

**George D. McLin**

Company C, 318th Inf Reg

*(Library of Congress: Veterans History Project; interviewed by William M. Tilt)*

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

Speaker 1

Today is June 11th, 2008. We are gathered at Aiken Technical College as part of the World War 2 oral history project.

00:00:10

Speaker 1

In conjunction with the Augusta, Richmond County Historical Society and today, we're going to hear the story of George McLean.

00:00:18

Speaker 1

I am William tilt and I will conduct the interview assisting with the interview is Stan Schrader. Our camera operator is Nell Tyler.

00:00:29

Speaker 1

If you would please, why don't you start with a little bit of your biographical data where you're born, where you know where you're from and before you got into the service?

00:00:40

Speaker 2

Well, I guess you've already told us who I am. I'm George D McLean. I was born in Anderson County, Tennessee.

00:00:52

Speaker 2

November 24th, 1925 and I grew up in the hills of Tennessee in the Great Depression and the oldest of seven children.

00:01:05

Speaker 2

And when I was.

00:01:11

Speaker 2

Year 17 the US government had a program called end on why A which was National Youth Administration. They taught youth trades.

00:01:23

Speaker 2

And place them in jobs and I took.

00:01:29

Speaker 2

Welders training in Oneida, TN and when I finished there, they sent me to Savannah, GA and out to Southeastern Shipbuilding Corporation.

00:01:41

Speaker 2

Where I worked for several months, I worked on the ship after it was launched and out in the in the river and tied up to the Wharf.

00:01:52

Speaker 2

And each day I'd see these merchant ships come up and down the river. And I thought, well, that's what I need to do.

00:02:01

Speaker 2

So I joined.

00:02:04

Speaker 2

A merchant marine, I had to beg permission from my parents, but I finally convinced them to sign for me. So I went to Sheepshead Bay, New York, to US Ms.

00:02:18

Speaker 2

Training school, which was operated by the Navy and Coast Guard at and.

00:02:24

Speaker 2

I.

00:02:25

Speaker 2

Stayed there three months, I believe, and I was in a.

00:02:32

Speaker 2

I was taught to be an older. That's what I came out of school as an older and they.

00:02:40

Speaker 2

Put place us on a ship.

00:02:42

Speaker 1

What does an oiler do?

00:02:46

Speaker 2

On this old ship, it was made in 19 and 20 and it had automatic things, but they had long ago stopped up so, and it was also a a, A, a ship with three Pistons is all it had. A huge 1A middle size and a small.

00:03:05

Speaker 2

And it has cross heads, it connects it, it goes up and down and connects it to the to the crankshaft. And so you it had had little a forced oil system, but it, like I said, it was long ago stopped up and.

00:03:23

Speaker 2

You had to do it by hand as the the cross head came down, you had to put your.

00:03:28

Speaker 2

Quirk can in and hit the all in the little cup. Well, if it was rough seas and the the after part of the ship come up with the prop, may you get out of the water and it goes real fast. Then you got to get your hand back out of the way. Same way with.

00:03:43

Speaker 2

The.

00:03:44

Speaker 2

Where the the the crankshaft it has big lobes on it and they.

00:03:48

Speaker 2

They had bearings in them and you had to, as it came over, you had to stick your hands down in the field to see.

00:03:54

Speaker 2

If.

00:03:54

Speaker 2

It was hot and the same way if it if the prop came out, it would speed up. So I.

00:04:03

Speaker 2

May when I put them on ship, I made trips to Venezuela and Colombia, South America and.

00:04:12

Speaker 2

Our job was to haul Ralph crude back to Marcus Hook, Pennsylvania to refinery. I guess suppose. But anyway like one of the. Then my interviewer asked me what did we haul back? What I told him we hauled seawater, which was ballast, to keep the ship down in the water.

00:04:31

Speaker 2

But anyway, it was we traveled in convoys and most of our trips, well, all of our trips were actually uneventful. Other than the weather, we never seen any.

00:04:45

Speaker 2

Subs or any such, but we always had a Navy.

