

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,086
Tell me when.

2
00:00:01,086 --> 00:00:02,574
It's rolling now.

3
00:00:02,574 --> 00:00:05,550
OK.

4
00:00:05,550 --> 00:00:08,940
This is a United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

5
00:00:08,940 --> 00:00:14,280
interview with Mr. Gerald
Silver on June 19th,

6
00:00:14,280 --> 00:00:19,740
2014 in Forrest Hills, Queens.

7
00:00:19,740 --> 00:00:21,980
Thank you very, very
much, Mr. Silver,

8
00:00:21,980 --> 00:00:25,140
for agreeing to speak with us
and to give your testimony.

9
00:00:25,140 --> 00:00:27,070
My pleasure.

10
00:00:27,070 --> 00:00:30,690
We're going to be talking
today about your experiences

11
00:00:30,690 --> 00:00:33,510
as part of the US
military of being

12
00:00:33,510 --> 00:00:35,520
a Jewish-American

in the military

13

00:00:35,520 --> 00:00:39,720

during World War

II, what you saw

14

00:00:39,720 --> 00:00:43,650

when you were in

service in Europe

15

00:00:43,650 --> 00:00:46,200

as the war was

drawing to a close.

16

00:00:46,200 --> 00:00:48,330

But before we get

to all that, I want

17

00:00:48,330 --> 00:00:50,590

to start at the very beginning.

18

00:00:50,590 --> 00:00:55,310

So I'd like you to tell

me your name at birth,

19

00:00:55,310 --> 00:00:59,140

your date of birth, and

where you were born.

20

00:00:59,140 --> 00:01:05,080

I was born in

Brownsville, New York.

21

00:01:05,080 --> 00:01:10,200

I was born on April 6th, 1923.

22

00:01:10,200 --> 00:01:11,130

OK.

23

00:01:11,130 --> 00:01:12,360

And your name at birth was?

24

00:01:12,360 --> 00:01:15,900

25

00:01:15,900 --> 00:01:17,820

My name is Gerald--

26

00:01:17,820 --> 00:01:20,520

G-E-R-A-L-D-- Silver.

27

00:01:20,520 --> 00:01:25,020

I'm better known as Jerry,
or in Hebrew, [HEBREW]..

28

00:01:25,020 --> 00:01:29,340

29

00:01:29,340 --> 00:01:31,710

I speak fluent Yiddish, so.

30

00:01:31,710 --> 00:01:33,300

Did you learn it
from your parents?

31

00:01:33,300 --> 00:01:37,120

I learned it from parents,
from grandparents.

32

00:01:37,120 --> 00:01:41,130

And I always had an
interest in learning it,

33

00:01:41,130 --> 00:01:44,040

and I enjoy speaking.

34

00:01:44,040 --> 00:01:48,070

Not too many can
speak fluent Yiddish.

35

00:01:48,070 --> 00:01:50,130

at least that's
what I've been told.

36

00:01:50,130 --> 00:01:51,120
It's true.

37
00:01:51,120 --> 00:01:52,980
It's true.

38
00:01:52,980 --> 00:01:55,800
Yeah, but I find it interesting.

39
00:01:55,800 --> 00:01:59,190
So tell me a little
bit about your family.

40
00:01:59,190 --> 00:02:01,660
My dad came here--

41
00:02:01,660 --> 00:02:04,560
I was telling Jim.

42
00:02:04,560 --> 00:02:11,070
My dad came here in, I
believe, 1913 from Ukraine.

43
00:02:11,070 --> 00:02:15,870
My grandfather, his father,
sent him from Russia

44
00:02:15,870 --> 00:02:19,860
because he didn't want him
to go into the Russian Army.

45
00:02:19,860 --> 00:02:24,480
So he came here, but he did.

46
00:02:24,480 --> 00:02:29,860
He was drafted into the
American Army in 1917.

47
00:02:29,860 --> 00:02:35,970
So he was a World War I soldier
and I was a World War II

48

00:02:35,970 --> 00:02:37,200
soldier.

49
00:02:37,200 --> 00:02:39,750
I've always thought
that was interesting.

50
00:02:39,750 --> 00:02:45,090
And my mother came here
as a one-year-old infant.

51
00:02:45,090 --> 00:02:48,330
My grandparents came from Kiev.

52
00:02:48,330 --> 00:02:49,170
Also Ukraine.

53
00:02:49,170 --> 00:02:50,280
Yeah.

54
00:02:50,280 --> 00:02:53,820
My mother, though
as a one-year-old,

55
00:02:53,820 --> 00:02:56,080
was raised as American.

56
00:02:56,080 --> 00:02:58,200
She was a high school graduate.

57
00:02:58,200 --> 00:03:04,350
She spoke fluent English,
and was more American

58
00:03:04,350 --> 00:03:05,520
than European.

59
00:03:05,520 --> 00:03:09,840
But strangely, enough she spoke
a beautiful fluent Yiddish,

60
00:03:09,840 --> 00:03:10,340

too.

61

00:03:10,340 --> 00:03:13,320

62

00:03:13,320 --> 00:03:18,300

I had a sister, Miriam,
younger than me.

63

00:03:18,300 --> 00:03:23,550

Unfortunately, she passed.

64

00:03:23,550 --> 00:03:30,538

I think it was a week before
Jim and Barbara's wedding.

65

00:03:30,538 --> 00:03:31,830

What year would that have been?

66

00:03:31,830 --> 00:03:36,123

67

00:03:36,123 --> 00:03:39,020

1982?

68

00:03:39,020 --> 00:03:42,760

Yeah, I think it was about 1982.

69

00:03:42,760 --> 00:03:45,160

Unfortunately, she passed.

70

00:03:45,160 --> 00:03:47,650

She had breast cancer.

71

00:03:47,650 --> 00:03:48,600

Very young, though.

72

00:03:48,600 --> 00:03:48,940

Yeah.

73

00:03:48,940 --> 00:03:49,440

Yeah.

74

00:03:49,440 --> 00:03:51,280

I have two nephews.

75

00:03:51,280 --> 00:03:52,090

Her sons?

76

00:03:52,090 --> 00:03:56,620

Her sons, yeah,
Richard and Jeffrey.

77

00:03:56,620 --> 00:03:57,520

They're fine.

78

00:03:57,520 --> 00:04:01,060

I speak to them, see
them occasionally.

79

00:04:01,060 --> 00:04:04,000

So your sister and yourself
were the only children?

80

00:04:04,000 --> 00:04:05,920

Yes, we were, the only children.

81

00:04:05,920 --> 00:04:07,350

And you were the older brother?

82

00:04:07,350 --> 00:04:08,690

I was the older brother.

83

00:04:08,690 --> 00:04:12,970

Yeah, I was five years
older, I believe.

84

00:04:12,970 --> 00:04:14,800

Well, it's very
interesting when you

85

00:04:14,800 --> 00:04:17,350

say that both sets

of grandparents

86

00:04:17,350 --> 00:04:24,040
came from the Ukraine, because
that's the territory where

87

00:04:24,040 --> 00:04:26,020
Sholem Aleichem, I believe--

88

00:04:26,020 --> 00:04:26,710
Sholem Aleichem.

89

00:04:26,710 --> 00:04:30,580
Right, lived, and we know
that Fiddler on the Roof

90

00:04:30,580 --> 00:04:31,810
is his creation.

91

00:04:31,810 --> 00:04:32,560
Yeah.

92

00:04:32,560 --> 00:04:35,770
My mother's father,
my grandfather,

93

00:04:35,770 --> 00:04:39,400
was a kosher butcher here.

94

00:04:39,400 --> 00:04:43,360
Did they talk about those old
days in the Ukraine at all?

95

00:04:43,360 --> 00:04:47,710
Not in my presence
very often, no.

96

00:04:47,710 --> 00:04:51,580
They never discussed
European growing up.

97

00:04:51,580 --> 00:04:52,514

[PHONE RINGING]

98

00:04:52,514 --> 00:04:54,850

Let's cut.

99

00:04:54,850 --> 00:04:56,110

Let's cut for a second.

100

00:04:56,110 --> 00:04:57,486

That's my phone.

101

00:04:57,486 --> 00:04:58,974

Yeah.

102

00:04:58,974 --> 00:05:01,620

Did you cut?

103

00:05:01,620 --> 00:05:02,500

Rolling.

104

00:05:02,500 --> 00:05:03,190

OK.

105

00:05:03,190 --> 00:05:07,390

So we were talking about your
childhood and growing up,

106

00:05:07,390 --> 00:05:11,200

and how much of Europe
parents talked about

107

00:05:11,200 --> 00:05:12,940

and where they came from.

108

00:05:12,940 --> 00:05:15,460

And you're saying not so much.

109

00:05:15,460 --> 00:05:17,860

Not in my presence, anyway.

110

00:05:17,860 --> 00:05:20,800

Was it because, you sense,
that it was a hard life

111
00:05:20,800 --> 00:05:23,980
and so they didn't have
anything really positive to say?

112
00:05:23,980 --> 00:05:25,930
Not that I'm aware of, no.

113
00:05:25,930 --> 00:05:26,430
OK.

114
00:05:26,430 --> 00:05:30,440
They never spoke of
hard life in Europe.

115
00:05:30,440 --> 00:05:32,140
Well, my mother
knew nothing of it.

116
00:05:32,140 --> 00:05:33,790
She came here as an infant.

117
00:05:33,790 --> 00:05:34,660
Right.

118
00:05:34,660 --> 00:05:39,970
And my father had a
very good childhood.

119
00:05:39,970 --> 00:05:43,580
He has four sisters
and two brothers,

120
00:05:43,580 --> 00:05:48,880
and they did very,
very, very well in life.

121
00:05:48,880 --> 00:05:54,370
Became very successful,
financially and otherwise.

122

00:05:54,370 --> 00:05:57,850

123

00:05:57,850 --> 00:05:59,890

My dad's oldest sister--

124

00:05:59,890 --> 00:06:06,730

he was the oldest,
but his oldest sister,

125

00:06:06,730 --> 00:06:11,980

she met this man I think
before they left Russia.

126

00:06:11,980 --> 00:06:19,360

And he had some friends, at
least that's what I was told,

127

00:06:19,360 --> 00:06:23,620

that told him if he would
leave Russia and come to South

128

00:06:23,620 --> 00:06:28,210

America, there were chances
for people to become

129

00:06:28,210 --> 00:06:32,620

very successful financially.

130

00:06:32,620 --> 00:06:36,610

And this man went to South
America, Columbia, South

131

00:06:36,610 --> 00:06:38,650

America.

132

00:06:38,650 --> 00:06:42,730

And he was there
for a year or so,

133

00:06:42,730 --> 00:06:44,740

did whatever business he was in.

134
00:06:44,740 --> 00:06:46,510
I don't know.

135
00:06:46,510 --> 00:06:49,450
And he wrote back
to my aunt and said

136
00:06:49,450 --> 00:06:55,270
if you would come to Columbia,
we could get married there.

137
00:06:55,270 --> 00:06:58,900
I am in business
there, and so on.

138
00:06:58,900 --> 00:07:00,190
She did that.

139
00:07:00,190 --> 00:07:02,050
They got married.

140
00:07:02,050 --> 00:07:08,220
She then wrote back to
her sisters and brothers,

141
00:07:08,220 --> 00:07:10,420
come to South America.

142
00:07:10,420 --> 00:07:14,020
You will do very, very well.

143
00:07:14,020 --> 00:07:19,930
Sure enough, the rest of
the family went there.

144
00:07:19,930 --> 00:07:23,890
They became literally
millionaires.

145
00:07:23,890 --> 00:07:25,840
They all went into business.

146
00:07:25,840 --> 00:07:29,050
I was told, I don't
know how true it is,

147
00:07:29,050 --> 00:07:33,550
that they were the second
or the third Jewish family

148
00:07:33,550 --> 00:07:35,580
to settle in Colombia.

149
00:07:35,580 --> 00:07:40,900
I'm going back to
the early 1920s.

150
00:07:40,900 --> 00:07:47,140
From there, because they were
so successful in business--

151
00:07:47,140 --> 00:07:52,420
my original uncle George,
who was the first one there,

152
00:07:52,420 --> 00:07:55,720
he literally had a
sugar plantation,

153
00:07:55,720 --> 00:07:58,330
a coffee plantation.

154
00:07:58,330 --> 00:08:05,230
I was told that he sold the
sugar plantation to Coca-Cola.

155
00:08:05,230 --> 00:08:09,490
I don't know how many
years ago, and at that time

156
00:08:09,490 --> 00:08:11,480
was given \$4 million.

157

00:08:11,480 --> 00:08:13,480
Oh my gosh.

158
00:08:13,480 --> 00:08:18,340
It's probably equivalent
\$400 million today, whatever.

159
00:08:18,340 --> 00:08:20,560
I mean, he became so successful.

160
00:08:20,560 --> 00:08:25,780
He and my aunt, they
had a home in Paris.

161
00:08:25,780 --> 00:08:28,330
They had a home, I
think, in England.

162
00:08:28,330 --> 00:08:31,010
I'm not that sure.

163
00:08:31,010 --> 00:08:34,210
And my Aunt Paulina
would come here.

164
00:08:34,210 --> 00:08:38,590
They lived in Forrest
Hills for a while.

165
00:08:38,590 --> 00:08:41,245
They had one son, George.

166
00:08:41,245 --> 00:08:45,820

167
00:08:45,820 --> 00:08:50,940
The rest of the family
were also very Zionistic.

168
00:08:50,940 --> 00:08:57,320

169

00:08:57,320 --> 00:09:02,130

At the time that Israel
was being formed and all,

170

00:09:02,130 --> 00:09:10,780

they literally sent boatloads
of ammunition and everything

171

00:09:10,780 --> 00:09:14,830

to the Jewish people,
the Haganah people--

172

00:09:14,830 --> 00:09:15,520

Right.

173

00:09:15,520 --> 00:09:18,130

--before the forming of Israel.

174

00:09:18,130 --> 00:09:22,900

They supplied arms,
ammunition, and so on.

175

00:09:22,900 --> 00:09:28,510

And when the Jewish state was
formed, they came to Israel.

176

00:09:28,510 --> 00:09:31,030

They bought a lot
of real estate.

177

00:09:31,030 --> 00:09:34,150

They had orange groves.

178

00:09:34,150 --> 00:09:36,970

They had homes in Tel Aviv.

179

00:09:36,970 --> 00:09:40,360

My cousin George,
to this very day,

180

00:09:40,360 --> 00:09:43,810

lives in a penthouse
in Tel Aviv.

181
00:09:43,810 --> 00:09:45,370
He was here last year.

182
00:09:45,370 --> 00:09:48,560
He does business in New
York, and he came here.

183
00:09:48,560 --> 00:09:51,400
He was here for an
hour or two with me

184
00:09:51,400 --> 00:09:55,240
and he was telling me about
the rest of the family.

185
00:09:55,240 --> 00:09:58,660
My aunts and uncles, of
course, are gone by now,

186
00:09:58,660 --> 00:10:00,400
but there are cousins
who I've never

187
00:10:00,400 --> 00:10:04,860
met that are still in Israel.

188
00:10:04,860 --> 00:10:09,800
There is no more family left
in Colombia, South America.

189
00:10:09,800 --> 00:10:11,570
It's a very interesting family.

190
00:10:11,570 --> 00:10:15,590
Yes, it is, and at a
very interesting time.

191
00:10:15,590 --> 00:10:20,210
It was true that in tsarist
Russia, a lot of people

192

00:10:20,210 --> 00:10:22,070
ran away because
they didn't want

193
00:10:22,070 --> 00:10:24,110
to be part of the tsarist army.

194
00:10:24,110 --> 00:10:27,590
That is true, yeah.

195
00:10:27,590 --> 00:10:30,350
In your particular case,
it sounds extraordinarily

196
00:10:30,350 --> 00:10:34,190
auspicious for your father,
because even though he

197
00:10:34,190 --> 00:10:39,500
was an American soldier in World
War I as part of the US Army,

198
00:10:39,500 --> 00:10:42,320
the Russian Army experience
was much different,

199
00:10:42,320 --> 00:10:44,620
and it was a four-year war
rather than a one-year war.

200
00:10:44,620 --> 00:10:45,120
Oh, sure.

201
00:10:45,120 --> 00:10:47,940
It was probably the reason
why his father sent him away

202
00:10:47,940 --> 00:10:48,440
from there.

203
00:10:48,440 --> 00:10:51,950
He didn't want him going
into the Russian Army.

204
00:10:51,950 --> 00:10:54,680
So what happened with your
grandparents, your father's

205
00:10:54,680 --> 00:10:55,430
father?

206
00:10:55,430 --> 00:10:58,492
Did they stay or did they
eventually come as well?

207
00:10:58,492 --> 00:11:05,420
They finally migrated to Israel,
and they are buried in Israel.

208
00:11:05,420 --> 00:11:10,040
They did this in what
year, do you know?

209
00:11:10,040 --> 00:11:11,180
No.

210
00:11:11,180 --> 00:11:12,950
I was extremely young.

211
00:11:12,950 --> 00:11:16,700
I remember we were
living in an apartment,

212
00:11:16,700 --> 00:11:20,060
I think, on Bristol
Street in Brownsville.

213
00:11:20,060 --> 00:11:22,490
I believe that's where it is.

214
00:11:22,490 --> 00:11:24,590
And I was quite young.

215
00:11:24,590 --> 00:11:28,280
But I do remember

both my grandparents,

216

00:11:28,280 --> 00:11:32,570

my father's parents,
coming to see him,

217

00:11:32,570 --> 00:11:42,020

saying goodbye before they left
to go to the state of Israel.

218

00:11:42,020 --> 00:11:44,540

It was before there
was a state of Israel.

219

00:11:44,540 --> 00:11:46,430

When it was Palestine.

220

00:11:46,430 --> 00:11:52,400

My aunts, my father's
sisters, bought them my house.

221

00:11:52,400 --> 00:11:55,910

Believe it or not, I
remember the address

222

00:11:55,910 --> 00:11:58,100

where they were in Israel.

223

00:11:58,100 --> 00:12:00,740

It was Sharabi number 6.

224

00:12:00,740 --> 00:12:01,570

Oh, wow.

225

00:12:01,570 --> 00:12:02,510

Tel Aviv.

226

00:12:02,510 --> 00:12:03,100

Wow.

227

00:12:03,100 --> 00:12:10,020

That's where the house was that

my aunts bought their parents,

228

00:12:10,020 --> 00:12:13,070

my grandparents, in Israel.

229

00:12:13,070 --> 00:12:18,590

My grandmother died before

my grandfather died.

230

00:12:18,590 --> 00:12:22,270

Would this all have been

before World War II?

231

00:12:22,270 --> 00:12:22,810

Oh, yes.

232

00:12:22,810 --> 00:12:23,810

It would have had to be.

233

00:12:23,810 --> 00:12:25,970

Sure, I was a youngster.

234

00:12:25,970 --> 00:12:28,610

I remember them

coming into the house

235

00:12:28,610 --> 00:12:32,840

to see my father

before they left.

236

00:12:32,840 --> 00:12:35,510

I wasn't even in my teens then.

237

00:12:35,510 --> 00:12:37,950

I was that young.

238

00:12:37,950 --> 00:12:43,340

It struck my mind very vividly,

and that was the only time

239

00:12:43,340 --> 00:12:45,530

that I saw and met them.

240
00:12:45,530 --> 00:12:48,620
So that means they came from
Russia to the United States

241
00:12:48,620 --> 00:12:51,650
first and then
went to Palestine?

242
00:12:51,650 --> 00:12:52,410
Yes.

243
00:12:52,410 --> 00:12:52,910
OK.

244
00:12:52,910 --> 00:12:56,300
That's right,
Palestine, not Israel.

245
00:12:56,300 --> 00:13:01,220
And then if you were a young
kid and you were born in '23,

246
00:13:01,220 --> 00:13:04,843
that means that this would have
been in the '20s or early '30s.

247
00:13:04,843 --> 00:13:05,510
That is correct.

248
00:13:05,510 --> 00:13:08,225
It would have had
to be in the '20s.

249
00:13:08,225 --> 00:13:10,520
And one of the reasons
I'm going after dates

250
00:13:10,520 --> 00:13:16,010
is after the
Bolshevik Revolution,

251

00:13:16,010 --> 00:13:17,930

I wonder how many
people could have

252

00:13:17,930 --> 00:13:20,810

left the Ukraine after 1918.

253

00:13:20,810 --> 00:13:21,540

Interesting.

254

00:13:21,540 --> 00:13:26,210

So maybe they
emigrated before then?

255

00:13:26,210 --> 00:13:32,430

And if they emigrated after
1918 from that part of Russia,

256

00:13:32,430 --> 00:13:34,280

Ukraine, and so
on, then they would

257

00:13:34,280 --> 00:13:38,030

have had a story, because it
was a very tumultuous place.

258

00:13:38,030 --> 00:13:41,210

Oh, I'm sure it was.

259

00:13:41,210 --> 00:13:44,720

And they got out in time
because of the Ukrainian famine

260

00:13:44,720 --> 00:13:46,330

that happened in the early '30s.

261

00:13:46,330 --> 00:13:47,060

Yeah.

262

00:13:47,060 --> 00:13:50,270

They all got out in time, my
father's sisters and brothers,

263

00:13:50,270 --> 00:13:51,650
and so on.

264

00:13:51,650 --> 00:13:54,560
And here's then another
thought that comes to my mind

265

00:13:54,560 --> 00:14:01,130
as you're speaking, is
that we're interviewing you

266

00:14:01,130 --> 00:14:09,980
as a Jewish-American person
who is going to be experiencing

267

00:14:09,980 --> 00:14:12,680
something during World War II.

268

00:14:12,680 --> 00:14:14,630
But there are roots
in Europe, which

269

00:14:14,630 --> 00:14:16,670
we're talking about
now, roots in Russia,

270

00:14:16,670 --> 00:14:20,930
where the German occupation
and the Nazi occupation--

271

00:14:20,930 --> 00:14:23,270
the same at that time--

272

00:14:23,270 --> 00:14:24,470
extended.

273

00:14:24,470 --> 00:14:26,900
And when I'm
hearing you talk, it

274

00:14:26,900 --> 00:14:30,590
says to me there were no

family members of yours who

275

00:14:30,590 --> 00:14:33,050
were in the territories
that were at some point

276

00:14:33,050 --> 00:14:36,360
occupied by the Nazi forces.

277

00:14:36,360 --> 00:14:37,760
No.

278

00:14:37,760 --> 00:14:39,510
Because those who
stayed, of course,

279

00:14:39,510 --> 00:14:41,900
had a very, very different fate.

280

00:14:41,900 --> 00:14:43,920
No, I know of no
family members who

281

00:14:43,920 --> 00:14:50,810
were left behind, at least
to my knowledge anyway.

282

00:14:50,810 --> 00:14:53,570
Tell me, how did your
father make a living?

283

00:14:53,570 --> 00:14:57,920
What was his education
and his profession?

284

00:14:57,920 --> 00:14:59,810
My dad was actually--

285

00:14:59,810 --> 00:15:04,090

286

00:15:04,090 --> 00:15:07,090

he had one store after another.

287

00:15:07,090 --> 00:15:09,340

He tried very hard.

288

00:15:09,340 --> 00:15:12,910

Originally, I think it
was a clothing line.

289

00:15:12,910 --> 00:15:17,930

290

00:15:17,930 --> 00:15:21,140

I'm trying to
remember what he did.

291

00:15:21,140 --> 00:15:26,620

292

00:15:26,620 --> 00:15:31,220

Dad was a cutter, at
least in the clothing--

293

00:15:31,220 --> 00:15:38,240

whatever a cutter does in
clothing manufacturing.

294

00:15:38,240 --> 00:15:42,980

But when that went
poorly for him,

295

00:15:42,980 --> 00:15:47,240

he decided to go into retailing.

296

00:15:47,240 --> 00:15:52,220

He had a dairy
stand, a dairy store.

297

00:15:52,220 --> 00:15:55,325

I try to remember, on
Avenue U in Brooklyn.

298

00:15:55,325 --> 00:15:57,860

299

00:15:57,860 --> 00:16:01,430

We lived on Bedford
Avenue, near Avenue U,

300

00:16:01,430 --> 00:16:05,240

and he had a dairy store.

301

00:16:05,240 --> 00:16:07,185

He gave that up after a while.

302

00:16:07,185 --> 00:16:12,770

303

00:16:12,770 --> 00:16:16,530

From dairy, he went
into an appetizing store

304

00:16:16,530 --> 00:16:22,280

selling all type of smoked
fish, and what have you.

305

00:16:22,280 --> 00:16:26,900

From there, he finally
ended up in Brooklyn

306

00:16:26,900 --> 00:16:33,250

on St. John's place in
Crown Heights near--

307

00:16:33,250 --> 00:16:37,170

St. John's, near Buffalo Avenue.

308

00:16:37,170 --> 00:16:39,750

I remember that.

309

00:16:39,750 --> 00:16:43,220

And it was of
Silvers Sweet Shop.

310

00:16:43,220 --> 00:16:44,420
Oh, wow.

311
00:16:44,420 --> 00:16:45,680
It was a store.

312
00:16:45,680 --> 00:16:52,400
He carried all type of
nuts, all forms of candy,

313
00:16:52,400 --> 00:16:55,990
boxes of chocolate, halva.

314
00:16:55,990 --> 00:16:59,870
And it was very successful.

315
00:16:59,870 --> 00:17:03,470
He did very, very well in that.

316
00:17:03,470 --> 00:17:07,670
And I think that was the
last store that he owned.

317
00:17:07,670 --> 00:17:11,089
But from there, they were
able to buy a nice family

318
00:17:11,089 --> 00:17:17,869
house in Near Eastern Parkway,
and they did quite well

319
00:17:17,869 --> 00:17:19,020
at that point.

320
00:17:19,020 --> 00:17:22,230
Well, you literally grew up
as a kid in a candy store.

321
00:17:22,230 --> 00:17:24,260
Yeah.

322
00:17:24,260 --> 00:17:27,290

I would come in
there and help myself

323
00:17:27,290 --> 00:17:32,300
to dates and nuts and
chocolate, and you name it.

324
00:17:32,300 --> 00:17:33,770
Oh, wow.

325
00:17:33,770 --> 00:17:35,300
Yeah, Silver Sweet Shop.

326
00:17:35,300 --> 00:17:36,710
It was known all over.

327
00:17:36,710 --> 00:17:41,960
And he also had a picture in
the window of his cousin, also

328
00:17:41,960 --> 00:17:43,220
my cousin.

329
00:17:43,220 --> 00:17:45,830
If you've ever heard of
Phil Silvers, the comedian.

330
00:17:45,830 --> 00:17:46,670
Yes.

331
00:17:46,670 --> 00:17:48,500
Yes.

332
00:17:48,500 --> 00:17:51,200
When my dad came
to this country,

333
00:17:51,200 --> 00:17:56,090
he had one relative,
his uncle, who happened

334
00:17:56,090 --> 00:18:00,110

to be Phil Silver's father.

335
00:18:00,110 --> 00:18:01,960
My dad came to this country.

336
00:18:01,960 --> 00:18:05,360
His aunt was pregnant then.

337
00:18:05,360 --> 00:18:09,300
And when she gave
birth, it was to Philly.

338
00:18:09,300 --> 00:18:10,810
Oh my.

339
00:18:10,810 --> 00:18:15,270
And my dad had his only
relative, his uncle,

340
00:18:15,270 --> 00:18:17,430
so he lived with
them for a while.

341
00:18:17,430 --> 00:18:20,160

342
00:18:20,160 --> 00:18:24,810
He used to hold Philly
in his arms as an infant.

343
00:18:24,810 --> 00:18:30,330
When Phil grew up, he used to
refer to him as Uncle Sam, not

344
00:18:30,330 --> 00:18:31,620
his cousin.

345
00:18:31,620 --> 00:18:33,240
Oh.

346
00:18:33,240 --> 00:18:38,440
Philly was Phil

Silver, but people,

347

00:18:38,440 --> 00:18:40,710

when he went into
show business, they

348

00:18:40,710 --> 00:18:42,393

would call him, hey, Silvers.

349

00:18:42,393 --> 00:18:42,935

Hey, Silvers.

350

00:18:42,935 --> 00:18:43,946

[PHONE RINGING]

351

00:18:43,946 --> 00:18:47,620

352

00:18:47,620 --> 00:18:48,370

Hold that thought.

353

00:18:48,370 --> 00:18:51,440

354

00:18:51,440 --> 00:18:52,220

So Phil Silver.

355

00:18:52,220 --> 00:18:54,410

Phil was often referred
to-- because they

356

00:18:54,410 --> 00:18:57,170

called him Silvers-- hey,
Silvers, how are you?

357

00:18:57,170 --> 00:19:00,150

He kept the S at
the end of his name,

358

00:19:00,150 --> 00:19:03,350

but the name is Silver, really.

359

00:19:03,350 --> 00:19:07,360

The family name in
Russia was Srebrenik.

360

00:19:07,360 --> 00:19:13,220

Srebrenik in Russian, I
was told, means Silver.

361

00:19:13,220 --> 00:19:16,190

That's how we got the
family name of Silver.

362

00:19:16,190 --> 00:19:16,790

Oh.

363

00:19:16,790 --> 00:19:22,070

My dad's name, Samuel Srebrenik.

364

00:19:22,070 --> 00:19:23,300

Got it.

365

00:19:23,300 --> 00:19:27,020

So tell me, your
relatives, your aunts,

366

00:19:27,020 --> 00:19:32,030

who were so well-off,
it was because of one

367

00:19:32,030 --> 00:19:35,090

of their husbands,
that is the man who

368

00:19:35,090 --> 00:19:38,900

went to Columbia to begin
with and then invited

369

00:19:38,900 --> 00:19:41,010

your aunt to marry him?

370

00:19:41,010 --> 00:19:41,510

Yeah.

371
00:19:41,510 --> 00:19:43,220
What was his name?

372
00:19:43,220 --> 00:19:44,870
George Machunik.

373
00:19:44,870 --> 00:19:45,900
George Machunik.

374
00:19:45,900 --> 00:19:46,400
Yeah.

375
00:19:46,400 --> 00:19:50,580
And it was through him that arms
were sent to Israel to Haganah?

376
00:19:50,580 --> 00:19:53,240

377
00:19:53,240 --> 00:19:56,900
All my aunts and uncles
were very Zionist.

378
00:19:56,900 --> 00:20:01,400
They sent boatloads of arms
and ammunition to them.

379
00:20:01,400 --> 00:20:02,660
I'm just trying to find--

380
00:20:02,660 --> 00:20:06,320
OK, then if there were
more family names,

381
00:20:06,320 --> 00:20:11,000
could you tell us who they
were, the other aunts?

382
00:20:11,000 --> 00:20:15,050
Their maiden names were silver,
or whatever it is in Russian.

383
00:20:15,050 --> 00:20:16,140
I can't pronounce it.

384
00:20:16,140 --> 00:20:16,980
Srebrenik.

385
00:20:16,980 --> 00:20:19,640
Srebrenik.

386
00:20:19,640 --> 00:20:21,940
But they later on, I mean--

387
00:20:21,940 --> 00:20:24,410
They married.

388
00:20:24,410 --> 00:20:26,600
One named Fishman
was a last name.

389
00:20:26,600 --> 00:20:29,120

390
00:20:29,120 --> 00:20:33,890
Rosita, because they all
kept their Latin names

391
00:20:33,890 --> 00:20:37,550
from living in Colombia.

392
00:20:37,550 --> 00:20:42,700
So my aunt Rosita, which,
afterwards, was Rosie.

393
00:20:42,700 --> 00:20:43,710
Right.

394
00:20:43,710 --> 00:20:50,000
She married Heschel
Fishman, and so on.

395

00:20:50,000 --> 00:20:57,970
But my father's two
brothers was Enrique--

396
00:20:57,970 --> 00:21:01,390
Hanok in Hebrew.

397
00:21:01,390 --> 00:21:05,150
I mean, those are the names,
as I still recall some of them,

398
00:21:05,150 --> 00:21:05,770
you know.

399
00:21:05,770 --> 00:21:08,230
And they were Silvers as well.

400
00:21:08,230 --> 00:21:09,730
Enrique was a Silver.

401
00:21:09,730 --> 00:21:10,510
Sure.

402
00:21:10,510 --> 00:21:11,320
Sure.

403
00:21:11,320 --> 00:21:14,350
Gavriel, his other brother.

404
00:21:14,350 --> 00:21:17,430
Gavriel-- Gabriel-- was also.

405
00:21:17,430 --> 00:21:17,930
Sure.

406
00:21:17,930 --> 00:21:21,040

407
00:21:21,040 --> 00:21:23,710
Let's go back to
your cousin Phil,

408

00:21:23,710 --> 00:21:25,870

or for you he would
have been an uncle.

409

00:21:25,870 --> 00:21:27,010

Is that right?

410

00:21:27,010 --> 00:21:28,870

No, a cousin to me, too.

411

00:21:28,870 --> 00:21:33,670

My father's first cousin, but
he used to call him Uncle Sam

412

00:21:33,670 --> 00:21:38,740

because he remembered him as
an infant, when my father--

413

00:21:38,740 --> 00:21:40,300

you know, when he was born.

414

00:21:40,300 --> 00:21:41,140

Yeah.

415

00:21:41,140 --> 00:21:43,510

He was actually my
father's first cousin,

416

00:21:43,510 --> 00:21:46,750

but he always referred
to him as Uncle Sam

417

00:21:46,750 --> 00:21:49,360

because as a little
infant, my father

418

00:21:49,360 --> 00:21:51,340

was a grown person already.

419

00:21:51,340 --> 00:21:52,300

Right.

420

00:21:52,300 --> 00:21:56,200

But when my dad had the
store in St. John's place,

421

00:21:56,200 --> 00:21:59,430

Phil sent him a big
picture of himself.

