

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,770

2

00:00:01,770 --> 00:00:02,270

All right.

3

00:00:02,270 --> 00:00:06,870

Today is Friday,  
28 February, 2014.

4

00:00:06,870 --> 00:00:09,410

I'm Stephen Mise at the United  
States Holocaust Memorial

5

00:00:09,410 --> 00:00:13,100

Museum in Washington,  
DC interviewing Frank

6

00:00:13,100 --> 00:00:15,590

Towers, who is in Florida.

7

00:00:15,590 --> 00:00:19,640

We are interviewing  
him by telephone.

8

00:00:19,640 --> 00:00:22,680

Mr. Towers, can you tell me  
when you were born and where?

9

00:00:22,680 --> 00:00:31,130

Yeah, I was born in Boston,  
Mass, June 13, 1917.

10

00:00:31,130 --> 00:00:33,350

Did you grow up in Boston?

11

00:00:33,350 --> 00:00:37,590

Well, I grew up there  
until I was 10 years old.

12

00:00:37,590 --> 00:00:43,940

And at that time, my father's  
business moved to Vermont.

13  
00:00:43,940 --> 00:00:47,300  
And of course, I finished  
my education there

14  
00:00:47,300 --> 00:00:50,630  
in St. Johnsbury, Vermont.

15  
00:00:50,630 --> 00:00:59,240  
And I graduated from  
high school in 1935

16  
00:00:59,240 --> 00:01:03,090  
and went to the  
University of Vermont.

17  
00:01:03,090 --> 00:01:08,890  
And in 1940, I got into  
the military service

18  
00:01:08,890 --> 00:01:10,250  
and stayed for 10 years.

19  
00:01:10,250 --> 00:01:12,530  
OK, let's back up a wee bit.

20  
00:01:12,530 --> 00:01:15,380  
What sort of business  
was your father in?

21  
00:01:15,380 --> 00:01:17,630  
He was a machinist.

22  
00:01:17,630 --> 00:01:22,415  
And his company moved to Vermont  
for, I guess, tax purposes.

23  
00:01:22,415 --> 00:01:24,080  
I see.

24

00:01:24,080 --> 00:01:27,810

And did you enjoy  
it there in Vermont?

25

00:01:27,810 --> 00:01:31,280

Yeah, growing up there,  
I enjoyed it better than

26

00:01:31,280 --> 00:01:33,300

I did in Boston.

27

00:01:33,300 --> 00:01:33,800

I see.

28

00:01:33,800 --> 00:01:34,300

Yeah.

29

00:01:34,300 --> 00:01:36,550

What was the name of the  
high school that you went to?

30

00:01:36,550 --> 00:01:38,920

It was St. Johnsbury Academy.

31

00:01:38,920 --> 00:01:40,130

OK.

32

00:01:40,130 --> 00:01:42,950

Was that an all boys  
school or was it coed?

33

00:01:42,950 --> 00:01:43,765

It was coed.

34

00:01:43,765 --> 00:01:44,800

OK.

35

00:01:44,800 --> 00:01:48,580

Yeah, it was a sort of  
a semi-private school.

36

00:01:48,580 --> 00:01:53,930

It was a school founded  
by the Fairbanks family.

37  
00:01:53,930 --> 00:01:56,930  
And it was the only  
high school in town.

38  
00:01:56,930 --> 00:02:00,920

39  
00:02:00,920 --> 00:02:06,290  
Every student in town was  
entitled to go to that school

40  
00:02:06,290 --> 00:02:08,315  
and get a good education.

41  
00:02:08,315 --> 00:02:09,440  
And did you enjoy it there?

42  
00:02:09,440 --> 00:02:13,400  
Did you participate in any sort  
of extracurricular activities?

43  
00:02:13,400 --> 00:02:14,470  
No.

44  
00:02:14,470 --> 00:02:19,890  
This was during the  
Depression years in the '30s--

45  
00:02:19,890 --> 00:02:21,530  
'35.

46  
00:02:21,530 --> 00:02:27,500  
And I had to work to actually  
pay my way-- buy my books

47  
00:02:27,500 --> 00:02:31,390  
and pay my way  
through high school.

48

00:02:31,390 --> 00:02:37,820  
So I didn't have much time to be  
involved in outside activities.

49  
00:02:37,820 --> 00:02:38,990  
How did you do that?

50  
00:02:38,990 --> 00:02:41,390  
What sort of work did  
you do while in school?

51  
00:02:41,390 --> 00:02:45,320  
Well, I was a stock boy  
in a store for a while

52  
00:02:45,320 --> 00:02:51,200  
and worked for a  
company, Standard Brands,

53  
00:02:51,200 --> 00:02:54,650  
as a stock clerk there.

54  
00:02:54,650 --> 00:03:00,790  
And that's about all that  
I did in the way of work.

55  
00:03:00,790 --> 00:03:01,290  
Right.

56  
00:03:01,290 --> 00:03:02,270  
Yeah.

57  
00:03:02,270 --> 00:03:03,893  
And did you have  
any friends there?

58  
00:03:03,893 --> 00:03:06,060  
Did you meet your wife in  
high school, for instance?

59  
00:03:06,060 --> 00:03:07,010  
Oh, no, no.

60

00:03:07,010 --> 00:03:08,600

I had a lot of friends.

61

00:03:08,600 --> 00:03:13,070

Of course, when I

left Vermont in 1940,

62

00:03:13,070 --> 00:03:17,720

I came down here to Florida--

to Camp Blanding, Florida

63

00:03:17,720 --> 00:03:21,800

and spent a year training here.

64

00:03:21,800 --> 00:03:27,800

And during that time, I met

this young lady that eventually,

65

00:03:27,800 --> 00:03:29,480

three years later, we married.

66

00:03:29,480 --> 00:03:32,150

And we've been hanging

around together ever since.

67

00:03:32,150 --> 00:03:32,910

I see.

68

00:03:32,910 --> 00:03:33,470

Yeah.

69

00:03:33,470 --> 00:03:36,650

And what made you decide to go

to the University of Vermont?

70

00:03:36,650 --> 00:03:39,560

Had you set your

sights on that from go?

71

00:03:39,560 --> 00:03:42,700

I was in business

administration.

72  
00:03:42,700 --> 00:03:43,460  
OK.

73  
00:03:43,460 --> 00:03:45,130  
Yeah.

74  
00:03:45,130 --> 00:03:46,750  
You graduated in 1940?

75  
00:03:46,750 --> 00:03:47,250  
Right.

76  
00:03:47,250 --> 00:03:50,010

77  
00:03:50,010 --> 00:03:52,620  
Tell us about your decision  
to go into the military.

78  
00:03:52,620 --> 00:03:54,690  
Were you drafted or  
did you volunteer?

79  
00:03:54,690 --> 00:03:57,330  
I volunteered.

80  
00:03:57,330 --> 00:04:03,540  
At that time, I was out of  
work, looking for a job,

81  
00:04:03,540 --> 00:04:11,550  
and employers were very hesitant  
about hiring young men who

82  
00:04:11,550 --> 00:04:16,410  
had not had their military  
service, because the draft

83  
00:04:16,410 --> 00:04:20,459  
system had just kicked in  
a short time before that.

84

00:04:20,459 --> 00:04:26,810

And they did not want to train  
new employees for two, three,

85

00:04:26,810 --> 00:04:29,580

six months and then lose  
them to the military.

86

00:04:29,580 --> 00:04:30,150

Right.

87

00:04:30,150 --> 00:04:37,170

So they declined employing  
young men who had not

88

00:04:37,170 --> 00:04:38,880

had their military training.

89

00:04:38,880 --> 00:04:41,550

So I decided to get my  
year's training over

90

00:04:41,550 --> 00:04:46,660

with and come back and  
then be able to get a job.

91

00:04:46,660 --> 00:04:48,840

And exactly what were the  
circumstances of that?

92

00:04:48,840 --> 00:04:52,710

And where I'm going with this  
is, did you seek a commission

93

00:04:52,710 --> 00:04:54,750

or did you enlist?

94

00:04:54,750 --> 00:04:58,470

And how did you come  
about your commission?

95



00:04:58,470 --> 00:04:59,370  
To get my commission?

96  
00:04:59,370 --> 00:04:59,990  
Yes.

97  
00:04:59,990 --> 00:05:01,830  
OK.

98  
00:05:01,830 --> 00:05:09,930  
I got into the local Company  
K of the National Guard

99  
00:05:09,930 --> 00:05:11,850  
in Burlington.

100  
00:05:11,850 --> 00:05:15,900  
And we came down  
here to Camp Blanding

101  
00:05:15,900 --> 00:05:17,940  
and trained here for a year.

102  
00:05:17,940 --> 00:05:21,720  
And we're getting ready to  
go home back to Vermont,

103  
00:05:21,720 --> 00:05:25,230  
and the Japanese dropped  
the bomb at Pearl Harbor.

104  
00:05:25,230 --> 00:05:28,340  
So we were in for the duration.

105  
00:05:28,340 --> 00:05:29,220  
Right.

106  
00:05:29,220 --> 00:05:32,140  
And there was no going back  
to Vermont at that time.

107  
00:05:32,140 --> 00:05:35,230

So the unit that I was  
with, the 43rd division,

108  
00:05:35,230 --> 00:05:39,540  
was then prioritized  
to go to the Pacific

109  
00:05:39,540 --> 00:05:42,780  
and start fighting  
the war down there.

110  
00:05:42,780 --> 00:05:52,380  
And at that time, I was  
chosen to go to Fort Benning

111  
00:05:52,380 --> 00:05:55,890  
to go to officer  
candidate school.

112  
00:05:55,890 --> 00:05:59,160  
And I spent three  
months there training

113  
00:05:59,160 --> 00:06:03,480  
and became a second lieutenant,  
my commission there.

114  
00:06:03,480 --> 00:06:07,740  
What rank had you attained  
in the enlisted ranks?

115  
00:06:07,740 --> 00:06:09,870  
They gave me a  
second lieutenant.

116  
00:06:09,870 --> 00:06:14,340  
Yes, but just before becoming  
a second lieutenant, what rank

117  
00:06:14,340 --> 00:06:16,830  
had you attained in the ranks?

118  
00:06:16,830 --> 00:06:20,850

I had risen up through  
corporal and sergeant.

119  
00:06:20,850 --> 00:06:25,130  
I was a sergeant when  
I went to Fort Benning.

120  
00:06:25,130 --> 00:06:28,800  
You said you went in 1940--

121  
00:06:28,800 --> 00:06:33,240  
were you conscious of the fact  
of what was going on in Europe?

122  
00:06:33,240 --> 00:06:36,030  
And did you see a likelihood  
of the United States

123  
00:06:36,030 --> 00:06:37,150  
entering the war?

124  
00:06:37,150 --> 00:06:37,650  
No.

125  
00:06:37,650 --> 00:06:39,060  
At that time, I did not.

126  
00:06:39,060 --> 00:06:42,210

127  
00:06:42,210 --> 00:06:44,670  
I could see the clouds  
of war in Europe,

128  
00:06:44,670 --> 00:06:48,240  
but it was still far away.

129  
00:06:48,240 --> 00:06:55,620  
And I really didn't see the  
United States getting involved

130  
00:06:55,620 --> 00:06:58,200

in the war at that time.

131  
00:06:58,200 --> 00:07:01,500  
It was not until  
later on-- '42, '43,

132  
00:07:01,500 --> 00:07:04,020  
that I began to see  
that, hey, we're going

133  
00:07:04,020 --> 00:07:06,043  
to get involved in this thing.

134  
00:07:06,043 --> 00:07:07,460  
And tell us about  
your experiences

135  
00:07:07,460 --> 00:07:08,850  
at officer candidate school.

136  
00:07:08,850 --> 00:07:11,000  
What was that like?

137  
00:07:11,000 --> 00:07:16,870  
Well, it was rather  
difficult, because I

138  
00:07:16,870 --> 00:07:24,660  
had been working with a supply  
officer in the 43rd Division,

139  
00:07:24,660 --> 00:07:28,780  
and I did not get  
the full extent

140  
00:07:28,780 --> 00:07:32,440  
of the basic training  
of the infantrymen

141  
00:07:32,440 --> 00:07:35,330  
that all the rest  
of the guys got.

142

00:07:35,330 --> 00:07:38,200  
And so when I went to Benning,  
I was at a disadvantage

143

00:07:38,200 --> 00:07:42,070  
that I had not had  
that basic training,

144

00:07:42,070 --> 00:07:48,490  
and I was competing  
with other sergeants who

145

00:07:48,490 --> 00:07:50,630  
had had the basic training.

146

00:07:50,630 --> 00:07:54,250  
So I really had to do my  
military basic training

147

00:07:54,250 --> 00:07:58,940  
at Fort Benning during the  
offer candidate course.

148

00:07:58,940 --> 00:07:59,995  
OK.

149

00:07:59,995 --> 00:08:01,120  
And how did you fare there?

150

00:08:01,120 --> 00:08:03,400  
How did you do in the end?

151

00:08:03,400 --> 00:08:06,470  
Well, in the end, I did well.

152

00:08:06,470 --> 00:08:09,280  
And likely, I got my commission.

153

00:08:09,280 --> 00:08:10,120  
Very good.

154

00:08:10,120 --> 00:08:12,205

If I hadn't got  
my commission, I'd

155

00:08:12,205 --> 00:08:15,840

have gone back in rank  
to my original unit.

156

00:08:15,840 --> 00:08:16,340

Sure.

157

00:08:16,340 --> 00:08:19,130

Sure.

158

00:08:19,130 --> 00:08:23,290

You said when the Japanese did  
attack Pearl Harbor, that's

159

00:08:23,290 --> 00:08:25,925

when you realized  
America, they were in it.

160

00:08:25,925 --> 00:08:26,550

That's correct.

161

00:08:26,550 --> 00:08:27,925

Tell us your  
attitude about that.

162

00:08:27,925 --> 00:08:29,290

What was that experience like?

163

00:08:29,290 --> 00:08:32,080

When did you hear about  
the attack on Pearl Harbor?

164

00:08:32,080 --> 00:08:33,650

How did it affect you?

165

00:08:33,650 --> 00:08:35,240

What was your feelings?

166

00:08:35,240 --> 00:08:45,990  
Well, I felt that this was  
going to get us into the war,

167  
00:08:45,990 --> 00:08:49,950  
because the Japanese  
had bombed Pearl Harbor.

168  
00:08:49,950 --> 00:08:54,230  
But the Japanese were  
tied in with the Germans

169  
00:08:54,230 --> 00:08:56,730  
as the Axis powers.

170  
00:08:56,730 --> 00:09:04,660  
And that, in turn, was going  
to draw us into the war.

171  
00:09:04,660 --> 00:09:05,160  
I see.

172  
00:09:05,160 --> 00:09:08,700  
Then I felt confident  
at that time

173  
00:09:08,700 --> 00:09:10,620  
that, hey, we're  
going to go over

174  
00:09:10,620 --> 00:09:15,540  
to Europe or to the Pacific  
and fight these guys,

175  
00:09:15,540 --> 00:09:18,330  
and we're going to  
get this thing over

176  
00:09:18,330 --> 00:09:23,220  
with in maybe two  
or three months.

177  
00:09:23,220 --> 00:09:25,530

That was a little optimistic.

178  
00:09:25,530 --> 00:09:26,940  
Indeed.

179  
00:09:26,940 --> 00:09:34,440  
So when was the decision  
made to send you to Europe?

180  
00:09:34,440 --> 00:09:35,730  
I'm sorry, give me that again.

181  
00:09:35,730 --> 00:09:37,960  
When did you go to Europe?

182  
00:09:37,960 --> 00:09:38,790  
OK.

183  
00:09:38,790 --> 00:09:43,890  
When I left Fort Benning, I  
went to Camp Wheeler, Georgia,

184  
00:09:43,890 --> 00:09:50,340  
and remained there as a training  
instructor for 14 months.

185  
00:09:50,340 --> 00:09:57,790  
At that time, we had  
invaded North Africa.

186  
00:09:57,790 --> 00:10:02,880  
So we became involved in the  
European scene at that time.

187  
00:10:02,880 --> 00:10:05,750  
At the end of that 14 months,  
I got transferred then

188  
00:10:05,750 --> 00:10:09,960  
either the 30th  
Infantry Division, which

189



00:10:09,960 --> 00:10:15,780  
was at Camp Forrest, Tennessee,  
finishing up their summer

190  
00:10:15,780 --> 00:10:17,730  
maneuvers there.

191  
00:10:17,730 --> 00:10:22,560  
And they went to Camp  
Atterbury in Indiana.

192  
00:10:22,560 --> 00:10:32,100  
And I joined them there  
the 1st of November of '43.

193  
00:10:32,100 --> 00:10:38,710  
And they were prioritized  
to go to Europe,

194  
00:10:38,710 --> 00:10:41,790  
although we didn't know  
that at the moment.

195  
00:10:41,790 --> 00:10:44,560  
We didn't know where  
we were going to go,

196  
00:10:44,560 --> 00:10:48,240  
but we were doing  
our immunizations

197  
00:10:48,240 --> 00:10:53,070  
and the final firing and  
familiarization with weapons

198  
00:10:53,070 --> 00:10:58,380  
and getting prepared  
for combat somewhere.

199  
00:10:58,380 --> 00:11:06,870  
And we left Camp Atterbury  
the 1st of February of '44.

200

00:11:06,870 --> 00:11:12,450  
And not knowing where we were  
going, we got on the train

201  
00:11:12,450 --> 00:11:16,800  
and we ended up at Boston.

202  
00:11:16,800 --> 00:11:20,940  
And it was only then  
that we realized

203  
00:11:20,940 --> 00:11:23,700  
that we would be going  
to the European theater.

204  
00:11:23,700 --> 00:11:26,980

205  
00:11:26,980 --> 00:11:28,300  
And how were you sent there?

206  
00:11:28,300 --> 00:11:30,940

207  
00:11:30,940 --> 00:11:33,190  
I assume you were  
shipped out by ship.

208  
00:11:33,190 --> 00:11:38,710  
Yeah, we shipped out from  
Boston on the 12th of February

209  
00:11:38,710 --> 00:11:40,870  
on the SS Argentina.

210  
00:11:40,870 --> 00:11:46,440  
And we joined a convoy  
just outside of Boston

211  
00:11:46,440 --> 00:11:52,810  
with some other ships that came  
from New York and Newport News,

212  
00:11:52,810 --> 00:11:54,280  
Virginia.

213  
00:11:54,280 --> 00:11:56,170  
And it was the largest  
convoy that ever

214  
00:11:56,170 --> 00:11:58,630  
crossed the ocean together.

215  
00:11:58,630 --> 00:12:06,470  
And our ship landed  
in Glasgow, Scotland.

216  
00:12:06,470 --> 00:12:09,910  
And from there,  
we entrained down

217  
00:12:09,910 --> 00:12:16,000  
through London and to the  
South Coast of England

218  
00:12:16,000 --> 00:12:19,210  
to a town of Bognor Regis.

219  
00:12:19,210 --> 00:12:22,300  
And that's where we stayed  
for the next six months

220  
00:12:22,300 --> 00:12:27,353  
training for the invasion  
if and when it came.

