

Gore: A Revolutionary War veteran I don't think he was a very big veteran but he signed up for a couple of short hitches and the Revolution veterans got land grants I think is one of their benefits. And I think that they moved first to Kentucky and then they moved to Thomassore I think he was the oldest son he moved to South West Missouri and close to Fulton.

Interviewer: Harry Truman's part of the world Independence is near there.

Gore: No I said Missouri I meant Tennessee.

Interviewer: Tennessee uh huh

Gore: It's on the border between Tennessee and Kentucky Clinton I'll think of the name of the Casey Kentucky.

Interviewer: Did you turn that on?

Man in the background: I did.

Interviewer: We just turned on the tape so just for the record we're speaking with a veteran today WWII whose name is Forest Gore and Mr. Gore you were born in Illinois' and you were born in 192

Gore: 2

Interviewer: 1922 and you grew up in Southern Illinois and when did you what do you recall about the great depression?

Gore: That was one of the first economic things I heard about the collapse of the capital markets.

Interviewer: Was your father a store keeper then?

Gore: No

Interviewer: He was still teaching school?

Gore: No he quite teaching school he was farming at the time my grandfather had died and he had taken over the farm. And it the I think my uncle had the store in Olmsted and he was ill and my father went over went to town to help with the store. After he died my father stayed there in the store.

Interviewer: Did your family support Roosevelt?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Do you know of anyways that your family benefited from the New Deal Programs?

Gore: Well they made a payday in Olmsted the WPA was one of the big supports of the lower economic community.

Interviewer: What were they building what were they doing in Olmsted?

Gore: They mostly built roads shovels and picks and axes and they cleared the road banks and soaped the banks and spread gravel by hand.

Interviewer: And on pay day they'd come to your father's store?

Gore: Yes two weeks every two weeks we had a big day.

Man in the background: Mr. Gore did that store operate throughout the great depression?

Gore: Yes

Man in the background: Okay and I interviewed another person a while back that had grown up on a farm during the great depression also would you say maybe you weren't as affect by the great depression having been raised on a farm having what kind of

Gore: The farmer had that was his first project was to grow enough to eat

Man in the back ground: Right

Gore: And then sale enough to pay the taxes it was not it was the economic strata below is that got hit

Interviewer: The hardest

Gore: Devastated by the depression.

Interviewer: Tenant farmers for instance people who didn't own their land but had to rent land from somebody else.

Gore: And or the workers in the small industries and there was a lot of wood work kegs and barrels and I think Singer had a sewing machine plant in Carol. But all of that the republicans before they left officer reduced all the called in all the liquidity there was no money and the there was no commerce.

Interviewer: Did you plan to stay in Southern Illinois did you

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Did you plan to take after your father and

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And did you go to High School in Southern Illinois?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And did you start going to college?

Gore: No

Interviewer: Why not?

Gore: There's a thing called social awareness we didn't have it the ideation of the rural isolation of the depression and there weren't any benefits from going to college because you still couldn't find employment.

Interviewer: Yeh I like to tell freshmen students that if you graduated from high school or college between 1929 and 1939 you had a very rough life because no one would hire you there were no jobs for young people finishing their educations.

Gore: It was the only thing you could call it was the great depression it was it devastated the country.

Interviewer: What did you decide to do after you finished high school?

Gore: My mother's brothers were had some dump trucks they were hauling blacktop mostly. And I drove a truck for them.

Interviewer: How long did you do that roughly?

Gore: Two years

Interviewer: Did you have any sense before Pearl Harbor that a war was coming?

Gore: The not really the news of course carried the Hitler's battles in Europe. But we didn't I didn't have any way to really connect with it because that was a long ways off.

Interviewer: Did you go to see movies on the weekends where there was a movie house? Could you see the news reels?

Gore: Yes we when we got to a movie it was not too often but we saw the news reels.

Interviewer: Because before television that was a way of seeing what was out there in the world.

Gore: Well my family always subscribed to a newspaper that was kind of reverent in the rural areas.

Interviewer: And did you have a radio?

Gore: Yes but I don't recall a lot of any programming now the draft started in 39 I think.

Interviewer: 40

Gore: 40 and that was the first real connection the rural area had to the outside events was the draft.

Interviewer: And did you, you signed up for selective service and

Gore: Yes I was a little younger than the first draftees. I guess I had to signup when I was 18.

Interviewer: What happened what did you do after you drove truck for your uncles?

Gore: That's I parked the truck and went in the army I was drafted fall of 1943.

Interviewer: Okay and did you consider enlisting before that time?

Gore: No I didn't want anything to do with their war.

Interviewer: Okay what was your thinking why did you feel so strongly about that?

Gore: Well it wasn't a real strong feeling I was just ready to let somebody else worry about it.

Interviewer: But of course that wasn't possible. I mean it's a sort of generational issue in a way if you were you know if you were born in the right place at the right time you had to confront this issue whether you liked it or not.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And when you were drafted where were you sent for basic training?

Gore: Well the first mistake I made when they had the draft they went to Chicago and were inducted and sent back to get ready to go in the service. And they said you can have the Army or the Navy or the Marines or the Coast Guard. My experience was that the people from home would go off to the Army and go off to Camp Doolittle and nothing happened. And so I said well I'll just take the Army you get three weeks to report to the Army. I just said well I'll take the Army that will be fine then I am sure that the induction system had a way of I'm just sure of this of separating the hill country people from the city people.

Interviewer: And the assumption was that the hill country people were less well informed?

Gore: And more rugged and more used to being deprived and probably could already use a shot gun.

Interviewer: Okay

Gore: They were half way to being infantry.

Interviewer: So they were potentially better recruits?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Than someone from the city. So you're in the Army now basically?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And where did you do your basic training?

Gore: Camp Walters Texas

Interviewer: Where is that in Texas? Texas is a big place.

Gore: Its north of Fort Worth.

Interviewer: Okay was it was it a large facility?

Gore: Yes it was one of the IRTC camps or replacement training camps.

Interviewer: So by this time in the war you're already considered a replacement troop you're not part of the original group?

Gore: they put us on a troop train at Camp Grand Illinois which is close to Chicago we went to I'm sure we went to Kansas City then we went down through Oklahoma and nobody knew what this destination was. We rode the troop train a couple of days we weren't in a hurry and they unloaded us at Mineral Wells outside of Camp Walters. And the first thing I heard after we got to Camp Walters was well this is a replacement training camp they keep you here a few weeks and send you to the front. I didn't want anything to do with that.

Interviewer: Did you have any idea about this replacement system?

Gore: No

Interviewer: None at all?

Gore: Not at all that's the first time I had heard of a thing like that. The United States had only a few low number divisions and the only way they could fight a war like the generals were trained to fight was to funnel replacements into the same companies the same units.

Interviewer: And when did you find out where you were going or who you were going to replace or to what unit you would go?

Gore: Let's see about two or three days after I got there.

Interviewer: And what time of year was this roughly what month was this? You said in 43 was it in the fall of 43?

Gore: You mean this was June of 44 when I found out where I was going to be.

Interviewer: Oh it's already June of 44 okay. And what was the training like at Camp Walters?

Gore: It was brutal and unprofessional and crude.

Interviewer: Did you have the feeling that they didn't value you very much?

