

Elliott: Now wait a minute where do you live?

Interviewer: I'm living in Tennessee and what we're doing with this video is I'm in a college class that is researching WWII.

Elliott: Yeah okay

Interviewer: As I'm sure you're aware because I'm sure a lot of your comrades and friends have passed on WWII vets are not getting any younger. So we're trying to call what you call war history and we're trying to record interviews with everyone that we can that's a veteran of WWII so that the knowledge and the experience that you American men have isn't lost.

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: Well this tape I'm going to make a copy of this tape for your family I believe asked for a copy of it so I will make a copy for her. And then the original of this tape will go in the archives at the air borne museum at Fort Campbell Kentucky.

Elliott: Oh I see

Interviewer: So what I'd like if you could

Elliott: Now were you mainly interested in the air borne or just a

Interviewer: We're interested in the air borne and really any experience that you fell is unique that you have. I'd like for you to tell me a little about the training that you went through for the 82<sup>nd</sup> because it was a very elite select group.

Elliott: Yeah it was a hard training I mean you know there wasn't anything easy about the whole situation. You just had to drive yourself to get through and to get into condition too so after you got through you were worth something as far as your body was concerned.

Interviewer: Sure so there was a lot of physical fitness training?

Elliott: Yeah yeah yeah physical fitness yes a lot of double time.

Interviewer: A lot of running?

Elliott: Yeah a lot of running. Let's see where can I begin.

Interviewer: How about basic training?

Elliott: Oh basic training?

Interviewer: Yeah where did you go to basic training?

Elliott: Basic training I first went to basic training to medical basic. I volunteered for the army about I don't know how long after the war started it was I went in 42.

Interviewer: In 42 right.

Elliott: And from there I went to medical basic. The reason why they sent me to medical basic was because they said well we need men we need medics.

Interviewer: Sure sure

Elliott: I mean you relay didn't have a choice. Of course I wasn't drafted so I was supposed to be able to get into the outfit that I wanted to.

Interviewer: Sure sure

Elliott: Because if you volunteer.

Interviewer: Sure they gave you that option because you volunteered.

Elliott: But they didn't allow it not while the war on.

Interviewer: Right that was a later option once war was declared.

Elliott: We're going to send you where we need you.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: So I went to basic training down in Virginia no where was it anyway I'm trying to get it straight. But anyway medical basic was down there in the south I'm pretty sure it was probably in Virginia I'll have to ask my brother about that. He was in basic training my older brother was in basic training not too far Fort Houston right yeah he was in Fort Houston and I was in a training camp that wasn't far from Fort Houston.

Interviewer: Fort Belvoir maybe?

Elliott: Who?

Interviewer: Fort Belvoir is in Virginia close to Fort Houston.

Elliott: No this was Fort Benning.

Interviewer: Oh Fort Benning Georgia sure.

Elliott: Fort Benning

Interviewer: Fort Benning Georgia that's where the air borne school is.

Elliott: Right right Fort Benning Georgia well that's where we went Fort Benning Georgia. I'll see if I can keep this straight now.

Interviewer: So you went to Benning for the air borne training?

Elliott: Air borne

Interviewer: How long was air borne school?

Elliott: Air borne

Interviewer: It doesn't matter it's about three now.

Elliott: I have a problem.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: I've got a memory problem.

Interviewer: Well

Elliott: I'll make a good interviewer because I have no memory.

Interviewer: Now you went through the air borne school.

Elliott: Yeah air borne school.

Interviewer: And you learned how to jump.

Elliott: Yeah we learned how to jump. You make five at the end of training you make five qualifying jumps.

Interviewer: Right one of which is a night jump.

Elliott: I think I did a night jump.

Interviewer: Qualifying night jump.

Elliott: Yeah at that time they weren't too sharp about having a night jump but we did it we did make a night jump.

Interviewer: How was that was it scary?

Elliott: Scary right

Interviewer: Could you see the ground coming up to meet you or were you just in the dark?