221  
00:12:27,353 --> 00:12:28,520  
Well, how was your crossing?

222  
00:12:28,520 --> 00:12:30,490  
Did you have a good crossing?

223  
00:12:30,490 --> 00:12:32,290  
It was a relatively  
good crossing.

224  
00:12:32,290 --> 00:12:36,310  
We didn't encounter  
any enemy ships.

225  
00:12:36,310 --> 00:12:41,980  
We had all kinds of battleships,  
sub-chasers with us.

226  
00:12:41,980 --> 00:12:47,480  
And periodically, we  
could see them darting out

227  
00:12:47,480 --> 00:12:50,320  
on some sort of a mission.

228  
00:12:50,320 --> 00:12:55,480  
We just assumed that they were  
out chasing a sub somewhere.

229  
00:12:55,480 --> 00:13:01,240  
But we had no problem  
in going across.

230  
00:13:01,240 --> 00:13:03,920  
The weather was fairly good.

231  
00:13:03,920 --> 00:13:06,210  
In the North Atlantic  
in the wintertime,

232  
00:13:06,210 --> 00:13:09,150  
it's never very good.

233  
00:13:09,150 --> 00:13:13,120  
But we didn't encounter  
any storms or anything.

234  
00:13:13,120 --> 00:13:15,040  
So we had a fair crossing.

235  
00:13:15,040 --> 00:13:17,630

Was that your first time  
out of the United States?

236  
00:13:17,630 --> 00:13:20,000  
Well, I had been to Canada--

237  
00:13:20,000 --> 00:13:22,660  
right you call that out  
of the United States.

238  
00:13:22,660 --> 00:13:25,180  
But the first time  
overseas, yes.

239  
00:13:25,180 --> 00:13:29,200  
And you were in Britain  
for how many months again?

240  
00:13:29,200 --> 00:13:29,770  
I'm sorry.

241  
00:13:29,770 --> 00:13:34,240  
Well, until June--  
about five months.

242  
00:13:34,240 --> 00:13:36,350  
Did you interact  
with the British?

243  
00:13:36,350 --> 00:13:36,850  
I'm sorry?

244  
00:13:36,850 --> 00:13:40,000  
Did you interact  
with the British?

245  
00:13:40,000 --> 00:13:43,270  
We did somewhat, but  
not a great deal.

246  
00:13:43,270 --> 00:13:45,880

247

00:13:45,880 --> 00:13:47,320

I think you're  
probably referring

248

00:13:47,320 --> 00:13:49,150

to the British military.

249

00:13:49,150 --> 00:13:53,780

No, but the British civilians,  
we had more contact with them.

250

00:13:53,780 --> 00:13:54,640

What did you think?

251

00:13:54,640 --> 00:13:55,765

What did you think of them?

252

00:13:55,765 --> 00:13:57,100

How did they treat you?

253

00:13:57,100 --> 00:13:59,460

They treated us very well--

254

00:13:59,460 --> 00:14:03,520

were very happy to see  
us come and help them,

255

00:14:03,520 --> 00:14:10,150

because they'd been there in  
war for four years already--

256

00:14:10,150 --> 00:14:13,910

German bombing and  
that sort of thing.

257

00:14:13,910 --> 00:14:21,600

So they were very happy to  
see us come and help them out.

258

00:14:21,600 --> 00:14:23,990

OK.

259

00:14:23,990 --> 00:14:26,020

But we had a very  
good relationship

260

00:14:26,020 --> 00:14:29,110

with the British civilians.

261

00:14:29,110 --> 00:14:30,100

Very good.

262

00:14:30,100 --> 00:14:32,230

And I just want to back up  
a little bit so we don't

263

00:14:32,230 --> 00:14:34,420

get too far ahead of ourselves.

264

00:14:34,420 --> 00:14:38,890

By this time-- and I'm referring  
to you being in Britain before

265

00:14:38,890 --> 00:14:45,880

being deployed to the  
continent, to combat that is--

266

00:14:45,880 --> 00:14:48,610

by this time, you were married?

267

00:14:48,610 --> 00:14:49,820

Yes, I was.

268

00:14:49,820 --> 00:14:54,580

I married in March of '43.

269

00:14:54,580 --> 00:14:57,220

And you had met your  
wife at university?

270

00:14:57,220 --> 00:15:00,150

No, here at Camp Blanding.

271

00:15:00,150 --> 00:15:01,240  
I see.

272  
00:15:01,240 --> 00:15:05,110  
She was teaching in  
Jacksonville at that time,

273  
00:15:05,110 --> 00:15:07,990  
and I met her there  
in Jacksonville.

274  
00:15:07,990 --> 00:15:09,660  
Tell us about how you met.

275  
00:15:09,660 --> 00:15:10,570  
How did we meet?

276  
00:15:10,570 --> 00:15:13,180  
Yes.

277  
00:15:13,180 --> 00:15:16,360  
It's kind of a long story.

278  
00:15:16,360 --> 00:15:22,930  
The people in Jacksonville  
were very hospitable.

279  
00:15:22,930 --> 00:15:29,500  
And we being Yankee boys at  
Camp Blanding away from home,

280  
00:15:29,500 --> 00:15:32,920  
they thought it would be  
nice to invite the soldier

281  
00:15:32,920 --> 00:15:38,680  
boys from Camp Blanding  
to their various church

282  
00:15:38,680 --> 00:15:43,060  
and civic organizations  
where they put on dances



283

00:15:43,060 --> 00:15:50,800  
and get together with the  
young people of the local area,

284

00:15:50,800 --> 00:15:52,390  
Jacksonville.

285

00:15:52,390 --> 00:15:56,400  
And of course, we  
were macho guys.

286

00:15:56,400 --> 00:15:59,760  
And we wanted to have our  
beer on Saturday night.

287

00:15:59,760 --> 00:16:04,170  
And when we'd go to  
these dances or whatever

288

00:16:04,170 --> 00:16:08,300  
function they were having,  
all they had was soft drinks.

289

00:16:08,300 --> 00:16:11,310  
And we didn't go for that.

290

00:16:11,310 --> 00:16:14,940  
So we declined a lot  
of these invitations.

291

00:16:14,940 --> 00:16:17,730  
And it got to the  
point where nobody

292

00:16:17,730 --> 00:16:22,090  
was going on a voluntary basis.

293

00:16:22,090 --> 00:16:28,870  
So the army decided, we can't  
disappoint these people.

294

00:16:28,870 --> 00:16:31,840

You're going to have to go,  
whether you want to or not.

295  
00:16:31,840 --> 00:16:32,530  
Right.

296  
00:16:32,530 --> 00:16:36,550  
So volunteer-- you, you,  
you, you, get your Class

297  
00:16:36,550 --> 00:16:38,950  
A uniform on, and you go.

298  
00:16:38,950 --> 00:16:43,510  
So I was one of those  
that volunteered to go.

299  
00:16:43,510 --> 00:16:47,890  
And I went to this dance  
one evening and met my wife.

300  
00:16:47,890 --> 00:16:51,650  
And we were attracted  
to each other,

301  
00:16:51,650 --> 00:16:59,350  
so we started up a  
letter communication.

302  
00:16:59,350 --> 00:17:01,090  
There was no email  
back in those days,

303  
00:17:01,090 --> 00:17:05,030  
so the only way we could  
get together was to write.

304  
00:17:05,030 --> 00:17:10,109  
And so we just worked up  
a nice the relationship.

305  
00:17:10,109 --> 00:17:13,200  
And you recall the first time

you saw her, the first time you

306

00:17:13,200 --> 00:17:14,510

laid eyes on her?

307

00:17:14,510 --> 00:17:15,432

Yeah.

308

00:17:15,432 --> 00:17:16,390

And what was that like?

309

00:17:16,390 --> 00:17:17,520

Did you think--

310

00:17:17,520 --> 00:17:21,480

I'm sorry, I didn't  
get that question.

311

00:17:21,480 --> 00:17:24,329

What did you think  
when you first saw her?

312

00:17:24,329 --> 00:17:27,810

Well, I just thought she  
was a nice looking girl

313

00:17:27,810 --> 00:17:33,690

and that I'd be interested  
in coming back and seeing her

314

00:17:33,690 --> 00:17:34,210

again.

315

00:17:34,210 --> 00:17:34,950

Sure.

316

00:17:34,950 --> 00:17:39,270

And so we started  
writing back and forth.

317

00:17:39,270 --> 00:17:41,880

I would go back to

Jacksonville and visit with her

318  
00:17:41,880 --> 00:17:44,730  
and met her family.

319  
00:17:44,730 --> 00:17:52,170  
And well, actually,  
I left Camp Blanding

320  
00:17:52,170 --> 00:17:57,540  
and went to Fort Benning  
and went to Camp Wheeler

321  
00:17:57,540 --> 00:18:03,000  
and sort of picked up  
the writing communication

322  
00:18:03,000 --> 00:18:05,520  
again with her.

323  
00:18:05,520 --> 00:18:13,190  
And I decided it was time  
that we got more serious.

324  
00:18:13,190 --> 00:18:14,630  
We did.

325  
00:18:14,630 --> 00:18:24,890  
And it was January  
1 of '42, I invited

326  
00:18:24,890 --> 00:18:27,680  
her to come up to Camp Wheeler.

327  
00:18:27,680 --> 00:18:31,430  
And I gave her an  
engagement ring.

328  
00:18:31,430 --> 00:18:37,690  
And the following March, we were  
married there at Camp Wheeler.

329

00:18:37,690 --> 00:18:39,440

It was a lovely way  
to start the new year.

330

00:18:39,440 --> 00:18:41,840

Yeah, good way.

331

00:18:41,840 --> 00:18:43,460

So let's go back  
to Britain, then.

332

00:18:43,460 --> 00:18:45,980

You're in the South of England.

333

00:18:45,980 --> 00:18:48,800

You're writing to your  
wife at that time as well.

334

00:18:48,800 --> 00:18:49,400

Oh, yes.

335

00:18:49,400 --> 00:18:51,440

What was it like  
being away from her?

336

00:18:51,440 --> 00:18:55,040

Well, of course I missed her.

337

00:18:55,040 --> 00:19:01,370

But we were so busy  
working, training,

338

00:19:01,370 --> 00:19:08,140

that I didn't have much  
time to dwell on the fact

339

00:19:08,140 --> 00:19:12,400

that I'm away from  
home and I'm lonesome.

340

00:19:12,400 --> 00:19:13,510

I was, of course.

341

00:19:13,510 --> 00:19:14,960

I missed her.

342

00:19:14,960 --> 00:19:17,710

But we just had  
so many activities

343

00:19:17,710 --> 00:19:22,972

going on that we didn't  
have time to get homesick.

344

00:19:22,972 --> 00:19:23,650

Sure.

345

00:19:23,650 --> 00:19:26,120

Had you had children  
by that time or not?

346

00:19:26,120 --> 00:19:26,620

Sorry?

347

00:19:26,620 --> 00:19:27,730

Did you have any  
children by that time?

348

00:19:27,730 --> 00:19:28,230

No.

349

00:19:28,230 --> 00:19:29,740

No, we did not.

350

00:19:29,740 --> 00:19:34,390

So when was it made  
clear to you that you

351

00:19:34,390 --> 00:19:36,190

were going to be sent  
into combat, that you

352

00:19:36,190 --> 00:19:37,200

were going to the continent?

353

00:19:37,200 --> 00:19:39,117

And when did that happen  
and where did you go?

354

00:19:39,117 --> 00:19:44,310

Well, we were on the  
South Coast of England,

355

00:19:44,310 --> 00:19:49,080

and we could hear the  
planes, the Air Force,

356

00:19:49,080 --> 00:19:54,210

going over every night  
bombing somewhere

357

00:19:54,210 --> 00:19:55,720

over on the continent.

358

00:19:55,720 --> 00:20:07,250

And because everything was  
top secret, until actually,

359

00:20:07,250 --> 00:20:10,890

the 5th of June--

360

00:20:10,890 --> 00:20:16,980

at the night of the 5th of June,  
we heard this tremendous roar

361

00:20:16,980 --> 00:20:22,260

of planes going, and that just  
continued on and on and on.

362

00:20:22,260 --> 00:20:25,810

And we were not hearing  
any planes coming back.

363

00:20:25,810 --> 00:20:29,110

So they were making  
a wide circle,

364

00:20:29,110 --> 00:20:31,360  
going over, bombing,  
and coming back.

365  
00:20:31,360 --> 00:20:34,510  
And it was just  
continuing on all night.

366  
00:20:34,510 --> 00:20:38,680  
And this was unusual,  
because normally, the planes

367  
00:20:38,680 --> 00:20:41,910  
would go out and we'd hear them  
coming back, and that was it.

368  
00:20:41,910 --> 00:20:43,120  
Right.

369  
00:20:43,120 --> 00:20:46,360  
So we knew that  
that was probably

370  
00:20:46,360 --> 00:20:49,970  
the beginning of the invasion.

371  
00:20:49,970 --> 00:20:56,410  
And it was, then, the next  
day, we read in the newspapers

372  
00:20:56,410 --> 00:21:00,880  
that the invasion had started.

373  
00:21:00,880 --> 00:21:05,230  
And right at that  
time, we were moved

374  
00:21:05,230 --> 00:21:12,490  
to the marshaling area near  
Southampton in preparation

375  
00:21:12,490 --> 00:21:14,380  
for the crossing.



376  
00:21:14,380 --> 00:21:21,310  
Now, on D-day, the 1st  
and the 29th division

377  
00:21:21,310 --> 00:21:25,960  
were the assault troops  
to go across the channel

378  
00:21:25,960 --> 00:21:30,160  
and land on Omaha Beach.

379  
00:21:30,160 --> 00:21:37,120  
And our 30th division went  
in behind the 29th five days

380  
00:21:37,120 --> 00:21:39,440  
later.

381  
00:21:39,440 --> 00:21:46,070  
So you entered the European  
combat theater at D-day plus 5?

382  
00:21:46,070 --> 00:21:47,000  
Yeah, that's right.

383  
00:21:47,000 --> 00:21:47,680  
Yeah.

384  
00:21:47,680 --> 00:21:50,170  
What was your position at  
the time of deployment?

385  
00:21:50,170 --> 00:21:54,100  
I was a platoon leader in  
a heavy weapons company--

386  
00:21:54,100 --> 00:21:55,540  
mortar platoon leader.

387  
00:21:55,540 --> 00:21:56,530  
OK.

388  
00:21:56,530 --> 00:21:58,670  
What was your first  
experience of combat, sir?

389  
00:21:58,670 --> 00:21:59,170  
I'm sorry?

390  
00:21:59,170 --> 00:22:02,750  
What was your first  
experience of combat?

391  
00:22:02,750 --> 00:22:07,880  
Well, it was different  
than what we expected.

392  
00:22:07,880 --> 00:22:10,700

393  
00:22:10,700 --> 00:22:13,460  
When we were in England, we  
were all gung ho-- the hell,

394  
00:22:13,460 --> 00:22:18,110  
we were going to go over there  
and tear those guys up and make

395  
00:22:18,110 --> 00:22:24,630  
sure of the situation,  
drive the Germans back

396  
00:22:24,630 --> 00:22:26,930  
into their own country.

397  
00:22:26,930 --> 00:22:30,490

398  
00:22:30,490 --> 00:22:35,180  
And we had done some training  
with live ammunition,

399  
00:22:35,180 --> 00:22:41,480

but it was all very  
closely guarded

400  
00:22:41,480 --> 00:22:45,620  
so that we would not have  
any casualties or accidents.

401  
00:22:45,620 --> 00:22:48,230  
Once we got over  
to Europe, there

402  
00:22:48,230 --> 00:22:52,580  
was no safety regulations,  
and the bullets

403  
00:22:52,580 --> 00:22:55,820  
were flying around  
fast and furious.

404  
00:22:55,820 --> 00:22:58,670  
And we never knew  
when the silver bullet

405  
00:22:58,670 --> 00:23:00,160  
was going to hit us.

406  
00:23:00,160 --> 00:23:02,780  
It was an entirely  
different situation.

407  
00:23:02,780 --> 00:23:06,530  
Do you remember the first  
time-- the very, very first time

408  
00:23:06,530 --> 00:23:10,850  
that either you received  
fire or you returned fire?

409  
00:23:10,850 --> 00:23:11,350  
Yeah.

410  
00:23:11,350 --> 00:23:15,350  
It was on the 15th of June.

411  
00:23:15,350 --> 00:23:16,250  
Where were you?

412  
00:23:16,250 --> 00:23:17,210  
Tell me about it.

413  
00:23:17,210 --> 00:23:22,550  
Well, we landed on Omaha Beach--

414  
00:23:22,550 --> 00:23:27,380  
and I can recall it  
very well, because this

415  
00:23:27,380 --> 00:23:29,240  
was on my birthday--  
the 13th of June.

416  
00:23:29,240 --> 00:23:33,660

417  
00:23:33,660 --> 00:23:35,600  
OK.

418  
00:23:35,600 --> 00:23:37,490  
I'm just talking  
with my wife here.

419  
00:23:37,490 --> 00:23:44,420  
Yeah, we landed on my  
birthday on the 13th of June

420  
00:23:44,420 --> 00:23:50,090  
and moved into what we call a  
bivouac area, because this area

421  
00:23:50,090 --> 00:23:52,920  
had been cleared out now  
by the 29th division--

422  
00:23:52,920 --> 00:23:56,120  
about two to three miles inland.

423

00:23:56,120 --> 00:24:00,130

And so we stayed in this  
bivouac area overnight,

424

00:24:00,130 --> 00:24:04,550

and then the next day, we  
marched into this little

425

00:24:04,550 --> 00:24:09,770

village in [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]  
which the 29th division the day

426

00:24:09,770 --> 00:24:14,080

before had taken but were  
driven back out of it.

427

00:24:14,080 --> 00:24:18,370

And so it was our job then  
to get back into that town,

428

00:24:18,370 --> 00:24:22,010

clear it out, and  
continue on from there.

429

00:24:22,010 --> 00:24:25,250

And that was our  
first day of combat.

430

00:24:25,250 --> 00:24:27,415

And we were green.

431

00:24:27,415 --> 00:24:30,260

432

00:24:30,260 --> 00:24:34,850

We just didn't realize  
the seriousness

433

00:24:34,850 --> 00:24:38,120

of what this whole  
thing was all about

434

00:24:38,120 --> 00:24:41,420

until the silver bullet  
hit some of our friends

435

00:24:41,420 --> 00:24:46,610

and they encountered  
mines, they were

436

00:24:46,610 --> 00:24:49,250

hit way artillery shrapnel.

437

00:24:49,250 --> 00:24:58,040

And these guys were being  
hit, became casualties,

438

00:24:58,040 --> 00:25:02,800

and the medics had to take care  
of them as best they could.

439

00:25:02,800 --> 00:25:07,510

And then during the  
night and the next day,

440

00:25:07,510 --> 00:25:09,820

we had to get replacements  
in for those men that

441

00:25:09,820 --> 00:25:13,210

were casualties of that day.

442

00:25:13,210 --> 00:25:17,860

As a platoon leader,  
how did that affect you?