422

00:21:59,430 --> 00:22:05,770

And my dad put it in a window,
Phil Silver, my cousin.

423

00:22:05,770 --> 00:22:06,890

Did you meet him?

424

00:22:06,890 --> 00:22:08,170

Did you know him?

425

00:22:08,170 --> 00:22:11,500

I met him when he was in--

426

00:22:11,500 --> 00:22:13,195

I forget the show on Broadway.

427

00:22:13,195 --> 00:22:16,135

428

00:22:16,135 --> 00:22:19,520

He had me come to
see him backstage.

429

00:22:19,520 --> 00:22:23,430

I'm trying to remember
what the show is.

430

00:22:23,430 --> 00:22:25,380

Isn't that something?

431

00:22:25,380 --> 00:22:26,820

Come on, Jerry, wake up.

432

00:22:26,820 --> 00:22:30,924

433

00:22:30,924 --> 00:22:37,270

Phil Silvers, High Button Shoes.

434

00:22:37,270 --> 00:22:38,880

High Button Shoes.

435

00:22:38,880 --> 00:22:41,080

Raz and I, we went backstage.

436

00:22:41,080 --> 00:22:45,180

Oh, my wife was, oh.

437

00:22:45,180 --> 00:22:45,970

Yeah.

438

00:22:45,970 --> 00:22:48,880

And he came through.

439

00:22:48,880 --> 00:22:51,640

And he was very nice
to us, you know.

440

00:22:51,640 --> 00:22:54,850

But when I went into
service, he sent me

441

00:22:54,850 --> 00:23:01,450

a letter, if you're ever
transferred to California,

442

00:23:01,450 --> 00:23:03,160

come stay at my home.

443

00:23:03,160 --> 00:23:08,710

But I was never shipped there.

444

00:23:08,710 --> 00:23:09,280

Yeah.

445

00:23:09,280 --> 00:23:10,366

How interesting.

446

00:23:10,366 --> 00:23:11,590

How interesting.

447

00:23:11,590 --> 00:23:12,950

Yeah.

448

00:23:12,950 --> 00:23:18,390

Because he had two
brothers, Saul, and I

449

00:23:18,390 --> 00:23:20,850

forget the other brother's name.

450

00:23:20,850 --> 00:23:25,540

The other brother
was an accountant,

451

00:23:25,540 --> 00:23:29,110

I believe, or a
lawyer, one of the two.

452

00:23:29,110 --> 00:23:34,310

But when Philly was in show
business and in New York,

453

00:23:34,310 --> 00:23:38,590

he was the softest touch for
anybody who needed money.

454

00:23:38,590 --> 00:23:42,490

Hey Phil, you got this?

455

00:23:42,490 --> 00:23:45,620

And his brother--

456

00:23:45,620 --> 00:23:50,370

I forget the brother's name,
that was this attorney.

457

00:23:50,370 --> 00:23:52,840

I think he was an attorney.

458

00:23:52,840 --> 00:23:56,320

He gave up his practice
to be his manager,

459

00:23:56,320 --> 00:24:02,890

because otherwise everybody
on Broadway owed Phil money.

460

00:24:02,890 --> 00:24:03,430

Oh my.

461

00:24:03,430 --> 00:24:05,770

If you needed money,
you went to Phil

462

00:24:05,770 --> 00:24:08,320

and he gave money
all over the place.

463

00:24:08,320 --> 00:24:11,350

But his brother couldn't
stand it anymore

464

00:24:11,350 --> 00:24:15,370

so he became his manager,
and because of that,

465

00:24:15,370 --> 00:24:17,810

Phil ended up fairly well.

466

00:24:17,810 --> 00:24:19,920

But otherwise, he would
have been dead broke.

467

00:24:19,920 --> 00:24:21,340

He was a soft touch.

468

00:24:21,340 --> 00:24:24,220

If you needed money, go to Phil.

469
00:24:24,220 --> 00:24:24,980
Oh my.

470
00:24:24,980 --> 00:24:29,020
But he was very successful
in burlesque, and then

471
00:24:29,020 --> 00:24:30,770
ultimately in Hollywood.

472
00:24:30,770 --> 00:24:32,780
Yeah, I remember
seeing him in films.

473
00:24:32,780 --> 00:24:33,280
Sure.

474
00:24:33,280 --> 00:24:33,610
Sure.

475
00:24:33,610 --> 00:24:34,110
Yeah.

476
00:24:34,110 --> 00:24:39,250

477
00:24:39,250 --> 00:24:41,590
Forgive me for putting
it so bluntly, and it's

478
00:24:41,590 --> 00:24:45,430
so self-evident, but how
Jewish was your family?

479
00:24:45,430 --> 00:24:46,465
That is, how--

480
00:24:46,465 --> 00:24:49,390
Oh, my dad was quite Jewish.

481

00:24:49,390 --> 00:24:52,510
My dad was quite Jewish,
very learned in that.

482
00:24:52,510 --> 00:25:01,360
He went religiously to
synagogue on Saturdays.

483
00:25:01,360 --> 00:25:05,470
Oh, he was quite
religious, to that extent.

484
00:25:05,470 --> 00:25:08,050
He was very
knowledgeable in that.

485
00:25:08,050 --> 00:25:12,680
And as a youngster, I
went to Hebrew school.

486
00:25:12,680 --> 00:25:16,810
I was bar mitzvahed and all.

487
00:25:16,810 --> 00:25:19,510
I was a member when we lived--

488
00:25:19,510 --> 00:25:24,460
we had our house in Hillcrest.

489
00:25:24,460 --> 00:25:28,570
I was a 36-year member of
the Hillcrest Jewish Center

490
00:25:28,570 --> 00:25:32,580
on Union Turnpike, 183rd
Street and Union Turnpike.

491
00:25:32,580 --> 00:25:34,690
A beautiful synagogue.

492
00:25:34,690 --> 00:25:37,780
I was quite active
in that synagogue.

493
00:25:37,780 --> 00:25:40,180
Was your mother
religious as well?

494
00:25:40,180 --> 00:25:42,050
Yes, my mother was religious.

495
00:25:42,050 --> 00:25:44,770
Her father was a kosher butcher.

496
00:25:44,770 --> 00:25:49,270
My grandparents were
extremely orthodox.

497
00:25:49,270 --> 00:25:54,340
And did you know your
mother's parents quite well?

498
00:25:54,340 --> 00:25:55,250
My mother's family?

499
00:25:55,250 --> 00:25:55,750
Yes.

500
00:25:55,750 --> 00:25:56,417
Sure, very well.

501
00:25:56,417 --> 00:25:58,450
My mother had two brothers.

502
00:25:58,450 --> 00:26:01,570
They were very
successful in business.

503
00:26:01,570 --> 00:26:03,220
And oh, sure.

504
00:26:03,220 --> 00:26:09,610
I was very close to my
aunts, my uncles, my cousins.

505

00:26:09,610 --> 00:26:11,710

Even though there was
only you and your sister

506

00:26:11,710 --> 00:26:13,960

in your own family,
you really come

507

00:26:13,960 --> 00:26:15,790

from a large extended family.

508

00:26:15,790 --> 00:26:16,480

That's right.

509

00:26:16,480 --> 00:26:17,760

That's very true.

510

00:26:17,760 --> 00:26:19,540

OK, that's the
impression I'm getting.

511

00:26:19,540 --> 00:26:22,000

That's very true.

512

00:26:22,000 --> 00:26:24,070

My mother was very close.

513

00:26:24,070 --> 00:26:28,530

She had several cousins
in this country.

514

00:26:28,530 --> 00:26:30,010

We're a close-knit family.

515

00:26:30,010 --> 00:26:35,290

516

00:26:35,290 --> 00:26:39,970

Was your social life
mostly in the family

517

00:26:39,970 --> 00:26:43,000
or did you have friends outside?

518
00:26:43,000 --> 00:26:46,330
I had friends from
the neighborhoods.

519
00:26:46,330 --> 00:26:48,700
OK.

520
00:26:48,700 --> 00:26:53,700
We lived for quite
a few years in--

521
00:26:53,700 --> 00:26:57,290
I'm trying to
remember the street--

522
00:26:57,290 --> 00:26:57,920
in Brooklyn.

523
00:26:57,920 --> 00:27:00,810

524
00:27:00,810 --> 00:27:04,380
Was it a Jewish neighborhood?

525
00:27:04,380 --> 00:27:05,820
Yeah, it was between--

526
00:27:05,820 --> 00:27:11,120
Sterling Place, Sterling Place
between Howard and Ralph.

527
00:27:11,120 --> 00:27:14,880
That's where I grew
up in my teens.

528
00:27:14,880 --> 00:27:19,560
And there were quite a
few guys on the block

529

00:27:19,560 --> 00:27:23,910
that we were very
close, and played

530
00:27:23,910 --> 00:27:28,530
a lot of punchbowl in the
street and a lot of stickball

531
00:27:28,530 --> 00:27:30,120
in the street.

532
00:27:30,120 --> 00:27:36,630
And I went to public school,
144 on Howard Avenue.

533
00:27:36,630 --> 00:27:39,860
And from there I went to
junior high school, 210

534
00:27:39,860 --> 00:27:42,180
on Rochester Avenue.

535
00:27:42,180 --> 00:27:46,130

536
00:27:46,130 --> 00:27:47,530
They were good years.

537
00:27:47,530 --> 00:27:50,360
Did you have any friends
who weren't Jewish?

538
00:27:50,360 --> 00:27:51,080
Who were what?

539
00:27:51,080 --> 00:27:53,900
Who were not Jewish?

540
00:27:53,900 --> 00:27:57,740
Not that I recall, no.

541
00:27:57,740 --> 00:28:01,340

We always ended up
with a Jewish crowd.

542
00:28:01,340 --> 00:28:04,050
Not that I looked for it, but
it just happened that way.

543
00:28:04,050 --> 00:28:04,550
Yeah.

544
00:28:04,550 --> 00:28:07,160
Well, a lot of people in
different neighborhoods.

545
00:28:07,160 --> 00:28:07,810
Right.

546
00:28:07,810 --> 00:28:12,620
The neighborhood at that point
was pretty much all Jewish.

547
00:28:12,620 --> 00:28:15,570
So I want to segue
a little bit now.

548
00:28:15,570 --> 00:28:22,130
In 1933, you were 10 years
old, having been born April--

549
00:28:22,130 --> 00:28:24,380
26th, 1920.

550
00:28:24,380 --> 00:28:25,700
Right.

551
00:28:25,700 --> 00:28:28,610
And it's in 1933
that Adolf Hitler

552
00:28:28,610 --> 00:28:31,290
comes to power in Germany.

553

00:28:31,290 --> 00:28:34,010
I remember reading about
that very strongly, yes.

554
00:28:34,010 --> 00:28:35,780
Tell me about that.

555
00:28:35,780 --> 00:28:37,175
Why did it stay in your mind?

556
00:28:37,175 --> 00:28:39,990

557
00:28:39,990 --> 00:28:43,860
Because of the fact that
so many Jewish people were

558
00:28:43,860 --> 00:28:51,390
being persecuted, it told
me, even at that young age,

559
00:28:51,390 --> 00:28:54,180
that this was a bad situation.

560
00:28:54,180 --> 00:28:56,740
And I used to follow it.

561
00:28:56,740 --> 00:29:02,020
My dad got a Jewish
newspaper The Day.

562
00:29:02,020 --> 00:29:06,640
There were two Jewish papers
that I'm aware, The Forward--

563
00:29:06,640 --> 00:29:09,490
called The Forverts in Yiddish--

564
00:29:09,490 --> 00:29:11,860
and The Day, Der Tog.

565
00:29:11,860 --> 00:29:14,590

My dad used to read Der Tog.

566

00:29:14,590 --> 00:29:17,260

Did it have some
sort of political--

567

00:29:17,260 --> 00:29:21,610

I learned how to read
the Jewish newspaper.

568

00:29:21,610 --> 00:29:25,510

I used to read the Jewish
newspaper religiously,

569

00:29:25,510 --> 00:29:28,330

and I followed the
happenings that were taking

570

00:29:28,330 --> 00:29:31,730

place in Europe at the time.

571

00:29:31,730 --> 00:29:32,230

Interesting.

572

00:29:32,230 --> 00:29:36,220

I was very, very knowledgeable,
at that early age,

573

00:29:36,220 --> 00:29:40,150

of what was happening
in and around Europe.

574

00:29:40,150 --> 00:29:44,000

Well, that's very interesting,
because most of the people,

575

00:29:44,000 --> 00:29:46,540

I wouldn't say all
of them, but many

576

00:29:46,540 --> 00:29:50,920

of the people who ended
up drafted in the US Army

577
00:29:50,920 --> 00:29:54,530
knew of some things
going on in Europe,

578
00:29:54,530 --> 00:29:56,530
but they didn't really follow.

579
00:29:56,530 --> 00:30:01,120
I was very well versed in
that, even at that young age.

580
00:30:01,120 --> 00:30:05,830
And the newspaper that
your father subscribed to,

581
00:30:05,830 --> 00:30:09,190
Der Tog as you say, did
that have a political slant?

582
00:30:09,190 --> 00:30:12,370
Forverts was a
socialist type of paper.

583
00:30:12,370 --> 00:30:13,300
Did Tog have--

584
00:30:13,300 --> 00:30:16,750
Yeah, politically, it was
probably quite leftist,

585
00:30:16,750 --> 00:30:19,450
I would imagine.

586
00:30:19,450 --> 00:30:20,710
Yeah.

587
00:30:20,710 --> 00:30:23,590
And also, my dad, by the way--

588
00:30:23,590 --> 00:30:27,610
it just comes to mind

to me as we're talking.

589
00:30:27,610 --> 00:30:29,590
Jerry, wake up.

590
00:30:29,590 --> 00:30:30,370
It happens.

591
00:30:30,370 --> 00:30:31,780
That's normal.

592
00:30:31,780 --> 00:30:36,970
As we're talking, I wanted
to tell you, my dad also,

593
00:30:36,970 --> 00:30:41,380
in his earlier years,
was one of the founders

594
00:30:41,380 --> 00:30:44,680
of the Jewish Usher's Union.

595
00:30:44,680 --> 00:30:47,040
What's that?

596
00:30:47,040 --> 00:30:48,410
The Yiddish Stage.

597
00:30:48,410 --> 00:30:52,190

598
00:30:52,190 --> 00:30:53,420
Now it comes to me.

599
00:30:53,420 --> 00:31:01,230
My dad was an usher at the
Jewish Stage, the Parkway

600
00:31:01,230 --> 00:31:03,960
Theater on Eastern Parkway.

601

00:31:03,960 --> 00:31:09,900

He was an usher at the
Second Avenue Theater,

602

00:31:09,900 --> 00:31:14,330
the Public Theater in Manhattan.

603

00:31:14,330 --> 00:31:20,060
And I grew up, as a youngster,
being taken to the Parkway

604

00:31:20,060 --> 00:31:24,580
Theater to see the Jewish--

605

00:31:24,580 --> 00:31:25,210
Plays.

606

00:31:25,210 --> 00:31:27,310
Jewish plays.

607

00:31:27,310 --> 00:31:34,000
When I was older, I became a
substitute usher on weekends.

608

00:31:34,000 --> 00:31:37,300
If an usher would take
off for the weekend,

609

00:31:37,300 --> 00:31:41,560
I would take his place as an
usher at the Jewish Theater.

610

00:31:41,560 --> 00:31:45,150
I would get \$1 for the
day I was an usher.

611

00:31:45,150 --> 00:31:49,090
A big dollar I used to get.

612

00:31:49,090 --> 00:31:53,525
And I saw many,
many Jewish shows.

613

00:31:53,525 --> 00:31:56,110

614

00:31:56,110 --> 00:31:56,690

In Yiddish?

615

00:31:56,690 --> 00:31:57,607

Were these in Yiddish?

616

00:31:57,607 --> 00:31:59,440

In Yiddish, because

I spoke Yiddish.

617

00:31:59,440 --> 00:32:03,220

I understood Yiddish,

and I enjoyed it.

618

00:32:03,220 --> 00:32:09,470

And I remember Jacob

Jacobs and his wife.

619

00:32:09,470 --> 00:32:12,170

So your knowledge

of Yiddish, it's

620

00:32:12,170 --> 00:32:15,890

not something that was augmented

by any formal training?

621

00:32:15,890 --> 00:32:18,390

It was all from just growing

up in the environment?

622

00:32:18,390 --> 00:32:19,400

Exactly.

623

00:32:19,400 --> 00:32:24,060

Listening to it, hearing it,

and becoming interested in it.

624

00:32:24,060 --> 00:32:26,000

And so reading the newspaper.

625
00:32:26,000 --> 00:32:29,750
Yeah, I probably could
still read it today

626
00:32:29,750 --> 00:32:30,770
if I was given it.

627
00:32:30,770 --> 00:32:32,270
I think I would.

628
00:32:32,270 --> 00:32:34,550
So that was also training?

629
00:32:34,550 --> 00:32:37,130
It was training, yeah.

630
00:32:37,130 --> 00:32:40,160
I was taught how to
write it, but that's

631
00:32:40,160 --> 00:32:42,200
one thing I forgot very early.

632
00:32:42,200 --> 00:32:47,330
But I never forgot the reading
of it and the speaker of it.

633
00:32:47,330 --> 00:32:48,325
That makes sense.

634
00:32:48,325 --> 00:32:49,700
That makes sense,
because writing

635
00:32:49,700 --> 00:32:53,510
is the final stage of fluency.

636
00:32:53,510 --> 00:32:54,890
Exactly.

637

00:32:54,890 --> 00:32:58,220

But I had no reason to
write it, so that's probably

638

00:32:58,220 --> 00:33:00,140

why I forgot it that early.

639

00:33:00,140 --> 00:33:03,590

Outside the home
and in school, were

640

00:33:03,590 --> 00:33:06,920

events in Europe discussed
as you were going through--

641

00:33:06,920 --> 00:33:07,740

At home?

642

00:33:07,740 --> 00:33:08,840

Yeah.

643

00:33:08,840 --> 00:33:10,670

When I was still
living at home, yeah.

644

00:33:10,670 --> 00:33:13,370

I used to hear my parents
discuss the events that

645

00:33:13,370 --> 00:33:14,940

were taking place.

646

00:33:14,940 --> 00:33:16,940

And then, of course,
my father was always

647

00:33:16,940 --> 00:33:20,450

getting letters from his
sisters and brothers,

648

00:33:20,450 --> 00:33:22,050

wherever they happened to be.

649

00:33:22,050 --> 00:33:24,830

650

00:33:24,830 --> 00:33:28,430

They would also
write their letters.

651

00:33:28,430 --> 00:33:31,910

Obviously, they would write
about the political events

652

00:33:31,910 --> 00:33:34,430

that were taking
place where they were.

653

00:33:34,430 --> 00:33:39,140

So my father was quite
versed and interested

654

00:33:39,140 --> 00:33:43,050

in knowing the
happenings of the day.

655

00:33:43,050 --> 00:33:47,300

So most of them were still in
South America in the 1930s,

656

00:33:47,300 --> 00:33:48,830

is that right?

657

00:33:48,830 --> 00:33:50,430

Sure, they would have had to be.

658

00:33:50,430 --> 00:33:51,260

Yes, they were.

659

00:33:51,260 --> 00:33:52,100

So they were--

660

00:33:52,100 --> 00:33:54,320

But they were
beginning to become

661
00:33:54,320 --> 00:33:59,030
so successful financially
they began their traveling.

662
00:33:59,030 --> 00:34:04,640
And they would come to stop
in this country to see us,

663
00:34:04,640 --> 00:34:06,920
whoever were the
ones who were here,

664
00:34:06,920 --> 00:34:09,980
and that's how we got to
meet some of my aunts.

665
00:34:09,980 --> 00:34:11,300
Tell me this.

666
00:34:11,300 --> 00:34:15,050
During World War II, that
is, before the United States

667
00:34:15,050 --> 00:34:20,179
entered the war in 1944, but
in the early years of the war,

668
00:34:20,179 --> 00:34:23,239
were your relatives
still in South America

669
00:34:23,239 --> 00:34:25,340
or had they moved to
Palestine by then?

670
00:34:25,340 --> 00:34:28,840

671
00:34:28,840 --> 00:34:31,690
Palestine was formed
in what, in '48?

672

00:34:31,690 --> 00:34:33,550

Well, Israel was formed in '48.

673

00:34:33,550 --> 00:34:34,850

I meant Israel in '48.

674

00:34:34,850 --> 00:34:35,350

'48.

675

00:34:35,350 --> 00:34:40,060

676

00:34:40,060 --> 00:34:42,190

They were more, I
think, in Europe

677

00:34:42,190 --> 00:34:50,699

than they were in the Middle
East that I can try to recall,

678

00:34:50,699 --> 00:34:52,889

although their
parents had been there

679

00:34:52,889 --> 00:34:57,600

at a very early
age in Palestine.

680

00:34:57,600 --> 00:35:00,030

But I think they
were already involved

681

00:35:00,030 --> 00:35:04,280

in the machinations of
the Haganah or the Zionist

682

00:35:04,280 --> 00:35:05,370

movement.

683

00:35:05,370 --> 00:35:09,510

This would have been right
after World War II, after '45.

684
00:35:09,510 --> 00:35:10,110
Yeah.

685
00:35:10,110 --> 00:35:14,520
But I'm wondering, if they were
so aware of what was going on

686
00:35:14,520 --> 00:35:16,220
and had the financial means--

687
00:35:16,220 --> 00:35:21,340
Oh, they were very well
aware of what was going on.

688
00:35:21,340 --> 00:35:26,940
So during World War II, as
Jews were being slaughtered

689
00:35:26,940 --> 00:35:31,500
and trying to get out of Europe,
do you know if your relatives--

690
00:35:31,500 --> 00:35:34,260
I had no relatives, to my
knowledge, that were ever

691
00:35:34,260 --> 00:35:36,770
lost in the Holocaust.

692
00:35:36,770 --> 00:35:39,870
But the relatives that
went to South America,

693
00:35:39,870 --> 00:35:42,090
do you know if
they were involved

694
00:35:42,090 --> 00:35:45,210
in any kind of rescue
efforts, if they had prepared

695

00:35:45,210 --> 00:35:48,370
any papers for anybody?

696
00:35:48,370 --> 00:35:51,370
I'm unaware of any of that.

697
00:35:51,370 --> 00:35:54,300
To my knowledge, it was
never told me or it was never

698
00:35:54,300 --> 00:35:55,950
discussed with me.

699
00:35:55,950 --> 00:35:57,040
I don't know that.

700
00:35:57,040 --> 00:35:57,770
OK.

701
00:35:57,770 --> 00:35:59,370
OK.

702
00:35:59,370 --> 00:36:01,410
But the sense that
I'm getting is

703
00:36:01,410 --> 00:36:06,660
that your childhood
and youth you really

704
00:36:06,660 --> 00:36:14,940
are spending in like the
golden age of New York

705
00:36:14,940 --> 00:36:16,020
Jewish cultural life.

706
00:36:16,020 --> 00:36:17,380
Oh, absolutely.

707
00:36:17,380 --> 00:36:17,880
Yeah.

708
00:36:17,880 --> 00:36:20,220
Oh, completely, completely.

709
00:36:20,220 --> 00:36:24,750
I mean, between my
dad's knowledge of it,

710
00:36:24,750 --> 00:36:28,200
my dad being in
the Jewish theater,

711
00:36:28,200 --> 00:36:33,885
and seeing Jewish
theater as a youngster--

712
00:36:33,885 --> 00:36:34,800
[PHONE RINGING]

713
00:36:34,800 --> 00:36:35,300

714
00:36:35,300 --> 00:36:36,580
Let's cut.

715
00:36:36,580 --> 00:36:39,310
Excuse me.

716
00:36:39,310 --> 00:36:41,590
We're rolling.

717
00:36:41,590 --> 00:36:43,360
What were we talking
about before?

718
00:36:43,360 --> 00:36:45,490
It was about--

719
00:36:45,490 --> 00:36:46,330
Family.

720

00:36:46,330 --> 00:36:52,810
Family and growing up in
a very culturally rich--

721
00:36:52,810 --> 00:36:53,380
Yiddish.

722
00:36:53,380 --> 00:36:54,190
Yiddish.

723
00:36:54,190 --> 00:36:54,910
Atmosphere.

724
00:36:54,910 --> 00:36:55,410
Yeah.

725
00:36:55,410 --> 00:37:00,110

726
00:37:00,110 --> 00:37:03,110
As you're going
through school, how

727
00:37:03,110 --> 00:37:05,330
are your interests developing?

728
00:37:05,330 --> 00:37:09,590
In the late '30s, you're
already a teenager.

729
00:37:09,590 --> 00:37:10,563
What are you doing?

730
00:37:10,563 --> 00:37:11,480
What are you studying?

731
00:37:11,480 --> 00:37:13,340
What are you interested
in at the time?

732
00:37:13,340 --> 00:37:18,640

733
00:37:18,640 --> 00:37:24,730
I actually never really
thought about what

734
00:37:24,730 --> 00:37:30,310
I would do as an adult, for
some very ridiculous reason.

735
00:37:30,310 --> 00:37:32,470
I don't know to this very day.

736
00:37:32,470 --> 00:37:34,870
I can't tell you
that I had an urge

737
00:37:34,870 --> 00:37:41,200
to want to be studying
law, medicine, you name it.

738
00:37:41,200 --> 00:37:44,170
Nothing ever really
struck me as, gee,

739
00:37:44,170 --> 00:37:48,640
that's what I want to do,
for whatever stupid reason.

740
00:37:48,640 --> 00:37:50,890
Did your parents
emphasize education?

741
00:37:50,890 --> 00:37:52,510
And I went through school.

742
00:37:52,510 --> 00:37:53,650
I did fairly well.

743
00:37:53,650 --> 00:37:58,120
I was not the top student
nor was I the lowest student.

744

00:37:58,120 --> 00:37:59,560
I was an average student.

745
00:37:59,560 --> 00:38:03,150

746
00:38:03,150 --> 00:38:13,620
Also, as I was getting older, I
became aware of the fact, hey,

747
00:38:13,620 --> 00:38:16,380
there's a war going
to be breaking out.

748
00:38:16,380 --> 00:38:17,550
So even though--

749
00:38:17,550 --> 00:38:20,070

750
00:38:20,070 --> 00:38:24,060
And that really took my
mind off what I would

751
00:38:24,060 --> 00:38:28,510
be doing as an adult here.

752
00:38:28,510 --> 00:38:34,980
So the war, the events
that were taking place,

753
00:38:34,980 --> 00:38:40,090
clashed with some of the
ideas that I had growing up.

754
00:38:40,090 --> 00:38:42,600

755
00:38:42,600 --> 00:38:48,210
Yeah, some of the guys
that I knew, even though we

756

00:38:48,210 --> 00:38:51,690
were in the same
atmosphere, some of them

757
00:38:51,690 --> 00:38:57,390
became successful
accountants, law, whatever.

758
00:38:57,390 --> 00:39:01,705
I, unfortunately, did
not fall into that realm.

759
00:39:01,705 --> 00:39:04,950

760
00:39:04,950 --> 00:39:11,800
I did end up doing fairly
well as a sales person.

761
00:39:11,800 --> 00:39:15,980
And when I got out of service--

762
00:39:15,980 --> 00:39:17,370
Well, that's after the war.

763
00:39:17,370 --> 00:39:18,070
Yeah.

764
00:39:18,070 --> 00:39:20,280
OK, I'm still talking
before the war,

765
00:39:20,280 --> 00:39:21,990
but if you want to
continue, go ahead.

766
00:39:21,990 --> 00:39:24,780
Well, before the war,
I went into service

767
00:39:24,780 --> 00:39:27,450
at the very beginning of '43.

768

00:39:27,450 --> 00:39:28,410

OK.

769

00:39:28,410 --> 00:39:34,420

Between 1939, when you would
have been 16 years old,

770

00:39:34,420 --> 00:39:36,120

something like that--

771

00:39:36,120 --> 00:39:37,560

I was still in school.

772

00:39:37,560 --> 00:39:38,430

Right.

773

00:39:38,430 --> 00:39:41,640

So World War I, excuse
me, World War II

774

00:39:41,640 --> 00:39:45,060

broke out on
September 1st, 1939.

775

00:39:45,060 --> 00:39:47,098

You would have
been 16 and a half.

776

00:39:47,098 --> 00:39:47,640

That's right.

777

00:39:47,640 --> 00:39:51,540

Do you remember hearing
or reading about it?

778

00:39:51,540 --> 00:39:53,430

I was very interested.

779

00:39:53,430 --> 00:39:57,840

Those things interested me
greatly, what was taking place.

780

00:39:57,840 --> 00:39:58,380

Oh, yes.

781

00:39:58,380 --> 00:40:04,810

I read the newspapers

very, very, very--

782

00:40:04,810 --> 00:40:08,230

there wasn't a day went by

that I didn't read or listen

783

00:40:08,230 --> 00:40:10,180

to the radio to

what was taking--

784

00:40:10,180 --> 00:40:13,810

no, that to that extent,

I was quite interested

785

00:40:13,810 --> 00:40:16,750

and very knowledgeable,

for my age,

786

00:40:16,750 --> 00:40:19,530

to what was taking

place in those years.

787

00:40:19,530 --> 00:40:20,030

Yeah.

788

00:40:20,030 --> 00:40:26,320

So when you found out

about the war breaking out,

789

00:40:26,320 --> 00:40:31,630

was there also news

at that time of what

790

00:40:31,630 --> 00:40:34,420

was happening to European

Jews, whether they were

791

00:40:34,420 --> 00:40:38,500
in Poland or in France
or in the Netherlands,

792
00:40:38,500 --> 00:40:41,470
in those first four
years, from '39

793
00:40:41,470 --> 00:40:45,340
till '43 when you
were in the Army?

794
00:40:45,340 --> 00:40:48,838
But in that interim period,
how much knowledge--

795
00:40:48,838 --> 00:40:51,130
I guess I'm trying to get a
sense of how much knowledge

796
00:40:51,130 --> 00:40:54,760
was there about what was
happening to the Jews.

797
00:40:54,760 --> 00:40:57,610
I personally was
knowledgeable about it.

798
00:40:57,610 --> 00:41:02,120
A lot of the fellows
that I knew, my friends,

799
00:41:02,120 --> 00:41:04,150
was never discussed amongst us.

800
00:41:04,150 --> 00:41:08,710
But myself personally, I
followed that very closely.

801
00:41:08,710 --> 00:41:13,270
I knew of no one in the family
that was being persecuted,

802

00:41:13,270 --> 00:41:15,830
but it interested
me to know of it.

803
00:41:15,830 --> 00:41:18,940
I was good about that.

804
00:41:18,940 --> 00:41:20,980
So tell me, do you
remember what it

805
00:41:20,980 --> 00:41:23,650
is you knew about those events?

806
00:41:23,650 --> 00:41:27,160
Did you know of disappearances?

807
00:41:27,160 --> 00:41:29,375
Did you know of
concentration camps?

808
00:41:29,375 --> 00:41:32,080

809
00:41:32,080 --> 00:41:38,620
Yes, I knew of that, as much
as I could read about or hear

810
00:41:38,620 --> 00:41:40,720
about on the radio.

811
00:41:40,720 --> 00:41:44,478
Yes, I followed that.

812
00:41:44,478 --> 00:41:46,270
I guess one of the
three reasons I'm asking

813
00:41:46,270 --> 00:41:49,600
is how much news was
there about these things?

814

00:41:49,600 --> 00:41:52,690
How much could there
have been information?

815
00:41:52,690 --> 00:41:58,390
I mean, were newspapers
writing about the camps?

816
00:41:58,390 --> 00:42:02,080
About the camps themselves,
I cannot say that I know

817
00:42:02,080 --> 00:42:06,820
of anything that was intimately
taking place in the camps.

818
00:42:06,820 --> 00:42:09,870
What I did know was the
fact that there were camps.

819
00:42:09,870 --> 00:42:11,200
OK.

820
00:42:11,200 --> 00:42:12,190
OK.

821
00:42:12,190 --> 00:42:16,060
Beyond that, I
knew of no one that

822
00:42:16,060 --> 00:42:20,440
wrote about what took
place in the camps.

823
00:42:20,440 --> 00:42:23,380
Being here in New
York, there were

824
00:42:23,380 --> 00:42:25,930
a lot of German-Jewish
refugees coming

825
00:42:25,930 --> 00:42:29,320

to New York right
after Kristallnacht

826
00:42:29,320 --> 00:42:31,330
or before Kristallnacht.

827
00:42:31,330 --> 00:42:33,640
I mean, they were
fleeing Germany.

828
00:42:33,640 --> 00:42:38,910
Did your path ever cross
with a refugee from Germany?

829
00:42:38,910 --> 00:42:40,140
No.

830
00:42:40,140 --> 00:42:42,010
Not that I recall.

831
00:42:42,010 --> 00:42:44,510
German-Jews, no.

832
00:42:44,510 --> 00:42:45,395
OK.

833
00:42:45,395 --> 00:42:47,770
So it wouldn't have been that
you could have found things

834
00:42:47,770 --> 00:42:50,110
out, even in a
very personal way,

835
00:42:50,110 --> 00:42:51,520
through some kind of contact?

836
00:42:51,520 --> 00:42:52,910
No.

837
00:42:52,910 --> 00:42:53,690
OK.

838
00:42:53,690 --> 00:42:54,190
No.

839
00:42:54,190 --> 00:42:57,730
Never got that close to me.

840
00:42:57,730 --> 00:42:58,410
Let's cut again.

841
00:42:58,410 --> 00:43:01,662

842
00:43:01,662 --> 00:43:02,162
Rolling.

843
00:43:02,162 --> 00:43:04,980

844
00:43:04,980 --> 00:43:06,560
OK.

