

Charles Faulconer Interview

Company A, 319th Inf Reg

(From the 2017 Reunion, Richmond, VA. Interviewed by Rishi Sharma)

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

00:00:02 Speaker 1

What is your full name, Sir?

00:00:04 Speaker 2

Charles Olin Faulkner senior.

00:00:09 Speaker 1

Where and when were you born?

00:00:11 Speaker 2

Beg your pard.

00:00:12 Speaker 1

Where and when were you born?

00:00:14 Speaker 2

On I was born in March 22nd, 1926, in Monroe, VA.

00:00:19 Speaker 1

So how old are you right now?

00:00:21 Speaker 2

I'm 91.

00:00:23 Speaker 1

Do you feel like you're 91?

00:00:26 Speaker 2

Last few months I have because I've had a problem health problem, but other than that I'm still doing things that I did.

00:00:32 Speaker 2

It's cutting grass and keeping place up is a little hard, but I love it.

00:00:39 Speaker 1

Physically talk to me about what it's like to be 91.

00:00:44 Speaker 2

Well, someone asked me if I'm going to live to be a.

00:00:48 Speaker 2

I said no, I'm looking to be 92 my next year, so I don't look to be 100 and I've said that for years.

00:00:56 Speaker 2

I was 70. I said the same thing. If I was 70, I want to be 72.

00:01:02 Speaker 1

What branch of the military were you in during?

00:01:05 Speaker 2

I was in the army and it was I was in the infantry.

00:01:09 Speaker 1

What division, Regiment and company were you in?

00:01:11 Speaker 2

OK, I started out. I was drafted. And is that?

00:01:15 Speaker 2

I'll put it drafted in the World War 2 and they I went to basic training at Fort McClellan AL and I took.

00:01:25 Speaker 2

17 weeks of irtc training.

00:01:28 Speaker 2

That is infantry REPL.

00:01:30 Speaker 2

Placement training and I knew that that when I got through my training I was going straight to the front lines because we had guys that wounded.

00:01:42 Speaker 2

Trained us for.

00:01:43 Speaker 2

When you supposed to know what it was to be going to the front lines, and that's what they did with me.

00:01:50 Speaker 2

And I finished my basic training and they sent me.

00:01:55 Speaker 2

Home and they gave me 3 day delay in route but they wouldn't let me stay till Christmas Day and then I went to Boston, MA and we got a convoy on boats.

00:02:08 Speaker 2

And I was seasick until we arrived in Frank Lahave, France.

00:02:13 Speaker 2

I was headed to go, so I went to.

00:02:15 Speaker 2

They sent for me from Lahore, France, by boxcar to Metz, France. And that's where where they gave issue.

00:02:22 Speaker 2

A rifle.

00:02:24 Speaker 2

We they were.

00:02:25 Speaker 2

We had to clean the rifles up and we we took and he gave us.

00:02:33 Speaker 2

Go to the.

00:02:34 Speaker 2

So they took me from Metz, France and cabinet to to to my division and I was a company a three 19th infantry.

00:02:47 Speaker 2

Eightus division.

00:02:48 Speaker 1

And what was your specific role in company A?

00:02:52 Speaker 2

I was a.

00:02:53 Speaker 2

I was a Sander Rifleman.

00:02:55 Speaker 1

And what was the highest rank you achieved by the time you left the Armed Services?

00:02:59 Speaker 2

Pfc. A Pfc they get and Pfc rating they give you if you got a a good rating and everybody in a in a gets apfc after one year in the army if you don't have anything against you you make apfc.

00:03:17 Speaker 2

But if you got anything against you, you don't make apfc.

00:03:22 Speaker 1

You said.

00:03:23 Speaker 1

Were born in.

00:03:24 Speaker 1

Did you grow up in Monroe?

00:03:24 Speaker 2

Yes, yes.

00:03:26 Speaker 1

Talk to me about growing up in.

00:03:29 Speaker 1

As a kid.

00:03:30 Speaker 2

OK, my dad was a Carpenter, and times are tight. And when the wall broke broke out in World War 2 times, got good and did it got picked up his job.

00:03:42 Speaker 2

Worked.

00:03:43 Speaker 2

You can't penalize. That's where soldiers trained and that was about 60 miles from home. Times got better.

00:03:49 Speaker 2

And then so many men were drafted all the.

00:03:53 Speaker 2

Could could really work and make a few bucks and not a whole lot, but I got my driver's license when I was 14 and I start taking up orders when I was about 10 years with these stores is five stores in Monroe, VA, and that was a.

00:04:05 Speaker 2

Railroad center. Then at that time.

00:04:08 Speaker 2

And the railroad man. Most of them were younger people because the others got drafted.

00:04:13 Speaker 2

But I loved.

00:04:15 Speaker 2

I cut papers and I drove pickup.

00:04:17 Speaker 2

I took orders of work from the store and I took the civil service and I got a postmaster job.

00:04:23 Speaker 1

Talk to me about the struggles your family faced during the Great Depression.

00:04:31 Speaker 2

I was.

00:04:32 Speaker 2

I was a little early for me, but.

00:04:37 Speaker 2

I had to take and take care of my clothes.

00:04:40 Speaker 2

I had to take a lunch and a bag. I had to bring a bag back back home each day, and mom and dad didn't have too much, but I helped.

00:04:50 Speaker 2

Pay work by when I was younger and I gave my mother dead money. And then when I went in service I made.

00:04:59 Speaker 2

Paid 1750.

00:05:02 Speaker 2

Yeah, 1750 out of my.

00:05:04 Speaker 2

\$50 check and then they got my mother got \$50.00 a month while I was in the army.

00:05:12 Speaker 1

Were there any specific instances, things that you saw around you that made you realize that the times were tough?

00:05:23 Speaker 2

Not not in my play.

00:05:26 Speaker 2

In play play.

00:05:26 Speaker 1

Did you ever go hungry?

00:05:28 Speaker 2

Hello.

00:05:30 Speaker 2

My.

