

Lou Engelke Interview #2

MP Platoon, 80th Division

(Aug 2001, interviewed by COL(ret) Grant Porter)

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

00:00:16 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:00:18 Speaker 2

I watch for Letterman columns there after, and I was concerned this they were such a great chance taken without all these other shelves dropping around, all the engineers and every man, and then nobody got hit, thank God.

00:00:36 Speaker 2

He didn't mention the the donation or or he just said he really witnessed a demonstration attack on the pill box or.

00:00:43

The.

00:00:48

Something.

00:00:49 Speaker 2

Philosophers we're disappointed in.

00:01:00 Speaker 3

If you have another subject you wanted to come.

00:01:02 Speaker 2

Yeah, I wanted to mention that MP's like on trains at the time we, you know, we didn't get much, we didn't have air travel for routine people and they did a great job. Even though it was.

00:01:16 Speaker 2

People thought that was chicken and checking on passes and all that because of been chaotic without having that kind of. And I think it it carried over was very comfortable because we we had people I think they liked our MP's and they would chat with them. They want anything.

00:01:36 Speaker 2

Bad like Nashville that the town and page would beat the devil item with clubs and and, but he didn't allow that.

00:01:48

We.

00:01:49 Speaker 2

Went there. We we went in the beginning and once the division started.

00:01:57 Speaker 2

We were they they wanted to head off the brand, the General Bradley was afraid the Germans were going to close in over the 3rd Army and get it and create another Dunkirk.

00:02:10 Speaker 2

And so it worked out and the 30th Division did a great job. And then the our tell me and I think the whole so much of the the the yellow is the P40 sevens and the typhoons they we have it on the German troops in there and we were.

00:02:30

Uh.

00:02:32 Speaker 2

We were really going to head into the second s s 100 division. That's right. Division, which has been infamous in certain ways of of executing free French and they were retaliating really against sabotage.

00:02:52 Speaker 2

Because they they had orders to move north. And anyway, that's another story. But this was real Indian country. We didn't have to do much there, but all in the 35.

00:03:05 Speaker 2

With them and the other divisions. But when we were sent to southeast to protect the highway, that area, and there were a lot of Germans who were sent by von ***** and Field Marshall and the West.

00:03:25 Speaker 2

To go back towards Germany and try to get with their own units, they will be to return to the units. This is really Indian country that has sporadic firing.

00:03:39 Speaker 2

And s s troops cross the while somewhere, Vermont. And anyway at the we didn't know, the 318th went ahead.

00:03:53 Speaker 2

And we figured we moved all our traffic. I I primary duty was to move traffic and keep it moving. I was the chief of the traffic section. Like the assistant program Marshall. But we should want to keep the traffic moving. So I figured that all the 318th was in them by now. And so we got to little.

00:04:13 Speaker 2

Down and across rows this below, not sure.

00:04:17 Speaker 2

And there's the roads about a fire where roads went out of this village and the Frenchman was out on the road and waving the knee. He's haunting with his barrage brush brush to go back. And we started that another really and holler again. Go back to the other one. Don't go back. We came from.

00:04:37 Speaker 2

We're down down the road and so I missed that, see. And then there was a assistant division engineer, William Captain William Salzman.

00:04:49 Speaker 2

And Selznick was a expert on demining things and all like that, especially the blows, any kind of explosive work.

00:04:58 Speaker 2

And he and later I talked to him during the past year and he he's been shot on that same Rd. I was going to go down and he said to me he he spotted the ambush, but he's too late. When he came through, he said that there was a built up wood pile there. And he told his driver.

00:05:18 Speaker 2

Picture.

00:05:19 Speaker 2

So the driver ditched the the vehicle and it broke it up, say, and sells it. And his sellers got shot through the shoulder and then the his He and his driver, he was a little better 5 foot 5 or something like that. And he ran and got out of there. His driving.

00:05:39 Speaker 2

Game 2.

00:05:41 Speaker 2

And so the somebody figured that German officer shot him. But they'll always say they had to think completely. The sales need later. Well, I found out from IP not many people in the units with no life.

00:06:00 Speaker 2

That's interrogation of prisoners of war.

00:06:03 Speaker 2

And we had a captain lower ship from New York area and that the guys were almost all Jewish people would come from this from Germany and they were so fluent in the language and they they really could get a lot out of the German prisoners.

00:06:22 Speaker 2

And so that's what reason it's very bad business to shoot prisoners because you get a lot more out of a live 1 than a dead one. And then it goes back to the enemy. They find out about that you get the same.