845
00:43:06,560 --> 00:43:11,030
So by 1939, you're
in high school.

846
00:43:11,030 --> 00:43:15,530
By 1943, you're already
then about 20 years old.

847
00:43:15,530 --> 00:43:19,250

848
00:43:19,250 --> 00:43:21,920
When did you finish high
school, and did you work at all?

849
00:43:21,920 --> 00:43:27,890
January 1940, I graduated
Thomas Jefferson High School.

850

00:43:27,890 --> 00:43:31,570
And Raz graduated in 1941.

851
00:43:31,570 --> 00:43:32,300
That your wife?

852
00:43:32,300 --> 00:43:33,660
We went to the same high school.

853
00:43:33,660 --> 00:43:37,670
I didn't know her then, but we
went to the same high school.

854
00:43:37,670 --> 00:43:40,400
And what did you do afterwards?

855
00:43:40,400 --> 00:43:43,860

856
00:43:43,860 --> 00:43:52,330
In 1940, when I graduated
high school, oh, I think I--

857
00:43:52,330 --> 00:43:57,710

858
00:43:57,710 --> 00:43:59,220
that's a very good question.

859
00:43:59,220 --> 00:44:01,240
What did I do?

860
00:44:01,240 --> 00:44:03,020
I don't think I went to--

861
00:44:03,020 --> 00:44:03,810
no, I--

862
00:44:03,810 --> 00:44:06,350

863

00:44:06,350 --> 00:44:07,910

Did you work in
your dad's store?

864

00:44:07,910 --> 00:44:09,710

I worked in dad's store.

865

00:44:09,710 --> 00:44:11,120

Right, that's correct.

866

00:44:11,120 --> 00:44:17,240

I worked in dad's store and
I was ushering on weekends

867

00:44:17,240 --> 00:44:19,710

at the Jewish theater.

868

00:44:19,710 --> 00:44:23,720

And basically I
knew that I'm going

869

00:44:23,720 --> 00:44:27,650

to be drafted into the
Army, so it was just

870

00:44:27,650 --> 00:44:30,920

a sense of waiting
until I was called in.

871

00:44:30,920 --> 00:44:33,980

So tell me, were people
just absolutely sure

872

00:44:33,980 --> 00:44:37,130

that the US was going
to enter the war?

873

00:44:37,130 --> 00:44:38,850

Is that the conversation
of those years?

874

00:44:38,850 --> 00:44:39,395

Oh, sure.

875
00:44:39,395 --> 00:44:42,704

876
00:44:42,704 --> 00:44:46,730
It was a God-given thing that
it was going to take place.

877
00:44:46,730 --> 00:44:48,200
Yeah, sure.

878
00:44:48,200 --> 00:44:50,570
OK.

879
00:44:50,570 --> 00:44:55,380
Listening to President
Roosevelt talk about it,

880
00:44:55,380 --> 00:44:57,650
I knew that we were
going to go into war.

881
00:44:57,650 --> 00:45:00,480
It was common knowledge.

882
00:45:00,480 --> 00:45:02,340
Do you remember
where you were when

883
00:45:02,340 --> 00:45:03,630
you learned of Pearl Harbor?

884
00:45:03,630 --> 00:45:06,200

885
00:45:06,200 --> 00:45:07,880
1941.

886
00:45:07,880 --> 00:45:10,838
December, 1941.

887

00:45:10,838 --> 00:45:13,130
Do you remember hearing of
the bombing of Pearl Harbor?

888
00:45:13,130 --> 00:45:15,550
Oh, by all means, of course.

889
00:45:15,550 --> 00:45:17,870
Of course.

890
00:45:17,870 --> 00:45:21,420
It's all everyone spoke about.

891
00:45:21,420 --> 00:45:23,230
Yeah, it was common knowledge.

892
00:45:23,230 --> 00:45:25,250
We're going to be there any day.

893
00:45:25,250 --> 00:45:27,230
We're all going in.

894
00:45:27,230 --> 00:45:30,830
We're going to fight the Japs.

895
00:45:30,830 --> 00:45:34,700
So when you were
waiting to be drafted,

896
00:45:34,700 --> 00:45:36,530
you really wouldn't
know whether you'd

897
00:45:36,530 --> 00:45:38,620
go to the Pacific Theater--

898
00:45:38,620 --> 00:45:43,160
No, in those years,
you never knew that.

899
00:45:43,160 --> 00:45:45,200
You never knew that.

900
00:45:45,200 --> 00:45:49,310
You had the chance to
volunteer, if you wanted to,

901
00:45:49,310 --> 00:45:54,380
to go into the Navy or the
Air Force, to be an air cadet,

902
00:45:54,380 --> 00:45:55,140
and so on.

903
00:45:55,140 --> 00:45:58,260
But as a nice
Jewish boy, I wasn't

904
00:45:58,260 --> 00:46:00,050
interested in leaving home.

905
00:46:00,050 --> 00:46:02,240
I was waiting to be called.

906
00:46:02,240 --> 00:46:05,870
And mommy and daddy
wanted me that way.

907
00:46:05,870 --> 00:46:06,680
Of course.

908
00:46:06,680 --> 00:46:08,010
Of course.

909
00:46:08,010 --> 00:46:11,536
[SPEAKING YIDDISH]

910
00:46:11,536 --> 00:46:13,280
[LAUGHTER]

911
00:46:13,280 --> 00:46:14,120

912

00:46:14,120 --> 00:46:16,070
And what did you
speak at home, English

913
00:46:16,070 --> 00:46:19,490
with one another or Yiddish?

914
00:46:19,490 --> 00:46:21,110
Basically English.

915
00:46:21,110 --> 00:46:22,340
Basically English.

916
00:46:22,340 --> 00:46:26,260
But if my parents were
speaking to themselves,

917
00:46:26,260 --> 00:46:29,390
it would usually be in
Yiddish, and occasionally

918
00:46:29,390 --> 00:46:31,100
an English word was thrown in.

919
00:46:31,100 --> 00:46:34,860

920
00:46:34,860 --> 00:46:37,370
That was my normal
way of listening.

921
00:46:37,370 --> 00:46:39,590
It never dawned on me
that they should only

922
00:46:39,590 --> 00:46:41,750
speak English and all.

923
00:46:41,750 --> 00:46:46,130
To me, that's the way
that they should speak.

924

00:46:46,130 --> 00:46:48,410
OK.

925
00:46:48,410 --> 00:46:52,520
So when were you
finally drafted?

926
00:46:52,520 --> 00:46:57,680
I was drafted in
February or March of '43.

927
00:46:57,680 --> 00:47:04,302
I was called earlier, but when
I went to the draft board--

928
00:47:04,302 --> 00:47:07,490
it was probably at the
very beginning of '43,

929
00:47:07,490 --> 00:47:13,100
but they didn't reach my number
until around February or March,

930
00:47:13,100 --> 00:47:19,480
and I was drafted then and
was sent to Camp Upton out

931
00:47:19,480 --> 00:47:21,410
in Long Island.

932
00:47:21,410 --> 00:47:28,860
And from there, I was shipped
to Fort Dearborn, Illinois.

933
00:47:28,860 --> 00:47:32,240
And it ended up
as a 40 millimeter

934
00:47:32,240 --> 00:47:37,140
anti-aircraft battalion unit.

935
00:47:37,140 --> 00:47:44,120
397 AAA automatic weapon, 40

millimeter, anti-aircraft.

936
00:47:44,120 --> 00:47:45,050
Wow.

937
00:47:45,050 --> 00:47:46,760
And it was very interesting.

938
00:47:46,760 --> 00:47:53,090
It was great because it was
right on the shores of Lake

939
00:47:53,090 --> 00:47:57,470
Michigan, and Fort
Dearborn happened

940
00:47:57,470 --> 00:48:01,910
to be a regular Army
post that went back

941
00:48:01,910 --> 00:48:04,620
to the early 20th century.

942
00:48:04,620 --> 00:48:08,000
It was a beautiful,
beautiful regular Army

943
00:48:08,000 --> 00:48:11,360
post on the outskirts
of Washington,

944
00:48:11,360 --> 00:48:12,890
on the shores of Lake Michigan.

945
00:48:12,890 --> 00:48:17,000

946
00:48:17,000 --> 00:48:19,460
Outskirts of Washington?

947
00:48:19,460 --> 00:48:21,350
Was there a town

called Washington?

948

00:48:21,350 --> 00:48:23,320

No, did I say Washington?

949

00:48:23,320 --> 00:48:25,760

Yeah.

950

00:48:25,760 --> 00:48:28,130

On the shores of Lake Michigan.

951

00:48:28,130 --> 00:48:31,440

On the outskirts of
Chicago, excuse me.

952

00:48:31,440 --> 00:48:31,940

OK.

953

00:48:31,940 --> 00:48:33,080

What did I say, Washington?

954

00:48:33,080 --> 00:48:34,220

My God.

955

00:48:34,220 --> 00:48:35,670

It's OK.

956

00:48:35,670 --> 00:48:38,240

And it was great.

957

00:48:38,240 --> 00:48:41,270

As a matter of fact,
the commanding officer,

958

00:48:41,270 --> 00:48:44,900

the colonel, happened to
be the former basketball

959

00:48:44,900 --> 00:48:48,230

coach of DePaul
University, which

960

00:48:48,230 --> 00:48:52,400
is out in the Chicago area.

961

00:48:52,400 --> 00:48:55,440
But it was really great.

962

00:48:55,440 --> 00:48:57,800
I enjoyed it
because on weekends,

963

00:48:57,800 --> 00:49:03,230
when we got our passes, I would
spend one weekend in Chicago

964

00:49:03,230 --> 00:49:06,380
and another weekend we
would go to Milwaukee.

965

00:49:06,380 --> 00:49:07,880
Oh, wow.

966

00:49:07,880 --> 00:49:10,670
Oh, it was really great.

967

00:49:10,670 --> 00:49:15,440
Chicago was a
great soldier town,

968

00:49:15,440 --> 00:49:17,900
because when you
went into a bar,

969

00:49:17,900 --> 00:49:21,020
they would not let
you pay for anything.

970

00:49:21,020 --> 00:49:23,510
Because as a soldier--

971

00:49:23,510 --> 00:49:32,930
Chicago was really a sailor
town because it had the--

972
00:49:32,930 --> 00:49:35,720
what was the base of--

973
00:49:35,720 --> 00:49:38,980
the Great Lakes Naval
Station was there.

974
00:49:38,980 --> 00:49:43,520
So it was a sailor town,
loaded with sailors, but very

975
00:49:43,520 --> 00:49:44,930
few soldiers.

976
00:49:44,930 --> 00:49:50,350
So when we went into a bar,
hey, you don't pay for drinks.

977
00:49:50,350 --> 00:49:52,730
It was really nice.

978
00:49:52,730 --> 00:49:56,010
And I liked Chicago very much.

979
00:49:56,010 --> 00:49:56,810
It was great.

980
00:49:56,810 --> 00:49:59,300
That's quite a compliment,
coming from a New Yorker.

981
00:49:59,300 --> 00:50:00,200
Yeah.

982
00:50:00,200 --> 00:50:01,310
It was a great town.

983
00:50:01,310 --> 00:50:03,230
They treated us nicely.

984

00:50:03,230 --> 00:50:07,680
Milwaukee was nice,
and I liked it.

985
00:50:07,680 --> 00:50:08,970
Did you, in the service--

986
00:50:08,970 --> 00:50:11,580
excuse me for just
interrupting here--

987
00:50:11,580 --> 00:50:15,660
did you meet other people who
were not Jewish background?

988
00:50:15,660 --> 00:50:17,460
Was this the first
time you really were--

989
00:50:17,460 --> 00:50:18,840
Yes, the first time.

990
00:50:18,840 --> 00:50:19,860
Right.

991
00:50:19,860 --> 00:50:21,510
I had no problem.

992
00:50:21,510 --> 00:50:24,150
We assimilated very well.

993
00:50:24,150 --> 00:50:24,910
OK.

994
00:50:24,910 --> 00:50:25,410
Yeah.

995
00:50:25,410 --> 00:50:28,095
We didn't look at each
other as you're not Jewish

996
00:50:28,095 --> 00:50:29,670

or you are Jewish.

997

00:50:29,670 --> 00:50:32,400

No, that never
even came to play.

998

00:50:32,400 --> 00:50:35,430

Was there any anti-Semitism
that you ever felt?

999

00:50:35,430 --> 00:50:37,220

Not that I was aware of.

1000

00:50:37,220 --> 00:50:38,540

OK.

1001

00:50:38,540 --> 00:50:42,600

At least not
directed at me then.

1002

00:50:42,600 --> 00:50:44,050

It was directed at me--

1003

00:50:44,050 --> 00:50:45,820

I'll tell you about it--

1004

00:50:45,820 --> 00:50:47,760

during the war.

1005

00:50:47,760 --> 00:50:52,260

If you read that thing,
I'd like you to see that.

1006

00:50:52,260 --> 00:50:54,000

OK, we'll talk
about this incident

1007

00:50:54,000 --> 00:50:56,750

that you're talking
about later on.

1008

00:50:56,750 --> 00:50:57,420

Later on?

1009
00:50:57,420 --> 00:50:58,050
OK.

1010
00:50:58,050 --> 00:50:59,860
OK.

1011
00:50:59,860 --> 00:51:04,020
But remind me of it if
when it comes to that area.

1012
00:51:04,020 --> 00:51:08,400
So this is the first time you're
really intensively involved

1013
00:51:08,400 --> 00:51:11,580
with meeting people who are
of different backgrounds.

1014
00:51:11,580 --> 00:51:13,390
Absolutely.

1015
00:51:13,390 --> 00:51:17,290
But basically, my outfit was
basically a New York outfit.

1016
00:51:17,290 --> 00:51:20,090
We all were shipped
out at Camp Upton.

1017
00:51:20,090 --> 00:51:27,720
So the guys that I met, some
from Brooklyn, from the Bronx,

1018
00:51:27,720 --> 00:51:31,500
some from Amsterdam, New
York, upstate New York.

1019
00:51:31,500 --> 00:51:37,530
It was a New York outfit, so
we all assimilated very well.

1020

00:51:37,530 --> 00:51:41,480

Our backgrounds were fairly similar, being New Yorkers.

1021

00:51:41,480 --> 00:51:42,420

Right.

1022

00:51:42,420 --> 00:51:43,020

Right.

1023

00:51:43,020 --> 00:51:46,520

So tell me this,
how did you end up

1024

00:51:46,520 --> 00:51:50,550

being in that
anti-aircraft training?

1025

00:51:50,550 --> 00:51:52,830

How did that happen,
that you became

1026

00:51:52,830 --> 00:51:55,770

a machine gunner, anti-aircraft
machine gunner, right?

1027

00:51:55,770 --> 00:51:57,360

Yeah.

1028

00:51:57,360 --> 00:51:59,350

Was it something you
were assigned to?

1029

00:51:59,350 --> 00:51:59,850

Yeah.

1030

00:51:59,850 --> 00:52:02,730

They told us you're
going to be a 40

1031

00:52:02,730 --> 00:52:05,820

millimeter anti-aircraft unit.

1032
00:52:05,820 --> 00:52:06,840
We didn't choose it.

1033
00:52:06,840 --> 00:52:08,970
We were told what
are were going to be.

1034
00:52:08,970 --> 00:52:09,480
Got it.

1035
00:52:09,480 --> 00:52:10,510
Yeah.

1036
00:52:10,510 --> 00:52:11,970
OK.

1037
00:52:11,970 --> 00:52:15,895
And how long were you in
that base close to Chicago?

1038
00:52:15,895 --> 00:52:19,070

1039
00:52:19,070 --> 00:52:21,390
That's a very good question.

1040
00:52:21,390 --> 00:52:23,420
I think we were there
pretty much until we

1041
00:52:23,420 --> 00:52:26,300
were going to go overseas.

1042
00:52:26,300 --> 00:52:26,840
Oh, no.

1043
00:52:26,840 --> 00:52:32,060

1044
00:52:32,060 --> 00:52:35,820

Before we went overseas,
believe it or not,

1045
00:52:35,820 --> 00:52:41,000
we were shipped out to
West Hampton, Long Island.

1046
00:52:41,000 --> 00:52:45,760
At that time, there was no
such thing as the Hamptons

1047
00:52:45,760 --> 00:52:49,100
that we know of today.

1048
00:52:49,100 --> 00:52:53,450
There were two houses
in West Hampton.

1049
00:52:53,450 --> 00:52:58,580
And I saw them, and I was told
one was owned by the Vanderbilt

1050
00:52:58,580 --> 00:53:02,930
family, the very wealthy
Vanderbilt family,

1051
00:53:02,930 --> 00:53:07,160
and one other I don't know
what, but extremely very

1052
00:53:07,160 --> 00:53:10,220
highly social alto--

1053
00:53:10,220 --> 00:53:10,880
Family.

1054
00:53:10,880 --> 00:53:12,380
Family.

1055
00:53:12,380 --> 00:53:16,310
That was solely what
the Hamptons were,

1056

00:53:16,310 --> 00:53:18,290

West Hampton Beach.

1057

00:53:18,290 --> 00:53:21,080

And we were sent there

because we were going

1058

00:53:21,080 --> 00:53:25,280

to do anti-aircraft training.

1059

00:53:25,280 --> 00:53:32,010

Planes that were in the air

were towing targets behind them,

1060

00:53:32,010 --> 00:53:35,240

and we were firing

at these targets

1061

00:53:35,240 --> 00:53:37,640

that the planes were towing.

1062

00:53:37,640 --> 00:53:42,290

That's how we were being

trained to fire at airplanes

1063

00:53:42,290 --> 00:53:44,660

that were going to attack us.

1064

00:53:44,660 --> 00:53:46,080

How did it go?

1065

00:53:46,080 --> 00:53:47,270

Did you guys hit them all?

1066

00:53:47,270 --> 00:53:50,300

It went fairly well

until one of our guns

1067

00:53:50,300 --> 00:53:53,450

started almost hitting

the planes that

1068

00:53:53,450 --> 00:53:55,400
were towing the targets.

1069

00:53:55,400 --> 00:53:59,730
At that point, that was
the end of the firing.

1070

00:53:59,730 --> 00:54:02,420
We almost shot
down our own plane.

1071

00:54:02,420 --> 00:54:05,090
But that's how we
did our training.

1072

00:54:05,090 --> 00:54:10,550
And the Hamptons, West Hampton
Beach, had two houses, period.

1073

00:54:10,550 --> 00:54:13,150
There were no such thing
as going to the Hamptons

1074

00:54:13,150 --> 00:54:14,670
in those years.

1075

00:54:14,670 --> 00:54:17,420
So the training's on
this beautiful beach.

1076

00:54:17,420 --> 00:54:18,410
Yeah.

1077

00:54:18,410 --> 00:54:21,980
And after that, we
were pretty much

1078

00:54:21,980 --> 00:54:25,510
sent out across to England.

1079

00:54:25,510 --> 00:54:27,090
On what kind of a ship?

1080
00:54:27,090 --> 00:54:32,110

1081
00:54:32,110 --> 00:54:36,310
I don't remember the name of it.

1082
00:54:36,310 --> 00:54:39,220
I remember sleeping in a hold.

1083
00:54:39,220 --> 00:54:41,590
We all slept in a hold.

1084
00:54:41,590 --> 00:54:46,460
We landed in Glasgow, Scotland.

1085
00:54:46,460 --> 00:54:49,420
Did you have any issue
or thought of mines

1086
00:54:49,420 --> 00:54:50,840
as you were crossing?

1087
00:54:50,840 --> 00:54:51,340
Yeah.

1088
00:54:51,340 --> 00:54:52,645
I was extremely seasick.

1089
00:54:52,645 --> 00:54:57,361

1090
00:54:57,361 --> 00:54:59,970
It's the only thing
that interested me,

1091
00:54:59,970 --> 00:55:01,690
was puking into my helmet.

1092
00:55:01,690 --> 00:55:03,130
Oh, gosh.

1093
00:55:03,130 --> 00:55:07,630
Fill it up, empty it,
and fill it up again.

1094
00:55:07,630 --> 00:55:11,020
I was not the greatest
sailor in the world.

1095
00:55:11,020 --> 00:55:14,120
But we landed in
Glasgow, Scotland,

1096
00:55:14,120 --> 00:55:21,810
and I remember traveling by
Jeep from Glasgow to Wales.

1097
00:55:21,810 --> 00:55:25,790
Wales, super-- super--

1098
00:55:25,790 --> 00:55:28,240
I forget the name
of where we were,

1099
00:55:28,240 --> 00:55:33,670
but it was a very colorful,
beautiful area in Wales.

1100
00:55:33,670 --> 00:55:37,630
And from Wales, we
did our training.

1101
00:55:37,630 --> 00:55:42,770

1102
00:55:42,770 --> 00:55:46,250
I didn't know it at the
time, but we were being

1103
00:55:46,250 --> 00:55:54,800
trained to land, to go over.

1104

00:55:54,800 --> 00:55:56,780
How were you being trained?

1105
00:55:56,780 --> 00:56:01,460
What was the training like?

1106
00:56:01,460 --> 00:56:05,030
They would take us to
an area that had water.

1107
00:56:05,030 --> 00:56:11,688

1108
00:56:11,688 --> 00:56:15,976
We were put into small
boats, as a matter of fact.

1109
00:56:15,976 --> 00:56:17,950
And they would take
us out and then

1110
00:56:17,950 --> 00:56:20,500
bring us in toward the beach.

1111
00:56:20,500 --> 00:56:24,760
And as it turned out,
that was preparation

1112
00:56:24,760 --> 00:56:27,760
for landing on a beach.

1113
00:56:27,760 --> 00:56:31,180
But at that point in
time, we had no idea what

1114
00:56:31,180 --> 00:56:35,200
that was all about, for D-day.

1115
00:56:35,200 --> 00:56:38,650
We had several months
of that training,

1116

00:56:38,650 --> 00:56:42,530
and I really liked it because--

1117
00:56:42,530 --> 00:56:43,720
Well, what did it involve?

1118
00:56:43,720 --> 00:56:45,430
You're going on the
beach in these boats.

1119
00:56:45,430 --> 00:56:48,700
Were they similar types of boats
that were used in the actual--

1120
00:56:48,700 --> 00:56:54,220
Yeah, but we never had our
anti-aircraft guns with us

1121
00:56:54,220 --> 00:56:58,780
for some very reason,
which I never did realize.

1122
00:56:58,780 --> 00:57:03,760
But we set up our guns.

1123
00:57:03,760 --> 00:57:06,520
We did very little
target practice

1124
00:57:06,520 --> 00:57:10,400
before we left England
that I'm aware of.

1125
00:57:10,400 --> 00:57:12,680
So the training was
basically how to land--

1126
00:57:12,680 --> 00:57:19,390
But what happened
was for D-day, I

1127
00:57:19,390 --> 00:57:23,770
think it must have

been 50 or 75 of us

1128
00:57:23,770 --> 00:57:26,950
were detached from our outfit.

1129
00:57:26,950 --> 00:57:29,160
I was one of them.

1130
00:57:29,160 --> 00:57:33,800
And I was told that
I would be attached,

1131
00:57:33,800 --> 00:57:37,082
I think I was the 16th
infantry first division.

1132
00:57:37,082 --> 00:57:37,582
Mm-hmm.

1133
00:57:37,582 --> 00:57:40,300

1134
00:57:40,300 --> 00:57:45,570
I wasn't told why I was being
transferred to that outfit,

1135
00:57:45,570 --> 00:57:50,450
but I was told that I am being
transferred to that outfit.

1136
00:57:50,450 --> 00:57:53,700
We couldn't ask
questions of why,

1137
00:57:53,700 --> 00:57:57,360
but we were told that's where
you're going to be attached to.

1138
00:57:57,360 --> 00:58:03,060
As it turned out, we were
attached to them because after

1139

00:58:03,060 --> 00:58:11,190
we hit D-day onto the
Omaha Beach, we were then--

1140
00:58:11,190 --> 00:58:15,730
The plan was after
the beach was secured,

1141
00:58:15,730 --> 00:58:18,990
they were going to
build a jetty that

1142
00:58:18,990 --> 00:58:26,110
was going to go out from the
beach onto the English Channel.

1143
00:58:26,110 --> 00:58:29,130
And on that jetty,
they were going

1144
00:58:29,130 --> 00:58:37,870
to then put anti-aircraft
guns so that the guns then

1145
00:58:37,870 --> 00:58:42,940
that would be on the jetty
would be able to protect,

1146
00:58:42,940 --> 00:58:47,410
in case the Germans were
going to strafe the beach.

1147
00:58:47,410 --> 00:58:53,660
Our guns were going to be able
to provide anti-aircraft fire

1148
00:58:53,660 --> 00:58:55,190
for the beach.

1149
00:58:55,190 --> 00:58:56,840
But you didn't know
that at the time?

1150

00:58:56,840 --> 00:58:57,340
Right.

1151
00:58:57,340 --> 00:58:59,540
We did not know it at
the time, but after I

1152
00:58:59,540 --> 00:59:03,200
landed on the beach,
I found out why

1153
00:59:03,200 --> 00:59:06,200
that jetty was going
to be beat and why

1154
00:59:06,200 --> 00:59:10,880
we were then transferred
to the 16th infantry.

1155
00:59:10,880 --> 00:59:13,010
We were going to
be the guys that

1156
00:59:13,010 --> 00:59:17,390
were going to be on the
jetty to fire the guns,

1157
00:59:17,390 --> 00:59:20,810
in case the Germans
strafed the beach.

1158
00:59:20,810 --> 00:59:21,530
OK.

1159
00:59:21,530 --> 00:59:27,620
It never really took place
because half the guns ended up

1160
00:59:27,620 --> 00:59:28,710
in the English Channel.

1161
00:59:28,710 --> 00:59:34,640

1162
00:59:34,640 --> 00:59:37,410
I saw the jetty
after it was built,

1163
00:59:37,410 --> 00:59:39,255
but I was never on the jetty.

1164
00:59:39,255 --> 00:59:41,360
I never manned it.

1165
00:59:41,360 --> 00:59:47,080
And afterward, I was then
shipped back to my old outfit.

1166
00:59:47,080 --> 00:59:49,600
OK.

1167
00:59:49,600 --> 00:59:53,025
So when you were transferred
to this special unit--

1168
00:59:53,025 --> 00:59:56,485

1169
00:59:56,485 --> 01:00:01,240
I remember when we
left England on an LST.

1170
01:00:01,240 --> 01:00:02,140
What's that?

1171
01:00:02,140 --> 01:00:05,140
Landing ship tank it was called.

1172
01:00:05,140 --> 01:00:12,400
It was a boat that carried
tanks, equipment, and so on.

1173
01:00:12,400 --> 01:00:18,400
And from that boat, as we
were in the Channel going

1174
01:00:18,400 --> 01:00:21,610
to cross a D-Day,
when we reached

1175
01:00:21,610 --> 01:00:24,430
a certain point
in the channel, we

1176
01:00:24,430 --> 01:00:30,520
were told that you
would climb down a rope

1177
01:00:30,520 --> 01:00:36,670
ladder from that boat and
land onto an LCVP, which

1178
01:00:36,670 --> 01:00:38,485
was a landing craft.

1179
01:00:38,485 --> 01:00:43,060
It was a small boat that you
climbed off the big boat,

1180
01:00:43,060 --> 01:00:48,820
down a rope ladder onto
this landing craft.

1181
01:00:48,820 --> 01:00:55,870
These landing craft then circled
for six hours in the channel

1182
01:00:55,870 --> 01:01:00,430
before the flares
went up, were shot up

1183
01:01:00,430 --> 01:01:04,570
into the sky, which meant
now these landing craft could

1184
01:01:04,570 --> 01:01:07,780
go to the beach.

1185

01:01:07,780 --> 01:01:12,880

But in those six hours,
we all puked our guts up,

1186

01:01:12,880 --> 01:01:15,600

because on these little
boats on the channel,

1187

01:01:15,600 --> 01:01:22,390

I don't have to tell you,
seasickness took over.

1188

01:01:22,390 --> 01:01:23,230

Oh my.

1189

01:01:23,230 --> 01:01:23,840

Oh my.

1190

01:01:23,840 --> 01:01:26,180

So there you are in the
middle of the ocean.

1191

01:01:26,180 --> 01:01:28,300

Middle of the English Channel.

1192

01:01:28,300 --> 01:01:29,380

Yeah.

1193

01:01:29,380 --> 01:01:32,440

And then we landed on the beach.

1194

01:01:32,440 --> 01:01:33,155

Hang on.

1195

01:01:33,155 --> 01:01:35,120

And got blown to hell.

1196

01:01:35,120 --> 01:01:35,620

Hang on.

1197

01:01:35,620 --> 01:01:37,495

I want to get there,
but I want to precede it

1198
01:01:37,495 --> 01:01:39,410
with a few questions.

1199
01:01:39,410 --> 01:01:43,030
So by the point that you're
put on that first big boat

1200
01:01:43,030 --> 01:01:47,260
with the tanks on it, do
you then know at that point

1201
01:01:47,260 --> 01:01:51,550
that this is the
invasion, this is D-day?

1202
01:01:51,550 --> 01:01:56,450
No, not to my knowledge.

1203
01:01:56,450 --> 01:01:59,590
But we all knew that
something was taking place.

1204
01:01:59,590 --> 01:02:04,510
What was taking place, where
were we going I did not know.

1205
01:02:04,510 --> 01:02:07,810
None of us knew that we're
going to cross the Channel

1206
01:02:07,810 --> 01:02:11,350
and go to Omaha
Beach in Normandy.

1207
01:02:11,350 --> 01:02:12,610
No.

1208
01:02:12,610 --> 01:02:15,290
We knew something
was taking place,

1209
01:02:15,290 --> 01:02:19,660
and we knew that because of
the equipment that we shot.

1210
01:02:19,660 --> 01:02:26,170
But the reason being there--

1211
01:02:26,170 --> 01:02:30,580
we were not told you'll be
going on to Normandy, no.

1212
01:02:30,580 --> 01:02:31,630
What were you told?

1213
01:02:31,630 --> 01:02:34,610

1214
01:02:34,610 --> 01:02:36,680
We were told that we're
going into action,

1215
01:02:36,680 --> 01:02:40,858
but we didn't know
where or what.

1216
01:02:40,858 --> 01:02:41,900
You didn't know how big--

1217
01:02:41,900 --> 01:02:42,400
No.

1218
01:02:42,400 --> 01:02:43,490
We did not know it, no.

1219
01:02:43,490 --> 01:02:44,660
OK.

1220
01:02:44,660 --> 01:02:47,450
And so when you're in
the English Channel,

1221

01:02:47,450 --> 01:02:51,200
there's no danger from
any German artillery

1222

01:02:51,200 --> 01:02:53,430
or any German guns or planes.

1223

01:02:53,430 --> 01:02:53,930
Yes.

1224

01:02:53,930 --> 01:02:56,940

1225

01:02:56,940 --> 01:02:59,800
I lost one of my friends,
Jimmy Speredakus.

1226

01:02:59,800 --> 01:03:04,720

1227

01:03:04,720 --> 01:03:16,460
On the English Channel, a German
U-boat, or some German ship,

1228

01:03:16,460 --> 01:03:21,680
attacked one of our boats.

1229

01:03:21,680 --> 01:03:27,430
And I found out
afterward one of the guys

1230

01:03:27,430 --> 01:03:30,461
that I knew that was on that--

1231

01:03:30,461 --> 01:03:33,200
a very good friend
of mine, I always

1232

01:03:33,200 --> 01:03:36,560
missed him, Jimmy Speredakus.

1233

01:03:36,560 --> 01:03:39,440

1234

01:03:39,440 --> 01:03:42,590

We used to call him, hey, Greek.

1235

01:03:42,590 --> 01:03:44,540

That was his nickname.

1236

01:03:44,540 --> 01:03:48,070

He came from one area.

1237

01:03:48,070 --> 01:03:51,290

Which is the Greek area here?

1238

01:03:51,290 --> 01:03:52,540

Astoria.

1239

01:03:52,540 --> 01:03:54,730

That's where he came from.

1240

01:03:54,730 --> 01:03:58,100

Jimmy Speredakus.

1241

01:03:58,100 --> 01:04:01,590

Handsome as could be, the
nicest guy in the world.

1242

01:04:01,590 --> 01:04:04,820

He and I were very
close friends.

1243

01:04:04,820 --> 01:04:06,790

We were real buddies.

1244

01:04:06,790 --> 01:04:09,970

I think I shed a
tear that day when

1245

01:04:09,970 --> 01:04:13,470

I found out that Jimmy is gone.

1246

01:04:13,470 --> 01:04:16,040

And so that was even in the
middle of the English Channel?

1247

01:04:16,040 --> 01:04:17,350

Yeah, we were attacked.

1248

01:04:17,350 --> 01:04:20,840

1249

01:04:20,840 --> 01:04:27,530

I know of no other boats that
were hit or lost or whatever.

1250

01:04:27,530 --> 01:04:31,130

So out there, was this
the middle of the night

1251

01:04:31,130 --> 01:04:33,110

when you were climbing
down those ropes?

1252

01:04:33,110 --> 01:04:38,050

No, I think it was
6:30 in the morning.

1253

01:04:38,050 --> 01:04:38,830

OK.

1254

01:04:38,830 --> 01:04:39,330

Yeah.

1255

01:04:39,330 --> 01:04:41,870

1256

01:04:41,870 --> 01:04:44,840

H hour was 6:30.

1257

01:04:44,840 --> 01:04:46,120

H hour means what?

1258

01:04:46,120 --> 01:04:55,120
H hour means the hour
that we hit the beach.

1259
01:04:55,120 --> 01:04:59,530
H hour, 6:30 in the morning,
were the flares went up

1260
01:04:59,530 --> 01:05:04,330
and we were told, get these
boats heading toward the beach.