00:05:31 Speaker 2

My mother was the same too. She worked.

00:05:35 Speaker 2

In.

00:05:37 Speaker 2

Clothes for.

00:05:37 Speaker 2

And she had a little income that way.

00:05:40 Speaker 2

Dad was a Carpenter and at one time I didn't build houses.

00:05:43 Speaker 2

That's what it's tight times were in winter time.

00:05:46 Speaker 1

Did you have any brothers or sisters?

00:05:48 Speaker 2

Yeah, I had.

00:05:49 Speaker 2

I was five of us.

00:05:51 Speaker 2

I had two sisters older than I and I had two brothers younger than.

00:05:55 Speaker 1

So you were the only one who saw combat.

00:05:57 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:05:59 Speaker 1

How did you hear about the attack on Pearl Harbor?

00:06:04 Speaker 2

It.

00:06:05 Speaker 2

It was big news.

00:06:09 Speaker 2

At home, the guys start volunteer for the service said.

00:06:13 Speaker 2

I mean, that's the way it affected and it didn't bother me too much because I was pretty busy at the time.

00:06:19 Speaker 2

I selling papers carried a paper route to what have you.

00:06:23 Speaker 2

Had always had something to do.

00:06:25 Speaker 1

But how did you hear about the attack?

00:06:30 Speaker 2

The first time I heard about it was a service station there and this guy told me about that I remember.

00:06:39 Speaker 2

When I was going around and I didn't even know big to do for me then you know I didn't.

00:06:43 Speaker 2

It wasn't like it happened.

00:06:45 Speaker 2

I was younger and it wasn't high school. I went to Madison, Madison Heights High School.

00:06:48 Speaker 1

What high school did you go to?

00:06:54 Speaker 2

Mass heights, Virginia.

00:06:57 Speaker 2

The wall was getting tight and I didn't get.

00:06:59 Speaker 2

Vowed to quit and volunteered for the Navy because I knew there was going to draft me.

00:07:03 Speaker 2

At what time if you behind in school, they would draft you right out of high school if you was behind you know your age because of high school.

00:07:13 Speaker 2

So I was close.

00:07:15 Speaker 2

And so I quit ballet it for the Navy, and they turned me down.

00:07:18 Speaker 2

Then they I worked and they they drafted me.

00:07:22 Speaker 1

Why?

00:07:23 Speaker 2

They I think in my opinion it takes about a lady years.

00:07:30 Speaker 2

It was so many kids like me volunteer for the Navy that they just didn't have a paperwork to do it because I I did everything to get in and they told me I was drinking a lot of cocolas I was working in the coca colas was my favor.

00:07:43 Speaker 2

And I had.

00:07:45 Speaker 2

Sugar in my in my urine or whatever they said get 2 Doctor slips and bring them back and and I got the doctor slip and said it's OK and they still didn't take me.

00:07:57 Speaker 1

Did you go steady with anyone when you were a teenager? Go steady.

00:08:00 Speaker 2

Daddy. What?

00:08:04 Speaker 2

You mean vet Dayton?

00:08:05 Speaker 2

Not not exactly. We all.

00:08:08 Speaker 2

Were all buddies.

00:08:09 Speaker 2

My daddy, I got a driver's license when I was 14 and we were all buddies and we had basketball games. And at that time.

00:08:19 Speaker 2

Gas was rationed and I learned how to drive early, and I would put put kerosene and stretch. The gas was drafted and the cars were miss, but we we we had a ball.

00:08:35 Speaker 1

When you were a teenager, what kind of mischief did you get into with your buddies?

00:08:43 Speaker 2

Say that I have a dear.

00:08:45 Speaker 1

What about on how?

00:08:46 Speaker 2

Let me put it this.

00:08:47 Speaker 2

My mother was real, sincere person. I had two.

00:08:50 Speaker 2

Who was younger than me and I was kind of had to look out for them and I knew I couldn't get in. No mischief. You know, I'm not saying I didn't do things right, but I don't remember.

00:09:02 Speaker 2

Fighting anything like that, I don't remember.

00:09:05 Speaker 1

What about Halloween?

00:09:08 Speaker 2

Oh, we I did like what they did.

00:09:11 Speaker 2

They throw things on top of people's houses and go. I didn't.

00:09:15 Speaker 2

Didn't get into that.

00:09:18 Speaker 2

Monroe was a.

00:09:19 Speaker 2

Everybody talked about if you did something, they would know it, you know.

00:09:24 Speaker 1

So after you're drafted into the army, take me through basic training.

00:09:30 Speaker 2

Basic training.

00:09:33 Speaker 2

Alright, I'll tell.

00:09:34 Speaker 2

I was drafted and they sent me to Fort Georgia, Mead, Maryland and it put me in a box and and the the title code. I didn't know or the bottom of my bed.

00:09:46 Speaker 2

Didn't know what it was.

00:09:47 Speaker 2

And so I asked a guy that's in the building. He said he didn't know.

00:09:51 Speaker 2

So I found out at about 3:00 in the morning they came and put me on.

00:09:57 Speaker 2

He did it and they said put that overcoat on. So I put the overcoat on and he tried me to a cooler cracking eggs.

00:10:04 Speaker 2

And they told me it said well put the eggs in it. Cry. It was our hammer crates. Eggs was a big, big part to put them in and said put everything in that don't fly away.

00:10:15 Speaker 2

And I said, well, that was enough KP duty for.

00:10:17 Speaker 2

So I did everything I could to get her to KP duty.

00:10:21 Speaker 2

And.

00:10:23 Speaker 2

When I went to basic training.

00:10:26 Speaker 2

I didn't like Chippy.

00:10:27 Speaker 2

I pulled chippy dude one day and I asked him if there's anything I could do to get over.

00:10:33 Speaker 2

Said you can pick up cigarette butts. And I said OK.

00:10:36 Speaker 2

Better than KP?

00:10:37 Speaker 2

So I did that one time and then they gave us swimming.

