

**Interview with
Walter Clifton Robbins, ID0005
Born 19 March 1918
1st Army/ 104th Infantry Division/ 413th Infantry Regiment/ Company B**

The date is July 2, 2003 and it's the home of Walter Clifton Robbins, Sr. [Sr] born the 19th of March 1918 and the interviewer is Walter C Robbins, Jr., [Jr] son.

Jr: You served in the US Army and reached the rank of what Staff Sergeant?

Sr: Yeah, Staff Sergeant

Jr: And you served in the European Theater during World War 2.

Jr: What unit were you attached to?

Sr: 1st Army

Jr: First Army?

Jr: What division or

Sr: one hundred and five I think it was 105 wasn't it – Timberwolves

Jr: Were you drafted or did you enlist?

Sr: Drafted

Jr: You were drafted – do you remember when?

Sr: The 2nd of December 1942

Jr: Where did you go after you were drafted?

Sr: Went to Indianapolis and then went to Oregon

Jr: So – what did you do in Indianapolis?

Sr: Oh, just nothing - just in and out – whatever they call it

Jr – So did you do any basic training there?

Sr – No

Jr – How long were you in Indianapolis?

Sr – 2 days or 3 days

Jr – and then went to Oregon? – So how did you get there? By train

Sr – Yeah

Jr: How long did it take? Do you know?

Sr – all day – 2 days probably – it didn't go very fast. It was a troop train – it was a special troop train

Jr – What was the troop train like? Did it have seats in it and stuff?

Sr – It had different seats than the regular train

Jr – So how were they different?

Sr – I forget I couldn't tell you but anyway they were different from and there wasn't any body on there but troops – no civilians on there

Jr – They were just special troop trains and that was all that was on there – so you were mustered in, in Oregon or Indianapolis?

Sr – Must have been in Indianapolis

Jr – So the whole group from Indiana went to...

Sr – Different places – where ever - they took so many here and so many there whatever they needed in certain basic training then that's where you had basic training – 6 months of basic training.

Jr – Six months?

Sr – and then you got a

Jr – That was a long time

Sr – I think June or July I got a furlough of 15 days or 7 days or whatever it was.

Jr – What did you think of your ???

Sr – Well, I was home in July of, No May - May the 29th I was home because that was when I got married I was on furlough.

Jr – 43 – OK – Were you still living at home with your parents when you got drafted?

Sr – Yeah

Jr – That was at Redkey?

Sr – Well, lets see, no, yeah probably

Jr – So your name is on the monument over there in Redkey?

Sr – no, over at Winchester on – was drafted through Winchester because it was in Randolph County

Jr – Oh, so it was Winchester

Sr – It used to be over on the thing over by the Courthouse – I saw it over there one time.

Jr – I thought you said it was Redkey

Sr – Nope they didn't have anything in Redkey

Jr – So what did you think of the Army Life to begin with?

Sr – Well it was alright – I didn't have no kicks

Jr – What did you think about being in the Army?

Sr – I guess I never thought nothing about it – in and out

Jr – You weren't upset about having to go

Sr – Oh I didn't want to go but I wasn't upset over it

Jr – How did it feel like - the difference between being in the Army as compared to your life before that – before going in?

Sr – I never thought nothing about it

Jr – Just didn't think anything about it

Jr – So, your basic training - what all took place in basic training – What kind of things did you have to learn and go through?

Sr – Well, we had to learn to shoot the gun right - learn to where the compass went how to run the compass

Jr – What about marching and following orders and that kind of thing?

Sr – yeah that was a big thing – Quick order drill and the hikes – 20 mile hikes 5 mile fast hikes – or what was it called - forget what they called them - anyway you double timed for 5 miles –

Jr – So how long would it take before you and the other guys before you got to where you could do that without

Sr – Just started out doing it

Jr – Just started out doing it – No working up to it huh?

Sr – Nope – well close order drill you had that every morning

Jr so you got used to it

Sr – After Reveille then you got close order drill and exercises which was good for you

Jr – So what time did you have to up in the morning?

Sr – 5 o'clock – and sweep and mop your barracks all out and make your bed and fall out for Reveille, yeah Reveille, and after they blow the horns you go eat breakfast and then you're ready for close order drill.

Jr – how was the food?

Sr – Oh, in the United States it was all right

Jr – Did you get plenty?

Sr – Yeah I got plenty

Jr – What were some of the things you remember about your training, basic training being in Oregon being out there?

Sr – too much Poison Ivy - yeah had to go to the hospital every time you got poison ivy in Oregon – covered with poison ivy – or poison Oak what it was

Jr – So you were living out in tents then not in barracks?