1261
01:05:04,330 --> 01:05:09,040
But then before then, for
the six hours previously,

1262
01:05:09,040 --> 01:05:12,040
you were circling in the
channel, is that correct?

1263
01:05:12,040 --> 01:05:12,540
Yeah.

1264
01:05:12,540 --> 01:05:14,590
We were circling in the Channel.

1265
01:05:14,590 --> 01:05:16,160
It was pretty dark.

1266
01:05:16,160 --> 01:05:17,230
Yeah.

1267
01:05:17,230 --> 01:05:21,930
But as the dawn broke, we
were told, hit the beach.

1268
01:05:21,930 --> 01:05:22,930
And so what did you see?

1269
01:05:22,930 --> 01:05:25,120
And that's what happened.

1270

01:05:25,120 --> 01:05:29,460

1271

01:05:29,460 --> 01:05:32,440

A lot of these
landing craft, which

1272

01:05:32,440 --> 01:05:35,020

were stretched all
across, some of them

1273

01:05:35,020 --> 01:05:38,200

were hit by shellfire
before they even--

1274

01:05:38,200 --> 01:05:45,740

I know when I hit the water,
I was pretty much probably

1275

01:05:45,740 --> 01:05:51,760

waist deep in water when I
got off that landing craft.

1276

01:05:51,760 --> 01:05:57,760

And then I remember seeing,
hey, we're being shot at.

1277

01:05:57,760 --> 01:06:01,350

You know, it was noisy as hell.

1278

01:06:01,350 --> 01:06:03,700

It was firing going
on, the shells

1279

01:06:03,700 --> 01:06:10,250

hitting the water, guys being
hit by bullets, and so on.

1280

01:06:10,250 --> 01:06:12,755

I remember ducking down behind--

1281

01:06:12,755 --> 01:06:15,360

1282
01:06:15,360 --> 01:06:21,020
there were things in the water.

1283
01:06:21,020 --> 01:06:26,650
I forget what they were called,
but they had mines on them.

1284
01:06:26,650 --> 01:06:29,530

1285
01:06:29,530 --> 01:06:33,470
If a bullet hit that
mine, it blew up and all.

1286
01:06:33,470 --> 01:06:36,400

1287
01:06:36,400 --> 01:06:41,380
As I was being in the water, I
was helping guys who were hit.

1288
01:06:41,380 --> 01:06:43,510
I would reach over
to try and pick them

1289
01:06:43,510 --> 01:06:46,360
up and help them, and
so on and so forth,

1290
01:06:46,360 --> 01:06:49,330
and help myself
get onto the beach.

1291
01:06:49,330 --> 01:06:52,750
And as I was almost
on the beach,

1292
01:06:52,750 --> 01:06:57,490
I remember, geez,
my foot felt stiff.

1293

01:06:57,490 --> 01:07:04,100
And I looked down and I saw
some blood, not terribly.

1294
01:07:04,100 --> 01:07:06,650
But I realized that I was hit.

1295
01:07:06,650 --> 01:07:12,070
And my foot felt a little
numb, but I said, hey,

1296
01:07:12,070 --> 01:07:13,510
I still have feeling.

1297
01:07:13,510 --> 01:07:14,260
I'm OK.

1298
01:07:14,260 --> 01:07:15,360
I'm OK.

1299
01:07:15,360 --> 01:07:16,420
I'm wounded.

1300
01:07:16,420 --> 01:07:23,480
And I remember my arm also had
a couple of pieces of shrapnel.

1301
01:07:23,480 --> 01:07:25,750
I forget which arm it was.

1302
01:07:25,750 --> 01:07:28,990
My left foot I know, my thigh.

1303
01:07:28,990 --> 01:07:32,020
And I was able to
crawl onto the beach.

1304
01:07:32,020 --> 01:07:36,190
And I kept crawling
up onto the beach

1305
01:07:36,190 --> 01:07:38,460

until I reached the seawall.

1306
01:07:38,460 --> 01:07:42,910
And once I reached the
seawall, the Germans that

1307
01:07:42,910 --> 01:07:48,560
were up on the top of the beach
at the cliff looking down,

1308
01:07:48,560 --> 01:07:50,650
they couldn't see me
there, because when

1309
01:07:50,650 --> 01:07:54,880
I was up to the seawall, behind
me, when I turned my back,

1310
01:07:54,880 --> 01:07:57,570
the whole beach was behind me.

1311
01:07:57,570 --> 01:07:58,930
So you had made it?

1312
01:07:58,930 --> 01:08:04,750
I made it up to the seawall and
I was able to crawl up to it.

1313
01:08:04,750 --> 01:08:12,182
And then as more and more of the
guys were able to get up there,

1314
01:08:12,182 --> 01:08:15,600
the whole seawall was
full of guys that were

1315
01:08:15,600 --> 01:08:19,050
able to get onto the beach.

1316
01:08:19,050 --> 01:08:22,979
And once I got onto that,
then I turned around

1317

01:08:22,979 --> 01:08:26,990
and looked and see what I could
do to help others get up to it.

1318

01:08:26,990 --> 01:08:30,149

1319

01:08:30,149 --> 01:08:35,189
So what I did is I crawled
around as much as I could.

1320

01:08:35,189 --> 01:08:40,660
I was able to pull
wounded guys up with me.

1321

01:08:40,660 --> 01:08:45,010
And then I realized that
then somebody said, hey,

1322

01:08:45,010 --> 01:08:48,740
what if they attempt
to gas us, the Germans?

1323

01:08:48,740 --> 01:08:51,340
Do we have gas masks?

1324

01:08:51,340 --> 01:08:58,859
I had my gas mask, and I made
sure that everybody that I--

1325

01:08:58,859 --> 01:09:00,000
do you have a gas mask?

1326

01:09:00,000 --> 01:09:01,960
Do you have a gas mask?

1327

01:09:01,960 --> 01:09:04,770
So what I did is
I crawled around

1328

01:09:04,770 --> 01:09:10,750
from guy to guy, if the

guy was wounded, I said,

1329

01:09:10,750 --> 01:09:12,460

do you have your gas mask?

1330

01:09:12,460 --> 01:09:15,880

Do you have your

canteen of water?

1331

01:09:15,880 --> 01:09:20,729

And if they said no, I crawled

around to several dead guys.

1332

01:09:20,729 --> 01:09:23,040

I knew they were dead already.

1333

01:09:23,040 --> 01:09:25,710

I took their gas masks off them.

1334

01:09:25,710 --> 01:09:29,740

I took their canteens off them.

1335

01:09:29,740 --> 01:09:32,370

And I went, here's a canteen.

1336

01:09:32,370 --> 01:09:33,779

Here's a gas mask.

1337

01:09:33,779 --> 01:09:35,539

I did as much as I could.

1338

01:09:35,539 --> 01:09:39,220

1339

01:09:39,220 --> 01:09:40,680

Even I remember this.

1340

01:09:40,680 --> 01:09:44,720

Lieutenant Ralston, he

was even a nice guy.

1341

01:09:44,720 --> 01:09:45,790
He was in my outfit.

1342
01:09:45,790 --> 01:09:49,240

1343
01:09:49,240 --> 01:09:52,060
I don't think he was
on my landing craft,

1344
01:09:52,060 --> 01:09:57,310
but when I saw him on the beach,
I saw he was badly wounded.

1345
01:09:57,310 --> 01:09:59,410
So I said, do you
have a gas mask?

1346
01:09:59,410 --> 01:10:03,850
I made sure he had a
gas mask and a canteen.

1347
01:10:03,850 --> 01:10:07,620
He was the only officer
that I knew on the beach.

1348
01:10:07,620 --> 01:10:11,070
I think he was
ultimately evacuated.

1349
01:10:11,070 --> 01:10:13,530
I tried to find out later on.

1350
01:10:13,530 --> 01:10:16,260
I think he was
evacuated to England.

1351
01:10:16,260 --> 01:10:17,670
To my knowledge, he lived.

1352
01:10:17,670 --> 01:10:21,390
He didn't die, at
least as far as I know.

1353
01:10:21,390 --> 01:10:29,050
But a couple of the other
guys in my outfit that I saw I

1354
01:10:29,050 --> 01:10:30,660
saw badly wounded.

1355
01:10:30,660 --> 01:10:34,900
I think most of them died.

1356
01:10:34,900 --> 01:10:37,030
Anybody you knew?

1357
01:10:37,030 --> 01:10:41,390
Outside of Jimmy that
was hit on the Channel,

1358
01:10:41,390 --> 01:10:43,010
I didn't know the other guys.

1359
01:10:43,010 --> 01:10:46,760

1360
01:10:46,760 --> 01:10:49,410
Now, what happened
with this ultimately,

1361
01:10:49,410 --> 01:10:52,290
later on after the beach
was secure-- oh, no?

1362
01:10:52,290 --> 01:10:52,790
OK.

1363
01:10:52,790 --> 01:10:53,290
Hang on.

1364
01:10:53,290 --> 01:10:53,870
All right.

1365

01:10:53,870 --> 01:10:57,090
But what you're pointing
to is a framed letter.

1366
01:10:57,090 --> 01:10:59,360
I'm just saying
that for the camera.

1367
01:10:59,360 --> 01:11:03,470
And the letter reads-- let me
see if I can pick it up here.

1368
01:11:03,470 --> 01:11:05,750
We will film it later.

1369
01:11:05,750 --> 01:11:08,540
But let me read it and then
you can explain what it was.

1370
01:11:08,540 --> 01:11:09,291
Go right ahead.

1371
01:11:09,291 --> 01:11:12,240

1372
01:11:12,240 --> 01:11:15,960
It is headquarters 49th
anti-aircraft artillery

1373
01:11:15,960 --> 01:11:17,100
brigade.

1374
01:11:17,100 --> 01:11:22,380
It's signed, it's dated,
excuse me, 9th of July, 1944.

1375
01:11:22,380 --> 01:11:25,170
And the subject
says, "Commendation."

1376
01:11:25,170 --> 01:11:28,920
And it's to Private First
Class Gerald Silver,

1377

01:11:28,920 --> 01:11:39,200
32822439 397th AAA W Battalion,
APO 054 United States Army.

1378

01:11:39,200 --> 01:11:42,570
"Number 1, on the
occasion of the invasion

1379

01:11:42,570 --> 01:11:46,290
of the French coast,
6th of June, 1944,

1380

01:11:46,290 --> 01:11:49,050
I desire to commend
you on your exemplary

1381

01:11:49,050 --> 01:11:52,650
and magnificent behavior
under enemy fire.

1382

01:11:52,650 --> 01:11:56,250
Number 2, through your
unselfish and heroic actions,

1383

01:11:56,250 --> 01:12:00,120
you were responsible for saving
the lives of wounded comrades

1384

01:12:00,120 --> 01:12:04,860
by rescuing them from the rising
tide on the invasion beach.

1385

01:12:04,860 --> 01:12:07,590
Your action under the
prevailing conditions

1386

01:12:07,590 --> 01:12:11,370
bespeak the highest credit
to you and your service.

1387

01:12:11,370 --> 01:12:13,710
Number 3, a copy

of this letter will

1388

01:12:13,710 --> 01:12:17,880

be sent to the Office of the

Adjutant General, Washington DC

1389

01:12:17,880 --> 01:12:19,500

by this headquarters."

1390

01:12:19,500 --> 01:12:24,240

And it's signed by EW

Timberlake, Brigadier General,

1391

01:12:24,240 --> 01:12:25,830

USA commanding.

1392

01:12:25,830 --> 01:12:28,520

1393

01:12:28,520 --> 01:12:30,650

What an honor, and

congratulations.

1394

01:12:30,650 --> 01:12:34,330

1395

01:12:34,330 --> 01:12:39,540

The reason that this came

into play, after the beach

1396

01:12:39,540 --> 01:12:46,290

was secured, a couple of

weeks after that, I was told

1397

01:12:46,290 --> 01:12:53,900

there was a meeting of

officers and non-coms

1398

01:12:53,900 --> 01:12:57,290

to decide if any medals

are to be given out.

1399

01:12:57,290 --> 01:13:00,450

1400

01:13:00,450 --> 01:13:03,390

I was told this
by someone who was

1401

01:13:03,390 --> 01:13:07,690

I was friendly with who
was at that meeting.

1402

01:13:07,690 --> 01:13:15,690

When my name was mentioned to
be given the Bronze Star and,

1403

01:13:15,690 --> 01:13:20,020

I remember, stripes to be made--

1404

01:13:20,020 --> 01:13:22,540

I was a PFC then.

1405

01:13:22,540 --> 01:13:27,040

I was to be given the
Bronze Star and stripes

1406

01:13:27,040 --> 01:13:30,310

to become a buck sergeant.

1407

01:13:30,310 --> 01:13:34,480

When my name was mentioned,
one of the officers

1408

01:13:34,480 --> 01:13:35,980

said, not the Jew boy.

1409

01:13:35,980 --> 01:13:39,540

1410

01:13:39,540 --> 01:13:42,160

This is what I was
told by my friend.

1411

01:13:42,160 --> 01:13:43,870

When I said to
him, who was it, he

1412

01:13:43,870 --> 01:13:47,470

would not tell me which
officer said that.

1413

01:13:47,470 --> 01:13:51,550

In lieu of that Bronze Star
and getting the stripes

1414

01:13:51,550 --> 01:13:55,735

to be a sergeant, this
ultimately is what I received.

1415

01:13:55,735 --> 01:14:00,620

1416

01:14:00,620 --> 01:14:02,720

That's the story
with this thing.

1417

01:14:02,720 --> 01:14:05,280

1418

01:14:05,280 --> 01:14:07,030

How bitter.

1419

01:14:07,030 --> 01:14:10,310

How bitter.

1420

01:14:10,310 --> 01:14:16,526

That was the anti-Semitism that
I ever ran into in the Army.

1421

01:14:16,526 --> 01:14:17,026

Yeah.

1422

01:14:17,026 --> 01:14:20,960

1423

01:14:20,960 --> 01:14:22,820
I'm so sorry.

1424
01:14:22,820 --> 01:14:25,250
But I value this
more than any medal.

1425
01:14:25,250 --> 01:14:28,190

1426
01:14:28,190 --> 01:14:33,490
It is quite a distinction.

1427
01:14:33,490 --> 01:14:39,920
I mean, without knowing the back
story, it speaks of such honor.

1428
01:14:39,920 --> 01:14:40,420
Yes.

1429
01:14:40,420 --> 01:14:42,680
I helped as many of
the guys that I could.

1430
01:14:42,680 --> 01:14:45,320

1431
01:14:45,320 --> 01:14:47,630
And they lived to
testify and to say that.

1432
01:14:47,630 --> 01:14:53,310

1433
01:14:53,310 --> 01:14:58,340
I want to finish up
before we break about why

1434
01:14:58,340 --> 01:15:00,320
wasn't that jetty ever built?

1435
01:15:00,320 --> 01:15:01,160

Excuse me?

1436

01:15:01,160 --> 01:15:04,900

Why wasn't that
jetty ever built?

1437

01:15:04,900 --> 01:15:07,540

Why wasn't that
jetty ever built,

1438

01:15:07,540 --> 01:15:09,943

the ones that you
would fire from?

1439

01:15:09,943 --> 01:15:11,110

That's a very good question.

1440

01:15:11,110 --> 01:15:14,920

I think they realized afterwards
that the beach was so secure

1441

01:15:14,920 --> 01:15:19,330

that the Germans were nowhere
near able to strafe it

1442

01:15:19,330 --> 01:15:20,620

or anything.

1443

01:15:20,620 --> 01:15:23,680

Because right after
that, we started

1444

01:15:23,680 --> 01:15:26,950

moving inland across
Normandy, and there

1445

01:15:26,950 --> 01:15:32,770

was no reason afterward to build
that jetty because the Germans

1446

01:15:32,770 --> 01:15:33,730

were nowhere near us.

1447

01:15:33,730 --> 01:15:36,540

We had knocked out
most of their aircraft.

1448

01:15:36,540 --> 01:15:38,515

They had very few
planes left already.

1449

01:15:38,515 --> 01:15:45,910

1450

01:15:45,910 --> 01:15:52,440

Also, the very fact that
those of us who hit the beach

1451

01:15:52,440 --> 01:15:58,130

would, for months,
speak of the problem

1452

01:15:58,130 --> 01:16:06,940

that General Eisenhower and
his brain staff screwed up on.

1453

01:16:06,940 --> 01:16:10,330

When we were crossing
the English Channel,

1454

01:16:10,330 --> 01:16:14,440

the sky was black
with our planes,

1455

01:16:14,440 --> 01:16:17,980

who were flying
overhead, going inland

1456

01:16:17,980 --> 01:16:22,170

to bomb the Germans inland.

1457

01:16:22,170 --> 01:16:28,510

They never ever, ever
strafed the German positions

1458

01:16:28,510 --> 01:16:31,900
overlooking the beach.

1459
01:16:31,900 --> 01:16:39,820
We did not have to lose 3,000
dead and 9,000 wounded that day

1460
01:16:39,820 --> 01:16:41,990
on D-Day.

1461
01:16:41,990 --> 01:16:45,440
That was the biggest
screw up of the war.

1462
01:16:45,440 --> 01:16:47,630
It was never publicized.

1463
01:16:47,630 --> 01:16:49,220
I never read about it.

1464
01:16:49,220 --> 01:16:55,050
I never heard about it, but
we who were there saw it.

1465
01:16:55,050 --> 01:16:58,860
Those German positions
overlooking the beach,

1466
01:16:58,860 --> 01:17:03,630
if they were strafed
and bombed that morning,

1467
01:17:03,630 --> 01:17:07,110
we would be able to walk
right onto the beach instead

1468
01:17:07,110 --> 01:17:11,110
of crawling on and blood.

1469
01:17:11,110 --> 01:17:12,910
I can attest to that fact.

1470

01:17:12,910 --> 01:17:15,040
I saw it with my own eyes.

1471
01:17:15,040 --> 01:17:17,830

1472
01:17:17,830 --> 01:17:18,760
You saw all those--

1473
01:17:18,760 --> 01:17:21,610
That was the screw up of D-Day.

1474
01:17:21,610 --> 01:17:25,060
Never never, to my
knowledge publicized,

1475
01:17:25,060 --> 01:17:30,540
but we who laid on that
beach in blood knew of it.

1476
01:17:30,540 --> 01:17:33,540
Those Germans on a cliff
were looking right down on us

1477
01:17:33,540 --> 01:17:35,160
and just shooting at us.

1478
01:17:35,160 --> 01:17:36,820
Like fish in a barrel.

1479
01:17:36,820 --> 01:17:38,890
That's right.

1480
01:17:38,890 --> 01:17:42,310
They should have been
blown to head that morning.

1481
01:17:42,310 --> 01:17:44,980
The bombers were going overhead.

1482
01:17:44,980 --> 01:17:47,620
I never saw so many

planes in my life

1483

01:17:47,620 --> 01:17:51,435

as that morning, all going
inland to bomb Germany.

1484

01:17:51,435 --> 01:17:56,760

1485

01:17:56,760 --> 01:17:59,872

Did they-- go ahead, you
were going to say something.

1486

01:17:59,872 --> 01:18:00,455

No, that's OK.

1487

01:18:00,455 --> 01:18:11,800

1488

01:18:11,800 --> 01:18:14,930

How did you make
it up that seawall?

1489

01:18:14,930 --> 01:18:16,160

I crawled onto it.

1490

01:18:16,160 --> 01:18:17,660

I crawled up the beach.

1491

01:18:17,660 --> 01:18:19,690

Yes, and then after that?

1492

01:18:19,690 --> 01:18:22,370

Oh, after that, once
we realized that--

1493

01:18:22,370 --> 01:18:25,740

1494

01:18:25,740 --> 01:18:29,730

I forget which unit it was
or which outfit it was,

1495
01:18:29,730 --> 01:18:38,670
but they were able to blast a
hole through the barbed wire,

1496
01:18:38,670 --> 01:18:41,010
and whatever other
things that were there

1497
01:18:41,010 --> 01:18:43,260
that the Germans had put there.

1498
01:18:43,260 --> 01:18:46,590
They were able to
blast that apart.

1499
01:18:46,590 --> 01:18:51,540
And once that was
blasted apart, the guys

1500
01:18:51,540 --> 01:18:54,062
were able to go through.

1501
01:18:54,062 --> 01:18:55,400
And by that time--

1502
01:18:55,400 --> 01:18:59,380

1503
01:18:59,380 --> 01:19:02,140
also, what saved
us on the beach--

1504
01:19:02,140 --> 01:19:03,340
I just realized it.

1505
01:19:03,340 --> 01:19:05,365
Excuse me for going backwards.

1506
01:19:05,365 --> 01:19:06,010
It's OK.

1507

01:19:06,010 --> 01:19:11,770

But I just realized there
were two destroyers going

1508

01:19:11,770 --> 01:19:14,365

up and back in the
English Channel.

1509

01:19:14,365 --> 01:19:19,520

1510

01:19:19,520 --> 01:19:24,690

I believe one was an
English destroyer and one,

1511

01:19:24,690 --> 01:19:26,700

I don't think it was
an American destroyer.

1512

01:19:26,700 --> 01:19:29,820

I think it was a
French destroyer.

1513

01:19:29,820 --> 01:19:34,650

By going up and back on
the beach, in the Channel,

1514

01:19:34,650 --> 01:19:39,510

they were firing onto the
cliffs where the Germans were

1515

01:19:39,510 --> 01:19:43,940

and knocking out these
German gun positions.

1516

01:19:43,940 --> 01:19:47,060

That is what saved
all of us who were

1517

01:19:47,060 --> 01:19:50,480

able to reach the beach safely.

1518

01:19:50,480 --> 01:19:54,500
But these destroyers, when
they knocked out the German gun

1519
01:19:54,500 --> 01:20:02,960
positions, after blasting it was
through, all of us on the beach

1520
01:20:02,960 --> 01:20:06,530
were then able to
move inland and start

1521
01:20:06,530 --> 01:20:08,240
to get inland, and then--

1522
01:20:08,240 --> 01:20:09,260
[PHONE RINGING]

1523
01:20:09,260 --> 01:20:11,920
--the Germans were
knocked out then.

1524
01:20:11,920 --> 01:20:12,470
Let's cut.

1525
01:20:12,470 --> 01:20:15,446

1526
01:20:15,446 --> 01:20:16,440
Rolling.

1527
01:20:16,440 --> 01:20:17,910
All right.

1528
01:20:17,910 --> 01:20:21,690
So you are saying that
some of the destroyers

1529
01:20:21,690 --> 01:20:24,030
also helped save
lives on the beach.

1530

01:20:24,030 --> 01:20:26,750

Those two destroyers
saved the whole beach.

1531

01:20:26,750 --> 01:20:29,570

OK.

1532

01:20:29,570 --> 01:20:34,900

Tell me, the Rangers
were a very special unit.

1533

01:20:34,900 --> 01:20:39,096

I did not know any of them, no.

1534

01:20:39,096 --> 01:20:42,250

I assumed they were Rangers who
were at the end of the beach,

1535

01:20:42,250 --> 01:20:45,640

at this Pointe du
Hoc, who were scaling

1536

01:20:45,640 --> 01:20:48,010

it to get up to the very top.

1537

01:20:48,010 --> 01:20:53,810

I was able to see not too much
of it because I crawled a ways.

1538

01:20:53,810 --> 01:20:57,470

And then when I saw it, then
I crawled back the other way.

1539

01:20:57,470 --> 01:20:57,970

That's it.

1540

01:20:57,970 --> 01:21:00,550

But that's the only
thing that I know

1541

01:21:00,550 --> 01:21:02,860

about of that end of the beach.

1542

01:21:02,860 --> 01:21:09,970

But my end of the beach is where
we saw a lot of our action.

1543

01:21:09,970 --> 01:21:13,660

Now, what happened was
after the beach was secured

1544

01:21:13,660 --> 01:21:16,750

and the rest of my--
because only some of us

1545

01:21:16,750 --> 01:21:19,840

had been detached
from my outfit.

1546

01:21:19,840 --> 01:21:23,770

The rest of my outfit still
had to be brought over

1547

01:21:23,770 --> 01:21:24,610

from England.

1548

01:21:24,610 --> 01:21:26,080

[PHONE RINGING]

1549

01:21:26,080 --> 01:21:28,040

1550

01:21:28,040 --> 01:21:29,610

Give me this phone right here.

1551

01:21:29,610 --> 01:21:31,400

OK.

1552

01:21:31,400 --> 01:21:32,360

I'm sorry.

1553

01:21:32,360 --> 01:21:33,800

That's OK.

1554

01:21:33,800 --> 01:21:34,520
It's OK.

1555
01:21:34,520 --> 01:21:37,700
Now, what happened
was those of us who

1556
01:21:37,700 --> 01:21:40,730
were able to
survive on our unit,

1557
01:21:40,730 --> 01:21:44,720
until the rest of our unit could
be brought over from England,

1558
01:21:44,720 --> 01:21:47,360
we acted as beach masters.

1559
01:21:47,360 --> 01:21:53,330
In other words, the
officers, or whoever

1560
01:21:53,330 --> 01:21:57,080
was responsible for
the landing there,

1561
01:21:57,080 --> 01:22:00,800
they would tell us which
outfits are being brought over

1562
01:22:00,800 --> 01:22:05,550
from England to land on
to France onto the beach.

1563
01:22:05,550 --> 01:22:10,670
So as a beach master, I was
told, when this and this outfit

1564
01:22:10,670 --> 01:22:14,060
last, tell them to take
that road to go inland.

1565
01:22:14,060 --> 01:22:16,940

This road, go here, go there.

1566

01:22:16,940 --> 01:22:21,980

And I did that
for a week or two.

1567

01:22:21,980 --> 01:22:25,040

Every morning, I
was given a list

1568

01:22:25,040 --> 01:22:28,580

of which units are coming
across the channel,

1569

01:22:28,580 --> 01:22:31,370

where to send them,
and so on and so forth.

1570

01:22:31,370 --> 01:22:36,560

Because we were already starting
to move in across Normandy.

1571

01:22:36,560 --> 01:22:38,570

And so I did that for a while.

1572

01:22:38,570 --> 01:22:41,250

It was interesting to see that.

1573

01:22:41,250 --> 01:22:44,330

And then when our
outfit landed, we

1574

01:22:44,330 --> 01:22:52,070

rejoined them and we spent the
rest of the war going inland--

1575

01:22:52,070 --> 01:22:54,990

France, Belgium,
Germany, Holland.

1576

01:22:54,990 --> 01:22:56,570

I'm going to want
to get to that,

1577
01:22:56,570 --> 01:22:59,760
but I still want to
step back a little bit.

1578
01:22:59,760 --> 01:23:01,880
I want to step back
to that moment,

1579
01:23:01,880 --> 01:23:06,260
to those moments, when you are--

1580
01:23:06,260 --> 01:23:07,270
Let me say this.

1581
01:23:07,270 --> 01:23:07,770
OK.

1582
01:23:07,770 --> 01:23:12,940
When I was wounded on the
beach, realized I was wounded,

1583
01:23:12,940 --> 01:23:19,910
I was lucky enough to spot
two guys who had medical.

1584
01:23:19,910 --> 01:23:23,960
And I called them and I
said, I have some blood here,

1585
01:23:23,960 --> 01:23:26,540
and so on.

1586
01:23:26,540 --> 01:23:32,510
Thankfully, one of them happened
to be actually a doctor.

1587
01:23:32,510 --> 01:23:36,680
So he pulled my pants
down and he said, oh, you

1588
01:23:36,680 --> 01:23:39,020

have shrapnel here.

1589

01:23:39,020 --> 01:23:42,500

He said, I think I can
do something for you.

1590

01:23:42,500 --> 01:23:47,840

Sure enough, he took out
what I would call a plier.

1591

01:23:47,840 --> 01:23:50,320

It was a miracle instrument.

1592

01:23:50,320 --> 01:23:55,600

And he was able to pluck
out as much as the shrapnel

1593

01:23:55,600 --> 01:23:58,600

that he saw on my leg.

1594

01:23:58,600 --> 01:24:02,200

And he took out of my arm.

1595

01:24:02,200 --> 01:24:04,000

He did that.

1596

01:24:04,000 --> 01:24:09,040

Then he put some kind
of a sulfur or whatever

1597

01:24:09,040 --> 01:24:14,480

onto the wound and
he bandaged me.

1598

01:24:14,480 --> 01:24:17,060

And he said, now you'll be OK.

1599

01:24:17,060 --> 01:24:23,570

And he took my name, my unit,
my outfit and everything.

1600

01:24:23,570 --> 01:24:27,710

And sure enough, later
on during the war,

1601
01:24:27,710 --> 01:24:29,000
I got the Purple Heart--

1602
01:24:29,000 --> 01:24:29,917
[GASP]

1603
01:24:29,917 --> 01:24:30,750
--for being wounded.

1604
01:24:30,750 --> 01:24:31,750
And I'll show it to you.

1605
01:24:31,750 --> 01:24:34,430
It's hanging in my room.

1606
01:24:34,430 --> 01:24:36,650
Because I am a
Purple Heart soldier.

1607
01:24:36,650 --> 01:24:40,070
I mean, I was wounded.

1608
01:24:40,070 --> 01:24:42,950
Oh my God.

1609
01:24:42,950 --> 01:24:47,420
I often wondered what would
have happened had I not

1610
01:24:47,420 --> 01:24:50,720
stopped him on the beach,
if these wounds would

1611
01:24:50,720 --> 01:24:52,580
have been gone.

1612
01:24:52,580 --> 01:24:58,260
But actually, what did
happen, way after the war, 20,

1613
01:24:58,260 --> 01:25:02,870
25 years later, it did affect
the nerves down my leg.

1614
01:25:02,870 --> 01:25:03,380
Did it?

1615
01:25:03,380 --> 01:25:07,970
And that's what
caused a drop foot.

1616
01:25:07,970 --> 01:25:09,800
And now both of
them are that way,

1617
01:25:09,800 --> 01:25:15,370
because I use this leg so often.

1618
01:25:15,370 --> 01:25:18,830
It's acting as two
legs instead of one,

1619
01:25:18,830 --> 01:25:22,490
that this also is now
a drop foot, which

1620
01:25:22,490 --> 01:25:24,080
is why I need the walker.

1621
01:25:24,080 --> 01:25:26,600
I cannot walk without them.

1622
01:25:26,600 --> 01:25:30,110
If I stood up and tried to
walk, I'd fall on my face.

1623
01:25:30,110 --> 01:25:31,400
I can't walk.

1624
01:25:31,400 --> 01:25:36,110
How long have you

had that situation?

1625

01:25:36,110 --> 01:25:40,190

Oh, it started 20,
25 years afterwards.

1626

01:25:40,190 --> 01:25:44,960

But then I started to
use a cane for a while.

1627

01:25:44,960 --> 01:25:49,790

And then I went to the VA
and I had them examine me,

1628

01:25:49,790 --> 01:25:52,370

and that's how,
ultimately, I ended up

1629

01:25:52,370 --> 01:25:57,260
with an 80% service-connected
disability rating.

1630

01:25:57,260 --> 01:26:02,330

Actually, in my own heart
I feel now I deserve 100%,

1631

01:26:02,330 --> 01:26:05,600

but I don't have the
strength to go to the VA

1632

01:26:05,600 --> 01:26:09,760

and be examined and go
to doctor to doctor.

1633

01:26:09,760 --> 01:26:12,675

I'm not that strong anymore.

1634

01:26:12,675 --> 01:26:14,800

And now you walk, you say,
with the brace, that is,

1635

01:26:14,800 --> 01:26:15,717

your foot has a brace?

1636
01:26:15,717 --> 01:26:16,780
Yeah, the foot brace.

1637
01:26:16,780 --> 01:26:23,440
A doctor told me to put this
brace on, and this is in--

1638
01:26:23,440 --> 01:26:24,410
And it helps you?

1639
01:26:24,410 --> 01:26:26,530
It helps me a great deal, sure.

1640
01:26:26,530 --> 01:26:28,900
So that's one thing
that happened.

1641
01:26:28,900 --> 01:26:31,120
When that doctor
came over to you,

1642
01:26:31,120 --> 01:26:36,630
were you still in danger
from the bunkers above?

1643
01:26:36,630 --> 01:26:37,130
No.

1644
01:26:37,130 --> 01:26:44,520
I think when I saw him, it may
have been the next morning.

1645
01:26:44,520 --> 01:26:48,630
We all slept on the beach
that night, the next night.

1646
01:26:48,630 --> 01:26:52,970
No, when I saw him
it was the next day.

1647
01:26:52,970 --> 01:26:58,070

Most of the firing had ceased.

1648
01:26:58,070 --> 01:27:00,530
I mean, it's hard question
to remember the answer,

1649
01:27:00,530 --> 01:27:02,990
but do you know
how long you guys

1650
01:27:02,990 --> 01:27:05,150
were under fire on the beach?

1651
01:27:05,150 --> 01:27:06,230
Oh, for hours.

1652
01:27:06,230 --> 01:27:07,470
Hours on end.

1653
01:27:07,470 --> 01:27:07,970
Yeah?

1654
01:27:07,970 --> 01:27:10,500
Hours on end that first day.

1655
01:27:10,500 --> 01:27:12,440
It was early in the morning.

1656
01:27:12,440 --> 01:27:15,110
We were under fire all day.

1657
01:27:15,110 --> 01:27:20,840
And until those two boats
were able to knock out

1658
01:27:20,840 --> 01:27:25,000
some of these gun positions,
then we were fairly safe then.

1659
01:27:25,000 --> 01:27:27,570

1660

01:27:27,570 --> 01:27:31,280

By that time, we were
able to even bring down

1661

01:27:31,280 --> 01:27:34,650

some prisoners already.

1662

01:27:34,650 --> 01:27:35,760

OK.

