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John McGovern, president of the 42nd Rainbow Division Veterans Association, was interviewed by the Surviving Generations of the Holocaust on July 14, 1995, at a reunion in Seattle 50 years after the liberation of Dachau.

SUMMARY:

Former U.S. Army soldier with the 42nd Infantry, Rainbow Division, John McGovern details the history of the Rainbow veterans association; his enlistment in the Army in 1943 at age 18, training on tank destroyers at Camp Hood, Tex., specialized training program at the University of Kansas, assignment to the Rainbow Division, transport overseas in November 1944, temporary assignment to Patton's 3rd Army, then the 7th Army in the Strasbourg area; describes surrendering, somewhat clumsily, to the Germans in Sessenheim on Jan. 18, 1945, after his machine gun squad had fought off three tank attacks; being taken across the Rhine by the Germans to the POW camp Stalag 11-B; conditions in the camp of 25,000 prisoners, the majority Russians; liberation by the British 7th Armored in April 1945; a foray in search of a warehouse supply of raisins that led to an encounter with a Yugoslav and his friend, who was shortly after lynched by Germans, perhaps in revenge for the rape of a girl; McGovern's postwar trips to commemorate the liberation of Dachau and his visit to an area near the camp where the Germans would force Russian prisoners to run across a field and use them for target practice.