speaker 1

We'll call the fences there.

00:16:56 Speaker 1

And the the seat free line. I just might, you know, add the air parenthetically was defensive line along the border of Germany.

00:17:05 Speaker 1

And it consisted of pill boxes and whatever. And I think the most distinctive feature of these concrete so-called Dragon's Teeth.

00:17:13 Speaker 1

And they were 5 or 6 deep, and we're supposed to be pretty formidable obstacles, at least for armor.

00:17:21 Speaker 1

But I believe with our engineers and what area we just.

00:17:24 Speaker 1

Pretty well walked, you know, through those things, you know, build them up and and and breach that.

00:17:29 Speaker 1

Mine.

00:17:30 Speaker 1

But it was part of very elaborate German defense of the Fatherland there.

00:17:37 Speaker 1

And do you remember the cold weather?

00:17:40 Speaker 2

Ohh yes sure do. And now I also say that the 80th Infantry was part of patents 3rd Army.

00:17:49 Speaker 1

You were in the 3rd Army, OK?

00:17:50 Speaker 2

And so a lot of times like going through there, his tanks and so forth were ahead of us blasting away. And so whenever there was a highway or something, we were on trucks following them. And then you come to the.

00:18:04 Speaker 2

Forests and so forth. We had to clean the forest out so that because he was afraid to let the tanks through there that get moving. Trapped but.

00:18:12 Speaker 1

So you as infantry then would dismount from the truck form in whatever tactical formation was appropriate for the situation and then you?

00:18:22 Speaker 1

Would.

00:18:23 Speaker 1

Advance ahead of those tanks to clear out any any opposition, particularly any tank crew.

00:18:29 Speaker 1

And things like that. And I wonder where the 80th. So you were the patent army who had come to the aid of the.

00:18:34 Speaker 2

Right.

00:18:39 Speaker 1

At the bastone, what have you?

00:18:41 Speaker 2

But then you asked about cold weather. I remember sometimes when they'd say, well, OK, we're going to, we're going to camp here for the night and do some foxholes. Protect yourself.

00:18:55 Speaker 2

And you start digging in the ground was so hard and so frozen. After a while you just say the.

00:19:00 Speaker 2

Heck.

00:19:00 Speaker 2

With it and it laid out and just hoped they weren't going to shoot or come up and surprise you.

00:19:08 Speaker 1

I've read accounts of that you know, that's supposedly was the.

00:19:12 Speaker 1

Coldest winter on record for.

00:19:14 Speaker 1

For decades there and you know, you see.

00:19:18 Speaker 1

Combat footage of that of that campaign, and he's just.

00:19:23 Speaker 1

Looked absolutely miserable. How are you close and and your job was, I would assume you're just a Rifleman in this way. What regiment? Incidentally, don't remember which regiment. The agent.

00:19:30 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's right. Yeah.

00:19:33 Speaker 2

I don't remember.

00:19:36 Speaker 2

No, I don't.

00:19:38 Speaker 2

Uh.

00:19:40 Speaker 2

The they just asked my clothing. I remember. We did have sort of winter coats and then at night you were, you know, you could haul out this sleeping bag. So it's the, but you couldn't really zip it up because you had to lay there with your rifle right in hand in case you were, you know, were surprised. So it was pretty cold.

00:20:00 Speaker 2

Trying to get him time to sleep by sleeping you could do is when you're sitting in the truck, right? Sometimes, maybe tomorrow you can ride the trucks, you know, and you know.

00:20:06 Speaker 1

In the back.

00:20:12 Speaker 1

Did you come under a lot of fire? Probably a lot of artillery fire.

00:20:18 Speaker 2

Right. And then there was one little town. I was down near Kaiserslautern somewhere where the s s were entrenched and they were nasty. And they had a lot of these.

00:20:31 Speaker 2

90mm.

00:20:36 Speaker 1

You talk about the radiation the 88 was designed as many aircraft weapons. They also used it as field artillery.

00:20:37 Speaker 2

The idiots, are they?

00:20:42 Speaker 2

Field. So sometimes you'd be going across the field and all of a sudden they'd be popping.

00:20:46 Speaker 2

All around you, you know.

00:20:48 Speaker 2

But.

00:20:49 Speaker 1

Those things, the sound. You know, I've heard them on combat footage before, and that's enough that they had that whistling sound.

00:20:56 Speaker 1

Well.

00:20:56 Speaker 2

If you could hear the rustling N going over here, it's all right.

00:21:00 Speaker 1

It's very distinctive sound. That thing may do, you know, at the time of the weapon was fired and.

00:21:07 Speaker 1

I'm telling you that was supposed to be the Premier Artillery piece in the war.

00:21:11 Speaker 2

No.

00:21:13 Speaker 2

But we are a few of those. Finally, though, we and I don't know what month it was. Finally we you know that fighting down around Kaiser Lawton and we got through the Siegfried Line. Then we got on the autobahns.

00:21:29 Speaker 2

And the tanks would roll up. And if they've got any.

00:21:34 Speaker 2

Uh.

00:21:36 Speaker 2

Firing anybody fired at them from the villages and stuff, they wiped the village out. Yeah. And I remember one time there was old patents sitting right there on the edge of the highway and his silver helmet. And he was watching the.

00:21:52 Speaker 2

I actually saw him there.

00:21:55 Speaker 2

Troops go by.

00:21:58 Speaker 2

It was by that time most of the real fighting was over, and we went all the way up through Hanover, we.

00:22:07 Speaker 2

Tomorrow.

00:22:09 Speaker 2

Rescued one of their big storage barns when he found 2 bottles of wine.

00:22:16 Speaker 1

Which was quickly disposed of on here.

00:22:19 Speaker 2

And we got up as far as chimneys and that's where we had to.

00:22:23 Speaker 2

Stop.