1663

01:27:35,760 --> 01:27:38,250

So until then, you were all
kind of huddled at that--

1664

01:27:38,250 --> 01:27:38,830

Oh, sure.

1665

01:27:38,830 --> 01:27:40,530

We were all at the seawall.

1666

01:27:40,530 --> 01:27:41,140

Yeah.

1667

01:27:41,140 --> 01:27:41,910

Yeah.

1668

01:27:41,910 --> 01:27:44,130

And the Rangers
you saw climbing,

1669

01:27:44,130 --> 01:27:47,410

was that after the
gunships, the destroyers?

1670

01:27:47,410 --> 01:27:47,910

Yeah.

1671

01:27:47,910 --> 01:27:49,350

OK.

1672

01:27:49,350 --> 01:27:51,120

OK.

1673
01:27:51,120 --> 01:27:52,860
I have to come to a hard part.

1674
01:27:52,860 --> 01:27:57,330

1675
01:27:57,330 --> 01:28:03,060
Most of us who were
born later had no idea

1676
01:28:03,060 --> 01:28:08,670
of what the impact was of
the experience of D-Day

1677
01:28:08,670 --> 01:28:13,530
and what these young guys,
young kids sometimes,

1678
01:28:13,530 --> 01:28:15,540
faced in Normandy.

1679
01:28:15,540 --> 01:28:17,490
And the closest
we ever came to it

1680
01:28:17,490 --> 01:28:20,400
is through Steven
Spielberg's eyes

1681
01:28:20,400 --> 01:28:23,850
when he filmed
Saving Private Ryan.

1682
01:28:23,850 --> 01:28:25,680
It was the only glimpse.

1683
01:28:25,680 --> 01:28:29,310
So I want to ask you,
what was it like?

1684

01:28:29,310 --> 01:28:32,475

And was anything
accurate, or not?

1685

01:28:32,475 --> 01:28:36,700

Now, before Saving
Private Ryan, there

1686

01:28:36,700 --> 01:28:39,420

was this movie, The Longest Day.

1687

01:28:39,420 --> 01:28:39,920

Correct.

1688

01:28:39,920 --> 01:28:42,570

1689

01:28:42,570 --> 01:28:45,050

When that picture
was released, I

1690

01:28:45,050 --> 01:28:49,630

happened to be going to the VA.

1691

01:28:49,630 --> 01:28:55,360

And I'd never forget
that day, because I

1692

01:28:55,360 --> 01:29:02,530

had to see a medical doctor,
a neurologist, a psychiatrist.

1693

01:29:02,530 --> 01:29:06,940

When I came to the
psychiatrist's office that day,

1694

01:29:06,940 --> 01:29:12,550

I started yelling and screaming
at the top of my voice,

1695

01:29:12,550 --> 01:29:16,990

how could they have the
nerve to make that picture

1696
01:29:16,990 --> 01:29:20,290
and bring all these
memories back to us?

1697
01:29:20,290 --> 01:29:22,570
Do you realize what
that did to us?

1698
01:29:22,570 --> 01:29:25,360
I was screaming and crying.

1699
01:29:25,360 --> 01:29:31,210
And this neurologist, this
psychiatrist, easy, Mr. Silver.

1700
01:29:31,210 --> 01:29:31,950
Calm down.

1701
01:29:31,950 --> 01:29:32,740
It was a movie.

1702
01:29:32,740 --> 01:29:34,580
I said, what do
you mean a movie?

1703
01:29:34,580 --> 01:29:37,210
Do you realize the
memories it's bringing?

1704
01:29:37,210 --> 01:29:40,210
I think they must have heard
me all over that big veterans

1705
01:29:40,210 --> 01:29:46,510
hospital on 23rd Street and
First Avenue, the VA hospital.

1706
01:29:46,510 --> 01:29:50,290
And I think it was
afterward that part

1707

01:29:50,290 --> 01:29:56,500
of that 80% disability rating
is from that screaming that I

1708
01:29:56,500 --> 01:29:59,230
did that day, The Longest Day.

1709
01:29:59,230 --> 01:30:03,100
Now, when the movie comes
out occasionally now,

1710
01:30:03,100 --> 01:30:05,830
I watch it for about 10 minutes.

1711
01:30:05,830 --> 01:30:09,780
And I shut the goddamn thing
off and I cry for an hour.

1712
01:30:09,780 --> 01:30:14,140

1713
01:30:14,140 --> 01:30:17,020
And then, of course,
Saving Private Ryan,

1714
01:30:17,020 --> 01:30:20,440
I can only watch it for
about five, 10 minutes.

1715
01:30:20,440 --> 01:30:24,430
I have to stop it
because I get very--

1716
01:30:24,430 --> 01:30:26,560
I don't sleep that night.

1717
01:30:26,560 --> 01:30:28,210
I cry a little.

1718
01:30:28,210 --> 01:30:34,891
To this very day and some of
these things, I still cry.

1719

01:30:34,891 --> 01:30:37,420

I don't sleep for a week.

1720

01:30:37,420 --> 01:30:39,580

It brings back
too many memories.

1721

01:30:39,580 --> 01:30:44,780

I see faces that I forgot,
names that I forgot.

1722

01:30:44,780 --> 01:30:49,310

It doesn't do me any good.

1723

01:30:49,310 --> 01:30:52,010

I like the acting,
but I can't watch it.

1724

01:30:52,010 --> 01:31:00,530

Yeah, well, for those of us
who have never been in that,

1725

01:31:00,530 --> 01:31:02,120

it's vicarious.

1726

01:31:02,120 --> 01:31:03,200

Oh, sure.

1727

01:31:03,200 --> 01:31:06,420

But for somebody
who has, it's real.

1728

01:31:06,420 --> 01:31:07,532

Yeah.

1729

01:31:07,532 --> 01:31:10,250

Oh, yeah, it's very real.

1730

01:31:10,250 --> 01:31:16,790

And when you were huddled
against that wall, what

1731

01:31:16,790 --> 01:31:19,910

happened to all those
other bodies of people

1732

01:31:19,910 --> 01:31:20,780

who didn't make it?

1733

01:31:20,780 --> 01:31:34,010

Ultimately, they brought
in a graves registration.

1734

01:31:34,010 --> 01:31:35,990

I forget what they were called.

1735

01:31:35,990 --> 01:31:40,230

Believe it or not, it
was an all Black unit.

1736

01:31:40,230 --> 01:31:45,780

In those days, that's what they
used these poor Black guys for.

1737

01:31:45,780 --> 01:31:52,070

And they were the ones who
collected all the bodies.

1738

01:31:52,070 --> 01:31:59,950

And ultimately, they were
all buried in that cemetery

1739

01:31:59,950 --> 01:32:03,320

overlooking the beach.

1740

01:32:03,320 --> 01:32:03,980

How many--

1741

01:32:03,980 --> 01:32:05,510

I was in that--

1742

01:32:05,510 --> 01:32:28,130

1743

01:32:28,130 --> 01:32:36,260

I was at the service when
that cemetery opened that day,

1744

01:32:36,260 --> 01:32:41,750

and that's where all the guys
that were lost on the beach

1745

01:32:41,750 --> 01:32:45,290

are laying there today.

1746

01:32:45,290 --> 01:32:50,610

I was in the observance,
the ceremony--

1747

01:32:50,610 --> 01:32:53,170

I forget the name
of the cemetery--

1748

01:32:53,170 --> 01:32:54,520

overlooking the beach.

1749

01:32:54,520 --> 01:33:03,170

1750

01:33:03,170 --> 01:33:05,000

I forget how many years ago.

1751

01:33:05,000 --> 01:33:07,610

1752

01:33:07,610 --> 01:33:12,260

I convinced Raz,
my wife, I would

1753

01:33:12,260 --> 01:33:17,380

like to go back in
Normandy to see the beach

1754

01:33:17,380 --> 01:33:21,910

and go over the cemetery
and see how many of the guys

1755
01:33:21,910 --> 01:33:23,095
I knew are there.

1756
01:33:23,095 --> 01:33:27,270

1757
01:33:27,270 --> 01:33:28,552
We had reservations.

1758
01:33:28,552 --> 01:33:31,800

1759
01:33:31,800 --> 01:33:34,260
I forget what year it was.

1760
01:33:34,260 --> 01:33:38,550
We had reservations
to fly there.

1761
01:33:38,550 --> 01:33:41,990
Oh, and I think Raz took sick.

1762
01:33:41,990 --> 01:33:44,310
I forget why.

1763
01:33:44,310 --> 01:33:47,180
I had to cancel that flight.

1764
01:33:47,180 --> 01:33:54,630
But I often, often had feelings
to want to go back to see

1765
01:33:54,630 --> 01:33:56,550
the Omaha Beach.

1766
01:33:56,550 --> 01:34:00,600
I never did go, but I would
have liked to have gone

1767
01:34:00,600 --> 01:34:02,320

and walked the cemetery.

1768

01:34:02,320 --> 01:34:07,600

I think it would have done
me good, but I never did go.

1769

01:34:07,600 --> 01:34:10,260

So when you were there at the
beginning, when you say there

1770

01:34:10,260 --> 01:34:14,220

was a service, how soon after--

1771

01:34:14,220 --> 01:34:19,410

I don't really remember how
soon after the beach was

1772

01:34:19,410 --> 01:34:26,040

secured that the cemetery
was built or formed,

1773

01:34:26,040 --> 01:34:29,490

whatever you call it.

1774

01:34:29,490 --> 01:34:32,280

I wish I could
remember, to tell you.

1775

01:34:32,280 --> 01:34:36,360

I don't know how long
after D-Day it was.

1776

01:34:36,360 --> 01:34:43,350

But it was before you
moved out further inwards?

1777

01:34:43,350 --> 01:34:50,500

I think we were probably a
good part across Normandy

1778

01:34:50,500 --> 01:34:54,660

before that service took place.

1779

01:34:54,660 --> 01:34:59,000

I'm sure that many
of our men had gone

1780

01:34:59,000 --> 01:35:03,350

inland already across Normandy.

1781

01:35:03,350 --> 01:35:07,010

But I don't remember how
soon after D-Day they

1782

01:35:07,010 --> 01:35:10,280

started to form the cemetery.

1783

01:35:10,280 --> 01:35:14,120

1784

01:35:14,120 --> 01:35:17,660

I know it's on a cliff
overlooking the beach.

1785

01:35:17,660 --> 01:35:22,050

What is it in your
mind that makes

1786

01:35:22,050 --> 01:35:26,740

it hard to speak about
that particular ceremony?

1787

01:35:26,740 --> 01:35:28,960

Because that's where I
know a lot of the guys

1788

01:35:28,960 --> 01:35:34,090

that I may have known
are laying, and even some

1789

01:35:34,090 --> 01:35:37,210

that I didn't know, but
who I helped on the beach.

1790

01:35:37,210 --> 01:35:40,450

1791
01:35:40,450 --> 01:35:42,510
I helped quite a few that day.

1792
01:35:42,510 --> 01:35:45,360

1793
01:35:45,360 --> 01:35:47,970
I'm not a doctor, but
I know a lot of them

1794
01:35:47,970 --> 01:35:51,610
that I helped did not survive.

1795
01:35:51,610 --> 01:35:55,800
And that's what always
makes me want to go back.

1796
01:35:55,800 --> 01:35:58,320
While I didn't know
them personally,

1797
01:35:58,320 --> 01:36:01,930
I do know that that's
where they're resting,

1798
01:36:01,930 --> 01:36:04,130
and that's the feeling
that I always had.

1799
01:36:04,130 --> 01:36:09,610

1800
01:36:09,610 --> 01:36:14,860
Were they already buried by
the time the ceremony happened?

1801
01:36:14,860 --> 01:36:16,760
Were there already markings?

1802
01:36:16,760 --> 01:36:17,510

Yes.

1803

01:36:17,510 --> 01:36:21,700

The day that I was there,
yeah, many were buried.

1804

01:36:21,700 --> 01:36:27,550

In other words, this beach, this
cemetery, had already been--

1805

01:36:27,550 --> 01:36:30,640

I didn't know it, but
that cemetery was already

1806

01:36:30,640 --> 01:36:38,140

being formed, and that's where a
lot of the bodies were brought.

1807

01:36:38,140 --> 01:36:42,150

From your unit, how
many people made it

1808

01:36:42,150 --> 01:36:45,840

and how many people didn't,
in rough numbers, do you know?

1809

01:36:45,840 --> 01:36:49,290

Only a handful of
my unit was lost.

1810

01:36:49,290 --> 01:36:50,880

We were lucky.

1811

01:36:50,880 --> 01:36:52,640

We were lucky.

1812

01:36:52,640 --> 01:36:54,728

But poor Jimmy
wasn't lucky, the guy

1813

01:36:54,728 --> 01:36:55,895

that was hit on the Channel.

1814

01:36:55,895 --> 01:36:59,190

1815

01:36:59,190 --> 01:37:00,370

No, we were lucky.

1816

01:37:00,370 --> 01:37:01,770

Most of us survived.

1817

01:37:01,770 --> 01:37:03,255

Wounded, but survived.

1818

01:37:03,255 --> 01:37:07,100

1819

01:37:07,100 --> 01:37:10,040

And a lot of us,
believe it or not,

1820

01:37:10,040 --> 01:37:12,050

were so spread out
that morning when

1821

01:37:12,050 --> 01:37:17,740

we hit the beach that most of
my outfit were not with me.

1822

01:37:17,740 --> 01:37:20,870

We took all along the
length of the beach.

1823

01:37:20,870 --> 01:37:24,680

A lot of the First Division
that had to be on my side

1824

01:37:24,680 --> 01:37:26,390

were on one end of the beach.

1825

01:37:26,390 --> 01:37:31,580

The 29th infantry that was
not supposed to be near us

1826

01:37:31,580 --> 01:37:34,123
was with us.

1827

01:37:34,123 --> 01:37:35,540
That's what happened
that morning.

1828

01:37:35,540 --> 01:37:37,940
The boats were all spread out.

1829

01:37:37,940 --> 01:37:43,940
And the way it was planned
did not take place that day

1830

01:37:43,940 --> 01:37:46,470
that it happened.

1831

01:37:46,470 --> 01:37:49,160
When did you realize
that this is not

1832

01:37:49,160 --> 01:37:51,410
only that you're seeing
action, but that you

1833

01:37:51,410 --> 01:37:55,795
are taking part in this
entirely historic occasion?

1834

01:37:55,795 --> 01:37:58,460

1835

01:37:58,460 --> 01:38:03,770
I knew enough that on the other
side of the Channel was France.

1836

01:38:03,770 --> 01:38:05,815
That's when I realized
that I was in France.

1837

01:38:05,815 --> 01:38:08,840

1838
01:38:08,840 --> 01:38:11,890
I knew I was in
France that morning.

1839
01:38:11,890 --> 01:38:14,110
I didn't know what
part of France,

1840
01:38:14,110 --> 01:38:17,440
but then I as the
beach was secured,

1841
01:38:17,440 --> 01:38:19,165
then I was told we
are in Normandy.

1842
01:38:19,165 --> 01:38:21,670

1843
01:38:21,670 --> 01:38:24,190
I didn't know what part
of France I was in.

1844
01:38:24,190 --> 01:38:27,040
And you didn't know
yet that it was D-Day,

1845
01:38:27,040 --> 01:38:29,890
or did you already know that?

1846
01:38:29,890 --> 01:38:37,570
Well, it dawned on us, hey, this
is D-Day and we're in France.

1847
01:38:37,570 --> 01:38:41,060
Where in France I couldn't
begin to tell you.

1848
01:38:41,060 --> 01:38:45,520
I didn't know of where I was.

1849

01:38:45,520 --> 01:38:51,970
But we were then told you are
in Normandy, and that's it.

1850
01:38:51,970 --> 01:38:56,970
Things began to gel,
but it took a while.

1851
01:38:56,970 --> 01:39:04,230
When the burial
detail came by, you

1852
01:39:04,230 --> 01:39:08,160
say African Americans
took part and they were

1853
01:39:08,160 --> 01:39:10,710
the ones assigned for this.

1854
01:39:10,710 --> 01:39:12,377
Were the bodies
all on the beach?

1855
01:39:12,377 --> 01:39:13,335
Were some in the water?

1856
01:39:13,335 --> 01:39:16,480

1857
01:39:16,480 --> 01:39:18,130
Some of us went down.

1858
01:39:18,130 --> 01:39:22,550
I was one of them that
did go down the next day

1859
01:39:22,550 --> 01:39:26,510
and I pulled bodies out of
the water onto the beach.

1860
01:39:26,510 --> 01:39:29,720
But I didn't do that much of it.

1861

01:39:29,720 --> 01:39:34,725

Other guys did a lot of it
that were able to do it more.

1862

01:39:34,725 --> 01:39:36,350

Is it because of your
wounds and stuff?

1863

01:39:36,350 --> 01:39:36,850

Yeah.

1864

01:39:36,850 --> 01:39:41,420

I didn't want to open up
the wounds or anything.

1865

01:39:41,420 --> 01:39:44,330

But I pulled a
couple, but not many.

1866

01:39:44,330 --> 01:39:47,260

I wasn't that much
of a hero then.

1867

01:39:47,260 --> 01:39:51,980

1868

01:39:51,980 --> 01:39:52,480

Sad.

1869

01:39:52,480 --> 01:39:54,140

Gruesome.

1870

01:39:54,140 --> 01:39:57,950

Young people, you know, gone.

1871

01:39:57,950 --> 01:39:59,150

Most were my age.

1872

01:39:59,150 --> 01:40:00,220

Most were young guys.

1873

01:40:00,220 --> 01:40:06,270

1874

01:40:06,270 --> 01:40:11,040

When I met a guy that was
30, I would stare at him.

1875

01:40:11,040 --> 01:40:13,120

Most were in the early 20s.

1876

01:40:13,120 --> 01:40:16,500

1877

01:40:16,500 --> 01:40:18,315

How long did you stay
on the beach itself?

1878

01:40:18,315 --> 01:40:22,400

1879

01:40:22,400 --> 01:40:27,770

No more than a couple of weeks
at the most, at the most.

1880

01:40:27,770 --> 01:40:32,750

I mean, we pitched some tents.

1881

01:40:32,750 --> 01:40:36,530

We were sleeping in tents
at night on the beach.

1882

01:40:36,530 --> 01:40:43,670

And as the outfits came in,
they set up a field kitchen

1883

01:40:43,670 --> 01:40:47,300

so we had some food to
eat, whatever they gave us.

1884

01:40:47,300 --> 01:40:49,160

I don't remember.

1885

01:40:49,160 --> 01:40:51,890

We had water.

1886

01:40:51,890 --> 01:40:55,160

What happened with the German prisoners that were captured?

1887

01:40:55,160 --> 01:40:59,870

I remember that when they captured the German prisoners,

1888

01:40:59,870 --> 01:41:03,310

they marched them along the beach.

1889

01:41:03,310 --> 01:41:08,940

And I remember going that day to see what they looked like.

1890

01:41:08,940 --> 01:41:11,970

And I remember walking up to a couple of them

1891

01:41:11,970 --> 01:41:13,610

and saying, [GERMAN].

1892

01:41:13,610 --> 01:41:17,030

1893

01:41:17,030 --> 01:41:22,100

I wanted them to see what a Jew was.

1894

01:41:22,100 --> 01:41:24,000

They were too scared.

1895

01:41:24,000 --> 01:41:26,540

They didn't even turn their head to look at me.

1896

01:41:26,540 --> 01:41:29,340

But I remember grabbing a couple of them by the arm

1897
01:41:29,340 --> 01:41:33,240
and banging them and
saying, [GERMAN]..

1898
01:41:33,240 --> 01:41:36,255
And they would look at me
and turn their heads away.

1899
01:41:36,255 --> 01:41:38,760

1900
01:41:38,760 --> 01:41:43,550
It just made me feel
good that day to do it.

1901
01:41:43,550 --> 01:41:44,775
I would look at them closely.

1902
01:41:44,775 --> 01:41:47,340

1903
01:41:47,340 --> 01:41:55,600
But I do remember, when we were
inland already and doing some

1904
01:41:55,600 --> 01:42:02,730
of the fighting, I remember
one German officer near me,

1905
01:42:02,730 --> 01:42:06,440
I saw he had his pistol on his--

1906
01:42:06,440 --> 01:42:07,700
I took his pistol off.

1907
01:42:07,700 --> 01:42:10,820
It was a nine
millimeter revolver.

1908
01:42:10,820 --> 01:42:13,650
I carried it with

me during the war,

1909

01:42:13,650 --> 01:42:16,360
and I remember bringing it home.

1910

01:42:16,360 --> 01:42:18,880
And when I showed it
to my wife, she said,

1911

01:42:18,880 --> 01:42:21,380
Jerry, I don't want
a gun in the house.

1912

01:42:21,380 --> 01:42:25,130
So I took it down
to the basement.

1913

01:42:25,130 --> 01:42:29,660
I threw away all the
ammunition in the garbage.

1914

01:42:29,660 --> 01:42:34,470
And I kept it for a long time.

1915

01:42:34,470 --> 01:42:37,440
And then in the
house, I would never

1916

01:42:37,440 --> 01:42:41,270
show the kids where it was.

1917

01:42:41,270 --> 01:42:47,560
And I remember at that
time, the police said,

1918

01:42:47,560 --> 01:42:52,570
anyone that turns in a
gun, no questions asked.

1919

01:42:52,570 --> 01:42:59,080
So I brought it to the 77
precinct in Fresh Meadows.

1920

01:42:59,080 --> 01:43:03,390

And when I brought it in,
I put it down on the table.

1921

01:43:03,390 --> 01:43:07,620

When these cops saw a
nine millimeter gun,

1922

01:43:07,620 --> 01:43:08,730

look at this thing.

1923

01:43:08,730 --> 01:43:10,580

They all ran to it.

1924

01:43:10,580 --> 01:43:14,484

And one of the cops
took it, I remember.

1925

01:43:14,484 --> 01:43:16,200

But I got rid of it.

1926

01:43:16,200 --> 01:43:18,960

Raz felt better that it
was out of the house.

1927

01:43:18,960 --> 01:43:21,960

How many years had you kept it?

1928

01:43:21,960 --> 01:43:27,060

Oh, I kept it for a long time,
till we bought the house.

1929

01:43:27,060 --> 01:43:31,170

Because originally,
we lived in Glen Oaks

1930

01:43:31,170 --> 01:43:32,650

before we bought the house.

1931

01:43:32,650 --> 01:43:35,230

1932

01:43:35,230 --> 01:43:37,660

We bought the house in '59.

1933

01:43:37,660 --> 01:43:40,000

So until '59 you had it?

1934

01:43:40,000 --> 01:43:41,080

Yeah.

1935

01:43:41,080 --> 01:43:43,570

Yeah.

1936

01:43:43,570 --> 01:43:46,010

And was that German
officer a prisoner of war?

1937

01:43:46,010 --> 01:43:46,620

Yeah.

1938

01:43:46,620 --> 01:43:48,605

Yeah.

1939

01:43:48,605 --> 01:43:50,390

I don't know if
he was a captain.

1940

01:43:50,390 --> 01:43:55,220

I don't remember his rank,
but he was an officer.

1941

01:43:55,220 --> 01:43:57,170

Did you go up on
top of the cliff

1942

01:43:57,170 --> 01:44:00,680

and see some of those bunkers
that they were shooting off of?

1943

01:44:00,680 --> 01:44:04,580

I remember passing it, but
they were all blasted to hell.

1944

01:44:04,580 --> 01:44:06,960

I did look at them, yes.

1945

01:44:06,960 --> 01:44:09,710

I didn't go into it.

1946

01:44:09,710 --> 01:44:11,540

I didn't want to go into them.

1947

01:44:11,540 --> 01:44:14,700

I didn't know what
was laying in there.

1948

01:44:14,700 --> 01:44:18,030

But I did look down at them
and they were pretty well hit.

1949

01:44:18,030 --> 01:44:21,460

1950

01:44:21,460 --> 01:44:24,250

Is there anything else
about D-Day itself,

1951

01:44:24,250 --> 01:44:28,300

about what happened in your
experience, and the things

1952

01:44:28,300 --> 01:44:29,785

that you saw that
you want to add?

1953

01:44:29,785 --> 01:44:31,300

No.

1954

01:44:31,300 --> 01:44:32,800

That was pretty much it.

1955

01:44:32,800 --> 01:44:35,500

1956

01:44:35,500 --> 01:44:39,670
The firing died
down slowly, slowly.

1957
01:44:39,670 --> 01:44:44,230
And it was just a matter
of gathering our wits

1958
01:44:44,230 --> 01:44:48,340
and being able to get
inland as quickly as we can

1959
01:44:48,340 --> 01:44:50,680
and get off the beach.

1960
01:44:50,680 --> 01:44:54,820
But as the units
were coming, they

1961
01:44:54,820 --> 01:44:59,320
were all shipped inland,
inland, inland, and that's

1962
01:44:59,320 --> 01:45:00,955
how we started to cross France.

1963
01:45:00,955 --> 01:45:03,610

1964
01:45:03,610 --> 01:45:04,690
I think what we'll do--

1965
01:45:04,690 --> 01:45:09,740
But most of my recollection
was the D-Day recollection.

1966
01:45:09,740 --> 01:45:10,630
Yeah.

1967
01:45:10,630 --> 01:45:15,460
I was happy that I can tell
you as much as I recall.

1968

01:45:15,460 --> 01:45:16,660

Well, I'm very grateful.

1969

01:45:16,660 --> 01:45:19,000

Yeah, but I'm calm now.

1970

01:45:19,000 --> 01:45:20,830

I was a little--

1971

01:45:20,830 --> 01:45:22,810

before, but I'm all right.

1972

01:45:22,810 --> 01:45:23,920

Well, I'm grateful--

1973

01:45:23,920 --> 01:45:27,220

I'm glad I was able to recall
some of the things for you.

1974

01:45:27,220 --> 01:45:28,990

Thank you.

1975

01:45:28,990 --> 01:45:30,690

I'm just sorry I've
forgotten them,

1976

01:45:30,690 --> 01:45:34,780

but I recalled as much
as I could for you.

1977

01:45:34,780 --> 01:45:37,480

Well, I'm grateful
on two accounts, one

1978

01:45:37,480 --> 01:45:39,430

that you recalled
it and one that you

1979

01:45:39,430 --> 01:45:42,050

were a part of that
force that saved us.

1980

01:45:42,050 --> 01:45:44,460

I'm glad I'm here to
tell you about it.

1981

01:45:44,460 --> 01:45:45,250

Yeah.

1982

01:45:45,250 --> 01:45:47,680

What we'll do right
now is we'll break

1983

01:45:47,680 --> 01:45:49,450

and then we'll come
back later to talk

1984

01:45:49,450 --> 01:45:52,870

about the rest of the things
that you saw in Europe, OK?

1985

01:45:52,870 --> 01:45:57,310

1986

01:45:57,310 --> 01:45:59,470

We're going to break.

1987

01:45:59,470 --> 01:46:03,250

This is a continuation of
the United States Holocaust

1988

01:46:03,250 --> 01:46:07,720

Memorial Museum interview
with Mr. Gerald silver.

1989

01:46:07,720 --> 01:46:11,590

And before the break, we
were talking about D-Day

1990

01:46:11,590 --> 01:46:14,200

and being on Omaha Beach.

1991

01:46:14,200 --> 01:46:16,420

And before we go

further, I wanted just

1992

01:46:16,420 --> 01:46:20,860

to ask a few more things
about the landing itself

1993

01:46:20,860 --> 01:46:24,850

and about some of the
things that happened.

1994

01:46:24,850 --> 01:46:28,060

When the boats were open,
did you have a gun with you?

1995

01:46:28,060 --> 01:46:30,430

Did you have other
kinds of equipment?

1996

01:46:30,430 --> 01:46:31,585

What were you all carrying?

1997

01:46:31,585 --> 01:46:34,500

1998

01:46:34,500 --> 01:46:41,360

Well, we all had either
carbines or rifles.

1999

01:46:41,360 --> 01:46:50,440

Some wore pistols, ammunition
belts, anything and everything

2000

01:46:50,440 --> 01:46:55,230

that you could possibly
need once you hit the beach.

2001

01:46:55,230 --> 01:47:00,780

But unfortunately, so many of
us landed in either chest-deep

2002

01:47:00,780 --> 01:47:02,100

water--

2003

01:47:02,100 --> 01:47:05,160

and quite a few,
believe it or not,

2004

01:47:05,160 --> 01:47:09,450

depending where they landed and
how much equipment they had,

2005

01:47:09,450 --> 01:47:11,820

quite a few drowned.

2006

01:47:11,820 --> 01:47:13,270

From that?

2007

01:47:13,270 --> 01:47:13,770

Yes.

2008

01:47:13,770 --> 01:47:17,280

There were many
people, many guys,

2009

01:47:17,280 --> 01:47:22,770

who drowned because the
equipment they had carrying

2010

01:47:22,770 --> 01:47:27,240

and how far back they
were from the beach.

2011

01:47:27,240 --> 01:47:30,510

So they were so laden down.

2012

01:47:30,510 --> 01:47:37,950

You see, what happened was if
the fire was really tremendous,

2013

01:47:37,950 --> 01:47:48,570

some of these guys who were
captaining these LCVPS,

2014

01:47:48,570 --> 01:47:51,450

when they saw the

shelling was real hard,

2015

01:47:51,450 --> 01:47:52,770

they said, get off now.

2016

01:47:52,770 --> 01:47:53,850

Get off now.

2017

01:47:53,850 --> 01:47:57,000

They didn't want to

go in any further,

2018

01:47:57,000 --> 01:47:58,980

not realizing that

they were making

2019

01:47:58,980 --> 01:48:03,600

guys get into the water

over their shoulders.

2020

01:48:03,600 --> 01:48:06,060

And many guys literally drowned.

2021

01:48:06,060 --> 01:48:10,090

2022

01:48:10,090 --> 01:48:11,470

What a terrifying--

2023

01:48:11,470 --> 01:48:14,280

It was a disaster.

2024

01:48:14,280 --> 01:48:14,860

Yeah.

2025

01:48:14,860 --> 01:48:18,040

It was a disaster.

2026

01:48:18,040 --> 01:48:21,370

Thank goodness for

those two destroyers,

2027

01:48:21,370 --> 01:48:27,040

otherwise it would have
been complete failure.

2028

01:48:27,040 --> 01:48:31,300

When you started pulling
bodies out of the water,

2029

01:48:31,300 --> 01:48:33,880

were there any people
who were still alive?

2030

01:48:33,880 --> 01:48:34,870

Oh, sure.

2031

01:48:34,870 --> 01:48:35,760

They were wounded.

2032

01:48:35,760 --> 01:48:37,390

They were moaning.

2033

01:48:37,390 --> 01:48:40,270

You knew if the
person was alive.

2034

01:48:40,270 --> 01:48:43,000

You didn't have to be
a doctor to know that.

2035

01:48:43,000 --> 01:48:44,060

You could tell.

2036

01:48:44,060 --> 01:48:49,600

And was this still under
fire from the cliff head?

2037

01:48:49,600 --> 01:48:53,530

The first couple of hours were.

2038

01:48:53,530 --> 01:48:56,800

After I did it once
or twice, I realized

2039
01:48:56,800 --> 01:48:59,890
that it's time to stop.

2040
01:48:59,890 --> 01:49:02,520
Don't be a hero.

2041
01:49:02,520 --> 01:49:08,500
But it also bothered me to
see people in need of help.

2042
01:49:08,500 --> 01:49:13,180
But as the day wore on,
and as more and more

2043
01:49:13,180 --> 01:49:15,790
of these guys on
the top were killed,

2044
01:49:15,790 --> 01:49:18,610
it made it easier to
get down on the beach.

2045
01:49:18,610 --> 01:49:21,310

2046
01:49:21,310 --> 01:49:24,880
Instead of crawling, I was
able to almost run down

2047
01:49:24,880 --> 01:49:26,440
to the beach.

2048
01:49:26,440 --> 01:49:30,710
And my leg didn't
bother me all that much.

2049
01:49:30,710 --> 01:49:34,830
And this was before
it was patched up?

2050
01:49:34,830 --> 01:49:39,060

Some of this I did before
and some afterward.

2051
01:49:39,060 --> 01:49:41,050
Were other people
doing the same thing?

2052
01:49:41,050 --> 01:49:42,820
Oh, sure.

2053
01:49:42,820 --> 01:49:44,170
I was no hero.

2054
01:49:44,170 --> 01:49:45,020
A lot of guys--

2055
01:49:45,020 --> 01:49:47,560
Well, everybody was a hero.

2056
01:49:47,560 --> 01:49:52,160
A lot of guys were looking
to help each other, sure.

2057
01:49:52,160 --> 01:49:54,110
And what about those crossbars?

2058
01:49:54,110 --> 01:49:56,750
I think that called
them asparagus,

2059
01:49:56,750 --> 01:49:59,260
those iron things on the beach?

2060
01:49:59,260 --> 01:50:01,010
Oh, those are the
things that I--

2061
01:50:01,010 --> 01:50:04,160
initially, when I got
off my landing craft,

2062
01:50:04,160 --> 01:50:08,600

I hid behind one of
those, not knowing

2063
01:50:08,600 --> 01:50:14,700
that there was a mine
attached to each one of these.

2064
01:50:14,700 --> 01:50:16,870
That's what the Germans did.

2065
01:50:16,870 --> 01:50:19,990
And if one of their
shells hit that mine,

2066
01:50:19,990 --> 01:50:22,260
the whole thing blew up.

2067
01:50:22,260 --> 01:50:24,190
But who knew it at the time?

2068
01:50:24,190 --> 01:50:27,140
I thought, hey, I
could hide behind this.

2069
01:50:27,140 --> 01:50:27,710
Oh my.

2070
01:50:27,710 --> 01:50:32,800
It was later on that we
realized what these things were.