443

00:25:17,860 --> 00:25:20,410

444

00:25:20,410 --> 00:25:27,250

Well, I was responsible  
for 50 men in my platoon.

445

00:25:27,250 --> 00:25:32,740

And everything I did,  
I had to consider

446  
00:25:32,740 --> 00:25:37,390  
the safety of those  
men to do the actions

447  
00:25:37,390 --> 00:25:41,920  
that we did in  
firing our mortars,

448  
00:25:41,920 --> 00:25:48,120  
locating positions that  
were the best suited for us,

449  
00:25:48,120 --> 00:25:51,340  
and to have protection  
as best we could.

450  
00:25:51,340 --> 00:25:54,640  
And did you lose any men that  
day or in subsequent days?

451  
00:25:54,640 --> 00:25:56,740  
That first day, no, I  
didn't lose any men.

452  
00:25:56,740 --> 00:26:03,286  
But in subsequent following  
days, I did lose some men.

453  
00:26:03,286 --> 00:26:05,830  
That must have been  
extraordinarily difficult.

454  
00:26:05,830 --> 00:26:08,110  
It was, because  
these were men that I

455  
00:26:08,110 --> 00:26:11,890  
had trained with back  
in the States and then

456

00:26:11,890 --> 00:26:13,840  
through the period in England.

457  
00:26:13,840 --> 00:26:18,490  
And during that period of time,  
you become close to your men,

458  
00:26:18,490 --> 00:26:21,040  
and almost like family.

459  
00:26:21,040 --> 00:26:29,210  
And it hurts when you see a  
man get wounded or killed.

460  
00:26:29,210 --> 00:26:34,610  
And you feel partially  
responsible for it.

461  
00:26:34,610 --> 00:26:37,390  
Although, it's not  
your fault. You

462  
00:26:37,390 --> 00:26:39,610  
feel that you've lost  
one of your boys.

463  
00:26:39,610 --> 00:26:42,520  
And it hurt.

464  
00:26:42,520 --> 00:26:46,320  
You described it just now as  
being rather like a family.

465  
00:26:46,320 --> 00:26:50,620  
As a platoon leader,  
did you look at the men

466  
00:26:50,620 --> 00:26:54,280  
under your command, were  
they more like sons to you

467  
00:26:54,280 --> 00:26:56,050  
or more like brothers?



468  
00:26:56,050 --> 00:27:02,450  
More like sons, because, as I  
mentioned, when I landed there,

469  
00:27:02,450 --> 00:27:06,070  
I was 27 years old  
on my birthday.

470  
00:27:06,070 --> 00:27:11,700  
And most of my men were 18, 19,  
20-year-old-- like old kids.

471  
00:27:11,700 --> 00:27:12,460  
Right.

472  
00:27:12,460 --> 00:27:15,250  
So there was a little  
bit of a gap there.

473  
00:27:15,250 --> 00:27:21,460  
And I felt more or less  
they were my sons, that I

474  
00:27:21,460 --> 00:27:22,710  
had to take care of them.

475  
00:27:22,710 --> 00:27:23,950  
Sure.

476  
00:27:23,950 --> 00:27:26,320  
What do you think of--

477  
00:27:26,320 --> 00:27:28,672  
you said before  
going into combat,

478  
00:27:28,672 --> 00:27:30,130  
you had that attitude  
that you were

479  
00:27:30,130 --> 00:27:35,110

going to go in and show  
these guys the what for.

480  
00:27:35,110 --> 00:27:36,610  
We were going to  
tear them up, yeah.

481  
00:27:36,610 --> 00:27:40,090  
Once you had that  
experience of close combat,

482  
00:27:40,090 --> 00:27:41,950  
what did you think  
about the Germans?

483  
00:27:41,950 --> 00:27:42,950  
Were they good soldiers?

484  
00:27:42,950 --> 00:27:46,150  
Well, we found,  
we really learned

485  
00:27:46,150 --> 00:27:50,380  
that they were well-trained,  
well-disciplined soldiers.

486  
00:27:50,380 --> 00:27:56,710  
And they had weapons that  
were as good as or better

487  
00:27:56,710 --> 00:27:58,780  
than what we had.

488  
00:27:58,780 --> 00:28:03,670  
And the only way we  
gained the upper hand

489  
00:28:03,670 --> 00:28:06,910  
was the fact that we  
just had more men.

490  
00:28:06,910 --> 00:28:10,300  
We had more weapons, more tanks.

491  
00:28:10,300 --> 00:28:16,280  
And we just overpowered  
them by sheer numbers--

492  
00:28:16,280 --> 00:28:16,780  
Yes.

493  
00:28:16,780 --> 00:28:23,810  
Rather than technical  
better weapons.

494  
00:28:23,810 --> 00:28:25,460  
They had better  
weapons than we had.

495  
00:28:25,460 --> 00:28:26,230  
Sure.

496  
00:28:26,230 --> 00:28:28,990  
But let's just talk about  
that a little bit more.

497  
00:28:28,990 --> 00:28:31,323  
How did you view them--

498  
00:28:31,323 --> 00:28:33,490  
the Germans, that's to say  
the German soldiers-- how

499  
00:28:33,490 --> 00:28:35,710  
did you view them as soldiers?

500  
00:28:35,710 --> 00:28:38,710  
Well, they were good--

501  
00:28:38,710 --> 00:28:41,290  
most of them, the Wehrmacht--

502  
00:28:41,290 --> 00:28:46,990  
were very good soldiers,  
well-disciplined.

503

00:28:46,990 --> 00:28:50,470

One of the big  
differences that we found

504

00:28:50,470 --> 00:28:58,180

is that they went  
strictly by the book.

505

00:28:58,180 --> 00:29:02,380

Whatever was in the  
training manuals, whatever

506

00:29:02,380 --> 00:29:06,330

their leaders told them to  
do, that's what they did--

507

00:29:06,330 --> 00:29:07,580

nothing more.

508

00:29:07,580 --> 00:29:08,720

OK.

509

00:29:08,720 --> 00:29:14,050

The American  
soldiers, we adapted.

510

00:29:14,050 --> 00:29:18,010

We were told what to  
do and how to do it,

511

00:29:18,010 --> 00:29:22,330

but if that didn't  
work, then we had

512

00:29:22,330 --> 00:29:29,100

the liberty of doing something  
else that would work.

513

00:29:29,100 --> 00:29:35,570

And we had that flexibility,  
which the Germans did not have.

514  
00:29:35,570 --> 00:29:38,470  
OK.

515  
00:29:38,470 --> 00:29:43,780  
Now, as you're moving inland,  
moving deeper and deeper

516  
00:29:43,780 --> 00:29:56,200  
into France, at some point, you  
came into contact with Jews.

517  
00:29:56,200 --> 00:29:58,490  
Can you tell us about  
that first experience?

518  
00:29:58,490 --> 00:29:59,800  
Came into contact with who?

519  
00:29:59,800 --> 00:30:01,160  
Jews.

520  
00:30:01,160 --> 00:30:01,930  
Jews?

521  
00:30:01,930 --> 00:30:02,530  
Yes.

522  
00:30:02,530 --> 00:30:03,760  
OK.

523  
00:30:03,760 --> 00:30:08,080  
We did not have any  
contact with Jews.

524  
00:30:08,080 --> 00:30:09,880  
Let me go back a little bit.

525  
00:30:09,880 --> 00:30:15,910  
Back in the early training  
days, occasionally we

526

00:30:15,910 --> 00:30:20,500  
would hear or read  
in the newspapers

527  
00:30:20,500 --> 00:30:26,470  
about some Jews being  
tortured over in Europe--

528  
00:30:26,470 --> 00:30:27,670  
slave laborers.

529  
00:30:27,670 --> 00:30:29,500  
Mmhmm.

530  
00:30:29,500 --> 00:30:32,560  
And this periodically  
would appear,

531  
00:30:32,560 --> 00:30:35,560  
but we never paid  
much attention to it,

532  
00:30:35,560 --> 00:30:44,080  
because what we were hearing  
was that some Jew would escape

533  
00:30:44,080 --> 00:30:47,170  
from some camp-- we didn't  
know about Auschwitz or Dachau

534  
00:30:47,170 --> 00:30:50,440  
back in those days.

535  
00:30:50,440 --> 00:30:52,780  
We heard there were  
these camps where

536  
00:30:52,780 --> 00:30:57,910  
they were concentrating Jews and  
torturing them and using them

537  
00:30:57,910 --> 00:30:59,800  
as slave labor.

538

00:30:59,800 --> 00:31:04,780

But the story that  
we would get was

539

00:31:04,780 --> 00:31:12,130

that a Jew escaped from a camp,  
went back to his hometown,

540

00:31:12,130 --> 00:31:17,320

and told the people about what  
was going on in this camp--

541

00:31:17,320 --> 00:31:20,650

that the Jews were  
being tortured and used

542

00:31:20,650 --> 00:31:23,720

as slave labor.

543

00:31:23,720 --> 00:31:27,140

They did not believe him.

544

00:31:27,140 --> 00:31:30,200

The Jewish congregation  
in his town

545

00:31:30,200 --> 00:31:35,630

did not believe him,  
because, like us, we

546

00:31:35,630 --> 00:31:42,350

thought of the German people as  
being civilized human beings,

547

00:31:42,350 --> 00:31:48,580

intelligent people,  
and they would not

548

00:31:48,580 --> 00:31:53,990

do that to another  
segment of human beings.

549

00:31:53,990 --> 00:31:55,810

So this went on.

550

00:31:55,810 --> 00:31:58,690

Periodically, we would  
read articles like this

551

00:31:58,690 --> 00:32:01,030

while we were in England.

552

00:32:01,030 --> 00:32:07,070

But when we got into  
France, we saw none of that.

553

00:32:07,070 --> 00:32:11,010

In fact, Jews didn't  
ever cross our mind.

554

00:32:11,010 --> 00:32:14,050

That was not why we were there.

555

00:32:14,050 --> 00:32:14,550

Right.

556

00:32:14,550 --> 00:32:18,030

We weren't there to  
liberate the Jews.

557

00:32:18,030 --> 00:32:20,940

We didn't know about  
that whole situation.

558

00:32:20,940 --> 00:32:24,360

We were there to  
drive the Germans out

559

00:32:24,360 --> 00:32:30,870

of the land which they  
had occupied illegally.

560

00:32:30,870 --> 00:32:32,820

So we were not



concerned with Jews.

561  
00:32:32,820 --> 00:32:39,120  
And we never really  
saw any Jews,

562  
00:32:39,120 --> 00:32:44,700  
because the Germans had taken  
them all out of France back

563  
00:32:44,700 --> 00:32:49,620  
to Germany to use them  
as slave laborers.

564  
00:32:49,620 --> 00:32:57,000  
So as we proceeded on through  
Normandy, and northern France,

565  
00:32:57,000 --> 00:33:00,090  
and into Belgium,  
we never saw or had

566  
00:33:00,090 --> 00:33:01,860  
any contact with any Jews.

567  
00:33:01,860 --> 00:33:02,670  
OK.

568  
00:33:02,670 --> 00:33:03,840  
They were all gone.

569  
00:33:03,840 --> 00:33:05,490  
Right.

570  
00:33:05,490 --> 00:33:12,480  
So we continued on through  
Belgium and into Holland

571  
00:33:12,480 --> 00:33:15,000  
in the Battle of the  
Bulge during the winter

572

00:33:15,000 --> 00:33:25,260  
of '44-'45, and then we  
captured the city of Aachen,

573  
00:33:25,260 --> 00:33:31,740  
which was the first  
city to fall in Germany.

574  
00:33:31,740 --> 00:33:34,920  
And up to that time, we  
had seen nor heard nothing

575  
00:33:34,920 --> 00:33:35,715  
about any Jews.

576  
00:33:35,715 --> 00:33:38,780

577  
00:33:38,780 --> 00:33:44,140  
Then we continued on northward  
through Monchengladbach

578  
00:33:44,140 --> 00:33:49,710  
and [? Hanlon, ?]  
Detmold, and Brunswick.

579  
00:33:49,710 --> 00:33:54,980  
We crossed the Rhine River  
on the 24th of March.

580  
00:33:54,980 --> 00:33:59,260  
Now, up to that  
time, we had seen

581  
00:33:59,260 --> 00:34:04,240  
nor heard nothing about Jews.

582  
00:34:04,240 --> 00:34:05,330  
That was not in our--

583  
00:34:05,330 --> 00:34:10,342

584

00:34:10,342 --> 00:34:11,550  
anything that we cared about.

585

00:34:11,550 --> 00:34:12,449  
Sure.

586

00:34:12,449 --> 00:34:14,130  
As you're fighting  
along and as you're

587

00:34:14,130 --> 00:34:16,800  
moving through Belgium  
and the Netherlands

588

00:34:16,800 --> 00:34:18,870  
and then into Germany,  
what have you,

589

00:34:18,870 --> 00:34:21,100  
is the German resistance  
getting stiffer?

590

00:34:21,100 --> 00:34:23,489  
Or did you sense as  
an officer that--

591

00:34:23,489 --> 00:34:26,670  
Oh no, it was getting much less.

592

00:34:26,670 --> 00:34:32,580  
From the time we had our  
last major battle in France

593

00:34:32,580 --> 00:34:39,460  
at the city of Mortain,  
and that was the beginning

594

00:34:39,460 --> 00:34:41,510  
of what we call the rat race--

595

00:34:41,510 --> 00:34:44,850  
that they were moving

back to Germany

596

00:34:44,850 --> 00:34:46,620

almost as fast as they could.

597

00:34:46,620 --> 00:34:49,480

So as an officer, you could  
sense them in retreat?

598

00:34:49,480 --> 00:34:50,040

I'm sorry?

599

00:34:50,040 --> 00:34:51,929

You could sense them in retreat?

600

00:34:51,929 --> 00:34:52,770

Oh, yes.

601

00:34:52,770 --> 00:34:53,480

Yeah.

602

00:34:53,480 --> 00:34:55,739

So you crossed the Rhine.

603

00:34:55,739 --> 00:34:58,980

Let's go to that period of  
time, and you're pressing on.

604

00:34:58,980 --> 00:35:01,570

Right.

605

00:35:01,570 --> 00:35:03,430

So we were just chasing them.

606

00:35:03,430 --> 00:35:08,514

They were doing what we call--

607

00:35:08,514 --> 00:35:10,000

I forget what it is now--

608

00:35:10,000 --> 00:35:12,790

609

00:35:12,790 --> 00:35:16,660

sort of defensive action  
as they were retreating.

610

00:35:16,660 --> 00:35:20,470

And the major part  
of the German army

611

00:35:20,470 --> 00:35:25,270

were moving back  
eastward toward Germany.

612

00:35:25,270 --> 00:35:28,000

And they would leave  
a small segment of men

613

00:35:28,000 --> 00:35:31,360

behind to delay us--

614

00:35:31,360 --> 00:35:34,970

just create delaying actions.

615

00:35:34,970 --> 00:35:39,520

And that's all we did all the  
way across northern France

616

00:35:39,520 --> 00:35:41,870

and up into Belgium and Holland.

617

00:35:41,870 --> 00:35:47,380

And it was not until we got into  
Holland and the German border

618

00:35:47,380 --> 00:35:50,020

where they had the  
Siegfried line.

619

00:35:50,020 --> 00:35:54,610

That's where we had to  
stop, and, of course,

620

00:35:54,610 --> 00:35:57,410  
they stopped as well.

621

00:35:57,410 --> 00:36:01,060  
The reason that we  
stopped there was

622

00:36:01,060 --> 00:36:07,390  
that we had run across France,  
and Belgium, and Holland

623

00:36:07,390 --> 00:36:11,980  
so fast, we had outrun  
our supply lines.

624

00:36:11,980 --> 00:36:14,890  
Now, all of our supplies  
had to come to us

625

00:36:14,890 --> 00:36:18,160  
from England, across the  
channel, into Omaha Beach,

626

00:36:18,160 --> 00:36:23,710  
and by truck move them  
up daily to supply us

627

00:36:23,710 --> 00:36:29,650  
with food, ammunition,  
clothing, replacements.

628

00:36:29,650 --> 00:36:32,460  
So it was kind of  
a slow process--

629

00:36:32,460 --> 00:36:35,260  
that we are moving  
faster than the supply

630

00:36:35,260 --> 00:36:38,330  
lines could keep up with us.

631

00:36:38,330 --> 00:36:46,780  
So by the time we got to the  
Holland and the Siegfried Line,

632  
00:36:46,780 --> 00:36:50,920  
we had left thousands of  
vehicles behind because we

633  
00:36:50,920 --> 00:36:54,163  
ran out of gasoline.

634  
00:36:54,163 --> 00:36:56,580  
We just dropped the vehicles  
off on the side of the road--

635  
00:36:56,580 --> 00:36:57,080  
Sure.

636  
00:36:57,080 --> 00:36:59,520  
And abandoned  
them, more or less.

637  
00:36:59,520 --> 00:37:03,440  
And so by the time we got to  
Holland, we were out of food.

638  
00:37:03,440 --> 00:37:04,600  
We were out of ammunition.

639  
00:37:04,600 --> 00:37:07,400  
We were out of gasoline.

640  
00:37:07,400 --> 00:37:12,770  
So we had to stop  
there nearly a month

641  
00:37:12,770 --> 00:37:17,420  
waiting for supplies  
to reach us and become

642  
00:37:17,420 --> 00:37:21,310  
resupplied with  
ammunition, food,

643

00:37:21,310 --> 00:37:28,190  
replacement men before we  
could make a successful attack

644

00:37:28,190 --> 00:37:33,260  
on the Siegfried Line, and  
once we got the momentum going,

645

00:37:33,260 --> 00:37:34,910  
to keep on going.

646

00:37:34,910 --> 00:37:36,470  
When did that happen?

647

00:37:36,470 --> 00:37:46,560  
That was in about  
February of '45--

648

00:37:46,560 --> 00:37:52,160  
February of '45 that we crashed  
through the Siegfried Line.

649

00:37:52,160 --> 00:37:56,610  
And we had enough momentum  
going that we just kept on going

650

00:37:56,610 --> 00:38:02,200  
and got up to  
Monchengladbach and Vessel

651

00:38:02,200 --> 00:38:03,650  
and crossed the  
Rhine River, which

652

00:38:03,650 --> 00:38:09,510  
was the biggest major obstacle  
that we had at that time.

653

00:38:09,510 --> 00:38:13,800  
So we continued on from  
crossing the Rhine River



654

00:38:13,800 --> 00:38:22,760

on the 24th of March  
and headed to Brunswick,

655

00:38:22,760 --> 00:38:27,310

which is in the northern  
part of Germany.

656

00:38:27,310 --> 00:38:32,840

Now, up to this  
time, we had not seen

657

00:38:32,840 --> 00:38:38,070

nor heard anything about  
Jews or concentration camps--

658

00:38:38,070 --> 00:38:38,770

nothing.

659

00:38:38,770 --> 00:38:41,100

Now, this should have been  
around April, was it not?

660

00:38:41,100 --> 00:38:44,790

This was the 10th of April  
that we captured Brunswick.