00:22:23 Speaker 2

And because the Russians were just on the other side there.

00:22:29 Speaker 1

So that's sort of where the combat experience then, did you have any particularly memorable things that happened to you while you're in combat?

00:22:40 Speaker 1

Just the fact of being there is fairly.

00:22:41 Speaker 2

Memorable. Well, one of my good friends. I remember one night. You know, we we were there and he got shot in the neck.

00:22:48 Speaker 2

And I never throw him again.

00:22:51 Speaker 1

Had did that happen just at night? Was it an artillery barrage?

00:22:56 Speaker 2

Just a sniper off of the tree somewhere. Got it.

00:23:00 Speaker 2

And I remember one of these little towns where we went in where the US had been somebody. Some Americans were ahead of us. And then there were. So there were a lot of dead Americans around. We had to walk her over and and.

00:23:13 Speaker 2

Then the Germans too.

00:23:13 Speaker 1

They've been executed by the SF probably.

00:23:16 Speaker 2

I don't know, it's just shot trying to get in and.

00:23:18 Speaker 1

Take the town, just the heavy fighting. Unless us folks didn't generally quit pretty mean.

00:23:25 Speaker 1

Group of folks.

00:23:26 Speaker 1

Your your friend that was wounded, was he? He apparently was wounded. Right? The one that shot by the slide.

00:23:26 Speaker 2

Alright.

00:23:31 Speaker 2

Yeah, I think so, right? But I never didn't know him well enough to.

00:23:34 Speaker 2

Ever follow up after the war?

00:23:37 Speaker 1

But they just they took him out of there, I'm sure on the litter and that's the.

00:23:40 Speaker 1

Last you ever saw it?

00:23:41 Speaker 2

That's right.

00:23:43 Speaker 1

That's sort of funny how that happens. I was interviewing a 90th Infantry Division sold here last week. Who was?

00:23:51 Speaker 1

One of your.

00:23:53 Speaker 1

That that division was also in the 3rd Army and he was a forward artillery observer and he and the Lieutenant were up in this attic in Key Wonder, Artillery and mortar fire collapsed the building.

00:23:59 Speaker 2

Oh yeah.

00:24:07 Speaker 1

Next thing he knew, he was had fallen from the attic through three stories and into the cellar and high in the house and on top of it.

00:24:13

Bored.

00:24:15 Speaker 1

He said they hauled him out of there. The Lieutenant. He didn't know what happened to him. He never. He never has found out. Whatever happened, that Lieutenant? So that's kind of interesting that you go through those things and there's so many gaps, those that are.

00:24:26 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:24:28 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:24:30 Speaker 1

Did the excuse me go?

00:24:30 Speaker 2

I.

00:24:31 Speaker 2

Ahead remember, one other thing that just kind of sticks with me and that's where.

00:24:37 Speaker 2

We crossed the.

00:24:37 Speaker 2

Line that was, that was after we got through the secret line. The next thing was across the line. And boy, the engineers really had a did a job. They came with all this white phosphorus stuff.

00:24:50 Speaker 2

You know.

00:24:50 Speaker 2

And.

00:24:53 Speaker 2

It seemed like the sky was lighted up for hours and hours, and then they put bridges across temporary bridges and.

00:25:00 Speaker 2

Then they called us to go across and we figured, man, we're.

00:25:02 Speaker 2

Going to really get it.

00:25:04 Speaker 2

Nobody was nobody ever shot at us, just we crossed the right at that point. So we really liked our stars and for that.

00:25:06 Speaker 1

Nobody had learned.

00:25:09 Speaker 1

Amazing.

00:25:14 Speaker 1

You know, they captured that bridge crossings by boat and what have you and then.

00:25:24 Speaker 1

Up.

00:25:25 Speaker 1

Of course, the engineers had their pontoon.

00:25:28 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's what I remember.

00:25:30 Speaker 1

Pontoon bridges in one day? Yeah, but.

00:25:32 Speaker 1

I think that's.

00:25:34 Speaker 1

General patent crossed on one of those who performed his symbolic act of defiance by your urinating in the Rhine River. I don't know whether you.

00:25:42 Speaker 1

Remember that or not.

00:25:43 Speaker 1

But yeah, pretty famous occurrence there. So where were you?

00:25:44 Speaker 2

Sounds like a.

00:25:50 Speaker 1

To.

00:25:51 Speaker 2

Well then.

00:25:51 Speaker 1

So the reminders were what have.

00:25:53 Speaker 2

Well, the war wasn't over, but we went up there and met the Russians, and then they somehow told us to get down to Austria. So we went down to Munich and we had a week rest in Munich and then we went into Austria and I was actually in Hitler's birthplace on the E day.

00:26:11 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:26:13 Speaker 1

That's where you were.

00:26:14 Speaker 2

Yeah, symbolic and.

00:26:21 Speaker 2

Then they said, well, OK, the anticipatory division is going to go to Japan.

00:26:26 Speaker 2

And the rightful and I didn't have enough points to get out or anything, so.

00:26:31 Speaker 1

Can you explain a little bit about what the points or somebody might be interested to?

00:26:35 Speaker 1

Know about that.

00:26:36 Speaker 2

Well, it depends upon how many months you've actually been in active duty and whether it was in the combat zone or something like that.

00:26:44 Speaker 1

And if you've been wounded, you receive a certain number of points for each of these things.

00:26:46 Speaker 2

Right.

00:26:49 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:26:50 Speaker 2

And if you had enough points, you could go home. But at this point, the war was still going on. They thought they were going to have to go to Japan so.

00:27:00 Speaker 2

They were getting us ready to go to Japan and then, luckily, August came along and we had the Jay Day.

00:27:08 Speaker 2

And then things we all want Whoopi.

00:27:11 Speaker 1

Yeah, the atomic bombs ended that night. So as far as the 8th Division was concerned, it was never.