2071
01:50:32,800 --> 01:50:36,340
I mean, once the
beach was secure,

2072
01:50:36,340 --> 01:50:39,760
the place was still
mined, correct?

2073
01:50:39,760 --> 01:50:45,370
No, once the beach was secured,
as more or more units were

2074

01:50:45,370 --> 01:50:48,300
brought in from
the mainland, you

2075

01:50:48,300 --> 01:50:50,990
began to clear everything up.

2076

01:50:50,990 --> 01:50:51,490
OK.

2077

01:50:51,490 --> 01:50:52,750
Sure.

2078

01:50:52,750 --> 01:50:54,780
There were specific
outfits brought in

2079

01:50:54,780 --> 01:50:58,250
to do nothing but just
straighten out the beach.

2080

01:50:58,250 --> 01:50:59,110
I see.

2081

01:50:59,110 --> 01:51:01,450
Then after that, it
was up to everybody

2082

01:51:01,450 --> 01:51:06,760
to get inland and cross France
and go after the Germans.

2083

01:51:06,760 --> 01:51:08,890
So tell me, when you
found your unit, that

2084

01:51:08,890 --> 01:51:12,580
is, they came over later
and you were a beach master

2085

01:51:12,580 --> 01:51:15,190
and were directing people

and you rejoined them,

2086

01:51:15,190 --> 01:51:16,345
what were your next orders?

2087

01:51:16,345 --> 01:51:19,740

2088

01:51:19,740 --> 01:51:22,320
I don't remember exactly.

2089

01:51:22,320 --> 01:51:29,487
We were given specific places
to go to across France.

2090

01:51:29,487 --> 01:51:30,320
Where were you sent?

2091

01:51:30,320 --> 01:51:33,230
We were in France.

2092

01:51:33,230 --> 01:51:41,510
We were from France,
Belgium, Holland, Germany,

2093

01:51:41,510 --> 01:51:46,740
all of these places that
we would set up our units

2094

01:51:46,740 --> 01:51:49,980
in defense of certain
activities that

2095

01:51:49,980 --> 01:51:52,980
were going to take
place, certain maneuvers,

2096

01:51:52,980 --> 01:51:54,540
certain battles.

2097

01:51:54,540 --> 01:51:58,170
And we were supplying the

anti-aircraft protection

2098

01:51:58,170 --> 01:52:00,240
that they may have needed.

2099

01:52:00,240 --> 01:52:04,860
So tell me, did you face that
kind of action still in France?

2100

01:52:04,860 --> 01:52:05,880
Very little.

2101

01:52:05,880 --> 01:52:09,620
There was very little
German aircraft to fire at.

2102

01:52:09,620 --> 01:52:12,690
We fired at a few,
but hardly any.

2103

01:52:12,690 --> 01:52:18,270
And once we cleared
the beach, my outfit,

2104

01:52:18,270 --> 01:52:21,060
literally, while we were
part of the American

2105

01:52:21,060 --> 01:52:25,080
Army in all these
countries, we did not

2106

01:52:25,080 --> 01:52:27,810
see that much direct action.

2107

01:52:27,810 --> 01:52:32,070
There was some, but
not continuous action.

2108

01:52:32,070 --> 01:52:39,330
And tell me, when you were
traveling through France,

2109

01:52:39,330 --> 01:52:43,870

did you have any interaction
with local people?

2110

01:52:43,870 --> 01:52:45,610

I tried to on my own.

2111

01:52:45,610 --> 01:52:47,940

Yeah, at times I would, sure.

2112

01:52:47,940 --> 01:52:52,440

If we were going through
a town and we would stop--

2113

01:52:52,440 --> 01:52:56,190

I remember knocking
on a door one time.

2114

01:52:56,190 --> 01:52:58,175

I think I was asking
them to go to a bathroom,

2115

01:52:58,175 --> 01:52:59,940

if they had a bathroom.

2116

01:52:59,940 --> 01:53:02,550

But in the interim,
I would speak to them

2117

01:53:02,550 --> 01:53:05,010

in my broken French.

2118

01:53:05,010 --> 01:53:07,220

And how did people
respond to you?

2119

01:53:07,220 --> 01:53:09,210

Oh, they loved Americans.

2120

01:53:09,210 --> 01:53:13,230

The French, they idolized us.

2121

01:53:13,230 --> 01:53:15,740

There was no
question about that.

2122

01:53:15,740 --> 01:53:19,080

I had no problem in France.

2123

01:53:19,080 --> 01:53:20,970

Did you have any in
Belgium or Germany

2124

01:53:20,970 --> 01:53:23,731

or Holland or the Netherlands?

2125

01:53:23,731 --> 01:53:29,090

2126

01:53:29,090 --> 01:53:29,590

No.

2127

01:53:29,590 --> 01:53:32,320

In Belgium, I think we saw
some action in Belgium.

2128

01:53:32,320 --> 01:53:35,250

2129

01:53:35,250 --> 01:53:38,640

And in Holland, no.

2130

01:53:38,640 --> 01:53:41,080

We didn't have
problems in Holland.

2131

01:53:41,080 --> 01:53:44,190

They were nice people, and
the Dutch, I liked them.

2132

01:53:44,190 --> 01:53:48,250

2133

01:53:48,250 --> 01:53:51,260

I'm trying to
remember where we--

2134

01:53:51,260 --> 01:53:52,530

oh.

2135

01:53:52,530 --> 01:53:55,395

At the time, the Battle of
the Bulge was taking place.

2136

01:53:55,395 --> 01:54:00,090

2137

01:54:00,090 --> 01:54:06,170

The Germans had dropped
a parachute battalion,

2138

01:54:06,170 --> 01:54:10,170

and several of them were
picked up near our outfit.

2139

01:54:10,170 --> 01:54:14,600

I personally didn't see them
until they were captured.

2140

01:54:14,600 --> 01:54:18,740

But some in our
outfit did capture

2141

01:54:18,740 --> 01:54:24,495

some German paratroopers,
and I went to look at them.

2142

01:54:24,495 --> 01:54:25,370

And what did you see?

2143

01:54:25,370 --> 01:54:27,020

What kind of impression
did you have?

2144

01:54:27,020 --> 01:54:28,850

They were hard-looking guys.

2145
01:54:28,850 --> 01:54:31,520
They didn't look at us.

2146
01:54:31,520 --> 01:54:35,420
We put them behind barbed wire
until they could be taken away

2147
01:54:35,420 --> 01:54:38,450
to some prisoner of war camp.

2148
01:54:38,450 --> 01:54:40,980
But they were
tough-looking guys.

2149
01:54:40,980 --> 01:54:46,130

2150
01:54:46,130 --> 01:54:54,170
The think where I didn't
like, I was in Dachau--

2151
01:54:54,170 --> 01:54:55,820
We will talk about that, too.

2152
01:54:55,820 --> 01:54:59,060
--shortly after
it was liberated.

2153
01:54:59,060 --> 01:55:01,660

2154
01:55:01,660 --> 01:55:07,840
And as much as I saw during
the war, what I saw here

2155
01:55:07,840 --> 01:55:10,602
is hard to describe to you.

2156
01:55:10,602 --> 01:55:12,310
I want to hold that
thought for a minute.

2157
01:55:12,310 --> 01:55:15,080

2158
01:55:15,080 --> 01:55:18,110
Let me get back to
the military actions.

2159
01:55:18,110 --> 01:55:20,780

2160
01:55:20,780 --> 01:55:28,250
I take it that from the
time you were drafted

2161
01:55:28,250 --> 01:55:32,510
until you hit the beach in
Normandy, that whole time

2162
01:55:32,510 --> 01:55:34,970
when you were in
military service,

2163
01:55:34,970 --> 01:55:39,140
did you have the opportunity
to read newspapers,

2164
01:55:39,140 --> 01:55:43,040
to hear what the news was
of how the war was going?

2165
01:55:43,040 --> 01:55:43,870
Sure.

2166
01:55:43,870 --> 01:55:45,110
OK.

2167
01:55:45,110 --> 01:55:48,290
And what about the situation of
what was happening to the Jews?

2168
01:55:48,290 --> 01:55:50,510

I don't recall
seeing a paper when

2169
01:55:50,510 --> 01:55:52,480
we were in England already.

2170
01:55:52,480 --> 01:55:52,980
OK.

2171
01:55:52,980 --> 01:55:56,636
But prior to that, sure.

2172
01:55:56,636 --> 01:56:00,620
When I was in the States,
I was able to read a paper.

2173
01:56:00,620 --> 01:56:04,820
Was there more news of what
was happening to the Jews?

2174
01:56:04,820 --> 01:56:06,530
That's a good question.

2175
01:56:06,530 --> 01:56:08,620
Not particularly, no.

2176
01:56:08,620 --> 01:56:09,550
OK.

2177
01:56:09,550 --> 01:56:10,670
No.

2178
01:56:10,670 --> 01:56:12,110
And I know that
during the break,

2179
01:56:12,110 --> 01:56:16,970
you remember the town that
you had been in in Wales.

2180
01:56:16,970 --> 01:56:18,680
Weston-super-Mare.

2181
01:56:18,680 --> 01:56:19,880
Weston-super-Mare.

2182
01:56:19,880 --> 01:56:21,620
That was the name of
the town in Wales.

2183
01:56:21,620 --> 01:56:22,120
OK.

2184
01:56:22,120 --> 01:56:25,730
Picturesque,
beautiful little town.

2185
01:56:25,730 --> 01:56:27,010
OK.

2186
01:56:27,010 --> 01:56:32,660
You also said that you had
some sort of excursions

2187
01:56:32,660 --> 01:56:36,080
near Bristol, that there was
some kind of activity going on?

2188
01:56:36,080 --> 01:56:36,680
What was that?

2189
01:56:36,680 --> 01:56:41,060
The Bristol Channel,
at the time,

2190
01:56:41,060 --> 01:56:45,200
they took us out on
a water in a boat

2191
01:56:45,200 --> 01:56:48,920
and then they turned
it around, practicing

2192
01:56:48,920 --> 01:56:53,090

disembarking from a
boat onto a beach,

2193

01:56:53,090 --> 01:56:59,630

not realizing this was a
rehearsal for a D-Day landing.

2194

01:56:59,630 --> 01:57:01,670

There was no mention,
we're doing this

2195

01:57:01,670 --> 01:57:04,010

because you're going
to land in France.

2196

01:57:04,010 --> 01:57:04,830

Of course not.

2197

01:57:04,830 --> 01:57:07,370

2198

01:57:07,370 --> 01:57:09,680

We were told it was a maneuver.

2199

01:57:09,680 --> 01:57:14,180

Whoever knew that they were
anticipating an invasion?

2200

01:57:14,180 --> 01:57:18,360

Well, talk about the
best kept secret,

2201

01:57:18,360 --> 01:57:23,000

and the daunting task
of keeping it a secret.

2202

01:57:23,000 --> 01:57:27,785

So you did these maneuvers
in Bristol in the Bay.

2203

01:57:27,785 --> 01:57:29,660

On the Bristol Channel, yeah.

2204

01:57:29,660 --> 01:57:32,000

Very picturesque
part of England, too.

2205

01:57:32,000 --> 01:57:34,910

Must have been easier to land on
those beaches than on Normandy.

2206

01:57:34,910 --> 01:57:35,750

I would say so.

2207

01:57:35,750 --> 01:57:37,180

Nobody was shooting at you.

2208

01:57:37,180 --> 01:57:38,960

Yeah.

2209

01:57:38,960 --> 01:57:41,360

And were you also laden
down with equipment

2210

01:57:41,360 --> 01:57:43,340

in the practicing or not?

2211

01:57:43,340 --> 01:57:45,060

No, not that I'm aware of.

2212

01:57:45,060 --> 01:57:45,560

No.

2213

01:57:45,560 --> 01:57:46,800

OK.

2214

01:57:46,800 --> 01:57:48,810

OK.

2215

01:57:48,810 --> 01:57:53,160

Now, did you take part in
the Battle of the Bulge?

2216

01:57:53,160 --> 01:57:55,890

No, our unit was
more to the rear.

2217
01:57:55,890 --> 01:58:00,330
We were kept to the rear for
anti-aircraft protection.

2218
01:58:00,330 --> 01:58:05,240
So the actual Bulge
itself, I was not in that.

2219
01:58:05,240 --> 01:58:07,260
I escaped that, luckily.

2220
01:58:07,260 --> 01:58:08,760
I wasn't too far from it.

2221
01:58:08,760 --> 01:58:11,340

2222
01:58:11,340 --> 01:58:13,860
There was a place
called Malmedy.

2223
01:58:13,860 --> 01:58:14,620
Yeah.

2224
01:58:14,620 --> 01:58:18,370
We had tremendous
atrocities there.

2225
01:58:18,370 --> 01:58:21,270
I know we passed
that area, and I

2226
01:58:21,270 --> 01:58:23,610
kept looking to see
what I could find.

2227
01:58:23,610 --> 01:58:29,700
But aside from seeing
some fallen bodies or so,

2228
01:58:29,700 --> 01:58:31,950
that's all I saw.

2229
01:58:31,950 --> 01:58:36,240
Well, what part of the
Netherlands was your unit in?

2230
01:58:36,240 --> 01:58:38,115
I remember being in Venlo.

2231
01:58:38,115 --> 01:58:39,510
Tell me about that.

2232
01:58:39,510 --> 01:58:42,510
But I don't recall any--

2233
01:58:42,510 --> 01:58:49,220
well, it was in Passover,
I think it was, in '45.

2234
01:58:49,220 --> 01:58:51,170
So it was sort of
springtime-ish?

2235
01:58:51,170 --> 01:58:51,670
Yeah.

2236
01:58:51,670 --> 01:58:56,604

2237
01:58:56,604 --> 01:59:00,570
A Jewish chaplain came into
our outfit, wanting to know,

2238
01:59:00,570 --> 01:59:03,090
are there any Jewish
guys here that would want

2239
01:59:03,090 --> 01:59:06,480
to go to Passover services?

2240

01:59:06,480 --> 01:59:07,660
I raised my hand.

2241
01:59:07,660 --> 01:59:08,910
Why not?

2242
01:59:08,910 --> 01:59:12,780
And a couple of
us went, not many.

2243
01:59:12,780 --> 01:59:19,980
And we came to this convent
and a group of nuns greeted us,

2244
01:59:19,980 --> 01:59:24,280
and they had prepared
a dinner for us.

2245
01:59:24,280 --> 01:59:27,810
And during dinner,
one of them said,

2246
01:59:27,810 --> 01:59:30,900
we have a surprise for you.

2247
01:59:30,900 --> 01:59:35,420
And they removed a carpet
that was on the floor

2248
01:59:35,420 --> 01:59:37,890
and there was a trapdoor there.

2249
01:59:37,890 --> 01:59:43,200
And they raised the
trapdoor and one of them

2250
01:59:43,200 --> 01:59:44,490
climbed down a little.

2251
01:59:44,490 --> 01:59:48,430
And I heard her talking,
and she came back up,

2252

01:59:48,430 --> 01:59:51,990
and a group of men came
up under this trapdoor.

2253

01:59:51,990 --> 01:59:57,450
They were Jewish men that they
had hidden from the Germans

2254

01:59:57,450 --> 02:00:01,860
and had kept them
down in the basement.

2255

02:00:01,860 --> 02:00:06,010
They fed them and
they took care of them

2256

02:00:06,010 --> 02:00:10,210
so that the Germans
didn't capture them.

2257

02:00:10,210 --> 02:00:13,000
But when they saw
us, they froze.

2258

02:00:13,000 --> 02:00:16,130
They saw men in uniform.

2259

02:00:16,130 --> 02:00:18,660
We had guns.

2260

02:00:18,660 --> 02:00:25,440
And I went over 'cause
the nun told me, Jews.

2261

02:00:25,440 --> 02:00:27,630
I went over and I
spoke Yiddish to them.

2262

02:00:27,630 --> 02:00:31,150

2263

02:00:31,150 --> 02:00:36,180

I didn't know what part
of Judaism they were from,

2264
02:00:36,180 --> 02:00:38,700
but I was able to
calm them down.

2265
02:00:38,700 --> 02:00:40,470
They were shaking, literally.

2266
02:00:40,470 --> 02:00:43,590
They saw men in
uniform with guns.

2267
02:00:43,590 --> 02:00:49,250
But then after I spoke to them,
Yiddish, Yiddish, you know.

2268
02:00:49,250 --> 02:00:51,090
Were they Dutch-Jewish men?

2269
02:00:51,090 --> 02:00:52,230
I don't know.

2270
02:00:52,230 --> 02:00:54,090
I don't know.

2271
02:00:54,090 --> 02:00:58,350
I don't remember really being
able to converse with them.

2272
02:00:58,350 --> 02:01:02,850
I don't know what form of
Judaism they were from.

2273
02:01:02,850 --> 02:01:05,890
Did the nuns say who they were?

2274
02:01:05,890 --> 02:01:08,510
I don't remember,
quite honestly.

2275

02:01:08,510 --> 02:01:14,290

They did tell us, Jewish
men, and they hid them

2276

02:01:14,290 --> 02:01:15,850

from the Germans.

2277

02:01:15,850 --> 02:01:18,760

Now, what form of
Judaism they were--

2278

02:01:18,760 --> 02:01:21,570

all I know is they were
terrified when they saw.

2279

02:01:21,570 --> 02:01:24,520

They literally shook.

2280

02:01:24,520 --> 02:01:27,220

They were even too
scared to speak.

2281

02:01:27,220 --> 02:01:33,980

But after I spoke Yiddish and
Yiddish and Yiddish, [YIDDISH],,

2282

02:01:33,980 --> 02:01:35,980

then they calmed down.

2283

02:01:35,980 --> 02:01:38,230

And maybe they said a few words.

2284

02:01:38,230 --> 02:01:40,540

I don't recall really.

2285

02:01:40,540 --> 02:01:42,440

Did they sit down at
the table with you?

2286

02:01:42,440 --> 02:01:43,060

They came.

2287

02:01:43,060 --> 02:01:44,190
They sat a little.

2288
02:01:44,190 --> 02:01:45,670
They ate.

2289
02:01:45,670 --> 02:01:49,090
And the nuns covered
up this trapdoor

2290
02:01:49,090 --> 02:01:51,670
and put this carpet down again.

2291
02:01:51,670 --> 02:01:54,520
I don't think they ever
had to go back down again.

2292
02:01:54,520 --> 02:01:57,760
What they did with them
after we left, I don't know.

2293
02:01:57,760 --> 02:02:03,160
But it was a very, very
unbelievable experience, to me,

2294
02:02:03,160 --> 02:02:04,570
to see that.

2295
02:02:04,570 --> 02:02:05,950
I was shocked.

2296
02:02:05,950 --> 02:02:09,910
So you see it at the
time when they're

2297
02:02:09,910 --> 02:02:13,020
free for the first time, and
they don't even know it yet.

2298
02:02:13,020 --> 02:02:14,650
That's right.

2299

02:02:14,650 --> 02:02:20,170
I mean, I myself was mystified.

2300
02:02:20,170 --> 02:02:25,390
I was probably too excited
to see any more than just

2301
02:02:25,390 --> 02:02:26,940
what I saw.

2302
02:02:26,940 --> 02:02:28,870
Yeah, because there's
so many questions

2303
02:02:28,870 --> 02:02:30,190
that would come from that.

2304
02:02:30,190 --> 02:02:30,910
Who were they?

2305
02:02:30,910 --> 02:02:31,970
Where did they come from?

2306
02:02:31,970 --> 02:02:33,820
Exactly.

2307
02:02:33,820 --> 02:02:35,670
To this day I don't know.

2308
02:02:35,670 --> 02:02:37,310
OK.

2309
02:02:37,310 --> 02:02:42,570
But it was an unbelievable
experience, to see a trapdoor

2310
02:02:42,570 --> 02:02:44,170
and out come a group.

2311
02:02:44,170 --> 02:02:46,500
It was about seven or eight men.

2312

02:02:46,500 --> 02:02:50,010

Were they young,
old, middle-aged?

2313

02:02:50,010 --> 02:02:52,560

I would say middle-aged
at the most.

2314

02:02:52,560 --> 02:02:55,350

They weren't old people, no.

2315

02:02:55,350 --> 02:02:57,810

Do you know how long
they had been down there?

2316

02:02:57,810 --> 02:03:00,300

I don't recall that.

2317

02:03:00,300 --> 02:03:01,690

That's a good question.

2318

02:03:01,690 --> 02:03:04,320

I don't even know if we
ever asked, or if we did,

2319

02:03:04,320 --> 02:03:05,190

I don't remember.

2320

02:03:05,190 --> 02:03:06,060

I don't know.

2321

02:03:06,060 --> 02:03:08,400

Did the nuns speak English?

2322

02:03:08,400 --> 02:03:09,330

To some extent.

2323

02:03:09,330 --> 02:03:10,720

A few words, yes.

2324

02:03:10,720 --> 02:03:11,220

OK.

2325

02:03:11,220 --> 02:03:11,720

Yeah.

2326

02:03:11,720 --> 02:03:14,150

2327

02:03:14,150 --> 02:03:16,530

They knew we were coming

because they had already

2328

02:03:16,530 --> 02:03:18,030

prepared a meal.

2329

02:03:18,030 --> 02:03:21,390

So evidently, they had

seen this Jewish chaplain.

2330

02:03:21,390 --> 02:03:27,360

He must have told them, I will

be here with a group of men.

2331

02:03:27,360 --> 02:03:31,590

Do know how long the place had

been under American control?

2332

02:03:31,590 --> 02:03:35,340

I mean, was it a matter of days

before the Germans had left?

2333

02:03:35,340 --> 02:03:36,750

When we were in Venlo?

2334

02:03:36,750 --> 02:03:39,030

Yeah.

2335

02:03:39,030 --> 02:03:41,490

There was no fighting

when we got there.

2336

02:03:41,490 --> 02:03:42,360

There was fighting.

2337

02:03:42,360 --> 02:03:44,340

It was already over with.

2338

02:03:44,340 --> 02:03:48,860

When we got to Venlo,
there was no shooting.

2339

02:03:48,860 --> 02:03:52,230

And was Passover soon
after you got to Venlo?

2340

02:03:52,230 --> 02:03:54,090

That is, it was soon after--

2341

02:03:54,090 --> 02:03:54,590

Yeah.

2342

02:03:54,590 --> 02:03:58,830

It had to be around
April, I believe.

2343

02:03:58,830 --> 02:04:02,820

But no, there was no
fighting in Venlo that I saw.

2344

02:04:02,820 --> 02:04:06,090

And so from there, is
that when you first went

2345

02:04:06,090 --> 02:04:08,880

into Germany itself from Venlo?

2346

02:04:08,880 --> 02:04:13,360

I think after Venlo, we finally
ended up in Germany, yeah.

2347

02:04:13,360 --> 02:04:14,920

And what do you remember seeing?

2348

02:04:14,920 --> 02:04:17,636

2349
02:04:17,636 --> 02:04:18,930
I'm trying to remember.

2350
02:04:18,930 --> 02:04:21,530

2351
02:04:21,530 --> 02:04:25,460
During the war of
occupation, after the war,

2352
02:04:25,460 --> 02:04:29,450
we were in some town in Bavaria.

2353
02:04:29,450 --> 02:04:33,930

2354
02:04:33,930 --> 02:04:34,680
Kirsenhof?

2355
02:04:34,680 --> 02:04:37,270

2356
02:04:37,270 --> 02:04:39,690
See, stupid me.

2357
02:04:39,690 --> 02:04:42,350
I don't remember
the town we were in.

2358
02:04:42,350 --> 02:04:50,180
But it was a beautiful,
picturesque town in Bavaria.

2359
02:04:50,180 --> 02:04:55,940
I know that it had a
brewery that made beer.

2360
02:04:55,940 --> 02:05:00,920
And we made sure that
we drank a lot of beer,

2361
02:05:00,920 --> 02:05:06,050
and these Germans made sure
that they gave us a lot of beer.

2362
02:05:06,050 --> 02:05:07,540
Now, this is after the war ends?

2363
02:05:07,540 --> 02:05:08,040
Yeah.

2364
02:05:08,040 --> 02:05:12,470

2365
02:05:12,470 --> 02:05:16,520
The occupation, after
the war, before we

2366
02:05:16,520 --> 02:05:19,760
were transferred to the
different port, where

2367
02:05:19,760 --> 02:05:21,110
we left for the States.

2368
02:05:21,110 --> 02:05:22,040
Yeah.

2369
02:05:22,040 --> 02:05:25,040
I want to still go back.

2370
02:05:25,040 --> 02:05:26,930
When you first
crossed into Germany,

2371
02:05:26,930 --> 02:05:30,830
that's far from Bavaria,
because Venlo is in the north

2372
02:05:30,830 --> 02:05:32,780
and Bavaria is in the south.

2373

02:05:32,780 --> 02:05:34,340

Did you go to Aachen?

2374

02:05:34,340 --> 02:05:36,040

I was in Aachen.

2375

02:05:36,040 --> 02:05:37,910

There was action in Aachen.

2376

02:05:37,910 --> 02:05:39,770

What kind of action
was in Aachen?

2377

02:05:39,770 --> 02:05:42,650

What was going on there?

2378

02:05:42,650 --> 02:05:47,880

There was a German outfit there
that was being attacked, yeah.

2379

02:05:47,880 --> 02:05:51,180

And we were always to
the rear that action,

2380

02:05:51,180 --> 02:05:53,510

bringing up anti-aircraft guns.

2381

02:05:53,510 --> 02:05:57,580

But we didn't partake
in the actual fighting.

2382

02:05:57,580 --> 02:06:03,630

But I was close enough to
see a lot of it and hear it.

2383

02:06:03,630 --> 02:06:06,870

Did you pass through smaller
German villages or towns?

2384

02:06:06,870 --> 02:06:07,650

Yeah, sure.

2385

02:06:07,650 --> 02:06:09,930

I don't remember them.

2386

02:06:09,930 --> 02:06:13,620

I liked I enjoyed seeing
these small areas.

2387

02:06:13,620 --> 02:06:17,940

It was very picturesque,
especially Bavaria.

2388

02:06:17,940 --> 02:06:20,310

I found it a very nice area.

2389

02:06:20,310 --> 02:06:22,240

What were the people like?

2390

02:06:22,240 --> 02:06:23,445

Kaufering.

2391

02:06:23,445 --> 02:06:25,330

Kaufering.

2392

02:06:25,330 --> 02:06:25,830

Kaufering?

2393

02:06:25,830 --> 02:06:27,640

Kaufering, Germany.

2394

02:06:27,640 --> 02:06:28,650

That's where we spent--

2395

02:06:28,650 --> 02:06:31,800

2396

02:06:31,800 --> 02:06:33,940

the Army of Occupation.

2397

02:06:33,940 --> 02:06:40,440

That town had of a brewery,
some pretty girls that we chased

2398
02:06:40,440 --> 02:06:41,960
and caught.

2399
02:06:41,960 --> 02:06:42,900
[LAUGHS]

2400
02:06:42,900 --> 02:06:44,310

2401
02:06:44,310 --> 02:06:46,510
Oh, yeah.

2402
02:06:46,510 --> 02:06:48,520
Kaufering.

2403
02:06:48,520 --> 02:06:49,020
Helda.

2404
02:06:49,020 --> 02:06:51,590

2405
02:06:51,590 --> 02:06:53,820
I never told Raz,
but Helda was pretty.

2406
02:06:53,820 --> 02:06:57,420

2407
02:06:57,420 --> 02:06:59,670
Well, I have got a lot
of questions on that one.

2408
02:06:59,670 --> 02:07:02,880

2409
02:07:02,880 --> 02:07:06,750
If the French were
understandably very friendly

2410
02:07:06,750 --> 02:07:09,000

towards the Americans,
what were the Germans

2411
02:07:09,000 --> 02:07:11,640
like, the German civilians?

2412
02:07:11,640 --> 02:07:12,840
No problem.

2413
02:07:12,840 --> 02:07:14,410
No problem at all.

2414
02:07:14,410 --> 02:07:16,170
As a matter of
fact, most of them

2415
02:07:16,170 --> 02:07:18,600
kept to themselves
because they didn't know

2416
02:07:18,600 --> 02:07:22,700
how we would react to them.

2417
02:07:22,700 --> 02:07:26,360
I mean, I never walked
through the town

2418
02:07:26,360 --> 02:07:30,410
without a pistol or a
rifle because I never knew

2419
02:07:30,410 --> 02:07:33,590
who would take a shot at me.

2420
02:07:33,590 --> 02:07:36,410
I never saw anything
that happened though,

2421
02:07:36,410 --> 02:07:39,350
but I always carried a
pistol, at least a pistol,

2422

02:07:39,350 --> 02:07:43,140
with me when I walked
through the town.

2423
02:07:43,140 --> 02:07:44,970
Most of us did.

2424
02:07:44,970 --> 02:07:47,460
But the civilians themselves,
they basically kept

2425
02:07:47,460 --> 02:07:51,660
to themselves, or if they had
to pass you, they would nod,

2426
02:07:51,660 --> 02:07:55,680
and that was the
extent of their--

2427
02:07:55,680 --> 02:07:58,550
So no fraternization?

2428
02:07:58,550 --> 02:07:59,398
No.

2429
02:07:59,398 --> 02:08:01,020
No.

2430
02:08:01,020 --> 02:08:02,770
Except for the girls
that you could catch.

2431
02:08:02,770 --> 02:08:03,420
Yeah, right.

2432
02:08:03,420 --> 02:08:07,050

2433
02:08:07,050 --> 02:08:08,630
A lot of that went on.

2434
02:08:08,630 --> 02:08:10,700

Did it, huh?

2435

02:08:10,700 --> 02:08:15,100

There were not many
girls and too many guys.

2436

02:08:15,100 --> 02:08:16,100

It's the Army.

2437

02:08:16,100 --> 02:08:22,910

2438

02:08:22,910 --> 02:08:28,022

For you, where were
you when the war ended?

2439

02:08:28,022 --> 02:08:28,980

That's a good question.

2440

02:08:28,980 --> 02:08:31,500

2441

02:08:31,500 --> 02:08:35,470

I remember being
in a gun position.

2442

02:08:35,470 --> 02:08:41,240

Gee, I don't remember what
part of Germany I was in.

2443

02:08:41,240 --> 02:08:45,000

But somebody came by
in a Jeep and said,

2444

02:08:45,000 --> 02:08:48,340

it looks like the
war is over, guys.

2445

02:08:48,340 --> 02:08:52,360

And I remember there was
a big roar, you know.

2446

02:08:52,360 --> 02:08:53,085

Are you sure?

2447

02:08:53,085 --> 02:08:53,830

Are you sure?

2448

02:08:53,830 --> 02:08:59,180

2449

02:08:59,180 --> 02:09:03,170

Then there was more
trucks coming up

2450

02:09:03,170 --> 02:09:07,220

the road and more guys saying,
yes, the war is over, guys.

2451

02:09:07,220 --> 02:09:07,760

It's over.

2452

02:09:07,760 --> 02:09:09,690

We're finished, and so on.

2453

02:09:09,690 --> 02:09:14,840

And there was a big
roar, hooray, and things.

2454

02:09:14,840 --> 02:09:20,060

But that was the extent of how I
found out that the war is over.

2455

02:09:20,060 --> 02:09:22,430

But were you in Bavaria, do
you think, at that point?

2456

02:09:22,430 --> 02:09:25,040

I would have had to been
in some part of Bavaria,

2457

02:09:25,040 --> 02:09:28,730

probably, if we ended
up in Kaufering.

2458

02:09:28,730 --> 02:09:30,710

I would have had
to been somewhere

2459

02:09:30,710 --> 02:09:33,470

there, as far as I can recall.

2460

02:09:33,470 --> 02:09:35,330

You mentioned earlier,
before we were

2461

02:09:35,330 --> 02:09:39,290

taping, that there was a
place where you surprisingly

2462

02:09:39,290 --> 02:09:41,150

came upon some Soviet soldiers.

2463

02:09:41,150 --> 02:09:41,650

Yeah.

2464

02:09:41,650 --> 02:09:43,340

When was that?

2465

02:09:43,340 --> 02:09:44,670

I can't tell you.

2466

02:09:44,670 --> 02:09:47,570

I don't know what part
of Germany we were in.

2467

02:09:47,570 --> 02:09:50,870

All I know is when we
heard foreign language

2468

02:09:50,870 --> 02:09:53,620

and we parted the
trees or whatever,

2469

02:09:53,620 --> 02:09:55,130

and we stared at each other.

2470

02:09:55,130 --> 02:09:59,840

I realized they were Russian,
they realized we were American.

2471

02:09:59,840 --> 02:10:05,420

And a big cheer went up
and laughing and so on

2472

02:10:05,420 --> 02:10:09,020

and so forth, and then we
each turned and went our way.

2473

02:10:09,020 --> 02:10:13,160

Because there was still some
fighting in the area somewhere,

2474

02:10:13,160 --> 02:10:16,250

but not a hell of a lot.

2475

02:10:16,250 --> 02:10:17,750

Was this before the war ends?

2476

02:10:17,750 --> 02:10:18,300

Yeah.

2477

02:10:18,300 --> 02:10:18,800

Yeah.

2478

02:10:18,800 --> 02:10:23,120

It had to be for them
to be so close to us

2479

02:10:23,120 --> 02:10:25,250

and we so close to them.

2480

02:10:25,250 --> 02:10:29,720

But I couldn't tell you
what part of Germany it was.

2481

02:10:29,720 --> 02:10:33,500

Well, I don't know all of the
places where your unit was.

2482
02:10:33,500 --> 02:10:35,730
But if you say you
were in Bavaria,

2483
02:10:35,730 --> 02:10:38,660
Bavaria borders Czechoslovakia.

2484
02:10:38,660 --> 02:10:40,340
I was never in Czechoslovakia.