661

00:38:44,790 --> 00:38:45,510

OK.

662

00:38:45,510 --> 00:38:51,630

Now, there was a concentration  
camp, Bergen-Belsen,

663

00:38:51,630 --> 00:38:55,440

which was a little bit  
north of Brunswick,

664

00:38:55,440 --> 00:38:57,650

but that was in  
the British zone.

665

00:38:57,650 --> 00:38:58,210  
Right.

666  
00:38:58,210 --> 00:38:59,580  
So we had nothing to do with it.

667  
00:38:59,580 --> 00:39:00,600  
OK.

668  
00:39:00,600 --> 00:39:02,470  
But it was there, nevertheless.

669  
00:39:02,470 --> 00:39:06,450  
But we didn't even  
hear about it.

670  
00:39:06,450 --> 00:39:11,070  
We captured Brunswick, and  
then our next objective

671  
00:39:11,070 --> 00:39:18,150  
was Magdeburg, which was  
probably 75 to 100 miles

672  
00:39:18,150 --> 00:39:20,220  
further East.

673  
00:39:20,220 --> 00:39:24,930  
And we started moving from  
Brunswick on toward Magdeburg.

674  
00:39:24,930 --> 00:39:28,440  
And we came to this  
town of Hillersleben

675  
00:39:28,440 --> 00:39:31,560  
where there was a  
large German airbase.

676  
00:39:31,560 --> 00:39:33,460  
We captured that.

677

00:39:33,460 --> 00:39:39,330  
And there was a number of  
large barracks and a hospital.

678  
00:39:39,330 --> 00:39:40,282  
OK.

679  
00:39:40,282 --> 00:39:41,490  
And we thought nothing of it.

680  
00:39:41,490 --> 00:39:44,160  
We just captured  
that town and went on

681  
00:39:44,160 --> 00:39:47,260  
to the next town of Farsleben.

682  
00:39:47,260 --> 00:39:50,950

683  
00:39:50,950 --> 00:39:55,190  
As we were approaching this  
little village of Farsleben--

684  
00:39:55,190 --> 00:40:00,070  
there were only probably  
1,000 people at the most--

685  
00:40:00,070 --> 00:40:08,760  
we met some soldiers  
who were walking

686  
00:40:08,760 --> 00:40:12,240  
along the side of  
the road westward.

687  
00:40:12,240 --> 00:40:16,200  
And they said that  
up in Farsleben,

688  
00:40:16,200 --> 00:40:21,900  
the Germans are preparing  
an ambush for you,

689  
00:40:21,900 --> 00:40:27,560  
and they are protecting  
a train load of people.

690  
00:40:27,560 --> 00:40:29,720  
Well, we didn't understand  
exactly what they meant

691  
00:40:29,720 --> 00:40:33,000  
by a train load of people.

692  
00:40:33,000 --> 00:40:36,710  
So we had our  
reconnaissance unit,

693  
00:40:36,710 --> 00:40:43,500  
which was a few tanks and  
infantrymen on the tanks,

694  
00:40:43,500 --> 00:40:48,690  
to move forward to  
this town of Farsleben.

695  
00:40:48,690 --> 00:40:50,720  
They found no  
resistance in the town.

696  
00:40:50,720 --> 00:40:52,940  
They cleared it out.

697  
00:40:52,940 --> 00:40:57,470  
And on the east side of the  
town, there was a little hill.

698  
00:40:57,470 --> 00:41:02,360  
And the tanks were  
still moving forward.

699  
00:41:02,360 --> 00:41:08,450  
And as they mounted the  
hill and looked down

700

00:41:08,450 --> 00:41:11,420

into the little valley

on the other side,

701

00:41:11,420 --> 00:41:15,410

they saw a train sitting

there with a bunch of people

702

00:41:15,410 --> 00:41:22,630

milling around doing whatever

they wanted to do, really.

703

00:41:22,630 --> 00:41:24,430

OK.

704

00:41:24,430 --> 00:41:25,870

That should have been--

705

00:41:25,870 --> 00:41:28,690

just to clarify where

we are in time--

706

00:41:28,690 --> 00:41:31,420

that should have been probably

the 12th or 13th of April?

707

00:41:31,420 --> 00:41:32,380

Somewhere around there?

708

00:41:32,380 --> 00:41:37,470

This was the 13th of April.

709

00:41:37,470 --> 00:41:38,350

OK.

710

00:41:38,350 --> 00:41:42,310

We had liberated

Brunswick on the 10th,

711

00:41:42,310 --> 00:41:45,610

and I think we

liberated Hillersleben

712  
00:41:45,610 --> 00:41:47,710  
on the 11th or 12th.

713  
00:41:47,710 --> 00:41:55,660  
And the next day, the 13th of  
April 1945, we saw the train.

714  
00:41:55,660 --> 00:41:59,800  
And not knowing  
exactly what it was,

715  
00:41:59,800 --> 00:42:03,830  
very cautiously  
we approached it.

716  
00:42:03,830 --> 00:42:09,080  
And in turn, they saw the  
tanks and recognized them

717  
00:42:09,080 --> 00:42:12,520  
as American tanks, and  
they came rushing forward

718  
00:42:12,520 --> 00:42:15,900  
to meet and greet us.

719  
00:42:15,900 --> 00:42:22,390  
Then we found through a  
few of these people who

720  
00:42:22,390 --> 00:42:27,100  
could speak a little bit of  
English, and one of our guys

721  
00:42:27,100 --> 00:42:32,254  
was a Jew, and he could  
speak a little bit of Hebrew.

722  
00:42:32,254 --> 00:42:33,910  
OK.

723

00:42:33,910 --> 00:42:38,350

Well, they began to  
communicate, and what they found

724

00:42:38,350 --> 00:42:46,150

was this train had about  
2,500 people on it.

725

00:42:46,150 --> 00:42:49,990

And it had come  
from Bergen-Belsen.

726

00:42:49,990 --> 00:42:52,540

Well, what is Bergen-Belsen?

727

00:42:52,540 --> 00:42:54,340

We'd never heard of it.

728

00:42:54,340 --> 00:42:58,960

OK, they told us Bergen-Belsen  
was a concentration camp where

729

00:42:58,960 --> 00:43:03,250

they had about 50,000 Jews.

730

00:43:03,250 --> 00:43:06,190

This was the first time--

731

00:43:06,190 --> 00:43:08,050

the very first time--

732

00:43:08,050 --> 00:43:14,020

that we had ever heard of a  
concentration camp of Jews.

733

00:43:14,020 --> 00:43:16,395

That's the first time that  
we had ever met any Jews.

734

00:43:16,395 --> 00:43:18,990

735

00:43:18,990 --> 00:43:21,960

How close did you personally  
get to that train?

736

00:43:21,960 --> 00:43:23,940

Were you right on top of it?

737

00:43:23,940 --> 00:43:26,040

Well, I was not  
there the first day.

738

00:43:26,040 --> 00:43:26,820

OK.

739

00:43:26,820 --> 00:43:28,770

I was with another unit.

740

00:43:28,770 --> 00:43:32,100

And this was the  
743rd tank battalion,

741

00:43:32,100 --> 00:43:33,360

which was a part of our unit.

742

00:43:33,360 --> 00:43:34,210

Mmhmm.

743

00:43:34,210 --> 00:43:40,920

They were the lead  
reconnaissance group

744

00:43:40,920 --> 00:43:42,960

right up in the very front.

745

00:43:42,960 --> 00:43:46,650

They were the first ones to  
meet this group of people.

746

00:43:46,650 --> 00:43:51,010

And I didn't see them,  
actually, until the next day.

747



00:43:51,010 --> 00:43:54,310  
And when you did see them--

748  
00:43:54,310 --> 00:43:57,820  
It was a horrible scene.

749  
00:43:57,820 --> 00:44:01,900  
Because they had  
just been liberated--

750  
00:44:01,900 --> 00:44:05,290

751  
00:44:05,290 --> 00:44:08,380  
I need to go back  
just a minute now.

752  
00:44:08,380 --> 00:44:18,400  
On the 6th of April, the camp  
commander of Bergen-Belsen

753  
00:44:18,400 --> 00:44:22,630  
was aware that the British  
troops were approaching

754  
00:44:22,630 --> 00:44:29,470  
his camp, and he wanted to get  
the inmates of the camp out

755  
00:44:29,470 --> 00:44:31,480  
of there as quickly  
as he could so

756  
00:44:31,480 --> 00:44:34,720  
that they would not  
see the condition

757  
00:44:34,720 --> 00:44:38,320  
that these people were in.

758  
00:44:38,320 --> 00:44:44,770  
So on the 4th, 5th,  
and 6th of April,

759  
00:44:44,770 --> 00:44:47,920  
they loaded up three  
different trains

760  
00:44:47,920 --> 00:44:54,870  
loaded with about 2,500  
Jews and sent them eastward

761  
00:44:54,870 --> 00:45:00,810  
towards a town of  
Theresienstadt, which

762  
00:45:00,810 --> 00:45:04,440  
was another concentration camp.

763  
00:45:04,440 --> 00:45:08,370  
And that was going to  
be the final solution

764  
00:45:08,370 --> 00:45:10,790  
for these people.

765  
00:45:10,790 --> 00:45:17,370  
So one of the trains actually  
did arrive at Theresienstadt,

766  
00:45:17,370 --> 00:45:22,170  
and the second train was  
captured by the Russian army.

767  
00:45:22,170 --> 00:45:24,570  
And this was the  
third train that

768  
00:45:24,570 --> 00:45:26,610  
had come from Bergen-Belsen.

769  
00:45:26,610 --> 00:45:30,660  
Now, it took six  
days for that train

770

00:45:30,660 --> 00:45:34,470  
to come from Bergen-Belsen  
to Farsleben.

771  
00:45:34,470 --> 00:45:38,330

772  
00:45:38,330 --> 00:45:46,340  
That train was made up of  
what they call cattle cars--

773  
00:45:46,340 --> 00:45:51,890  
cattle wagons-- that are like  
our small freight trains.

774  
00:45:51,890 --> 00:45:55,940  
They were smaller than  
our normal freight trains.

775  
00:45:55,940 --> 00:45:59,390

776  
00:45:59,390 --> 00:46:09,950  
We had used this type of  
freight train in World War I,

777  
00:46:09,950 --> 00:46:13,550  
and we called them  
40 and eights.

778  
00:46:13,550 --> 00:46:20,530  
Noting that each car  
was capable of handling

779  
00:46:20,530 --> 00:46:24,420  
40 men or eight horses.

780  
00:46:24,420 --> 00:46:26,740  
And that was the general  
mode of transportation

781  
00:46:26,740 --> 00:46:31,020  
back in World War I to move

troops around by train.

782  
00:46:31,020 --> 00:46:31,720  
OK.

783  
00:46:31,720 --> 00:46:35,480  
So these are these cattle  
cars, as they call them--

784  
00:46:35,480 --> 00:46:41,290  
40 and eights-- which  
we had put 40 men in.

785  
00:46:41,290 --> 00:46:46,620  
They had 75 or 80  
people in these cars.

786  
00:46:46,620 --> 00:46:50,262  
And they were locked in there.

787  
00:46:50,262 --> 00:46:55,490  
In the corner of the car, they  
had what we would normally term

788  
00:46:55,490 --> 00:46:58,700  
it like a five-gallon bucket.

789  
00:46:58,700 --> 00:47:02,650  
That was their  
sanitary facility.

790  
00:47:02,650 --> 00:47:07,730  
And if you can imagine  
75 or 80 people crammed

791  
00:47:07,730 --> 00:47:11,720  
into one of these  
small freight cars,

792  
00:47:11,720 --> 00:47:14,620  
and the guy over  
here in the corner

793

00:47:14,620 --> 00:47:19,350

needs to relieve  
himself, there is no way

794

00:47:19,350 --> 00:47:22,970

that he can get over to that  
bucket and relieve himself.

795

00:47:22,970 --> 00:47:25,770

796

00:47:25,770 --> 00:47:28,890

So the only alternative  
he had was just

797

00:47:28,890 --> 00:47:30,170

to let it run down his legs.

798

00:47:30,170 --> 00:47:34,060

799

00:47:34,060 --> 00:47:37,120

So this is the condition  
that we found these people

800

00:47:37,120 --> 00:47:42,030

in after six days of standing.

801

00:47:42,030 --> 00:47:45,640

802

00:47:45,640 --> 00:47:48,565

There was no way that they  
could sit or lay down.

803

00:47:48,565 --> 00:47:51,730

804

00:47:51,730 --> 00:47:57,310

The only way they could  
get down on the floor

805

00:47:57,310 --> 00:47:58,770  
was by exhaustion--

806

00:47:58,770 --> 00:48:03,510  
that they would just crumple  
and fall down to the floor.

807

00:48:03,510 --> 00:48:06,530  
And they just had to stay there.

808

00:48:06,530 --> 00:48:09,830  
And these were the conditions  
when we opened these cars up

809

00:48:09,830 --> 00:48:14,680  
that we found these  
people stinking

810

00:48:14,680 --> 00:48:17,320  
from their feces and urine--

811

00:48:17,320 --> 00:48:22,765  
six days of dirty,  
lice-infested.

812

00:48:22,765 --> 00:48:26,040

813

00:48:26,040 --> 00:48:27,740  
It was a horrible sight--

814

00:48:27,740 --> 00:48:31,710  
something that we could not  
believe that was happening.

815

00:48:31,710 --> 00:48:34,890  
How did you react  
when you saw them?

816

00:48:34,890 --> 00:48:39,400  
And how did they react when  
they saw you as Americans?

817  
00:48:39,400 --> 00:48:47,830  
Well, we reacted-- we didn't  
believe what we were seeing.

818  
00:48:47,830 --> 00:48:52,830  
We could communicate  
very vaguely,

819  
00:48:52,830 --> 00:48:55,800  
because of the language  
barrier, with these people.

820  
00:48:55,800 --> 00:49:01,710  
But to see and understand  
where they had come from,

821  
00:49:01,710 --> 00:49:05,670  
the conditions that they had  
for those six days on the train,

822  
00:49:05,670 --> 00:49:13,920  
it was just nauseating  
to smell these people.

823  
00:49:13,920 --> 00:49:17,430  
We didn't dare to  
touch them, because we

824  
00:49:17,430 --> 00:49:21,710  
were afraid of  
getting lice on us,

825  
00:49:21,710 --> 00:49:30,360  
fleas, typhus, was a very  
rampant disease in those days.

826  
00:49:30,360 --> 00:49:33,860  
We didn't want to actually  
touch these people at all.

827  
00:49:33,860 --> 00:49:36,870  
They wanted to greet us

and hug us and kiss us.

828

00:49:36,870 --> 00:49:40,540

829

00:49:40,540 --> 00:49:46,140

So we just had to  
rebel against them

830

00:49:46,140 --> 00:49:50,820

and not have any personal  
contact with them

831

00:49:50,820 --> 00:49:52,780

as much as we could.

832

00:49:52,780 --> 00:49:56,470

Now, we understood where  
they were coming from

833

00:49:56,470 --> 00:49:59,460

and the conditions  
that they had.

834

00:49:59,460 --> 00:50:01,890

They were hungry.

835

00:50:01,890 --> 00:50:06,600

They had only gotten  
one meal a day,

836

00:50:06,600 --> 00:50:14,610

which consisted of a  
big bucket of soup,

837

00:50:14,610 --> 00:50:18,870

as they called it, which was  
nothing but a pail of water

838

00:50:18,870 --> 00:50:23,220

with some potato peelings  
or turnip peelings in it.



839

00:50:23,220 --> 00:50:26,160

And they were very  
lucky if they got

840

00:50:26,160 --> 00:50:29,490

a few of the turnip peelings  
in their cup full of soup

841

00:50:29,490 --> 00:50:31,390

they got every day.

842

00:50:31,390 --> 00:50:36,450

How were they clothed  
when you saw them?

843

00:50:36,450 --> 00:50:38,995

Well, some of them were  
fairly well clothed.

844

00:50:38,995 --> 00:50:41,980

845

00:50:41,980 --> 00:50:47,910

The Dutch people and  
a few of the others

846

00:50:47,910 --> 00:50:53,280

were being held, more or  
less, as hostages for exchange

847

00:50:53,280 --> 00:50:58,830

purposes with the Americans for  
some of the German prisoners

848

00:50:58,830 --> 00:51:00,840

that we were holding.

849

00:51:00,840 --> 00:51:03,870

So they were in  
fairly good condition,

850

00:51:03,870 --> 00:51:07,770

and clothing was fairly good.

851

00:51:07,770 --> 00:51:14,760

But for the most part, their  
clothes were very ragged.

852

00:51:14,760 --> 00:51:19,240

They were not in the  
striped prison uniforms

853

00:51:19,240 --> 00:51:23,192

that you often see  
in the pictures.

854

00:51:23,192 --> 00:51:24,900

They were in their  
own civilian clothing,

855

00:51:24,900 --> 00:51:29,760

but they had worn these  
clothes for months

856

00:51:29,760 --> 00:51:35,595

and months and months without  
any possibility of repair.

857

00:51:35,595 --> 00:51:38,970

If they got a tear in the  
clothing, that was it--

858

00:51:38,970 --> 00:51:39,960

too bad.

859

00:51:39,960 --> 00:51:44,800

And the shoes-- they were  
just worn out, basically.

860

00:51:44,800 --> 00:51:48,710

There was nothing left of  
their shoes, just the tops.

861

00:51:48,710 --> 00:51:51,840

And they were in a

horrible condition

862

00:51:51,840 --> 00:51:57,330

as far as clothing was  
concerned, and hungry.

863

00:51:57,330 --> 00:51:59,160

As best you could  
tell in the languages

864

00:51:59,160 --> 00:52:01,290

that they were  
speaking and when you

865

00:52:01,290 --> 00:52:03,870

were speaking and  
interacting with them, where

866

00:52:03,870 --> 00:52:05,460

were these people coming from?

867

00:52:05,460 --> 00:52:08,940

Were they primarily Germans,  
Dutch, French, Italians?

868

00:52:08,940 --> 00:52:16,110

No, these prisoners were  
from Eastern countries--

869

00:52:16,110 --> 00:52:21,915

Hungary, Poland,  
Romania, Ukraine.

870

00:52:21,915 --> 00:52:24,660

871

00:52:24,660 --> 00:52:28,710

A number of them were from  
Holland, a few from France.

872

00:52:28,710 --> 00:52:35,360

They were of varied  
nationalities.

873  
00:52:35,360 --> 00:52:41,010  
And this made the communication  
with them more difficult,

874  
00:52:41,010 --> 00:52:45,390  
because they spoke so many  
different foreign languages

875  
00:52:45,390 --> 00:52:50,460  
that we understood nothing  
at all except that there

876  
00:52:50,460 --> 00:52:57,780  
was one girl in particular  
who was quite intelligent,

877  
00:52:57,780 --> 00:53:01,080  
and she was fluent in  
about six languages.

878  
00:53:01,080 --> 00:53:04,260  
So she was the main  
interpreter for this group.