Elliott: No you could see you could see a little bit because it wasn't strictly dark you know we did have some moonlight.

Interviewer: Sure sure

Elliott: And the moonlight gave us a chance to I'm trying to remember when I did it I just missed a fence. It was just a rusty fence but it was a fence. So you had a chance to guide your shoot to a certain extent not too much but to a certain extent you could guide it.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: But you didn't have complete control.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And that was a little scary too.

Interviewer: Of course

Elliott: I think it was my last jump or either the fourth or the fifth jump when I went through another paratrooper's lines on his parachute and for just for an instance there we got tangled up together. And just before we hit the ground I got out I got out from the line and was able to hit the ground alright. And the only thing there was I think he either broke his arm or his leg the other guy wasn't lucky. Wasn't lucky what is the word?

Interviewer: Yes luck is a very good word. He wasn't as lucky as you were.

Elliott: I came out physically better than he did which of course you know makes you feel bad when your line the two of you and one of you gets hurt. But that was and then after that we went to we stayed at Benning there for a while. The first thing a group and the outfit was the outfit was there are a lot of things that the 502.

Interviewer: The 502<sup>nd</sup> parachute regiment?

Elliott: 502 regiment yeah right as a medic.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: And we were there for a while and where did they send us from there out to Nebraska we went out to the Nebraska. Alliance Nebraska and we were there for about two years about two years.

Interviewer: Then you went from there to England?

Elliott: We trained there for a while you know jumping in the sand and all that stuff. And after we were there for two years they sent us overseas. And first we went to Ireland.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: I'm trying to think of the name of the place I wish I could tell you.

Interviewer: Now you went over on a troop ship?

Elliott: Yeah yeah yeah we went over on a troop ship.

Interviewer: Do you happen to remember what ship you went over on?

Elliott: I wish could.

Interviewer: The Queen Mary and the Queen Elizabeth carried a great majority of soldiers over. They converted those to huge troop ships.

Elliott: I know but we went over on a small English ship.

Interviewer: Oh really you went over on a British ship.

Elliott: Yeah I guess the British ship came over and of course you know they're empty going back so they put us in there. And of course everybody sleeping on the desks and everywhere they could sleep you know in the stairwell or wherever.

Interviewer: That crowded

Elliott: Yeah yeah it was crowded alright.

Interviewer: How was the food on the ship?

Elliott: In fact it was over crowded.

Interviewer: Yeah

Elliott: It was a large ship that was only supposed to hold a certain number and we were way over that number.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: But they put us on there anyway. Yeah and let's see so we went to Ireland first Northern Ireland. Then what you know when I found out that you wanted me to do the interview with me yesterday I'm trying to think of the names and the places.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: But I'm older.

Interviewer: Whatever you can remember is fine.

Elliott: I'm quite confused.

Interviewer: Yeah don't even don't stress yourself by not having remembered certain details because that's fine.

Elliott: So we stayed in Northern Ireland until they got ready to ship us over and we were the we were sleeping in the airport in the big hangers and all. Waiting for the time to board the plane to make a jump.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Okay so it came time for you know let's go and we jumped the at 2:30 the morning before the guys came in on the beaches.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: I don't know if I was on Omaha Beach or

Interviewer: The Americans went to Omaha, Surd, Juno, Gold

Elliott: Omaha Beach was closer to Cherbourg wasn't it?

Interviewer: Omaha was the closest to Cherbourg then Utah then Surd, Juno and Gold. And the British and Canadians went to Surd and Juno and Gold the Americans went to Omaha and Utah.

Elliott: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: And do you happen to remember where you were supposed to jump into because you went in behind the lines right?

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: You went in back behind the German line.

Elliott: Yeah the German lines yeah.

Interviewer: What was the plan I know you were the medical support for your infantry support company.