2485
02:10:40,340 --> 02:10:43,260
And you weren't any
close to the border?

2486
02:10:43,260 --> 02:10:45,550
To my knowledge, I was
never near Czechoslovakia,

2487
02:10:45,550 --> 02:10:48,050
that I know of.

2488
02:10:48,050 --> 02:10:52,235
I never even know the name
Czechoslovakia in those years.

2489
02:10:52,235 --> 02:10:55,295
It could also, perhaps, be
parts of northern Austria.

2490
02:10:55,295 --> 02:10:58,430

2491
02:10:58,430 --> 02:11:00,330
I was never in Austria then.

2492
02:11:00,330 --> 02:11:00,830
OK.

2493
02:11:00,830 --> 02:11:04,080

2494

02:11:04,080 --> 02:11:07,760

If your unit was
in Aachen and then

2495

02:11:07,760 --> 02:11:11,930

goes down towards Bavaria to
Kaufering, and all of that

2496

02:11:11,930 --> 02:11:13,550

is western Germany--

2497

02:11:13,550 --> 02:11:18,780

none of it is in what eventually
becomes eastern Germany.

2498

02:11:18,780 --> 02:11:21,080

Then where would I have
met up with Russian troops?

2499

02:11:21,080 --> 02:11:22,460

Well, that's a big mystery.

2500

02:11:22,460 --> 02:11:25,590

That's what I'm trying
to go back and piece--

2501

02:11:25,590 --> 02:11:26,960

Yeah, I know what you're saying.

2502

02:11:26,960 --> 02:11:27,830

Yeah.

2503

02:11:27,830 --> 02:11:33,370

We had to be closer
to the Russian border.

2504

02:11:33,370 --> 02:11:39,290

I know what was closer
to that part of Germany,

2505

02:11:39,290 --> 02:11:41,670

but I don't remember.

2506
02:11:41,670 --> 02:11:42,560
That's OK.

2507
02:11:42,560 --> 02:11:43,160
It's OK.

2508
02:11:43,160 --> 02:11:44,240
I'm sorry.

2509
02:11:44,240 --> 02:11:46,690
I wish I could help
you and help myself.

2510
02:11:46,690 --> 02:11:48,710
Yeah.

2511
02:11:48,710 --> 02:11:51,850
I covered a big part of
Germany, that I know.

2512
02:11:51,850 --> 02:11:54,410
I saw a lot of Germany.

2513
02:11:54,410 --> 02:11:57,872
It's interesting, for
historical purposes,

2514
02:11:57,872 --> 02:12:01,070
how far east the
Americans really went

2515
02:12:01,070 --> 02:12:04,220
and how far west the
Soviets really went.

2516
02:12:04,220 --> 02:12:08,750
And it could be well beyond
what we know, or it may not be.

2517
02:12:08,750 --> 02:12:11,610
I know I was in one

big city in Germany.

2518

02:12:11,610 --> 02:12:13,960

I don't remember the name.

2519

02:12:13,960 --> 02:12:17,180

It was a pretty good-sized city.

2520

02:12:17,180 --> 02:12:23,510

It was blasted to hell by our
bombers before we got there.

2521

02:12:23,510 --> 02:12:28,680

It was a good-sized city,
but I mean, it was in ruins.

2522

02:12:28,680 --> 02:12:29,870

Was it Frankfurt, maybe?

2523

02:12:29,870 --> 02:12:31,910

We had bombed the
hell out of it.

2524

02:12:31,910 --> 02:12:34,790

2525

02:12:34,790 --> 02:12:37,486

So when you were with--

2526

02:12:37,486 --> 02:12:40,720

With an H. What
would be with an H?

2527

02:12:40,720 --> 02:12:43,260

Heidelberg?

2528

02:12:43,260 --> 02:12:44,255

Hanover?

2529

02:12:44,255 --> 02:12:46,070

It might have been Heidelberg.

2530

02:12:46,070 --> 02:12:47,535

It could have been Heidelberg.

2531

02:12:47,535 --> 02:12:50,040

It might have been Heidelberg.

2532

02:12:50,040 --> 02:12:53,300

Oh, I couldn't believe my eyes.

2533

02:12:53,300 --> 02:12:54,835

It was literally in ruins.

2534

02:12:54,835 --> 02:12:57,450

2535

02:12:57,450 --> 02:13:00,940

And yet the villages and
towns were not as affected.

2536

02:13:00,940 --> 02:13:03,930

No, not the villages.

2537

02:13:03,930 --> 02:13:07,131

Little towns, little villages.

2538

02:13:07,131 --> 02:13:11,230

This place in Kaufbeuren,
Bavaria, beautiful.

2539

02:13:11,230 --> 02:13:12,420

Picturesque.

2540

02:13:12,420 --> 02:13:14,760

No parts of the war there.

2541

02:13:14,760 --> 02:13:20,610

So tell me, when you were
in Dachau or come to Dachau,

2542

02:13:20,610 --> 02:13:25,480

was that before the

war ends or after?

2543

02:13:25,480 --> 02:13:26,775

Oh, the war.

2544

02:13:26,775 --> 02:13:34,430

Let's see, Dachau

was liberated in '45.

2545

02:13:34,430 --> 02:13:35,260

Yes, of course.

2546

02:13:35,260 --> 02:13:37,860

2547

02:13:37,860 --> 02:13:42,930

It had been shortly before

or shortly right thereafter.

2548

02:13:42,930 --> 02:13:44,020

Very close.

2549

02:13:44,020 --> 02:13:45,060

So May 1945.

2550

02:13:45,060 --> 02:13:50,990

I remember somebody passed

the unit and said, hey,

2551

02:13:50,990 --> 02:13:53,540

the Dacha camp is here.

2552

02:13:53,540 --> 02:13:55,280

Want to see it?

2553

02:13:55,280 --> 02:13:57,570

Did you know what it was?

2554

02:13:57,570 --> 02:14:01,110

When I heard the name, I knew

it was a concentration camp.

2555

02:14:01,110 --> 02:14:05,830

And I said, yeah, I'll see it.

2556

02:14:05,830 --> 02:14:10,810

Sure enough, maybe one or two
other guys said, maybe I'll go.

2557

02:14:10,810 --> 02:14:12,460

Not a bunch of guys--

2558

02:14:12,460 --> 02:14:14,890

nobody said, yeah, yeah.

2559

02:14:14,890 --> 02:14:15,720

I said yes.

2560

02:14:15,720 --> 02:14:19,910

2561

02:14:19,910 --> 02:14:28,300

And I got there and I went in.

2562

02:14:28,300 --> 02:14:30,880

It was shortly after
it was liberated.

2563

02:14:30,880 --> 02:14:34,190

2564

02:14:34,190 --> 02:14:41,220

The SS guards were still
there behind barbed wire.

2565

02:14:41,220 --> 02:14:43,740

I said to myself, I want
to get over and see what

2566

02:14:43,740 --> 02:14:47,250

these characters look like.

2567

02:14:47,250 --> 02:14:52,670

I walked to the fence,
barbed wire fence.

2568
02:14:52,670 --> 02:14:56,380
And there must have
been 15 or 20 of them,

2569
02:14:56,380 --> 02:14:59,460
laying on the ground, sitting
on the ground, talking.

2570
02:14:59,460 --> 02:15:02,710
They were having a good
time, laughing to each other.

2571
02:15:02,710 --> 02:15:06,490

2572
02:15:06,490 --> 02:15:09,730
I remember one of them stood up.

2573
02:15:09,730 --> 02:15:14,330
He must have seen me on the
other side of the fence.

2574
02:15:14,330 --> 02:15:17,710
And he was walking
slowly, slowly.

2575
02:15:17,710 --> 02:15:22,720
When he got near where
I was, he turned around

2576
02:15:22,720 --> 02:15:25,015
and he spit through
the fence in my face.

2577
02:15:25,015 --> 02:15:28,780

2578
02:15:28,780 --> 02:15:31,060
I reached for my pistol.

2579

02:15:31,060 --> 02:15:34,150

I was going to shoot
the son of a bitch.

2580

02:15:34,150 --> 02:15:37,040

One of the guys
near me grabbed me.

2581

02:15:37,040 --> 02:15:38,950

He said, put that gun down.

2582

02:15:38,950 --> 02:15:40,420

I said, that guy spit at me.

2583

02:15:40,420 --> 02:15:42,160

I'm going to kill the bastard.

2584

02:15:42,160 --> 02:15:45,580

He said, do not do that.

2585

02:15:45,580 --> 02:15:49,300

If you shoot him, you'll be
court-martialed for killing

2586

02:15:49,300 --> 02:15:50,455

a captured soldier.

2587

02:15:50,455 --> 02:15:53,590

2588

02:15:53,590 --> 02:15:55,270

Son of a bitch,
he turned around.

2589

02:15:55,270 --> 02:15:55,970

He smiled.

2590

02:15:55,970 --> 02:16:00,250

He laughed, and he walked
away after he spit in my face.

2591

02:16:00,250 --> 02:16:02,140
I'll never forget that.

2592
02:16:02,140 --> 02:16:04,750
The guy said, don't
you shoot him.

2593
02:16:04,750 --> 02:16:06,775
He said you'll be
court-martialed.

2594
02:16:06,775 --> 02:16:12,070

2595
02:16:12,070 --> 02:16:15,010
I wish I could have gotten
close to these SS guys.

2596
02:16:15,010 --> 02:16:19,360
They literally had to
be a bunch of killers,

2597
02:16:19,360 --> 02:16:21,130
from what I saw in this camp.

2598
02:16:21,130 --> 02:16:24,360

2599
02:16:24,360 --> 02:16:28,680
I went into the showers
where they gassed them.

2600
02:16:28,680 --> 02:16:31,380
I stood in the shower
and I looked up.

2601
02:16:31,380 --> 02:16:35,580
Sure enough, there were
gas jets in the ceiling

2602
02:16:35,580 --> 02:16:36,600
that were turned on.

2603

02:16:36,600 --> 02:16:39,270

When they told them
they're taking a shower,

2604

02:16:39,270 --> 02:16:42,250

that's when they gassed them.

2605

02:16:42,250 --> 02:16:45,309

There were still
several people that

2606

02:16:45,309 --> 02:16:49,280

were too sick to be moved yet.

2607

02:16:49,280 --> 02:16:53,460

I know they showed me what
building they were in,

2608

02:16:53,460 --> 02:16:56,570

and I did not go
to look at them,

2609

02:16:56,570 --> 02:16:58,940

but there were some
former prisoners still too

2610

02:16:58,940 --> 02:17:00,000

sick to be moved.

2611

02:17:00,000 --> 02:17:02,549

2612

02:17:02,549 --> 02:17:04,180

I walked around the camp.

2613

02:17:04,180 --> 02:17:04,680

I looked.

2614

02:17:04,680 --> 02:17:07,469

I went into the bunk house
where they kept them.

2615

02:17:07,469 --> 02:17:10,639

2616

02:17:10,639 --> 02:17:16,110

Disgusting where they had these
people sleep, laying on boards.

2617

02:17:16,110 --> 02:17:18,200

It turned my stomach.

2618

02:17:18,200 --> 02:17:20,879

Was it all still
all dirty and stuff?

2619

02:17:20,879 --> 02:17:22,100

Oh, yeah.

2620

02:17:22,100 --> 02:17:24,330

It hadn't been worked on yet.

2621

02:17:24,330 --> 02:17:29,709

There were still
inmates still left.

2622

02:17:29,709 --> 02:17:35,184

And the one sight I saw that
stuck with me to this very day

2623

02:17:35,184 --> 02:17:39,330

that I literally gasped.

2624

02:17:39,330 --> 02:17:46,114

I saw a mountain, a mountain,
of children's shoes.

2625

02:17:46,114 --> 02:17:49,469

2626

02:17:49,469 --> 02:17:52,230

To this very day
I can picture it.

2627

02:17:52,230 --> 02:17:55,555

I never saw anything
like it in my life.

2628

02:17:55,555 --> 02:18:00,120

Higher than from here to that
ceiling, maybe two ceilings up.

2629

02:18:00,120 --> 02:18:04,990

Thousands of pairs
of children's shoes.

2630

02:18:04,990 --> 02:18:08,730

Do you know how frightening
that sight could be?

2631

02:18:08,730 --> 02:18:11,410

It wasn't anything,
people being shot

2632

02:18:11,410 --> 02:18:15,930

or anything, just a
mountain of children's shoes

2633

02:18:15,930 --> 02:18:20,690

stuck in my mind to
this very, very day.

2634

02:18:20,690 --> 02:18:21,530

Chilling.

2635

02:18:21,530 --> 02:18:26,059

I would lay at night after that
and all I would think of-- all

2636

02:18:26,059 --> 02:18:28,709

night long, I could
not fall asleep--

2637

02:18:28,709 --> 02:18:33,590

all I kept seeing in front of my
eyes, a mountain of children's

2638

02:18:33,590 --> 02:18:34,639
shoes.

2639

02:18:34,639 --> 02:18:38,170
Thousands and
thousands of pairs.

2640

02:18:38,170 --> 02:18:41,750
What made these Germans do that?

2641

02:18:41,750 --> 02:18:46,520
I cannot understand
the reasoning.

2642

02:18:46,520 --> 02:18:50,139
So I can surmise, you
didn't have any chance

2643

02:18:50,139 --> 02:18:53,350
to speak with any of the
former prisoners there?

2644

02:18:53,350 --> 02:18:53,850
No.

2645

02:18:53,850 --> 02:18:54,350
No.

2646

02:18:54,350 --> 02:18:55,420
I don't know.

2647

02:18:55,420 --> 02:18:56,709
I never saw them.

2648

02:18:56,709 --> 02:18:59,650
Was most of the camp empty
by the time you got there?

2649

02:18:59,650 --> 02:19:00,150
Yeah.

2650

02:19:00,150 --> 02:19:01,059
Yeah.

2651
02:19:01,059 --> 02:19:05,394
So it was this handful of SS
guards behind barbed wire.

2652
02:19:05,394 --> 02:19:05,959
Yeah.

2653
02:19:05,959 --> 02:19:06,610
Yeah.

2654
02:19:06,610 --> 02:19:09,250
And these sick inmates
who you didn't see.

2655
02:19:09,250 --> 02:19:09,760
Yeah.

2656
02:19:09,760 --> 02:19:12,010
That's all that I knew of.

2657
02:19:12,010 --> 02:19:14,959
I didn't spend all
that much time there.

2658
02:19:14,959 --> 02:19:17,290
I was there maybe an
hour or two at the most.

2659
02:19:17,290 --> 02:19:21,309
Was there anybody who described
to you what had just gone on

2660
02:19:21,309 --> 02:19:24,010
or how they liberated it
or anything like that?

2661
02:19:24,010 --> 02:19:25,750
No, I never met anybody.

2662

02:19:25,750 --> 02:19:27,580
There might have
been somebody there,

2663
02:19:27,580 --> 02:19:31,000
but I never knew
them or saw them.

2664
02:19:31,000 --> 02:19:31,624
Was it clear--

2665
02:19:31,624 --> 02:19:34,780
There was nobody there that
was like a guide or anything.

2666
02:19:34,780 --> 02:19:36,700
There may have
been, I don't know.

2667
02:19:36,700 --> 02:19:40,430
But the day I got there, I just
opened the gate and walked in,

2668
02:19:40,430 --> 02:19:42,070
and that's it.

2669
02:19:42,070 --> 02:19:43,360
Nobody stopped me.

2670
02:19:43,360 --> 02:19:46,510
Was it clear that someone was
in control of the camp, or not?

2671
02:19:46,510 --> 02:19:47,450
I would think so.

2672
02:19:47,450 --> 02:19:48,670
I would think so.

2673
02:19:48,670 --> 02:19:50,350
There were several
buildings that I

2674

02:19:50,350 --> 02:19:53,740

know that looked like offices.

2675

02:19:53,740 --> 02:19:58,870

I'm sure there were people in
there that knew about the camp.

2676

02:19:58,870 --> 02:20:01,840

I didn't go in there and
nobody came to talk to me.

2677

02:20:01,840 --> 02:20:04,240

So you just were able
to freely move around?

2678

02:20:04,240 --> 02:20:05,570

I was able to move around.

2679

02:20:05,570 --> 02:20:08,740

A couple of guys, like me--

2680

02:20:08,740 --> 02:20:10,930

I didn't go with
anyone, in particular,

2681

02:20:10,930 --> 02:20:15,040

but a couple of guys like
me came to look around.

2682

02:20:15,040 --> 02:20:16,120

Nobody stopped me.

2683

02:20:16,120 --> 02:20:18,430

I walked wherever I wanted.

2684

02:20:18,430 --> 02:20:23,240

Were there any other sites
that you saw besides the shoes?

2685

02:20:23,240 --> 02:20:27,900

2686

02:20:27,900 --> 02:20:30,690

There was a place
where they kept

2687

02:20:30,690 --> 02:20:36,290

what were described as mad
dogs that they would sick on

2688

02:20:36,290 --> 02:20:38,970

to the inmates.

2689

02:20:38,970 --> 02:20:41,350

Mad dogs.

2690

02:20:41,350 --> 02:20:47,680

And there was another place
where they had prisoners kneel

2691

02:20:47,680 --> 02:20:48,920

and they would whip them.

2692

02:20:48,920 --> 02:20:53,610

2693

02:20:53,610 --> 02:20:58,160

I think they were marked so that
I knew what I was looking at.

2694

02:20:58,160 --> 02:21:00,000

Were the dogs
still there, or no?

2695

02:21:00,000 --> 02:21:00,500

No.

2696

02:21:00,500 --> 02:21:01,000

No.

2697

02:21:01,000 --> 02:21:03,170

No dogs, OK.

2698

02:21:03,170 --> 02:21:06,020

But that's pretty
much what I saw,

2699

02:21:06,020 --> 02:21:11,907

besides the shower,
the gas jets.

2700

02:21:11,907 --> 02:21:12,990

And how long did you stay?

2701

02:21:12,990 --> 02:21:15,230

It was a fairly
large looking place.

2702

02:21:15,230 --> 02:21:16,860

I didn't go over
the whole thing.

2703

02:21:16,860 --> 02:21:18,410

It looked pretty large.

2704

02:21:18,410 --> 02:21:21,140

A lot of barracks?

2705

02:21:21,140 --> 02:21:22,250

Yeah.

2706

02:21:22,250 --> 02:21:25,430

There were quite a few barracks.

2707

02:21:25,430 --> 02:21:27,230

And how long did you
spend, do you think?

2708

02:21:27,230 --> 02:21:29,522

Was it the better part of a
day or just a couple hours?

2709

02:21:29,522 --> 02:21:33,150

Just a couple hours, that's all.

2710

02:21:33,150 --> 02:21:35,985

I had enough when
I saw those shoes.

2711

02:21:35,985 --> 02:21:39,400

I couldn't wait to
get out of there.

2712

02:21:39,400 --> 02:21:45,690

The camp is very close
to a town called Dachau.

2713

02:21:45,690 --> 02:21:48,090

I believe that's-- yes, yeah.

2714

02:21:48,090 --> 02:21:49,250

Did you go to that town?

2715

02:21:49,250 --> 02:21:50,770

What part of Germany is that in?

2716

02:21:50,770 --> 02:21:51,520

That's in Bavaria.

2717

02:21:51,520 --> 02:21:52,103

Bavaria, yeah.

2718

02:21:52,103 --> 02:21:55,050

Bavaria, and that's
just outside Munich.

2719

02:21:55,050 --> 02:21:57,720

2720

02:21:57,720 --> 02:21:58,585

I was in Munich.

2721

02:21:58,585 --> 02:22:00,450

I went into Munich.

2722

02:22:00,450 --> 02:22:02,290

OK, I'm going to want

to ask about that.

2723

02:22:02,290 --> 02:22:05,150

But first, I want to ask about
the town of Dachau itself.

2724

02:22:05,150 --> 02:22:06,140

I don't remember.

2725

02:22:06,140 --> 02:22:06,960

You don't remember.

2726

02:22:06,960 --> 02:22:08,680

If I past it, I went through it.

2727

02:22:08,680 --> 02:22:09,810

I don't know.

2728

02:22:09,810 --> 02:22:11,160

I couldn't tell you.

2729

02:22:11,160 --> 02:22:12,660

OK.

2730

02:22:12,660 --> 02:22:16,500

I don't even know how
I got to this camp.

2731

02:22:16,500 --> 02:22:18,810

Was I that close to walk to it?

2732

02:22:18,810 --> 02:22:21,420

2733

02:22:21,420 --> 02:22:22,540

I don't know.

2734

02:22:22,540 --> 02:22:26,130

I don't remember if I had
been in an Army vehicle.

2735

02:22:26,130 --> 02:22:27,320
I don't know.

2736
02:22:27,320 --> 02:22:28,530
OK.

2737
02:22:28,530 --> 02:22:30,710
Oh, and Dachau was in Bavaria.

2738
02:22:30,710 --> 02:22:34,020
Yeah, Dachau was in Bavaria.

2739
02:22:34,020 --> 02:22:36,030
And what about Munich?

2740
02:22:36,030 --> 02:22:37,380
When did you go to Munich?

2741
02:22:37,380 --> 02:22:40,290
Was this after the war again?

2742
02:22:40,290 --> 02:22:43,410
It might have been after the
war that I went to Munich.

2743
02:22:43,410 --> 02:22:47,190
That was also fairly well bombed
out in some parts of the city.

2744
02:22:47,190 --> 02:22:48,630
It was a big city, Munich.

2745
02:22:48,630 --> 02:22:50,400
Mm-hmm.

2746
02:22:50,400 --> 02:22:50,970
Munich.

2747
02:22:50,970 --> 02:22:51,870
Munich.

2748

02:22:51,870 --> 02:22:53,010
That's right.

2749
02:22:53,010 --> 02:22:55,440
That's right.

2750
02:22:55,440 --> 02:22:57,870
All these cities had
people bombed out.

2751
02:22:57,870 --> 02:23:00,490

2752
02:23:00,490 --> 02:23:07,830
So when the war ended and
this cry came up, you know,

2753
02:23:07,830 --> 02:23:11,520
when people find
out about it, what

2754
02:23:11,520 --> 02:23:14,940
were your orders after that?

2755
02:23:14,940 --> 02:23:18,292
As far as being part
of the military and so,

2756
02:23:18,292 --> 02:23:19,125
where were you sent?

2757
02:23:19,125 --> 02:23:21,710

2758
02:23:21,710 --> 02:23:24,800
We ultimately were sent
to Kaufering in Germany.

2759
02:23:24,800 --> 02:23:25,730
OK.

2760
02:23:25,730 --> 02:23:29,410

I don't know how they picked
that area or who did it or how,

2761
02:23:29,410 --> 02:23:31,860
but that's where we were.

2762
02:23:31,860 --> 02:23:34,070
And we were there for
quite a few weeks,

2763
02:23:34,070 --> 02:23:36,570
and I liked it very much.

2764
02:23:36,570 --> 02:23:38,090
It was nice.

2765
02:23:38,090 --> 02:23:40,120
I used to walk into town.

2766
02:23:40,120 --> 02:23:43,370
We pitched our
tents where we were,

2767
02:23:43,370 --> 02:23:47,150
and we were free to do what
we wanted, when we wanted.

2768
02:23:47,150 --> 02:23:53,210
And we would go into town, have
our drinks, look for girls,

2769
02:23:53,210 --> 02:23:56,420
see if there was a
place to eat, whatever.

2770
02:23:56,420 --> 02:24:00,725
But it was a very peaceful area.

2771
02:24:00,725 --> 02:24:03,950
There wasn't that much
of a civilian population,

2772

02:24:03,950 --> 02:24:05,360
but they minded.

2773
02:24:05,360 --> 02:24:08,360
They kept to themselves.

2774
02:24:08,360 --> 02:24:10,460
And you stayed there for
several weeks, you said?

2775
02:24:10,460 --> 02:24:12,810
Yeah, yeah.

2776
02:24:12,810 --> 02:24:16,730
Then ultimately,
we ended up going

2777
02:24:16,730 --> 02:24:20,700
to these camps in England.

2778
02:24:20,700 --> 02:24:21,930
I forget.

2779
02:24:21,930 --> 02:24:27,510
Each one had a name, like Camp
Chesterfield, Lucky Strike,

2780
02:24:27,510 --> 02:24:29,280
Camp So and So.

2781
02:24:29,280 --> 02:24:33,300
And from these camps is
where we ultimately embarked

2782
02:24:33,300 --> 02:24:35,990
to come back to the States.

2783
02:24:35,990 --> 02:24:39,000
I don't know if it was
from South Hampton,

2784
02:24:39,000 --> 02:24:43,920

or I forget what city
that I left to back home.

2785
02:24:43,920 --> 02:24:44,790
How long?

2786
02:24:44,790 --> 02:24:47,670
I mean, was it a month
later or two months later?

2787
02:24:47,670 --> 02:24:48,660
When was it that you--

2788
02:24:48,660 --> 02:24:51,690
We were there for a couple
of weeks in these camps,

2789
02:24:51,690 --> 02:24:56,950
and then just slowly, unit
by unit was shipped out,

2790
02:24:56,950 --> 02:24:59,820
and it was OK.

2791
02:24:59,820 --> 02:25:03,830
We came back on
an ordinary boat.

2792
02:25:03,830 --> 02:25:06,130
I had a chance to
be seasick again.

2793
02:25:06,130 --> 02:25:07,549
[CHUCKLING]

2794
02:25:07,549 --> 02:25:09,920

2795
02:25:09,920 --> 02:25:15,140
So a military boat or a
civilian, like passenger ship?

2796

02:25:15,140 --> 02:25:17,210

It looked like a
passenger ship to me.

2797

02:25:17,210 --> 02:25:19,340

I don't even remember.

2798

02:25:19,340 --> 02:25:23,870

But I remember, when we
came into New York Harbor,

2799

02:25:23,870 --> 02:25:26,880

we had Kate Smith singing.

2800

02:25:26,880 --> 02:25:31,260

They had a loud
thing of Kate Smith.

2801

02:25:31,260 --> 02:25:32,310

When did you get back?

2802

02:25:32,310 --> 02:25:33,210

What month was it?

2803

02:25:33,210 --> 02:25:45,680

2804

02:25:45,680 --> 02:25:47,350

December.

2805

02:25:47,350 --> 02:25:50,720

Oh, so you'd been in
Europe for half a year?

2806

02:25:50,720 --> 02:25:52,490

I was in Europe--

2807

02:25:52,490 --> 02:25:54,830

After the war ends, you
were for a good half year?

2808

02:25:54,830 --> 02:25:55,837

No, no, no, no.

2809
02:25:55,837 --> 02:25:56,420
Wait a minute.

2810
02:25:56,420 --> 02:26:00,300

2811
02:26:00,300 --> 02:26:02,450
That's a good
point you bring up.

2812
02:26:02,450 --> 02:26:03,810
When did we come back here?

2813
02:26:03,810 --> 02:26:07,460

2814
02:26:07,460 --> 02:26:11,570
I was discharged
in December of '45.

2815
02:26:11,570 --> 02:26:13,770
OK.

2816
02:26:13,770 --> 02:26:17,670
Which means we had to come
back here in the winter.

2817
02:26:17,670 --> 02:26:20,800

2818
02:26:20,800 --> 02:26:23,820
So I was discharged
at the end of '45

2819
02:26:23,820 --> 02:26:26,370
and we had to get back
here in the winter.

2820
02:26:26,370 --> 02:26:27,580
Beforehand?

2821
02:26:27,580 --> 02:26:28,080
Yeah.

2822
02:26:28,080 --> 02:26:30,350
So it would have been
the fall, actually.

2823
02:26:30,350 --> 02:26:30,850
Yeah.

2824
02:26:30,850 --> 02:26:31,350
Yeah.

2825
02:26:31,350 --> 02:26:32,590
It would have been the fall.

2826
02:26:32,590 --> 02:26:33,090
Yeah.

2827
02:26:33,090 --> 02:26:35,130
So it meant that you
spent about half a year

2828
02:26:35,130 --> 02:26:38,530
still in Europe and
in Great Britain.

2829
02:26:38,530 --> 02:26:39,910
Could well be.

2830
02:26:39,910 --> 02:26:41,070
It could be.

2831
02:26:41,070 --> 02:26:44,480
Yeah, we didn't go
home that quickly,

2832
02:26:44,480 --> 02:26:48,060
because the army of occupation.

2833

02:26:48,060 --> 02:26:51,940
We spent quite a few
time in Kaufering.

2834
02:26:51,940 --> 02:26:52,440
OK.

2835
02:26:52,440 --> 02:26:55,340
Yeah, so that's true.

2836
02:26:55,340 --> 02:26:59,660
And you had been shipped out
to Europe the previous year?

2837
02:26:59,660 --> 02:27:00,650
Yeah, sure.

2838
02:27:00,650 --> 02:27:07,870
So do you remember when you had
been shipped out to England?

2839
02:27:07,870 --> 02:27:15,630

2840
02:27:15,630 --> 02:27:19,190
It might have been
around April time.

2841
02:27:19,190 --> 02:27:19,955
April of '44?

2842
02:27:19,955 --> 02:27:23,420

2843
02:27:23,420 --> 02:27:24,590
Yeah.

2844
02:27:24,590 --> 02:27:27,410
And so you were in Britain
only for a couple of months

2845
02:27:27,410 --> 02:27:29,180

before D-Day?

2846
02:27:29,180 --> 02:27:31,940
Yeah.

2847
02:27:31,940 --> 02:27:33,350
OK.

2848
02:27:33,350 --> 02:27:47,180
I also remember after
Paris was liberated,

2849
02:27:47,180 --> 02:27:55,375
our unit was sent into
a suburb of Paris.

2850
02:27:55,375 --> 02:27:59,030

2851
02:27:59,030 --> 02:28:03,080
Oh, why don't I remember
the name of the suburb?

2852
02:28:03,080 --> 02:28:08,780
It was a working
class area of Paris.

2853
02:28:08,780 --> 02:28:14,690
We set up our guns in case the
Germans decided to bomb Paris.

2854
02:28:14,690 --> 02:28:18,600

2855
02:28:18,600 --> 02:28:20,452
Saint Denis.

2856
02:28:20,452 --> 02:28:22,250
OK.

2857
02:28:22,250 --> 02:28:26,190
The Saint Denis

section of Paris.

2858

02:28:26,190 --> 02:28:38,130

And I remember
walking into Paris,

2859

02:28:38,130 --> 02:28:44,400

and I stood under the Arc de
Triomphe, the Arc de Triomphe.

2860

02:28:44,400 --> 02:28:47,340

I remember that distinctly.

2861

02:28:47,340 --> 02:28:53,010

Oh, and I spent a great day
by myself walking around

2862

02:28:53,010 --> 02:28:57,150

parts of Paris, and I knew
how to get back to the area

2863

02:28:57,150 --> 02:29:00,240

where I was, the
Saint Denis section.

2864

02:29:00,240 --> 02:29:03,360

It was a working class area.

2865

02:29:03,360 --> 02:29:07,540

So this must have been
soon after Normandy.

2866

02:29:07,540 --> 02:29:08,680

Could have been.

2867

02:29:08,680 --> 02:29:11,410

But I liked it.

2868

02:29:11,410 --> 02:29:16,410

I saw a lot of Paris that
a lot of guys did not see,

2869

02:29:16,410 --> 02:29:19,560
and it was very,
very interesting.

2870
02:29:19,560 --> 02:29:22,770
Yeah, I remember
talking to myself,

2871
02:29:22,770 --> 02:29:25,910
I'm under the Arc de Triomphe.

2872
02:29:25,910 --> 02:29:29,480
And you saw the Eiffel
Tower, all or those things?

2873
02:29:29,480 --> 02:29:31,050
Yes.

2874
02:29:31,050 --> 02:29:34,680
What did Paris itself look
like, I mean the people

2875
02:29:34,680 --> 02:29:37,430
and the buildings, and so on?

2876
02:29:37,430 --> 02:29:38,520
I was in a big city.

2877
02:29:38,520 --> 02:29:42,030

2878
02:29:42,030 --> 02:29:44,460
there were GIs like
myself wandering

2879
02:29:44,460 --> 02:29:50,405
around the streets, guys
looking for brothels, you know.

2880
02:29:50,405 --> 02:29:54,360
That was the big
thing you did then.

2881
02:29:54,360 --> 02:29:56,760
No, but I thought
Paris was nice.

2882
02:29:56,760 --> 02:29:58,050
I went into a bar.

2883
02:29:58,050 --> 02:30:00,720

2884
02:30:00,720 --> 02:30:02,730
I pointed to what I wanted.

2885
02:30:02,730 --> 02:30:04,320
I didn't know what to tell him.

2886
02:30:04,320 --> 02:30:06,510
I pointed, then
he gave it to me.

2887
02:30:06,510 --> 02:30:10,650
I had a glass of liquor
and I walked around.

2888
02:30:10,650 --> 02:30:15,360
I looked around
and I enjoyed it.

2889
02:30:15,360 --> 02:30:18,780
So that kind of segues into
the question that I have,

2890
02:30:18,780 --> 02:30:23,880
is you were gone for
about a year and a half

2891
02:30:23,880 --> 02:30:25,650
from the United States.

2892
02:30:25,650 --> 02:30:30,866
We could say from April
'44 till the fall of '45.

2893
02:30:30,866 --> 02:30:35,010
Yeah, that's quite a time.

2894
02:30:35,010 --> 02:30:39,000
Look, I went through the war
period, no question about it.

2895
02:30:39,000 --> 02:30:40,380
That's what I wanted to ask you.

2896
02:30:40,380 --> 02:30:44,760
Not always in action, thank
God, but always closer

2897
02:30:44,760 --> 02:30:47,440
to hear it and see it.

2898
02:30:47,440 --> 02:30:48,630
So how did it change you?