00:06:37 Speaker 2

But anyway, there's one guy was a Polish fellow. They got in there and he said that the mission he was under German art and that he would. He said that the mission was to get a Jeep, get a Jeep and get back so they could.

00:06:56 Speaker 2

They had about a battalion heading out in this wood and here go let all this stuff advise going down toward towards the mines.

00:07:06 Speaker 2

And so Selznick tells me that he went along with his wounds and he got he hits the rides and he ended up in the 28th Division, which was late distance back. And he said that he figured this fella.

00:07:26 Speaker 2

Had too much to drink and he swore him down. He was a total, he thought sells. It was a German prison. So he's a Jewish man.

00:07:35 Speaker 2

And anyway, he he a lot of great Jewish soldiers. I know it's, you know, in the American army, but it's just having a Jewish man. But he couldn't convince this guy. And finally he he was getting mad that this guy was kind of threatening to shoot him.

00:07:39 Speaker 2

Right.

00:07:56 Speaker 2

And he was hiding with the seller. And he said let me see your officer commanding officer. That seemed to work better with the Germans and would with with people and.

00:08:09 Speaker 2

So the guy came and talked to him and they say, oh, you want to see my, you want to say General War, General Warden and the assistant division commander, the Agent division and he left. And he did so good in the other ninth division that he got the command of the 28th.

00:08:28 Speaker 2

The patient that was the day you got command of the patient. Well, Selznick when he was glad to see Selznick, he likes Selznick very much. And Selznick he said I'll give you my Jeep to go back to you.

00:08:30

Yes.

00:08:45 Speaker 2

And so that day. So he didn't know this until I talked to him. The General Martin was killed by a sniper. He we had a general who came to the Marines originally, and he was shot by a TI and on the.

00:09:05 Speaker 2

Arizona maneuvers. I walked up the firing into right into they had to pop up targets and he came up and then he got it and shot in the head and through about.

00:09:14

OK.

00:09:15 Speaker 2

Five days.

00:09:17 Speaker 2

Then we also lost a general survey.

00:09:22 Speaker 2

He was artillery general.

00:09:25 Speaker 3

And where did these take place? Where? Where did were they killed?

00:09:30 Speaker 2

One of them, and that's a maneuver area. Arizona. Yeah. The Camp Laguna area. Yeah. And then Wharton was in.

00:09:33 Speaker 1

In.

00:09:34 Speaker 1

That was worse.

00:09:43 Speaker 2

Just about where the Normandy Peninsula declines. The mainland in that area, that's when he, the other general, understand lost his position and they put Wharton in charge. There was 28.

00:09:58 Speaker 2

That anyway.

00:10:00 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:10:03 Speaker 2

They had a went back to pick up my MP's. We had, we've had our MP's in peace rather than have them in a in a weapons carrier like that, most of them any of my weapons carrying. But we had ours, all mobile and I think we had a faster moving deal and.

00:10:23 Speaker 2

So I.

00:10:24 Speaker 2

Couldn't find one guy on his post. Where is he? And that the French people have told him to hide. Get back in this door and hide. There were Germans in the area. And so the guy. I didn't believe it. And and that's when the poll the poll had been watching him say polling.

00:10:45 Speaker 2

And so then there was a the the woman came up all excited and she said there was a spy in this town, and he was a very.

00:10:58 Speaker 2

And I've got to look like a racetrack character, you know, gambling or something. I think it was a Spaniard. And so the French policeman, there was a French John dorm in the town. So he ran down the list and he put his finger on. He didn't want to say too much.

00:11:18 Speaker 2

He said he gave me the name and they they the lady, told her he was. We went up.

00:11:23 Speaker 2

Theirs and this guy you're trying to get away from us. Really. You're very arrogant. He spoke about 5 languages and he was mad because we couldn't speak in French or Spanish or anything else. And so he's trying to get away. So I I jammed the car being right in his gut and I could.

00:11:43 Speaker 2

Put his backbone there, but he had moved once just like that. He even had it. Had it right there. So we took him down and he had a a, a gorgeous blonde woman with him, you know.

00:11:55 Speaker 2

She looked like kind of a casino type, you know? So we put him on the Jeep. They were cold as the devil and and kept going. We went to the rear and then to the South. We knew the 1st Division was up in the main in the area they went S that they said that the policeman said to take them.

00:12:16 Speaker 2

Now they had at best.