Gore: Well yes I got that feeling when I had a barracks Sargent named Sprung and he said I was they were doing pack rolling I wasn't enthusiastic about pack rolling I just didn't care whether I learned that particular process or not. And he said wait until you get to combat just wait till you get to combat you won't last 10 minutes. That's the kind of

Interviewer: Did you have any advanced training like AIT or

Gore: They held us at Camp there was a golf course close to Char England in Somerset County they help us on this golf course it was on the net. They held us there I guess it might have been there was a tent

camp there. Might have been a thousand replacements in this little tent camp and they did the whole camp Walters thing all over again. Now they didn't tell us it seemed like they were more or less based on WWI and Civil War culture.

Interviewer: How did you get from Texas to England? Were you on a troop ship across the Atlantic?

Gore: The HMS Oregano it was a former orient trade liner we went in a convoy in February.

Interviewer: And did you leave from what New Orleans?

Gore: New York

Interviewer: New York so they took you by train from Texas to New York put you on a ship and then from

Gore: They gave us I guess a two week delay in route they gave us a ticket from Camp Walters to George E Neat Maryland and gave us a date to report there.

Interviewer: Did you visit your parents in Illinois? Did you go back to Illinois and visit?

Gore: Yes that was

Interviewer: And did your friends did you have friends who were part of this process also other people from Illinois that you knew neighbors, school mates?

Gore: The only one I remember was Johnny Little from Carmack. I think he and I rode the train from into Fort Worth and over to Memphis and

Interviewer: Were you beginning to get a little worried by this time?

Gore: Well

Interviewer: I mean as a replacement knowing that an invasion was coming knowing that you were in the infantry? I'd be worried.

Gore: Well there was one thing about it you were happy to leave Camp Walters after you were harassed there for 16 or 17 weeks you were happy to leave.

Man in the background: Did you feel well trained when you left or just

Gore: No

Man in the background: Beaten down

Gore: The United States was not prepared to fight a war they had no the United States military had learned the lessons of the Hanser divisions. It was

Interviewer: What was the unit that they sent you to in the end? What was the unit that they sent you to as a replacement in the end? Well the 38<sup>th</sup> infantry?

Gore: They we left the Chard is Summerset County is just across the channel from the invasion sight. And the C47s that were going to drop the paratroopers were training there. And there was one thing that you need to know about Wind Whistle Hill the food shortage the camp was managed by a different group than the replacements. Everything went fine for a while in March and we had nice there was a mess tent we would go down I don't think they ever tried to feed us but twice a day but we'd go down get nice breakfast and a nice dinner. Pretty soon the mess trays didn't get filled up and a little while later why you'd go down for breakfast and you'd hear a slap they had sold all of our rations and they had went to Chard and bought chicken feed oats and was making oatmeal.

Man in the background: Did you still get fed more than once a day with the oatmeal or was it only once? Did you only get fed the once a day?

Interviewer: Once a day one meal a day?

Gore: Well they gave us this short breakfast what was happening was they had started selling the rations the black market and camp operators was selling our rations about as soon as they got them. And when you went back for dinner why it was about the same thing they were just short of anything to feed us. And that was nearly coming to a riot and we had this inspection and some of guys said why I'm going to take my tray down and show them what I'm getting to eat. Inspection day we had a good meal. The next morning you could hear the spoon slap the bottom of the tray and

Interviewer: Did you know that you were training for the invasion?

Gore: Well I guess I knew it had to happen because we were right there across the everything was being staged there. And I guess I knew it had to happen but I was willing to put that out of my mind. I heard then the C47s came from the paratroopers to Normandy I think that the reason Normandy was the sight of the invasion was that the Army management seemed to be I think seemed to be why can't I think of what I'm trying to say?

Interviewer: It happens to all of us.

Gore: They were over enthused with the Air Borne.

Interviewer: The 82<sup>nd</sup> and the 101<sup>st</sup>?

Gore: Yeah well I don't know who it was that trained in our area. The Hitler invaded Creet in what 41?

Interviewer: Yes that's right.

Gore: With air borne troops.

Interviewer: That's right.

Gore: And he told General Student that he couldn't afford air borne troops it cost too much. And it was this over enthusiasm with air borne troops that made us invade Normandy. And the damn fools forgot about all of those hedgerows.

Interviewer: But every army experimented with air borne.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: The British the Germans the Russians the Americans every army said we have to have an air borne wing. It was sort of the fad of the 1930s.

Gore: I think it cost us cost us I think it was very expensive before and after.

Interviewer: Do you think it would have been better to invade at Calla further North or Normandy?

Gore: I don't see why they didn't invade Brittan.

Interviewer: But that's further south.

Gore: Well the first thing they did with the 5<sup>th</sup> core was pull them out of Normandy and send them down to Brittan because they had to have the ports was the argument. And the 5<sup>th</sup> quarter was there within two miles of Philese and nobody closed the Philese gap.

Interviewer: Yes I'm acquainted with this problem yes. Okay but let's back up a minute. Okay you see the 101<sup>st</sup> and 82<sup>nd</sup> air borne taking off on June 6, 1944 and were you then told to load into troop ships for the voyage to Normandy?

Gore: They it was either it must have been Sunday or Monday night anyway the next day we didn't go to training and within the next day or so they hauled us down to South Hampton. We went across the channel on the HMS Battle Axe which must have been a liberty ship.

Interviewer: And the beaches had already been secured correct?

Gore: Yes it was about I don't know where all the time went but I think it was about 10 days after D-day that I unloaded.

Interviewer: What did D-Day what did the beach of Normandy look like at that point?

Gore: It they had cleared the wreckage and the dead I don't recall anything you know that you could tell that there was a battle sight there.

Interviewer: Had they built the I think they were called Mulberries?

Gore: They I think they must have been built up further up the coast in the British sector. Now the swells were there was a storm you know and the swells were maybe 20 feet they parked the HMS Battle Axe about maybe a mile off of the beach. And unloaded us on to Higgins boats and the Higgins boat

Interviewer: Landing craft

Gore: They put us over a cargo net and I think we were still carrying our bags barracks bags. You dropped the barracks bag on the Higgins boat you come up waited until it crested then you turned loose of the cargo net and you were in the war.

Interviewer: Did you get seasick at all on the trip across the Atlantic or across the channel?

Gore: No a lot of poor boys were very sick.

Interviewer: I'm sure they were.

Gore: It didn't bother me.

Interviewer: When you crossed the Atlantic was that the first time you had seen the ocean?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Was it the first time you had been to the east coast?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Was it the first time you had been out of Illinois?

Gore: When I went to Camp Walters yes.

Interviewer: That's interesting.

Gore: The rural areas the isolation and the is something you can't imagine from today.

Interviewer: Right okay so you land on the beach at Normandy and where do you go next?

Gore: The next day they put us on a truck and took us three or four miles and then they unloaded us and took us to the front.

Interviewer: And where was the front at this point?

Gore: On hill 192 it was just north of St. Low.

Interviewer: Wasn't St. Low in the British sector?

Gore: No 29<sup>th</sup> division took St. Low the 29<sup>th</sup> infantry. They made they were one of the D-Day participants.

Interviewer: Would you turn that off for a minute (tape went off and then restarted). Okay we're looking at some maps of Normandy from June and July of 1944 and you were saying before you were just outside St. Low. Who was the commander of your division?