Sr – We was in barracks

Jr – How did you come in contact with the poison oak?

Sr - well you had to go out and train you had to fall down and dig your fox holes and everything – you were right on the ground – they made you fall down because the enemy was shooting at you - you couldn't get away from it so

Jr - So was everybody getting that stuff?

Sr - well the people that would get it – lot of people didn't get it – but some of them did

Jr – Did you get it?

Sr – Yeah I got it – every time you get it you had to go to the hospital for seven days to get over it

Jr – So, did they give you shots or something?

Sr – No, all they had was that there pink stuff

Jr –Ointments to put on it

Sr – that was all they would do – because as long as you was out doing anything else you was sweating and if you sweat you just itch all over – you had to stop the itching and sweating – and it took seven days to get over it

Jr – so during boot camp did you earn any medals or anything like the sharp shooting - I know you have the sharp shooting medal

Sr – Yeah, that's about all you got

Jr – So now what was your rank when you got out of boot camp?

Sr – Private

Jr – Do you remember any of your instructors or anything, the drill sergeants or anything stand out in your mind or do they ...

Sr – I can't remember their names

Jr – I don't necessarily mean their names but anyone stand out being memorable any that were real bad

Sr – Oh there - no they weren't real bad

Jr – Pretty decent to everybody

Sr – Some of them wasn't some of them were

Jr – did you have different drill sergeants for different kinds of things that you were doing?

Sr – you had the same sergeant about all the time – he was assigned to your squad

Jr – so he did everything – taught you to shoot, march and did about everything

Sr – yeah that was their job - cause that's basic training - just the sergeants assigned one outfit assigned to you and your squad and that was it.

Jr – so during that six months how many different sergeants did you have then?

Sr - just the one

Jr - same one all the time?

Sr - and the lieutenant - of course in the company you had the colonel, the captain, 1st Lt, 2nd Lt, sergeant, Master Sergeant all the same outfit all the time

Jr – so you stayed within the same group all the time

Sr - Yeah – there was 238 of us I think I'm not sure in the platoon or in the regiment – I think it was regiment - yeah regiment I think they called it – I'm not sure

Jr – where did you - once you left Oregon where did you go? To Colorado?

Sr – see where went - no we didn't go to Colorado – I don't think - we went to - I don't know – maybe we went to Arizona maybe – I'm not sure

Jr – then you ended up in Colorado though

Sr – Lets see where was I - I don't even remember where I was at when I went overseas – maybe I was in Colorado – yeah probably was

Jr – at Camp Carson

Sr – yeah

Jr – When you went to Europe where did you go first to England?

Sr – went to France

Jr Went to France First

Sr – LaHarve, France – I think its LaHarve

Jr – Did you get there by boat, ship?

Sr – Ship – A German Ship – no just a common ship

Jr – Do you remember the name of the ship?

Sr – No I don't

Jr – remember when you went over there?

Sr – No, we ran into a big storm but I – lets see I don't even know when it was now – I don't know – couldn't tell you

Jr – do you remember what it was like when you arrived over there?

Sr – Just riding in the country wasn't anybody there to bother you or nothing – they'd already taken that part

Jr – Oh the Allies had already taken France?

Sr – they had taken France see by that time

Jr – so there wasn't any fighting going on there at that time?

Sr – no

Jr – How was the ride over on the ship?

Sr – 13 days – I thought they were ever going to make it finally did

Jr – did you get seasick?

Sr – Nope – some of them did but I didn't – because we ran into that big storm

Jr – so what was it like being on the ship for 13 days?

Sr – I guess I never thought nothing about it - only thing if you took a shower you took it in salt water and that was terrible – slick as a whistle

Jr – where did you sleep on the ship – was there quarters

Sr – had regular quarters - beds on top of another or side by side or something - I forget now which way – regular beds in like the sailors had

Jr – was it a troop ship then or was it

Sr – well it was - I don't know they had 3 see 3000 sailors there was 3000 soldiers on it I forget how many sailors was on it - sort of a troop ship yeah

Jr – was it a naval ship then

Sr – Yeah the navy run it

Jr – so it wasn't like a - I know that sometimes they used big passenger ship and

Sr – lets see it was a pretty good sized ship because there was probably 4000 people or more - there was 3000 in the Army one whole division in there

Jr – so it was a Naval ship then so that's

Sr - the Navy was running it anyway – been too long ago to remember anything else

Jr - what did you think of France?

Sr – it is a lousy country

Jr – Why is that?

Sr – They don't do nothing - drink and sit around and do nothing – that's all they do –

JR – What was Paris like?