Elliott: I had to make sure they got first aid anything I could do before a fellow gets to the doctor.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And that was my job.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: And of course I was responsible for Company B I was a Corporal Technician 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Attached to B Company and wherever B Company went I went with them. That was my job to go with them wherever they went it didn't make any difference where they went you went with them.

Interviewer: You went with your company.

Elliott: You went with your company even if they went behind the lines you know like there were several times we went searching for the enemy and stuff like that. Well when my company went I went with them.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Wherever they went. I couldn't say hay fellows you know I'll wait here for you.

Interviewer: Oh no no because they needed medical support.

Elliott: Right

Interviewer: And that's a big part of moral is knowing you've got somebody there to take care of you if you get hurt.

Elliott: Yeah right

Interviewer: Did you carry a weapon when you jumped into Normandy?

Elliott: Not when we jumped no. We weren't allowed to carry but the medical men were not allowed to carry weapons then.

Interviewer: Okay

Elliott: There was a time when things got so bad that they came to us and said now look fellows we're in a hot spot. If you want to carry a gun that's alright you can carry a gun but if you carry a gun you've got to take off the Red Cross regard you know don't hold regard on your sleeve.

Interviewer: Right and you were just another rifleman as far as the Germans knew.

Elliott: Yeah right and of course then we have the ability then to defend ourselves.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: I never had a chance to defend myself.

Interviewer: You never carried a gun.

Elliott: Yes oh yeast that time we did when they told us you can carry a gun if you take off the regard. If you wear the regard you cannot carry a gun.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: So it was your choice so but that was for a time like I say when things were bad and it was rough. But other than that we didn't carry a gun.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: No

Interviewer: Now you jumped in the morning of June 6<sup>th</sup> in 44 when your infantry company hit the ground how confusing was it? Were things pretty well organized or did the group plans just go

Elliott: What happened to us is not what happened to some others you know this is a situation here. Okay here's we go now let's say this is Shemberg okay and here's the Omaha Beach and Utah Beach right there and then the others right along here like.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Okay so what we were supposed to do is fly around Shemberg peninsula like this. Come in and land form a defensive line in a circle you know what they call a

Interviewer: Perimeter

Elliott: Perimeter

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Around St. Marion Greece.

Interviewer: Okay

Elliott: Now St. Marion Greece was the first place that was liberated right?

Interviewer: Yes

Elliott: Okay well that was our responsibility. The only problem was that a lot of us didn't make it.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: You know we didn't make it there. We came in later and of course John Wayne was the Commander in the picture yeah in the picture. And so what happened here just as soon as we started hitting land they started firing at us.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: So we had a lot of flak hitting our planes and the planes they just scattered. They just scattered now of course some of them went as far back from the lines as 20 miles.

Interviewer: Wow



Elliott: Something like that and some further but mainly you know because they scattered right here. And I guess the pilots must have got confused or the fact that they were I don't want to say that they were scared but they were very concerned.

Interviewer: Justifiably so

Elliott: Where were they going to fly to after they crossed the peninsula here? Because everybody was supposed to go across here set a perimeter of defensive around St. Marion Greece and guard it don't let the Germans get you.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: But of course we scattered and went in all different directions see something like this. And we ended up I in my plane of course you start out with 40 men and in my plane 5 of us were able to get together. It wasn't planned that way but you know that's what happened. One of the men in my outfit told me later after we got back to the post where the officers were.

Interviewer: Sure like the headquarters.

Elliott: Headquarters yeah the he said they found our plane the pilot and copilot was dead.

Interviewer: So your plane had been shot down after you guys jumped?

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: Wow okay

Elliott: This is mainly why they probably made everybody jump.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: The plane was going down.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Of course I didn't believe it at first you know so the sergeant told us that the plane had gotten shot down and that the pilot and copilot were dead. So in other words they got shot down and they were killed. And we were still behind the line.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Okay we were behind the line, now what are we going to do? The first day we hid in a ditch you know the hedge rows?

Interviewer: Sure I've been to Normandy and St. Marion Greece. I'm familiar with the country side.