00:04:53

Speaker 2

Escorts with us in the convoy. They were small escort boats.

00:04:57

Speaker 2

And.

00:05:00

Speaker 2

I'm sure there was submarines around because occasionally we heard the the peeing of the depth charges when we were down in the engine it would ping this hull of the ship. When the discharge went off.

00:05:11

Speaker 2

But I.

00:05:13

Speaker 1

How many ships are in these convoys where big?

00:05:15

Speaker 1

Convoys or little?

00:05:15

Speaker 2

There's a big, big convoy and like I was talking about keeping the the bands cool. If you broke down that nobody stayed with you to to take care of you, so you had to keep going to stay with the convoy. If you dropped out, you were on your own, which would have been a good target.

00:05:33

Speaker 2

I'm sure if we're to Nazi submarines.

00:05:38

Speaker 2

But.

00:05:40

Speaker 2

Forever. So many I don't remember so many days at sea. So many weeks at sea. They would give you one day's leave up to 30 days. Well, I had my leave time and I went on leave back home to Tennessee.

00:05:56

Speaker 2

And.

00:05:59

Speaker 2

My wishful thinking was, well, actually, I went back to Philadelphia to to ship out and they had no ships going when I got it. So I just, I just came back home and said, well, I'll let them draft me. But in my thinking was that since I had this naval training and all that, they'll put me in the Navy. But that wasn't the way the.

00:06:19

Speaker 2

The way that the Selective Service worked, they had a line of people and they said you you, you will go. Oh well, I went in that you in the in the infantry and Needless to say I kind of kicked.

00:06:31

Speaker 2

Myself around Europe a little bit after that, but.

00:06:35

Speaker 2

I was drafted into the army at Fort Oglethorpe, GA.

00:06:41

Speaker 2

And took my basic training in.

00:06:47

Speaker 2

Fort McClellan, AL. And when we finished there we had a a delaying her out leave by home and then we went to well, I was by myself the 8. The individuals went by their self. We weren't as a group. But I went to.

00:07:08

Speaker 2

Pennsylvania. I'm in Maryland, Fort Meade, MD. And from there we processed there and then we went to uh.

00:07:16

Speaker 1

When you say your process, what were you doing that overseas?

00:07:18

Speaker 2

Just paperwork. Yeah. Getting preparing. Yeah. And taking care of the insurance and all the things you had to get in order. And we were there a few days and then they sent us to Camp Kilmer. And from there we went to New York Harbor and.

00:07:37

Speaker 2

Uh.

00:07:38

Speaker 2

We boarded Queen Elizabeth, which was Q1. I believe that it was. It was finished after the war started and it was never used as a passenger ship till after the war.

00:07:53

Speaker 2

But anyway, we rode that ship across. It was a huge ship. I believe there was 17,000 people on it. I was on E deck, which was 7 decks. I think down in the ship. And when you had boat drill, you had to hike out. They didn't let you ride the elevator. It had elevators on it.

00:08:14

Speaker 2

We had to come.

00:08:15

Speaker 2

On deck.

00:08:16

Speaker 1

What kind of quarters did you have?

00:08:18

Speaker 2

Lots of lots of hammocks, just those swing swinging canvas beds and.

00:08:28

Speaker 2

We went alone from New York to Glasgow, Scotland and we had no escort blimps and things escorted us out up distance from New York. And then when we were a distance from England, the English.

00:08:44

Speaker 2

Airplanes came out and checked on us, but anyway we landed in Glasgow, Scotland. We didn't land, we we anchored in the in the harbor and they took us on little.

00:08:57

Speaker 2

Lighters. I think they call them little. They carried us over the shore from the from the.

00:09:05

Speaker 2

Q1 and put us on train.

00:09:09

Speaker 2

And we rode, I believe most of the day and most of the night to Southampton, England.

00:09:16

Speaker 2

And we stayed there several days waiting on the ship, I guess. But anyway, after a few days they put us on a ship and sent us across to Lahar, France.

00:09:31



Speaker 2

And from there we went to near Metz, France.