00:10:40 Speaker 2

Had to learn to swim and we had to.

00:10:43 Speaker 2

To finish, you had to swim across and I was a good swimmer as we had pools and.

00:10:47 Speaker 2

I went to the card, made the pools at home and we down the creeks up in the swimming and I talked swimming the whole time I was in basic training.

00:10:59 Speaker 1

What was?

00:11:00 Speaker 1

Most difficult part of your basic training.

00:11:04 Speaker 2

Well, let me I I joined the the militia in Virginia Guard militia when I was 16 and.

00:11:14 Speaker 2

We trained and we walked and I lived close to the Blue Ridge Mountains and we.

00:11:17 Speaker 2

We walked and hiked, and we had broomsticks as good as you know, to. So when I went in service, the guys are much older than I was and I had to.

00:11:28 Speaker 2

It aggravated me because I could do more than they could forest training.

00:11:33 Speaker 2

And I feel like.

00:11:34 Speaker 2

I gained 45 lbs in my basic training and I felt I was a man. If anybody was a man in my outfit.

00:11:44 Speaker 2

When I finished my basic training.

00:11:49 Speaker 2

They sent me back home and I think it was three day leave to get to Fort George, E Meade, Maryland.

00:12:01 Speaker 2

And then enjoy Fort Georgie meeting Marilyn.

00:12:04 Speaker 2

They signed me to go overseas and they sent me to Boston, MA to get on a.

00:12:10 Speaker 2

And we got on a boat. You wanna go?

00:12:14 Speaker 2

Come down the coast.

00:12:16 Speaker 2

And rough weather and the boat was was was kind of rough riding a boat and the weather and we got in a convoy and we went.

00:12:29 Speaker 2

From there to Lahore, France, we got in with a convoy, went to Lahore French.

00:12:35 Speaker 2

In the half France.

00:12:38 Speaker 2

I took and we went out of boxes to met France and met France.

00:12:46 Speaker 2

Issued US rifles. We had to clean them up and issued us outfits.

00:12:54 Speaker 2

To for the front lines, shoes and everything we needed. And we were right there.

00:12:59 Speaker 2

Then we got on a truck and they took us to the front lines and I met the captain of the other the company.

00:13:10 Speaker 2

A 319.

00:13:11 Speaker 2

And they sad me as a Rifleman.

00:13:16 Speaker 2

And I was in the Battle of the Bulls wasn't over. We went there.

00:13:23 Speaker 2

And so we went to the front lines and then they moved us and gave us a three day pass. And we went to roused off Luxembourg to.

00:13:39 Speaker 2

Go to the front lines and then from. From there we went direct to the front lines.

00:13:46 Speaker 2

And.

00:13:48 Speaker 2

Then I was with come to a three 19th temperature and we waited for is February the 6th.

00:13:56 Speaker 2

We waited on that day and we dug foxholes.

00:14:01 Speaker 2

And our position right in front where I could look right straight to the front lines to the town of walled off. And it was a bridge bombed out.

00:14:10 Speaker 2

At could tell my location by that bridge and I could see here trucks and things and we would have found distance from the front lines, but the next day it was the next day at 2:00 in the morning they shelled that town.

00:14:27 Speaker 2

And.

00:14:30 Speaker 2

Same way the Germans were shelling us too. And we went into that and we lost farther ahead. Farther castle just before we got to the river our river and we.

00:14:42 Speaker 2

Went across and we went in and captured a town.

00:14:47 Speaker 2

Power and it was the bunker that we had to be careful with.

00:14:53 Speaker 2

They.

00:14:54 Speaker 2

But anyway, they got through.

00:14:56 Speaker 2

They sent me over high ground and that's where I got wounded on the high ground over walling dog Germany.

00:15:05 Speaker 1

How long were you in combat before?

00:15:07 Speaker 1

Were wounded.

00:15:08 Speaker 2

About 3 weeks I.

00:15:11 Speaker 2

I'm not sure the exact date, maybe about 3 weeks.

00:15:14 Speaker 1

And in those three weeks, were you in constant combat or was it sporadic?

00:15:20 Speaker 2

Well, the first day we went in, the captain got us in and we went out houses and and we got we had to retreat because they like the bomb to say. I don't know. I'd like to go back to that place, but I haven't been able to.

00:15:38 Speaker 2

And then they sent us back to rozdah for couple days rest, and then they bought.

00:15:44 Speaker 2

Had to March from roused off to the frontline.

00:15:49 Speaker 2

When the first day I went in, everything was quiet. I could hear Shields, but they were all playing poker and I didn't play poker.

00:15:56 Speaker 2

I didn't play poker sitting back and we thought the the building was going to get bombed down. So they the Sergeant took us and marched us back across.

00:16:06 Speaker 2

It was a Creek.

00:16:07 Speaker 2

Wasn't our.

00:16:08 Speaker 2

It marked us back across a.

00:16:10 Speaker 2

And we will and daylight hit. And we was in one bunch and another bunch and the shells hit several of them.

00:16:20 Speaker 2

We were treating across that river. I mean, earthquake and that was my first experience.

00:16:27 Speaker 1

You see the men getting hit from the shows.

00:16:32 Speaker 2

You mean that day they were but 300 feet or 4 feet from us from me when they got shelled and we were safe and they went down. But I never see them in the mall.

00:16:44 Speaker 2

Didn't see them in the mall.

00:16:47 Speaker 1

Were there times in combat that you saw the men around you getting hit?

00:16:52 Speaker 2

Yes, well, the first day they pulled us back.

00:16:57 Speaker 2

They March us from to the front lines and then the shells and extremely memorable look like we're going over my head and hit and then our company. We had 40 casters before and we had to cross.

00:17:10 Speaker 2

It was the snow had melted.

00:17:14 Speaker 2

And it backed the Air river up going into the cell river, and we had to go across in boats.

00:17:20 Speaker 2

And we pulled us, pulled us off front lines, and it went back to go to invade Germany. That was a safer land.

00:17:29 Speaker 2

Was a safer land.

