

## **Mark Anthony Osweiler Interview**

Company B, 318th Inf Reg

*(Library of Congress: Veterans History Project; interviewed by Dwight Merritt Davis)*

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

00:00:02 Speaker 1

We're on and running.

00:00:04 Speaker 1

And I'll put the date and time on.

00:00:06 Speaker 1

Here is the date is July 8th 2:05.

00:00:11 Speaker 1

And it's now 2:34 in the afternoon, and I have this piece of paper that says today is Friday the 8th of July near 2005. And this is the beginning of an interview with the Mr. Mark Auschwitzer at his home at 115.

00:00:28 Speaker 1

Zero education St.

00:00:30 Speaker 1

In Auburn, CA.

00:00:32 Speaker 1

95622.

00:00:35 Speaker 1

Mr. Ochweiler is 90 years old, having been born on February 9th near 1915, and my name is Dwight Davis and I'll be doing the interviewing. Mr. Ashwater and I met several years ago at APOW, meeting down in Sacramento.

00:00:50 Speaker 1

And a mutual friend of ours by the name of Chuck Holden.

00:00:53 Speaker 1

Why don't I interview you? And we did. But for some reason two years ago, when I sent the paper in, it got lost.

00:01:01 Speaker 1

So I want to make sure you get in the records and I'm going to do it again today.

00:01:06 Speaker 1

So Mr. Ashwater, would you state for the record, what war and branch of service you served in?

00:01:12 Speaker 2

Yes, I was in World War 2 in the US Army.

00:01:17 Speaker 1

Not your highest rank.

00:01:19 Speaker 2

And the highest rank was Pfc.

00:01:22 Speaker 1

And what part of the world did you serve him?

00:01:26 Speaker 2

USA and Europe.

00:01:28 Speaker 1

OK. Where were you born?

00:01:30 Speaker 2

Lewistown Mt where's that near?

00:01:34 Speaker 1

I've never heard of it.

00:01:35 Speaker 1

Is it in there?

00:01:36 Speaker 2

Oh, it really sounds in central Montana.

00:01:39 Speaker 2

Great cattle and wheat raising part of the state. My dad was a banker.

00:01:42 Speaker 1

That.

00:01:42 Speaker 1

Your dad did for a living.

00:01:46 Speaker 1

Banker. OK. You're living in town then?

00:01:49 Speaker 2

Yes, yes. I graduated from Fergus County High School there in 1932.

00:01:50 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:01:50 Speaker 1

You go to school there.

00:01:57 Speaker 1

That was right in the depression. What did you do for a job?

00:02:00 Speaker 2

Well, there weren't any jobs available at that time.

00:02:04 Speaker 2

Then I.

00:02:05 Speaker 2

My dad didn't have enough money to send me to college, so.

00:02:10 Speaker 2

I just did odd jobs.

00:02:13

OK.

00:02:14 Speaker 2

Mainly we did a lot of fishing because we didn't have anything else to do and hunting and played a lot of.

00:02:21 Speaker 1

Golf, hunting and fishing put food on the table.

00:02:25 Speaker 2

Well, yes, some of my neighbours ate a lot of Jack rabbits and cottontail rabbits that I'd find.

00:02:33 Speaker 1

How do you justify playing golf then?

00:02:37 Speaker 2

Well, I also had been a caddy and I made a lot of golf friends through my caddy.

00:02:45 Speaker 2

And so.

00:02:47 Speaker 2

We spent all of our spare time either in sports.

00:02:51 Speaker 2

Because we couldn't find a job, but that that was if you weren't married, they wouldn't hire you.

00:02:57 Speaker 2

Just hired married men.

00:02:59 Speaker 1

You finally got a job doing something though.

00:03:02 Speaker 2

Yes, I I've worked at first in the Continental oil station for \$5 a week.

00:03:13 Speaker 2

Then the Montana power.

00:03:17 Speaker 2

Superintendent there talked to me and I went to work for them for two years as a salesman, and then I wanted to strike out on my own.

00:03:28 Speaker 2

Went to California.

00:03:30 Speaker 2

And I found out it was tougher in California than it was in.

00:03:34 Speaker 2

I came back home and I finally picked up a job in the oil refinery.

00:03:40 Speaker 2

A bookkeeper and I worked there two years and then that was.

00:03:47 Speaker 2

From 1939 to 1941 and in 1941, I had the opportunity to take a job on the island of Trinidad.

00:03:59 Speaker 2

Where the US government was building a secret air base and this was four months before Pearl Harbor.

00:04:06 Speaker 1

You were there when Pearl Harbor happened, right?

00:04:08 Speaker 2

And.

00:04:10 Speaker 2

We built all the concrete pipe for drainage on this island.

00:04:15 Speaker 1

What was your part of this job?

00:04:16 Speaker 2

Well, I mainly, I was the bookkeeper, the payroll man of the purchasing agent, and I just did everything connected to the office duties.

00:04:30 Speaker 2

And I also learned through my boss, who is a very he was a World War 1 veteran and a good educator, and I learned all about the concrete pipe business.

00:04:40 Speaker 2

To the point where.

00:04:42 Speaker 2

When he finished the job, he.

00:04:43 Speaker 2

I can't ship the equipment back to the United States because the Germans will sink the ship.

00:04:50 Speaker 2

And he? So he sold it to the government of Venezuela and.

00:04:55 Speaker 2

The government of Venezuela then hired me to come over and put the machinery and get the plant in operation over there.

00:05:03 Speaker 1

So you went to Venezuela and actually set up a plant down there.

00:05:07 Speaker 2

Yes, same.

00:05:07 Speaker 1

What was the plant doing? Making pipe?

00:05:10 Speaker 2

Yes, making concrete pipe for the Ministerio de obverse publicas.

00:05:14 Speaker 1

Which you're an American citizen, aren't you?

00:05:17 Speaker 1

What kind of a job classification did you get? A two way or from the draft?

00:05:22 Speaker 2

Well, it was a 2B.

00:05:25 Speaker 1

To be.

00:05:26 Speaker 2

It was.

00:05:28 Speaker 2

Essential work or something to that effect.

00:05:32 Speaker 2

And the fact that Benz with whales.

00:05:36 Speaker 2

Nation that wasn't involved in the war, that there was no restrictions about me going over there 'cause I had to check that out with the embassy in the Council at there in Trinidad.

00:05:50 Speaker 1

Then you checked in with the consulate in.

00:05:53 Speaker 2

I only did it.

00:05:53 Speaker 1

Let them know you're. How did you stay in contact with your folks back in Montana?

00:05:58 Speaker 1

Just write them a letter.

00:05:59 Speaker 2

We mostly airmail letters.

00:06:02 Speaker 1

You weren't married yet?

00:06:03 Speaker 2

No, I was single.

00:06:05 Speaker 1

What kind of accommodations did they give you?

00:06:07 Speaker 1

Good place to live.

00:06:07 Speaker 2

What were you going to say?

00:06:10 Speaker 2

Well, I was living just a few blocks from where I was installing the pipe machinery to get it into operation, and with a first class hotel and all the meals furnished.

00:06:23 Speaker 2

Then I was making some 500 a month in 1942.

00:06:29 Speaker 2

Was really recognized.

00:06:29 Speaker 1

There's a lot of money, you bet.

00:06:32 Speaker 1

That's \$6000 a year.

00:06:34 Speaker 2

That's right.

00:06:34 Speaker 2

And in those days, that was really big money.

00:06:38 Speaker 1

So how long did you stay there?

00:06:40 Speaker 2

Well, I'll stay there till.

00:06:44 Speaker 2

Early in 1944.

00:06:47 Speaker 1

Then what happened?

00:06:47 Speaker 2

And then I came back to the States and I was.

00:06:51 Speaker 2

Immediately drafted into the US.

00:06:55 Speaker 2

I'd asked for the Navy, but they said you're in the army now.

00:06:58 Speaker 1

Who drafted you? The outfit back in Montana?

00:07:01 Speaker 2

Yes, I had to report to Lewistown.

00:07:05 Speaker 2

They sent me to Butte, Mt, where I was the sworn in, and then they sent us a whole group of us down to.

00:07:16 Speaker 2

Fort Douglas, Utah, for couple of weeks and then they shipped us to Camp Roberts where we trained 16 weeks.

00:07:24 Speaker 1

How'd you like Cap Roberts hearing?

00:07:26 Speaker 1

That's here in California.

00:07:28 Speaker 2

That's right. Is near Pastor Robles, and I really enjoyed that.



00:07:32 Speaker 2

The fellas with me were.

00:07:34 Speaker 2

Oh, what's 18 and 19 years?

00:07:36 Speaker 2

And I was 28 at the time.

00:07:39 Speaker 1

Well, you're the old man of the company.

00:07:40 Speaker 2

Well, I was one of the older ones and it was like a vacation and I really enjoyed basic training. And immediately after that they gave us a 10 day furlough and ship.

00:07:53 Speaker 2

Directly over to Europe.

00:07:56 Speaker 1

You remember any of your instructors in boot camp basic?

00:08:00 Speaker 2

Well, I remember the.

00:08:02 Speaker 2

His name is Sergeant Ebert and he was from the Detroit area.

00:08:08 Speaker 2

And the real nice.

00:08:12 Speaker 2

Real nice gentleman.

00:08:13 Speaker 1

Why do you remember?

00:08:15 Speaker 1

Anything special other than being a nice guy?

00:08:19 Speaker 1

Well, he treated you.

00:08:20 Speaker 1

Let him. Was he younger than you?

00:08:20 Speaker 2

Oh yes.

00:08:22 Speaker 2

He was burnt.

00:08:25 Speaker 2

I don't know how old he was.

00:08:27 Speaker 2

He probably about my age, but he was.

00:08:31 Speaker 2

He wasn't real strict, except he just wanted things done the right way and.

00:08:38 Speaker 2

You couldn't ask for a better fella to be under.

00:08:41 Speaker 1

Not one of.

00:08:42 Speaker 1

It's the right way the wrong way and my way.

00:08:44 Speaker 2

No, he he was very fair with all the fellows.

00:08:48 Speaker 1

You said you tried to join the Navy.