Elliott: Oh I see well well you're probably more familiar with it than I am.

Interviewer: I don't know about that that was only a few days.

Elliott: But so we five and I was the oldest of the group.

Interviewer: How old were you at this time?

Elliott: Oh boy how old was I couldn't have been too old.

Interviewer: This was in 44.

Elliott: Yeah 44 but I went in the army when I was 18 in 42.

Interviewer: So your 21 I mean 20, 21 years old.

Elliott: Right right

Interviewer: Just a boy.

Elliott: And I was the oldest of the group. So the guys you know they kind of look to you being the oldest they kind of look to you for direction you know.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Or at least that's the way I felt. I felt the responsibility well we've got to take care of each other. And so what we did was we hid at night we hid at night. And one night we went around a German barracks whatever you want to call it. And we headed toward anything that reminded us of American guns or you know.

Interviewer: By listening for the sound of the American guns?

Elliott: Oh yes right right mainly by the sound is what we done. And that guides up in what general direction to go.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: So that's what we did and we moved we didn't hide at night time we hid in the daytime.

Interviewer: You moved at night so nobody could see you.

Elliott: Moved at night right we moved at night. And we finally got back to the command post the word I was trying to look for before.

Interviewer: Yeah command post.

Elliott: Command post right. And they had to dig in of course with me with us there was only five of us so the five of us dug in and we stayed there at the command post until they could find out where our outfit was or what it was doing and then send us to it you know.

Interviewer: Get you to it.

Elliott: Yeah right but

Interviewer: So when you jumped in you said there were five you who were hiding during the day and moving at night.

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: How many days did it take you to make your way to the command post so there were more

Elliott: About a day and a half.

Interviewer: A day and a half to get to

Elliott: Two days at the most.

Interviewer: More American soldiers.

Elliott: Yeah well at least the commanding officers.

Interviewer: Sure an officer to take charge. While you were moving did you have any encounters with the Germans?

Elliott: No the closest we got to them was going around one of their barracks.

Interviewer: And of course you were trying to avoid contact

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: Because there were five of you and one medic so you didn't even have a gun at this point. You've got one medic and four riflemen right?

Elliott: Yeah we were not looking for anybody to shoot crap with.

Interviewer: Absolutely not. Okay now once you were assigned you found the command post and they sent you back to your unit back to Bravo Company back to B Company?

Elliott: Yeah that's right

Interviewer: Okay once you got back with B Company what was B Company doing when you and the others joined them?

Elliott: Well the other guys were from they were from B Company too because they were in my plane so they had to be.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: B Company, well after we got back to the command post and we dug in and stayed there then they told us where to go and when to go to get back to our outfit. The scary part of it was the guys that were holding the line the Americans who were holding the line and, who was the parachute outfit in B? Well we went right through their line and they were afraid for us because they were down in the hedge rows and here we are you know walking around hi guys you know.

Interviewer: Glad to see you. Safety in numbers.

Elliott: Yeah we didn't take care of ourselves you know because we just wanted to get through and get back.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Get back to our outfit.

Interviewer: Sure get relinked up with your outfit now. Once you linked up with B Company what was B Company doing when you rejoined them? It had been a few days they had been on the ground were they setting up combat patrols or?

Elliott: Well they the main task for us and for the 82<sup>nd</sup> was to secure St. Marion Greece.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: To liberate them and make sure that nobody bothered them.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And hold the ground of course.

Interviewer: Sure and the unit was able to do that.

Elliott: Yeah they were able to do that because like I say John Wayne was there and he was the one to do it.

Interviewer: He was the one to do it took care of you. Okay now when you got to St. Marion Greece did you set up an aid station or was there already a medical aid station there for you to work in to help with wounded soldiers or?

Elliott: Well we I didn't see an aid station right in St. Marion Greece. We always made a point to have an aid station available.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: You know no matter where we went because of the fact that you know people were always getting shot and hurt and everything. And we moved we moved on from St. Marion Greece I don't know what outfit took over or what outfits took over that area. But they pulled us back to get ready for another jump.