00:17:31 Speaker 2

And yeah, I saw a bunch of them go there and my captain went down and I thought he was just ducking.

00:17:37 Speaker 2

From, you know, being here and shots.

00:17:39 Speaker 2

But he got wounded.

00:17:40 Speaker 2

Got wounded.

00:17:42 Speaker 2

And his father, casualties in my company before we got across the Owl River.

00:17:48 Speaker 1

You mentioned you saw a bunch of them go down.

00:17:53 Speaker 2

Well, in the army, we were trained that you don't.

00:17:58 Speaker 2

You don't hesitate and stop to help your buddy or help you.

00:18:03 Speaker 2

That's the latest division that's got the reputation of you always go far so.

00:18:09 Speaker 2

You read now where somebody helps about, but they didn't.

00:18:13 Speaker 2

So when I got wounded at 7:00 at night, they didn't pick me up till 7 next morning, daylight hit me the next morning.

00:18:20 Speaker 2

I will be 18 years old then and it's like.

00:18:27 Speaker 2

Before I went, I didn't think anything could happen to me. I just didn't.

00:18:30 Speaker 2

Didn't think it and I thought if a person got.

00:18:34 Speaker 2

Hurt I.

00:18:34 Speaker 2

He's going to get well, I just I.

00:18:36 Speaker 2

That was just my feelings. I didn't have the feelings that I had later in life.

00:18:42 Speaker 2

Because you know, when you're young, you go home.

00:18:45 Speaker 2

And you're supposed to be going to her mile last reckless and so.

00:18:50 Speaker 2

That's the way it is in a.

00:18:52 Speaker 2

You trained to go fart and so they went and left me all night long.

00:18:59 Speaker 2

I mean, did nobody help me?

00:19:01 Speaker 2

And they picked me up the next morning at daylight, when they come up. The Germans had an 88.

00:19:08 Speaker 2

Shot the shells and I think that's what I got hit with.

00:19:12 Speaker 2

And I saw plenty of them, you know.

00:19:18 Speaker 2

It.

00:19:19 Speaker 2

I don't have any got in my squad. They got hit.

00:19:22 Speaker 2

Was.

00:19:23 Speaker 2

In my squad we were going to up in high grounds and I don't know how many how many got hit but we lost 40 castles in my company and we lost 26.

00:19:35 Speaker 2

Casualties today I got.

00:19:36 Speaker 2

They called to the record, you know.

00:19:42 Speaker 2

Well, our when our director front lines and it was, I thought I was one of the lucky ones because all of it seemed to be going over top of my head and I was in the trees in a forest and the shells didn't hit in front of me.

00:19:58 Speaker 2

Was luck.

00:19:58 Speaker 2

I lucked.

00:19:59 Speaker 2

I was right on the front lines looking right at, but I didn't know where they were.

00:20:03 Speaker 2

Shields were coming over and they were hitting the tops of the trees and and you go but.

00:20:09 Speaker 2

I didn't think it was the end of the world. I mean, I didn't.

00:20:15 Speaker 2

I knew it wasn't a good situation because I was by myself and I was digging the foxhole and I didn't really know what was going on at 2:00 in the morning, that sky lit up was shooting both ways.

00:20:28 Speaker 2

All the shells and artillery that like you, got just as almost as bright as that light right there.

00:20:34 Speaker 2

And we could see one another.

00:20:36 Speaker 2

So we went back and they were showing us and we went back behind it with and that's where most of the men got hit.

00:20:44 Speaker 2

Most of the soldiers got hit. The Shields were coming.

00:20:48 Speaker 2

And so we had to go to the river to get a boat and we got pinned down and it was a while before we got across the river. And when we went across the river, we went by a bunker and it was some Germans land outside and it.

00:21:05 Speaker 2

A.

00:21:06 Speaker 2

I didn't know in World War 2 they didn't train me for no ditches.

00:21:09 Speaker 2

In World War 2, but it was a ditch.

00:21:13 Speaker 2

Doug from that Bunker, dad into the town of Wading off Germany and we went in Germany and to Walterdog and we it captured a few prisoners. But it wasn't a whole lot of prisoners there.

00:21:26 Speaker 2

It was right.

00:21:27 Speaker 2

It was dead from Michelle and.

00:21:30 Speaker 2

Beside that bunker, it was they were laying.

00:21:33 Speaker 2

They didn't clean the bunker. There was some dead Germans there. I didn't.

00:21:39 Speaker 2

I felt like that that was as much a mole man and they and some of them, some of them were. But I still didn't feel like that.

00:21:46 Speaker 2

That I was.

00:21:47 Speaker 2

I felt like I could do most anything they asked me to do.

00:21:52 Speaker 2

And then the next day I got wounded and I was in and out of it and.

00:22:00 Speaker 2

Anyway, when they got it was sunlight just like that and it hurt my eyes and I was laying in.

00:22:05 Speaker 2

Was in the in the when I first got hit.

00:22:08 Speaker 2

I was able to unload my rifle and get rid of all of my.

00:22:18 Speaker 2

Belts and everything, grenades and all. I just laid it down on the side and crawled about 25 feet from it because I heard it was trained that the Germans would shoot you if you had a you had an ammunition or rifle, you know, with you and they.

00:22:32 Speaker 2

You. So I didn't know that, but I was in and out until daylight and they cried me.

00:22:37 Speaker 2

Some German prisoners got up to me, put me on a stretcher and grabbed me down the river and I didn't know what was going on.

00:22:43 Speaker 2

They were talking a foreign language and I still didn't know what they were doing.

00:22:46 Speaker 2

What was happening?

00:22:48 Speaker 2

They were across this river. The Germans had to be fed and all and and they were rowing the boats back where the ones wounded. And then I saw Red Cross.

00:23:01 Speaker 2

Like and I knew that was American ambulance ambulance and they picked me up and carried me back to the field hospital so.

00:23:10 Speaker 2

Then I went from it was ethanol.

