

James William Morris Interview #1

80th Infantry Division

(Library of Congress: Veterans History Project; interviewed by Tony Mavredes)

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

00:00:00 Speaker 2

The day is Friday. May the 7th 2004 and this is the beginning of an interview with Mr. James Morris at Erlanger Health and plus office in Chattanooga, TN. Mr. Morris was born on January 5th, 1929 and is now 75 years old. My name is Tony Mavridis and I'll conduct this interview, Mr. Morris, if you will.

00:00:21 Speaker 2

Please state your name and its spelling.

00:00:23 Speaker 1

Named James W Morris, J AM ESWMORIS.

00:00:30 Speaker 2

And which time frame did you serve?

00:00:32 Speaker 1

I served started in 19 and 48 in the National Guard, went on active duty in 1952.

00:00:42 Speaker 1

Left active duty in 1953 and in the Army Reserve until retired and went into the retired reserve in 1979.

00:00:54 Speaker 1

And state and retired reserve till 1989 and then?

00:01:00 Speaker 1

Completed the entire obligation.

00:01:02 Speaker 2

Good. And which branch of service did you serve?

00:01:04 Speaker 1

Are.

00:01:04 Speaker 1

For me.

00:01:06 Speaker 2

And what was your highest rank attained?

00:01:08 Speaker 1

First Sergeant 8.

00:01:09 Speaker 2

Wonderful.

00:01:11 Speaker 2

As we get started, tell me a little bit about where you were born and how life was growing up and a little bit about your family.

00:01:18 Speaker 1

OK, well, I was born in Pulaski, VA.

00:01:23 Speaker 1

1929 and growing up as I normally tell folks, we moved around a lot. My dad was in the timber business and worked at furniture factories and while we moved quite a bit, I have one brother. His name is Joe.

00:01:42 Speaker 1

Marsh.

00:01:44 Speaker 1

We are a year apart. He's a year younger than I am.

00:01:48 Speaker 1

And might want to get into that a little later, but I'll tell you more about him and our military as we go along. But I attended grade school in Pulaski, VA, and newborn, Virginia and most of my early childhood was in newborn, Virginia.

00:01:55 Speaker 2

Good.

00:02:05 Speaker 1

A small little small place.

00:02:09 Speaker 1

Then after that I went to high school at Dublin High School, Dublin, VA, graduated from there in 1947.

00:02:18 Speaker 1

Went to work for the Virginia Department of Highways on survey party.

00:02:23 Speaker 1

And that's where, uh, really?

00:02:28 Speaker 1

Got connected with the military was there because a lot of the folks that were working for the Highway Department were World War 2 veterans.

00:02:37 Speaker 1

They belong to the National Guard in Roanoke, VA, and that's where I was working.

00:02:43 Speaker 1

They taught me and another young man into joining the National Guard, and if you'd like me to tell 1 little thing concerning that.

00:02:52 Speaker 1

We were the only two single people on this survey party.

00:02:59 Speaker 1

And when we went into the Army National Guard, it was in the summer. I can look on it exactly the date, but it was in June. See on it was in June 1948.

00:03:12 Speaker 1

Well, they had to go to summer camp, but they called it annual training and we went to Camp Pendleton and near Virginia Beach. They didn't know what to do with us. We had no training. We knew how to put our uniforms on because we knew how to clothe ourselves, so they didn't have nothing for us to do, and they came around one day and asked us if we knew anything about.

00:03:32 Speaker 1

Being a bartender and, well, we knew something. What? They served at bar in the bar, but we said no, not as, but we became bartenders at the officers club at Camp Pendleton at Virginia Beach, and we did that for two weeks.

00:03:49 Speaker 1

That was my first official job in the military, so we had a lot of fun doing that. The officers had a lot of fun with us and we made it real good, but after that I I stayed there in in 1949, I changed jobs and came back to Pulaski.

00:04:08 Speaker 1

And then I was drafted into the you're going to get into that. I was drafted into the military in February the 29th. That was leap year.

00:04:12 Speaker 2

That's fine.

00:04:19 Speaker 1

February the 29th, 19 and 52.

00:04:23 Speaker 1

I had married, had been married two years, would have been two years, 4th day of March of 52.

00:04:33 Speaker 2

You. You said you were drafted in.