00:08:49 Speaker 1

Wouldn't they let you in?

00:08:50 Speaker 2

Well, they, I don't know. They just said you're in the army now.

00:08:58 Speaker 1

Oh my, do you have any trouble getting through your basic?

00:09:01 Speaker 2

Oh no, I don't think anybody failed basic training at that time because they were so hard up for men, especially over in Europe.

00:09:09 Speaker 1

This was early.

00:09:11 Speaker 1

This was in 1944.

00:09:13 Speaker 2

Right.

00:09:14 Speaker 1

What month? February, March.

00:09:16 Speaker 2

Yeah, well, we trained.

00:09:20 Speaker 2

We've trained in May, June, July and August that, yeah, 16 weeks in that period.

00:09:24 Speaker 1

Of 44.

00:09:29 Speaker 1

OK.

00:09:31 Speaker 1

Then you went overseas.

00:09:33 Speaker 2

Yeah, we.

00:09:33 Speaker 1

How did you get there?

00:09:36

They.

00:09:36 Speaker 2

Gave us a 10 day furlough from Camp Robertson and then to report to.

00:09:43 Speaker 2

The East Coast and after going through with the Fort, George made first for a few days and then Camp Kilmer, New Jersey for a couple of days.

00:09:55 Speaker 2

And then aboard ship and the way we went.

00:09:58 Speaker 1

What kind of transport?

00:09:59 Speaker 2

Was it? It was a.

00:10:00 Speaker 2

Liberty ship and we were convoyed over to.

00:10:05 Speaker 2

There was 2500 men on the Liberty ship.

00:10:09 Speaker 1

Two meals a day.

00:10:12 Speaker 2

I don't know the exact date.

00:10:14 Speaker 1

Meals to eat 2 meals a day.

00:10:15 Speaker 2

I think yes, I think so. And I was lucky.

00:10:19 Speaker 2

They chose me to do KP and I was on the night shift and this other private night would crack 120 dozen cold storage eggs every night.

00:10:31 Speaker 1

120 dozen.

00:10:33

That's right.

00:10:34 Speaker 2

And.

00:10:35 Speaker 1

What, for scrambled eggs for dinner?

00:10:37 Speaker 2

For scrambled eggs and we had scrambled eggs everyday. I think we were bored.

00:10:42 Speaker 2

Ship for about 10 days going across.

00:10:45 Speaker 1

You have your own bunk.

00:10:47 Speaker 1

Didn't have to share anybody with.

00:10:48 Speaker 2

Well, we'll.

00:10:49 Speaker 2

Yeah, we slept in shifts because.

00:10:51 Speaker 1

Troy.

00:10:53 Speaker 2

They were like bats.

00:10:55 Speaker 2

In a cave.

00:10:56 Speaker 2

Right and.

00:10:58 Speaker 2

And.

00:10:59 Speaker 2

Anyway, I slept on the day shift and then worked in KP at night.

00:11:03

Mm.

00:11:05 Speaker 2

But anyway, we arrived in Southampton, we were convoyed over in a huge convoy.

00:11:12 Speaker 2

And when we got to Southampton, most of the fellas said, oh, we're going to get more training and I didn't say anything, but I figured, yeah, maybe.

00:11:22 Speaker 2

And we walked down the gang plank of the American ship.

00:11:26 Speaker 2

And walked maybe 1/8 of a mile, climbed up on a British ship that was smaller and the next morning we were.

00:11:40 Speaker 2

Omaha Beach, where they disembark this.

00:11:45 Speaker 2

In probably late September.

00:11:48 Speaker 1

Right. The invasion was in June, so it pretty well moved away from you.

00:11:50 Speaker 2

Yeah. And there was a lot of debris around there. Yet from the initial invasion.

00:11:57 Speaker 2

And there was a huge cemetery there that I'll never forget when we came up over this hill.

00:12:03 Speaker 1

It's still there.

00:12:04 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:12:05 Speaker 1

One of the other gentlemen that I interviewed was back there last year for the commemorative deal, and he was one of the guests of the French government and they went to that cemetery for dedication ceremonies.

00:12:19 Speaker 1

Luster is George W Bush was.

00:12:20 Speaker 1

Even so, he says, if he, this friend of mine said the cemetery is still there, beautiful place.

00:12:29 Speaker 1

So he went right into into France then.

00:12:31 Speaker 2

Yeah, we stayed there a couple of days and then they shipped us across France.

00:12:37 Speaker 2

Made one stop in Le Mans, France.

00:12:40 Speaker 1

Let's do go by truck in her truck.

00:12:41 Speaker 2

A.

00:12:42 Speaker 2

Yes, just a series of trucks.

00:12:45 Speaker 2

All loaded up with all these.

00:12:49 Speaker 2

Fellas that were we were called infantry replacements.

00:12:54 Speaker 2

And after the we spent one night in Le Mondez the next evening we were right up at the front lines and.

00:13:02 Speaker 2

That was it.

00:13:03 Speaker 1

Yeah, they're just about in time for the battle of the bulge.

00:13:06 Speaker 2

Well, this, yeah, this was a little before that.

00:13:09 Speaker 1

They just just before.

00:13:13 Speaker 1

Were you still in France then?

00:13:14 Speaker 2

I'm probably there about 3 or 4 weeks before that and then.

00:13:19 Speaker 1

In France.

00:13:21 Speaker 2

Yeah, fighting. You know, over at the frontline there and.

00:13:26 Speaker 2

Being shelled daily by the German artillery, yeah.

00:13:29 Speaker 1

Really.

00:13:31 Speaker 1

What do you do for food when?

00:13:33 Speaker 1

On the frontline.

00:13:35 Speaker 2

Occasionally they drive up with a little vehicle behind a Jeep and have a hot meal, but most of the time.

00:13:42 Speaker 2

Was a small.

00:13:44 Speaker 2

Canned rations and they weren't too bad. If you can heat them up.

00:13:50 Speaker 2

But that was not easy to do.

00:13:53 Speaker 2

But.

00:13:54 Speaker 1

It's fall over there.

00:13:55 Speaker 1



That rainy season.

00:13:58 Speaker 2

We had good days and bad days, but there was a when it was raining and sleeping in the foxhole, it was miserable life, to say the least.

00:14:10 Speaker 1

You have much trouble with Germans infiltration.

00:14:12 Speaker 2

No, none of that.

00:14:14 Speaker 1

Did you have to go on any night patrols?

00:14:17 Speaker 2

Well, not really we.

00:14:21 Speaker 2

Did most of our moving in the daytime and then dug in outside of.

00:14:27 Speaker 2

Villages there.

00:14:28 Speaker 1

Yes. Were you in a single man fight role or did you share one with somebody?

00:14:33 Speaker 2

Oh, there's always 2 door Fox. All you why?

00:14:37 Speaker 2

Well, I guess.

00:14:39 Speaker 2

Keep us from getting.

00:14:40 Speaker 2

Maybe I don't know the reason, but.

00:14:45 Speaker 1

Then one of you stay awake and the other guy sleep.

00:14:47 Speaker 2

That's what we try to do.

00:14:50 Speaker 2

One foxhole we dug in place.

00:14:52 Speaker 2

Where we got down there and during the night it been raining and we always dug a little trench around the foxhole for drainage so it wouldn't drain into the foxhole. But the water started coming up like a spring in the bottom, so we ended up sleeping or trying.

00:15:09 Speaker 2

Sitting up on our helmets and.

00:15:11 Speaker 1

Water got that deep in the bottom of the fire truck.

00:15:13 Speaker 2

Yeah, and it well, Needless to say.

00:15:18 Speaker 2

Those nights and those foxhole were really miserable.

00:15:22 Speaker 1

How long did you go between baths?

00:15:24 Speaker 2

Well, I think the last path I had was in New Jersey and the next one was.

00:15:31 Speaker 1

Nothing on board ship.

00:15:34 Speaker 2

No, there was not a board ship.

00:15:39 Speaker 1

Then you went right to Germany.

00:15:41 Speaker 2

Yeah, I think the next bath I got was.

00:15:46 Speaker 2

Sometime in early May.

00:15:49 Speaker 1

The owner.

00:15:52 Speaker 1

343 or four months.

00:15:53 Speaker 1

A bath.

00:15:53 Speaker 2

Well, even in the prison camp we, the water was so cold that we could take sort of sponge baths.

00:16:01 Speaker 2

But the shower in there if you got under that and the barracks was ice cold anyway.

00:16:09 Speaker 1

OK, we'll get to that in a second here. But I just wanted when you're on our side and not captured yet.

00:16:15 Speaker 1

What did you do for Bath and food?

00:16:20 Speaker 1

Well, you know, how did you survive?

00:16:22 Speaker 1

It, like Mr. Oshawa.

00:16:24 Speaker 1

How bad is it?

00:16:24 Speaker 2

No on the front lines, you just eat the rations you carry and and like I said, occasionally you get a hot.

00:16:32 Speaker 2

But that was.

00:16:33 Speaker 1

Do they bring you fresh Raspberry so often to resupply you? How about ammunition?

00:16:36 Speaker 2

Yes.

00:16:38 Speaker 1

Thing.

00:16:39 Speaker 2

Oh, oh, yeah. You could always get.

00:16:42 Speaker 2

That was basically as important as the rations, I think, if not more so.

00:16:47 Speaker 1

Ammunition would come before bullet before food. Well, probably.

00:16:52 Speaker 1

Well, OK.

00:16:54 Speaker 1

What do you do when they're showing the Germans are showing you?

00:16:57 Speaker 1

Well, you hunker down and wait it out.

00:16:57 Speaker 2

You're down in the fox alone.

00:17:03 Speaker 2

If you get caught out in the open, you lay flat on the ground and just hope 1 doesn't come too close. That the Germans had a habit of we just about to read their minds, I guess.

00:17:14 Speaker 2

But early in the morning, just after sunup, they shall us. Then at high noon, and then just.

00:17:21 Speaker 2

Before sundown. And I guess what they're trying to do is shake us up a little bit when we should be eating.

00:17:30 Speaker 2

And they it was just almost every day.

00:17:35 Speaker 2

And they must have pretty good intelligence because they didn't.