Sr – It just the same thing – I didn't think much of it myself

Jr – did you ever eat in Paris?

Sr – Yeah

Jr – What did you think of the food – did you have French food?

Sr – Just food, I don't know – didn't pay much attention to it just ate – cause I was in the hospital there we was right down town

Jr - I am talking about when you first got there

Sr – well we went right straight on through France and Germany

Jr – so you didn't stop in France much at all

Sr - oh a little bit here and there but

Jr - so your objective though was to get to Germany

Sr – yeah because they had already taken France see

Jr – so you just

Sr – they’d already liberated France

Jr – You just used France to get to Germany

Sr – just went straight through there on troop trains – or little trains we had there

Jr – narrow gauge trains

Sr – yeah

Jr – how long were you in France before you got to Germany then?

Sr – Oh we was probably in there a month maybe I don’t know

Jr – so it took like a month to get to Germany

Sr – Probably because we stopped all along

Jr – so what did you do while you were in France?

Sr - Skilled [?] training and all that

Jr – more training in France

Sr – yeah – well they never stopped the training – from the time you went in the first day trained until you left

Jr - it was all training then

Sr – always doing something

Jr – now did you think that made you better at the fighting or just to keep you busy?

Sr - well you had to be busy

Jr – do you have any idea when you arrived in Germany?

Sr – well I was there for – I was there for Thanksgiving but I couldn’t tell you when we got there

Jr – so, Thanksgiving of probably 43 or 44 – 43

Sr – that would be 43 – I reckon – see 44 – it might have been 44 though – I don’t know

Jr – what did you do as a – you were in infantry?

Sr - Yeah

Jr – In Germany - So what were your duties – what kind of assignments did you have in Germany

Sr – well I was head of the platoon and I had to oversee them - put out the duty roster, tell each guy what to do, and then part of the time I was a Lt because the Lt got lost, shot –

Jr – what was your rank while you were in Germany?

Sr – Staff Sergeant

Jr – when did you become a staff sergeant?

Sr – we wasn’t fighting over two weeks I don’t think when they made me staff sergeant

Jr – so after you got into Germany then you made Staff Sergeant then

Sr – Yeah

Jr – Then you stayed Staff Sergeant from then on until the end of the war?

Sr – Yeah

Jr - So then you were wounded when you were in Germany then?

Sr – No we went from Germany into Belgium then went into Holland - I got hurt in Holland

Jr – you got wounded in Holland – where on your body did you get wounded

Sr – In the arm – shrapnel

Jr – Was it the lower arm or the upper arm – [Indicated with his hand the wound had been between his wrist and elbow] between the elbow and the wrist then

Jr– Were you treated on the field or

Sr – they just sent us right into Paris

JR – so they – how did you get transported

Sr – by airplane

Jr – by airplane they took you – how did they get you off the field, by truck?

Sr – just walked off

Jr – you just walked off and then they flew you to Paris

Sr - No – I forget how we got to Paris – but they flew us to England - from Paris back to England – we must have went by truck or something to Paris because I don't remember being in a plane until we come back from England. We crossed the channel in the airplane

Jr – what – you were in a hospital in Paris then

Sr – yeah

Jr – and they sent you to another hospital in England?

Sr – no, a place in England was where they send you back to before you go to the front – I forget what they called it -they got a name for it – anyway, they send all the ones out the hospital back to England and then they send you back to whatever company you were from - they got a name for it but I can't really remember what it is

Jr – did you get re-supplied and that kind of thing before you went back - is that what kind of what they did there in England ?

Sr – well, you just stayed there until they got you back to your unit – like a staging area only you were going back instead of coming in – but they had a name for it

Jr – then once you were in England then you went back to Germany

Sr - back to my outfit

Jr – where was your outfit at – was it in Germany?

Sr – see where was – I don't know where it was at – I don't think we was in Holland – we was back in Germany because that was when they had – yeah we back in Germany because that was when the bulge or the battle of the Bulge –.

Jr – The Battle of the Bulge

Sr – so we were back in Germany – and that is when I went over to meet the Russians – they was on one side of the river and we were on the other side so

Jr – when they got to Germany

Sr – Yeah they - that's where we met – I got the privilege of going over and meet them – there was a captain and a Lt and me and I think two other soldiers – we got to go over and meet the Russians – so they come on one side and we were on the other

Jr – at a river somewhere – they were across the river

Sr – I forget the name of the river –

Jr – Rhine River?

Sr – No – we was way past the Rhine River

Jr – you were west of the Rhine or east of the Rhine River

Sr – yeah way over - several miles from the Rhine River

Jr – what was it like to meet those Russians?