00:27:13 Speaker 2

Right.

00:27:19 Speaker 1

Embarked from Europe to the other theater that all happened before.

00:27:24 Speaker 1

Y'all left here.

00:27:24 Speaker 2

Right, right. But the the 80th most of the people in the 80th and the 80s been over so long. The 80th was scheduled to go home pretty early. So those of us who were fairly new were transferred to the 9th Infantry Division for Occupation.

00:27:44 Speaker 2

And that was up.

00:27:48 Speaker 2

On the Danube river.

00:27:50 Speaker 2

With the little town, I can't think of it.

00:27:55 Speaker 2

Anyhow, that's where it was for the rest.

00:27:57 Speaker 2

Of the world.

00:27:59 Speaker 1

Yeah. Feel free to, you know, refer to any note, as I say, very conversational and.

00:28:06 Speaker 2

Right.

00:28:07 Speaker 1

I would assume that the you know, 80th Infantry division like all the rest of them, suffered pretty heavy casually.

00:28:15 Speaker 2

Yes, they did. They did. And they were, I think 80th was in D-Day.

00:28:23 Speaker 2

They were under D-Day, so they had lots of casualties.

00:28:27 Speaker 1

Yeah, you know.

00:28:29 Speaker 1

At Omaha Beach, it was a big red one and the 29th inventory to be and when it's really there for 29th being the blue and Gray, Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania National Guard.

00:28:42 Speaker 1

4th degree to be and when a short Utah beach.

00:28:47 Speaker 1

But they were pretty quickly followed up by them today, and they were the assault divisions. But I talked to this 90th Division veteran that I mentioned earlier.

00:28:57 Speaker 1

And I didn't realize this. They were right.

00:28:59 Speaker 1

Behind the floor.

00:29:00

Yeah.

00:29:01 Speaker 1

At Utah Beach came right ashore right behind them.

00:29:05 Speaker 1

And of course, Utah was not nearly the trauma that in Omaha was.

00:29:12 Speaker 1

So I'm sure that.

00:29:13 Speaker 1

The 80th was somewhere right in there, you know.

00:29:17 Speaker 2

Well, I've I've got a little map that shows where the 80th went. You know, they gave us a little thing showing where they went, even though we weren't part of it earlier, but they were.

00:29:29 Speaker 2

All over going to be there.

00:29:32 Speaker 1

So you had probably say four or five months in the in the combat zone then?

00:29:39 Speaker 1

You got you. You. You received a combat infantry badge, right?

00:29:43 Speaker 2

Oh, I did, yeah.

00:29:44 Speaker 1

You still have it.

00:29:46 Speaker 2

I suppose I do. I don't really couldn't put my hand on it right now.

00:29:49 Speaker 1

Or I'll tell you something to be very proud of.

00:29:51 Speaker 2

You know.

00:29:52 Speaker 2

And I'm not bad. It's a bad. Yeah, not a. Not a metal. It's a bad. Yeah. It's probably still on my uniform, which is in mothball somewhere.

00:29:59 Speaker 1

Can you get it?

00:30:02 Speaker 1

You got to drag it out and air it out a little bit. Somebody you have children, grandchildren.

00:30:09 Speaker 1

Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to furnish you a copy of this interview, you know, which might stimulate some of their interest, and they might like for you to drag all that out and preserve it.

00:30:21 Speaker 1

The combat infantry looks bad.

00:30:24 Speaker 1

It was originated during World War 2 and it is a must get on a.

00:30:27

Alright.

00:30:29 Speaker 1

It's a bad.

00:30:31 Speaker 1

It's got a Kentucky musket on a.

00:30:34 Speaker 1

Robbins, blue background. There's some trees around the Robins. Blue, of course, is the color infantry color. And it's it's really something to be, in my opinion.

00:30:41 Speaker 2

Right.

00:30:47 Speaker 1

Harley Bay because the only people that have served in combat and been in harm of the way where those combat temperatures are bad.

00:30:57 Speaker 1

So anybody, anytime I see anybody or know of anybody that that tells before one of those, my hat immediately comes off.

00:31:05 Speaker 1

So my congratulations to you for that achievement.

00:31:10 Speaker 1

What happened during the?

00:31:13 Speaker 1

Occupation service. How long were you there with?

00:31:15 Speaker 1

The knight well.

00:31:18 Speaker 2

It must have. Let's see. That must have been about September or something. 45. We got transferred to there. That was there until May of 40.

00:31:30 Speaker 1

So you stayed there about a year after the after the German surrender?

00:31:35 Speaker 1

Yeah, the little town called Ingolstadt. Ingolstadt. What? What would you need? I have not thought anybody that's been involved in the occupation so well. I quickly got tired of what we doing. That's fine. I got quickly got tired.

00:31:42 Speaker 2

Well.

00:31:52 Speaker 2

Of doing guard duty and things like that. And I talked to one of the guys up at headquarters and he found out I can type. And so I went in as the head of the what they call courts and boards in the.

00:32:12 Speaker 2

Italian headquarters. I guess it was.

00:32:16 Speaker 2

And we, you know, soldiers get in trouble, so you have to write up charges against them, and then they go up. That's for us.

00:32:25 Speaker 2

Forward March.

00:32:27 Speaker 2

Stuff.

00:32:28 Speaker 2

So at about 3 guys working for me and I was real happy that I took typing in high school. I'll tell you because that got me out of old.

00:32:36 Speaker 2

KP and all that stuff.

00:32:39 Speaker 1

Well, when you were on guard duty, what were you guarding? Generally, crossroads or just government property?

00:32:44 Speaker 2

They're hitting mostly just our we took over a big apartment house where we would live.

00:32:51 Speaker 2

And mostly just around that, the headquarters there.

00:32:55 Speaker 1

How did the?