00:17:40 Speaker 2

I never got hit by any of the shrapnel, but they were dropping pretty close.

00:17:45 Speaker 1

Ever use airburst on you?

00:17:47 Speaker 2

Very few times, but those were.

00:17:52 Speaker 2

Wicked.

00:17:52 Speaker 2

And you never got into a.

00:17:54 Speaker 2

Tree Dairy stayed out in the open as much as you could because if one of those 88 hit a tree before it hit the ground, it would create a air burst and really raise havoc.

00:18:09 Speaker 1

So not only would the 88 shrapnel come, but you get the tree on top of.

00:18:13 Speaker 1

Too well, probably so.

00:18:17 Speaker 2

He stayed out of the tree darians.

00:18:20

Moving.

00:18:20 Speaker 1

There ever there have tank support armor support.

00:18:23 Speaker 2

Well, they were.

00:18:24 Speaker 2

They were behind us and they did a lot of shelling.

00:18:29 Speaker 2

Cause Patton said one time at least the rumor was that for every shell the Germans threw to us, we threw 20 bag and I think it was true because they would log shells over us day and night.

00:18:38

Hmm.

00:18:45 Speaker 2

Not rapidly, but periodically boom.

00:18:49 Speaker 2

Go over the top.

00:18:52 Speaker 2

And you couldn't tell whether some of them were must have been from way.

00:18:56 Speaker 2

Maybe they were 10 fives or 150 fives, but they kept a steady stream going over to the enemy.

00:19:05 Speaker 1

How many men were in your group when you started out?

00:19:10 Speaker 2

Well, we were just a squad as far as.

00:19:12 Speaker 1

That's how many.

00:19:15 Speaker 1

Squad 16.

00:19:17 Speaker 2

About 12 men.

00:19:20 Speaker 1

How many?

00:19:20

And.

00:19:20 Speaker 1

How many came out of that 12 men?

00:19:23 Speaker 1

What kind of casualty rate did you have?

00:19:25 Speaker 2

Well, I really don't know because.

00:19:28 Speaker 1

You didn't make it either.

00:19:31 Speaker 2

Kidding. That's.

00:19:32 Speaker 2

And getting contact between men up there is.

00:19:37 Speaker 2

More difficult than you can imagine. I mean, keeping the organization together.

00:19:42 Speaker 2

They did the best they could but.

00:19:45 Speaker 2

You couldn't sometimes find your own Sergeant because the guys that scatter all over which way, for one reason or another.

00:19:55 Speaker 2

So.

00:19:57 Speaker 1

Not that old story. You dig a hole and have, like, a pin point. Here, here, here and here. And they're not in the line.

00:20:02 Speaker 1

All over.

00:20:02 Speaker 2

Oh yeah.

00:20:04 Speaker 2

If they say dig in, you just picked out a piece of ground, started digging wherever you wanted.

00:20:11 Speaker 1

When you leave, do you fill in the whole day?

00:20:13 Speaker 1

Leave it there.

00:20:14 Speaker 2

No, we.

00:20:17 Speaker 2

Somebody had a big job later because we sure dug a.

00:20:20 Speaker 2

Of.

00:20:20 Speaker 1

Holes. Germans use a lot of land mines.

00:20:24 Speaker 2

Well, I never run into any situations like that, so I couldn't comment on that really.

00:20:30 Speaker 1

How far did you?

00:20:31 Speaker 1

Did you get into Germany before you were captured?

00:20:34 Speaker 2

Well, we were right along with a French Magna line was and we hadn't even got beyond that so.

00:20:44 Speaker 2

And I don't think the Germans were even in the I don't really know, but I don't think they even were in the imaginative line.

00:20:52 Speaker 2

We were.

00:20:53 Speaker 2

You could see some of the pill boxes occasionally.

00:20:56 Speaker 1

Which one is French and which one is German?

00:20:58 Speaker 1

Siegfried in the magical.



00:20:59 Speaker 2

The Siegfried was the German liner.

00:21:01 Speaker 1

OK.

00:21:03 Speaker 1

Near by the French line NUM.

00:21:05 Speaker 2

Yes, we were coming up from the West side of the French line.

00:21:11 Speaker 2

That's just about the.

00:21:13 Speaker 2

The area where I got eliminated.

00:21:16 Speaker 1

Where is.

00:21:17 Speaker 1

Were you near Lexing Berg or?

00:21:19 Speaker 2

Well, we were South of Luxembourg somewhat and they were just real small towns and.

00:21:21

So.

00:21:25 Speaker 1

OK.

00:21:26 Speaker 1

You're between Luxembourg and Switzerland then.

00:21:29 Speaker 2

Yes, we'd be very near to to Luxembourg, but not.

00:21:30 Speaker 1

OK.

00:21:34 Speaker 1

You didn't.

00:21:35 Speaker 1

You didn't get run over by the.

00:21:40 Speaker 1

The December.

00:21:42 Speaker 1

The Battle of the Bulge, that was that further West and from where you were.

00:21:42 Speaker 2

Or.

00:21:42 Speaker 2

Battle of the wars.

00:21:45 Speaker 2

Well, the battle of the Bulge took place.

00:21:49 Speaker 2

Around the 12th, I think of December and I was already in a German hospital.

00:21:54 Speaker 1

Oh really?

00:21:55 Speaker 1

Well, I explain that how you how you got captured. What were you doing?

00:21:59 Speaker 2

Well, we've taken a small town and we've taken it rather easily and we had thrown a board across anti tank.

00:22:00 Speaker 1

Infantry work.

00:22:11 Speaker 2

Ditch and we got into the town like I say, without any effort to speak.

00:22:17 Speaker 2

Didn't get shot at or anything, and so our radio man had been talking to the rear.

00:22:26 Speaker 2

Some officer in the rear and late in the evening.

00:22:31 Speaker 2

He got the message to get out of the town as fast as we could because we weren't supposed to be that far advanced so.

00:22:40 Speaker 2

It was probably 10 or 11:00 at night.

00:22:44 Speaker 2

We decided we had to collect all the fellows with us.

00:22:48 Speaker 2

Probably about eight or ten of us.

00:22:51 Speaker 2

In that.

00:22:51 Speaker 1

That's all it was in this town, 8 or 10 of you, and some of those were wounded.

00:22:55 Speaker 2

No, everybody is in good shape up to that point. And so we started to head back to where the established lines were and that's when the Germans lit up the place.

00:22:59 Speaker 1

All right.

00:23:11 Speaker 2

With flares and it was just like daylight and when naturally they saw us and we were right out in the open and they caught us right out in the open and.

00:23:21 Speaker 2

It wasn't a moon and sky that night even, but boy, it was just like.

00:23:27 Speaker 2

And that's when I got shot and I hit the ground and started crawling back to one of the houses next.

00:23:34 Speaker 1

What part of your body do you get shot in?

00:23:36 Speaker 2

I was shot in the upper leg.

00:23:39 Speaker 1

Break a bone or anything.

00:23:42 Speaker 1

Did not break your bone. Went through the fatty part.

00:23:43 Speaker 2

No, it must've.

00:23:47 Speaker 2

It numbed my leg to where I thought I'd been shot in the knee and.

00:23:53 Speaker 2

And I grabbed my knee and they got back into the basement of this house. And here I was, shot up in the upper part of my hip.

00:24:03 Speaker 2

So I spent two days in that house.

00:24:07 Speaker 1

What happened to the other seven or eight or people there?

00:24:10 Speaker 1

Begged out and leave here. What?

00:24:11 Speaker 2

I don't know whether whatever.

00:24:14 Speaker 1

They just left.

00:24:15 Speaker 2

Well, well, I don't know.

00:24:17 Speaker 2

Could have been.

00:24:19 Speaker 1

Captured or whatever.

00:24:20 Speaker 2

Chapter they could have been killed. I imagine some of them got killed because.

00:24:27 Speaker 2

The ammunition was flying.

00:24:29 Speaker 2

Had us like crazy and.

00:24:31 Speaker 2

Were trying to get behind anything we could to protect ourselves.

00:24:36 Speaker 2

Anyway, I got in this basement of this House where they.

00:24:39 Speaker 2

Keep.

00:24:40 Speaker 2

Their cattle or sheep or whatever they raise over there and I got in there safely and.

00:24:48 Speaker 2

So what you.

00:24:51 Speaker 2

You take your we had sulfa pills with this nut. I took those because.

00:24:58 Speaker 2

That would stop any infection.

00:25:01 Speaker 1

Did you have a canteen?

00:25:02 Speaker 2

And now I had a.

00:25:03 Speaker 2

You're supposed to drink all the water you had, and so I pretty well consumed that because it's salt has a tendency to dry out anyway.

00:25:10

Hmm.

00:25:13 Speaker 2

But the next day I was really dry and that's when.

00:25:17 Speaker 2

The people that lived in this House, one of the little children, came in.

00:25:22 Speaker 2

I gave him a chocolate bar.

00:25:24 Speaker 1

How old was he?

00:25:25 Speaker 2

He took off and what?

00:25:27 Speaker 2

Oh, I'd say they were about 5 or seven years old in that range, and he took off and I never did see the kids again. And later that day that the man of the house came in there with a.

00:25:32 Speaker 1

OK.

00:25:42 Speaker 2

Pan of warm milk.

00:25:44 Speaker 2

And boy, that really hit the spot because I was really.

00:25:49 Speaker 1

You didn't try to help dress out your wound or anything.

00:25:51 Speaker 2

No, he.

00:25:52 Speaker 2

Gave me that and I never saw him again.

00:25:54 Speaker 1

I'm OK.

00:25:55 Speaker 2

So anyway, the American shell, that town pretty good that night.

00:26:02 Speaker 2

And the.

00:26:02 Speaker 2

Morning, while things are all quiet and I figured somebody from the US Army would open the door and walk in there and hear the door open.

00:26:12 Speaker 2

Then comes a German soldier.

00:26:14 Speaker 1

This is the third day since you've been shot.

00:26:16 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

00:26:16 Speaker 2

And he lit a cigarette and offered it to me, and he could see I was not in too good a shape.

00:26:25 Speaker 2

He didn't understand English and vice versa.