Sr – Well, we had to polish our guns and make three creases in your shirt and got all cleaned up – we went over there in the jeep here they come on motorcycles dirty as they could be and they all had automatic rifles- they just wasn't dressed up at all

Jr – Could you communicate with them?

Sr – Well I couldn't – we had a interpreter with us – no I didn't know what they was talking about

Jr – did it seem strange to – I mean they were your allies

Sr - yeah really

Jr – did it seem strange to see them and be around them?

Sr – well, I guess I never thought much about it

Jr – what about the German people – the German prisoners – soldiers German Soldiers and the prisoners what was it like to be around them

Sr – We wasn't around too many of them – just what we took in now and then was all we had to deal with you see – of course we couldn't understand them and they couldn't understand us –

Jr – so how if you had any prisoners how did you hold them – how did you keep them? Were they in barricades or something – I mean

Sr – As we caught them we just sent them back

Jr – so you sent them back

Sr – back to wherever they were going - capture them and they'd take them on back to wp what do they call the other guard – they'd take them back to wherever they go

Jr – military police

Sr – yeah military

Jr – somebody had to stand guard on them until they took them away or

Sr – Just as soon as we'd capture them they took them – we didn't have to fool with them

Jr – what about the German people when you

Sr – They seemed nice enough

Jr – Were they glad to see the Americans

Sr – I think most of them were – I think they was kind of glad to get out of it – cause they never bothered nothing – see we stayed in some of their homes and everything – and all of them seemed pretty nice

Jr – Did the German people – did the US start giving the German people food and medicine and that kind of thing

Sr – well now I don't know much about that but whatever food we had left when we have out in the field well we'd give it to them

Jr – I imagine they really appreciated that - they didn't have anything

Sr – they didn't have nothing

Jr – so, were you in Berlin?

Sr – No I didn't

Jr – You never made it to Berlin?

Jr – Did you see any of the concentration camps or anything while you were over there?

Sr – No I didn't – My cousin did but I didn't see any

Jr – who - what cousin was that?

Sr – Paul Ross

Jr – so he was over in Germany too

Sr – Yeah – he went down to – he was in my same outfit

Jr – he was in your outfit?

Sr - Only he was in – I forget what it is – he was in a different section than I was – I went over and saw him – he was like repair – rifle or I forget what they – they got a name for it – I can't remember what it is anymore – anyway kind of a repair division of some kind

Jr – did they call it ordinance?

Sr – yeah ordinance- he was in the ordinance

Jr – so he took care of the weapons and stuff then

Jr – what – where were you when – you were in Germany when the war got over, right?

Sr – yeah

Jr –how did you feel about that when you found out

Sr – Well, we had to go on – we was occupation forces after that – I liked that because I was still a sergeant so all I had to do was ride around on a jeep –

Jr – so was everybody undoubtedly pretty excited when they found out

Sr – Yeah most of them were

Jr – it was all over with – so then when you were occupation forces then what changed besides – you said you carried a side arm and

Sr – had a rifle –I was in charge of the outfit

Jr – What did you do then...?

Sr – I had a driver and we had two people to talk Germany

Jr – oh, interpreters

Sr - Yeah interpreters – we had two of them and two guards – I think it was – I think it was only five because we had the jeep – the driver and me and I think there was two or three others – cause we always had to have a soldier with a gun

Jr – so then what did you do?

Sr – we'd just go city to city to see if there was any trouble - just had a certain place to go every day. I didn't go every day – I think we went every other day or something – but we didn't – our outfit didn't go every day but somebody went every day – but they go each outfit had a different area - we just had one area and which we'd go I think every other day - I think we went or 3 days a week or whatever it was

Jr – What you got to these towns did you meet with the mayor or somebody or

Sr No just go through town and if there was anybody out you'd talk to them and see if there wasn't any trouble – as long as there wasn't any trouble wed just go to the next town you see – all the time I was there we never ran into any trouble at all – they just talked to you and wave to you and

Jr – did you have anything to do with getting the people food and medicine?

Sr – No

Jr – who took care of that?

Sr – I don't know

Jr – You don't know – somebody was doing that, right?

Sr – Apparently but we didn't – that's all we done was guards

Jr – so you were just making sure there wasn't any trouble

Sr – Yeah that was all we was doing – make sure there wasn't any fighting or trouble

Jr – it was shrapnel when you got wounded

Sr – yeah hand grenade shrapnel

Jr – you were in Holland

Sr – yeah

Jr – what did they do for you on the field – I mean before you went to the hospital

Sr – I don't remember - oh they give you pills –

Jr – did they bandage the wound?