00:09:36

Speaker 1

And you were still a he's not part of a unit at this point.

00:09:39

Speaker 1

In time, you just.

00:09:39

Speaker 2

No. We would just ship loader replacements and.

00:09:45

Speaker 2

After a few days in Mets, they gave her let us take a few little rifle training and such stuff as that, and then they shipped us up to the front and they shipped me up to my outfits, which was a C company of the 318th Infantry of the 80th Division of General George S patterns.

00:10:06

Speaker 2

Army and.

00:10:09

Speaker 2

Time. Almost time. I got there. They took off and it was surprising to me because when we had basic training, they telling us how you got to sneak and be quiet and all this. But when we took off through the woods, we made lots of noise.

00:10:25

Speaker 2

And.

00:10:28

Speaker 2

And that I think that was near Pittsburgh. And then we went through several towns and crossed little rivers and we came to Kaiser Lauder. And if I remember.

00:10:40

Speaker 2

And relieved.

00:10:44

Speaker 2

Some units there and then from there we went on to.

00:10:48

Speaker 1

As you are moving forward towards Kaiser's lot and did you, did you have any opposition in?

00:10:54

Speaker 1

Front.

00:10:54

Speaker 2

We had some, well, we were walking and part of we rode and when we walk and sometimes we would come up on a small village and they'd be a little resistance, but not much.

00:10:54

Speaker

Rising way forward or?

00:11:05

Speaker 2

Which reminds me of the first encounter I had. We were coming into the little village and drew small arms fire and I got behind the tree. What I thought was a tree to hide, you know? Take cover. But and when I realized it, it it probably was a six inch diameter trunk of a tree. And I decided this.

00:11:25

Speaker 2

This is not going to protect me here, so I I raised up and run on in the in the town, our little village where the cover was might have made it.

00:11:38

Speaker 1

So you're going from building to building necessarily?

00:11:40

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

00:11:46

Speaker 2

And what?

00:11:47

Speaker 1

Was your job in your unit? What? What were you, a Rifleman or?

00:11:50

Speaker 2

I will, as a Rifleman, but I'm assigned as the bazooka man's ammo carrier.

00:11:56

Speaker 1

How many rounds of ammo?

00:11:57

Speaker 1

Did have.

00:11:57

Speaker 2

You couldn't carry many they. They weighed a little bit. I seemed like we had about 5 or 6.

00:12:03

Speaker 2

In the bag on your shoulder.

00:12:06

Speaker 1

And you followed the bazooka man around.

00:12:08

Speaker 2

Where they said for him to go, I had to go, had to buy a push, stick the stick the rocket in there and wire and punch him on the shore and let it tell him.

00:12:16

Speaker 2

Let him know go.

00:12:18

Speaker 1

And he's the one that actually fired.

00:12:20

Speaker 2

He had to do the firing and Amen.

00:12:25

Speaker 1

OK, so you're at Kaiser slaughter now, where do?

00:12:28

Speaker 1

You go from there.

00:12:31

Speaker 1

Yeah, go to line.

00:12:32

Speaker 2

Seems like we went to mates on the Bryan River.

00:12:38

Speaker 2

And we.

00:12:42

Speaker 2

We stayed a little while on the East West side. It would be of the rainfall across it.

00:12:49

Speaker 2

And then some little small landing craft had held, I believe 15 men in a Jeep.

00:12:57

Speaker 2

I don't remember what they call them, but we crossed the Rhine River in those and we didn't have any fire around us as we went across.

00:13:08

Speaker 2

And I later learned I worked with a fellow at.

00:13:14

Speaker 2

The Atomic Energy plant near here, and we were talking one night.

00:13:17

Speaker 2

And he and he was telling me that he he was up in Germany and put people across. He was a Navy man and he put people across in, in the landing craft. And lo and behold, I mean, he may have been the one that put me across, I don't know. But anyway, he was there. They were dressed like soldiers, so we didn't have any way of knowing.

00:13:37

Speaker 2

They were in regular soldiers uniform, had the the the little vehicle or a little craft on long trailers.