879  
00:53:04,260 --> 00:53:07,200

880  
00:53:07,200 --> 00:53:09,590  
And a few of the  
others, they had

881  
00:53:09,590 --> 00:53:13,650  
a little bit of what we  
called pigeon English--

882  
00:53:13,650 --> 00:53:17,140  
they had a word here and there  
that they could fling out.

883  
00:53:17,140 --> 00:53:21,230  
And we could understand what  
they were trying to say.

884  
00:53:21,230 --> 00:53:24,260  
It was mostly sign language.

885  
00:53:24,260 --> 00:53:29,060  
But we felt sorry for them,  
because they were so hungry

886  
00:53:29,060 --> 00:53:35,720  
and they saw us in nice, clean  
uniforms smoking cigarettes

887  
00:53:35,720 --> 00:53:37,950  
and eating candy bars.

888  
00:53:37,950 --> 00:53:45,560  
They just went wild when  
we handed them a candy

889  
00:53:45,560 --> 00:53:48,387  
bar or a pack of cigarettes.

890  
00:53:48,387 --> 00:53:49,970  
And they were just  
fighting over them.

891  
00:53:49,970 --> 00:53:52,510

892  
00:53:52,510 --> 00:53:57,550  
But the problem that  
we did not understand

893  
00:53:57,550 --> 00:54:00,490  
was that these  
people had not had

894  
00:54:00,490 --> 00:54:03,730  
any kind of food for months.

895  
00:54:03,730 --> 00:54:07,570  
They were on very,

very limited rations.

896

00:54:07,570 --> 00:54:12,500

And we were eating  
high protein food.

897

00:54:12,500 --> 00:54:16,570

And as we'd give them a candy  
bar or chocolate or something

898

00:54:16,570 --> 00:54:23,530

that we had in our  
pocket, their bodies

899

00:54:23,530 --> 00:54:28,720

just could not assimilate  
this high protein food we had.

900

00:54:28,720 --> 00:54:31,042

And they would just  
gobble it down,

901

00:54:31,042 --> 00:54:33,250

and the sooner they did  
that, they would throw it up.

902

00:54:33,250 --> 00:54:34,570

Mmhmm.

903

00:54:34,570 --> 00:54:39,700

And by this time, we had  
gotten the medics in there,

904

00:54:39,700 --> 00:54:44,140

because so many of these  
people were sick and had

905

00:54:44,140 --> 00:54:47,905

medical problems that we had to  
have the medical battalion come

906

00:54:47,905 --> 00:54:51,550

in and administer care to them.

907  
00:54:51,550 --> 00:54:55,390  
They said, hey, don't give  
these guys any more food.

908  
00:54:55,390 --> 00:54:58,330  
And they took over  
from that point

909  
00:54:58,330 --> 00:55:03,400  
on to care for their feeding.

910  
00:55:03,400 --> 00:55:07,870  
And they took our rations and  
diluted them down with water.

911  
00:55:07,870 --> 00:55:08,980  
And what were those?

912  
00:55:08,980 --> 00:55:12,010  
You're talking about the  
rations that, presumably,

913  
00:55:12,010 --> 00:55:14,013  
the medical court took over.

914  
00:55:14,013 --> 00:55:14,680  
What were those?

915  
00:55:14,680 --> 00:55:16,320  
Were those K rations?

916  
00:55:16,320 --> 00:55:19,690  
Yeah, that they would take  
our K rations and C rations

917  
00:55:19,690 --> 00:55:26,230  
and water them down so that they  
were more easily assimilated

918  
00:55:26,230 --> 00:55:27,880  
by these people.

919

00:55:27,880 --> 00:55:30,940

How long did it take  
to get the corpsmen

920

00:55:30,940 --> 00:55:32,350

and the medical personnel there?

921

00:55:32,350 --> 00:55:34,890

How long of a delay it was  
before the time you saw them?

922

00:55:34,890 --> 00:55:36,760

It was a matter of hours.

923

00:55:36,760 --> 00:55:37,520

I see.

924

00:55:37,520 --> 00:55:39,820

Just a matter of  
hours, because they

925

00:55:39,820 --> 00:55:42,790

were located with our  
division headquarters,

926

00:55:42,790 --> 00:55:45,780

and that's where  
I was at the time

927

00:55:45,780 --> 00:55:50,880

that they were brought  
in there and administered

928

00:55:50,880 --> 00:55:52,520

the help to them.

929

00:55:52,520 --> 00:55:59,290

And this is where I got assigned  
a job of moving these people

930

00:55:59,290 --> 00:56:03,700



away from this  
point in Farsleben,

931  
00:56:03,700 --> 00:56:08,560  
because, actually, this  
was still a battle zone.

932  
00:56:08,560 --> 00:56:11,440  
And we had American artillery  
falling in the area.

933  
00:56:11,440 --> 00:56:14,510  
We had German artillery  
falling in the area.

934  
00:56:14,510 --> 00:56:17,560  
So we didn't want to  
have any more casualties.

935  
00:56:17,560 --> 00:56:22,660  
So I was delegated, then,  
to round up transportation

936  
00:56:22,660 --> 00:56:24,550  
and take these  
people out of there

937  
00:56:24,550 --> 00:56:27,990  
back to this town  
of Hillersleben

938  
00:56:27,990 --> 00:56:32,020  
that we had liberated  
a couple of days

939  
00:56:32,020 --> 00:56:37,380  
before, where there were  
some barracks and a hospital.

940  
00:56:37,380 --> 00:56:42,780  
So I rounded up about  
60 or 70 vehicles

941

00:56:42,780 --> 00:56:46,110  
and got them loaded up and  
got them out of the area

942  
00:56:46,110 --> 00:56:50,980  
back to Hillersleben.

943  
00:56:50,980 --> 00:56:54,970  
Of course, the medical  
corps went with them,

944  
00:56:54,970 --> 00:57:04,120  
and they put the sick  
people in the hospital.

945  
00:57:04,120 --> 00:57:07,150  
And the others went  
into the barracks.

946  
00:57:07,150 --> 00:57:09,910  
But first of all, as soon  
as we brought them back

947  
00:57:09,910 --> 00:57:18,160  
to Hillersleben, they were so  
dirty and stinky and filthy

948  
00:57:18,160 --> 00:57:20,680  
that there was  
nothing that we could

949  
00:57:20,680 --> 00:57:25,450  
do to give them clean clothing.

950  
00:57:25,450 --> 00:57:29,200  
So we had to have them  
strip their clothing off,

951  
00:57:29,200 --> 00:57:36,550  
and the engineer battalion  
set up some shower points.

952  
00:57:36,550 --> 00:57:42,410

And we started moving  
them through the showers--

953  
00:57:42,410 --> 00:57:46,430  
the first shower that they  
had had in months and years.

954  
00:57:46,430 --> 00:57:49,300

955  
00:57:49,300 --> 00:57:53,890  
And as soon as they got  
through the shower--

956  
00:57:53,890 --> 00:57:56,660  
they were given towels and soap.

957  
00:57:56,660 --> 00:58:00,880  
They were so happy to get  
cleaned up a little bit.

958  
00:58:00,880 --> 00:58:03,550  
But even through  
the shower, they

959  
00:58:03,550 --> 00:58:06,130  
could not get rid  
of the lice that

960  
00:58:06,130 --> 00:58:11,830  
were infested in their  
hair and their pubic hairs.

961  
00:58:11,830 --> 00:58:15,400  
And so after they  
finished the shower,

962  
00:58:15,400 --> 00:58:19,540  
we dusted them with DDT.

963  
00:58:19,540 --> 00:58:25,060  
Now, DDT is today  
a prohibited item

964  
00:58:25,060 --> 00:58:28,900  
because it is a  
carcinogenesis item.

965  
00:58:28,900 --> 00:58:34,420  
And it, by law, is  
prohibited for use.

966  
00:58:34,420 --> 00:58:39,010  
But at that time, that  
was the best technology

967  
00:58:39,010 --> 00:58:47,930  
that we had to fight lice and  
fleas and any kind of insects

968  
00:58:47,930 --> 00:58:49,360  
that they might have.

969  
00:58:49,360 --> 00:58:50,950  
Did it work?

970  
00:58:50,950 --> 00:58:51,990  
It worked.

971  
00:58:51,990 --> 00:58:52,870  
OK.

972  
00:58:52,870 --> 00:58:59,530  
So then the German people  
were ordered to bring clothing

973  
00:58:59,530 --> 00:59:01,250  
to this point--

974  
00:59:01,250 --> 00:59:04,120  
of course, they were re-clothed.

975  
00:59:04,120 --> 00:59:08,245  
And then the single people  
were put into the barracks,

976

00:59:08,245 --> 00:59:12,370  
the married people were put into  
some of the private homes that

977

00:59:12,370 --> 00:59:14,720  
were available.

978

00:59:14,720 --> 00:59:21,220  
And at this point, I left them  
and I went back to my unit

979

00:59:21,220 --> 00:59:24,880  
and continued on my job.

980

00:59:24,880 --> 00:59:27,670  
And we fought our  
way onto Magdeburg.

981

00:59:27,670 --> 00:59:34,300  
And we had attacked and captured  
Magdeburg on the 18th of April.

982

00:59:34,300 --> 00:59:38,620  
And as far as we were concerned,  
that was the end of the war.

983

00:59:38,620 --> 00:59:44,080  
Because the Elbe River,  
which ran through Magdeburg,

984

00:59:44,080 --> 00:59:48,310  
was the demarcation line  
between us and the Russians.

985

00:59:48,310 --> 00:59:52,560  
We could not go  
beyond that line.

986

00:59:52,560 --> 00:59:56,250  
So we stopped fighting  
on the 18th of April

987

00:59:56,250 --> 00:59:58,410

and just sat there and  
waited for the Russians

988

00:59:58,410 --> 01:00:05,610

to come in front of us  
and move on into Berlin.

989

01:00:05,610 --> 01:00:07,860

But basically, that  
was the end of the war.

990

01:00:07,860 --> 01:00:12,840

And that was the  
first and only contact

991

01:00:12,840 --> 01:00:19,840

that we had ever had with any  
Jews, this group of the 2,500

992

01:00:19,840 --> 01:00:22,590

on the train.

993

01:00:22,590 --> 01:00:25,650

And in talking  
with some of them,

994

01:00:25,650 --> 01:00:27,610

we found out where  
they came from

995

01:00:27,610 --> 01:00:31,660

and that they had been  
incarcerated at Bergen-Belsen.

996

01:00:31,660 --> 01:00:35,620

And they told us a little bit  
of the story about their life

997

01:00:35,620 --> 01:00:39,670

in Bergen-Belsen and them  
being put on the train,

998

01:00:39,670 --> 01:00:43,340  
and then we captured them.

999

01:00:43,340 --> 01:00:44,960  
Did they tell you  
about mass killing?

1000

01:00:44,960 --> 01:00:46,460  
Did they tell you about--

1001

01:00:46,460 --> 01:00:55,940  
Well, no, because Bergen-Belsen  
was not a killing camp,

1002

01:00:55,940 --> 01:00:56,900  
you might say.

1003

01:00:56,900 --> 01:01:08,490  
It was a camp where they  
worked 12, 15 hours a day.

1004

01:01:08,490 --> 01:01:14,510  
And the working  
conditions were not good.

1005

01:01:14,510 --> 01:01:17,420

1006

01:01:17,420 --> 01:01:20,210  
The food was not good.

1007

01:01:20,210 --> 01:01:22,680  
Their living conditions  
were not good.

1008

01:01:22,680 --> 01:01:26,420  
So they told us about their  
life there in Bergen-Belsen.

1009

01:01:26,420 --> 01:01:29,670

1010

01:01:29,670 --> 01:01:34,680

Like I said, they didn't  
have a large crematorium

1011

01:01:34,680 --> 01:01:40,560

or gas chambers or anything  
like that at Bergen-Belsen.

1012

01:01:40,560 --> 01:01:44,640

It was just a slave labor camp.

1013

01:01:44,640 --> 01:01:50,640

And part of it was  
an exchange camp,

1014

01:01:50,640 --> 01:01:54,570

as I mentioned before,  
to exchange these people

1015

01:01:54,570 --> 01:01:56,700

for German prisoners.

1016

01:01:56,700 --> 01:02:00,060

But they told us of the  
hardships that they had,

1017

01:02:00,060 --> 01:02:03,170

the life that they had.

1018

01:02:03,170 --> 01:02:08,280

The living conditions in the  
barracks there at Bergen-Belsen

1019

01:02:08,280 --> 01:02:10,225

was very bad.

1020

01:02:10,225 --> 01:02:17,950

They had bunks I  
think four-high,

1021

01:02:17,950 --> 01:02:25,320

and three or four people



had to sleep in one bunk.

1022

01:02:25,320 --> 01:02:28,920

And the living conditions  
were very, very bad

1023

01:02:28,920 --> 01:02:31,620

there at Bergen-Belsen.

1024

01:02:31,620 --> 01:02:33,450

So this was basically  
the first time

1025

01:02:33,450 --> 01:02:43,800

that we ever heard of Jews,  
slave labor, crematoriums,

1026

01:02:43,800 --> 01:02:45,090

gas chambers.

1027

01:02:45,090 --> 01:02:48,240

We never heard of  
anything like that before,

1028

01:02:48,240 --> 01:02:51,770

and we could hardly believe  
what they were telling us.

1029

01:02:51,770 --> 01:02:56,220

And they got a lot of  
this information from some

1030

01:02:56,220 --> 01:03:04,430

of the inmates who had come  
from Auschwitz and Dachau,

1031

01:03:04,430 --> 01:03:08,070

were being overcrowded  
there, and they moved them

1032

01:03:08,070 --> 01:03:09,690

into Bergen-Belsen.

1033

01:03:09,690 --> 01:03:15,150

And then those prisoners in  
turn were telling the others

1034

01:03:15,150 --> 01:03:18,500

about what was going on  
in these other camps.

1035

01:03:18,500 --> 01:03:21,690

That's how they knew  
what was going on there.

1036

01:03:21,690 --> 01:03:28,170

And we were not trained  
as humanitarians.

1037

01:03:28,170 --> 01:03:30,420

We were trained as soldiers.

1038

01:03:30,420 --> 01:03:35,820

And basically, when we saw  
this train, these Jews,

1039

01:03:35,820 --> 01:03:37,320

the conditions  
that they were in,

1040

01:03:37,320 --> 01:03:40,660

we really didn't  
know what to do.

1041

01:03:40,660 --> 01:03:43,860

We did the best we  
could with what we had.

1042

01:03:43,860 --> 01:03:51,690

Most was wrong by feeding  
them the food the way we did.

1043

01:03:51,690 --> 01:03:56,160

Did your understanding of  
what you were fighting for

1044

01:03:56,160 --> 01:03:59,880

and why you were fighting  
change with that encounter?

1045

01:03:59,880 --> 01:04:04,530

Oh, as we were  
fighting across Europe,

1046

01:04:04,530 --> 01:04:08,280

we weren't fighting  
to save any Jews.

1047

01:04:08,280 --> 01:04:09,780

We didn't know about them.

1048

01:04:09,780 --> 01:04:12,570

1049

01:04:12,570 --> 01:04:15,600

We were fighting to drive  
the Germans back out

1050

01:04:15,600 --> 01:04:18,300

of these occupied countries--

1051

01:04:18,300 --> 01:04:22,597

to give these people in  
France, Belgium, and Holland,

1052

01:04:22,597 --> 01:04:24,180

to give them their  
freedom and liberty

1053

01:04:24,180 --> 01:04:28,740

back that they had had  
before 1940 when they

1054

01:04:28,740 --> 01:04:32,240

were invaded by the Germans.

1055

01:04:32,240 --> 01:04:34,930

The Jewish situation

was just literally

1056

01:04:34,930 --> 01:04:39,710

a sideline that happened that we  
didn't know anything about it.

1057

01:04:39,710 --> 01:04:45,740

We didn't know what was  
going on until we saw

1058

01:04:45,740 --> 01:04:48,180

and then we believed.

1059

01:04:48,180 --> 01:04:52,350

And did that change your  
attitudes towards the Germans?

1060

01:04:52,350 --> 01:04:55,380

Well, at that point in  
time, it was too late,

1061

01:04:55,380 --> 01:04:58,490

because here we are at  
the end of the war now.

1062

01:04:58,490 --> 01:05:01,198

1063

01:05:01,198 --> 01:05:02,740

So from that point  
on, we didn't have

1064

01:05:02,740 --> 01:05:04,350

much contact with the Germans.

1065

01:05:04,350 --> 01:05:04,960

Right.

1066

01:05:04,960 --> 01:05:05,920

The war was over.

1067

01:05:05,920 --> 01:05:08,900

1068  
01:05:08,900 --> 01:05:13,310  
I think the 8th of May, so  
it was only about three weeks

1069  
01:05:13,310 --> 01:05:18,500  
after we found this  
train that the war ended.

1070  
01:05:18,500 --> 01:05:24,200  
We didn't have any good  
feelings toward the Germans,

1071  
01:05:24,200 --> 01:05:29,492  
because they were  
denying everything.

1072  
01:05:29,492 --> 01:05:33,190

1073  
01:05:33,190 --> 01:05:35,490  
And we knew that  
they were lying--

1074  
01:05:35,490 --> 01:05:37,680  
that they were involved with it.

1075  
01:05:37,680 --> 01:05:39,663  
They knew about it.

1076  
01:05:39,663 --> 01:05:40,830  
They knew what was going on.

1077  
01:05:40,830 --> 01:05:46,610

1078  
01:05:46,610 --> 01:05:49,100  
When did you hear that  
the war had ended?

1079  
01:05:49,100 --> 01:05:50,390

And how did you hear it?

1080

01:05:50,390 --> 01:05:51,093

I'm sorry?

1081

01:05:51,093 --> 01:05:52,760

When did you hear  
that the war was over,

1082

01:05:52,760 --> 01:05:54,470

and how did you hear about it?

1083

01:05:54,470 --> 01:06:00,290

Well, we were in Magdeburg  
and basically just sitting

1084

01:06:00,290 --> 01:06:05,190

there waiting for the Russians  
to go up in front of us,

1085

01:06:05,190 --> 01:06:17,320

and I think we got the word  
through our higher channels,

1086

01:06:17,320 --> 01:06:22,330

and it came down to us  
that the war had officially

1087

01:06:22,330 --> 01:06:26,420

ended on the 8th of May.

1088

01:06:26,420 --> 01:06:28,820

So as I say, we  
were in Magdeburg

1089

01:06:28,820 --> 01:06:31,690

and liberated that  
on the 18th of April,

1090

01:06:31,690 --> 01:06:38,800

and we could not cross the  
river to liberate anything more.

1091

01:06:38,800 --> 01:06:41,320

We just had to sit there  
and wait for the Russians,

1092

01:06:41,320 --> 01:06:44,230

because that was declared  
to be their territory.

1093

01:06:44,230 --> 01:06:47,650

So we had to sit there  
from the 18th of April

1094

01:06:47,650 --> 01:06:53,680

I think until about the  
25th or 26th of April

1095

01:06:53,680 --> 01:06:56,860

before the Russians actually  
moved up in front of us

1096

01:06:56,860 --> 01:06:58,090

and we met with them.