00:23:13 Speaker 2

Think his town was.

00:23:14 Speaker 2

And then I went from there to.

00:23:19 Speaker 2

What did I say was?

00:23:23 Speaker 2

Germany.

00:23:24 Speaker 2

OK.

00:23:25

What?

00:23:26

I turned to.

00:23:30 Speaker 1

Can you tell me the full story on how you were wounded, Sir, from the very beginning?

00:23:38 Speaker 2

OK.

00:23:40 Speaker 2

The.

00:23:41 Speaker 2

The day before.

00:23:44 Speaker 2

They I was with the with my.

00:23:45 Speaker 2

8.

00:23:50 Speaker 2

And we had been at this one place and they were getting ready to go into the safari land.

00:23:59 Speaker 2

I didn't know at the time as a safe read. I didn't know I knew.

00:24:02 Speaker 2

So this sinister forest it razed off Luxembourg and it caused my truck there and they fed us and we stayed overnight.

00:24:15 Speaker 2

In the Old People's House, haste and.

00:24:18 Speaker 2

We next day, on the 6th day of this February, we March back to the front lines and the guy asked me to.

00:24:35 Speaker 2

Sergeant asked me to dig in and I dug it sideways and it was snow melted and then warm and it snowed, melted and a river. Our river was going into the South River.

00:24:49 Speaker 2

I was back in and the whole bottom was full of water and we had to go across that river in boats.

00:24:56 Speaker 2

OK.

00:24:59 Speaker 2

We took and I dug, dug in foxhole and I dug it long way. And at 2:00 in the morning, I didn't know what time it was myself.

00:25:08 Speaker 2

I just read.

00:25:08 Speaker 2

It was 2:00 in the morning and the shells were going in just like daylight.

00:25:14 Speaker 2

Just overhead. And I tell her from.

00:25:18 Speaker 2

I don't know how far behind us and it was coming both ways.

00:25:22 Speaker 2

And lit up so.

00:25:26 Speaker 2

The Sergeant come and got me. Said follow me.

00:25:28 Speaker 2

They backed.

00:25:29 Speaker 2

And we were getting ready to go crossing boats and that's when they read the faulty casual back before cross the river and we crossed the river.

00:25:40 Speaker 2

In a boat and we got pinned down and it was a bunker above us on the left. And finally we got up and we went up to pass that bunker, and we went into town.

00:25:53 Speaker 2

And it was a.

00:25:55 Speaker 2

Ditch, Doug that you could.

00:25:59 Speaker 2

They dug.

00:25:59 Speaker 2

The Germans dug it.

00:26:01 Speaker 2

Know protection.

00:26:02 Speaker 2

But we marched down into town and we captured the town of Orlando, and that was the 7th, the 7th of February.

00:26:11

And.

00:26:11 Speaker 2

We turned around and they ordered us to go on high.

00:26:14 Speaker 2

I don't know where it was on high ground, but I got wounded at 7:00 but 7?

00:26:22 Speaker 2

And then I didn't.

00:26:24 Speaker 2

I was wounded and I couldn't go anywhere and lay there, in and out all night long.

00:26:29 Speaker 2

Know daylight hurt my eyes.

00:26:31 Speaker 2

Hurt my eyes, and that's when he put me on a stretcher and crack me down on the river and.

00:26:36 Speaker 2

There was Germans and they were helping and the Germans were really taking those boats and some of them was going across.

00:26:43 Speaker 2

They were captured and when they were captured they they were different.

00:26:46 Speaker 2

Were fighting they wanted.

00:26:48 Speaker 2

A male. And they knew they had to be.

00:26:50 Speaker 2

So anyway, I saw the ambulance with a cross, a Red Cross on, and then they tried me from there back to.

00:26:59 Speaker 2

Doctors Luxembourg and fulfill hospital and they gave me a shot to from a pain and then I went. They put me on a truck ambulance and I went from there to.

00:27:12 Speaker 2

Walden.

00:27:13 Speaker 2

Walden, I'd say Walgreens. Not not Walmart.

00:27:19 Speaker 2

Forgotten.

00:27:20 Speaker 2

There. What the name of it. Anyway, I went back to the hospital.

00:27:23 Speaker 2

Then I was there for almost to the end of the war, and then they sent me to England.

00:27:29 Speaker 2

And I was still in the hospital, but I was a bit bed patient.

00:27:36 Speaker 2

At the hospital until I couldn't walk until the end of the war, and with England and then I came home and they sent me to Fort Meade, MD. And they sent me home on leave.

00:27:51 Speaker 2

And then I went from there to Daniel Field, Georgia to a hospital.

00:27:55 Speaker 2

And I was in hospital.

00:27:57 Speaker 2

There and.

00:28:00 Speaker 2

I was home on VJ day.

00:28:04 Speaker 1

But take me through.

00:28:06 Speaker 1

What wounded you?

00:28:09 Speaker 2

It was artillery and I don't know, I just said guess. It was a German 8/8/88.

00:28:15 Speaker 2

Did not know. OK, I didn't.

00:28:18 Speaker 2

I do not know because I was wounded.

00:28:21 Speaker 2

Couldn't tell you.

00:28:22 Speaker 2

I'm just going.

00:28:24 Speaker 2

By the way, I was hit. You know, there was. It was artillery.

00:28:28 Speaker 1

And where were you hit?

00:28:30 Speaker 2

Where I was, I hit.

00:28:31 Speaker 2

I was hit in nine.

00:28:32 Speaker 2

I hit and both. I broke my left ankle and it put shrapnel in both tendons in my feet in my feet.

00:28:40 Speaker 2

And it was worn in middle middle of my leg.

00:28:43 Speaker 2

And it went part of a.

00:28:45 Speaker 2

They went up a kneecap and hit me in my hand.

00:28:50 Speaker 1

What was the pain like?

00:28:54 Speaker 2

They I didn't have a lot of pain until I got I was in and out of it and when I got on the ambulance they had to go on rough roads and it was.

00:29:04 Speaker 2

Really, it really hurt.