00:13:47

Speaker 1

American troops on the other side of the Rhine at.

00:13:48

Speaker 2

This point in time, they may have been farther up, I don't know, but we didn't have any resistance. We were when we went across there.

00:13:58

Speaker 2

And then.

00:14:01

Speaker 2

I don't remember the little towns in between, but I'm sure there was a number of them.

00:14:06

Speaker 2

And we went to, we were attacking Erfurt.

00:14:14

Speaker 2

And we went in just about Daybreak. We were going in.

00:14:19

Speaker 2

Part of us never did even get all the way in. We were still in the field. It would cross and two other fellows and I were in this field and they they kept us pinned down till around noon and then they decided the Germans decided to withdraw.

00:14:39

Speaker 2

But.

00:14:41

Speaker 2

While we were out in this field where we were in the ditch alongside the field, we we could see tanks going around the village behind us, not too far away and we thought they were American drinks, but we weren't sure. But anyway, after a little while a fella came out in the.

00:15:01

Speaker 2

And they had these, they grew, I guess they were sugar beets, some kind of beets, and they piled them in the field and put dirt over them. And this fellow walked out there and got up on top of the

hill beach and and looked all around. And so one of these and nuts I was with, he hollered. And when he did this.

00:15:24

Speaker 2

Bullets popped close. I mean, and so they just happened to be a culvert down. The road was raised and we we went under the culvert to the other side of the road.

00:15:36

Speaker 2

We were very little on it. Well, we heard a motorcycle coming, so we don't know if it's American or or German. So we we were waiting and watching and going to hold. It was a GI on the motorcycle came up and turned around just before we got to us and went back to the town, so I suppose.

00:15:55

Speaker 2

Well, that's the closest I know of. Probably getting killed, you know, by our own people.

00:16:03

Speaker

Hmm.

00:16:07

Speaker 1

Well from from that, that tension counter you went through over it then you said.

00:16:15

Speaker 1

And then and moved.

00:16:16

Speaker 2

They, they, they, we, we, they, they we took it.

00:16:21

Speaker 2

And then.

00:16:22

Speaker 1

Did the tanks turn out to be American or?

00:16:24

Speaker 2

They were. It was American, going around, going around, you know they would do. You'd have a front here and they they may go. Another section may go around, but either end.

00:16:37

Speaker 2

And that's what. That's what that was.

00:16:39

Speaker 1

OK, where did you go from there?

00:16:44

Speaker 2

Well, like I said, there may have been a little town or two in between. I'm sure there was, but we went to Castle.

00:16:49

Speaker 2

And.

00:16:52

Speaker 2

I believe it was an old I believe it was a German bags that we went into when we went into the town. Well, uh.

00:17:01

Speaker 2

Along with about daylight, we went in early in the morning.

00:17:05

Speaker 2

Long about.

00:17:06



Speaker 1

Resistance going in there, really. The humans occupying, are they?

00:17:07

Speaker 2

Not no, no, no, no, they, well, they were in there. We didn't know it. So about daylight, our CEO told us, told the the Bazooka man and myself to go out in the street. There was a German tank wandering around, but we went out into the street and.

00:17:28

Speaker 2

Lo and behold, it wasn't a German tank. It was a lot of German tanks, tiger oils, and the infantry with them.

00:17:36

Speaker 2

So I guess the good Lord provided the because they just happened to be a manhole there with no cover and we went in that and we stayed in there and we could watch the.

00:17:49

Speaker 2

The tanks move by and see the legs of the soldiers going and.

00:17:55

Speaker 2

We stayed till almost noon, I guess and.

00:17:59

Speaker 2

We finally heard GI voices, so we we took a chance and came out and it was our outfit. So we we rejoined them and then they got the.

00:18:10

Speaker 2

Air support I guess. And we we took took the town.

00:18:16

Speaker 1

Is it was that typical when when they when they found a tank that they call for the bazooka man to come forward to take care of that?