00:04:35 Speaker 1

Drafted. Yes. When I left the National Guard, I had no idea of being drafted and was married, so I didn't feel like I would go back into the military.

00:04:44 Speaker 1

But I was with the first group of married men that left Pulaski County during the Korean War that was drafted from there.

00:04:51 Speaker 2

So you had the expectation that you wouldn't be drafted because you've been in the National Guard. You were married. So what was it like when you got that special invitation to come visit?

00:04:55 Speaker 1

That's right, right.

00:05:01 Speaker 1

Well that I was working and my wife and I were living in a little apartment. It started housekeeping and I came home from work. One evening she handed me the paper, and in the paper it said there were going to be some men married men drafted from Pulaski, VA.

00:05:17 Speaker 1

I got on the phone and called the lady at the draft board, Hazel Cox. I still kid her about that and asked her if I was on the list and she said yes. You are James.

00:05:29 Speaker 1

And I said, how about my brother Joe? She said yes, he's on it too. So both of you are going at the same time. And so we did so that I was went in and went to.

00:05:41 Speaker 1

Fort Meade, MD, and was inducted there.

00:05:44 Speaker 2

Now your brother went with you.

00:05:45 Speaker 1

Yes, brother was in with us. Yes. And he was also married.

00:05:49

Great.

00:05:51 Speaker 1

We went to Fort Meade, MD, and stayed.

00:05:54 Speaker 1

Not very long. Get get all of our uniforms and get everything situated and put on the train and went to camp, Breckenridge, Kentucky.

00:06:05 Speaker 2

But that was for basic.

00:06:06 Speaker 1

For basic training, we was there with the 101st Airborne Division.

00:06:11 Speaker 1

And then.

00:06:11 Speaker 2

Now, having been married and been on your own and doing your own thing for.

00:06:15 Speaker 2

A.

00:06:15 Speaker 2

Number of years going back to this structured life must have been a.

00:06:18 Speaker 2

Little bit different for you.

00:06:19 Speaker 1

It was we.

00:06:22 Speaker 1

We didn't know what to do. The money wasn't enough for my wife to rent an apartment.

00:06:30 Speaker 1

So we broke up housekeeping and we stored our furniture part at my parents home and parted her parents home. And my brother did the same thing and they lived with my parents while we were gone and they worked while we were gone.

00:06:48 Speaker 1

So that then then when we came back, we both bought homes and and went moved to.

00:06:53 Speaker 1

Thank you.

00:06:54 Speaker 2

Now you had mentioned the fact that you've been in the National Guard with with the the veterans from World War 2.

00:06:57 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:07:01 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:07:04 Speaker 2

What you saw in them and what you were facing with the Korean War.

00:07:10 Speaker 2

Were there, were they similar? Was it different? Did you have? What was the feelings like during that time?

00:07:16 Speaker 1

Well, the, the the folks that I was with before while in the National Guard, of course they talked about their experiences in, in wartime and I'm not sure that.

00:07:30 Speaker 1

That I thought too much about what connection that would have with me going into combat, because I do feel that folks that have been in combat tell you part of it, and then you learn the rest of it. And and that's what happened. And it didn't take long to get the experience and feel like it had maybe enough.

00:07:49 Speaker 2

OK.

00:07:50 Speaker 2

Now how long were you at Breckenridge?

00:07:52 Speaker 1

Is it Breckenridge 16 weeks?

00:07:54 Speaker 2

16 weeks.

00:07:56 Speaker 2

Did you have any time off during that time?

00:07:59 Speaker 1

The only time we had off was maybe a a weekend and but didn't have any leave time or any of that. It was for 16 weeks.

00:08:09 Speaker 2

Now, having having been at home with the wife for a couple of years, I'm sure the food was very similar, right?

00:08:17 Speaker 1

No.

00:08:20 Speaker 2

A little bit different.

00:08:21 Speaker 1

Dear.

00:08:21 Speaker 1

Different, but that was one thing that I really I've thought about that and have have talked some about the food that we had.

00:08:31 Speaker 1

I can remember going into the mess hall. Of course, this this was the old barracks type camp at Breckenridge that opened up for training.

00:08:39 Speaker 1

Over the door, it said take all you want but eat all you take.