00:32:56 Speaker 1

How did y'all relate to the German population? Was it all pretty amicable?

00:33:01 Speaker 2

We were not supposed to fraternize at all. You could do things like I didn't smoke and I so I had my cigarettes and I had soap and I.

00:33:04

No.

00:33:16 Speaker 1

Found a lady down the street that would do my laundry if I gave her the soap, you know? And that's as good as money. Those cigarettes and everything, right?

00:33:27 Speaker 2

So you can fraternize to that extent that you.

00:33:31 Speaker 2

Be civil with them and stuff, but you weren't supposed to date any of.

00:33:33 Speaker 2

The girls of.

00:33:34 Speaker 1

Yeah, right.

00:33:36 Speaker 2

Course the course, the colonels and all they.

00:33:38 Speaker 1

Were so yeah, right. I'm sure that that to the letter, they're probably more German girls. Married Americans during that period of time than ever in the history of the world.

00:33:42 Speaker 2

Oh.

00:33:50 Speaker 2

But they.

00:33:52 Speaker 2

There were all kinds of special things for us, you know, they and.

00:33:56 Speaker 1

Little churches would have Easter services and things and you would go there. They invited us to the.

00:34:03 Speaker 1

Thank you.

00:34:04 Speaker 2

And so he was. He was peaceful enough and.

00:34:10 Speaker 2

It was just kind of boring. Got a couple of trips. Somebody needed transportation out to France. So another guy and I took that, and then we finally got a furlough. Christmas of 45.

00:34:22 Speaker 2

And we went to.

00:34:23 Speaker 2

London we have tickets to go to Glasgow and never got to Glasgow because we haven't such a good time in London.

00:34:27 Speaker 1

So.

00:34:30 Speaker 1

Love has probably never been the sun. That's right. It's had a great time there and so.

00:34:32 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:34:37 Speaker 1

So what was the day like? Say, for example in the?

00:34:41 Speaker 1

As an occupation force, so just ordinary military day, huh?

00:34:46 Speaker 2

That's right. You'd. You'd get up and you'd have breakfast, and then we'd have to go into the worked in the office there.

00:34:54 Speaker 2

And you'd have.

00:34:55 Speaker 2

A.

00:34:55 Speaker 2

Full day in the office and.

00:34:58 Speaker 1

Generally, you were free in the evenings to.

00:35:01 Speaker 2

Yeah, of course. There's no television or anything like that.

00:35:05 Speaker 2

At that time, there was radio you can hear, and they had some movies too that they would. We could go to.

00:35:13 Speaker 2

But.

00:35:15 Speaker 2

I don't. I don't know on weekends.

00:35:17 Speaker 2

What the heck we did? I just.

00:35:19 Speaker 2

Don't really remember.

00:35:21 Speaker 1

Well, of course, in the year of Transportation public Transportation, I'm assuming it would resume a little bit by then.

00:35:28 Speaker 1

Well, you know, here in the American military generally you don't have a car. You just in tough luck unless the unless you have a friend that has a, you know, transportation so.

00:35:39 Speaker 1

But I think probably they're in Europe.

00:35:42 Speaker 2

But I don't really remember going away from Engelstad.

00:35:46 Speaker 2

Like that, there's just we were just sort of stuck.

00:35:50 Speaker 2

Right there in that little town.

00:35:53 Speaker 2

It's interesting that after the war, the company I worked for Exxon built a big refinery in Engelstad, but I never got back.

00:36:00 Speaker 1

Nokia.

00:36:02 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:36:03 Speaker 1

I want to ask you about the Exxon part of it here later on, but.

00:36:05

OK.

00:36:08 Speaker 1

Let's talk just a little bit about some other aspects, perhaps that.

00:36:14 Speaker 1

People viewing this in the future might be interested in. I know in civil war research, I'm really interested in.

00:36:20 Speaker 1

So the basic facts of soldier life, you know?

00:36:23 Speaker 2

Uh-huh.

00:36:24 Speaker 1

I just stay in touch with your family. I remember as a kid, my dad being in the Navy and I say the male, they called it, you know, victory male. Do you remember anything like that?

00:36:35 Speaker 2

Well, that must have been what it was when we got overseas, they would actually photograph it.

00:36:44 Speaker 2

And and and.

00:36:44 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:36:45 Speaker 2

And then when they got over here, they enlarge it and print it out.

00:36:51 Speaker 2

I guess that was it e-mail, right? Everything had to be censored, of course.

00:36:54

Yeah.

00:36:55 Speaker 1

Sense to make sure that you weren't divulging some important military information.

00:37:02

Yeah.

00:37:03 Speaker 1

And that's what I remember. I remember these little letters. They were photographing copies. And like you say, what the deal was, is if they would make photographs of the letter.

00:37:16 Speaker 1

And.

00:37:17 Speaker 2

Like the, it's like the microfilms they use in the libraries now.

00:37:17 Speaker 1

Miniaturize.

00:37:21 Speaker 1

And then when it arrived, it would be blown up and then sent on to the proper destination, right?

00:37:29 Speaker 2

I think it must have been free. I don't.

00:37:30 Speaker 2

Think there was?

00:37:31 Speaker 2

Any stamps or anything?

00:37:31 Speaker 2

Probably.

00:37:34 Speaker 2

And that's just when we were overseas, when we were here in the States, I think you.

00:37:39 Speaker 2

It still was free, but you just write it. Write the regular letters.

00:37:44 Speaker 1

I think so. Was mail pretty good? Mail service fairly busy.

00:37:48 Speaker 2

No, I didn't have any real complaints about it. I mean, what we're actually in combat.

00:37:54 Speaker 1

That's different.

00:37:54 Speaker 2

There's different.