Gore: General Robertson

Interviewer: And had you known about of course the famous one of the famous commanders of this was George Patton

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Of the 3<sup>rd</sup> armor the army or the 3<sup>rd</sup> armor division?

Gore: The 3<sup>rd</sup> army

Interviewer: What did you know about him?

Gore: Well some of the troops gathered that he was going around addressing different units so in his command and he used real foul language.

Interviewer: And was that good or bad?

Gore: Well it was that was all I knew about Patton.

Interviewer: Okay and at this point Sharborg is still in German hands right?

Gore: I'm sure it was yes.

Interviewer: And the British had not taken Kan at this point?

Gore: No

Interviewer: And like most D-Day soldiers I gather that you were not very impressed with General Montgomery or correct me if I'm mistaken.

Gore: The American and British generals did not ever achieve the German philosophy of war fare.

Man in the background: What philosophy?

Interviewer: Yeah

Gore: they didn't have animals give to maneuvering nor Sherman nor Stonewall Jackson it was a difference in the mindset.

Interviewer: Would you call it plotting? Well plotting

Gore: Plotting?

Interviewer: Yeah

Gore: They it was it saved a lot of retirement benefits. The generals that run wars like Rommal and Gardane I'm not good with German names but

Interviewer: Gadarian

Gore: Gadarian they came up to the front to see what was going on and sometimes that would mess up a good retirement.

Interviewer: I see

Gore: The other way of warfare just roughly comparing is to assign a unit of an objective and then go off to bed and let them attack it the next morning and wake up to see what happened.

Interviewer: And Eisenhower is in this second category largely wouldn't you say?

Gore: Yes in the he wasn't Eisenhower wasn't a brilliant man or a person that could change his way of doing things and I'm sure that they went to George McClellan's class and Leavenworth.

Interviewer: And what about Bradley and Robertson?

Gore: Well Robertson did one thing that was the whole country needs to be grateful for

Interviewer: What's that?

Gore: In the Battle of the Bulge. He extracted the 2<sup>nd</sup> of the 99<sup>th</sup> division from the Lotion gap.

Interviewer: But at Normandy?

Gore: He seen the 2<sup>nd</sup> division seemed to follow the pattern and the precepts the idea that they fought the war with.

Interviewer: Now Patton does not fit that mold does he?

Gore: Well if they would have bought Patton a few nice big tanks instead of giving him Shermans' I'm sure he would have been a better tanker.

Interviewer: But he had initiative he was hands on he was right there with his men I mean you have to give him that right?

Gore: No

Interviewer: You don't think so?

Gore: No he did the same thing that the rest of the American Generals did stay at his headquarters and used the telephone.

Interviewer: But this breakout here on the far left when he essentially breaks through the German lines and nearly surrounds them going to the south. Most people would say that was a brilliant maneuver maybe the most brilliant thing that happened in Normandy in the summer of 1944.

Gore: If he would have it wasn't Patton that it was Eisenhower and Bradley that got mixed up and forgot to close the police gap or close the crossings of the sea. Patton took his tanks and run across open country the Germans were busy with drawing all of the troops they could to the Siegfried line and Patton just hurried them along a little.

Interviewer: Although Patton's defenders would say that Eisenhower and Bradley didn't give his tanks enough gasoline to close the gap.

Gore: He had it was George E Me didn't chase

Interviewer: Robert E Lee

Gore: Didn't chase General Lee after Gettysburg either.

Interviewer: That's true that's true

Gore: And George McClellan let General Lee take his troops from Mantada back to Virginia

Interviewer: Did you see any combat in Normandy?

Gore: (looking through a book and finding a picture)

Interviewer: And that's you having a medal pinned on you.

Gore: I got a that was for my first night in Normandy I got a Bronze Star. And they cheap skated me they could have given me a DSC or a Silver Star just as easily. That's General Robertson.

Interviewer: And why did you win the Bronze Star what were the circumstances?

Gore: They delivered us to the front I believe it was the evening of the 19<sup>th</sup> of June. The only thing the first thing I gathered after they unloaded us from the truck was there were dead American soldiers between these hedgerows. And they had this pretty insignia stamped on their helmets and several of them had been shot through the helmet. They went in the battle with this big target on their forehead very unseasoned. And this was the 2<sup>nd</sup> division which had been organized ever since war I .

Interviewer: So you think many of them died unnecessarily?

Gore: There's I think there's about 40,000 American dead from Normandy if I'm not mistaken. And Normandy was the sight of the invasion because the C47s could make two runs to deliver the air borne. And I don't think the air borne ever made enough difference to pay for their gas. Now I know I can that this is all arguable but that's my impression.

Interviewer: What action did you see that they deemed you worthy of a Bronze Star?

Gore: Well they we got to the front which was right across there's the classic picture of the 2<sup>nd</sup> division unloading D 1.

Interviewer: Coming up the beach and up the hill?

Gore: Yeh this is well that's the trail you came up

Interviewer: From the beach

Gore: Well I need to get this in better order I won't work on it because there's some pictures of the 192 it's on Google.

Interviewer: 11<sup>th</sup> of July 1944

Gore: The 2<sup>nd</sup> division monuments of St. George's death.

Interviewer: they developed tanks with cutters on the front that would remove these hedgerows. Had they started doing that yet?

Gore: they brought some of the first ones down to the 192.

Interviewer: And were they affective?

Gore: It gave the historians something to write about. It gave the tankers whip lash.

Interviewer: So I guess the answer is no they weren't that affective?

Gore: You wanted me to tell you about

Interviewer: Yes

Gore: Well I didn't want anything to do with this show. I think I should tell you about how near I come to avoiding the whole thing. They gave us this army entrance test at Camp Grant and I did well enough that they called us a few of us from the Camp Walters down to sign up for ASTP army specialized training program. And I think that made the barracks Sargent for me to go sign up for ASTP because he this just shouldn't happen. But anyway they closed the program between the time I signed up and the time I should have been called to the specialized training. They knew that they were busy planning the invasion of the fall of 43 and it and from the way they operated it was going to take a lot of replacements. But anyway we got to the top of hill 192 about dusk dark and this was the front was on the next hedgerow and this was the hedgerow back of the front and there was some fox holes dug there not to deep. And I was the last one in line and these Mexican I' sure he had been the BAR gunner and he'd been promoted to squad Sargent. And he came down the line looking for

Interviewer: Browning automatic riffle great big heavy thing. Something no one actually wanted to carry.

Gore: (looking through a book) that's a Browning see how bad that big ranger looks.

Interviewer: Yeh

Gore: I wasn't bad at all.

Interviewer: Go on go on

Gore: That goes in the mall at Washington that's the WWII monument. But this Mexican Sargent went down the row of little dug outs carrying this Browning it was just dusk dark and the first thing I knew I looked up there and he was standing up on top of my hole which I was the last one and he said did you

ever see this thing before? I said yes they had one down at Camp Walters they brought it out and put it on a table and I don't know how much of this I told him they brought it out one afternoon put it on a table. And they let some of the big guys handle the thing now the fire power of an infantry squad is a Browning. That's all the introduction we had to it at IRTC Camp they let some of the big guys handle it and I remember that you had to pull the bolt back and latch it to make it fire. And the first thing I knew why he had my rifle and I had that Browning and he was gone.