00:12:20 Speaker 2

And we turned over to the to that station. There they had a the free French running it, you know. And so then we came back. And that night I ran into the situation right out of time and the very getting late.

00:12:40 Speaker 2

And by the driver came running, we just fall asleep, wake up, Rosanna, run for your life and you run. And I started running down the hill from as far away from was following him. And just about that time, a bed check Curry came up.

00:12:56 Speaker 2

He was driving and he may have had a martyr around or something like that, but he dropped it right on.

00:13:02 Speaker 2

The.

00:13:02 Speaker 2

Road junction there and I ran into one of my classmates from the bedding at this outfit. He was, I think the S2 of the 318 there. That was like kind of a scary waking up.

00:13:18 Speaker 2

And run at top speed, kind of like in a swimming break. She's just about as exhausted. You know, we had another face up, but.

00:13:33 Speaker 2

Race, I think, called Sam Genito, but right on the road to go north to down the lane and toward the origin town.

00:13:44 Speaker 3

About what time was this? This was.

00:13:46 Speaker 2

About 13, remember the 13th was Sunday 13th and August, August 13th, and the town of San. I guess that's John Genito. And then the next town is Belane.

00:13:51 Speaker 1

Of.

00:14:01 Speaker 2

And right up above that is where the French 2nd Army general didn't follow patents instructions. So somebody some core commander and got this division talented and it would big forest there. They were one tank after another would not.

00:14:21 Speaker 2

Now I remember one guys arm it just looked like Arman, Hamlet's arm was knocked out, and it just on the on the road out there. So but they they had a 88 had been lined up direct hit, each one just picked all one.

00:14:43 Speaker 2

But there was a sometimes the French would be very much against this, sometime very much for us. As I tell you about that one guy, because if he had gotten captured.

00:14:54 Speaker 2

Dennis Delaney, who passed on recently Signal Officer, said he talked to one of them and they told me about it. He told him about a a guy who had been blow carts on the face that was a treat. That assess gave him when he was caught in some, well, this guy was ready to take off.

00:15:15 Speaker 2

And we we, you know, we were signed up bumper to bumper and then we'll be ready to take off. The Frenchman came punch me young kid about 18 years old. He had all these markers on this. You know that marking what do they call it anyway I got on the arm.

00:15:34 Speaker 2

And so.

00:15:38 Speaker 2

He was part in that book we had in English, French and Don and Jay up, saying Don Jay and he pointed.

00:15:45 Speaker 2

And said danger.

00:15:46 Speaker 2

And I said, what are you talking about? He pointed to a kid about 5 or 6 years old. Don Jay spy, you know? And so I went over and picked the kid up.

00:15:56 Speaker 2

And his daddy came. I think he was an Oxford trained man, been friend to Oxford and all. And so then the Frenchman said he's indicated he's a spy. And so we took to a.

00:16:14 Speaker 2

Daddy and the kid down to the next town to Civil affairs office. I thought he had helped, but he didn't. He didn't let me pull my heels and he didn't do anything. He let the guy.

00:16:29 Speaker 2

Go.

00:16:30 Speaker 2

And then a little later.

00:16:34 Speaker 2

The column got lambasted on the way the 317th at the lane. See, but he probably someone said he got on the radio right away and told him what it were. But the model that was is to to send them to the CIC.

00:16:51 Speaker 2

Don't handle the civil affairs. Counterintelligence gone. Yeah, they would be the ones that handled that. We just took them the wrong place and wasted time.

00:16:55 Speaker 3

For.

00:17:01 Speaker 4

So it sounds like as an MP, your experiences are different from the other gentleman that we've heard from. Can you briefly summarize that?

00:17:07 Speaker 2

Yeah, we would go. We would go.

00:17:12 Speaker 4

Can you briefly summarize how your experience is different?

00:17:13 Speaker 2

Yeah, we would. We would normally go to do the light artillery line, you know, and the only time we would be ahead of the infantry would be if we goofed off, like going out with an army division or we'd get them. We get ahead of them. We'll be with them.

00:17:32 Speaker 2

On a river crossing, say that we surely they got that river across the bridges put in, they MP, get on each end.

00:17:42 Speaker 1

And you guys can start that start that fridge. You guys would guard that bridge. Yeah. There's keep keep circulation, control, circulation.

00:17:42 Speaker 2

Is that without a partial? We had, Sir.

00:17:46 Speaker 2

Yeah, we regard that we would lose traffic. Yeah. Keep the traffic going. Yeah. Yeah, that was it.