00:37:56 Speaker 1

Well, you know, most soldiers, you know, you read about soldiers experiences in prior war is one of the things they always complained about. Why aren't you writing? You know, maybe they were writing and it just wasn't never getting it.

00:38:07

Sure.

00:38:08 Speaker 2

Came in bunches.

00:38:10 Speaker 1

How about the food? I know when you're in the field, I guess you were like any troops in the wartime. You're in the field. Back in that area was key rash and sea, right?

00:38:21 Speaker 1

How are those things? I had a some experience with that during my military experience in the 50s, but I remember not being so bad.

00:38:30 Speaker 2

They weren't too bad at.

00:38:33 Speaker 2

Kept it from being hungry and.

00:38:37 Speaker 2

I you know, the coffee tasted pretty good. I'd never drink coffee. I don't think before then, but the coffee would keep you awake. And there's a way to, you know, keep get it hot. I don't know what? It wasn't something you could burn.

00:38:49 Speaker 1

Well, yeah, I'm trying to remember exactly what that was. To me, it seemed to me like he.

00:38:54 Speaker 1

Was a kind of.

00:38:56 Speaker 1

What they call it, Sterno, maybe?

00:38:57 Speaker 2

Just turn here.

00:38:58 Speaker 2

Could be that you could teach, yeah.

00:39:00 Speaker 1

And you didn't lift that?

00:39:02 Speaker 1

And you put it in your canteen cup.

00:39:05 Speaker 1

And you heat it over the canteen. Cut, or rather over the the stern over fire, as I recall. And then I guess once you.

00:39:10 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's what you did, yeah.

00:39:14 Speaker 1

Or out of the field and again your occupation. Do you get a regular company kitchen? Probably. Right. Something similar to.

00:39:21 Speaker 2

Yeah, sure. Yeah, right.

00:39:22 Speaker 1

That.

00:39:23 Speaker 1

He was set up in breakfast, dinner and supper and not any opportunity for in between meals snack.

00:39:34 Speaker 2

No, not really.

00:39:37 Speaker 2

I guess there was.

00:39:39 Speaker 2

I don't know. Later during occupation, it must have been something like a PX. You know where? If you wanted to go buy some candy or something, you could, but.

00:39:47 Speaker 1

Yeah. Those metals were open a couple of hours, maybe at the most hour.

00:39:51 Speaker 1

And a half.

00:39:51 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:39:52 Speaker 1

And then they had to close up clean.

00:39:55 Speaker 1

Up.

00:39:56 Speaker 1

Two up for the next meal and that was seven days.

00:39:58 Speaker 1

A week so.

00:40:00 Speaker 1

I know that they weren't open to the public. I mean, you know, you didn't go back over there for peanut butter sandwich.

00:40:03 Speaker 2

No way.

00:40:07 Speaker 1

Did you in your experience where the supply is plentiful and plenty of ammunition, did you have?

00:40:15 Speaker 1

Clothing replacements, things like that.

00:40:18 Speaker 2

Yeah, I don't remember any real problems that way.

00:40:22 Speaker 2

One point you know they tell the story about patent going so fast that he was running out of gasoline, but.

00:40:29 Speaker 2

We never, we always had plenty of.

00:40:32 Speaker 1

You never were short of anything that you really needed them.

00:40:35 Speaker 2

Not to remember? No and the.

00:40:38 Speaker 2

Clothing you didn't.

00:40:39 Speaker 2

You didn't get all that often, but.

00:40:42 Speaker 2

They would turn it in and you get some clean.

00:40:46 Speaker 1

Well, you know, for a long time, Normandy.

00:40:49 Speaker 1

The Normandy beach head was a supply dump because the shore board had been destroyed and you know they were not, weren't yet in possession of the harbor and some of those other Calais and when.

00:41:01 Speaker 2

They.

00:41:02 Speaker 1

Supply line was stretched over an awful long way that so-called Red Ball Express must have been one of the real success stories.

00:41:10 Speaker 1

And and as far as supply is concerned.

00:41:12 Speaker 2

I don't think so, no.

00:41:13 Speaker 1

And then eventually, no, after we moved on inland and we're able to establish other supply bases, if that helped a great deal on that. This question here is.

00:41:23 Speaker 1

Rather facetious. Did you feel any pressure or stress? I know when you're under under artillery fire, you might call that stressful.

00:41:30 Speaker 2

Sure do. Yeah. Another one on the food thought about that as you were, you know, fighting village to village sort of you come across a nice farmland, you'd sometimes help yourself to some chickens or something like that.

00:41:49 Speaker 2

So whatever you might find, yes.

00:41:50 Speaker 1

Her leg.

00:41:55 Speaker 1

Did you ever.

00:41:57 Speaker 1

You know, there were entertainers that visited from, you know, like Bob Hope and what have you.

00:42:02 Speaker 1

Did you ever.

00:42:03 Speaker 2

Never saw anybody like that.

00:42:05 Speaker 1

You never did see anything like any USO shows. There were lesser known.

00:42:08 Speaker 2

No, you never did. You just never got to our little town of Ingolstadt.

00:42:14 Speaker 1

Well, you know, there were never really that many involved in.

00:42:18

So.

00:42:19 Speaker 1

I rather suspect that the majority of the troops really never saw any of these USO entertainers because they just weren't that many.

00:42:26 Speaker 1

Of them, of.

00:42:26 Speaker 1

Course there were a lot of, you know, unknown entertainers that went around and that sort of thing, but.

00:42:32 Speaker 2

When we did get to London on that furlough, there was a big USO place where we went to dance, you know.

00:42:39 Speaker 2

And.

00:42:41 Speaker 2

That was that was.

00:42:42 Speaker 2

Nice. They may have met food there.

00:42:44 Speaker 2

I don't remember.

00:42:47 Speaker 1

What you think of your?

00:42:50 Speaker 1

Fellow soldiers, your officers and what have you. Were they generally pretty confident?