Interviewer: Thank you very much

Gore: Welcome to the war

Interviewer: Uh huh

Gore: Now there was so then they took us down to the bottom of the hill and put us in another dug out about this deep four of us I guess they had a parameter I don't think they had the lines all connected. And I wouldn't be surprised but see we were opposing the 3<sup>rd</sup> left sprunghill division which was German paratroopers. I wouldn't be surprised but what they didn't watch us come up that evening. Anyway the other two were on guard we I think we took two hours on two hours off or something sprinkling rain and we were sitting in this muddy dugout down in under the hedgerow brush. And I heard something come tromping up to us up in the night they give us a password and I think I already told you that the 2<sup>nd</sup> division wasn't ready for war you didn't need a password all you needed was if there was something out there moving around in the night you better shoot it. But anyway here they come trudging up to us pitch black dark and I heard this one of the ones that was on guard ask them for the password. Said we're Nazis and then I must have heard the grenade thrown behind me because I had my arm up like this. And the grenade went off right back of me and it I still have grenade fragments in this arm across my back. And so the next morning well I saw there was something had to be done Nazis running around throwing had grenades and me trying to sleep it just wasn't going to work out.

Interviewer: No that's right

Gore: I jumped up and latched that bolt back on the Browning and made it go. First time I had ever had one in my hands and I shot two or three magazines out across the field and the other guys started shooting their M1s. And so when morning came the platoon people came down to see about us and they got this German was laying down there about 20 feet from the hole and they got him up and started towards the company headquarters with him. Then they came back and got me I don't know why they thought of that but anyway we all got the German and myself and the squad leaders and two or three of them all got to company headquarters and the I think the medical officers was there and I don't know I guess he had been sent probably from battalion because of the German was coming in and had been shot. And this the picture here will show you I had this elbow blown out of my jacket and the back of my jacket was shredded. And the I heard the German (tape ended).

## Tape 2

Interviewer: OK, today is December 12, 2006 and we're going to start our 3<sup>rd</sup> interview with Mr. Forrest Gore about his experiences in Europe and WWII. And I think we left off talking about the battle of bulge and Krinkelt and your experiences in December 1944. Where did you go after Northern Belgium?

Gore: You mean when I returned, from ah, from Paris?

Interviewer: Yes

Gore: The first, the first ah, think we did was to retake Rofrath and Krinkelt.

Interviewer: In January in 45 correct?

Gore: Yes it would have been in the last of January.

Interviewer: And it was clear that the offensive had failed by then.

Gore: Yes.

Interviewer: You were with, ahhhh, correct me if I'm mistaken, Hodges and the 1<sup>st</sup> Army then?

Gore: 1<sup>st</sup> Army, Gerolls fifth Corp, General Roberts 2<sup>nd</sup> infantry division.

Interviewer: Okay and how difficult was the process of retaking the territory that you lost to the Germans in the first round?

Gore: That was a big event. They, they for some reason or other, didn't confide in the privates about what they were going to do next. So up in the night they moved us from one set of dug outs to another one. Severely cold. And the second set of dug outs didn't have, we left our blankets at the first set of dugouts. And I guess it was Philbe and myself, we laid back to back, we had one blanket and somebody cut part of it, cut the end off of it and we held that blank and tried to stay warm in this fox hole. About daylight, it started snowing. A blizzard. But we had this mission to take Rockrath. I think the officers were home in bed. They had designated I guess the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion to retake Rockrath because we were the last ones out. We had to regain the honor of the 38<sup>th</sup> regiment through Rockathman. So, we started out wading this snow, knee deep, hip deep into this blizzard. Snow was going parrell, it wasn't falling to the ground. A mile or so, I saw I had a problem. They'd issued 2 piece long johns back at Fontainblow, they weren't sized, you just picked the next ones up from the pile. And my long johns were too short, they kept crawling up my legs. And I wasn't going to get to Rockrath like that. So what to do here in this blizzard. I pulled over the side of the line and I set my brownie down in the snow and I ah, unbutton my jackets and dropped my pants I took my trench knife. Trench knife went with the brownie belt and they had to be good for something. I split the legs of these long johns and held them up in the wind and let the wind take the long johns away. I pulled my trousers back up and faced the wind. Luckily some of the rest of the company or battalion were in line and I just fell back in line and went on toward Rockrath.

Interviewer: Had the Germans retreated from their position by that time?

Gore: I don't think they ever occupied Rockrath. I don't think they ever had any positions around there. Except for the snow, sometime up in the night we must of...., of course it wouldn't of been too many miles but we must of marched all day or struggled all day. Sometime up in the night we got up into some side of Rockrath, I don't know where. And the, we got in a house, I went upstairs in the barn loft and there was a pile of hay. I was exhausted and I crawled down this pile of hay and....went to sleep. Sometime the next morning I woke up and it was a beautiful clear winter day. The storm had went over. We could have waited for that next day and we could of walked into Rockrath no problems. And one of the first things I saw was General Robertson sitting out there in the back of his jeep and they brought him down, turned around and left. He had his town back.

Interviewer: And his honor.

Gore: His honor, such as it was. Now it was on the 17<sup>th</sup> of December, General Robertson went up on the road between Rockrath and Lotion and directed his second division back out of the trap. And he didn't have ahhh, a panic, or he didn't have a traffic jam because General Robertson was on the road. And we....he.....he didn't .....he didn't .....he thought a lot of his second division and he didn't want to lose it up there. That's how....

Interviewer: Were you involved in the Hertkin Forest?

Gore: No.

Interviewer: No?

No we were down safe there in above St. Bif. These several division masured in the Herkin Forest were maybe 20 miles from us and in another world.

Interviewer: And what about Aachen? Do you remember the town of Aachen?

Gore: No.

Interviewer: It's spelled "Aachen"

Gore: Yes I've read about it but we didn't participate in any of the full battles in the....1944, the first thing that happen to us was when we encountered the 12<sup>th</sup> SS Hanser in the village of Rockrath at Krinkhill.

Interviewer: Ok, you were telling me that you eventually crossed the Rhine near Romogan near

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Near the famous bridge. How did you get in January from the German-Belgium border right there to the Rhine?

Gore: Well we walked part of the time and I think it was just kind of a zig zag. And we walked part of the time and we rode trucks part of the time. And I think we started riding tanks about that time.

Interviewer: Did you encounter many much hostile action many encounters with defenders?

Gore: No.

Interviewer: Because the Germans were pulling back from the west bank of the Rhine?

Gore: I don't think there were any. I think the thing that keeps us from moving much faster than we did was the caution of the generals who didn't come up and see what was going on.

Interviewer: And what about the civilian population when you encountered them in Germany? How would you describe them?

Gore: Mostly just glad to see the war was over.

Interviewer: Did you encounter sort of a did you have a sense of a hostile local population at all?

Gore: I think they were glad it was Americans instead of Russians.

Interviewer: Did anyone in your unit speak German?

Gore: No.

Interviewer: Did you find local people who spoke English?

Gore: Well we didn't encounter civilians enough to discuss things with them or have conversations. It was after we crossed the Rhine they put the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion was attached to the combat command B of the 9<sup>th</sup> armor division. We rode tanks, didn't have any Bradley, infantry vehicles we just got up on top of the tanks and held on.

Interviewer: So between say the end of January and the middle of March 1945 you didn't see any hostile action particularly, right?