00:18:23

Speaker 2

Well, I don't know if it's always the occasion, but he was the man that's supposed to block. Know the blow of the tracks or something off. But I even blown much. I don't think off of that tank would. Especially those that German had.

00:18:38

Speaker 2

With them.

00:18:39

Speaker 1

Tell me a little bit about the the town. Was it built up in this area or is it houses?

00:18:43

Speaker 2

It was. It was a good sized town, yeah.

00:18:47

Speaker 1

And and this manhole was right, right in the middle of.

00:18:49

Speaker 2

Was on side the street and they they came up the street and we could lookout and.

00:18:58

Speaker 1

That was rather tense.

00:19:00

Speaker 2

It was.

00:19:03

Speaker 1

Did you? Did you worry about when you heard the American voices? If you popped out of this manhole, the head shoot at you?

00:19:07

Speaker 2

Well, we weren't sure, but we had to take. We had to take a chance.

00:19:10

Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:19:14

Speaker 1

Did you? Did you have a password?

00:19:17

Speaker 2

Well, each night you had a password, but we didn't. We didn't. We just Holler, Holler at him and leave, you know.

00:19:21

Speaker 1

Yell out, then. These guys don't let them know you're.

00:19:28

Speaker 2

OK.

00:19:33

Speaker 1

How about how?

00:19:34

Speaker 1

About the the German civilians were they were they evacuating the town or did they stay in the town pretty much or?

00:19:41

Speaker 2

Well, sometimes they were. There were people in town. Usually they had. They weren't really around, but sometimes they'd be in and they'd have, uh, bed sheets or something hanging out the window. You know, if white.

00:19:54

Speaker 2

White cloth.

00:19:56

Speaker 2

You know, so we didn't bother him.

00:19:59

Speaker 1

Did you ever use their houses for sleeping villains or?

00:20:03

Speaker 2

Many, many, many times we.

00:20:06

Speaker 2

Slipping there sometimes in the bed, sometimes in the floor, which whatever was available, that's was.

00:20:12

Speaker 1

The Germans in the in the same building.

00:20:14

Speaker 2

Not usually. No, huh?

00:20:14

Speaker

In Europe.

00:20:19

Speaker 1

OK, good.

00:20:21

Speaker 1

All right. So you, your unit took Castle, I assume, and did you stay there and occupy it or did you move on from there?

00:20:24

Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:20:29

Speaker 2

Now we went on from there. I don't think we stayed that we may have stayed overnight or something like that, but.

00:20:36

Speaker 2

Once the clearance out, they usually the trucks would come up and haul us to the next.

00:20:45

Speaker 2

Close to the next encounter.

00:20:48

Speaker 1

Deuce and 1/2.

00:20:49

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

00:20:53

Speaker 1

Were you bombed by the the German Air Force at this time, or the Americans pretty well cleared the?

00:20:59

Speaker 2

The only I had seen air dive bombers bombing the head of is, but the only thing I ever seen was the Germans was what they called bed. Check Charlie. He he was a reconnaissance.

00:21:12

Speaker 2

Plane. He came around every every late, every evening.

00:21:16

Speaker 2

And make a few circles around over the territory where we were. I suppose he was.

00:21:22

Speaker 2

I don't know what.

00:21:23

Speaker 2

Kind of picture.

00:21:24

Speaker 2

To take in the villages they had back then. But that's what that was. What?

00:21:28

Speaker 2

He was doing.

00:21:28

Speaker 1

Trying to locate where the lines were. Yeah, good. OK. So from Castle, where did you head towards?

00:21:29

Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:21:42

Speaker 2

I don't know exactly.

00:21:44

Speaker 2

We were headed toward Leipzig, Germany.

00:21:48

Speaker 2

And we.

00:21:52

Speaker 2

We went way up toward there, and then there was a change in plans. The my understanding is that we, our government, agreed for the Russians to cross the Elk River, so we stopped short of going up to lapsing, which was near the Elk River. So we came back South.

00:22:13

Speaker 2

Or South maybe SW or east, but down toward Austria?

00:22:18

Speaker 2

And.

