

Ed Bredbenner Interview #1

Company B, 318th Inf Reg

(Aug 2001, interviewed by COL(ret) Grant Porter) [VIDEO: 5m, 5s]

(MS Word Audio Transcript [NOT edited, just transcribed])

00:00:17 Speaker 1

Yeah. My name is Ed Bread better. And I born and lived in Ithaca all my life. I trained in Camp Wheeler, Georgia and.

00:00:25 Speaker 1

Early summer of 1944 and what was called Combat Intelligence. Now I was shipped overseas.

00:00:32 Speaker 1

And arrived after the Moselle. And when I joined the company, they handed me a bazooka and I'd never seen one before. And one of the guys sort of jokingly said, you know, you and like, bazooka man, we've had in 10 days and so forth. Well, I found out why. And there was assistant and so forth. I had to use it next day.

00:00:52 Speaker 1

But you know, we fought across France and so forth. But I think with all the many, all the many battles and everything.

00:01:00 Speaker 1

I think the key thing is what Bob had mentioned when we were sent into the Battle of the Bulge and we left sort of central.

00:01:11 Speaker 1

France, we were going to hit the SIG three line and we.

00:01:14 Speaker 1

Were on.

00:01:14 Speaker 1

Trucks. Coal. No blankets, no overcoats. And we were on those trucks a day and a half and never got off. They dumped rations on and gasoline on. And I remember we picked up a little guy and he filled the trunk. We picked him up.

00:01:29 Speaker 1

Upside down and he filled the trunk and we kept going. But it was so unusual going up there with the headlights on. You know, you wonder under.

00:01:38 Speaker 1

Tight control, no smoking nothing. And MP's on every crossroad and so forth. But any we got up there and I was put on an outpost and so forth and on the 22nd we attacked into elbrook and we fought there 2 1/2 days and we attacked. They attacked and we lost many men. We lost every automatic weapon.

00:01:58 Speaker 1

Was was gone the first day there in Middlebrook. Luckily they brought up ammo and so forth and.

00:02:04 Speaker 1

We lost our battalion commander and I think all the officers and a good share of the of the, of the sergeants and so forth. And then Christmas Eve were again put on these coal trucks and we were headed for what was the bastone attached to the 4th Armored Division.

00:02:25 Speaker 1

And we got up there in the morning of the 25th. We attacked and immediately when we attacked, we got off trucks and we hadn't gone. We stood around and some of them were smoking. They brought up a cold, hot.

00:02:36 Speaker 1

Breakfast and so forth.

00:02:38 Speaker 1

And and we started and we didn't go.

00:02:41 Speaker 1

100 feet.

00:02:43 Speaker 1

And the machine guns opened up on US neighbor and Fox was right there. Why? They never shot us while we were in the trucks, I don't know. But we attacked and attacked the moving forward all the time.

00:02:56 Speaker 1

And the snow was was knee to waist deep.

00:03:00 Speaker 1

And the the bitter part of it was we had no blankets, no overcoats. There were no.

00:03:07 Speaker 1

There were no buildings, no fires and.

00:03:13 Speaker 1

As we attacked, we were losing more and more men all the time. If you were wounded, we were told the medics could not get through. So if you either you hiked out or you froze to death, it was very simple and I was hit about 1:00 in the afternoon.

00:03:32 Speaker 1

Pretty severely in the thigh and they patched me up and put some novocaine in my leg.

00:03:39 Speaker 1

And I was sent back. Three of us went back. One man hit his heel shot off, the other one hit in the back, and I was in the thigh. And none of us were bleeding. It was so cold and so miserable, another bleeding, and we hiked back there and finally got to.

00:03:51 Speaker 1

The.

00:03:51 Speaker 1

8 Station they got to the 8th station. They patched me up. They put us on an airplane Christmas night.

00:03:58 Speaker 1

And we were headed for England and the guy said, well, probably you're going to head for the states well.

00:04:04 Speaker 1

We got up about 500 feet. The German fighters brought the plane down, we landed and pulled the bodies off. Basically, the the whole pilot was killed. One of the nurses and some of the guys. And then I sat in a chair like this and the medic gave me 7 shots. And over came and opened my leg up right to.

00:04:23 Speaker 1

The bone and.

00:04:24 Speaker 1

So forth.

00:04:25 Speaker 1

And then they sent me down to Commercy France. But I think the key thing of that was.

00:04:31 Speaker 1

That the miserable conditions we started out in Edelbrock on the 22nd with 220 men.

00:04:39 Speaker 1

In the seven days later, when we were relieved by the 36th Division, I wasn't there. 20 men were left in our company. We had over 90% casualties on that attack and so forth. And I think basically there were many other times as we moved into Germany, I was out for 2 1/2 months, came back in again and probably too soon.

00:04:59 Speaker 1

But they needed bodies, so they set this back in there.