00:17:55 Speaker 4

Appreciate we appreciate it. Thank you very much.

00:17:57 Speaker 1

Yeah, that's good. That's.

00:18:02 Speaker 2

I had a very lucky experience. Some of the guys told me that it reminded me of. It was.

00:18:12 Speaker 2

Going to Shalom Shalom salmon. That's a moron river. And he just took Shalon Simon. And we had a.

00:18:23 Speaker 3

About what time and time is the date?

00:18:26 Speaker 2

That was about.

00:18:28 Speaker 2

The 28th, 29th of August.

00:18:34 Speaker 2

And the, incidentally, the 80th the had a problem with it working with the armor with the seven O second tank attack with the attachment. And we weren't doing it right because at least the.

00:18:54 Speaker 2

Higher headquarters. You'd be surprised how much control a core has over division when anything goes wrong while they find out about it and come in quick. And so there were 4 tanks knocked out one after another, and I generally that ordered them through.

00:19:12 Speaker 2

This gate and so so the the commander of the company there was a captain. He fussed about it and then he got in a spat with gentleman pride. So general would cry. I guess he might have even cussed bride. We don't know.

00:19:33 Speaker 2

But McBride ordered him arrested quarters. But ain't no quarters there. They find his hand in the rear echelon. See for trying so.

00:19:44 Speaker 3

Well now this.

00:19:45 Speaker 3

Was a man from the other unit from the tank unit.

00:19:48 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

00:19:51 Speaker 3

And the 80th Division was trying to move through and they said.

00:19:54 Speaker 2

You know, they they they're trying. McBride was getting the the fight going say they had bad luck there. They had the the the regimental S2.

00:19:55 Speaker 3

Said that were fair areas.

00:20:07 Speaker 2

Major Morris and as another Lieutenant Colonel, and I think he was a District Attorney before he came into the service.

00:20:17 Speaker 2

He's he died of. He was shot, mortally wounded so that they lost a lot right in the beginning of the leadership. And then here McBride came and he sent these guys through this gate.

00:20:33 Speaker 2

And where the moral of that story was and provided and insisted on being redressed to.

00:20:43 Speaker 2

A. It was a court Marshall, so, Colonel Bill. Bill Miller was here at these conventions up to about a year ago. I passed on. They told me that the, the they they found, they satisfied the court Marshall. Satisfied both of them.

00:21:02 Speaker 2

The man shouldn't have responded that way to a higher officer.

00:21:09 Speaker 2

And on the other hand, he was protecting government profit from few to other losses, so they assigned him.

00:21:18 Speaker 2

To.

00:21:18 Speaker 2

A normal division and McBride got his apologies.

00:21:26 Speaker 3

Well, I wonder if this is the same incident. This is the 318th movement. It's way through the 90th Division ranks. It's at the incident that took place since that they were not welcomed by their comrades. Officers from the.

00:21:34 Speaker 2

We try.

00:21:38 Speaker 2

No, that was when they, the 19th was moving ahead. They were going to sham walk shampoo.

00:21:45 Speaker 2

Place they would meet the poles there from the north, the.

00:21:51 Speaker 2

The British had the police and the police to Army Division.

00:21:57 Speaker 2

And then the the the 80th lost the argument. Colonel McHugh was a three 18th commander. So we came back to an area that kind of was supposed to be cleaned out. You know, that sort of thing and then waited a few days.

00:22:21

Hello.

00:22:21 Speaker 2

Then, if it would make the other one I think would be about the 16th or 18th of August.

00:22:29 Speaker 2

Than this other one.

00:22:31 Speaker 2

Lindell was the Colonel. Lieutenant Colonel was.

00:22:34 Speaker 2

Killed Lindell Lindell.

00:22:36

OK.

00:22:37 Speaker 2

They lost their the battalion commander and then the.

00:22:45 Speaker 2

They're also killed right off the bat. Was the commander of the.

00:22:52 Speaker 2

Tank destroyer battalion.

00:22:55 Speaker 2

It's in there, but it was killed by an 88 hitter CP.

00:23:01 Speaker 2

And then.

00:23:04 Speaker 2

Somebody there?

00:23:08 Speaker 2

We lost a lot of high rankers right in there by the.

00:23:13 Speaker 2

Delayed some of the movements who but?

00:23:16 Speaker 2

How are the rooms supposed to be up there for the three men?

00:23:22 Speaker 1

You interviewed paused here.

00:23:24 Speaker 2

All right, that's OK. You know how to get back? Yeah. OK.