00:42:55 Speaker 1

Just like any other crowd of people, there's going to be some that are some that aren't, right.

00:42:59 Speaker 2

That's about the way it turned out most of.

00:43:01 Speaker 2

Them were really good.

00:43:04 Speaker 2

The one I remember, and he got lost and got us into the wrong place and the fire was too heavy, but.

00:43:11 Speaker 1

Was it like a platoon leader or something? OK.

00:43:13 Speaker 2

That was a Lieutenant.

00:43:15 Speaker 2

He just, you know.

00:43:16 Speaker 2

How many GPS like you do today? So he thought he was on this hill, but we were really.

00:43:21 Speaker 2

Over on that.

00:43:22 Speaker 1

Other hill and you came under heavy fire.

00:43:26 Speaker 2

Right.

00:43:28 Speaker 2

What?

00:43:29 Speaker 2

Mostly they were very good.

00:43:32 Speaker 1

Did you make any?

00:43:35 Speaker 1

And I think you've already actually answered this as far as friends and during the combat experience that you maintain contact with.

00:43:43 Speaker 2

There was one guy that was in when I was in the courts and boards and he he worked for me and I kept in contact with him a little after I came back to the.

00:43:54 Speaker 2

States.

00:43:55 Speaker 2

But.

00:43:57 Speaker 2

We moved to different cities and just sort of lost.

00:43:59 Speaker 2

Contact.

00:44:01 Speaker 1

Yeah, that's sort of happened.

00:44:03 Speaker 2

Did a trip to London and the furlough went with two guys and I knew them pretty well and all and I didn't hear from them for years and years.

00:44:14 Speaker 2

But two years ago.

00:44:16 Speaker 2

One of them called me up and he had just gotten a computer and gone on the net on the net and looked for my name and he found me. And then he told me where this other guy was.

00:44:28 Speaker 2

And talk to him. It's interesting as to what they've done over the years.

00:44:30 Speaker 1

I bet that was that was kind of interesting money.

00:44:34 Speaker 1

Sort of a pleasant surprise, I would think.

00:44:36 Speaker 2

You know, but they're like guys.

00:44:37 Speaker 2

I'll never look them up.

00:44:38 Speaker 2

There one in Ohio and 1:00.

00:44:40 Speaker 2

In Tennessee or something.

00:44:42 Speaker 1

Yeah, I know how that goes, believe me. Uh.

00:44:47 Speaker 1

Your call when your service ended. What happened? I guess the.

00:44:51 Speaker 2

Well, time I got enough points and we rode the trains out and then rode all those liberty ships that you're talking about, the North Atlantic. The man there was some trip and those those things Bob like corks.

00:44:51 Speaker 1

You came back to school.

00:45:04 Speaker 1

Where'd you embark yet? More not Markley, but maybe Calais or somewhere lahar, perhaps you remembered?

00:45:11 Speaker 2

It was near Laharpe and this.

00:45:15 Speaker 2

The camp up on the hill.

00:45:17 Speaker 2

There near there, where we was.

00:45:18 Speaker 1

Camp Lucky strike lady.

00:45:20 Speaker 2

Like that? Yeah. I think that was it.

00:45:22 Speaker 1

And a lot of guys went to Camp Lucky strike before being repatriated to the United States, so I mentioned that was a joy to reach.

00:45:29 Speaker 2

That was.

00:45:31 Speaker 2

That and then we had that trip on.

00:45:31 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:45:35 Speaker 2

The.

00:45:36 Speaker 1

Liberty ship and and, you know North Atlantic.

00:45:37 Speaker 2

Right.

00:45:39 Speaker 1

Can be really, really rough in the Liberty ship for.

00:45:43 Speaker 1

Not designed for smooth smooth riding where you see sick.

00:45:48 Speaker 2

I never got seasick, but I came pretty close to it, so I rode up on the deck most of the.

00:45:54 Speaker 1

So where did you go? What your where did you first of all, where did you debark in the United States?

00:46:00 Speaker 2

Oh well, it must have been Staten Island again. Yeah. And then we went out to.

00:46:02 Speaker 1

Back.

00:46:06 Speaker 2

Ohh there's New Jersey.

00:46:09 Speaker 2

Maybe 4 *****, Fort Dix, ray. And then then we went out to Camp Atterbury in Indiana, where I was actually discharged.

00:46:17 Speaker 1

You're discharged at out in Indiana. Was there a bunch of? Well, you had a whole shipload of guys.

00:46:19

Yeah.

00:46:22 Speaker 1

There.

00:46:23 Speaker 2

They're from all over the.

00:46:24 Speaker 1

Country and that that ship load? They weren't just 80s entry to be there every unit to imagine.

00:46:29 Speaker 2

Everywhere.

00:46:31 Speaker 2

All right.

00:46:33 Speaker 1

Were there any prisoners of war, former prisoners of war on the ship that you?

00:46:37 Speaker 2

Remember not that I know.

00:46:39 Speaker 1

I know a lot of them ended.

00:46:40 Speaker 1

Up there, also at Camp Lucky strike and.

00:46:42

Uh-huh.

00:46:45 Speaker 1

From which they were repatriated back the United States.

00:46:50 Speaker 1

What did you do for the?

00:46:52 Speaker 1

First few days, weeks, months after you got back home, you go to your parents home or what? And.

00:46:57 Speaker 2

Yes. Yeah.

00:46:59 Speaker 2

Went back to Louisville, where my mother lived and.

00:47:05 Speaker 2

So that was in May and I was, I don't know, it was rather boring around there. So I looked into going back to school. Yeah. So in June, I went back to summer school.

00:47:20 Speaker 1

That was where that Purdue fact.

00:47:21 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's pretty good, right?

00:47:24 Speaker 1

And what did you do? You stayed there until you.