1097

01:06:58,090 --> 01:07:00,690

1098

01:07:00,690 --> 01:07:10,520

So of course, we knew  
then the Russians

1099

01:07:10,520 --> 01:07:12,710

were allocated that  
territory which

1100

01:07:12,710 --> 01:07:15,230

included the city of Berlin.

1101

01:07:15,230 --> 01:07:20,950

And as soon as they moved in  
front of us and on up to Berlin

1102

01:07:20,950 --> 01:07:25,530

and captured it, that the war  
was going to be over very,

1103  
01:07:25,530 --> 01:07:26,785  
very soon.

1104  
01:07:26,785 --> 01:07:28,160  
And did you meet  
with or interact

1105  
01:07:28,160 --> 01:07:29,420  
with any of the Russians?

1106  
01:07:29,420 --> 01:07:30,410  
Yeah, we did.

1107  
01:07:30,410 --> 01:07:31,670  
What did you think of them?

1108  
01:07:31,670 --> 01:07:34,070  
They were stinking,  
dirty bastards.

1109  
01:07:34,070 --> 01:07:36,890

1110  
01:07:36,890 --> 01:07:38,645  
They were very arrogant.

1111  
01:07:38,645 --> 01:07:43,408

1112  
01:07:43,408 --> 01:07:45,200  
Did you write any  
letters home to your wife

1113  
01:07:45,200 --> 01:07:47,000  
about what you experienced  
with that train?

1114  
01:07:47,000 --> 01:07:50,470



1115  
01:07:50,470 --> 01:07:51,970  
I really don't remember.

1116  
01:07:51,970 --> 01:07:57,740  
I did write to her  
basically every day.

1117  
01:07:57,740 --> 01:08:00,110  
I'm sure that I did.

1118  
01:08:00,110 --> 01:08:05,570  
But very unfortunately,  
after I came home,

1119  
01:08:05,570 --> 01:08:08,490  
she had piles of  
these letters that I

1120  
01:08:08,490 --> 01:08:11,570  
had written to her-- she  
had saved all my letters.

1121  
01:08:11,570 --> 01:08:18,090  
And she made a return letter,  
wrote to me every day,

1122  
01:08:18,090 --> 01:08:22,130  
which I saved, and I would  
send them back to her--

1123  
01:08:22,130 --> 01:08:23,180  
bundles of them--

1124  
01:08:23,180 --> 01:08:26,609  
back to her, and she saved them.

1125  
01:08:26,609 --> 01:08:30,710  
So when I came home,  
we had boxes and boxes

1126  
01:08:30,710 --> 01:08:32,630

of these letters.

1127  
01:08:32,630 --> 01:08:36,649  
And what are we going  
to do with this stuff?

1128  
01:08:36,649 --> 01:08:40,370

1129  
01:08:40,370 --> 01:08:42,850  
Well, we dumped it.

1130  
01:08:42,850 --> 01:08:45,229  
That's the worst thing  
I ever did, I think.

1131  
01:08:45,229 --> 01:08:51,350  
Because in those  
letters, I wrote to her

1132  
01:08:51,350 --> 01:08:54,470  
in sort of a coded way--

1133  
01:08:54,470 --> 01:08:58,640  
where I was, what I was  
doing, because all of our mail

1134  
01:08:58,640 --> 01:09:05,460  
was censored, because we're not  
allowed to tell where we were

1135  
01:09:05,460 --> 01:09:06,796  
or what we were doing.

1136  
01:09:06,796 --> 01:09:07,630  
Sure.

1137  
01:09:07,630 --> 01:09:12,240  
But in a coded way, I could  
relate to her where I was

1138  
01:09:12,240 --> 01:09:13,270

or what I was doing.

1139

01:09:13,270 --> 01:09:14,740

So all those things were in it--

1140

01:09:14,740 --> 01:09:17,689

and the men that I had

contact with from day

1141

01:09:17,689 --> 01:09:21,260

to day, the things that

I did from day to day.

1142

01:09:21,260 --> 01:09:27,179

That was a historical document,

and we just threw all of that

1143

01:09:27,179 --> 01:09:31,040

away because, I

know all that stuff.

1144

01:09:31,040 --> 01:09:33,649

I can remember all those people.

1145

01:09:33,649 --> 01:09:37,831

But now today, I can't

remember those things.

1146

01:09:37,831 --> 01:09:40,132

Sure.

1147

01:09:40,132 --> 01:09:41,840

When did you get word

that you were going

1148

01:09:41,840 --> 01:09:44,770

to be sent back to the States?

1149

01:09:44,770 --> 01:09:45,270

I'm sorry?

1150

01:09:45,270 --> 01:09:45,779

Again.

1151  
01:09:45,779 --> 01:09:47,487  
When did you get word  
that you were going

1152  
01:09:47,487 --> 01:09:49,080  
to be sent back to the States?

1153  
01:09:49,080 --> 01:09:51,740  
Oh.

1154  
01:09:51,740 --> 01:09:57,480  
When we ended the war  
basically the 8th of May,

1155  
01:09:57,480 --> 01:10:01,770  
we moved southward  
about 50 miles

1156  
01:10:01,770 --> 01:10:04,620  
into an aerial occupation.

1157  
01:10:04,620 --> 01:10:11,280  
And it was at that time, we were  
notified that the 3rd division

1158  
01:10:11,280 --> 01:10:16,890  
was prioritized to  
come back to the States

1159  
01:10:16,890 --> 01:10:23,730  
and have a 15-day leave  
and do some 30-day training

1160  
01:10:23,730 --> 01:10:27,660  
and go to the Pacific and help  
finish the war in the Pacific.

1161  
01:10:27,660 --> 01:10:30,890

1162

01:10:30,890 --> 01:10:31,810  
So we were geared for.

1163  
01:10:31,810 --> 01:10:37,490  
That and that was  
probably in July.

1164  
01:10:37,490 --> 01:10:40,390

1165  
01:10:40,390 --> 01:10:47,050  
So in early August,  
we started moving back

1166  
01:10:47,050 --> 01:10:53,200  
through France and to  
England in preparation

1167  
01:10:53,200 --> 01:10:55,210  
to return to the States.

1168  
01:10:55,210 --> 01:11:01,810  
And while we were in England,  
they dropped the bomb

1169  
01:11:01,810 --> 01:11:04,710  
on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

1170  
01:11:04,710 --> 01:11:08,690  
And that, in effect,  
ended the war.

1171  
01:11:08,690 --> 01:11:14,400  
And we felt right  
then and there that we

1172  
01:11:14,400 --> 01:11:18,120  
may have to go to the Pacific,  
but there would not be any war

1173  
01:11:18,120 --> 01:11:22,150  
to be fought as we had planned.

1174

01:11:22,150 --> 01:11:31,440

So we came home and were  
given a 30-day leave.

1175

01:11:31,440 --> 01:11:34,360

1176

01:11:34,360 --> 01:11:41,740

And during that time, the great  
white fathers in Washington

1177

01:11:41,740 --> 01:11:44,640

were mulling over, what are we  
going to do with all these guys

1178

01:11:44,640 --> 01:11:46,150

now?

1179

01:11:46,150 --> 01:11:47,530

We don't need them anymore.

1180

01:11:47,530 --> 01:11:50,240

The war in the Pacific is over.

1181

01:11:50,240 --> 01:11:58,180

So they said the  
telegrams to everybody

1182

01:11:58,180 --> 01:12:05,510

telling them to report to their  
nearest military installation

1183

01:12:05,510 --> 01:12:08,485

for further orders, which they  
did, and then most of them

1184

01:12:08,485 --> 01:12:09,730

got their discharge.

1185

01:12:09,730 --> 01:12:14,815

And that ended their  
military service.

1186  
01:12:14,815 --> 01:12:17,620

1187  
01:12:17,620 --> 01:12:19,200  
But you stayed on.

1188  
01:12:19,200 --> 01:12:20,240  
I stayed on.

1189  
01:12:20,240 --> 01:12:26,120  
We had the opportunity to  
volunteer to stay in service

1190  
01:12:26,120 --> 01:12:28,070  
or take a discharge.

1191  
01:12:28,070 --> 01:12:31,210  
And I volunteered  
to stay in service.

1192  
01:12:31,210 --> 01:12:37,160  
And so I reported back  
to the 3rd Division,

1193  
01:12:37,160 --> 01:12:43,670  
which then was headquartered at  
Fort Jackson in South Carolina.

1194  
01:12:43,670 --> 01:12:47,300  
So I remained there  
for about six months.

1195  
01:12:47,300 --> 01:12:51,800  
I was company commander of the  
5th Corps headquarters company.

1196  
01:12:51,800 --> 01:12:57,140  
And at the end of  
that six months,

1197  
01:12:57,140 --> 01:13:03,320

we were given the opportunity  
to go to another station

1198  
01:13:03,320 --> 01:13:07,165  
in the occupation duty.

1199  
01:13:07,165 --> 01:13:08,540  
And we were given  
the opportunity

1200  
01:13:08,540 --> 01:13:14,900  
like the Caribbean,  
Panama area, Hawaii,

1201  
01:13:14,900 --> 01:13:17,030  
and a few other places--

1202  
01:13:17,030 --> 01:13:21,910  
plus Japan and Europe.

1203  
01:13:21,910 --> 01:13:23,370  
Well, of course,  
Japan and Europe

1204  
01:13:23,370 --> 01:13:25,430  
were at the bottom of my list.

1205  
01:13:25,430 --> 01:13:29,390  
Naturally, the Hawaii  
or the Caribbean

1206  
01:13:29,390 --> 01:13:31,470  
were at the top of the list.

1207  
01:13:31,470 --> 01:13:33,370  
That's what I chose.

1208  
01:13:33,370 --> 01:13:35,533  
What did I get?

1209  
01:13:35,533 --> 01:13:36,950  
I got orders to



go back to Europe.

1210  
01:13:36,950 --> 01:13:39,680

1211  
01:13:39,680 --> 01:13:45,920  
So I went back to  
Europe and was stationed

1212  
01:13:45,920 --> 01:13:51,870  
in Frankfurt, Germany, and  
remained there for three years.

1213  
01:13:51,870 --> 01:13:54,890  
During that time,  
after I was over there

1214  
01:13:54,890 --> 01:14:01,550  
for about four or five  
months, dependents

1215  
01:14:01,550 --> 01:14:04,850  
were allowed to come  
over and join us.

1216  
01:14:04,850 --> 01:14:10,820  
So my wife came to Frankfurt,  
and we lived there.

1217  
01:14:10,820 --> 01:14:13,360

1218  
01:14:13,360 --> 01:14:18,538  
And that's where  
we had our family.

1219  
01:14:18,538 --> 01:14:20,530  
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

1220  
01:14:20,530 --> 01:14:21,100  
I'm sorry?

1221

01:14:21,100 --> 01:14:23,080

Let's back up just  
for a little bit

1222

01:14:23,080 --> 01:14:25,450

in terms of returning  
to the United States.

1223

01:14:25,450 --> 01:14:25,960

Yeah.

1224

01:14:25,960 --> 01:14:29,170

Do you recall the first time  
that you saw your wife again?

1225

01:14:29,170 --> 01:14:31,390

Oh yeah.

1226

01:14:31,390 --> 01:14:33,580

Going back to the  
time we left England,

1227

01:14:33,580 --> 01:14:37,410

we came home on the Queen  
Mary, come into New York,

1228

01:14:37,410 --> 01:14:41,320

and went to Camp  
Kilmer in New Jersey.

1229

01:14:41,320 --> 01:14:44,380

And that's where we  
were given our leave.

1230

01:14:44,380 --> 01:14:49,590

So I took the train  
and went to Boston.

1231

01:14:49,590 --> 01:14:53,840

I'll say during the time  
that I was in Europe,

1232

01:14:53,840 --> 01:15:00,310

my wife stayed with  
my mother in Boston,

1233  
01:15:00,310 --> 01:15:03,460  
although her home  
was in Florida.

1234  
01:15:03,460 --> 01:15:07,950  
She chose to stay with my  
mother during that time.

1235  
01:15:07,950 --> 01:15:16,060  
So when I get home, of course,  
the train took me into Boston,

1236  
01:15:16,060 --> 01:15:20,250  
and I got a cab to  
take me to my home.

1237  
01:15:20,250 --> 01:15:27,600  
And it was a pretty  
emotional reunion.

1238  
01:15:27,600 --> 01:15:31,980  
Of course, I had sent  
a telegram to them

1239  
01:15:31,980 --> 01:15:35,400  
and telephone call telling  
them that I was coming,

1240  
01:15:35,400 --> 01:15:40,890  
so they were aware that  
I was going to be there.

1241  
01:15:40,890 --> 01:15:42,060  
And what was that day like?

1242  
01:15:42,060 --> 01:15:42,852  
Do you remember it?

1243  
01:15:42,852 --> 01:15:44,100  
Tell me about it?

1244  
01:15:44,100 --> 01:15:48,150  
Well, I can't really  
remember that very well.

1245  
01:15:48,150 --> 01:15:51,690  
But I know it was  
very emotional.

1246  
01:15:51,690 --> 01:15:55,860  
You know, I had not seen  
my wife in 11 months.

1247  
01:15:55,860 --> 01:16:00,030  
And to be alive and  
back with her again,

1248  
01:16:00,030 --> 01:16:04,840  
it was a very, very  
pleasant reunion.

1249  
01:16:04,840 --> 01:16:06,660  
Of course, my mother  
was there too.

1250  
01:16:06,660 --> 01:16:12,300  
And to be alive  
was the main thing.

1251  
01:16:12,300 --> 01:16:15,818  
We never knew  
through the war when

1252  
01:16:15,818 --> 01:16:17,360  
the silver bullet  
was going to hit us

1253  
01:16:17,360 --> 01:16:20,360  
and that would be the end.

1254  
01:16:20,360 --> 01:16:25,700  
But I was very fortunate  
that I dodged the bullet.

1255

01:16:25,700 --> 01:16:27,300

So let's go back to Frankfurt.

1256

01:16:27,300 --> 01:16:28,860

Your wife has joined you.

1257

01:16:28,860 --> 01:16:30,600

You're there, you're  
starting a family.

1258

01:16:30,600 --> 01:16:32,150

What was that whole  
experience like?

1259

01:16:32,150 --> 01:16:34,610

Were your children  
born there in Germany?

1260

01:16:34,610 --> 01:16:36,510

Yes.

1261

01:16:36,510 --> 01:16:52,780

She came over in, let me  
see, in the fall of '46.

1262

01:16:52,780 --> 01:16:58,840

And we were given the  
preference of having

1263

01:16:58,840 --> 01:17:02,870

a house there in Frankfurt.

1264

01:17:02,870 --> 01:17:11,020

And eight months later,  
she delivered twins

1265

01:17:11,020 --> 01:17:13,565

in the 97th General Hospital.

1266

01:17:13,565 --> 01:17:16,430

1267  
01:17:16,430 --> 01:17:19,280  
That was the beginning  
of our family.

1268  
01:17:19,280 --> 01:17:21,470  
And then exactly  
one year later, we

1269  
01:17:21,470 --> 01:17:27,930  
had a son born also in  
the 97th General Hospital.

1270  
01:17:27,930 --> 01:17:32,510  
Now, although they were  
born in Frankfurt, Germany,

1271  
01:17:32,510 --> 01:17:37,440  
I being an American  
citizen and she also, they

1272  
01:17:37,440 --> 01:17:42,080  
were registered with the  
United States embassy there,

1273  
01:17:42,080 --> 01:17:44,910  
and they are actually  
American citizens,

1274  
01:17:44,910 --> 01:17:49,070  
although they were  
born in Germany.

1275  
01:17:49,070 --> 01:17:53,380  
And did you stay long enough  
for them to go to school there?

1276  
01:17:53,380 --> 01:17:54,230  
No, no.

1277  
01:17:54,230 --> 01:17:56,930  
No.

1278

01:17:56,930 --> 01:18:03,530

The girls were two years old,  
and the son was one-year-old.

1279

01:18:03,530 --> 01:18:10,660

And it was then that we made  
a decision to terminate--

1280

01:18:10,660 --> 01:18:13,940

my contract was  
coming to an end,

1281

01:18:13,940 --> 01:18:17,780

and we decided to  
terminate the contract

1282

01:18:17,780 --> 01:18:20,180

and come back to the States.

1283

01:18:20,180 --> 01:18:28,550

So in 49, we came  
back to the States.

1284

01:18:28,550 --> 01:18:30,830

And where did you settle  
and what did you do?

1285

01:18:30,830 --> 01:18:36,110

Well, we came back to Boston and  
lived there for a few months.

1286

01:18:36,110 --> 01:18:42,320

And then we were down to  
Florida to live with her parents

1287

01:18:42,320 --> 01:18:43,770

for a few months.

1288

01:18:43,770 --> 01:18:52,190

And we decided that Florida was  
a better location, because we

1289

01:18:52,190 --> 01:18:59,360  
had just lived in Boston through  
a winter, and it was very cold.

1290  
01:18:59,360 --> 01:19:03,860  
And I got tired  
of shoveling snow,

1291  
01:19:03,860 --> 01:19:06,395  
so we decided to  
settle in Florida.

1292  
01:19:06,395 --> 01:19:07,520  
What did you do in Florida?

1293  
01:19:07,520 --> 01:19:11,000

1294  
01:19:11,000 --> 01:19:13,540  
I went back to  
school for a while

1295  
01:19:13,540 --> 01:19:19,040  
and studied computer work.

1296  
01:19:19,040 --> 01:19:25,580  
And I got a job there at  
the University of Florida

1297  
01:19:25,580 --> 01:19:31,840  
as an office manager  
in the computing center

1298  
01:19:31,840 --> 01:19:35,960  
that they had at the  
university at that time.

1299  
01:19:35,960 --> 01:19:37,850  
And you've been in  
Florida ever since?

1300  
01:19:37,850 --> 01:19:39,420  
Yeah, been here ever since.



1301  
01:19:39,420 --> 01:19:43,940  
Yeah, we built our  
house here in 1950,

1302  
01:19:43,940 --> 01:19:46,310  
and I've been right  
here ever since.

1303  
01:19:46,310 --> 01:19:50,780  
Now, that experience with  
those people on that train,

1304  
01:19:50,780 --> 01:19:53,230  
that really wasn't the  
end of it for you, was it?

1305  
01:19:53,230 --> 01:19:55,530  
No.

1306  
01:19:55,530 --> 01:20:04,200  
I never gave it much thought  
until I guess in the '80s--

1307  
01:20:04,200 --> 01:20:14,030  
we were cleaning out some junk  
in somewhere, --holdings--

1308  
01:20:14,030 --> 01:20:16,340  
and I came across  
a little notebook

1309  
01:20:16,340 --> 01:20:20,000  
that I had kept a  
sort of diary in.

1310  
01:20:20,000 --> 01:20:26,690  
And I had a lot of information  
about this encounter

1311  
01:20:26,690 --> 01:20:28,220  
with that train.

1312

01:20:28,220 --> 01:20:34,250

And I just stopped to  
think about those days

1313

01:20:34,250 --> 01:20:36,570

and those people.