Gore: No.

Interviewer: And you were headed toward Cologne, is that correct? I mean you were a little south of Cologne but you went in the direction of Cologne.

Gore: Yes, we were south of Cologne.

Interviewer: Did you anticipate a battle for Cologne?

Gore: No the infantry, except for they didn't make any effort to tell us what was going on or what was going to happen next. Ah, we were just there to do the dirty work.

Interviewer: Right, right. When you arrived in Romagan how long had it been since the bridge had been seized?

Gore: Didn't know anything about it they held us in some houses. I'm sure some time the ninth armor was in the 5<sup>th</sup> cord at that time and I'm sure when they seized the bridge they sent for the rest of the core and they held us in some houses there, 2-3 days before we crossed the Rhine.

Interviewer: And you said you crossed in you crossed the Rhine in Higgins boats?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: So, there was no hum hostile fire coming from the other side?

Gore: No

Interviewer: Once you crossed the Rhine, where did you go next?

Gore: The day Roosevelt died the platoon leader told us, well it had to be the next day, because we were....

Interviewer: April 12<sup>th</sup> I think.

Gore: I guess it was the 13<sup>th</sup> then because the, the time zones but the platoon leader told us that Roosevelt had died and our next objective was Lagcee. That's the first time I had been given an objective. But this time we, I think it was maybe a hundred miles to Lacgee maybe more.

Interviewer: It's more than that actually. In fact Romagan is right here and Lastick, is just south of Volukenval, in that southern general area. So that's easily a couple of hundred miles.

Gore: Okay

Interviewer: Do you remember the names of any of the cities? There is a city near there called Zegin, just on the other side, right bank of the Rhine, it's near Remagen. You weren't close to Frankfort?

Gore: I think we were, I think Remagen is south of Frankfort down river from Frankfort.

Interviewer: Remagen is down river it's North of Frankfort actually.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: What about Geesen? Or Shokenborg? None of these names ring any bells?

Gore: The Boranagrima on the Muldie is where we ended our offensive. And this is the only towns that I remember between the names of between Remarken and

Interviewer: And Lasleket?

Gore: We didn't go to Lasleket we

Interviewer: Where did you, you must of gotten fairly close though right?

Gore: Yes the I think we were in Bornagima I think the bridges were out and some of the Germans were trying to that is where the Germans were going to border with the Russians and some of the Germans were trying to get to our side. They sent across the Mueling once. We were in Borner, I don't know whether it was Bornner or Brennen but, and they, I don't know who it was, but I've heard it attributed to Eisenhower, hum, that they discovered integration. They didn't need all the black troops had been support had been supply troops, truck drivers.

Interviewer: Cooks, dishwashers?

Gore: Well they, and they didn't need so many of them so they put a platoon of black volunteers that maybe they caught them high jacking supplies and selling them on the black market or something, anyway. They have this platoon of black soldiers and there was this village across from the Rhine, and they sent us over there for some reason. Not the Rhine but the Mulding, and the black soldiers were inside the houses and they wouldn't come out. Now this, again it takes time to adapt to combat. You didn't expect anybody to be combat ready overnight you know. And our guys invited the black soldiers to come out. 'No.' 'What's the matter is there any artillery over here?' 'Naw sir', not any artillery, now this is 1944, it's not today's world of integration among other things. I have nothing wrong with integration. That's the way it was.

Interviewer: Sure

Gore: But they said "naw sir, not any artillery over here he said Lord Gawd those bazookas" "Lord Gawd those boozekas" some German had slipped up and shot a couple of at them and our guys thought this was very entertaining. They tried to get this bazooka pronounced the way the black troops has pronounced it, tried and re-tried it. That was a great event.

Interviewer: Well, I suppose that bazooka is easier to say than hodzerfoust.

Gore: Well, they, it was Bowzooka that they tried to

Interviewer: You realize that the war was quickly coming to an end by this time don't you?

Gore: From the time we re-occupied Rockrath it was evident that the German resistance was mostly finished.

Interviewer: Did you encounter any hostile resistance as you crossed Germany in the middle?

Gore: No

Interviewer: No what about when you came to towns, did towns and villages, did the mayor come out to surrender, ah?

Gore: No

Interviewer: What would happen?

Gore: They'd park the tanks outside town and the infantry would get off and go into town. Now I'm not sure I think some of our guys ran into some SS troops in a town. And I think these SS weren't ready to surrender and our guys didn't have much problem with shooting them. It, it, SS might be bad but you get combat hillbilly infantry that have been on the front line a few months and he was superior to an SS trooper. But on the whole we didn't run into any resistance. I went in one house and the back door, the basement door was right inside the back door, and the basement door slammed as I went in. I put a few holes in the door. And when we looked downstairs it was full of civilians. But back a lot of the a lot of the village congregated there. They were scared to death

Interviewer: Of course

Gore: And apparently I missed the one I shot at. So he was lucky. I'm glad I missed him. But, that was more or less the kind of this compass came from one town out there. I got a German soldier out of bed one morning he was sleeping there in the house and I got him up and took his compass and showed him the way to the POW cage.

Interviewer: That's neat in what did you say to the civilians? I mean how did you interact with them did you simply say handahoe?

Gore: I didn't have any reaction with them really. They weren't my business. I went in one town, and there was a whole bunch of little fellows, about 14 years old, dressed up in little Hitler suits and in the basement of maybe a municipal building there or something and I looked at them and shook my head. You guys need to go home to mamma...you shouldn't be out here all dressed up ready to be little Nazi's you need to I just walked off and left them. Maybe somebody else put them in the POW cage but I don't know what for.

Interviewer: Well at this stage they were talking about civilian Folksamay they called it which was civilians resisting the invasion by allied troops. The old, the young, people who wouldn't have been considered soldiers otherwise.

Gore: They might have been told to do that but the, the big Nazi movement had died out by then.

Interviewer: Sure

Gore: And they mostly just stood by and watched. Sargent Wright and I one afternoon came out of the woods and there was a bunch of maybe 6 or 8 or 10 Germans down there 5, 600 yards from us. They were busy doing something and we sat up on the edge of the woods and started shooting at them because they were Germans and had German uniforms on. They were busy and after awhile we went down there they started waving, they brought some bed sheets with them, and after we shot at them awhile they started waving those. And somebody had sent them out there to mind the road they had some big black minds with them and all he managed to do is get them shot up. And I hope they found a good surgeon to fix the damage we did to them I hope we didn't kill any of them but I don't know.

Interviewer: You don't I don't get the sense that you were angry at the Germans or that you wanted revenge or that you sound very moderate in talking about this.

Gore: I didn't ever have any big problem with the Germans I had more problems with the American army. I said the Germans were my second set of enemies. It was all of these heroes we had wanted to fight the war only they wanted to stay back somewhere and have the benefits the opportunities.

Interviewer: Have you ever been to Antietam the Battle Field in Maryland?

Gore: No I was at Gettysburg.

Interviewer: Well go to Antietam sometime it's close to it's not that far from Gettysburg. And when you take a tour of the battle field you know you'll see the battle field then usually they will tell you where McClellan's headquarters were. McClellan's was miles away he was up in a farmhouse on a hill overlooking this battle field I mean he couldn't have gotten injured if he'd have stood out there like this.

Gore: Here's US Grant out here at

Interviewer: At Fort Donnellson right?