2899
02:30:48,630 --> 02:30:53,650

2900
02:30:53,650 --> 02:30:58,135
It changed me for the
fact that Hitler was gone.

2901
02:30:58,135 --> 02:31:00,700

2902
02:31:00,700 --> 02:31:02,440
Narcissism was defeated.

2903
02:31:02,440 --> 02:31:05,720

2904
02:31:05,720 --> 02:31:08,080
Concentration camps
were liberated.

2905

02:31:08,080 --> 02:31:11,550

2906

02:31:11,550 --> 02:31:12,990

I did my part.

2907

02:31:12,990 --> 02:31:14,910

That's what changed me.

2908

02:31:14,910 --> 02:31:17,640

I was part of what happened.

2909

02:31:17,640 --> 02:31:24,330

I did my little part of it, and
that's the way it changed me.

2910

02:31:24,330 --> 02:31:29,880

I saw death close up, and I
guess it left its mark on me,

2911

02:31:29,880 --> 02:31:31,500

to some extent.

2912

02:31:31,500 --> 02:31:34,080

Well, you were 22 years old.

2913

02:31:34,080 --> 02:31:36,725

Yeah, I was an old 22.

2914

02:31:36,725 --> 02:31:43,070

2915

02:31:43,070 --> 02:31:48,440

One question I forgot
to ask about your unit,

2916

02:31:48,440 --> 02:31:54,650

was your unit moving via wheeled
vehicles or tracked vehicles?

2917

02:31:54,650 --> 02:31:57,188

No, wheel, all wheel vehicles.

2918
02:31:57,188 --> 02:31:57,980
All wheel vehicles.

2919
02:31:57,980 --> 02:32:01,790
Always wheel vehicles,
and we would tow our guns

2920
02:32:01,790 --> 02:32:03,225
behind the vehicle.

2921
02:32:03,225 --> 02:32:09,010

2922
02:32:09,010 --> 02:32:12,237
And that was throughout
France and Belgium

2923
02:32:12,237 --> 02:32:13,070
and the Netherlands?

2924
02:32:13,070 --> 02:32:15,770
Yeah, we never were
on track wheels

2925
02:32:15,770 --> 02:32:17,270
OK.

2926
02:32:17,270 --> 02:32:19,310
OK.

2927
02:32:19,310 --> 02:32:23,750
So you had as a 20-year-old,
come back as 22-year-old,

2928
02:32:23,750 --> 02:32:28,310
and done your part.

2929
02:32:28,310 --> 02:32:30,560
Did you did your
personality change,

2930
02:32:30,560 --> 02:32:32,260
or was it pretty
much the same you?

2931
02:32:32,260 --> 02:32:34,970

2932
02:32:34,970 --> 02:32:38,240
I have to assume that
some of it changed,

2933
02:32:38,240 --> 02:32:43,040
but I cannot say it changed to
the fact that it left me with

2934
02:32:43,040 --> 02:32:44,570
some--

2935
02:32:44,570 --> 02:32:47,540
yeah, it left me with a lot
of memories that come out

2936
02:32:47,540 --> 02:32:51,500
occasionally, but nothing
where I was always

2937
02:32:51,500 --> 02:32:55,160
in a traumatized state.

2938
02:32:55,160 --> 02:33:00,830

2939
02:33:00,830 --> 02:33:02,652
When you talk about
the hardest part,

2940
02:33:02,652 --> 02:33:03,860
which one would it have been?

2941
02:33:03,860 --> 02:33:05,485
Would it have been
the invasion itself?

2942
02:33:05,485 --> 02:33:08,080

2943
02:33:08,080 --> 02:33:09,940
The hardest part
would come to me

2944
02:33:09,940 --> 02:33:12,430
if someone would
begin questioning me.

2945
02:33:12,430 --> 02:33:13,090
Where were you?

2946
02:33:13,090 --> 02:33:15,250
What did you do during the war?

2947
02:33:15,250 --> 02:33:20,380
If I was questioned too
closely, it would affect me.

2948
02:33:20,380 --> 02:33:23,620
Otherwise, I would say,
yeah, I was in service.

2949
02:33:23,620 --> 02:33:29,530
But if I was really pressed and
all and I had to say something,

2950
02:33:29,530 --> 02:33:31,150
it would bother me.

2951
02:33:31,150 --> 02:33:34,690
Why, because of how they
were questioning you?

2952
02:33:34,690 --> 02:33:38,140
No, because of the memories
it would bring back.

2953
02:33:38,140 --> 02:33:41,200

I would rather not be
questioned that time.

2954
02:33:41,200 --> 02:33:46,180
But as time went on, you know.

2955
02:33:46,180 --> 02:33:50,050
Did your kids ask about it?

2956
02:33:50,050 --> 02:33:51,450
No.

2957
02:33:51,450 --> 02:33:55,540
Barbara and Mark, never, never.

2958
02:33:55,540 --> 02:33:56,830
They knew I was in service.

2959
02:33:56,830 --> 02:34:03,800

2960
02:34:03,800 --> 02:34:07,580
I very rarely discussed
it with Mark, my son.

2961
02:34:07,580 --> 02:34:09,590
But at some point
in time, I think

2962
02:34:09,590 --> 02:34:14,100
I did tell Barbara
some of the things,

2963
02:34:14,100 --> 02:34:18,710
but she also probably
didn't want to question me

2964
02:34:18,710 --> 02:34:22,730
too much about it at all.

2965
02:34:22,730 --> 02:34:25,370
I think she realizes

now it's easier

2966

02:34:25,370 --> 02:34:28,160
to question me than before.

2967

02:34:28,160 --> 02:34:29,960
That often is the case.

2968

02:34:29,960 --> 02:34:31,080
That often is the case.

2969

02:34:31,080 --> 02:34:31,700
Yeah.

2970

02:34:31,700 --> 02:34:33,320
It takes time.

2971

02:34:33,320 --> 02:34:35,090
My parents never questioned me.

2972

02:34:35,090 --> 02:34:39,690
My father never did, never did.

2973

02:34:39,690 --> 02:34:43,820
I guess they made it a
point not to want to.

2974

02:34:43,820 --> 02:34:46,070
Do you miss that they didn't?

2975

02:34:46,070 --> 02:34:47,340
Would you have liked them to?

2976

02:34:47,340 --> 02:34:47,840
No.

2977

02:34:47,840 --> 02:34:49,250
I'm glad that they didn't.

2978

02:34:49,250 --> 02:34:52,490
I didn't want to be questioned.

2979
02:34:52,490 --> 02:34:56,410
I remember the night I came
home from service, my discharge

2980
02:34:56,410 --> 02:34:58,070
in my hand.

2981
02:34:58,070 --> 02:35:01,900
And at that time, we lived
in the Crown Heights,

2982
02:35:01,900 --> 02:35:05,960
and I used to get off at
the Utica Avenue Station.

2983
02:35:05,960 --> 02:35:11,030
And Dubrow's Cafeteria
was on Eastern Parkway

2984
02:35:11,030 --> 02:35:13,340
and Utica Avenue.

2985
02:35:13,340 --> 02:35:16,580
And before the war, I used
to go there with the guys

2986
02:35:16,580 --> 02:35:17,840
to Dubrow's.

2987
02:35:17,840 --> 02:35:20,930
We hung out in this cafeteria.

2988
02:35:20,930 --> 02:35:21,740
I'll never forget.

2989
02:35:21,740 --> 02:35:26,810
I got out of the subway and I
said, by God, there's Dubrow's.

2990
02:35:26,810 --> 02:35:31,760
I went in to Dubrow's

to see if any of my guys

2991
02:35:31,760 --> 02:35:33,140
were still there.

2992
02:35:33,140 --> 02:35:37,260
I walked in to Dubrow's with
the discharge in my hand.

2993
02:35:37,260 --> 02:35:42,990
And I looked around and I said,
well, now I can walk home.

2994
02:35:42,990 --> 02:35:47,910
And I remember walking
home into my dad's store,

2995
02:35:47,910 --> 02:35:52,790
and my mother took one look
and she fell to her knees.

2996
02:35:52,790 --> 02:35:57,050
She went into a dead faint
when she looked up, saw me.

2997
02:35:57,050 --> 02:36:00,080
Had no idea I was coming then.

2998
02:36:00,080 --> 02:36:01,420
She fainted.

2999
02:36:01,420 --> 02:36:05,100
And I remember picking her up.

3000
02:36:05,100 --> 02:36:07,110
My father, he just gasped.

3001
02:36:07,110 --> 02:36:08,150
He didn't faint.

3002
02:36:08,150 --> 02:36:11,430

3003
02:36:11,430 --> 02:36:14,910
And that was my homecoming.

3004
02:36:14,910 --> 02:36:18,270
Well, I mean, it must
have been that they were

3005
02:36:18,270 --> 02:36:19,880
worried sick every single day.

3006
02:36:19,880 --> 02:36:23,890
Well, my dad was a veteran
so he knew some things.

3007
02:36:23,890 --> 02:36:25,780
Yeah.

3008
02:36:25,780 --> 02:36:26,280
Tell.

3009
02:36:26,280 --> 02:36:28,980
Me a little bit about
your post-war life.

3010
02:36:28,980 --> 02:36:30,600
When did you get married?

3011
02:36:30,600 --> 02:36:32,816
What did you do?

3012
02:36:32,816 --> 02:36:39,500
I met Raz through a
mutual friend in 1950.

3013
02:36:39,500 --> 02:36:45,860
And we dated for a year
and we got married in '51.

3014
02:36:45,860 --> 02:36:47,180
We had a beautiful wedding.

3015

02:36:47,180 --> 02:36:53,870

3016

02:36:53,870 --> 02:36:55,850

I met Raz.

3017

02:36:55,850 --> 02:36:58,710

She lived in east New York.

3018

02:36:58,710 --> 02:36:59,710

Beautiful wedding.

3019

02:36:59,710 --> 02:37:03,990

We had a little wedding
in the rabbi's apartment.

3020

02:37:03,990 --> 02:37:07,110

That was a 1951 wedding.

3021

02:37:07,110 --> 02:37:08,950

I'm thinking of his wedding.

3022

02:37:08,950 --> 02:37:10,030

It was gorgeous.

3023

02:37:10,030 --> 02:37:11,280

Yeah?

3024

02:37:11,280 --> 02:37:14,812

That's your
son-in-law's wedding.

3025

02:37:14,812 --> 02:37:16,990

But it was nice.

3026

02:37:16,990 --> 02:37:20,140

3027

02:37:20,140 --> 02:37:23,050

Raz's mother was a delight.

3028

02:37:23,050 --> 02:37:27,290

I met her father twice.

3029

02:37:27,290 --> 02:37:31,030

And we were coming home
from a date one night

3030

02:37:31,030 --> 02:37:36,590

and Raz, as we turned the
corner onto Sheffield Avenue,

3031

02:37:36,590 --> 02:37:38,950

she said, oh, there's
a light on my porch.

3032

02:37:38,950 --> 02:37:39,910

Something is wrong.

3033

02:37:39,910 --> 02:37:41,380

And she started running.

3034

02:37:41,380 --> 02:37:42,910

It was a Saturday night.

3035

02:37:42,910 --> 02:37:43,750

We were coming home.

3036

02:37:43,750 --> 02:37:46,550

We had gone to the
movies or something.

3037

02:37:46,550 --> 02:37:50,080

And she started running,
and I ran alongside of her,

3038

02:37:50,080 --> 02:37:52,910

and we came into the house.

3039

02:37:52,910 --> 02:37:58,615

And her father, they
were big card players.

3040

02:37:58,615 --> 02:38:04,030

My mother-in-law's family,
my father-in-law's family,

3041

02:38:04,030 --> 02:38:08,410

a lot of relatives lived close
to each other in those years.

3042

02:38:08,410 --> 02:38:11,320

And they used to come and
play poker, or whatever.

3043

02:38:11,320 --> 02:38:15,050

And they were playing cards in
my mother-in-law's apartment

3044

02:38:15,050 --> 02:38:17,190

that night, or house rather.

3045

02:38:17,190 --> 02:38:20,380

And my father-in-law was
sitting at the table.

3046

02:38:20,380 --> 02:38:23,650

He put his head down
on the table and died.

3047

02:38:23,650 --> 02:38:25,060

That's how he died.

3048

02:38:25,060 --> 02:38:29,530

Just put his head down
on the table and died.

3049

02:38:29,530 --> 02:38:31,550

Then when Raz saw the
light on the porch,

3050

02:38:31,550 --> 02:38:34,720

she said, something is wrong.

3051

02:38:34,720 --> 02:38:37,990

So I only met him just twice.

3052

02:38:37,990 --> 02:38:40,870

I may have said
four words to him.

3053

02:38:40,870 --> 02:38:44,110

But my mother-in-law, in all the
years and all, she was a doll.

3054

02:38:44,110 --> 02:38:47,185

3055

02:38:47,185 --> 02:38:50,630

What did you work
at after the war?

3056

02:38:50,630 --> 02:38:57,140

I was lucky enough to meet some
girl that I knew from school,

3057

02:38:57,140 --> 02:39:01,595

and she had a contact with
the US Employment Service.

3058

02:39:01,595 --> 02:39:04,550

3059

02:39:04,550 --> 02:39:08,570

Employers would call them
to say we can use somebody

3060

02:39:08,570 --> 02:39:13,460

in our plant or factory
or office and all.

3061

02:39:13,460 --> 02:39:19,490

So she gave the guy
in the USCS my name

3062

02:39:19,490 --> 02:39:24,360

to call me if something
interesting would come up.

3063

02:39:24,360 --> 02:39:28,270

And sure enough, this
guy calls me one day.

3064

02:39:28,270 --> 02:39:36,500

There's a job I can offer you
at a paper merchant company that

3065

02:39:36,500 --> 02:39:41,270

sells printing paper to
printers, publishers,

3066

02:39:41,270 --> 02:39:43,610

and so on.

3067

02:39:43,610 --> 02:39:46,490

And I went for an
interview, and they were

3068

02:39:46,490 --> 02:39:51,890

interested in hiring a veteran.

3069

02:39:51,890 --> 02:40:00,320

And this was on Hutchins Street
in Manhattan, Hudson Canal,

3070

02:40:00,320 --> 02:40:03,460

Graphic Paper Corporation.

3071

02:40:03,460 --> 02:40:05,510

And they interviewed me.

3072

02:40:05,510 --> 02:40:08,630

They hired me.

3073

02:40:08,630 --> 02:40:15,560

I became the order clerk
to the general manager.

3074

02:40:15,560 --> 02:40:18,140

It was owned by a Jewish firm.

3075
02:40:18,140 --> 02:40:21,900
Sid Greenberg was the owner.

3076
02:40:21,900 --> 02:40:29,420
And I worked at that
company until one year

3077
02:40:29,420 --> 02:40:34,490
he decided to sell it
to a Midwestern paper

3078
02:40:34,490 --> 02:40:37,700
company, a large company,
Sabin Robbins, who

3079
02:40:37,700 --> 02:40:42,530
were based in California,
in Cincinnati,

3080
02:40:42,530 --> 02:40:46,360
but they had offices
throughout the country.

3081
02:40:46,360 --> 02:40:49,060
So they bought Graphic
Paper, and they

3082
02:40:49,060 --> 02:40:51,740
were willing to hire me.

3083
02:40:51,740 --> 02:40:56,420
And they kept the office
in New York for a while,

3084
02:40:56,420 --> 02:41:01,040
and ultimately, they moved
it to Carlstadt, New Jersey.

3085
02:41:01,040 --> 02:41:05,270
And I went with them and
I became a salesperson.

3086

02:41:05,270 --> 02:41:07,235

And I had my territory.

3087

02:41:07,235 --> 02:41:11,355

It was a good part of

Long Island and Manhattan.

3088

02:41:11,355 --> 02:41:14,670

Had a couple in Brooklyn.

3089

02:41:14,670 --> 02:41:18,240

And I had a car then.

3090

02:41:18,240 --> 02:41:19,350

I worked my way up.

3091

02:41:19,350 --> 02:41:21,220

I did quite well.

3092

02:41:21,220 --> 02:41:24,660

I was with them for

many, many years.

3093

02:41:24,660 --> 02:41:28,710

And I ended up with

a profit sharing

3094

02:41:28,710 --> 02:41:33,150

plan of a couple of

\$100,000 when I left them.

3095

02:41:33,150 --> 02:41:41,720

And literally, though, I

still would have kept working,

3096

02:41:41,720 --> 02:41:46,670

but they insisted that I

stopped working at age 66.

3097

02:41:46,670 --> 02:41:47,740

I said, I'd rather work.

3098

02:41:47,740 --> 02:41:49,490

No.

3099

02:41:49,490 --> 02:41:51,470

You better stop
now or we'll make

3100

02:41:51,470 --> 02:41:55,550

you travel every week to
Cincinnati if you don't stop.

3101

02:41:55,550 --> 02:41:56,831

[LAUGHS]

3102

02:41:56,831 --> 02:41:58,790

So I said, you know what?

3103

02:41:58,790 --> 02:42:00,050

Look, they don't want me here.

3104

02:42:00,050 --> 02:42:01,460

The hell with them.

3105

02:42:01,460 --> 02:42:06,710

Give me my profit sharing
and let me go, and I left.

3106

02:42:06,710 --> 02:42:13,165

So I retired for
a couple of years.

3107

02:42:13,165 --> 02:42:19,170

3108

02:42:19,170 --> 02:42:22,140

New York at that time
had community boards

3109

02:42:22,140 --> 02:42:27,090

in the various
sections of the city.

3110

02:42:27,090 --> 02:42:31,770

And we were living in a
house, and community board 8

3111

02:42:31,770 --> 02:42:35,620

was in Fresh Meadows, not
too far from the house.

3112

02:42:35,620 --> 02:42:38,400

So I called them one day.

3113

02:42:38,400 --> 02:42:42,750

I said, I'd like to come in and
volunteer for a couple of days

3114

02:42:42,750 --> 02:42:43,470

a week.

3115

02:42:43,470 --> 02:42:46,410

Sure, come in.

3116

02:42:46,410 --> 02:42:52,060

I used to go there three days
a week from 9:00 to 12:00

3117

02:42:52,060 --> 02:42:54,870

or something, a few hours a day.

3118

02:42:54,870 --> 02:42:59,120

I would answer the phone
for them and so on.

3119

02:42:59,120 --> 02:43:03,110

One day they came
to me and they said,

3120

02:43:03,110 --> 02:43:09,770

we would hire you as a
city employee to get paid.

3121

02:43:09,770 --> 02:43:11,300

I said, wait a minute.

3122
02:43:11,300 --> 02:43:13,730
I don't want to work
full-time anymore.

3123
02:43:13,730 --> 02:43:15,710
What is the minimum
amount of hours

3124
02:43:15,710 --> 02:43:20,330
I could be on a city
payroll as a city employee?

3125
02:43:20,330 --> 02:43:22,550
They said 20 hours a week.

3126
02:43:22,550 --> 02:43:24,890
I said, you got a deal.

3127
02:43:24,890 --> 02:43:32,060
And I worked for three
or four years doing that,

3128
02:43:32,060 --> 02:43:36,080
and I was the assistant
to the district manager.

3129
02:43:36,080 --> 02:43:38,360
If I had stayed there, I
think I could have ended up

3130
02:43:38,360 --> 02:43:39,360
running that place.

3131
02:43:39,360 --> 02:43:41,750
Oh my goodness.

3132
02:43:41,750 --> 02:43:44,030
I enjoyed it, really.

3133
02:43:44,030 --> 02:43:46,790

3134
02:43:46,790 --> 02:43:52,920
When you work for
these type of places,

3135
02:43:52,920 --> 02:43:55,140
you run into all
sorts of problems

3136
02:43:55,140 --> 02:43:57,210
that are happening in an area.

3137
02:43:57,210 --> 02:43:58,032
Yeah.

3138
02:43:58,032 --> 02:43:59,240
You get very well-acquainted.

3139
02:43:59,240 --> 02:44:00,540
The community board 8.

3140
02:44:00,540 --> 02:44:04,350
I used to go out with
a building inspector

3141
02:44:04,350 --> 02:44:10,230
once a week when we got
complaints that houses are not

3142
02:44:10,230 --> 02:44:15,090
being kept right, houses are
dirty, illegal apartments

3143
02:44:15,090 --> 02:44:17,220
and some buildings, and so on.

3144
02:44:17,220 --> 02:44:19,770
I would go out with a
building apartment inspector

3145
02:44:19,770 --> 02:44:20,640
once a week.

3146
02:44:20,640 --> 02:44:23,760

3147
02:44:23,760 --> 02:44:27,480
I would go out with
a police sergeant

3148
02:44:27,480 --> 02:44:31,770
from the 107th
precinct once a week

3149
02:44:31,770 --> 02:44:34,930
to see if there are any
illegal gambling and things.

3150
02:44:34,930 --> 02:44:36,150
It was a great job.

3151
02:44:36,150 --> 02:44:37,500
I enjoyed it.

3152
02:44:37,500 --> 02:44:39,600
But ultimately, Raz
said, Jerry, it's

3153
02:44:39,600 --> 02:44:42,720
time that we were together
a lot more and all.

3154
02:44:42,720 --> 02:44:46,840
And I said, OK, so I quit.

3155
02:44:46,840 --> 02:44:49,960
But that was a smart
thing that I did.

3156
02:44:49,960 --> 02:44:52,500
So I was on the
city payroll, but I

3157
02:44:52,500 --> 02:44:55,530

didn't work there long
enough to collect a pension.

3158
02:44:55,530 --> 02:44:57,950
I needed, I think,
two more years.

3159
02:44:57,950 --> 02:45:00,240
Oh.

3160
02:45:00,240 --> 02:45:03,090
But I enjoyed it.

3161
02:45:03,090 --> 02:45:04,830
That was it.

3162
02:45:04,830 --> 02:45:10,320
Is there anything else you'd
like to add to your story now?

3163
02:45:10,320 --> 02:45:10,830
No.

3164
02:45:10,830 --> 02:45:13,110
You have awakened a
lot of memories in me,

3165
02:45:13,110 --> 02:45:16,420
and I thank you kindly for it.

3166
02:45:16,420 --> 02:45:17,290
I thank you.

3167
02:45:17,290 --> 02:45:19,280
I thank you very much.

3168
02:45:19,280 --> 02:45:22,850
I hope what you expected
is what you got.

3169
02:45:22,850 --> 02:45:24,380
Yes, and more.

3170
02:45:24,380 --> 02:45:24,920
And more.

3171
02:45:24,920 --> 02:45:25,780
I appreciate that.

3172
02:45:25,780 --> 02:45:28,070
Thank you.

3173
02:45:28,070 --> 02:45:30,500
This guy helped.

3174
02:45:30,500 --> 02:45:34,130
And Mr. Silver is
pointing to Jim Finkel,

3175
02:45:34,130 --> 02:45:36,140
who is his son-in-law.

3176
02:45:36,140 --> 02:45:40,340
And with that, I will
conclude the formal part

3177
02:45:40,340 --> 02:45:43,880
of our interview and say this
concludes the United States

3178
02:45:43,880 --> 02:45:47,090
Holocaust Memorial Museum
interview with Mr. Gerald

3179
02:45:47,090 --> 02:45:51,710
Silver on June 19th, 2014.

3180
02:45:51,710 --> 02:45:55,880
And what we'll do now is film
the letter, a photograph,

3181
02:45:55,880 --> 02:45:57,980
and the Purple Heart pictures.

3182
02:45:57,980 --> 02:46:00,000
Thank you.

3183
02:46:00,000 --> 02:46:00,500
OK.

3184
02:46:00,500 --> 02:46:01,700
Jim, could you--

3185
02:46:01,700 --> 02:46:04,910
All right, I have
one final question.

3186
02:46:04,910 --> 02:46:07,140
I'm sorry I forgot
to ask it before,

3187
02:46:07,140 --> 02:46:10,550
but it's such a
self-evident one in the end.

3188
02:46:10,550 --> 02:46:13,910
How did your wartime
experience, how did it

3189
02:46:13,910 --> 02:46:17,390
affect you as a Jewish person?

3190
02:46:17,390 --> 02:46:19,130
Did it strengthen your identity?

3191
02:46:19,130 --> 02:46:21,140
Did it change you?

3192
02:46:21,140 --> 02:46:28,760
Oh, yes, it strength-- the very
fact that Nazism was eliminated

3193
02:46:28,760 --> 02:46:33,380
was, as far as I'm
concerned, the whole essence

3194

02:46:33,380 --> 02:46:36,200
of being in the Army.

3195

02:46:36,200 --> 02:46:40,400
The fact that I was in the Army,
only because fighting Germans

3196

02:46:40,400 --> 02:46:43,270
was a way to get rid
of the Nazi situation.

3197

02:46:43,270 --> 02:46:45,880

3198

02:46:45,880 --> 02:46:47,970
It didn't embitter me at all.

3199

02:46:47,970 --> 02:46:52,110
It just made me feel glad
that, once and for all,

3200

02:46:52,110 --> 02:46:55,820
there is no Adolf Hitler.

3201

02:46:55,820 --> 02:47:00,950
Knowing that concentration
camps were liberated.

3202

02:47:00,950 --> 02:47:04,170
There are no more crematoriums.

3203

02:47:04,170 --> 02:47:06,300
Goodbye, Mr. Hitler.

3204

02:47:06,300 --> 02:47:09,380
Stay where you
are, deep in hell.

3205

02:47:09,380 --> 02:47:10,980
That's it.

3206

02:47:10,980 --> 02:47:16,670
It was worth being in the
Army if for no other reason.

3207
02:47:16,670 --> 02:47:18,350
You knew what you
were fighting for.

3208
02:47:18,350 --> 02:47:20,300
Absolutely, 100%.

3209
02:47:20,300 --> 02:47:22,810

3210
02:47:22,810 --> 02:47:23,720
OK.

3211
02:47:23,720 --> 02:47:26,330
Well, now I'd like
to have the camera

3212
02:47:26,330 --> 02:47:29,660
focus in on the framed
letter that you are holding.

3213
02:47:29,660 --> 02:47:38,380

3214
02:47:38,380 --> 02:47:40,010
You can't see it, [INAUDIBLE]?

3215
02:47:40,010 --> 02:47:40,510
No, no.

3216
02:47:40,510 --> 02:47:43,090
It's too dark in the
background, the camera.

3217
02:47:43,090 --> 02:47:44,690
The light's too dark.

3218
02:47:44,690 --> 02:47:45,190

OK, got it.

3219
02:47:45,190 --> 02:47:56,878

3220
02:47:56,878 --> 02:47:58,465
Just the picture.

3221
02:47:58,465 --> 02:48:01,500
Well, no, just the picture,
and then Mr. Silver

3222
02:48:01,500 --> 02:48:02,400
will talk about it.

3223
02:48:02,400 --> 02:48:11,970

3224
02:48:11,970 --> 02:48:17,040
I'm sure that there are days go
by when it's absolutely quiet.

3225
02:48:17,040 --> 02:48:19,120
It will be quiet tomorrow
and after tomorrow

3226
02:48:19,120 --> 02:48:20,290
and after tomorrow.

3227
02:48:20,290 --> 02:48:23,650

3228
02:48:23,650 --> 02:48:26,800
You know, Gerry, can you
hold it in front of you?

3229
02:48:26,800 --> 02:48:29,040
Just put on your belt. Yeah.

3230
02:48:29,040 --> 02:48:29,555
Yeah.

3231
02:48:29,555 --> 02:48:30,440
Is that OK for you?

3232
02:48:30,440 --> 02:48:34,119

3233
02:48:34,119 --> 02:48:35,093
That's better.

3234
02:48:35,093 --> 02:48:40,140

3235
02:48:40,140 --> 02:48:42,520
I will ask a question,
he will talk, OK?

3236
02:48:42,520 --> 02:48:43,960
So you just tell me when.

3237
02:48:43,960 --> 02:48:44,640
[INAUDIBLE]

3238
02:48:44,640 --> 02:48:48,705
It's fine, just as long
as the photo is seen.

3239
02:48:48,705 --> 02:48:50,690
It's kind of--

3240
02:48:50,690 --> 02:48:51,620
Should I take a look?

3241
02:48:51,620 --> 02:48:53,090
We cannot read it.

3242
02:48:53,090 --> 02:48:55,472
I want to read it.

3243
02:48:55,472 --> 02:48:57,410
[INAUDIBLE]

3244
02:48:57,410 --> 02:48:58,503
Difficult?

3245
02:48:58,503 --> 02:48:59,770
No.

3246
02:48:59,770 --> 02:49:02,150
It's not enough.

3247
02:49:02,150 --> 02:49:03,820
OK, so should I hold it closer?

3248
02:49:03,820 --> 02:49:04,570
No.

3249
02:49:04,570 --> 02:49:08,920
Let's see what we have,
and then to read it,

3250
02:49:08,920 --> 02:49:11,860
it'll have to be like
half of it on the screen.

3251
02:49:11,860 --> 02:49:13,010
Why not?

3252
02:49:13,010 --> 02:49:15,240
It's just--

3253
02:49:15,240 --> 02:49:17,876
Can you do it one more time?

3254
02:49:17,876 --> 02:49:22,358

3255
02:49:22,358 --> 02:49:24,848
Can you put it back?

3256
02:49:24,848 --> 02:50:14,150

3257

02:50:14,150 --> 02:50:14,650

Move it up.

3258

02:50:14,650 --> 02:50:16,192

No, no, no, move it
back-- so that we

3259

02:50:16,192 --> 02:50:20,070

get the word "headquarters," and
we have to catch the signature.

3260

02:50:20,070 --> 02:50:22,928

We don't need all that
white space in between.

3261

02:50:22,928 --> 02:50:24,924

No, you missed headquarters.

3262

02:50:24,924 --> 02:50:27,917

3263

02:50:27,917 --> 02:50:28,417

Yeah.

3264

02:50:28,417 --> 02:50:38,896

3265

02:50:38,896 --> 02:50:42,888

Let's hold it there.

3266

02:50:42,888 --> 02:50:45,070

OK.

3267

02:50:45,070 --> 02:50:46,690

You don't want to
move the camera.

3268

02:50:46,690 --> 02:50:51,190

3269

02:50:51,190 --> 02:50:53,190

We've lost headquarters.

3270

02:50:53,190 --> 02:51:38,690

3271

02:51:38,690 --> 02:51:42,976

OK, Mr. Silver, tell
me about this letter

3272

02:51:42,976 --> 02:51:44,440

that you are holding.

3273

02:51:44,440 --> 02:51:47,320

This is a commendation
given to me

3274

02:51:47,320 --> 02:51:53,470

for what I had done on the
beach to help wounded people,

3275

02:51:53,470 --> 02:51:59,450

and to the best of my ability,
to see that whatever I could do

3276

02:51:59,450 --> 02:52:03,980

to help anyone who
is in need is why

3277

02:52:03,980 --> 02:52:05,255

I was given the commendation.

3278

02:52:05,255 --> 02:52:08,120

And it was in place
of the Bronze Star.

3279

02:52:08,120 --> 02:52:13,310

It was in place of being given
the Bronze Star and stripes

3280

02:52:13,310 --> 02:52:16,850

as a sergeant.

3281

02:52:16,850 --> 02:52:21,140

But when my name was mentioned
to be given those things,

3282

02:52:21,140 --> 02:52:25,400

one officer said,
not the Jew boy.

3283

02:52:25,400 --> 02:52:28,580

So what happened is
this commendation

3284

02:52:28,580 --> 02:52:32,960

is in lieu of a Bronze
Star and stripes.

3285

02:52:32,960 --> 02:52:36,266

3286

02:52:36,266 --> 02:52:39,130

How do you feel about having
gotten the commendation?

3287

02:52:39,130 --> 02:52:42,010

I feel very strongly
the fact that I

3288

02:52:42,010 --> 02:52:44,530

was able to help
guys that needed

3289

02:52:44,530 --> 02:52:47,840

the help is all that matters.

3290

02:52:47,840 --> 02:52:50,105

They can keep their
Bronze Stars and stripes.

3291

02:52:50,105 --> 02:52:52,820

3292

02:52:52,820 --> 02:52:54,260

[PHONE RINGING]

3293
02:52:54,260 --> 02:52:56,760

3294
02:52:56,760 --> 02:53:00,770
Purple Heart was given to
me for wounds sustained

3295
02:53:00,770 --> 02:53:02,505
on Omaha Beach on D-Day.

3296
02:53:02,505 --> 02:53:06,750

3297
02:53:06,750 --> 02:53:12,230
All GIs who were wounded are
always given the Purple Heart.

3298
02:53:12,230 --> 02:53:15,350
There's a medal underneath
it, too, with the rainbow.

3299
02:53:15,350 --> 02:53:19,730
The medal was given for
being in a Normandy campaign

3300
02:53:19,730 --> 02:53:21,130
after D-Day.

3301
02:53:21,130 --> 02:53:21,890
OK.

3302
02:53:21,890 --> 02:53:25,340
And it looks like you
also have a certificate

3303
02:53:25,340 --> 02:53:29,330
of congressional
recognition about that.

3304
02:53:29,330 --> 02:53:29,920
Oh, yes.

3305
02:53:29,920 --> 02:53:34,960
That was given by, I think, at
the time a local congressman.

3306
02:53:34,960 --> 02:53:37,910
Thought I would
help him politically

3307
02:53:37,910 --> 02:53:41,850
to be giving these things out.

3308
02:53:41,850 --> 02:53:42,350
OK.

3309
02:53:42,350 --> 02:53:45,140
Well, thank you very
much for sharing them.

3310
02:53:45,140 --> 02:53:47,990
And we have one more
item to go and that

3311
02:53:47,990 --> 02:53:51,830
is a photograph of
yourself and your father,

3312
02:53:51,830 --> 02:53:53,450
and you'll tell us
about that, too.

3313
02:53:53,450 --> 02:53:55,360
Thank you.