00:08:44 Speaker 1

You didn't waste food. You didn't go back from seconds. You just ate what they gave you and and went. I I never had any problem with with the food. Really. Of course. I'd rather been home eating my wife's cooking, but.

00:08:55 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:08:57 Speaker 1

But I had no problem with that.

00:09:00 Speaker 2

You're finishing up your 16 weeks.

00:09:03 Speaker 2

During your basic training, did you know that from the start that you were off to?

00:09:08 Speaker 2

Korea.

00:09:08 Speaker 1

No.

00:09:09 Speaker 2

Or what was your thoughts about that when you, when you finally finished your 16 weeks and you got that assignment here is your next orders?

00:09:17 Speaker 1

OK, out of the there's 180 million in my basic training unit.

00:09:28 Speaker 1

And the way they.

00:09:30 Speaker 1

Fixed our orders for overseas duties or assignment was a through L went to Europe.

00:09:38 Speaker 1

M through Z went to the Far East, which included Korea.

00:09:43 Speaker 1

Now when we found that out.

00:09:48 Speaker 1

It was a shock, yes, to to know that we were going there.

00:09:54 Speaker 2

Now, how far along? When you're getting these orders, how far along are we into the Korean War? I mean, what are you hearing about what's?

00:10:00 Speaker 2

Going on in Korea?

00:10:01 Speaker 1

Not a whole lot. Some of the men that trained us were from had been to Korea, so they would tell us how bad it was, and that was to get us to do the training.

00:10:13 Speaker 1

And to get the training that we would need to protect ourselves and to do the job and complete the mission when we got there.

00:10:20 Speaker 1

But it was scary to know that and to know that we were leaving the one thing my brother was in basic training with me, also in the same squad, my company commander, to our knowledge, didn't know we were brothers. And the day we got our orders to to ship out, he called me into the.

00:10:40 Speaker 1

Office and asked me if I had a brother there and I said yes, I do and he said I can't send both of you to Korea.

00:10:48 Speaker 1

But it was too late for him to change the order, so we both did go and after we get into Korea, I'll tell you a little bit about that.

00:10:54 Speaker 2

Good. Now, did you have anytime off before you were?

00:10:58 Speaker 1

We had 14 days delaying right. They call it delay in route. We got to come home, spend that time and then we went to Fort Lewis and Seattle, WA, Fort Lewis, WA.

00:11:11 Speaker 1

To be shipped out.

00:11:13 Speaker 2

Now it had to be tough having been married.

00:11:17 Speaker 2

Couple of years done. All this military stuff, knowing where you're going and the intensity that's going on there.

00:11:24 Speaker 2

What was it like to come home for those 14 days?

00:11:28 Speaker 1

It was good to come home and and we enjoyed those 14 days.

00:11:34 Speaker 1

When I got ready to leave the morning, we were getting ready to leave my wife and I talked quite a bit about realities that could take place and some things that I would like for her to do if I didn't come back. We did that.

00:11:51 Speaker 1

And it was a sad time. The last three or four days was really bad.

00:11:56 Speaker 1

And I can remember the morning. It was hard for me to even hold her hand that morning.

00:12:03 Speaker 1

But she was braver than I was.

00:12:06 Speaker 1

And I couldn't. I wasn't able to carry my duffel bag to the car. I just. I was just completely wiped out just about. But of course we did, and she wished me the best and some of the folks, some of the neighbors, were there and did the same thing because this was two brothers leaving, going to the same place.

00:12:25 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:12:27 Speaker 2

Sort of had to magnify things quite a bit. How did Mom and Dad handle that? Because your wives were living with.

00:12:28 Speaker 1

We should do.

00:12:32 Speaker 2

Them.

00:12:32 Speaker 1

Right.

00:12:33 Speaker 2

How did they handle this besides the fact that they've been taking care of these ladies for a few days and a few weeks now, and now they're seeing both boys go to Korea? How did Mom and Dad handle it?

00:12:46 Speaker 1

You know, I don't remember their.

00:12:49 Speaker 1

I just don't remember them saying anything they would, I'm sure, wished us the best and they stayed in the house when we left.

00:12:59 Speaker 1

I don't remember much reaction from them really. They kind of left it with us with their wives too.

00:13:06 Speaker 1

I think they were considerate there.

00:13:10 Speaker 2

So you're up in Washington?

00:13:13 Speaker 2

How are you going to get to Korea?