Sr – I don't even remember – they had a little brown tablet – I forget what they call it now – they had a name for them – they'd give you that and they give you a tetanus shot or a it wasn't a tetanus shot – what was they using then? –

Jr – Penicillin?

Sr – Penicillin – they give you penicillin shot and them pills – and maybe tetanus shot too – I don't know – and then they let you go

Jr – what was it like being in the hospital?

Sr – It wasn't too bad – had all men nurses – so that's where we went first was France –

Jr – So how long were you there?

Sr – Probably two or three weeks maybe – then we got transferred then and they took us back to England – we was there couple of weeks maybe

Jr – What all did you do in the hospital since you were able to walk around and everything so what did you

Sr – We wanted to go uptown or anything as long as you was in there – I wasn't crippled

Jr – so you just came back to sleep more or less

Sr – Yeah

Jr – you were recuperating

Sr – yeah that was what it amounted to yeah – yeah we'd walk uptown and

Jr – what did you do when you went uptown – sightsee or

Sr – that was about all you could do –

Jr – so that was in Paris, right?

Sr – Yeah – we was right down town

Jr – what kind of things did you see?

Sr – Oh, I don't know that there was much to see – just houses and buildings was about all there was

Jr- What was the different about the buildings and the architecture stuff than what's here?

Sr – well, I don't know it was much different than it was from here but England was all together different

Jr – What was so different about England?

Sr – Well all their, well no not either, but all their roofs are tile roofs – that’s one thing – of course in Holland now in Holland now their houses and barns are all built together because you go out of the kitchen in to milk the cows – everything is clean- just as clean in the barn as it is in the house

Jr – Do you think that is because of the winters so that they

Sr – No just the way they live – they live – they’re clean people

Jr – What struck you about Holland other than the houses that was

Sr – They got those darn canals everyplace

Jr – In Holland?

Sr – Every 20 – about every half mile they got a canal – and ever two or three miles they got a great big one which feeds the little ones – course they are under sea level – and that’s the way everything is irrigated

Jr – they got a lot of windmills over there

Sr – yeah that’s where they have the big windmills – grind feed and everything

Jr – So, they use them for all kinds of stuff then

Sr – yeah grind feed and electricity and whatever they needed – everything is windmills in Holland

Jr – Did people live under those windmills look like in the pictures I’ve seen looks like big building kind of things underneath?

Sr - Well, that’s the elevator like where they grind feed and power and all that in there – nobody lived there

Jr – that was where the mill was

Sr - yeah that was where the mill down in the bottom

Jr – so what about Belgium

Sr – Belgium is a wine country – everything is what do they call it? They got another name for it. But it is a wine it’s strictly wine and of course Holland and Belgium both had cheese – that’s where you get the cheese – milk cows – of course they had a lot of dairy in Holland – all that cheese they’d made in Holland and – Belgium is mostly wine country

Jr – so they raised a lot of grapes and stuff there right

Sr – yeah – because every house we’d go in had a wine cellar – course everybody took it

Jr – now did most of the people – I’ve heard people in France – they drink wine like water

Sr – they drink – they drink cedar [sp] it is the same as our cider – they called it cedar [sp] – and then they’d make another – I forget what they called it and then after that have something else – all their beer or cedar[sp] we called cedar[sp] we’d drink a lot of that.

Jr – so they’d drink - most people drank that rather than water?

Sr – nobody drunk water in France

Jr – Is that because the water was bad

Sr – I don’t know – just nobody ever drunk it I guess – I don’t know – we had water but I don’t think they ever had any because everybody had a bottle - carry around a bottle so I suppose they drinking that

Jr – What about Germany - people drink a lot of beer in Germany?

Sr – Yeah they had good beer in Germany – just like American

Jr – Did the people after the war - was the beer available to them then or

Sr – Lot of the time while we was there some of them didn’t even have any beer – couldn’t get it

Jr – they couldn’t get much of anything

Sr – you’d go in the restaurant and of course we had our rifles with us we’d just lay them on the table – everybody’d watch you until you walked back out – even if you got anything to eat or drink either one – it was really limited because they didn’t hardly have anything

Jr – when you said people watched – people were watching you – you meant the German people watching you...

Sr – Anybody was in there keep an eye on you all the time you was in there because we all had our guns laid them on the table and

Jr – were they scared of you?

Sr – I imagine they were afraid we might do something but

Jr – that is what I mean they

Sr - ??? be – we wasn't allowed to walk around by ourselves – so it was always 2 to 5 of us together going anyplace like that

Jr – there were still restaurants operating and

Sr – a little bit

Jr – but not much

Sr – not a big lot because of course they didn't have anything

Jr – What cities in Germany did you?