Gore: Fort Donnellson now I admire Grant.

Interviewer: I do too.

Gore: He there he sits on his horse watching the battle. He could take advantage of opportunities.

Interviewer: Yeah I've seen this print before.

Gore: That picture attracted my attention.

Interviewer: That too was in the winter that was in February of 1862.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Show us some of your medals here. I see a Purple Heart.

Gore: I have a Purple Heart and the first and second oak leaf clusters. As I told them a while ago they forgot to give me my third oak leaf cluster in now why can't I think of the name of that town? It was the first town we took after we left Rockwrath and Krincal. I was running from one house to another one Hellenthagh it was down in under a mountain and I was running from one house to another one and I wound up on the ground. Browning and helmet and ammo belt and everything and I said to myself that was a god shooter he was a good shot. And when I come around I realized that I had run into the close line. There's a scare I maintain that qualified me for my third Purple Heart. I was bloody a couple of the guys decided I had to go to the medics they were up on the safe side of town. And when we got up there Private Johnson had came into the medics for treatment the medics were stressed at Private Johnson the medical officer. Private Johnson had gonorrhoea and he had brought in his case of gonorrhoea to the front line for treatment he had been drafted out of the 4<sup>th</sup> battalion and so they forgot to give me my Purple Heart.

Interviewer: And what are these other medals? Do they call this a greenback?

Gore: That's the Indian Head insignia from the 2<sup>nd</sup> infantry division.

Interviewer: Okay

Gore: The Indian Heads. This is the combat infantry badge I think they had just started issuing that in Normandy because they had a lot of combat infantry in Normandy. Because I had shot Carl Smith off of the end of my Browning I had qualified for a combat infantry badge. I think that's one of the first ones that they issues.

Interviewer: And that's your Bronze Star right?

Gore: I have a Bronze Star and one oak leaf cluster and this is the European Theatre medal with five campaign ribbons the little star in the middle a substitute for five ribbons five campaign stars.

Interviewer: How did you what were you doing when you heard that the Nazis had surrendered?

Gore: We were in Pillson in Checkasylvakia I wanted to tell you about the charge of the 16<sup>th</sup> armor division. This, the front lines had been short of replacements short of materials and equipment and they the war was finished down on the Mulding so we stayed there about a week. And one evening they pulled the trucks in loaded us up and of course we didn't know where we were going and the trucks run in the mountains all night and we were back there in the back without any canvas. And the only protection we had was to lay down bed and so the next morning up in the morning they pulled us over to the side. We were in a village up there in the mountain somewhere and down in the valley it was spring and there was snow up in the mountains. And here come the 16<sup>th</sup> armor division pretty new tanks with their little short barrels all shiny pretty new trucks pretty little soldiers sitting back there in back of the trucks with all shaved up and shiny helmets all ready to go. The 16<sup>th</sup> armored had been committed to battle and there wasn't any battle to be had. They had shipped the 16<sup>th</sup> armor division to Europe and instead of breaking it down and making a bunch of nice replacements.

Interviewer: So you crossed the mountains into Checkeslovakia that night?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And were you close to Prog at all did you get to Prog?

Gore: No we went to Pillson they announced the end of the war in Pillson. And the next day or tow somebody was fighting n Prog I don't know it was the German SS maybe and some I don't know what the problem was. And they wanted they wanted the Americans to send troops down there and evidently Eisenhower wouldn't send them for whatever the disturbance was. It's in the history books and I

Interviewer: I think I've heard of this because it was the partisans who took Prog back from the SS.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Because the Russians never invaded in other words Checkeslovakia remained in Nazi control until the very end of the war.

Gore: One of the things I remember from Pillson is there were some communist I guess they had been underground or had organized after we got there anyway they were coming out to drill.

Interviewer: Well they had been part of the resistance.

Gore: I guess the way they were resistance it was safer after we got there.

Interviewer: Sure of course of course.

Gore: After we got there than it was before.

Interviewer: And did you were you afraid that you would be shipped to the Pacific after this?

Gore: No I knew that now that was one of the problems that I had in getting home. I knew that they couldn't they couldn't send me to another war threate with I was already crippled form the one I had been in. But they wanted the 2<sup>nd</sup> division for the

Interviewer: The invasion of Japan?

Gore: Yes and so they loaded us up in 40 and 8s and started back towards the POE the coast. And on the way we went by Reems and they unloaded me and assigned me to the 75<sup>th</sup> division. They just stopped one morning and called me out and that's the last time I saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> division. The 2<sup>nd</sup> division went home and I got to stay in Europe.

Interviewer: Correct me if I'm mistaken but wasn't there kind of a points system whereby the longer you were there the sooner you got sent back is that correct?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: How did you do on the points scale? In other words you got points for various things that you had done.

Gore: That's the reason I was pulled out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> division I had it's in the 38<sup>th</sup> regiment paper they published a paper after the war. And or bulletin or whatever I had the highest number of points towards a discharge in the 38<sup>th</sup> regiment because they counted all these medal points.

Interviewer: So you knew you were going home?

Gore: Well I knew I was going to be taken out of the 2<sup>nd</sup> division.

Interviewer: How long did you remain in Europe after May 8<sup>th</sup> after the end of the war?

Gore: All summer.

Interviewer: All summer?

Gore: They had all these extra troops they had sent over there they didn't seem to have any reason about which ones they sent home first. It was more or less a there was no selection it was just whoever they whatever

Interviewer: Did you spend the summer in France?

Gore: Yes by Reems at the cigarette camps they called them.

Interviewer: What are the I've never heard that expression. I've never heard of a cigarette camp what's that?

Gore: That was what they named the holding camps that they kept the troops on the way home. I forget which camp we were in but they named them for a brand of cigarettes.

Interviewer: Oh I see Marlboro and so and so

Gore: Camel and Lucky Strikes and

Interviewer: And how did you spend your days while you were there?

Gore: Well

Interviewer: Did you have any duties?

Gore: No there wasn't anything to do it was just killing time.

Interviewer: Did you drink a fair amount of French wine?

Gore: Well there were sometimes there were a lot of troops around they it was a situation where you had a lot of young people looking for something to do. And they would go into the towns and the towns were tired of them and once in a while we'd hustle a vehicle from the motor pool and go somewhere.

Interviewer: Did you see the famous cathedral there in Reems?

Gore: No we weren't oriented towards touring cathedrals.

Interviewer: One of the great cathedrals in France you were right there.

Gore: I know but it wasn't one of our things.

Interviewer: How did you make it back home then?

Gore: On the US America it had been convert to a troop ship I think they called it the United States. And it was loaded and somewhere off of out in the Atlantic we hit a gale and the breakfast line got very short. The navy served beans for breakfast and I didn't have any weight the US American would stand on one end for awhile then it would change its mind and stand on the other end. And sometimes you could hear the propellers come out of the water about the same time they did that the front end would try to go in the water. And we had a lot of sea sick soldiers.

Interviewer: I bet I bet.

Gore: And I didn't miss a meal.

Interviewer: And where did you land? In New York?

Gore: I don't know it wasn't New York it might have been Norfolk but I'm not sure.

Interviewer: You went immediately then on a train they put you on a train?

Gore: Yes put us on a train and to Chicago.

Interviewer: Was this in August or September of 45?

Gore: The last of September.