00:29:06 Speaker 2

And then we tried it to the field hospital, the cement floor that laid down, and I was hurting.

00:29:12 Speaker 2

And then they gave me shots. And I think it was all morphine. And I never suffered a whole lot.

00:29:18 Speaker 2

It was on my feet, the rest of the time, and I never suffered too much.

00:29:23 Speaker 2

And they.

00:29:24 Speaker 2

I couldn't walk because the way I was wounded and they had to put openings to drain my legs and I couldn't walk because.

00:29:35 Speaker 2

A crooked castle on my leg and one on my left leg left ankle.

00:29:41 Speaker 1

And how long did it take?

00:29:44 Speaker 1

The medics to get to you.

00:29:46 Speaker 2

Beg pardon.

00:29:47 Speaker 1

How long did it take the medics to get to you?

00:29:51 Speaker 2

From what it what? Medics, they had me from.

00:29:57 Speaker 2

I'd say it got me a daylight and I couldn't tell you exactly. I was out all night till the sun come up and then it put me on ambulance coming down the river and coming across in a boat and they put me in an ambulance and tried me.

00:30:12 Speaker 2

20 miles to the field hospital.

00:30:15 Speaker 2

And.

00:30:16 Speaker 2

Then they gave me shots to ease of pain and.

00:30:22 Speaker 1

Before you were wounded.

00:30:24 Speaker 2

OK.

00:30:25 Speaker 1

Before you were wounded. Do you remember any of the firefights that you got into?

00:30:31 Speaker 2

Yeah, I remember did it.

00:30:32 Speaker 2

Didn't follow you?

00:30:34 Speaker 1

Do you remember any of the firefight that your group got into?

00:30:39 Speaker 1

The firefight.

00:30:40 Speaker 1

Skirmishes.

00:30:41 Speaker 2

No, because when I was in the foxhole, I didn't know if Ralinda had 6 bunkers and it was a bunker right at the end of that bridge. I'd looked at all night long and he said I was within rifle range of him, but I didn't know it was.

00:30:56 Speaker 2

There until I went back after the.

00:30:59 Speaker 2

Whoa. We went back to that same bunker and where I was, I didn't know.

00:31:05 Speaker 2

I didn't know it was a bunker there and we went on a trip over there and Brian was with us.

00:31:14 Speaker 2

And this guy was and I told him no. I was up on the hill and I saw that bridge and he showed me the bridge. But he didn't take me where the foxhole was, you know.

00:31:24 Speaker 2

I don't know.

00:31:26 Speaker 2

I was type of.

00:31:28 Speaker 2

I didn't want to kill anybody.

00:31:30 Speaker 2

I mean I.

00:31:30 Speaker 2

I didn't actually shoot at one person.

00:31:33 Speaker 2

We laid fire down to protections, but I didn't see anybody that I would that I would.

00:31:42 Speaker 2

My rifle shot actually hit anybody. We put fire down to to, you know, to take.

00:31:48 Speaker 2

And so we could go far, but I didn't. If I'd have been there long enough, I would have seen it more.

00:31:56 Speaker 2

I didn't see it now, and I'm glad I didn't we the first weeks I was there.

00:32:04 Speaker 2

We were in and out of places and and the Germans were shooting us and we were shooting back at them, putting artillery back into them.

00:32:12 Speaker 2

But I didn't the first time I saw actually a German thing was when we crossed the Air River.

00:32:19 Speaker 2

So, so and they look like they will hold up. Be my dad.

00:32:24 Speaker 1

They look like what?

00:32:26 Speaker 2

To be my.

00:32:27 Speaker 2

I mean, they were older.

00:32:28 Speaker 2

I wasn't but 18 and and and the army was drafted.

00:32:34 Speaker 2

Older people and it and I read where they had the young Germans, but the ones that I saw looked old.

00:32:42 Speaker 2

They when they were dead, but a person looks.

00:32:46 Speaker 2

Different when they did when they left.

00:32:49 Speaker 2

Well, I was with my squad about 12 men with my squad and and I didn't see any of my squad hit I.

00:32:57 Speaker 2

I was one of the first ones in my squad to actually go and I don't know how many in my squad that shell come in and and I don't how many it hit, whether they got out, but I was by myself all night, you know.

00:33:10 Speaker 1

Did you ever take on machine gunfire? German machine gunfire?

00:33:16 Speaker 2

Not not.

00:33:17 Speaker 2

Most of ours is artillery and like I said, they had machine gunfires in this bunker.

00:33:24 Speaker 2

Could have shot us. Currently brown. They could have shot us.

00:33:29 Speaker 2

At us.

00:33:30 Speaker 2

But they.

00:33:31 Speaker 2

I didn't. I don't remember.

00:33:33 Speaker 2

Bullets going over my head when I was in the foxhole.

00:33:37 Speaker 2

Is not not small.

00:33:37 Speaker 1

Never.

00:33:41 Speaker 2

The Big Shield is going over.

00:33:45 Speaker 2

Artillery, but I don't remember any machine gunfire because see machine gun fire. It pops over your head and I didn't hear any.

00:33:56 Speaker 2

And I'm glad I didn't.

00:34:00 Speaker 1

Do you remember any other close calls that you had?

00:34:05 Speaker 2

Hmm.

00:34:07 Speaker 2

Well, it was when we got across the river and we got we got machine gun fire there. And when you were down and but I didn't make no big deal out of it because the Sergeant.

00:34:23 Speaker 2

Gave us orders to what to do?

00:34:28 Speaker 2

And.

00:34:29 Speaker 1

How long were you guys pinned down?

00:34:34 Speaker 2

Ah, at 2:00 it was shelled and the daylight come, and they put out a fog to get us across. And I couldn't tell you.

00:34:42 Speaker 2

Didn't know what that.

00:34:43 Speaker 2

It got dark again and they put a fog so we could get across.

00:34:49 Speaker 1

What was the?

00:34:50 Speaker 1

Thing for you to go through during your time in combat.