00:22:20

Speaker 2

We went.

00:22:20

Speaker 1

You go through Nuremberg.

00:22:23

Speaker 2

Yes, I did. Yeah, I don't remember what sequence that was in, but we we released some another 6. I don't remember which division, but anyway we released somebody that we did we we didn't take the town ourselves my come but we stayed there a few days and and we had you know R&R I suppose.

00:22:44

Speaker 2

She had a Red Cross mobile and and.

00:22:49

Speaker 2

We took showers and different things that we didn't get it on the front.

00:22:52

Speaker

So.

00:22:52

Speaker 1

When you got the Nuremberg that was already in US hands, I guess the Third Infantry division.

00:22:55

Speaker 2

Yeah. Yeah, yeah, yeah. And while we were there, they, the Germans, had a huge parade ground where they had their.

00:23:06

Speaker 2

I guess they're show off parades for Hitler, but anyway, there was a huge swastika up on the top.

00:23:13

Speaker 2

Of it. And they they blew it away while we were there. Blew it off the top of it.

00:23:21

Speaker 1

All the GI's went crazy.

00:23:23

Speaker 2

Yeah, I don't know.

00:23:24

Speaker 1



What did they use to blow it off?

00:23:31

Speaker 1

OK. And and you started telling us about the you had some entertainment while you were there the USO?

00:23:38

Speaker 1

Show or something again.

00:23:38

Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

00:23:41

Speaker 1

Any any names that we'd recognize?

00:23:43

Speaker 2

No, no, no.

00:23:45

Speaker 2

60 years later, if I ever knew I would know.

00:23:47

Speaker 1

Yeah, OK, I understand. I understand. Did you see patent at all during this period?

00:23:55

Speaker 2

Well, we had A at well, we went Austria, we went through Brown Austria, which was the birth place of of Hitler. And we went by house.

00:24:07

Speaker 2

They told us was where he was born.

00:24:10

Speaker 2

But then.

00:24:12

Speaker 2

When the war ended, we we were out in the country like in Austria.

00:24:17

Speaker 2

And.

00:24:20

Speaker 2

We had a.

00:24:22

Speaker 2

I forgot the names of the German armies.

00:24:26

Speaker 2

When we got the words to surrender, they they.

00:24:31

Speaker 2

They came, they came.

00:24:36

Speaker 2

They came by the we just had a feel for them with A1 strand of wire around it and.

00:24:44

Speaker 2

Shortly after the war was over there we we went to Pilsen, Czechoslovakia and had a parade with the Russians and the parade down the street.

00:24:54

Speaker 2

And the general pattern was there and some Russian general was there and the Russian got up and said his words. I don't know what they were in Russian. So Patton got up and he said his in English and he used his.

00:25:09

Speaker 2

Good. The good English that he used talking about the general, you know, on his men and the but I don't know if the general spoke English or not, but anyway he got his point.

00:25:24

Speaker

Across.

00:25:26

Speaker 2

So.

00:25:28

Speaker 2

I.

00:25:29

Speaker 2

They then Europe from.

00:25:32

Speaker 2

May till the next April.

00:25:37

Speaker 1

But let me bring you back a little bit on your way into Austria. You were telling us a story about crossing the Danube.

00:25:42

Speaker 2

Oh, yes. Oh, yeah. Well, when we crossed the Danube River, we crossed and we were out Rd. trucks and it was on those pontoon little tracks that you went across on, you know. But anyway, we had to spell it called Snuffy. I guess everybody had a every outfit.

00:26:03

Speaker 2

That one. But anyway, when we when we driving across the Danube river, he was playing the Blue Danube on harmonica.

00:26:12

Speaker

Where the.

00:26:17

Speaker 1

You, you say, then, then the war ended and you were. You stayed in Europe. Can you tell me a little bit about?

00:26:24

Speaker 1

What you did then?

00:26:25

Speaker 2

Well, one period I we guarded the.

00:26:31

Speaker 2

General's house.