00:47:26 Speaker 2

He graduated right in 47 because a lot of there were a lot of veterans back in.

00:47:33 Speaker 2

It was quite a different campus with the everybody had really grown up a lot.

00:47:40 Speaker 1

Was the GI Bill already in effect by then?

00:47:42 Speaker 2

Ohh yeah.

00:47:44 Speaker 1

Was that not really.

00:47:46 Speaker 1

A great thing that GI Bill.

00:47:48 Speaker 2

It was after I graduated from Purdue, it allowed me to go to MIT and they got my Masters degree on the GI Bill.

00:47:56 Speaker 1

With the GI Bill and was that in chemical engineering office at MIT?

00:47:59

Yeah.

00:48:03 Speaker 1

Well, I'll tell you what.

00:48:05 Speaker 2

GI Bill was really great.

00:48:07 Speaker 1

You know that sent an awful lot of people to higher education and led to some very productive careers. All of that.

00:48:18 Speaker 1

You know I.

00:48:19 Speaker 1

Think was a A well deserved reward for.

00:48:23 Speaker 1

You know service.

00:48:25 Speaker 1

That was performed during wartime.

00:48:29 Speaker 1

And I think it greatly benefited this nation and over time I was able to go on the.

00:48:35 Speaker 1

I ended up with a PhD through.

00:48:40 Speaker 1

Enlisted service during the Korean War period. I did not go to Korea. It was after the truth. But I had the GI Bill and that thing. I got an undergraduate degree and then sort of indirectly as a result of that math and then eventually PhD. That's a great program. So what happened?

00:49:00 Speaker 1

You, after you graduated from.

00:49:04 Speaker 1

What you tell us a little bit about your career after your graduation from MIT? Did you go right to MIT after?

00:49:14 Speaker 2

Well, I took a job down in Baton Rouge, LA with the old Esso. Actually it was.

00:49:22 Speaker 2

In research and development down there and.

00:49:27 Speaker 2

Right. And then I was transferred up to New Jersey after a few years and worked in New York and Rural Park, you know, out in Bay Way and Linden, NJ.

00:49:34

So.

00:49:45 Speaker 2

Have you OK.

00:49:48 Speaker 1

I'll talk to you about that after we finish this.

00:49:49 Speaker 2

All right, but they.

00:49:52 Speaker 2

So I worked there and then I went to New York.

00:49:58 Speaker 2

And was a general manager of a division that had, we were building plants and building in Brazil and Italy and all around then they transferred me back to head up to the research out in New Jersey. He can and I had laboratories several.

00:50:17 Speaker 2

Of them in Europe.

00:50:19 Speaker 2

And then 1973, they said, and your next job is going to be in Houston, TX, which you said we because we had never, we were in Westfield, NJ for 20 years and kids went all through high school and everything.

00:50:34 Speaker 1

You figured you were set there for the remainder.

00:50:37 Speaker 2

Well thought so.

00:50:39 Speaker 2

But we've never been unhappy to be down here. We're.

00:50:42 Speaker 1

So you came down here in 73, so you've been here about 30 years now?

00:50:48 Speaker 1

And you were probably right up there in the city Exxon building was completed about 1961 or so. So you.

00:50:56 Speaker 1

Is that where you were?

00:50:57 Speaker 2

Still actually having chemicals?

00:50:59 Speaker 2

So we just came down, we were out.

00:51:01 Speaker 2

On.

00:51:01 Speaker 2

The loop and then we eventually built the place out here on the Cane Freeway in Eldridge.

00:51:09 Speaker 1

Yeah, so rather Exxon.

00:51:11 Speaker 2

Right.

00:51:14 Speaker 1

So they also have something down at the bank down there, Potter. That's kind of chemical I believe.

00:51:18 Speaker 2

Oh, sure. That's the big manufacturing. And the research is down there for the plastics, yeah.

00:51:22 Speaker 1

Yeah, that's what it is. The Research Center down there. OK, but if you?

00:51:29 Speaker 1

So it's 73. You can, when did you retire?

00:51:33 Speaker 1

86, OK, so you've been retired something like 17 years now. Have you enjoyed your retirement?

00:51:38 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:51:41 Speaker 2

Sure. Have you know?

00:51:43 Speaker 2

Stay pretty busy, I'll tell you.

00:51:45 Speaker 2

Church work and.

00:51:47 Speaker 1

You remember this charity? Yes.

00:51:49 Speaker 2

Actually, this morning I was all work. We went out and served communion to a blind man who wanted to have communion at home and.

00:51:58 Speaker 1

Have you been alive?

00:52:01 Speaker 2

No. Just as we got married.

00:52:06 Speaker 2

Remember the Christian Church?

00:52:08 Speaker 2

Before that and.

00:52:12 Speaker 2

But.

00:52:13 Speaker 2

This has been a great church as they do a lot good things here in the community.

00:52:18 Speaker 2

And.

00:52:20 Speaker 1

You know, we have heard of this church before. We're a member of the Small Methodist Church up there in, but I was raised as a as a Presbyterian, so.

00:52:31 Speaker 1

So I still I told him when I joined the Methodist Church, I said this is going to be fine, but I'm still going to believe him.

00:52:37 Speaker 1

Free destination whether you like.

00:52:42 Speaker 1

But I know this is a big fine church here. So do you and your wife live nearby?

00:52:49 Speaker 2

Or yeah, we're about 5 minutes from here. Just.

00:52:55 Speaker 1

How many children did y'all have?

00:52:57 Speaker 2

Three kids, 8 grandchildren.

00:53:00 Speaker 1

What were the children, boys and girls 2?

00:53:02 Speaker 2

Boys and a girl.

00:53:04 Speaker 2

OK, they're all live up east.

00:53:06 Speaker 1

They're all back on the well, of course. That's.