00:34:56 Speaker 2

Well-being loaded down with equipment for somebody else. If see, I was a Rifleman, but you, I've occurred grenades and I carried.

00:35:08 Speaker 2

What do you call bandeliers of bullets on my shoulder and the arcade?

00:35:15 Speaker 2

Bazooka shell and it's loaded down. I mean it was heavy and that was the hardest thing and we had to March from Roswell to the front lines and I had to carry somebody else's equipment.

00:35:27 Speaker 2

That's why they got all the equipment.

00:35:30 Speaker 2

Because it wouldn't matter if he was a machine.

00:35:33 Speaker 2

Equally, equipment somebody else had to carry and that was the hardest thing I had to do the whole time I was in, in, in, in combat with Kyle equipment.

00:35:45 Speaker 1

Did you?

00:35:50 Speaker 1

When you went into the town, did it become house to house fighting?

00:35:55 Speaker 2

Yes, research houses and and research houses.

00:36:04 Speaker 2

Well, it wasn't too many German say I wasn't in particular.

00:36:08 Speaker 2

And in it was such as I was in certain squads had to do it, but I don't remember any German prisoners in the squad where the houses we searched, but some of the houses we went in before that.

00:36:22 Speaker 2

We found hams and apples and what have you and they were really coming.

00:36:29 Speaker 2

You know, and we get permission to cook a ham.

00:36:33 Speaker 2

You have to take it and have it.

00:36:35 Speaker 2

Let you do.

00:36:36 Speaker 2

You just couldn't put it on the stove and we put up.

00:36:39 Speaker 2

Stove pipe back in the houses and cooked, had hot food or something that way. That was kind of cheating a little.

00:36:46 Speaker 2

You mentioned.

00:36:49 Speaker 2

OK. All right.

00:36:52 Speaker 2

The German.

00:36:53 Speaker 2

But I didn't be frank with we had the American planes dropping, so we went across the river.

00:37:04 Speaker 2

We didn't have a one day supply of food with us and they dropped food in with American airplanes, but I didn't see any fights, air fights. I didn't see any.

00:37:15 Speaker 1

Did you have any encounters with German tanks?

00:37:19 Speaker 2

No, not close, no.

00:37:23 Speaker 2

I saw him from a distance, yes.

00:37:26 Speaker 1

What do you remember about that?

00:37:28 Speaker 2

Assam. But they were on a retreat.

00:37:31 Speaker 1

Did you have any experiences?

00:37:35 Speaker 1

With land mines.

00:37:37 Speaker 2

Yes, she.

00:37:37 Speaker 2

Be careful with those.

00:37:39 Speaker 1

Do.

00:37:39 Speaker 1

Any of them go away.

00:37:40 Speaker 2

Any of them.

00:37:41 Speaker 2

Well, some of those houses were mine and some of the guys were wounded, but I didn't.

00:37:46 Speaker 2

I wasn't.

00:37:47 Speaker 2

I was still able to get in and out. Let me tell you when I got wounded, I wasn't hurting.

00:37:54 Speaker 2

I didn't hurt.

00:37:55 Speaker 2

No, I didn't know I was in and out of it.

00:37:58 Speaker 2

I was in and I didn't even know I couldn't tell.

00:38:01 Speaker 2

I couldn't tell that I was.

00:38:03 Speaker 2

I knew that I got hit and I knew I had to get rid of my.

00:38:06 Speaker 2

Equipment. But I laid there all night.

00:38:08 Speaker 2

I was in and out of it. I won't.

00:38:10 Speaker 2

I didn't hurt till I got in an ambulance like I told you while ago and that was rough.

00:38:15 Speaker 1

And did you go on any patrols before you were wounded?

00:38:20 Speaker 1

Did you ever go on patrols?

00:38:22 Speaker 2

Patrol. Yeah, but yeah, I had. We took turns on on the patrol.

00:38:29 Speaker 1

What do you remember about your patrols?

00:38:32 Speaker 2

I didn't do it too long.

00:38:34 Speaker 2

I didn't have too.

00:38:35 Speaker 2

I didn't didn't have any problem while we while I was patrolling.

00:38:40 Speaker 2

I mean, in other words, I didn't say it, but one place we had it was a woman sniper was sniping, and we went close and somebody else went in and got her.

00:38:51 Speaker 2

Know the woman, German woman in a window shooting. But I don't know what happened. I just.

00:38:57 Speaker 2

Hear hear about it. You know. And that's the only time it that that a single shell was coming at me while I was in action.

00:39:05 Speaker 1

When you were wounded.

00:39:08 Speaker 1

Were there a lot of shells going off around your area?

00:39:11 Speaker 2

Absolutely.

00:39:13 Speaker 2

Germans were shed at all times screaming namers were going out have.

00:39:17 Speaker 1

What? What's a screaming made me sound like?

00:39:20 Speaker 2

They scare you to.

00:39:21 Speaker 2

They feel like they coming right at you and going to hit you, but they go past.

00:39:26 Speaker 2

It's claiming name is. They scream.

00:39:29 Speaker 2

It's a big sound they make.

00:39:32 Speaker 2

And they scare you, I mean.

00:39:34 Speaker 2

You think it's coming at you, but they don't.

00:39:36 Speaker 2

Go over screaming. Name it.

00:39:40 Speaker 2

And they don't do as much damage to the good part of they don't do as much damage as it like. I got hit with the screaming amers were going overhead like I told you, and they were hitting people behind us because I don't know why we were right.

00:39:56 Speaker 2

The front lines.

00:39:57 Speaker 2

And I looked out and none hit in front of me.

00:39:59 Speaker 2

Of them went overhead.

00:40:01 Speaker 1

What can you tell me about the tree bursts again, please?

00:40:04 Speaker 2

They when it shells hit these trees, they make a big noise and and when you we were safe and it wasn't us because they were behind us.

00:40:15 Speaker 1

Were there any shows that hit trees around you?