00:13:15 Speaker 1

We were well. We stayed in Fort Lewis for maybe two weeks and then they went on a ship. We went by ship.

00:13:25 Speaker 2

How long did that take?

00:13:27 Speaker 1

If I remember right, it was 14 days to Yokohama, Japan. That's where we went next.

00:13:36 Speaker 2

And how is life on board ship?

00:13:40 Speaker 2

I mean, I don't think they have any ships in.

00:13:41 Speaker 2

Pulaski, if I remember right.

00:13:43 Speaker 1

No. Well.

00:13:48 Speaker 1

I can remember about the only thing I did aboard ship, and I've heard people say pulling KP, they put me in the kitchen working from 7:00 at night till 7:00 in the morning. So I worked in the kitchen the whole time for that period of time.

00:14:03 Speaker 2

And you get to Japan. And how long would you be?

00:14:06 Speaker 1

In Japan, we were at Camp Drake in Tokyo.

00:14:12 Speaker 1

Probably 2 weeks.

00:14:15 Speaker 1

And every day they would read out names where they were going, shipping them out. And of course our name. My my brother's name came up first and then mine came up. We went with the.

00:14:29 Speaker 1

2nd Infantry Division in Korea.

00:14:33 Speaker 1

That was by boat. That was about another 7 days.

00:14:38 Speaker 1

From there to Korea.

00:14:41 Speaker 2

Had you gotten any more insight about what was happening in Korea at this point? Are we still pretty isolated from the real?

00:14:47 Speaker 2

Events.

00:14:47 Speaker 1

Not really, very little was said. It was just a matter of processing and assignments and reissuing of equipment and.

00:14:57 Speaker 1

But not very much about what was going on. We did.

00:15:00 Speaker 1

Heard very little about that.

00:15:02 Speaker 2

OK, you're 7 days from Japan. Do you remember where you landed in Korea?

00:15:07 Speaker 1

Landed it in John in John Korea.

00:15:09

OK.

00:15:12 Speaker 2

Was there a processing camp there as well or?

00:15:14 Speaker 1

We went to the processing camp with the Second Infantry division and they assigned us to companies.

00:15:26 Speaker 2

Now, where is your brother at during this process as well?

00:15:29 Speaker 1

We're right together there. We're everything. It was alphabetically, so, right.

00:15:36 Speaker 2

You're pretty close to each.

00:15:37 Speaker 2

Other.

00:15:38 Speaker 2

So they would send you to the.

00:15:39 Speaker 2

Same company.

00:15:40 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:15:41 Speaker 2

And what was this company?

00:15:43 Speaker 1

It was Company B of the first battalion.

00:15:46 Speaker 1

The 38th Infantry Regiment, the Second Infantry division.

00:15:52 Speaker 2

OK. And what would your assignments be with those companies?

00:15:55 Speaker 1

Rifleman.

00:15:58 Speaker 1

M1 rifle.

00:16:01 Speaker 2

Now.

00:16:02 Speaker 2

Once again making the comparison to having work jobs and been married and been on your own.

00:16:09 Speaker 2

At what point after you got into Korea, did you realize that we're not in Pulaski anymore?

00:16:15 Speaker 1

About 10 minutes.

00:16:17 Speaker 1

Long enough for your feet to get on the ground, because once you hit Korea then the reality sits in of where you are and what's taking place.

00:16:26 Speaker 2

Now, did they give you any warm up time to get adjusted to the situation and career or?

00:16:30 Speaker 2

Was it your?

00:16:30 Speaker 1

No, it was just right. Maybe 3 days and you were on the.

00:16:35 Speaker 2

Three days.

00:16:38 Speaker 1

You were where the action was.

00:16:40 Speaker 2

Now.

00:16:41 Speaker 2

Everything at this point has been pretend. Make believe. I mean, we're just shooting at pieces of paper and targets and things.

00:16:48

MHM.

00:16:49 Speaker 2

What do you recall about the first time you really ran into your first?

00:16:53 Speaker 2

Combat real fire going on around you.

00:16:57 Speaker 1

I guess I don't know just how long it was, it couldn't have been maybe a week.

00:17:04 Speaker 1

We went to the front line. I remember the first going up everywhere you went in Korea, in the area where where you went up hill mountains.