00:26:32

Speaker 2

He had a house out in the country like and we two of us at the time was there all all 24 hours a day. We were there and we walked around his.

00:26:45

Speaker 2

Building he stayed in and seeing.

00:26:47

Speaker 1

For the 80th Division commander.

00:26:48

Speaker 2

No, this was I was. I went the 80th Division. They came home shortly after the war was over. Because they'd been over there most of the time and most of the men had enough points to come home. But I didn't have enough to come right then. So this I was in the four fifth.

00:27:08

Speaker 2

Entrance three, 102nd division.

00:27:13

Speaker 1

OK. And where was this located?

00:27:13

Speaker 2

We.

00:27:15

Speaker 2

Near Beirut or Beirut.

00:27:21

Speaker 1

And did you have much interaction then with the German people or did you, where were you building it?

00:27:30

Speaker 2

Well, usually we was in a house to say was schools over. We stay alive in one emman stop. We stayed in a A.

00:27:42

Speaker 2

Agricultural school.

00:27:44

Speaker 2

We lived in that for several months.

00:27:47

Speaker 2

And.

00:27:51

Speaker 1

Did you have trouble getting supplies or anything at that point in time, or what was the German people's food situation?

00:27:56

Speaker 2

No, no.

00:28:00

Speaker 2

Well, I think theirs must have been short because they would ask us for our coffee grounds after we had used them and we we, uh, we let them have them, you know.

00:28:11

Speaker 2

And I'm kind of ashamed. But every Christmas I think of this, one of the jobs I had was guarding the the VD hospital. If they picked ladies or women up off the street, they run them through that to check them, to see if they had disease.

00:28:31

Speaker 2

But anyway this is this.

00:28:34

Speaker 2

German nurse in there and. And it was Christmas time and we we were talking whatever we could. So me and several other fellows that were on duty there and she got attendance about she said.

00:28:49

Speaker 2

She said feel boom boom now, she said the flukes had come. Phil Boom, boom.

00:28:57

Speaker 2

Nick's Mama and Nick's Papa all is kapoot and we we knew better than this, but we said I said scoot. I said Scoot and she was in there playing silent night. And you know, every time I hear that, I think about what a dirty Rascal it would for telling her. That was good. Then wish it might have been good, but.

00:29:17

Speaker 2

That one, nice to tell her.

00:29:20

Speaker 2

And I'm not proud of it.

00:29:22

Speaker 1

Tell me a little bit. I know your unit had a bunch of German soldiers surrendering during that period. Were you ever involved in taking POW's or guarding them or escorting them?

00:29:38

Speaker 2

Well, no, not really.

00:29:42

Speaker 2

The.

00:29:44

Speaker 2

The seals Jeep driver in highway in this one town in Austria. We stayed in. They had a German hospital and uh.

00:29:53

Speaker 2

That's when we had all the prisoners in the big field and the nurse from the the German nurse. From or in the German hospital every day or so she'd come over and said I'm told. So I told her whatever. Anyway, some of the their patients had died. So the.

00:30:14

Speaker 2

The seal was driver and I had to take the Jeep and it wasn't a very good horse, but we had to take the Jeep and the trailer, the Jeep trailer and go over and they load the dead ones on the on the Jeep. Then we had to take them out in the field or the prisoners. Where? And they they had a cemetery there. They where they buried them.

00:30:32

Speaker 1

The.

00:30:32

Speaker 1

Germans buried their own, yeah.

00:30:33

Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:30:35

Speaker 2

We just delivered them.

00:30:41

Speaker 1

Tell me a little bit about. I was going to ask you your your strongest memory or the time you were most afraid, but I think you told us that in the in the beat field there what what was some of the bravest things that you saw Americans do?

00:30:52

Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:31:02



Speaker 2

I don't know of any particular.

00:31:05

Speaker 2

Thing is this.

00:31:07

Speaker 2

Is all move ahead you know.

00:31:10

Speaker 1

Just doing your job.

00:31:11

Speaker 2

Right, right.

00:31:11

Speaker 1

Huh.

00:31:13

Speaker 1

You know, hanging out down there in that.