Sr – Cherbourg was the big – I think that was one of the biggest cities I was in - we was in a lot of cities – I think that was one of the biggest

Jr – was there a lot of bomb damage and devastation in there

Sr – They was bombing when we were in there – you could hear them all night long –

Jr – What was the – what did you think when you would heard the bombs coming over

Sr – guess it didn't make much difference - just another day

Jr – Did you ever hear any of the -what did they call them - the V-2s? Or whatever it was the – the rockets they sent

Sr – see the first ones they had was v2s – no they wasn't v-2s – I forget what they called them – you could see them in the air –

Jr – they moved kind of slow didn't they?

Sr – they were like 20 mile per hour but they'd go up 100 or 200 feet in the air and then go straight through see – I forget what they called them - but they just had enough fuel in them to go so far – when the fuel went out they come down – we saw them coming – we were next to a big hospital – and it landed pretty close to that hospital – and the fragments just – they had a tent - hospital tent – it just made a hole through that tent – it didn't kill anybody, but

Jr - that is the same ones that they sent over to England

Sr – no, V-2s they sent to England - Now they v-2s went up in the air and came down but these others they just gas powered – just a gas powered motor on them and they just go straight through until they run out of gas – but these V-2s they had them angled so they'd go to a certain place – see they used them in England – and mostly in Paris – or in London – cause I wanted to go to London and they was bombing so bad I didn't go. That's the way the V-2s done – they'd just go way up in the air and they'd come back down –

Jr – Did you ever see any of those V-2s?

Sr – No you couldn't see them – you could hear them but you couldn't see them

Jr – Could you hear them?

Sr – Yeah

Jr – What did they sound like?

Sr – Just a big noise – you could hear them – you couldn't – but them others you could see them

Jr – the V -2s were going too fast – lot faster

Sr – Yeah – see they shot them off of big truck angled in the air and off of trains – flat cars - they just had them on there and just turn them things up whatever angle had to go how ever far they wanted to they would put the angle - then they'd shoot them

Jr – Did you ever have any problem with your arm after later? Ever cause you any problem –

Sr – No

Jr - Did anybody in your outfit or anybody you knew ever had like trench foot or any of that kind of thing

Sr – Everybody in our outfit had trench foot

Jr – that was caused by the being wet and cold

Sr – In Holland - the water was ice cold and you couldn't get dry because they had us pinned down – a big tank had us pinned down - see there's where it killed my captain and Lt – that's where I got hurt too but they just had us pinned down and we couldn't get dry you couldn't do nothing

Jr – what was that battle like – how long did it last

Sr – we was there maybe two days and they finally got the tank

Jr so one tank was keeping your outfit

Sr – mostly because they were shooting at point blank that is the way a tank shoots is point blank

Jr – so you had to stay in your foxholes

Sr – I stayed in mine but the captain he got up so he could look out and they blowed his head off

Jr – how many of your outfit got killed during that

Sr – just them – well I think there was them Lt and Captain and then one or two others – I'm not sure

Jr – Is that when you became the Lt at that point

Sr – No, that was after that I got to be Lt

Jr – when you were in Germany

Sr – I don't know whether we was in – we must have got back in Germany by that time

Jr – what happened to the Lt

Sr – I don't know he said he got lost but I don't know what happened to him

Jr – all of a sudden he wasn't there

Sr – so I was the next – I was the only sergeant left all he rest got killed or wounded – so I was the only one left I had to be the Lt – didn't have any Lt –

Jr – how long were you a Lt?

Sr – I think about a week I'm not sure

Jr – what did you think about that?

Sr – I didn't like it at all – Captain never let me sleep – I had to watch the whole company – plus I had to do that

Jr – what else didn't you like about being a Lt?

Sr – I didn't like it at all - nothing good about it – cause I had to get the troops up we went out at 3 o'clock in the morning and I had to get the troops up out of bed get them the whole outfit

Jr – you didn't have a sergeant to do anything anymore or did they make - did they make some new sergeants when they made you Lt?

Sr – Yeah they made two or three but and then after that the Lt finally got back to the company and then I was still the only sergeant – so then the next week they sent one from England to replace so I'd have a helper and he came in and I hadn't slept for a couple of days so I thought well I'll go down and sleep and I hadn't went to bed over ½ hour they come down and woke me up and said that guy shot himself in the foot and so then I had to be sergeant again -I think he done it on purpose – he said he was cleaning his gun anyway

Jr – he wanted to go back to England

Sr – I think he did – he was a staff sergeant just like I was - so then they finally then well it seems like they made another one or two finally after that

Jr – You got the Purple Heart – where did – where did you get that – did they give it to you out on the field or how did you get the medal

Sr – I don't know – I don't remember

Jr – In your outfit the whole time – what do you suppose the percentage of casualties were in your outfit?