00:17:14 Speaker 1

And starting up the hill, there were several Chinese or North Korean sold dead soldiers land. That was the first time I can remember a, you know, this is real. And then it was just a matter.

00:17:26 Speaker 1

Of trying to survive.

00:17:32 Speaker 2

How is life in the company? How is the relationships with the other guys and?

00:17:37 Speaker 1

Very.

00:17:39 Speaker 1

I don't remember any negative parts at all. Everyone had a job to do.

00:17:46 Speaker 1

Had a portion of the mission that was to be accomplished. Each one had their own job to do, and we did it.

00:17:54 Speaker 2

When you first joined the company, did you find yourself being left out there a little bit where you were a little green or did guys pretty much bring in?

00:18:01 Speaker 1

They.

00:18:03 Speaker 1

When we went in the unit company I went with had just been through a heavy battle and had lost a lot of folks.

00:18:11 Speaker 1

And we were replacements.

00:18:14 Speaker 1

And I can remember 1 Puerto Rican, a gentleman by the name of Rico.

00:18:19 Speaker 1

And a gentleman by the name of Hugh Ledbetter.

00:18:23 Speaker 1

And I can call these names because it's in a positive way and one was Frank Holla.

00:18:29 Speaker 1

They were the leaders and they took us under the wing and and tried to help us and to show us how to do the job we were assigned to do because they had been there a while.

00:18:43 Speaker 2

You said they lost a bunch not too long before you joined.

00:18:46

We're here.

00:18:47 Speaker 2

Them.

00:18:48 Speaker 2

Were these guys?

00:18:50 Speaker 2

New to the service, I mean, they were Korean War air. Or would they bring backs from World War?

00:18:55 Speaker 2

2.

00:18:56 Speaker 1

Well, it could have been, but I wouldn't know that they didn't. That way we just knew that that had taken place and that we were replacements. And as to get me into, I don't remember anyone calling any names who had been killed or wounded or that I don't remember them doing that. We had the same job to do, that they had the ones that were left.

00:19:17 Speaker 1

Still had the job to do. We were just taking those folks place and filling in and you soon learned what you're supposed to do and how to do.

00:19:27 Speaker 2

Now was this a a company that was active and always on the move or did you have a base?

00:19:32 Speaker 2

Camp that you would come back to.

00:19:33 Speaker 1

No, no, no bases. We were on the move. The only time we would come back it would be into what they call a reserve area.

00:19:41 Speaker 1

Where you were to back up another unit that was in front of you that we have to understand, this is after the war had kind of stabilized it. It wasn't a moving attacking. We were on the defense rather than the offense most of the time. Now we were up on what we call the front lines, but.

00:20:01 Speaker 1

We were not attacking.

00:20:04 Speaker 1

As they did the first two years of.

00:20:06

The war.

00:20:07 Speaker 1

Our first 18 months anyway because it was a moving war then.

00:20:12 Speaker 2

The.

00:20:14 Speaker 2

Life in the company you'd already had the adjustment to basic training and that wonderful change in your diet. How was the diet in Korea?

00:20:21 Speaker 1

Mm-hmm.

00:20:25 Speaker 1

Lucky to get one hot meal a day, most of the time, most of just see rations.

00:20:33 Speaker 2

Did you gain weight or lose weight?

00:20:35 Speaker 1

And I don't remember doing either one pretty much stayed. The rations were not too bad. If you get the right one.

00:20:42 Speaker 2

How long did it take you to learn which ones to pick?

00:20:45 Speaker 1

Not long. Maybe the first carton you opened because the carton you got was about a shoe box size, had three meals in it for a day and it had breakfast, not bacon and eggs, of course. But then they had sausage for one and a hamburger, and then it would have.

00:21:05 Speaker 1

A cookie in it and.

00:21:08 Speaker 1

Some coffee to make coffee.

00:21:11 Speaker 1

And that was about it. A little roll of toilet paper.

00:21:14 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:21:14 Speaker 1

For you and four cigarettes pack of four cigarettes, that was in a celebration.

00:21:17 Speaker 2

4.

00:21:21 Speaker 2

How often we got this? What? Every couple days or?

00:21:23 Speaker 1

Where you get them every.

00:21:25 Speaker 2

Every morning. So you did pretty well. At least you got something.