Interviewer: The last of September and so the war is completely finished by this time?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And did you go back to Southern Illinois.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And what did you do when you got back there?

Gore: I worked for my father in the store and that's where I made my mistake I stayed in Southern Illinois too long.

Interviewer: Because there weren't enough opportunities

Gore: Right

Interviewer: That's why it was a mistake. You told me one time that you thought about writing a memoir of your experience.

Gore: Well I'm going to I the method to do this has evaded me. I'm going to make a portfolio so I can write about these different things like I can put a couple of pages in about the heroics of the 16<sup>th</sup> armor division.

Interviewer: Well I think it would be very interesting if you could do this I really do. I think you have a really quite remarkable story to tell because I mean from the beginning of the invasion to the surrender the following summer you know you have a whole series of events that you could talk about. And particularly in Normandy and in the Battle of the Bulge that must have been very difficult very very difficult.

Gore: There's very few of the troops that fought in the bowl cage there are a few of them were the line troops very few of them fought in the Bulge.

Interviewer: Of course at the Bulge those were supposed to be that was supposed to be R&R those were supposed to be soldiers recuperating. It was supposed to be a quiet sector in other words.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: No one anticipated or no one anticipated the attack.

Gore: They gave the 106<sup>th</sup> division the responsibility for the sector we had been holding in front of St. Biff.

Interviewer: Is there anything that I haven't asked you about that you'd like to talk about on tape? Is there anything that I've neglected somehow that you'd like to add?

Gore: Well I'd like to tell you about the Mud March at Camp Older so you could see for the value that the put the war managers put on the replacements.

Interviewer: Go right ahead.

Gore: It was Christmas Eve and we had been out to transition range they called it.

Interviewer: Christmas Eve 1943?

Gore: Yes I think Christmas was on Saturday and Christmas Eve was on Friday. And so it was a mixture of rain and snow and we had been out to this transition range when they brought us our lunch out my mess kit filled with water while I was trying to eat. We had finished our project at the transition range and it was 2 or 3 o'clock maybe 3 or 4 o'clock in the evening it looked like we could get to the barracks and being as it was Christmas Eve they might dismiss the whole thing a little ahead of time. The line come out to the road and it made a turn towards Camp Walters and there in the middle of the road sat a jeep with side curtains. And he must have been the Colonel Officer or somebody was standing out there beside the jeep in his in his rain coat in his whatever. And the troops come down towards the jeep and they made a right turn and we went up the road a little while and made a left into a country lane. And the clays in that Texas I think it's midnight they call it it's sticky it's volcanic clay and the line went down this country road clay wet muddy there was no soldiers to walk on made us step in you had a big ball of mud on your shoe. And there was no reason to clean the shoes because the next step you made was the same thing I was lucky I got out I don't know how long this road was but I got out sometime up in the evening. Troops came in all night they had been stuck out there in the mud of course there wasn't any way to go get them if they wanted to. I could vision this big officer down at the officer's club tossing down a couple of whiskies and joking about what he did to the troops.

Interviewer: I could too.

Gore: The Germans weren't our first enemies.

Interviewer: No that's just sadistic that's terrible.

Gore: They ruined the only they when the troops came in full of mud they muddied the barracks some of them had families coming I guess I think the ones of us didn't have families coming cleaned the barracks that kept that occupied Christmas.

Interviewer: Is there anything else you'd like to say?

Gore: Well I'd like to tell you about the air raid at Wind Whistle Hill.

Interviewer: Go ahead.

Gore: The first night we were there I told you Wind Whistle Hill we called it Whistle Wind Hill but the real name for it is Wind Whistle. It's a golf course outside of Chard and they had these squad tents pitched on it.

Interviewer: This is in England?

Gore: Yes Summerset County and the up in the we'd been all the way from New York to Chard and this was the first time I had been where they had cots there for us. It was the first time I had been in a place I could lay down for what two or three weeks and up in the night here come these German airplanes. You could tell they weren't ours because the engines didn't synchronize. And the little fighter German bombers I don't know where they were going but the troops panicked I think probably the antiaircraft come out and few shots at them and they turned the search lights on and they started running. They had a bell there to ring for something and some kind of clacker

Interviewer: Siren an air raid siren?

Gore: Yeah anyway somebody got those to going and they all left the camp and there was a fellow there in the next cot to me named I can't think of his name right now but he says Gore what are you going to do? And I said I think I'll just stay here from up in the air I reasoned that if they turned those bombs loose that they might miss me anyway I wouldn't be any safer half a mile out in the brush. I said I think I'll just stay here and he and I stayed in our bunks and the rest

Interviewer: Good for you smart man.

Gore: Well I think that attitude may have helped me survive the war because you know there's not any use in worrying about things before they happen. And troops came in all the next morning the American army wasn't ready for a war. The I think I've said enough about our general management the Germans had a different method of war and I think for one reason that we didn't imitate it was it required officers like Rommal who came up to the front. And I think our officers decided that wasn't a good thing to do because they might mess up a good retirement.

Interviewer: Although also you have the phenomenon for what they call the 90 day wonders.

Gore: Yes it seems to me like in the bowl cage we probably had two or three lieutenants. And when I was hit during operation Cobra I think Sargent Sabra was running what was left of the platoon.

Interviewer: Well some people have always said that the noncommissioned officers are the most important element in any unit anyway more so than the officers.

Gore: Well

Interviewer: Because the noncoms rise through the ranks. The officers not necessarily so.

Gore: Came from Fort Benning

Interviewer: Right or an ROTC program or West Point or someplace else. Is our tape through?

Man in the background: Two minutes.

Interviewer: Two minutes well is there anything else we have another minute or two of tape if you want to say anything or if either two of you want to ask questions last minute.

Man in the background: A lot of information.

Interviewer: Well Mr. Gore thank you very much actually I have something I want to make a photocopy of something I'll be right back. (Tape ended)

Tape 3

Interviewer: Kirt Vonaget and he subtitled this book the Children's Crusade and one of the themes of the book is how young and ill prepared these soldiers were to undertake this job. And he was captured at the Bulge

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: And he was taken prisoner of war and he was sent to Dresden Germany he was there in February of 1945 when Dresden was fire bombed. It's a wonderful book and the movie is good to I recommend the movie I like the movie. The movies probably 30 years old I mean it's made in the 70s. But he lived through the experience.

Gore: Was he in the 106<sup>th</sup> maybe?

Interviewer: I think he was he was a Chaplin's assistant or something like that he wasn't at all prepared to be doing this.

Gore: The 106<sup>th</sup> had to be surprised. No when I was in Springfield Missouri I talked to a lady her son was killed in the 106<sup>th</sup> division and some of those had been in ASTP and when the war got serious they busted them back out of ASTP and I think that some of them went to the 106<sup>th</sup> division.

Interviewer: So what happens after Krinkelt after you leave there?

Gore: We were going up the road I'm sure that these Germans spoke English fluently and I'm sure that they had tuned in on our radio frequency. And it was some of the military organization anyway they all wanted to go the same way which was out of Kringhild we went right back towards Worsfelt and the

General Robertson had and General Gero which was the 55<sup>th</sup> quarter commander had I guess had done this mostly on their own they had enough permission from General Hodge wherever he was hiding at. To withdraw from the Lotion gap and they reestablished their lines at Elsonborne and we were the last he had brought the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 99<sup>th</sup> division back through Rockrath. And through this past this and

Interviewer: So you were Hodges was the commander of the first army?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: So your unit was affiliated with the first army?