00:26:31 Speaker 2

Didn't understand much German.

00:26:34 Speaker 1

But you were weak from loss of blood.

00:26:36 Speaker 2

Yeah, I was incapable of even getting up to sitting position at the time. And so he had a couple of.

00:26:48 Speaker 2

There were Yugoslavians came in there and they took me out in a little 2 wheel cart and.

00:26:55 Speaker 2

To a German first aid station over a couple of hills from there.

00:27:00 Speaker 2

Then this one yoga Slav and could speak a little broken English and I finally determined what he would say.

00:27:06 Speaker 2

Says.

00:27:07 Speaker 2

I have brother in Chicago.

00:27:11 Speaker 2

Really. And so I gave him some cigarettes.

00:27:16 Speaker 2

That I had because I don't smoke and I I just had him from 1:00.

00:27:19 Speaker 2

The from.

00:27:20 Speaker 2

I don't know where I got him.

00:27:22 Speaker 1

You to get them with your canned meal.

00:27:24 Speaker 2

Yeah, I think it was.

00:27:25 Speaker 1

Used to come 2-3 or four packs of lucky strikes for Chesterfield.

00:27:28 Speaker 1

The Candice Bam and that's how I used to get mine.

00:27:33 Speaker 2

Yeah. And anyway, he got into this first aid station.

00:27:39 Speaker 2

The Earth determined officer there he wanted to get information from me and.

00:27:46 Speaker 2

I said, you know, name, rank and serial number.

00:27:51 Speaker 2

He spoke pretty good.

00:27:52 Speaker 2

And he'd lived in Los Angeles at one time. Believe it or not. And.

00:27:57 Speaker 2

So he he was trying to really cozy up to and I could just almost read his mind you.



00:28:02 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:28:04 Speaker 1

Know we're all buddy.

00:28:06 Speaker 1

I'm from LA and you're from Montana? Yeah, we're good friends.

00:28:06 Speaker 2

Yeah, yeah.

00:28:10 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:28:11 Speaker 2

Anyway, they shipped me to the hospital somewhere on the Rhine after that and.

00:28:15 Speaker 1

How'd you get there?

00:28:18 Speaker 1

Truck OK.

00:28:18 Speaker 2

Yeah, ambulance type is kind of rickety, old job.

00:28:26 Speaker 2

By that time, they picked up a couple other guys and so when we got to that hospital, there was 13 of us Americans in there laid on the floor, wounded.

00:28:36 Speaker 2

And that's.

00:28:37 Speaker 1

The Germans patch you up.

00:28:39 Speaker 1

They fixed you.

00:28:40 Speaker 2

Then they did late that afternoon, but they the Germans have a policy of they take care of their soldiers first.

00:28:48 Speaker 1

We do too.

00:28:50 Speaker 2

And the enemy comes in second.

00:28:51 Speaker 1

Right.

00:28:53 Speaker 1

There's time.

00:28:54 Speaker 1

I'll fix the.

00:28:55 Speaker 1

Otherwise my guys are first.

00:28:57 Speaker 2

Right.

00:28:58 Speaker 1

That's never changed.

00:29:00 Speaker 1

How long did you stay in this first aid place?

00:29:05 Speaker 1

Couple days.

00:29:06 Speaker 2

Or you say this hospital? Yes. Or it was about 10 days.

00:29:11 Speaker 1

OK.

00:29:11 Speaker 2

I don't know the exact number, but then they came in. They got us out and down to a train and put us on this train.

00:29:21 Speaker 2

Shipped us into Czechoslovakia.

00:29:24 Speaker 2

And that was a wild ride with.

00:29:27 Speaker 2

Because the American Air Force was doing a lot of damage in, we had a couple of scares.

00:29:31 Speaker 1

Right.

00:29:34 Speaker 2

But they they never bombed the train or strafed it, fortunately, and the Germans put all of the Americans on the upper berth.

00:29:44 Speaker 2

And then there was German wounded in the same.

00:29:47 Speaker 2

Only they were on the lower here. And anyway, we got safely to check the Slovakia in another hospital.

00:29:48 Speaker 1

I'm blowing.

00:29:55 Speaker 1

And when you're in that first hospital, where they're both American and German wounded.

00:29:58 Speaker 2

Oh yeah.

00:30:00 Speaker 1

Same room.

00:30:01 Speaker 2

Not in the same room. No. They kept the secret.

00:30:04 Speaker 1

Kept it segregated.

00:30:04

Yeah.

00:30:05 Speaker 2

In the same way, when I got to the Czech hospital.

00:30:09 Speaker 2

But we're very fortunate there because the Czech nurse.

00:30:17 Speaker 2

Hated Germans, and when she found out we're Americans, she just bent over backwards to do things for us and.

00:30:24

Mm.

00:30:27 Speaker 1

How long were you there?

00:30:29 Speaker 2

We were there about a week.

00:30:31 Speaker 2

And by that time, the battle of the bows had taken place and we didn't know anything about it.

00:30:37 Speaker 2

And the German physician that came in there, he came in one morning and he was hollering.

00:30:46 Speaker 2

Germans will be.

00:30:47 Speaker 2

The Germans will bend over.

00:30:50 Speaker 2

Well, we all chuckled in.

00:30:52 Speaker 2

We thought.

00:30:53 Speaker 2

The guy's been drinking some snoops.

00:30:55 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:30:57 Speaker 2

'Cause, we didn't know anything about the battle of the ball.

00:31:02 Speaker 2

We named him Doctor Ober.

00:31:04 Speaker 2

We didn't know what his name was.

00:31:06

Yeah.

00:31:07 Speaker 2

But that's because a lot of us were shot in the upper leg, and that was the word for upper leg over shanker so.

00:31:13 Speaker 1

OK.

00:31:15 Speaker 1

That was his specialty. Taken care of upper leg or what?

00:31:17 Speaker 2

Well, no. He just came in and checked the.

00:31:20 Speaker 1

That was.

00:31:21 Speaker 2

The really chart on the head of the bed told our temperature and so forth, and he checked that off and take off.

00:31:22

Yeah.

00:31:30 Speaker 2

And.

00:31:31 Speaker 1

Did the Americans, before you were captured or after you were captured?

00:31:34 Speaker 1

They ever finally take back that town.

00:31:36

Here.

00:31:38 Speaker 2

I don't know.

00:31:38 Speaker 1

You don't know. You're long gone.

00:31:40 Speaker 1

Down in Czechoslovakia by now.

00:31:42 Speaker 2

You know what it means.

00:31:43 Speaker 1

After the hospital, where did you go?

00:31:46 Speaker 2

Well, then they put us on another train and shipped us down into Austria, and that's when we arrived at.

00:31:56 Speaker 2

Stall like 17.

00:31:58 Speaker 1

That's where you ended up. Is installed.

00:32:01 Speaker 1

This is about.

00:32:02

You.

00:32:03

Were gonna be in the other room.

00:32:04 Speaker 1

November, December of 44.

00:32:07 Speaker 2

Right. So we go in there.

00:32:08 Speaker 1

OK.

00:32:10 Speaker 1

Yeah, go.

00:32:11 Speaker 1

I'll set this off for a second.

00:32:12 Speaker 1

The ladies are back from downstairs and we're still.

00:32:14 Speaker 1

You were down in the stadium 17 in the fall, almost start of the winter of 1944.

00:32:21 Speaker 2

We arrived there.

00:32:22 Speaker 2

I think it was the 23rd of December 1944.

00:32:26 Speaker 1

OK, Battle of Bulge is on right now.

00:32:29 Speaker 2

And yeah, and the weather was.

00:32:32 Speaker 2

We rode from the train station up this hill in an open truck and it had to be 20 below 0 out there.

00:32:41 Speaker 2

And we weren't dressed for that kind of weather either.

00:32:43 Speaker 1

Did they take any of your protective clothing away from you?

00:32:47 Speaker 2

No. Whatever we had on we had on.

00:32:48 Speaker 1

You.

00:32:51 Speaker 1

When you were captured, that's still what you got.

00:32:54 Speaker 2

Yeah, I had the same clothes on when I went into the prison camp that I was shot in.

00:32:59 Speaker 1

Did you get a chance to wash the blood and stuff off of them?

00:33:01 Speaker 1

Still.

00:33:02 Speaker 1

All bloody.

00:33:04 Speaker 2

And it it remained on there until I got in the prison camp and I could clean the blood off, but I couldn't fix the hole in my pants, which is as big as my hand.

00:33:14 Speaker 1

Wow.

00:33:15 Speaker 2

So I had a hole.

00:33:19 Speaker 2

In the left leg and so.

00:33:21 Speaker 1

Put paper, cloth, anything over the holding.

00:33:24 Speaker 2

Anyway, the fellas in the Starlight 17 put us in what they called the lazarette or hospital section.

00:33:33 Speaker 2

Which it was a pitiful.

00:33:35 Speaker 2

It was just an old barracks that was reserved for.

00:33:39 Speaker 2



Things like that.

00:33:41 Speaker 2

And they patched all of us up with gauze bandages.

00:33:47 Speaker 2

And best they could, you know. And then the next day we were issued, spread out in the camp. They take two fellas for this barracks and two for that barracks. And I ended up in barracks 18B.

00:34:02 Speaker 1

Is there heat in there?

00:34:04 Speaker 2

There was number heat.

00:34:06 Speaker 1

No heat.

00:34:06 Speaker 2

They had a bucket of cold. They got periodically depending on when they got. Sometimes they get one bucket a week.

00:34:14 Speaker 2

But the fellow saved it in there to start.

00:34:20 Speaker 2

A small.

00:34:20 Speaker 2

They try to spread it out through.

00:34:21 Speaker 2

Last, for every afternoon so that they could warm up their tin cans.

00:34:28 Speaker 2

And whatever they had in their tin cans.

00:34:30 Speaker 1

Where do you get these two cans from?

00:34:32 Speaker 2

Well, from mostly from Red Cross food partials.

00:34:36 Speaker 1

You did get some Red Cross pliers and some.

00:34:37 Speaker 2

Yes, and that was the measuring device.

00:34:41 Speaker 2

When we get soup, we get a bucket of soup.