Sr – We went over with 186 and came back with 45 – so it must have been pretty high

Jr – Were a lot of the guys in your outfit people from your local area?

Sr – No, from all over all over the United States – we had I think two Indians – we didn't have any colored people – course there wasn't any ??? then - but there was two Indians and we had some Jews from New York but they was from all over the United States

Jr – what was it like to write letters – you didn't have to put any postage stamps on –?

Sr – I'm not much of a letter writer

Jr – But what letters and postcards and stuff you did write – was there any problems getting stuff to write with o

Sr – No, not any trouble

Jr – did they supply stuff or

Sr – they had plenty of stuff

Jr – did they have a post office unit with..?

Sr – they brought the mail around and I think you deposit the letter while we was in camp right there but when we were out overseas I think he came around and give it to the Captain or – of course they had to read it when we was overseas they read it all anyhow so we just turned it into – the company and they mailed it I guess

Jr – So once you wrote it you turned it over to somebody

Sr – they read them anyway so it didn't make any difference – they wanted to make sure you didn't give any locations or anything about the service

Jr – they didn't censor anything you got from home though

Sr – no they

Jr – did anyone ever send you anything like food or anything like that while you were in service

Sr – Norma sent me a cake and some cookies

Jr – did it arrive alright?

Sr – Yeah

Jr – how long did you suppose it took for a letter to get from the United States when you were in Europe

Sr – I don't know – I have no idea

Jr – Did you have plenty of supplies when you were in Europe? Did you run out of anything?

Sr – No we had plenty of everything

Jr – so you didn't need anything that you didn't have then

Sr – no

Jr – so when you were out in the field how did you shave and take a bath and clean up?

Sr – well if we got a chance to we'd shave – we didn't get any showers – there wasn't anyplace to get any – we'd just wash once in a while in our helmets or whatever – about all we had was our helmets

Anything that would hold water was a helmet

Jr- did they have water trucks that

Sr – yeah they had plenty of water

Jr – so they just followed you around then with all the supplies

Sr – they always had a big canvas thing or probably held about 20 gallons – hang out on a pole – We'd get water out of that.

Jr – what about the food – were there people that prepared the food I mean regular cooks and stuff

Sr – yeah they had cooks all the time – that's all they done was cook

Jr – did you ever do KP Duty?

Sr – Yeah until I got to be a sergeant you had to do so much

Jr – what kinds of things did you do for KP duty?

Sr – mostly clean the dishes after the – we'd set the table and all that stuff and then clean up all the dishes and of course didn't have any dishwasher so we had to clean all big ole pots and everything like that

Jr – did you feel like you were under a lot of pressure or stress while you were over there – were you scared

Sr – No, I think maybe one time I might have been a little scared – we heard a tank coming of a night but he finally stopped - but that was about the only time I thought much about it but

Jr – What about the time – you told me once a long time ago about being in a barn and you were hiding from the Germans or something and you woke up the next morning and you were lying on the straw and

End of side one

Side 2

Sr - ... And had to hold his mouth to keep him from yelling –

Jr - that was in Germany –

Sr - we was in that great big barn and I imagine the whole German troops wasn't 100 yards from the barn but they didn't know we was in there – If they had they'd probably killed all of us but we was all in there

Jr How many of you were in that barn

Sr – there was a company

Jr – 100 people or

Sr – Probably – there were several – it was a big ole barn

Jr – Why did you go in the barn to begin with because you knew the Germans were coming or did you

Sr – well, we had to get someplace so the barn was there so we went in it

Jr - Just to spend the night

Sr – yeah

Jr – you didn't have any idea that the Germans were coming

Sr – No we

[Dead space on the tape]

Jr –So the guards saw them coming and there wasn't anything you could do

Sr – We didn't want to do anything about it

Jr – I mean there wasn't even if you – how many of the Germans were there?

Sr – I don't know there were a lot of them

Jr – Was there tanks with them and stuff

Sr – No just

Jr – Just infantry

Sr – Just infantry

Jr – How did the guys out in the field what did they do to entertain themselves – did they – was there like play guitar or sang

Sr – didn't have no entertainment

Jr – did you ever see a USO show or anything over there?