00:21:28 Speaker 1

We we had plenty. Yes, we had stuff to eat. Yes, they did try wherever we were, they would try to come in after dark and bring us maybe cake and hot coffee.

00:21:41 Speaker 1

But and on occasion it depended on the seriousness of where we were and the danger they would set up a mess tent and cook a meal and we would have that. So that wasn't too often, but it did happen.

00:21:55 Speaker 2

Did you get any downtime? Days off any R&R time during it?

00:21:59 Speaker 1

Got did get R&R.

00:22:02 Speaker 1

On our rest and recuperation they gave you 5 days. I went to Tokyo, Japan, and if you want me to get into a little bit of what took place, how I got them.

00:22:17 Speaker 1

In December of 52.

00:22:21 Speaker 1

My brother and I were together at the same company, the same squadron on the front lines.

00:22:26 Speaker 1

And.

00:22:28 Speaker 1

On the 22nd day of December 52.

00:22:33 Speaker 1

We were what we call relaying messages from a forward observer, which is a field artillery unit.

00:22:42 Speaker 1

They were too far away from their weapons to talk direct to them, and we were transferring the call. They would call us. We would transfer it to the guns. The guns would transfer it back to us and we'd transfer it back.

00:22:55 Speaker 1

And there was probably six or seven of us in this one bunker. This was a bunker about 6 by 8 feet.

00:23:05 Speaker 1

And around came in the door of that thing, enemy round artillery.

00:23:12 Speaker 1

Or heavy weapon of some kind.

00:23:15 Speaker 1

And.

00:23:16 Speaker 1

Killed the Ledbetter boy and the Holland boy that I'm mentioned.

00:23:21 Speaker 1

And wounded the rest of us and wounded my brother and me. Wounded him real bad. And I wasn't that serious.

00:23:30 Speaker 1

And talking about the R&R, we went back to a mash hospital.

00:23:36 Speaker 1

They shipped him out to. I didn't know where he was going, but when he left.

00:23:43 Speaker 1

I asked the doctor. I wasn't too serious. Let me go back to my company and they did. So I went back.

00:23:51 Speaker 2

Now go ahead.

00:23:51 Speaker 1

They OK? They are not. You're asking the on and on.

00:23:55

Yeah.

00:23:55 Speaker 2

Let's go back. Let's go back and stay with where you're at for a second.

00:24:00 Speaker 2

Was this a a frequent assignment for you to have to do this message relaying?

00:24:05 Speaker 1

No, this was just something that just failed in line that we had to do. They couldn't make communication with their battery of artillery and we were the closest one to them in between the two, and we were just transferring the messages from what they called a forward observer.

00:24:05 Speaker 2

Or.

00:24:25 Speaker 2

So was it intense? I mean, was there firing, going on around you anyway? Or so it's pretty active already?

00:24:29 Speaker 1

Oh, yes. Oh yes, there was active already, yes.

00:24:32 Speaker 2

So you're in this bunker relaying these messages?

00:24:37 Speaker 2

Are you having second thoughts at this point at all, or are you just? This is just another day and.

00:24:41 Speaker 2

Life in Korea goes on.

00:24:43 Speaker 1

I don't remember having anything except that this is what we have to do. We're doing the job and I don't. Maybe. Yeah. I guess we were scared. I don't remember that part. But it was just. This was what we had to do.

00:24:55 Speaker 1

To get a job.

00:24:55 Speaker 2

How long have you been overseas then? How long have you been in Korea then?

00:24:59 Speaker 1

I got there in September of 52 and this is December 52.

00:25:02 Speaker 2

So we're just three or four months down the road. So you're still looking at another six months after this event for.

00:25:08 Speaker 1

Yes.

00:25:10 Speaker 2

OK. When did you hear it coming?

00:25:14 Speaker 1

This round you never hear the one that gets you know. Now we had. They had landed, there was no troops invading. It was all artillery.

00:25:22 Speaker 2

Right.

00:25:25 Speaker 1

We could hear those coming in the screaming of them and them going off, but we felt fairly secure in the position.

00:25:33 Speaker 1

Where we were.

00:25:34 Speaker 1

But no, you we didn't hear the one that hit.

00:25:39 Speaker 2

Do you remember anything when it did hit?

00:25:41 Speaker 1

Yes, I remember.