00:34:44 Speaker 2

Had the same size can so.

00:34:49 Speaker 2

The diet was mostly soup, but there was.

00:34:51 Speaker 1

How often did you get Red Cross partials?

00:34:55 Speaker 2

Oh, no, no. What? One of the fellows said they used to get them once a week when he first got there. But at that time there was only 1600 Americans in there.

00:34:56 Speaker 1

Once a week.

00:35:07 Speaker 2

And he said.

00:35:10 Speaker 2

It wasn't bad and you were.

00:35:11 Speaker 2

Told me he.

00:35:12 Speaker 2

You came at a bad time.

00:35:15 Speaker 1

Why is that?

00:35:17 Speaker 1

Why'd you come in a bad time?

00:35:19 Speaker 2

Well, he.

00:35:20 Speaker 2

Now we get about every three weeks we.

00:35:23 Speaker 2

A parcel and he said we have to split it between two or three or four men. However, many parcels there are for the 4000.

00:35:33 Speaker 1

The Germans didn't give you any supplement food to the apartment.

00:35:36 Speaker 2

Well, a little bit, but we got a bread ration every.

00:35:41 Speaker 2

But it was real small and and I even have the recipe for the bread, which was quite interesting because it was 20% what they call tree flower, which was sawdust.

00:35:53

Mm.

00:35:53 Speaker 2

And.

00:35:55 Speaker 1

Sawdust wouldn't bother your inside.

00:35:57 Speaker 2

Well, I guess now we all survive, but I guess fortunately we didn't get big.

00:36:03

Rations.

00:36:05 Speaker 2

These pieces of bread we get to be about 2 1/2.

00:36:07 Speaker 2

Square.

00:36:09 Speaker 1

That was it, huh?

00:36:10 Speaker 2

That was the congratulation.

00:36:12 Speaker 1

You and I think it was slice of bread, like the size of a 8 1/2 by 11 paper.

00:36:17 Speaker 1

Saying it's 2 1/2 inches square.

00:36:19 Speaker 1

Pretty small.

00:36:20 Speaker 2

You know it.

00:36:21 Speaker 1

How long did that bread supposed to last you all day?

00:36:24 Speaker 2

Well you could store.

00:36:25 Speaker 1

Two days.

00:36:27 Speaker 2

Wouldn't spoil. That was one thing good about it.

00:36:29 Speaker 2

But what most of the fellows did, they wouldn't.

00:36:32 Speaker 2

They try to eat late in the afternoon, just before it got dark.

00:36:38 Speaker 2

Because that way when you went to bed at night, you had something on your stomach 'cause it. If you went to bed hungry, the first thing you do is dream about food.

00:36:48 Speaker 2

I guess it was something psychological in the human mind, but.

00:36:54 Speaker 2

Mm.

00:36:55 Speaker 2

Everybody was dreaming about food.

00:36:59 Speaker 1

Did they do any interrogation of you people?

00:37:01 Speaker 2

No, they never did.

00:37:03 Speaker 1

Never took you out for questioning. Other than that first Lieutenant from Los Angeles.

00:37:05 Speaker 2

No.

00:37:09 Speaker 2

Yeah. And he could tell right away that I wasn't too smart.

00:37:14 Speaker 2

I didn't impress him, I guess.

00:37:17 Speaker 1

Not an officer, not anybody that read the maps.

00:37:20 Speaker 1

Just there to shoot.

00:37:22 Speaker 2

Because he had my paybook and it said right in there, I was a private guy.

00:37:26 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:37:27 Speaker 2

I tried to convince him I was a Sergeant because.

00:37:31 Speaker 2

Under the Geneva Convention, they can't work sergeants.

00:37:36 Speaker 2

And I never did do any work either, but I don't know if that helped.

00:37:39 Speaker 1

Or did you have dog tags on? Did it say PSE on there or just a certain name, rank and serial number?

00:37:47 Speaker 1

No rank.

00:37:49 Speaker 2

Oh, there was no rake on there. I don't.

00:37:50 Speaker 1

Just your name and your serial number and protest under whatever.

00:37:52 Speaker 2

You know.

00:37:55 Speaker 2

Yeah. Whatever religion.

00:37:57 Speaker 2

And the Germans issued us dog tags to our initiation into the camp. By the way, it was we got to this little place, a little room, and there was only 12 of us left because one of the guys died at the checkout.

00:38:13 Speaker 2

And anyway, the first thing they did was make a strip down all of our clothes and they gave us a cold shower and we were half frozen from this ride from the train station to the camp.

00:38:26 Speaker 1

Who made you strip Americans or German?

00:38:27 Speaker 2

The Germans and.

00:38:31 Speaker 2

Before that, though, they cut all of our hair.

00:38:34 Speaker 2

And.

00:38:36 Speaker 2

They wanted us to.

00:38:37 Speaker 2

In there sanitary, I guess and then they sprayed us with flea powder and then gave us the same clothes we had on.

00:38:45 Speaker 1

The same clothes you still got blood on them.

00:38:47 Speaker 2

Yeah, we put the same clothes back on.

00:38:51 Speaker 1

Doesn't make much sense, does it?

00:38:53 Speaker 2

The first couple of months there, I didn't take off any.

00:38:56 Speaker 2

The only thing I took off was my combat boots at night when I got into bed because they were too clumsy to wear in bed.

00:39:05 Speaker 1

Worried about somebody stealing them at night?

00:39:07 Speaker 2

No.

00:39:10 Speaker 2

These always. That's why they have to say about the air.

00:39:14 Speaker 2

There were 4200 Air Force men in there and you could leave a bread ration out there and they wouldn't take it.

00:39:23 Speaker 2

Pretty admirable of all those.

00:39:26 Speaker 1

How many men were in this camp?

00:39:27 Speaker 2

There.

00:39:29 Speaker 2

There was 29,000 of all nationalities when it was 4200 Americans.

00:39:35 Speaker 2

And there was 10s of thousands of Russians in there.

00:39:38 Speaker 2

Don't know how.

00:39:38 Speaker 1

Many were they separated by Bob Wire.

00:39:41 Speaker 2

Yeah. The Russian compound is next hours and then beyond them would be the maybe the British and Canadians.

00:39:48 Speaker 2

Then the French were in one section and the Serbs were in one section.

00:39:53 Speaker 2

And.

00:39:54 Speaker 1

They had y'all segregated by different nationalities. That is not.

00:39:55 Speaker 2

Not by nationality.

00:40:00 Speaker 1

The camp where they dug their tunnels out is it.

00:40:02 Speaker 2

Well, they took some tunnels, but nobody ever.

00:40:05 Speaker 1

Nobody ever got away.

00:40:06 Speaker 2

Nobody ever got out. The only guy I knew got out was he hung on the bottom of a vehicle and got out and they caught him a couple of days later.

00:40:19 Speaker 2

And they wanted to shoot him in the head that the American in their Kenneth Curtain back from Miles City, Mt, went to the commandant and told him, he said.

00:40:31 Speaker 2



The war isn't going to last forever, and if you shoot this man or kill him.

00:40:36

He.

00:40:37 Speaker 2

We're not going to forget it.

00:40:39 Speaker 2

So the German Coleman dot let him.

00:40:43 Speaker 2

He put him in what we call the \*\*\*\*.

00:40:47 Speaker 2

Or solitary for, I think a week or 10 days, and then let him out back to McCain.

00:40:53 Speaker 1

You're you're saying if you had something you had done wrong, they did have a punishment. Confinement like solitaire? That's right.

00:41:00

And.

00:41:00 Speaker 1

That's where they put this runaway.

00:41:04 Speaker 1

Did he?

00:41:05 Speaker 1

Did he survive the war? Do you know?

00:41:07 Speaker 2

Yeah. In fact, I think he lives right down here near Galt.

00:41:11 Speaker 1

Now we.

00:41:12 Speaker 2

Yeah, he was from Billings Mt.

00:41:16 Speaker 2

Another good Montana boy.

00:41:19 Speaker 1

This is the coldest winter in the history of Europe.

00:41:22 Speaker 1

And you had no heat in the barracks.

00:41:23 Speaker 1

You have a blanket.

00:41:25 Speaker 2

You know, they gave us.

00:41:28 Speaker 2

A Red Cross furnaces with a regular GI blanket, which is good heavy blanket and then there was a German blanket and we called it a table cloth because you could almost hold it up to the light and see through it. But between the two.

00:41:43 Speaker 2

I wrapped mine up.

00:41:46 Speaker 2

Made it like a sleeping bag and tied it so I could just slip into it.

00:41:51 Speaker 2

And that gave you more wraps around.

00:41:54 Speaker 1

You never had to share a bunk with somebody else to keep warm.

00:41:56 Speaker 2

No, no.

00:41:56 Speaker 1

Put more blankets on over under.

00:41:59 Speaker 1

What kind of a bed did you have to sleep on?

00:42:02 Speaker 2

Well, the bunks were stacked 2 and 3 high.

00:42:07 Speaker 2

And different levels.

00:42:08 Speaker 1

Right.

00:42:08 Speaker 2

And there was wood slats across there. And then you had a big sack like a gunny sack when it was about 6 feet long and about 3 feet wide.

00:42:19 Speaker 2

It was filled with straw and sawdust, and that was your mattress in the bed springs building. The one.

00:42:25 Speaker 1

No pillow.

00:42:28 Speaker 1

OK.

00:42:29

Yeah.

00:42:32 Speaker 1

You went the whole winter that way.

00:42:34 Speaker 2

Right.

00:42:34 Speaker 2

Right, yeah.

00:42:35 Speaker 2

And.

00:42:36 Speaker 1

When did, when did the weather start to turn good? February, March.

00:42:41 Speaker 2

It got a little better in February and then March was, you know, like a spring day in Montana and.

00:42:49 Speaker 2

Then on April 8, we found out what we could hear the Russians bombarding Vienna, which is 30 miles away.

00:43:00 Speaker 2

And apparently they had taken Vienna and the Germans then decided to have.

00:43:06 Speaker 2

Us leave the camp.

00:43:08 Speaker 2

And what?

00:43:09 Speaker 1

Are they going to take you?

00:43:12 Speaker 2

Well, we didn't know where we were headed or anything.