Interviewer: Okay

Elliott: In other words we were held and ready to do it.

Interviewer: Right by then the troops had pushed in from the beach?

Elliott: Yeah yeah

Interviewer: They had new units to come in and take over for the air borne.

Elliott: Right

Interviewer: Had air forces like tanks and artillery and things were coming in moving up?

Elliott: Right we

Interviewer: At that point did you begin to feel maybe a little more safe?

Elliott: Oh

Interviewer: Did you let it plane full of parachute guys jumping on the ground?

Elliott: No I think I was more scared then than when I was jumping.

Interviewer: Really why was that?

Elliott: Well you know

Interviewer: Confusion noise

Elliott: Well you know you think a lot. Oh man that was gee we got out of that did we. And you know go around in your mind.

Interviewer: So you had a little time to settle down and think about what you had just done and then it hit you it was pretty scary.

Elliott: It hit you yeah

Interviewer: While you were doing it you were too busy concentrating on what you needed to do to stay alive to really worry a lot about it.

Elliott: yeah right because that the name of the game was like you say to stay alive.

Interviewer: Exactly

Elliott: Stay alive and get the enemy if you can. See I had it all planned what I was going to do was one bullet right between Hitler's eyes. See I had that plan for me.

Interviewer: Just for yourself.

Elliott: Yes to get him right between the eyes with just one bullet.

Interviewer: A lone medic corporal. Gonna take Berlin

Elliott: That's what everybody thought. Yeah of course we it was only one time for me personally when I felt that I almost got killed. Somebody threw it was either a hand grenade or it was something but anyway it was thrown. And we were on a road going to take a town and the thing landed over here not too far away from me and you know I stopped and thought you know gee whiz that was scary. It would have been very easy for you to get killed or injured.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: But that was the only real close call I ever had.

Interviewer: That one grenade.

Elliott: Yeah I never got scratched you know I never got shot I never oh what can I say. In other words it's amazing because my older brother he was a captain. He wasn't in the war but he was a Captain here in the states at the time of the war you know. But he never got shot he never got injured or anything. Then I've got the next to the oldest brother same way and he was over in Europe and several countries and to Germany right during the war and he never got a scratch either and myself alike. All three of us including my step-father who was a Captain never got scratched never got hit.

Interviewer: Very fortunate.

Elliott: Yeah right

Interviewer: Very fortunate the good Lord was looking out for your family.

Elliott: When I look back I say gee it's amazing you know it's amazing you're so thankful that it happened that way because there is no reason why, it should have been worse than that.

Interviewer: You said after the troops moved up you pulled out of St. Marion Greece and got ready for another jump.

Elliott: Right

Interviewer: Where was your next jump at?

Elliott: Okay that's a good point I'll say why. What they did was they pulled us back to England.

Interviewer: Okay

Elliott: Yeah okay and we were with like I was naturally still with B Company.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Their first aid man and there we stayed until they decided to invade Holland.

Interviewer: Holland right

Elliott: But you know I didn't jump in Holland. In fact I think our outfit I don't think the 82<sup>nd</sup> jumped in Holland I'm not quite sure about that but if they did they jumped without us.

Interviewer: I know the 101<sup>st</sup> did.

Elliott: I was going to say I know the 101<sup>st</sup> jumped in Holland.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: And we never went in we never went in to that. But you know they sort of kept us in reserve.

Interviewer: Okay

Elliott: And of course I don't think anybody was looking forward to going back into combat again you know.

Interviewer: I don't think they would be.

Elliott: Right

Interviewer: So did you make another combat jump or was that the one?

Elliott: No that was it.

Interviewer: You made the one combat jump.

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: Tell me what it felt like going out the door. The difference between the training jumps that you made your qualifying jumps at Fort Benning

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: And practice jumps up in Nebraska. What was the difference between that and the experience of going out the door when there is flack in the air? How did that feel?