00:25:44 Speaker 1

A little tough to.

00:25:46 Speaker 1

Think about but it it, yes.

00:25:50 Speaker 1

It knocked us all to the floor, I guess, and I started trying to get out into some of the.

00:25:57 Speaker 1

Timbers and dirt and stuff had fallen in.

00:26:01 Speaker 1

And I started hollering from my brother.

00:26:04 Speaker 1

And he answered me, so I knew he was alive.

00:26:08 Speaker 1

I called the other fellows names and two of them didn't answer was who lived better than the Holland boy.

00:26:16 Speaker 1

And we got outside of the bunker. We got out of it.

00:26:21 Speaker 1

And saw that.

00:26:23 Speaker 1

Those two men were dead.

00:26:26 Speaker 2

Had they been blown out or?

00:26:28 Speaker 1

Yeah, they they were.

00:26:30 Speaker 1

I could get into what I wrote their families and corresponded with their family, but we got out. We knew we get needed to get medical attention and the rest of our unit was.

00:26:34 Speaker 2

If it's OK, you feel free to.

00:26:44 Speaker 1

I don't know how far it was, but a good distance from us, but we had to get to them.

00:26:49 Speaker 1

And I was about the only one that was able to really walk.

00:26:54 Speaker 1

And I made it to the company commander and told him we needed medics and they.

00:27:01 Speaker 1

Went back and got the rushed.

00:27:03 Speaker 1

Up.

00:27:03 Speaker 2

Your brother still being there waiting.

00:27:05 Speaker 1

Yeah, he was. I laid him up against the trench.

00:27:09 Speaker 1

And one of the other men.

00:27:13 Speaker 1

And they went back and got him.

00:27:15

So.

00:27:15 Speaker 2

It was just the two of you that survived that blast.

00:27:18 Speaker 1

No, there was 2 was killed. It was, I believe there was 7 in it, so 5 survived it. Two of them were killed.

00:27:27 Speaker 2

So you're off to a mass unit. At what point did you get to see your brother again?

00:27:32 Speaker 1

We went back first to what they call a battalion aid station.

00:27:38 Speaker 1

They flew him. I helped put him on a helicopter.

00:27:41 Speaker 1

He flew him back to the Mash hospital on a helicopter.

00:27:45 Speaker 1

And we had to wait for an ambulance and the rest of us went back on an ambulance and we got, we got back to the. This was about 2:00 in the afternoon. That all of this happened.

00:27:56 Speaker 1

When I got back to the mash hospital, I just asked them if my brother was there because we didn't know where they'd gone.

00:28:03 Speaker 1

And they told me they didn't know that they didn't believe that I had a brother there. And I said yes. I've got a brother somewhere.

00:28:12 Speaker 1

And finally, one of the nurses came out. This was just tents. If you've seen mash on TV, the tent part that that the activity that goes on, I'm not sure it's the same but but the that's what it looks like.

00:28:21

OK.

00:28:27 Speaker 1

And her nurse finally came out and said we have a Joe Morris. And I said that's my brother. I want to see him. They said he's in surgery. You can't see. I saw him. The.

00:28:36 Speaker 1

Next morning.

00:28:37 Speaker 2

What was it like?

00:28:40 Speaker 1

Turf.

00:28:42 Speaker 1

Tough.

00:28:43 Speaker 1

He had.

00:28:46 Speaker 1

Wounds all over his body and.

00:28:48 Speaker 1

Was.

00:28:50 Speaker 1

Pretty well out of it with, you know, with medication, but they let me talk to him and we said and I wrote a letter to we said we've got to let our family know.

00:29:02 Speaker 1

And I wrote a letter with my left hand sitting with me and him talking.

00:29:09 Speaker 1

And Senate.

00:29:11 Speaker 1

And I guess he stayed there.

00:29:14 Speaker 1

Two or three days.

00:29:17 Speaker 1

And they said they were shipping him to, of course, another hospital. He didn't stay at a mass hospital.

00:29:25 Speaker 1

And when they shipped him, I watched him put him on a train.

00:29:29 Speaker 1

And wave goodbye.

00:29:32 Speaker 1

And I went back and asked the man on the IT was at the RadioShack.

00:29:39 Speaker 1

If he would get in touch with my company.

00:29:42 Speaker 2

Hold that thought.