00:40:19 Speaker 2

No, not not. While I'm on the frontline, no.

00:40:23 Speaker 1

Talk to me about your living conditions.

00:40:26 Speaker 2

You mean after I got the army arm is there?

00:40:29 Speaker 1

In combat, what are your leanings?

00:40:31 Speaker 2

Like I said while ago, we had to go across the seafood land to claim we had only one day of rations.

00:40:39 Speaker 2

Before that, when we were in different places in the houses we stayed in, we didn't stay in digging trenches. You know, we stayed in houses as much and we could find hams and we take the most of the houses where it should. We take and get permission to.

00:40:55 Speaker 2

And we have something to eat.

00:40:58 Speaker 1

About the destruction done to the German cities.

00:41:02 Speaker 2

I didn't.

00:41:03 Speaker 2

We wanted to conquer Germany and we I never gave it the least thought.

00:41:08 Speaker 1

Well, what did the destruction look like?

00:41:11 Speaker 2

It like this time we had.

00:41:16 Speaker 2

At home and you see on on a TV where the hurricane did.

00:41:20 Speaker 2

That's what things look like.

00:41:23 Speaker 2

If the town that we went in was totally gone down with anything and a hotel, and I'll tell this the hotel rebuilt and we went back on a trip and we stayed in the same hotel that we tore down at night.

00:41:42 Speaker 1

What life advice do you want to give to future generations?

00:41:49 Speaker 2

I don't know what kind of like they they fool me or the last month or so I didn't know. Was anybody in the United States that that did the noxis and white supremists and all of that?

00:42:06 Speaker 2

I I didn't.

00:42:06 Speaker 2

I never heard of it.

00:42:08 Speaker 2

Until it this thing in Charlottesville, I never heard of that, and I can't hardly believe it.

00:42:11 Speaker 2

Many people that do that.

00:42:13 Speaker 2

I mean, I didn't know it was loud and.

00:42:17 Speaker 1

What would you want to say to all the men who were killed overseas in World War 2?

00:42:23 Speaker 2

I talked about we went to graves that some of the people that.

00:42:31 Speaker 2

Buried over there, we went to the graves in Elmhur.

00:42:37 Speaker 2

I can't understand why they buried over.

00:42:42 Speaker 2

I I really can't understand why they want to be buried there because.

00:42:48 Speaker 2

I'm a family person and I hope they bear me where I don't want them buried me over. If I'd got killed over out of here, I thought that sure that I'd be.

00:43:01 Speaker 1

You're, but if you could talk to them, the guys who were killed, what would you want them to know?

00:43:08 Speaker 2

I've never, never.

00:43:10 Speaker 2

Thought about that? I mean, I never.

00:43:11 Speaker 1

Now you are.

00:43:15 Speaker 2

We went over there and we.

00:43:17 Speaker 2

When I went in the army, you got \$10,000. You got a \$10,000 policy and they would send your body home. But you were responsible.

00:43:27 Speaker 2

Family responsible divided the light and burn.

00:43:30 Speaker 2

But the government would give you \$10,000 and bring you bodies home.

00:43:35 Speaker 2

And I don't understand why they buried over there.

00:43:39 Speaker 2

Some of them, you know, I don't know.

00:43:42 Speaker 2

I lost my wife 24th and it's it's something I never could realise and I can't today.

00:43:48 Speaker 2

Can't understand why she went first 'cause. I retired when I was 52 on my health.

00:43:55 Speaker 2

And and I've lived this long.

00:43:57 Speaker 1

Do you believe there is a heaven?

00:44:00 Speaker 2

I got disability from the army and then I had a stomach problem and I got I retired.

00:44:06 Speaker 2

Got disability from a government?

00:44:08 Speaker 1

Do you believe there's a heaven?

00:44:10 Speaker 2

Yes, Sir, absolutely.

00:44:15 Speaker 2

I hope I don't know whether he'll go Take Me Out or not. 'cause. I have been cured of.

00:44:23 Speaker 2

A lot of times, but I hope a good lawyer.

00:44:26 Speaker 1

Were were you very religious overseas?

00:44:31 Speaker 2

We had.

00:44:32 Speaker 2

I didn't I when I was young. I I can't realize I didn't.

00:44:38 Speaker 2

I didn't think that loud would ever kill me.

00:44:43 Speaker 2

I mean, I I didn't have a dream that she was going over.

00:44:46 Speaker 2

Just said I can't.

00:44:47 Speaker 2

Can't be.

00:44:48 Speaker 2

I can't be me. And when I got wounded, I said I'm going to get well.

00:44:53 Speaker 2

And.

00:44:55 Speaker 2

I.

00:44:56 Speaker 2

I just couldn't. Never looked at it the other way in any other way.

00:44:59 Speaker 1

But you do believe there's a God.

00:45:01 Speaker 2

Hey Siri, absolutely.

00:45:06 Speaker 2

Well, let me put it to you this way.

00:45:09 Speaker 2

I got. I got my family, got three boys and my wife felt the same way.

00:45:16 Speaker 2

Paid the way from. I'll go back where I got wounded and.

00:45:21 Speaker 2

14 of us and she paid OK. I've not said it.

00:45:25 Speaker 2

Don't intend to sell.

00:45:28 Speaker 2

The boys won't give. I've given them everything I got and I got a trust fund and they get everything I got. And, but as long as I live, I own it.

00:45:37 Speaker 2

When I die.

00:45:39 Speaker 2

I want to be think I honest.

00:45:44 Speaker 2

I think.

00:45:45 Speaker 2

I won't if I think I've been honest. I don't think I ever who do anybody. If you will put it that way.

00:45:54 Speaker 1

Thank you for your time and.

00:45:55 Speaker 1

You for your service.

00:45:57 Speaker 2

OK.

00:45:57 Speaker 1

And and don't worry.

00:46:00 Speaker 2

And you've been a nice guy.

00:46:00 Speaker 1

I I definitely believe you're you'll go to heaven.

00:46:04 Speaker 2

You think so? Yeah.