Elliott: Well actually me personally I didn't concern myself with the flack because you know I felt very not naive but well this is what we've got to do.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And of course it was scary.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: And then of course we were looking for a place to land.

Interviewer: Now when you came down it was fairly open area where you landed?

Elliott: We landed in the field I think it was an apple field I'm not sure about that but it was a field with trees in it. And luckily we missed the trees you know.

Interviewer: The small like apple trees right?

Elliott: Whatever it was. Missed the trees and landed okay. And that's when I found out that there was another guy from my outfit over there someplace you know and so we just got together. And that's how we just ended up with five fellows.

Interviewer: Sure was anybody there that was wounded for you to help once you hit the ground?

Elliott: Nobody was hurt no.

Interviewer: Nobody was hurt wow. Now how about when you moved up and joined B Company at St. Marion Greece were you kept busy there treating wounded soldiers?

Elliott: St. Marion Greece no I didn't let see there was a naturally there was a field hospitals there.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: But when you're with your company that's your responsibility. In other words you don't just go wondering off.

Interviewer: Sure you're responsible for that unit.

Elliott: Yeah right you're so you stay with that unit so you take care of that unit whatever's necessary. So I really don't know if they had they must have had a few hospitals set up someplace.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Or some building in town probably was turned in you know to a hospital or a field hospital. But no in fact let's see when they were going to relieve us and send us back we were on the line my outfit was on the line B was on the line. And of course you're on the line with them.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And this some outfit from the it was an infantry outfit not a paratrooper outfit but an infantry outfit was to move through us set up a front line in front of us and then we were to draw back and regroup and so on. And go back to where they wanted us to go. So while all of that was happening this was one of well there were two instances that stand out in my mind if you'd like to know about them.

Interviewer: Oh sure.



Elliott: Is that this one fellow from my company now he's out on the front. And of course when you're out on the front and you're what do they say when you're moving ahead to try and find out

Interviewer: Like probing?

Elliott: Where the enemy is.

Interviewer: Probing for the enemy?

Elliott: Whatever it is yeah I don't know what the word is but that's a good word. Feeling out the enemy trying to find out where they are. Well he crosses a field like say this is the field here this is the field right here. We're over here on this side they are driving us out from wherever the Germans are and so he doesn't know that they're here. So he crosses over coming through here goes out in the open like this he gets about here he gets shot. He got shot right up here between the shoulder and the chest cavity. So you hear medic medic.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: So you go over there and you look out in the field and you know what in the world is he doing out there. But the guy should not have crossed over there he should have gone around or something like that but anyway.

Interviewer: He was in an open area.

Elliott: Yeah he was in an open area. So what we did is first I went out to where he was nobody fired at me and I put something in his wound and bound it up put a patch on it. And called for a couple of fellows to come out and they came out nobody got shot. We picked him up and brought him to the line brought him behind that line and off to the field hospital. Well that was one incident.

Interviewer: So the Germans here respected the fact that you were out there trying to take care of your man and they didn't fire on you or threaten you?

Elliott: We hoped they wouldn't.

Interviewer: But they didn't in that instance.

Elliott: Yeah in other words it wasn't a lot of men there.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: You know this probably would be a few were sniffing around as well. But no nobody shot at us.

Interviewer: That's good.

Elliott: And I think either one of two things either they were scared to let us know where they were.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: You know or else they like you say they honored the fact that the medic was doing his work.

Interviewer: You had your regard at that point.

Elliott: Oh yeah

Interviewer: So they knew you were medical personnel sure they knew you were medical personnel.