Sr – Not over there we didn't no

Jr – did you ever anyplace

Sr – One time I saw Jack Benny – I don't remember where I was at now

Jr – were you overseas or were you over here?

Sr – I don't know where we was at

Jr – What did you think about seeing him?

Sr – It wasn't too bad it wasn't nothing wonderful – I had – they give me 5 tickets and I so I must have been after I was Sergeant because they give me the tickets and I was trying to give them away and I got rid of all but one so I thought to heck with it I'll just go myself - so I must have been overseas someplace – I don't know – Anyway I had the tickets – they give me the tickets

Jr – Did you get any leaves while you were overseas besides the time you went to the hospital other than that did you get leaves were you did you go

Sr – Well I was – Anytime you wasn't on duty you had a leave overseas – so what are you going to do with it? Wouldn't have done you much good – of course I was going - wanted to go to London but I never did go – I was afraid to because they were bombing

Jr – Where were you when you wanted to go to London

Sr – waiting to go back the front

Jr - What town were you in, in England

Sr – I couldn't even tell you that – Right on the coast

Jr – You must have been fairly close to London if you wanted to go...

Sr – I forget now how far it was but you could just take - took the train right up there and back – but I don't remember

Jr – do you remember any of the any kind of pranks or that kind of thing that people - guys did in the service

Sr – didn't do any – that I know of

Jr – I'll be they did

Sr – Probably

Jr – What did you think of the of your officers and your fellow soldiers – were what did you think of them

Sr – You had one or two Lieutenants that was kind of smart alecks but most of them just people

Jr – Did they treat everybody alright for the most part – so everybody got along pretty good?

Sr – They got along pretty good

Jr – Do you remember where you were at and what you were doing when you hear about the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

Sr – I was farming

Jr – How did you hear about it

Sr – I guess it was on the radio or television – radio I guess

Jr – What did you think about that

Sr - I didn't give it a thought I don't reckon – That would have been December 7 I guess I never thought nothing about it - I don't know.

Jr – Did you take any souvenirs from Europe?

Sr – I had that one gun and that's the one I give to Kevin's got it – the one he's got

Jr – That was a German gun, pistol

Sr – I forget what they call them

Jr – Lueger

Sr – Yeah Leuger

Jr – some money or anything from

Sr – I had that but I don't know whatever happened to it

Jr – I got it

Sr - I got that 50,000 or 50 million or was it fifty thousand dollar

Jr – Mark I think it is

Sr – Yeah – whatever it was

Jr – Do you remember the day - the last day that you were in the Army? – Not the date but what it was like the last day you were in when you got out

Sr – Well they just – we just sat out there on the lawn 4 or 5 of us waiting to get a bus to take us to go

Jr – where was this at?

Sr – In California

Jr – So you came back on a boat to California

Sr – Came back on a German ship coming back – one they'd captured

Jr – How did you get from Europe to California – That would have been a long trip?

Sr – W came back in to New York and then – See I came home for 30 days or whatever it was on furlough from Germany.

Jr – so you came on a boat to New York

Sr – Yeah we went on a train from Chicago back to California

Jr – From New York you came back home then you went to Chicago then you went by train to California and you were getting ready to go to Japan

Sr – Japan then – see we was going to take amphibious training so we could go right into Japan itself – that's what we were going to do but they gave up while we were going out there so that ended that.

Jr – So you never did any of the training at all

Sr – Well, we trained but not amphibious training

Jr - So then once they dropped the bombs on Japan then you were pretty much done

Sr – Yeah

Jr – How long was it after that before you got out

Sr – well, that was I don't know when I got home – we was out there a month probably I don't know

Jr – What was your thoughts and the other guys thoughts when you learned that they had dropped the bombs on Japan

Sr – I never thought much about it - Just glad it was over –

Jr – was there some of the guys you were in the service with did you – I know you continued to write and saw some of them after the war for a long time – how many of those guys were there that you kept in contact with

Sr – there was about three I think –

Jr – so when did you start at Sunoco – the Sunoco Service station – when did you work there – this is stuff after the war

Sr – been in 47 I reckon – lets see 46 – probably 47

Jr – How long did you work there

Sr – off and on for a year probably

Jr – so you just worked part time

Sr – Yeah

Jr – you were working at Chevrolet at the same time

Sr – Yeah

Jr – Do you think that being in the Army and in the war – how did that affect your thinking about other wars like the Korean War or Vietnam war

Sr – I never gave it a thought

Jr – Did you ever attend any reunions of any of your outfits or anything?

Sr – No – they had them but I never did go

Jr – Anything else you would like to say about your experience in the Army or during the war

Sr – No

Jr – Ok, thank you very much – that is it