00:43:15 Speaker 2

They said anybody that wants to stay in the camp can stay with a volunteer base.

00:43:21 Speaker 2

200 of the fellow stayed in the camp because they were incapable of walking.

00:43:27 Speaker 2

For one reason or another.

00:43:29 Speaker 2

And everybody else, we went out in groups of 500, about nine groups of Americans.

00:43:38 Speaker 1

And.

00:43:38 Speaker 2

We want marks for 17 days.

00:43:42 Speaker 1

That that 600 mile March.

00:43:44 Speaker 2

Well, no. This was 190 miles.

00:43:47 Speaker 1

190, OK.

00:43:48 Speaker 1

Why did you want to do that instead of being wait for the Russians?

00:43:51 Speaker 2

Well, the German guards didn't want to be captured by the Russians.

00:43:56 Speaker 1

No, but you could have stayed there and you could have been liberated by the Russians.

00:43:59 Speaker 2

We didn't have the choice.

00:44:01 Speaker 1

Oh, I thought you said it was voluntary to stay or go.

00:44:03

No.

00:44:04 Speaker 2

It was voluntary as far as staying and going, but you didn't.

00:44:11 Speaker 2

No, we didn't want to stay there for the have the front come through there.

00:44:16 Speaker 2

We we everybody had the idea of just a little ways W we'd run into the Americans while it was a little.

00:44:23 Speaker 2

Than we figured.

00:44:24 Speaker 1

Nephew 190 miles and you're still inside a German line, but a long ways away.

00:44:30 Speaker 2

And anyway, we that was.

00:44:33 Speaker 2

We slept on open out in the open.

00:44:36 Speaker 2

And it was tougher on the air core men than it was me 'cause. I was kind of used to it from being on the front lines.

00:44:42 Speaker 1

How's your bullet wound doing?

00:44:43 Speaker 2

Well.

00:44:44 Speaker 1

Getting healed up.

00:44:45 Speaker 2

Yeah, it healed up and pretty much by the end of February.

00:44:50 Speaker 1

You have trouble with it today.

00:44:52 Speaker 2

No.

00:44:53 Speaker 1

OK, everything grew back you holes patched up.

00:44:56 Speaker 2

Yeah, I got a little dent there, but that's about it.

00:45:03 Speaker 1

How did you finally get freed?

00:45:05 Speaker 1

You made this 190 mile March.

00:45:07 Speaker 2

That we walked that 190 miles, we ended up in a little town called Brunau Austria. And that was Hitler's birthplace, by the way.

00:45:16 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:45:16 Speaker 2

And anyway, we walked through that town and the people.

00:45:21 Speaker 2

They they called us all kinds of names and stuff, and so the Germans marched there 2 kilometers South of town and put us up in the forest.

00:45:29 Speaker 2

1st and we the reason we couldn't go any further W there was a big river just West of.

00:45:36 Speaker 2

They're called the ends river and all the bridges had been bombed out and there was no way you could get across.

00:45:43 Speaker 2

River because it was.

00:45:45 Speaker 2

As big as the American River, as you, Sacramento.

00:45:49 Speaker 2

And so.

00:45:51 Speaker 2

We put up there.

00:45:54 Speaker 2

And made little lean twos.

00:45:56 Speaker 2

One thing about.

00:45:57 Speaker 2

Had a lot of firewood in this forest.

00:46:00 Speaker 2

We were warm that we were pretty hungry and the Germans got us a little food, but it was it was just nip and tuck as to whether some of those guys were going.

00:46:11 Speaker 2

Make it and.

00:46:12 Speaker 1

This is February.

00:46:13 Speaker 2

Your well, this is April.

00:46:17 Speaker 2

April 8th we marched out and.

00:46:20 Speaker 1

I thought the Germans gave up about March 6.

00:46:24 Speaker 2

No.

00:46:24 Speaker 1

March, April May where was it?

00:46:25 Speaker 2

Th when war ended, I think officially on May 12th.

00:46:30 Speaker 1

May 12th, OK.

00:46:31 Speaker 2

And we were the last major camp to be.

00:46:35 Speaker 2

But you might say we liberated ourselves in a sense, we.

00:46:41 Speaker 2

But by a coincidence, the American armies right across this river, and we didn't know they were over there and they didn't know we were on the other side from them.

00:46:45 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:46:52 Speaker 2

And on May 3rd.

00:46:55 Speaker 2

The engineers from the 13th Armored Division built a pontoon bridge across the river.

00:47:01 Speaker 2

Drove across and much of their surprise, they run into 4000.

00:47:08 Speaker 1



Pow.

00:47:09 Speaker 2

Gowers that they had no idea we're over there and they were, I'll equipped to handle this. Really, but.

00:47:15 Speaker 1

Right.

00:47:17 Speaker 2

We were happy to see them and they.

00:47:19 Speaker 1

Were you still in an internment camp?

00:47:21 Speaker 2

Pardon.

00:47:22 Speaker 1

Were you still in an enclosure?

00:47:23 Speaker 1

Still in a camp.

00:47:24 Speaker 2

Oh, no, we're we're in that forest. We were afraid.

00:47:26 Speaker 1

Just marching along.

00:47:29 Speaker 2

Were roaming around everywhere. We wanted to go.

00:47:31 Speaker 1

But where'd your guards go?

00:47:33 Speaker 2

Oh, I don't.

00:47:34 Speaker 2

They they sort of disappeared, but they they were around somewhere.

00:47:37 Speaker 2

Because on May 3rd, when we were liberated by whoever the head soldier, the Germans, he got about 20 of the guards together.

00:47:52 Speaker 2

And they all put their rifles down, and all of the the towels were circling and.

00:48:01 Speaker 2

We were taunting them a little.

00:48:03 Speaker 2

You know, inventing our anger.

00:48:06 Speaker 2

Over the what we've been through and.

00:48:10 Speaker 2

Our kilometer and we didn't really mean it.

00:48:14 Speaker 2

This American.

00:48:17 Speaker 2

That was in control.

00:48:18 Speaker 2

I guess he was from the 13th armored he.

00:48:23 Speaker 2

Had a chat with the German officer there and the German officer mentioned that he'd like to have his men treated.

00:48:31 Speaker 2

As good as the Americans and the the American officer got mad as a Jacob had him in custody and said look at these guys said you call that.

00:48:44 Speaker 2

Good treatment, he.

00:48:45 Speaker 2

You get your \*\*\*\* in there with the rest of your men, and he said we'll haul you away in about 30 minutes or something to that effect.

00:48:53 Speaker 2

So anyway, we all cheered.

00:48:56 Speaker 2

They took off.

00:48:59 Speaker 2

And and.

00:48:59 Speaker 2

Took them several days to get us out of there, though, because there were so many of us.

00:49:05 Speaker 1

They bring you good food and water.

00:49:08 Speaker 2

Well, we, we played rations off of the the soldiers as they came across because.

00:49:09 Speaker 1

Change of clothes.

00:49:14 Speaker 2

The 12th core came across on that pontoon bridge in my division.

00:49:19 Speaker 2

80th Infantry came across and I met a.

00:49:23 Speaker 2

That I came over on the boat.

00:49:25 Speaker 1

Oh really?

00:49:26 Speaker 1

What are your own buddies?

00:49:27 Speaker 1

Kind of liberated you then.

00:49:29 Speaker 2

Cooper from Alpena.

00:49:31 Speaker 2

We'd become friends on the boat, and the first remark I made to him, I said. Boy, you sure look.

00:49:38 Speaker 2

To me.

00:49:39 Speaker 2

And I said, do you Remember Me?

00:49:40 Speaker 2

Was sweater.

00:49:43 Speaker 2

From Montana always said. Yeah, I said, boy said. You sure look like hell.

00:49:49 Speaker 2

Anyway, I got some rations off.

00:49:52 Speaker 1

How to make friends sure look terrible.

00:49:56 Speaker 2

So they they flew us out of there, we got out on about the third day of probably the 6th of May and they pushed in Nuremberg and gassed up.

00:50:07 Speaker 1

Where'd you go camp lucky strike, yeah.

00:50:09 Speaker 2

Right. And we ended up camp.

00:50:11 Speaker 2

Strike and.

00:50:13 Speaker 1

Then you got fresh clothes and fresh food and.

00:50:15 Speaker 2

Click all of our clothing.

00:50:17 Speaker 1

Burn them.

00:50:17 Speaker 2

Probably burn them, right?

00:50:20 Speaker 1

Now you're going to get a bath.

00:50:22 Speaker 2

Yeah. Oh, that was.

00:50:23 Speaker 2

And then they they they fit a special.

00:50:27 Speaker 2

There, you know, because our stomachs weren't adjusted to eating normally.

00:50:29 Speaker 1

Right.

00:50:32 Speaker 1

Right people.

00:50:33 Speaker 2

So yeah.

00:50:35 Speaker 1

People are trying to come out of POW camps and just eat a hamburger or punches high, rich food. They got sick.

00:50:41 Speaker 1

Man, they got sick.

00:50:42 Speaker 2

Yeah, they had a lot of mashed potatoes there, but no gravy or butter and things like that.

00:50:47 Speaker 1

Right. Nothing with grease in it.

00:50:51 Speaker 1

Well, get me medals, rewards.

00:50:55 Speaker 1

I saw you got a silver star.

00:50:58 Speaker 1

You got a silver star.

00:51:00 Speaker 2

Oh no, I got a bronze though.

00:51:01 Speaker 1

Bronstein for what?

00:51:04 Speaker 2

Well, I really don't know.

00:51:06 Speaker 2

I I like the joke about it, but it was never really officially awarded to me.

00:51:12 Speaker 2

Came in the mail one.

00:51:14 Speaker 2

After I.

00:51:15 Speaker 2

Was back home and.

00:51:17 Speaker 1

I know you got the Purple Heart that's from being shot.

00:51:20 Speaker 2

I earned that legitimately, that the Bronze Star I I would like to joke about that and said I think they produced too many of.

00:51:27 Speaker 2

Them and they.

00:51:30 Speaker 2

But they also had a POW medal. They gave us layer.

00:51:36 Speaker 1

How do you get out of camp?