00:31:14

Speaker 1

Sewer it sounds pretty brave to me.

00:31:17

Speaker 2

Well, it didn't feel very brave right then, but it it served the purpose.

00:31:26

Speaker 2

If they're one of those photos that having to look down in there and drop the grenade down there, we wouldn't be having this interview today.

00:31:32

Speaker 1

Was there, was there pipes running through to it was.

00:31:34

Speaker 2

No, no, it was no. It was just a manhole with I I guess it had a, you know, like they have just one, but there was no sewage or anything in there. It's just a drain, I suppose St. drain.

00:31:35

Speaker 1

Just all around.

00:31:48

Speaker 1

OK. Is there anything that you can think of you'd like to tell us about in your experience?

00:31:56

Speaker 2

No, I'm just. I'm just. I wasn't very brave and proud then, but now I'm. I'm thankful and I am proud that I served my country and.

00:32:07

Speaker 1

What is it that that you would like people of this generation to know about World War 2 and and your generation that that they went through and?

00:32:18

Speaker 1

What are the lessons learned, I guess?

00:32:18

Speaker 2

Well.

00:32:20

Speaker 2

I'm not sure we learned a lot of all of the lessons we should have, but when I think of D-Day, which I did not participate in, I knew some people that did that was.

00:32:34

Speaker 2

A brave thing and a a great thing we did. That's one reason I had respect.

00:32:40

Speaker 2

Strom thurmond? He he was one of those people that rode those plywood gliders over into France and pulled them over there by plane and turned them loose and.

00:32:53

Speaker 2

I thought it to the good bidder.

00:32:56

Speaker 2

Do I need to do that?

00:33:00

Speaker 2

Well, they used to tell us that Patton, that said he was going to take Berlin if he had to ship the dog tags back by box cars, but he his blood, his blood and guts.

00:33:15

Speaker 2

Our blood in his guts, but I'll have. I think he was a great general personally.

00:33:19

Speaker 2

I think because he he went up. If he his men, his officers stalled up there said he went up there and gave him a little push.

00:33:31

Speaker 2

And he is capable of doing it.

00:33:33

Speaker 1

If the troops like him or hate him.

00:33:35

Speaker 2

Well, there is.

00:33:35

Speaker 2

A like he is a like hater.

00:33:42

Speaker 1

Well, listen, we certainly want to thank you for participating in this little project of ours and and hopefully that your story will be around for generations to come and I want to thank you for your service to our country.

00:33:58

Speaker 2

Thank you.

00:34:04

Speaker 2

This is a plaque that my three of my daughters fixed for me on my 80th birthday. Unbeknownst to me, I knew absolutely nothing about it, and it was a complete surprise when they had the party and and came up with this.

00:34:22

Speaker 2

This is the story that some of the story I just told and this is me. Before when I first went in the army, this is myself and another fellow in Germany. This is me in Germany and me in Germany.

00:34:37

Speaker 2

And uh, this is a comrade in myself. Before we went overseas.

00:34:42

Speaker 2

And this is a partner myself in Germany. This is before I went overseas.

00:34:48

Speaker 2

And this is a Claire Campbell.

00:34:51

Speaker 2

From up in Pennsylvania and myself, that was in, in, in stock Germany. And this was me working in Greenwood, SC and a metal shop.

00:35:08

Speaker 2

These are just some of the certificates I got from the merchant marine. One of them is for lifeboat efficiency and the other one is for qualified member of the Engine Department and the other one is a Siemens certificate.

00:35:22

Speaker 2

And the other little cards are just for identification and the patch down in the right corner is the patch they used at the United States Maritime Service Training School at Sheepshead Bay, New York.

00:35:37

Speaker 2

On the left is a batch from full 5th Infantry, 102nd Division, which I was in from the time shortly after the time the war was over, until I came home and the one on the right is the 318th Infantry 80th Division.

00:35:57

Speaker 2

Which I was a member of during the war and the little bird in the middle is what they gave it to. When you discharge, they called it a ruptured duck.

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