00:53:08 Speaker 1

Where they went to school? That's right.

00:53:10 Speaker 2

And we go up for the summer to get.

00:53:13 Speaker 2

Out of Houston heat.

00:53:14 Speaker 1

Please spend the summer wonderful up there and on the Jersey Coast Jersey Shore itself.

00:53:16 Speaker 2

And we kept our place up at the beach.

00:53:21 Speaker 2

Jersey Shore?

00:53:22 Speaker 1

I don't know but.

00:53:25 Speaker 1

So.

00:53:27 Speaker 1

You've had a pretty interesting life.

00:53:28 Speaker 1

I would say.

00:53:28 Speaker 2

I sure have, yeah.

00:53:31 Speaker 2

And it's very interesting around here. I do work for something called the Executive Service Corps, which is we do free consulting for nonprofit organizations. And you'd be surprised how many nonprofits there are. There's thousands of them here in Houston.

00:53:45 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:53:46 Speaker 2

And.

00:53:50 Speaker 1

Yeah. Well, there's all kind of volunteer opportunities, aren't there? And they just, you know.

00:53:55 Speaker 2

Sure.

00:53:59 Speaker 1

Sort of aside, but what do you think about the Operation Iraqi Freedom? I don't know about you.

00:54:04 Speaker 1

But I've been.

00:54:04 Speaker 1

At and I've been at the front for the last three.

00:54:07 Speaker 1

Weeks.

00:54:08 Speaker 1

You know, constantly watching TV and the unfolding of that drama, it's it's certainly gone, I think with better than anyone expected.

00:54:19 Speaker 2

I expected him to have a lot more hand to hand, St. to street fighting, and they may run into some of it. Yeah, I think. But it's done very well.

00:54:28 Speaker 1

Which brings up a point I didn't ask you did, and y'all. Did you have any Street Street house house fighting of any significance?

00:54:35 Speaker 2

Not much. That one little village we went into that.

00:54:40 Speaker 1

Time y'all went pretty fast by then, and as you say, I think by that that time of the war you just bring in the.

00:54:41 Speaker 2

Then the assessment, yeah.

00:54:48 Speaker 1

Germans and level it, you know.

00:54:50 Speaker 2

If they if they give you a.

00:54:51 Speaker 2

Hard time, right?

00:54:52 Speaker 1

Just level it. That's not the way it worked back then.

00:54:57 Speaker 2

You could also you know, you go into these little towns that if they didn't give you a hard time and it was time to take a little rest while you could, you chase them down the owners down in the basement and you take over the nice feather beds and and upstairs and a little rest.

00:55:11 Speaker 1

I know about that. Yeah, well, you know, you were billeted there, and that's what happened. You moved in, the company would be assigned certain certain buildings and what have you and the whomever lived there, they could either stay or had to get out, you know, and that's sort of the way it worked. They started it.

00:55:28 Speaker 2

That's right. We didn't do him any harm, but they.

00:55:32 Speaker 1

They had to clear out so you could be billeted. I know that.

00:55:36 Speaker 1

Where we're just about to the end of this tape. Unfortunately, I of course could talk to you for hours here. It's always a fascinating story to talk to. Anyway, we'll do better, particularly an infantry soldier. Who was.

00:55:48 Speaker 1

Present on the ground, moving through the through the Siegfried Line, and let me just say then.

00:55:54 Speaker 1

In my exalted capacity of the volunteer interviewer for the Library of Congress, I'd like to extend my.

00:56:01 Speaker 1

Thanks for your taking time to do this one thing. And then on a personal note then I'm sure I would speak for everybody and stadium how greatly we appreciate your World War 2 service it was.

00:56:13 Speaker 2

They.

00:56:14 Speaker 1

Crusade is generalized and how it turned it, and it was one of the.

00:56:20 Speaker 1

Few times I think in history where that war was totally.

00:56:24 Speaker 1

Justified.

00:56:26 Speaker 1

And it was, uh.

00:56:28 Speaker 1

Good, confronting almost pure evil. And we were successful and.

00:56:36 Speaker 1

You, you and your comrades certainly played the the pivotal role in the in the winning of that victory so.

00:56:43 Speaker 1

To appreciate your time and coming over and.

00:56:47 Speaker 1

I might just add here I'm going to provide you with the.

00:56:51 Speaker 1

A VHS formatted copy of this interview. The original will go to the Library of Congress.

00:56:58 Speaker 1

And I will provide you a copy. I keep a copy.

00:57:02 Speaker 1

And the copies of the interviews I've conducted so far, getting rather voluminous. So I'm looking for someplace to donate it on, sort of favoring perhaps the.

00:57:12 Speaker 1

National D-Day Museum, which is over in New Orleans, established by the historian Stephen Ambrose here in recent years. I'm not sure yet, but I think that.

00:57:20 Speaker 1

Might.

00:57:21 Speaker 1

Be after some investigation might be the appropriate place to put the.

00:57:25 Speaker 1

So not only.

00:57:27 Speaker 1

Are.

00:57:30 Speaker 1

People in the future going to be able to see you at the Library of Congress if they should so desire, and maybe also with the National Media Museum or somewhere similarly appropriate. But thank you, Mr. Boston. I appreciate you being here.

00:57:43 Speaker 2

Really, I think you you're wonderful that you take your time to do this. And I think it's important to get these stories down. There's so many of them. I don't know who's going to take the time to listen to all of these in the future, but.

00:57:57 Speaker 1

Somebody will. I think you'll find, you know, as the time goes by.

00:58:03 Speaker 1

And historians rehashed the war and this and that, and the others, they're going to be this is just the sort of thing, you know, that's pure vein of gold for a.

00:58:12 Speaker 1

A military historian, research and maybe 100 and 4050 years from now or beyond.

00:58:17 Speaker 1

So thanks again. Thank you.