00:51:37 Speaker 1

Strike back to the states.

00:51:40 Speaker 1

Back by ship.

00:51:40 Speaker 2

Or just click my Walter Reichert and.

00:51:42 Speaker 1

You're flying.

00:51:44 Speaker 2

We asked what we had to do to get out of there. The fellow said well.

00:51:49 Speaker 2

You just have to wait around when your papers come through so.

00:51:54 Speaker 2

We went down.

00:51:56 Speaker 2

Wasn't too far from the beach there and we went down there.

00:52:02 Speaker 2

And there was a little place where small craft could come in and stop and then take off.

00:52:07 Speaker 2

We were standing there and a guy comes into the.

00:52:11 Speaker 2

Vehicle of these American driving a small boat, he said.

00:52:16 Speaker 2

Are you?

00:52:17 Speaker 2

We said to the states, he says. Get in.

00:52:19 Speaker 2

And so we got out, got on a boat and about 10 days later we're in Brooklyn, NY.

00:52:27 Speaker 1

This guy just took you out to some ship, put you on board, and you came home.

00:52:30 Speaker 2

We had no papers.

00:52:33 Speaker 1

What do they say when you got into the states? You got no papers, no nothing.

00:52:36 Speaker 2

Well, there was never any question about it. When we got off the boat there, they took us to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey.

00:52:45 Speaker 2

And then start processing us.

00:52:48 Speaker 1

You know, they took your word for it then I said who you were and you were apow.

00:52:50 Speaker 2

Yeah. Once you all know that they they had this pinned down in the water.

00:52:56 Speaker 2

Was in the airport and they chipped him down near Miami somewhere.

00:53:02 Speaker 2

And they they.

00:53:05 Speaker 2

They shipped me to Fort Douglas, Utah and.

00:53:11 Speaker 2

I got I wasn't out of the service, but they gave me a 60 day furlough like they did all the other POW.

00:53:19 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:53:19 Speaker 2

So I caught a train up to Montana.

00:53:24 Speaker 2

And that's where I was when you dropped the big bomb on Japan.

00:53:28 Speaker 2

I was just due to go back.

00:53:32 Speaker 2

To return to Santa Barbara, that's where I was supposed to report.

00:53:38 Speaker 2



I think it's the day they dropped the big bomb. That was the last day I had of my 60 day furlough.

00:53:48 Speaker 1

So where do you report back to?

00:53:50 Speaker 2

And I went to Santa.

00:53:51 Speaker 1

He went to Santa Barbara and they said why bother to come back?

00:53:55 Speaker 2

Well, I was still in the army and they made a hotel clerk out of me there.

00:54:00 Speaker 1

OK. Because you're kind of like me.

00:54:02 Speaker 1

Got in in 44 and.

00:54:04 Speaker 1

Didn't have enough points yet, although you were a POW.

00:54:07 Speaker 2

Yeah, I didn't have enough points to get a three day pass, I guess, but.

00:54:11 Speaker 1

They kept you around until December, I think you said.

00:54:14 Speaker 2

Yeah, they they came out with a bullet in late November that anybody that POW 60 days or more could.

00:54:23 Speaker 2

Could be discharged and I took advantage of that because I've been 170 days of POW.

00:54:30 Speaker 1

Then you went back to Montana.

00:54:32 Speaker 2

Yeah, that's right.

00:54:33 Speaker 1

When you're in Plw camp, how did you stay in contact with anybody?

00:54:38 Speaker 1

Write letters home and did they get them?

00:54:40 Speaker 2

What I wrote, they had little postcards in there and I'd write 1 every day.

00:54:43

Yeah.

00:54:45 Speaker 2

And the strange part of that was none of them got home until after I did.

00:54:52 Speaker 1

That's what I've heard several times.

00:54:53

Because.

00:54:54 Speaker 2

They I don't know what happened to them, but I'd write 1 to my dad and mother.

00:55:02 Speaker 2

And one day I my dad got one. After I was home.

00:55:07

So.

00:55:08 Speaker 1

What you doing here in Powwow camp for entertainment?

00:55:12 Speaker 2

Well, mostly just sit around and talk to other fellas and.

00:55:16 Speaker 1

Do you have any books to read?

00:55:18 Speaker 2

They did.

00:55:19 Speaker 2

A small library there with some old books.

00:55:23 Speaker 1

Did they have a band made-up by Pows?

00:55:26 Speaker 1

Get together to play a band or.

00:55:28 Speaker 2

They had all the instruments from a band that had been captured in North Africa, Casserine Pass, and the fellas had a wonderful band in there, 'cause.

00:55:41 Speaker 2

And they some of the guys performed some stage plays there a.

00:55:46 Speaker 2

Of times.

00:55:47 Speaker 2

One of them was when I was in there.

00:55:49 Speaker 2

And they even got clothing and dressed up as women, two or three of those fellas. And when they came out, the guys just went wild, you know, they had a high heels on these guys and.

00:56:04 Speaker 2

They were, Needless to say, they were kind of pretty.

00:56:08 Speaker 1

You've been gone a long time, I say. Looking good.

00:56:10 Speaker 1

Take.

00:56:11 Speaker 2

It build.

00:56:12 Speaker 2

It sure kept the morale up.

00:56:13 Speaker 1

That's.

00:56:14 Speaker 1

One or not you did to keep it up.

00:56:16 Speaker 2

Yeah, 'cause. It got a little discouraging in their times.

00:56:19

Yeah.

00:56:20 Speaker 2

Always worried about.

00:56:22 Speaker 2

Where this all going to end and when?

00:56:25 Speaker 1

It's all the time you're in.

00:56:27 Speaker 1

You never really had any time off to do any sightseeing. You got to Europe.

00:56:30 Speaker 1

Sent you right up to the frontline.

00:56:32 Speaker 1

Captured you're.

00:56:34 Speaker 1

And you're sent home.

00:56:36 Speaker 2

Glad to get out.

00:56:37 Speaker 2

There.

00:56:37 Speaker 1

Yeah.

00:56:39 Speaker 1

You're seeing funny happen to anybody.

00:56:42 Speaker 1

Was there any time for funniness or humor?

00:56:44 Speaker 2

Yeah, there are some pranks that fellas used to pull on the guards there that were, I thought, were kind of common, though, and I didn't know they were doing it until afterwards.

00:56:53 Speaker 2

Told me what they had done, but.

00:56:55 Speaker 2

We line up in in 5 S the Germans could count off.

00:56:59 Speaker 2

We had two roll calls a day, one the morning, one the afternoon and.

00:57:07 Speaker 2

The German, who got knee count pins wide right clear down the line and he there's about 175 men in each half of the barracks. So he'd multiply that out and go over and report to the head officer that he had.

00:57:25 Speaker 2

Say 350 men or something like that and.

00:57:29 Speaker 2

If German officers say you're 1 short.

00:57:33 Speaker 2

Go back and recount.

00:57:34 Speaker 2

But what the guys would do, they had.

00:57:37 Speaker 2

Of them had big overcoats.

00:57:38 Speaker 2

They'd hide a little guy that was a tail gunner. Maybe in this overcoat and there'd be 6 there.

00:57:45 Speaker 2

So when he got to the end of the line, he would be 1 short.

00:57:48 Speaker 2

Then, while he's reporting to the officer, everybody shop around line up properly.

00:57:54 Speaker 2

And then he'd have to come back and.

00:57:55 Speaker 2

And then the count would be correct and then make the the guard look like he was a fool.

00:58:03 Speaker 2

One of the things and another thing they do is sometimes makes snowballs, take them in the barracks and they wouldn't melt because it's too cold in there. And then at night they'd throw them at the barbed wire fence and try to hit the cans that were up against.

00:58:19 Speaker 2

The fence, and if they could rattle those cans?

00:58:23 Speaker 2

Then the Germans would take somebody's trying to escape.

00:58:25 Speaker 2

Out of the camp, they turn the lights on, create a hell of a disturbance.

00:58:31 Speaker 1

They're saying then, did they have electrified fence too?

00:58:34 Speaker 2

Yeah. In the car towers, they can turn lights on and they'd line up right down the fence line.

00:58:40 Speaker 1

Had tin cans with stones or something in it for a noisemaker. So if you.

00:58:43 Speaker 2

Maker well, the tin cans are just from Red Cross food parcels that.

00:58:49 Speaker 1

Would bang together if you.

00:58:51 Speaker 2

Rather than dispose of the Germans, lay them right up against the fence and build a little stack of them.

00:58:57 Speaker 1

Mm.

00:58:58 Speaker 1

If you knock them over, they'd make a noise.

00:59:00 Speaker 2

Yeah.

00:59:01 Speaker 1

So the guard would know there's somebody trying to get out.

00:59:05 Speaker 2

So.

00:59:06 Speaker 1

OK. Uh.

00:59:08 Speaker 1

What do you think of your fellow officers?

00:59:10 Speaker 1

Fellow men, was there any officers in there with you?

00:59:13 Speaker 2

Well, there's very few there.

00:59:14 Speaker 2

Let's see. There was Father Stephen.

00:59:18 Speaker 2

He was a Catholic priest and he was the chaplain, and he'd been caught in Casseran Pass.

00:59:27 Speaker 2

By rammel.

00:59:28 Speaker 1

Well, that's about 1942.

00:59:30 Speaker 1

A long time ago.

00:59:33 Speaker 2

Yeah. And he.

00:59:35 Speaker 2

Administered services for all faiths there.

00:59:40 Speaker 2

And he also was kind of a counselor.

00:59:42 Speaker 2

Fellow had any.

00:59:44 Speaker 2

They he would request they come to talk to him and he'd sit down, talk to them and.

00:59:51 Speaker 2

You know, try to.

00:59:53 Speaker 2

Straighten them out.

00:59:55 Speaker 1

You never kept a personal diary, did you? You still haven't.

00:59:57 Speaker 2

Yes, I did.

00:59:59 Speaker 2

Oh yes.

01:00:00 Speaker 1

What are you going to do with it?

01:00:01 Speaker 2

Well, you.

01:00:03 Speaker 2

You can't hardly read.

01:00:04 Speaker 2

It's old, but I wrote a book that covers everything we've talked about today.