1314

01:20:36,570 --> 01:20:42,120

And I thought that that would  
be a good historical document.

1315

01:20:42,120 --> 01:20:47,000

And so I took all the notes  
that I had in those notebooks

1316

01:20:47,000 --> 01:20:52,920

and kind of put them together  
in a handwritten document.

1317

01:20:52,920 --> 01:20:57,110

This was before the days  
of computers, really.

1318

01:20:57,110 --> 01:21:03,300

But a little later, when I  
got to get to the university,

1319

01:21:03,300 --> 01:21:06,510

get involved with  
computers, I started

1320

01:21:06,510 --> 01:21:10,330

transferring all that  
stuff into my computer.

1321

01:21:10,330 --> 01:21:16,270

Well, I had this document there  
and still did nothing with it--

1322

01:21:16,270 --> 01:21:21,940

just a document for future  
historical purposes.

1323

01:21:21,940 --> 01:21:32,920

So it was not until 2005 that I  
had the opportunity to go back

1324

01:21:32,920 --> 01:21:36,460

to Magdeburg, Germany.

1325

01:21:36,460 --> 01:21:41,830

Now, this is a little  
story in itself.

1326

01:21:41,830 --> 01:21:47,080

A few years before this,  
I had had communication

1327

01:21:47,080 --> 01:21:54,500

with a young girl  
in Magdeburg who

1328

01:21:54,500 --> 01:21:57,410

was working at the  
University of Magdeburg

1329

01:21:57,410 --> 01:22:09,030

on her thesis, which was on  
the liberation of Magdeburg.

1330

01:22:09,030 --> 01:22:12,590

1331

01:22:12,590 --> 01:22:19,170

Now, when we left  
Magdeburg in May of 1945,

1332

01:22:19,170 --> 01:22:21,560

this became a part  
of the Russian zone.

1333

01:22:21,560 --> 01:22:24,190

1334

01:22:24,190 --> 01:22:28,430

The Russians moved  
into Magdeburg,

1335  
01:22:28,430 --> 01:22:34,190  
and they purged everything  
that was in the libraries

1336  
01:22:34,190 --> 01:22:43,440  
and schools archives, any  
documents that were in English,

1337  
01:22:43,440 --> 01:22:49,580  
and anything that was related  
to the liberation of Magdeburg.

1338  
01:22:49,580 --> 01:22:53,000  
They instilled in the  
people of Magdeburg

1339  
01:22:53,000 --> 01:22:57,560  
that they were the  
liberators of Magdeburg.

1340  
01:22:57,560 --> 01:23:05,740  
And for the next 40  
years, that was the belief

1341  
01:23:05,740 --> 01:23:08,140  
that the people of Magdeburg  
were brought up in.

1342  
01:23:08,140 --> 01:23:10,860

1343  
01:23:10,860 --> 01:23:14,030  
So the young girl  
working on her thesis

1344  
01:23:14,030 --> 01:23:18,750  
of the liberation of  
Magdeburg writing to me,

1345  
01:23:18,750 --> 01:23:22,770

indicated that  
the Russians claim

1346  
01:23:22,770 --> 01:23:29,640  
that they had liberated  
Magdeburg, but a friend of hers

1347  
01:23:29,640 --> 01:23:35,610  
had a book which said  
something about the Americans

1348  
01:23:35,610 --> 01:23:38,160  
had liberated Magdeburg.

1349  
01:23:38,160 --> 01:23:40,491  
What is the truth?

1350  
01:23:40,491 --> 01:23:46,805  
Now, she had found my  
name in the computer.

1351  
01:23:46,805 --> 01:23:49,440

1352  
01:23:49,440 --> 01:23:52,580  
I'm not sure just  
how she found it,

1353  
01:23:52,580 --> 01:23:56,550  
but she found my name connected  
with the 30th Division.

1354  
01:23:56,550 --> 01:24:00,390  
And so she was asking  
this question--

1355  
01:24:00,390 --> 01:24:05,850  
did the Americans really  
liberate Magdeburg?

1356  
01:24:05,850 --> 01:24:10,800  
Well, I sent her  
back copies of pages

1357  
01:24:10,800 --> 01:24:14,130  
from some of our  
history books and

1358  
01:24:14,130 --> 01:24:17,760  
from my own personal  
knowledge about the liberation

1359  
01:24:17,760 --> 01:24:24,890  
of Magdeburg on the  
16th of April, 1945.

1360  
01:24:24,890 --> 01:24:29,690  
She put this all together  
and wrote up her thesis,

1361  
01:24:29,690 --> 01:24:35,690  
and she did get her PhD.

1362  
01:24:35,690 --> 01:24:43,340  
But she took that document  
to the mayor of Magdeburg.

1363  
01:24:43,340 --> 01:24:48,500  
And he was rather  
surprised to know

1364  
01:24:48,500 --> 01:24:52,580  
that the Americans actually  
had liberated Magdeburg.

1365  
01:24:52,580 --> 01:24:54,800  
He was always under  
the impression

1366  
01:24:54,800 --> 01:24:59,390  
that the Russians had  
liberated Magdeburg.

1367  
01:24:59,390 --> 01:25:09,080  
Now, we're coming  
up on April of 2005,

1368

01:25:09,080 --> 01:25:19,390

which then was going to be  
the 40th or 50th anniversary

1369

01:25:19,390 --> 01:25:22,110

of the liberation.

1370

01:25:22,110 --> 01:25:31,290

This just happened to coincide  
with the 1,200th anniversary

1371

01:25:31,290 --> 01:25:35,820

of the founding of  
the city of Magdeburg.

1372

01:25:35,820 --> 01:25:39,820

So they were planning to  
have a big celebration

1373

01:25:39,820 --> 01:25:46,750

on the anniversary of  
the founding of Magdeburg

1374

01:25:46,750 --> 01:25:52,590

as well as the  
liberation of Magdeburg.

1375

01:25:52,590 --> 01:26:01,180

Well, in doing so, and  
unknown to me at the time,

1376

01:26:01,180 --> 01:26:07,840

they invited a man who had  
been in a slave labor camp

1377

01:26:07,840 --> 01:26:10,110

there in Magdeburg.

1378

01:26:10,110 --> 01:26:15,670

Now, in Magdeburg, there was  
a Polte Ammunition Works,

1379

01:26:15,670 --> 01:26:22,150  
which was making ammunition  
for the German war machine.

1380

01:26:22,150 --> 01:26:25,810  
And this was operated  
by slave laborers--

1381

01:26:25,810 --> 01:26:33,950  
Jewish slave laborers-- which  
had come from Buchenwald.

1382

01:26:33,950 --> 01:26:38,690  
And we, the 30th Division, had  
actually liberated this slave

1383

01:26:38,690 --> 01:26:41,810  
labor camp, and that was  
just a matter a few days

1384

01:26:41,810 --> 01:26:44,750  
after we had liberated  
the Farsleben group.

1385

01:26:44,750 --> 01:26:48,620

1386

01:26:48,620 --> 01:26:54,660  
Anyway, the mayor,  
through another person,

1387

01:26:54,660 --> 01:26:59,870  
invited this man,  
this Jew, who had

1388

01:26:59,870 --> 01:27:03,170  
been a slave  
laborer in Magdeburg

1389

01:27:03,170 --> 01:27:07,310  
in the Polte Ammunition Works  
to come back to Magdeburg



1390

01:27:07,310 --> 01:27:13,480

to tell the people  
about his incarceration.

1391

01:27:13,480 --> 01:27:18,450

At the same time, he invited  
me to come to Magdeburg

1392

01:27:18,450 --> 01:27:24,430

to tell the people about  
the actual liberation

1393

01:27:24,430 --> 01:27:25,570

by the Americans.

1394

01:27:25,570 --> 01:27:27,820

1395

01:27:27,820 --> 01:27:32,230

So for the first time,  
when I got to Magdeburg,

1396

01:27:32,230 --> 01:27:41,450

I met this man, a Jew that  
I had liberated in 1945.

1397

01:27:41,450 --> 01:27:45,550

So we worked up a  
nice relationship.

1398

01:27:45,550 --> 01:27:56,680

And I found that he lived  
in Boca Raton, Florida,

1399

01:27:56,680 --> 01:28:01,920

about three hours away  
from where I lived.

1400

01:28:01,920 --> 01:28:06,830

So this is a fascinating  
thing that I, a liberator,

1401

01:28:06,830 --> 01:28:14,750  
and he, a Jewish slave labor,  
should end up living so close

1402  
01:28:14,750 --> 01:28:17,510  
together here in Florida.

1403  
01:28:17,510 --> 01:28:20,180  
And have you been in  
communication with him since?

1404  
01:28:20,180 --> 01:28:21,950  
I was.

1405  
01:28:21,950 --> 01:28:26,790  
Sorry-- he just died  
about a month ago.

1406  
01:28:26,790 --> 01:28:35,250  
Anyway, after we came back from  
Magdeburg, he sent me an email

1407  
01:28:35,250 --> 01:28:39,700  
and said, Frank,  
look at this website.

1408  
01:28:39,700 --> 01:28:41,770  
It is tremendous.

1409  
01:28:41,770 --> 01:28:44,590  
And I opened up  
that website, and it

1410  
01:28:44,590 --> 01:28:52,420  
was a website created  
by a history teacher

1411  
01:28:52,420 --> 01:28:56,000  
up in Hudson Falls, New York.

1412  
01:28:56,000 --> 01:29:04,730  
And it was about a tank  
commander of the 743rd tank

1413  
01:29:04,730 --> 01:29:09,410  
battalion having liberated  
a train in Magdeburg.

1414  
01:29:09,410 --> 01:29:12,650

1415  
01:29:12,650 --> 01:29:15,860  
Well, I read the  
whole story through,

1416  
01:29:15,860 --> 01:29:20,830  
and it was exactly the story  
that I have related to you.

1417  
01:29:20,830 --> 01:29:25,180  
And how did this  
guy get this story?

1418  
01:29:25,180 --> 01:29:29,490  
So I got in contact  
with the teacher

1419  
01:29:29,490 --> 01:29:31,560  
to find out what  
his relationship was

1420  
01:29:31,560 --> 01:29:33,960  
to this website, the story.

1421  
01:29:33,960 --> 01:29:43,110  
And it seems that he was a  
World War II history buff,

1422  
01:29:43,110 --> 01:29:49,800  
but he was at the time  
concentrating on the Holocaust.

1423  
01:29:49,800 --> 01:29:57,690  
And he gave his class a project  
to go out in the village

1424

01:29:57,690 --> 01:30:00,840

and see if you can  
contact a veteran who

1425

01:30:00,840 --> 01:30:06,390

had anything to do with his  
connection with the Holocaust.

1426

01:30:06,390 --> 01:30:09,280

1427

01:30:09,280 --> 01:30:13,830

The students brought their  
stories back in and read them,

1428

01:30:13,830 --> 01:30:15,970

they discussed them.

1429

01:30:15,970 --> 01:30:20,620

But this one boy had  
a very unique story--

1430

01:30:20,620 --> 01:30:27,130

that his grandfather was a tank  
commander in the 743rd tank

1431

01:30:27,130 --> 01:30:30,970

battalion, and they  
had captured this train

1432

01:30:30,970 --> 01:30:34,180

with 2,500 Jews on it.

1433

01:30:34,180 --> 01:30:35,485

Well, that's exactly my story.

1434

01:30:35,485 --> 01:30:38,530

1435

01:30:38,530 --> 01:30:42,770

So I got together  
with this teacher,

1436  
01:30:42,770 --> 01:30:47,770  
and we discussed his side of it.

1437  
01:30:47,770 --> 01:30:51,780  
And I told him my  
connection with it.

1438  
01:30:51,780 --> 01:30:57,080  
And so we've been sort  
of collaborating together

1439  
01:30:57,080 --> 01:30:59,690  
ever since.

1440  
01:30:59,690 --> 01:31:04,100  
At the time, he  
put a website out--

1441  
01:31:04,100 --> 01:31:07,680

1442  
01:31:07,680 --> 01:31:12,900  
his story went out  
on the internet,

1443  
01:31:12,900 --> 01:31:17,730  
and the first hit  
that he had on it

1444  
01:31:17,730 --> 01:31:21,480  
was from a lady in Australia.

1445  
01:31:21,480 --> 01:31:24,600  
Now, she was a young  
girl on that train,

1446  
01:31:24,600 --> 01:31:27,870  
and her family moved to  
Australia at that time.

1447  
01:31:27,870 --> 01:31:29,800

Of course, she'd been  
there ever since.

1448  
01:31:29,800 --> 01:31:34,050  
And she saw that website,  
and she got back in contact

1449  
01:31:34,050 --> 01:31:37,080  
with the teacher.

1450  
01:31:37,080 --> 01:31:41,010  
And through that-- and then  
he had two or three other hits

1451  
01:31:41,010 --> 01:31:44,250  
up around New York.

1452  
01:31:44,250 --> 01:31:49,050  
So when I was discussing  
this matter with him,

1453  
01:31:49,050 --> 01:31:55,500  
he had probably about 10 or 12  
Jews that he had had contact

1454  
01:31:55,500 --> 01:31:57,960  
with who were on that train.

1455  
01:31:57,960 --> 01:32:01,650

1456  
01:32:01,650 --> 01:32:06,060  
Well, I said, I've got  
this story about the train,

1457  
01:32:06,060 --> 01:32:11,030  
and I wanted to  
get involved in it.

1458  
01:32:11,030 --> 01:32:16,330  
So I went on the internet  
and put my story out,

1459

01:32:16,330 --> 01:32:18,970

and I started  
getting hits on it.

1460

01:32:18,970 --> 01:32:22,450

And it just snowballed.

1461

01:32:22,450 --> 01:32:33,060

And eventually, I got in  
contact with a person in Israel

1462

01:32:33,060 --> 01:32:34,200

who had been a young boy--

1463

01:32:34,200 --> 01:32:37,520

1464

01:32:37,520 --> 01:32:43,050

he was orphaned and  
went to Israel--

1465

01:32:43,050 --> 01:32:45,380

or went to Palestine--

1466

01:32:45,380 --> 01:32:53,450

and was adopted by a family,  
was educated there in Tel Aviv,

1467

01:32:53,450 --> 01:32:55,790

and he became a doctor--

1468

01:32:55,790 --> 01:32:56,570

a medical doctor--

1469

01:32:56,570 --> 01:32:58,160

Mmhmm.

1470

01:32:58,160 --> 01:33:04,670

And had practiced and had  
just retired when I first

1471

01:33:04,670 --> 01:33:05,960  
got in contact with him.

1472  
01:33:05,960 --> 01:33:09,200

1473  
01:33:09,200 --> 01:33:11,630  
He could not speak  
very good English.

1474  
01:33:11,630 --> 01:33:15,710  
And it was very difficult  
for me to understand him.

1475  
01:33:15,710 --> 01:33:18,170  
But his daughter was  
quite interesting.

1476  
01:33:18,170 --> 01:33:21,710  
And she could speak much  
better English than he could,

1477  
01:33:21,710 --> 01:33:26,690  
although he was  
kind of broken up.

1478  
01:33:26,690 --> 01:33:30,530  
So she became very  
interested in his story,

1479  
01:33:30,530 --> 01:33:39,620  
because, as with many of  
these Jews, as they grew up,

1480  
01:33:39,620 --> 01:33:41,720  
they wanted to forget the past.

1481  
01:33:41,720 --> 01:33:46,190  
They wanted to forget about  
the Holocaust and not even talk

1482  
01:33:46,190 --> 01:33:48,500  
about it to their families.



1483  
01:33:48,500 --> 01:33:50,150  
So she was interested  
in it and she

1484  
01:33:50,150 --> 01:33:52,310  
wanted to hear more  
about it, wanted

1485  
01:33:52,310 --> 01:33:56,260  
to learn what her  
father had been through.

1486  
01:33:56,260 --> 01:34:01,270  
So I gave her the whole  
story as I could recall.

1487  
01:34:01,270 --> 01:34:05,770  
And she became very  
much involved in it.

1488  
01:34:05,770 --> 01:34:10,720  
And her father originally  
was from Budapest.

1489  
01:34:10,720 --> 01:34:13,240  
He was Hungarian.

1490  
01:34:13,240 --> 01:34:18,480  
And he remembered the names  
of some of the people.

1491  
01:34:18,480 --> 01:34:22,450  
And she started  
researching there

1492  
01:34:22,450 --> 01:34:26,110  
in Israel for some  
of these people,

1493  
01:34:26,110 --> 01:34:29,200  
and she found a number of them.

1494

01:34:29,200 --> 01:34:33,730

So this increased  
our numbers of people

1495

01:34:33,730 --> 01:34:39,270

who had survived this train.

1496

01:34:39,270 --> 01:34:40,780

Now, going back just a bit--

1497

01:34:40,780 --> 01:34:45,970

1498

01:34:45,970 --> 01:34:51,280

on the train originally,  
there were about 2,500 people.

1499

01:34:51,280 --> 01:34:57,680

And of them, there were  
about 600 children.

1500

01:34:57,680 --> 01:34:59,890

Now, I'm saying children--  
these are people

1501

01:34:59,890 --> 01:35:02,340

21 years of age and less.

1502

01:35:02,340 --> 01:35:04,930

OK.

1503

01:35:04,930 --> 01:35:08,410

Now, the Germans were quite  
meticulous about keeping

1504

01:35:08,410 --> 01:35:10,300

records.

1505

01:35:10,300 --> 01:35:14,090

When that train left  
Bergen-Belsen and we captured

1506

01:35:14,090 --> 01:35:18,670

it there in Farsleben,  
the train commander

1507

01:35:18,670 --> 01:35:23,960

had a list of all of the  
people that were on that train.

1508

01:35:23,960 --> 01:35:29,420

That list contained their  
name, their birth date,

1509

01:35:29,420 --> 01:35:32,250

and their birthplace--

1510

01:35:32,250 --> 01:35:37,260

and, of course, other data too  
that was not really relevant.

1511

01:35:37,260 --> 01:35:44,010

That document was  
taken and retained

1512

01:35:44,010 --> 01:35:47,535

by what is now the  
Bergen-Belsen Memorial.

1513

01:35:47,535 --> 01:35:50,450

1514

01:35:50,450 --> 01:35:56,960

And I got a copy of that  
list and went through it.

1515

01:35:56,960 --> 01:36:00,530

And since it had the  
birth date of everybody

1516

01:36:00,530 --> 01:36:02,990

that was on the train,  
I could determine

1517

01:36:02,990 --> 01:36:06,130  
who the children were.

1518  
01:36:06,130 --> 01:36:12,150  
So I sorted out  
all the children--

1519  
01:36:12,150 --> 01:36:13,195  
600 names.

1520  
01:36:13,195 --> 01:36:16,200

1521  
01:36:16,200 --> 01:36:19,290  
And of those, I just  
assumed half of them

1522  
01:36:19,290 --> 01:36:24,090  
were deceased because  
of malnutrition, age,

1523  
01:36:24,090 --> 01:36:25,390  
and other causes.

1524  
01:36:25,390 --> 01:36:27,630  
So we're down to  
about the possibility

1525  
01:36:27,630 --> 01:36:35,640  
of 300-plus surviving  
children out there somewhere.