Elliott: Sure oh yeah we weren't allowed to carry guns either not at that time. So when I was that was just before we drew back. And then the outfit came through and set up the front line and we stayed with it for a while because they were you know a little bit shaky.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And to give them a little confidence I guess whatever. And when they came through the Germans fired at them and they shot their little cannons and whatever they had. And one guy his arm was practically off it was open from here to here. So of course he was from the other outfit so but he was with us so naturally we were responsible to take care of him. And put something on him and patch him up and then he goes back to the medical aid station. But those are the only two incidents that you know I personally had to deal with.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: As far as injuries were concerned somebody getting shot. Except for one other this one other and he got hit in the back with shrapmetal probably I couldn't tell you if it was shrapmetal or a bullet just from looking at it from the outside.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: We patched him up got a couple of fellows and the thing about him is he was behind the lines. He was in a mortar platoon you know a mortar company.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: And that's where he got hit. So patched him up and got a couple of fellows because I was just about exhausted myself we got a stretcher and a couple of fellows to carry him on the stretcher to the medical aid station.

Interviewer: Was there a lot of shelling going on a lot of artillery from both sides?

Elliott: Not all the time no not all the time. There were instances of you know like I say when a shot hit over here by me and I was fortunately not hurt.

Interviewer: Very fortunately.

Elliott: But yeah right very fortunate. There were wasn't I don't think we saw an awful lot of shelling. Not all the time no not all the time.

Interviewer: Enough to make you nervous.

Elliott: It was with us it was more sneak and peak.

Interviewer: Sure well the air borne by its composition is very lightly armed.

Elliott: Yeah

Interviewer: So they are not a direct combat confrontational type unit that the others were.

Elliott: No

Interviewer: And the idea go in behind the lines secure that town hold it until the heavy forces take position.

Elliott: They don't go to a town to take it over.

Interviewer: No not like the armored

Elliott: Unless of course there's a large shelling first.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: Then after the shelling that's when you go in and mop up you know.

Interviewer: How did you get from France back to England? Did they fly you back or did you go back on troop ship?

Elliott: Ship

Interviewer: So you walked out to the harbor and they loaded you on ships and took

Elliott: Yeah we walked to the ship.

Interviewer: You didn't jump in with any vehicles so I figure you didn't have any transportation except your suit.

Elliott: Yeah that's right.

Interviewer: What are they called leather personnel carriers?

Elliott: Yeah I really felt for those guys that came in on the beach because a lot of them were slaughtered.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: We lost a lot of men during those times on the beaches. In fact we felt you know because ours was the sneaky outfit it was easier or better for us.

Interviewer: To jump in than to try to go in on the beach.

Elliott: Yeah and to last to last.

Interviewer: Now that your unit Bravo Company came out with very light casualties very few men hurt.

Elliott: Yeah I don't know of any casualties in the other companies in my outfit because there was naturally you have four companies to a

Interviewer: To a battalion.

Elliott: Yeah right four companies to a battalion and of course we had three battalions.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: So but all in all you know when I think back on it now I want to cry. No I'm thankful that we came out with less casualties than we thought we'd have. You know when you're in combat you were saying man alive I'm facing death.

Interviewer: Sure

Elliott: You know

Interviewer: How do you deal with that? How do you handle that threat of death?

Elliott: Well I think what you do well let's see what did I do what did I do? Like I said I don't think that I was naive but I was this is what we've got to do this is the order we go we don't stop we stay we go. We don't stay in the plane we jump out of it.

Interviewer: Because all of your buddies are jumping?

Elliott: Well yeah because that's the order that's the order. And I think if like if I had a fellow in front of me that was hesitating I was supposed to push him out.

Interviewer: Right

Elliott: Yeah make sure he's out the door. And he would thank probably thank you for it later.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you'd like to tell me before we wrap this up?

Elliott: Yeah a little about well let's see I don't want to go into my interview with Eisenhower. When he came to us for help

Interviewer: But you did you said earlier before I turned the tape on that you felt Eisenhower was a fine commander?

Elliott: Yes

Interviewer: All of the soldiers respected him thought highly of him.

Elliott: Yes I think so I think so.

Interviewer: Very good very good. Well thank you I'm going to turn this tape off.