01:00:10 Speaker 1

That the one you're holding in your hand.

01:00:12 Speaker 2

No, this one here is one that Ben Felker took pictures while he was in the camp.

01:00:19 Speaker 2

Traded cigarettes for a camera with the German Guards.



01:00:23 Speaker 2

And he took all of these pictures and it verifies a lot of things.

01:00:29 Speaker 1

That's a regular published manual by the by some publisher.

01:00:34 Speaker 1

It's not one-of-a-kind.

01:00:36 Speaker 2

Published it but.

01:00:38 Speaker 1

I'll have to look at it afterwards because I can't get from my camera to where you are.

01:00:40 Speaker 2

OK.

01:00:45 Speaker 1

Now, without tipping everything over.

01:00:46

Yeah.

01:00:47 Speaker 1

You did have a guy taking photographs then, but you don't have any photographs.

01:00:51 Speaker 2

The only.

01:00:52 Speaker 1

Only what's in the book there.

01:00:54 Speaker 2

Like when I make little talks to the classroom or some.

01:00:58 Speaker 1

20 all that book up in front of you, and I'll take a picture of it.

01:01:05

I think.

01:01:07 Speaker 1

Ohh I gotta change this thing around a little bit here.

01:01:12 Speaker 1

If the regular published manuscript, the three beds high.

01:01:18 Speaker 1

Guys are talking.

01:01:19 Speaker 1

Is a.

01:01:20 Speaker 1

A man in your camp actually took these pictures then.

01:01:23 Speaker 2

Yes.

01:01:24 Speaker 1

I see the inside the front cover.

01:01:29 Speaker 1

Pointing this part. Yeah. OK.

01:01:33 Speaker 1

As my pH. D El per Ben.

01:01:40 Speaker 1

Twicky KRI e.g. i.e. How do you pronounce that?

01:01:44 Speaker 2

Yeah, crazy. That was our. We called each other crazy.

01:01:45 Speaker 1

Creggy looks a.

01:01:49 Speaker 2

That.

01:01:49 Speaker 1

You're gay.

01:01:50 Speaker 2

That means war in German.

01:01:52 Speaker 1

That's all I want.

01:01:53 Speaker 1

You, Sir.

01:01:55

Position.

01:01:57

Yes.

01:01:58 Speaker 1

That the regular published book.

01:02:01 Speaker 1

So I can't turn it in since not years.

01:02:03 Speaker 1

Not separate.

01:02:06 Speaker 1

Somebody else did it and they got a lot of copies of.

01:02:09 Speaker 1

What I'm saying?

01:02:10 Speaker 2

Yeah. And Ben Felper Daddy died several years ago.

01:02:15 Speaker 1

Well, some of the people that I have interviewed actually made like this book I'm holding of their own memoirs, and it's the only one-of-a-kind where they had one or two copies.

01:02:25 Speaker 1

Of their history, that's not a published.

01:02:26 Speaker 2

Yeah, what?

01:02:28 Speaker 1

It's just made by them for a few friends.

01:02:31 Speaker 1

That's what we're kind of looking for.

01:02:33 Speaker 2

Well, I've got one of those too.

01:02:35 Speaker 1

You do.

01:02:37 Speaker 1

Got.

01:02:37 Speaker 1

How many copies did you make?

01:02:40 Speaker 2

I think I've made about 40 just for, you know, mostly for relatives and close friends.

01:02:45 Speaker 1

Mm.

01:02:46 Speaker 2

I've got about.

01:02:48 Speaker 2

3-3 or four left.

01:02:49 Speaker 1

You can still find them.

01:02:51 Speaker 2

Oh, I got them right here in the room.

01:02:54 Speaker 1

Can I have one?

01:02:55 Speaker 2

Oh you can.

01:02:56 Speaker 1

We'll fill out that other manuscript paper then and I'll submit this along as a manuscript goes with this thing.

01:03:02

Oh, OK.

01:03:05 Speaker 1

Well, you got out of service in 1945. You go back to school.

01:03:09 Speaker 2

No, I had to go back to work and I got affiliated with the company in Sioux City, IA made pipe machines that made concrete manufacturing pipe machines.

01:03:24 Speaker 2

They hired me as an installation engineer and I what?

01:03:30 Speaker 2

On numerous setups, take me about over six weeks to two months to get a plant built.

01:03:39 Speaker 1

Mm.

01:03:40 Speaker 2

And I built several.

01:03:42 Speaker 1

When did you get married?

01:03:45 Speaker 2

After let's see, this was in 1946. We got married on October 10th.

01:03:52 Speaker 1

46.

01:03:53

Yeah.

01:03:55 Speaker 1

You're about six weeks ahead of Maine.

01:03:58 Speaker 1

I got married in November of 46.

01:04:01 Speaker 1

So you didn't go back?

01:04:02 Speaker 1

School.

01:04:04 Speaker 1

Make any good close friends in the service.

01:04:07 Speaker 2

Old.

01:04:08 Speaker 1

Did you stay in contact with?

01:04:10 Speaker 2

Yeah, there's mostly.

01:04:14 Speaker 2

Fellows I really got close to where the some of the fellows install like 17.

01:04:20 Speaker 1

You stay in contact with them.

01:04:23 Speaker 2

Those that are still living, that boy I tell you.

01:04:26 Speaker 2

They're dwindling fast.

01:04:28 Speaker 1

That's why we're doing this.

01:04:31 Speaker 1

Million.

01:04:32 Speaker 2

I've been with my wife and I've been to several.

01:04:36

Where?

01:04:38 Speaker 2

Oh gosh, we.

01:04:40 Speaker 2

Been to Jackson, Ms. and Denver, Co.

01:04:45 Speaker 1

Who sponsored these reunions? Pows are your original.

01:04:48 Speaker 2

Yeah, our style like 17.

01:04:51 Speaker 1

OK.

01:04:52 Speaker 2

We I helped put one on in Reno a few years ago.

01:04:55 Speaker 2

And then they had another one.

01:04:58 Speaker 2

Just a couple years ago.

01:05:00 Speaker 1

So how many people show up?

01:05:00

But.

01:05:02 Speaker 2

There's usually about 200 to 2:50.

01:05:05 Speaker 1

Because you said there was, what 4000 of you in there?

01:05:08 Speaker 2

Yeah, there's, there's probably, we figured there's just a little over 2000 of us left.

01:05:13 Speaker 1

Mm.

01:05:16 Speaker 2

OK.

01:05:18

Do.

01:05:19 Speaker 1

What you do for a career after the pipe? Then you stay with manufacturing pipe the rest of your life.

01:05:24 Speaker 2

Right. I was in that until I retired.

01:05:27 Speaker 1

Right here in Sacramento area.

01:05:29 Speaker 2

Well.

01:05:31 Speaker 1

California.

01:05:32 Speaker 2

I I.

01:05:32 Speaker 2

I ran the plant in Sacramento for about a year, right down here on Jackson Rd. I know.

01:05:36 Speaker 1

Yeah.

01:05:41 Speaker 2

I can see that the plant was not going to make it too long, so I I moved out and to greener fields.

01:05:50 Speaker 2

We ended up in Houston, TX.

01:05:53 Speaker 1

Doing what?

01:05:53 Speaker 1

Thing.

01:05:54 Speaker 2

Same thing. I was a plant Superintendent there for a big company.

01:05:59 Speaker 1

Stayed there till you retired.

01:06:01 Speaker 2



I stayed there.

01:06:02 Speaker 2

Very one of the best companies ever worked for a nice way to end up.

01:06:09 Speaker 1

Think your military experience influenced your thinking?

01:06:12 Speaker 1

About.

01:06:13 Speaker 1

Just people in general.

01:06:17 Speaker 2

I didn't quite.

01:06:19 Speaker 1

Think the warrant influence you're thinking?

01:06:22 Speaker 2

Well, I suppose it.

01:06:24 Speaker 2

You know, I didn't let it bother me.

01:06:30 Speaker 2

I was too busy, man, with five children and the wife.

01:06:33 Speaker 1

Do you think you're wary or po W affected your life?

01:06:38 Speaker 2

Well, I think it made you appreciate the little things in life a lot better.

01:06:43 Speaker 2

Probably wouldn't have ordinarily.

01:06:46 Speaker 1

You have any children?

01:06:49

5.

01:06:49 Speaker 1

All online.

01:06:50 Speaker 2

Yeah, they're all turned out good thanks to my wife's training.

01:06:55 Speaker 1

The same wife that's in the other room there.

01:06:56 Speaker 2

It might.

01:06:57 Speaker 1

Been married ever since 46. So that's 59 years.

01:07:01 Speaker 2

About 57, I think.

01:07:03 Speaker 1

Whatever.

01:07:05 Speaker 1

Yeah, I'm 57.

01:07:06 Speaker 1

I'll be 58 for me.

01:07:09 Speaker 1

Well, I think we left anything out.

01:07:13 Speaker 2

No, I would covered that pretty thoroughly.

01:07:16 Speaker 1

Nothing you want to add.

01:07:18 Speaker 2

No, except a big thank you to you for doing all this.

01:07:23 Speaker 1

Well.

01:07:24 Speaker 1

We've been a little longer this.

01:07:26 Speaker 1

I looked at my record the last time we spoke.

01:07:29 Speaker 1

9 minutes this time we.

01:07:30 Speaker 1

101 hour and 8 minutes.

01:07:32 Speaker 2

Oh, is that right?

01:07:34 Speaker 1

So we're standing pretty close, mark.

01:07:37 Speaker 1

Well, with that, then I think I'll just hit the fade button.

01:07:39 Speaker 1

Don't know what else I can ask. Ah.

01:07:43 Speaker 1

I've got the figure on there and I really appreciate you doing this the second.

01:07:46 Speaker 1

I'm sorry we had to do it, but in fairness to you to get you logged in, I'm going to submit.

01:07:53 Speaker 1

And hope we get it this time.

01:07:55

V.

01:07:56 Speaker 1

So thank you very.

01:07:57 Speaker 1

And with that, I'm going to hit the fade and say goodbye, Mark.

01:08:01 Speaker 2

Thank you.