1526  
01:36:35,640 --> 01:36:41,970  
So with this young lady in  
Israel doing some research

1527  
01:36:41,970 --> 01:36:47,340  
and finding some of these people  
and some of my own research

1528  
01:36:47,340 --> 01:36:55,960  
through the internet, I have  
found 235 of these people.

1529  
01:36:55,960 --> 01:36:59,480  
And I've been in  
contact with each one,

1530  
01:36:59,480 --> 01:37:05,435  
either by mail or [AUDIO OUT]

1531  
01:37:05,435 --> 01:37:06,810  
Can you say that  
last part again?

1532  
01:37:06,810 --> 01:37:09,120  
We had a little bit  
of audio difficulty.

1533  
01:37:09,120 --> 01:37:13,990  
I lost you at, you were  
contacting them by email.

1534  
01:37:13,990 --> 01:37:15,820  
Either by email or snail mail.

1535  
01:37:15,820 --> 01:37:16,320  
OK.

1536  
01:37:16,320 --> 01:37:17,840  
And how many did you contact?

1537  
01:37:17,840 --> 01:37:20,740  
And I've contacted 235.

1538  
01:37:20,740 --> 01:37:24,580  
And did most of  
them respond to you?

1539  
01:37:24,580 --> 01:37:25,090  
I'm sorry?

1540  
01:37:25,090 --> 01:37:27,010  
Did most of them respond to you?

1541

01:37:27,010 --> 01:37:27,760

Oh, yes.

1542

01:37:27,760 --> 01:37:29,400

Yes.

1543

01:37:29,400 --> 01:37:32,920

In fact, I'm in contact  
with them right now

1544

01:37:32,920 --> 01:37:37,360

trying to get any kind of  
documents, copies of documents

1545

01:37:37,360 --> 01:37:38,275

that they might have.

1546

01:37:38,275 --> 01:37:40,950

1547

01:37:40,950 --> 01:37:44,500

Now, I need to go back  
here just a little bit.

1548

01:37:44,500 --> 01:37:48,640

At the time of the  
liberation, these people

1549

01:37:48,640 --> 01:37:51,610

I'm talking about today, they  
were all little young kids.

1550

01:37:51,610 --> 01:37:52,140

Sure.

1551

01:37:52,140 --> 01:37:53,440

21 years and less.

1552

01:37:53,440 --> 01:37:54,670

Mmhmm.

1553

01:37:54,670 --> 01:37:58,510

Those who were 10  
years and younger,

1554

01:37:58,510 --> 01:38:00,480  
they really don't remember much.

1555

01:38:00,480 --> 01:38:01,930  
OK.

1556

01:38:01,930 --> 01:38:05,980  
It's the group  
that's 10 to 21, they

1557

01:38:05,980 --> 01:38:09,910  
have a little memory  
of what was happening.

1558

01:38:09,910 --> 01:38:16,190  
Prior to the war, their parents  
could see the handwriting

1559

01:38:16,190 --> 01:38:17,720  
on the wall--

1560

01:38:17,720 --> 01:38:20,420  
what was happening to the Jews.

1561

01:38:20,420 --> 01:38:23,960  
And they were starting  
to make arrangements

1562

01:38:23,960 --> 01:38:26,510  
to get out of  
Europe, to get away

1563

01:38:26,510 --> 01:38:34,100  
from Hitler and the program that  
he had to eliminate the Jews.

1564

01:38:34,100 --> 01:38:38,690  
So many of them had  
obtained passports

1565

01:38:38,690 --> 01:38:44,170  
from various countries,  
wherever they would be accepted.

1566

01:38:44,170 --> 01:38:48,970  
Now, in those years, there was  
a great deal of anti-Semitism--

1567

01:38:48,970 --> 01:38:56,170  
that the United States  
did not want these Jews.

1568

01:38:56,170 --> 01:38:58,630  
They had a very,  
very limited quota,

1569

01:38:58,630 --> 01:39:03,090  
and that's all they  
would take in here.

1570

01:39:03,090 --> 01:39:07,830  
So these people got passports  
to South America countries,

1571

01:39:07,830 --> 01:39:13,280  
Australia, African  
countries, Canada, some

1572

01:39:13,280 --> 01:39:16,290  
got passports to  
the United States.

1573

01:39:16,290 --> 01:39:19,770  
So whatever place these  
people had a passport for,

1574

01:39:19,770 --> 01:39:20,890  
that's where they went.

1575

01:39:20,890 --> 01:39:23,950



1576

01:39:23,950 --> 01:39:26,665

They scattered all  
over the world,

1577

01:39:26,665 --> 01:39:30,880

because they were  
citizens of that country.

1578

01:39:30,880 --> 01:39:31,780

Sure.

1579

01:39:31,780 --> 01:39:35,920

And we at the time  
of the liberation

1580

01:39:35,920 --> 01:39:40,600

offered transportation to  
them to whatever country

1581

01:39:40,600 --> 01:39:43,630

they had a passport for.

1582

01:39:43,630 --> 01:39:49,240

Now, just last night, I  
was talking with a lady

1583

01:39:49,240 --> 01:39:52,930

in Australia by Skype.

1584

01:39:52,930 --> 01:40:00,020

And she said she has just found  
two more girls or ladies there

1585

01:40:00,020 --> 01:40:02,490

in Australia.

1586

01:40:02,490 --> 01:40:04,370

So this is the way the  
thing has snowballed.

1587

01:40:04,370 --> 01:40:05,540

Yes.

1588  
01:40:05,540 --> 01:40:07,430  
So I got two more  
people that are

1589  
01:40:07,430 --> 01:40:11,570  
going to start researching  
now in Australia.

1590  
01:40:11,570 --> 01:40:17,240  
But we had a lot of them come  
here to the United States,

1591  
01:40:17,240 --> 01:40:20,150  
but most of them are centered  
up around the New York area.

1592  
01:40:20,150 --> 01:40:22,250  
OK.

1593  
01:40:22,250 --> 01:40:26,270  
There's very few  
here in Florida.

1594  
01:40:26,270 --> 01:40:30,470  
And there's a group  
up in Carolina

1595  
01:40:30,470 --> 01:40:34,440  
and a few out in California--

1596  
01:40:34,440 --> 01:40:37,280  
they're just scattered all over.

1597  
01:40:37,280 --> 01:40:43,620  
So two years ago, this  
young lady in Israel

1598  
01:40:43,620 --> 01:40:49,980  
thought it'd be a nice idea  
to have a reunion of some

1599

01:40:49,980 --> 01:40:52,080  
of these people.

1600  
01:40:52,080 --> 01:40:55,170  
So she sent word out to  
them, and I sent word out

1601  
01:40:55,170 --> 01:41:00,360  
to the people here in the  
States about a reunion

1602  
01:41:00,360 --> 01:41:05,410  
that they wanted  
to have in April.

1603  
01:41:05,410 --> 01:41:08,510  
That was 2 and 1/2 years ago.

1604  
01:41:08,510 --> 01:41:12,280  
So we had this  
reunion in her town

1605  
01:41:12,280 --> 01:41:17,560  
in Rehovot, which is between  
Tel Aviv and Jerusalem.

1606  
01:41:17,560 --> 01:41:20,320

1607  
01:41:20,320 --> 01:41:27,130  
And we had 60 of the  
survivors plus their children

1608  
01:41:27,130 --> 01:41:29,950  
and grandchildren--

1609  
01:41:29,950 --> 01:41:32,680  
total of about 500 people.

1610  
01:41:32,680 --> 01:41:37,330  
And we assembled at the Weizmann  
Institute there in Rehovot.

1611

01:41:37,330 --> 01:41:42,010

They have a large  
auditorium in which we met.

1612

01:41:42,010 --> 01:41:44,680

What was that like  
seeing them again,

1613

01:41:44,680 --> 01:41:48,295

now as grown people who had  
made lives for themselves?

1614

01:41:48,295 --> 01:41:52,645

It was very emotional  
to meet these people

1615

01:41:52,645 --> 01:42:00,520

that I had had a little hand  
in liberating 69 years ago.

1616

01:42:00,520 --> 01:42:04,900

And they were very  
receptive and very thankful

1617

01:42:04,900 --> 01:42:08,260

to me to be one of  
their liberators.

1618

01:42:08,260 --> 01:42:11,860

And in fact, I had  
been the only liberator

1619

01:42:11,860 --> 01:42:13,840

that they had ever met.

1620

01:42:13,840 --> 01:42:18,430

And it was a very  
emotional meeting

1621

01:42:18,430 --> 01:42:24,460

to be with these people,  
to physically see

1622

01:42:24,460 --> 01:42:26,300  
some of these people.

1623

01:42:26,300 --> 01:42:32,900  
And the thing is, most of  
them had never met each other

1624

01:42:32,900 --> 01:42:35,960  
before, because  
they came to Israel

1625

01:42:35,960 --> 01:42:41,630  
staggered at different  
times by different routes

1626

01:42:41,630 --> 01:42:44,170  
and ended up in  
different places.

1627

01:42:44,170 --> 01:42:45,755  
Some went to  
Jerusalem, some went

1628

01:42:45,755 --> 01:42:52,180  
to Tel Aviv and all  
kibbutzes all over Israel--

1629

01:42:52,180 --> 01:42:54,224  
or Palestine at that time.

1630

01:42:54,224 --> 01:42:55,070  
Sure.

1631

01:42:55,070 --> 01:43:01,720  
And so they'd really never had  
any contact with each other.

1632

01:43:01,720 --> 01:43:07,060  
And this was the first time  
they had contact with each other

1633

01:43:07,060 --> 01:43:11,340

as well as me, as a liberator.

1634  
01:43:11,340 --> 01:43:21,500  
Now, most of these  
survivors had never

1635  
01:43:21,500 --> 01:43:24,385  
talked about the Holocaust  
to their families.

1636  
01:43:24,385 --> 01:43:27,510

1637  
01:43:27,510 --> 01:43:30,670  
As they grew up, they  
just wanted to forget.

1638  
01:43:30,670 --> 01:43:34,740  
They had bad memories there, and  
they just wanted to forget it.

1639  
01:43:34,740 --> 01:43:37,320  
The day of their  
liberation, that

1640  
01:43:37,320 --> 01:43:41,170  
was the beginning of  
a new life for them.

1641  
01:43:41,170 --> 01:43:44,700  
Anything before that,  
they just wanted

1642  
01:43:44,700 --> 01:43:47,870  
to forget about it--  
not talk about it.

1643  
01:43:47,870 --> 01:43:51,650  
Their children would  
ask them what happened--

1644  
01:43:51,650 --> 01:43:52,900  
I don't want to talk about it.

1645  
01:43:52,900 --> 01:43:57,270  
Forget it, and would talk  
about something else.

1646  
01:43:57,270 --> 01:44:03,670  
And this has gone on for  
years until this reunion time.

1647  
01:44:03,670 --> 01:44:08,090  
I told the story that I had  
more or less related to you

1648  
01:44:08,090 --> 01:44:12,400  
here now to these children.

1649  
01:44:12,400 --> 01:44:16,000  
And they are learning  
for the first time what

1650  
01:44:16,000 --> 01:44:19,150  
had happened to their  
parents, a little bit

1651  
01:44:19,150 --> 01:44:23,680  
about the Bergen-Belsen  
era, but mostly

1652  
01:44:23,680 --> 01:44:28,820  
from the actual  
liberation period, which

1653  
01:44:28,820 --> 01:44:30,760  
they knew nothing about.

1654  
01:44:30,760 --> 01:44:34,030  
All they knew was what  
their parents had told them

1655  
01:44:34,030 --> 01:44:37,870  
from the time they  
grew up in Israel

1656

01:44:37,870 --> 01:44:41,480

or wherever they were up  
until the present time.

1657

01:44:41,480 --> 01:44:42,810

Sure.

1658

01:44:42,810 --> 01:44:47,270

So this was a whole new  
story for these children

1659

01:44:47,270 --> 01:44:51,350

and grandchildren to learn about  
something about the liberation

1660

01:44:51,350 --> 01:44:53,100

of their people.

1661

01:44:53,100 --> 01:45:02,360

Now, one person in  
particular, a girl named Lily,

1662

01:45:02,360 --> 01:45:03,350

she was from Warsaw.

1663

01:45:03,350 --> 01:45:05,880

1664

01:45:05,880 --> 01:45:11,000

And she had lost both of  
her parents to Auschwitz.

1665

01:45:11,000 --> 01:45:15,140

And as an orphan,  
she was being taken

1666

01:45:15,140 --> 01:45:22,390

care of by various other women.

1667

01:45:22,390 --> 01:45:26,160

And she lived through  
Bergen-Belsen with them.



1668  
01:45:26,160 --> 01:45:28,730

1669  
01:45:28,730 --> 01:45:35,050  
And on the day of their  
liberation, the 13th of April,

1670  
01:45:35,050 --> 01:45:38,230  
she said, that is my birthday.

1671  
01:45:38,230 --> 01:45:41,770  
She did not know exactly  
where she was born,

1672  
01:45:41,770 --> 01:45:46,560  
she did not know exactly  
when she was born,

1673  
01:45:46,560 --> 01:45:50,130  
so she took that day of  
liberation, the 13th of April,

1674  
01:45:50,130 --> 01:45:53,660  
1945, as her birth date.

1675  
01:45:53,660 --> 01:45:57,780  
And she has considered that  
her birth date ever since.

1676  
01:45:57,780 --> 01:46:02,150  
This is just one  
example of their feeling

1677  
01:46:02,150 --> 01:46:04,820  
toward their liberation--

1678  
01:46:04,820 --> 01:46:07,250  
that they feel that  
that day of liberation

1679  
01:46:07,250 --> 01:46:10,817

was a very prominent  
and famous day as far as

1680  
01:46:10,817 --> 01:46:12,900  
they were concerned-- the  
beginning of their life.

1681  
01:46:12,900 --> 01:46:15,420

1682  
01:46:15,420 --> 01:46:20,270  
And so many of them have  
told me that their life began

1683  
01:46:20,270 --> 01:46:23,570  
on the 13th of April, 1845.

1684  
01:46:23,570 --> 01:46:26,750  
Anything before  
that never happened.

1685  
01:46:26,750 --> 01:46:28,770  
They just want to forget it.

1686  
01:46:28,770 --> 01:46:31,940  
There are those who  
would say, and those

1687  
01:46:31,940 --> 01:46:37,530  
who do say, that the  
Holocaust never happened.

1688  
01:46:37,530 --> 01:46:39,890  
What would you say to them?

1689  
01:46:39,890 --> 01:46:41,990  
You should have been there.

1690  
01:46:41,990 --> 01:46:47,000  
If you'd seen it and  
smelled it, you'd believe.

1691

01:46:47,000 --> 01:46:50,060  
That's all I can tell them.

1692  
01:46:50,060 --> 01:46:52,370  
Well, sir, it was an  
outstanding interview.

1693  
01:46:52,370 --> 01:46:55,440  
I thank you for your  
time and for your story.

1694  
01:46:55,440 --> 01:46:55,940  
OK.

1695  
01:46:55,940 --> 01:46:58,660  
Most of all, I thank you for  
your service to our nation.

1696  
01:46:58,660 --> 01:47:00,490  
Well, thank you very much.

1697  
01:47:00,490 --> 01:47:03,660  
It's been a pleasure  
for me to do this

1698  
01:47:03,660 --> 01:47:09,470  
and to contact these people,  
get their information,

1699  
01:47:09,470 --> 01:47:15,890  
and be able to relate  
that with others.

1700  
01:47:15,890 --> 01:47:20,960  
I must add on here  
that our 30th Infantry

1701  
01:47:20,960 --> 01:47:24,410  
Division has annual reunions.

1702  
01:47:24,410 --> 01:47:27,180  
And I think it was  
about five years ago,

1703

01:47:27,180 --> 01:47:29,420

we had a reunion  
at Fayetteville.

1704

01:47:29,420 --> 01:47:36,350

And we invited as many as  
would come of these survivors--

1705

01:47:36,350 --> 01:47:41,210

and we had I think it was  
eight came to our reunion

1706

01:47:41,210 --> 01:47:43,620

in Fayetteville.

1707

01:47:43,620 --> 01:47:50,190

So we were working up a close  
relationship with these people.

1708

01:47:50,190 --> 01:47:58,020

In fact, we just had a reunion  
in Savannah two weeks ago,

1709

01:47:58,020 --> 01:48:00,990

and we had four of them come.

1710

01:48:00,990 --> 01:48:04,280

Unfortunately, this was  
during the storm period

1711

01:48:04,280 --> 01:48:07,860

up in the north, and several  
who had planned to come

1712

01:48:07,860 --> 01:48:10,170

were unable to join with us.

1713

01:48:10,170 --> 01:48:15,510

But we did have one  
come from Jerusalem--

1714

01:48:15,510 --> 01:48:19,590  
he and his wife flew  
over and got here

1715  
01:48:19,590 --> 01:48:24,570  
just before the storm hit and  
was able to get into Savannah.

1716  
01:48:24,570 --> 01:48:28,620  
And I think it was  
last year or the year

1717  
01:48:28,620 --> 01:48:33,690  
before, we had two  
people from Jerusalem

1718  
01:48:33,690 --> 01:48:37,020  
come and join us just  
for this purpose--

1719  
01:48:37,020 --> 01:48:42,750  
to join with their  
liberators and some others

1720  
01:48:42,750 --> 01:48:46,200  
of their surviving peers.

1721  
01:48:46,200 --> 01:48:51,900  
So we're working up a close  
relationship with these people

1722  
01:48:51,900 --> 01:48:53,350  
today.

1723  
01:48:53,350 --> 01:48:53,850  
Yeah.

1724  
01:48:53,850 --> 01:48:54,830  
Very good.

1725  
01:48:54,830 --> 01:48:56,160  
Yeah.

1726

01:48:56,160 --> 01:48:58,110

So I'm working on  
this as a project

1727

01:48:58,110 --> 01:49:02,880

now and trying to get in  
contact with the two new people

1728

01:49:02,880 --> 01:49:05,310

down in Australia.

1729

01:49:05,310 --> 01:49:06,300

Excellent.

1730

01:49:06,300 --> 01:49:07,880

Thank you, sir.

1731

01:49:07,880 --> 01:49:08,405

OK, fine.

1732

01:49:08,405 --> 01:49:09,780

And nice talking  
with you, Steve.

1733

01:49:09,780 --> 01:49:10,800

Nice talking to you, sir.

1734

01:49:10,800 --> 01:49:11,010

All right.

1735

01:49:11,010 --> 01:49:12,150

Thank you very much indeed.

1736

01:49:12,150 --> 01:49:15,060

If I can help any further,  
give me a call back.

1737

01:49:15,060 --> 01:49:16,000

We will indeed.

1738

01:49:16,000 --> 01:49:17,310

Thank you so much.

1739

01:49:17,310 --> 01:49:18,030

Thank you.

1740

01:49:18,030 --> 01:49:19,442

Be well.

1741

01:49:19,442 --> 01:49:21,370

Bye bye.

1742

01:49:21,370 --> 01:49:29,000