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Okay

Gore: And anyway it was General Robertson that saved the north Cholter because from what I heard he was in Worseflet and Colonel went through with the sounder pump the main drive. He's the one who went up to Malmondie and did the massacre. That was back behind us and anyway the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion or the 38<sup>th</sup> was the last battalion out of the Lotion Gap and the Rockrath and Krinkal area. And it was the night of the 19<sup>th</sup> when we went up the road.

Interviewer: And how far west did you retreat?

Gore: They had retreated it wasn't over ten miles they had rebuilt their lines they sent the 1<sup>st</sup> and the 9<sup>th</sup> division down there. But there wasn't any use they could have stayed where they were when the 2<sup>nd</sup> and the 99<sup>th</sup> got reestablished and got their artillery set up why the north shoulder of the Bulge which is what needed to collapse was back in business.

Interviewer: The line held?

Gore: Yes but we got about three or four miles up the road and there was a some kind of a farm building right on the road with doors opening in it was a storage shed I guess. There was a bigger building over a couple a hundred feet to the left of the road it was up a little grade. And I looked over there, there were two German officers standing the fog had lifted and the moon was out and they were standing there in the shadow of the moon under by that building like they were reviewing Nazis in Newinburg. They were reviewing the retreat of the 38<sup>th</sup> regiment and Philbe was across the road from me and I was started to go across the road to tell Philbe that we need to go see about those two officers. It didn't seem right to me that they were standing there and a shell went over at my feet. Couldn't hear it coming it had to be a tank shell I had made those Nazis mad. They let the rest of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion go by and they took a shot at me.

Interviewer: So were you hurt?

Gore: Yes I got nicked and Philbe had a whole bunch of shrapnel. He was down in the road and the rest of the battalion was going to walk over him so I got him drug into this shed and picked a few pieces of shrap metal out of him and put a couple of bandages on him and I went back out and the medics was

following the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion out of town. And they loaded Philbe up the suckers slammed the doors and went on and left me standing there in the road. The 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion was gone I looked down the road the other way I looked over in the shed and the officers were gone and no Germans were coming up the road and there I stood right in the middle of the road and the ambulance was way up the road before I figured out he was going off and leaving me.

Interviewer: So what did you do?

Gore: There wasn't anything to do I didn't want to lay down there and go to sleep because I figured the Germans would be by that way pretty soon so I shouldered my Browning and started walking. And someway or another I picked up two or three more stragglers the next mile or so.

Interviewer: Were you walking west did you know if you were walking west?

Gore: I think we were going more north more than west. I'll find you a map and there sat Colonel Barsonie's jeep in the middle of the road. I guess it had run out of gas but these German officers and this tank could have put a big hole in the side of his jeep.

Interviewer: Sure

Gore: And they let him go and shot at me. And there the jeep sat and we all got in it and started tried the starter and the engine started down the road we four stragglers went in the Colonels jeep. If I would have got close to that jeep in any other circumstance why he wouldn't have liked it. And we went two or three miles and it run out it stopped again and I think next we caught a ride with a lieutenant who had a jeep and a trailer load of something. And they tried a side road and the trucks had cut big ruts and the jeep bottomed out and I think then I caught a ride with somebody from the 9<sup>th</sup> some Sargent from the 9<sup>th</sup> division. Probably a ration type the division had about 15,000 men and in full strength they put about 5,000 in the rifleman the rest of it was support and lord knows how much support they had all the way back to the United States.

Interviewer: Sure

Gore: Eisenhower was the ultimate duracrat and anyway he gave me a lecture on the 9<sup>th</sup> division shouldn't have had to come down there the 2<sup>nd</sup> division should have fought its own war. And I didn't know anything about tactics.

Interviewer: Did you still have the BAR?

Gore: Yeah and he let me out I guess it was the best I could figure there was a little airport at Elsonborn and he said this is where the 2<sup>nd</sup> division is and let me out. And I got inside this building or it looked like a hanger maybe and I unrolled my sleeping bag and crawled in and went to sleep that's all I could do for that day. The next day I woke up and there was somebody up on the other end of the building doing something and I studied them for a little while and decided they were Americans instead of Germans. And I went down to the towards town and the first things I came to was a medic station an aid station and the doctor was in the back room and they had a nice fire built and I spent the afternoon there. And

every once in a while I could hear somebody raise their voice back in the examining room like he wasn't too happy about something. And so I was the last one back there that evening and he said what's the matter with you noting doc I just a little I got nicked last night and I come by to get my tetanus shot and see if you'd wrap it up for me. So I can find out where my unit was and he said you're the first one that's been in here today that's got anything wrong with them, you've got to go to the hospital he's rear ashalone and panicked. A lot of them were trying to find a way out.

Interviewer: Self preservation.

Gore: Yes there weren't as many heroes there as there are at the American Legion meeting.

Interviewer: So you went to the hospital?

Gore: Wound up back in the 132rd general hospital in Paris got a ride all the way to Paris. And I was there four or five days and it was more or less the same situation the doctor found up there in Elsenbron. Some of them had been nicked up pretty much and there was a big psychiatric situation.

Interviewer: Where did you spend Christmas?

Gore: In the 123<sup>rd</sup> general hospital.

Interviewer: Did you have a Christmas meal?

Gore: The staff I think used up all the drinking alcohol around the place and pretty well got drunk. Yeh it was pretty nice clean sheets and

Interviewer: Was this your first visit to Paris?

Gore: Yes all I saw of Paris was this 123<sup>rd</sup> hospital it was in a civilian hospital there I think that they had taken over.

Interviewer: Then they sent you back to the front?

Gore: The doctor there one of the doctors there gave me my third Purple Heart and he said you're through with the war. He said you've been up there since Normandy I guess they got my records back by then and he said you've been up there since Normandy and the said this is your third you've been wounded three times. You're through with the war were going to send you home. And I said that's nice he said we'll have to put you back in the replacement pool but we're going to tag your records. I said doctor it won't work you put me back in that replacement pool I'll be there when the wars over.

Interviewer: So what happened?

Gore: Went out to Fountainblow I think where isn't that where Louis the 14<sup>th</sup> had his headquarters?

Interviewer: Well there's a palace there in Foltonblue yeah.

Gore: the troops there were troop barracks and

Interviewer: Napoleon had his headquarters there.

Gore: And we went down to see the palace or whatever while I was there but I didn't know who Louis the 14<sup>th</sup> was. But they gave us we got a shower there and got they rewashed his clothes and laid them out in a pile a set of long handle underwear two sets of ODs and we started going for Awduff and started back towards the front. And the first night there was two days and one night the first night wasn't bad the weather was pretty decent and we got

Interviewer: This is January by this time isn't it?

Gore: Yes yeah about the first of January and but it was maybe in the 40s or 50s or something closed the box car doors and I think we had a blanket maybe to wrap up in. And the second night they backed us into some kind of a replacement handling camp up in Belgium it was bitter cold and they backed us in there about dark. And somebody came down the line of these box cars and shoved the doors shut how they knew we weren't going to use up all the oxygen in those little box cars over night I don't know. But they maybe they didn't care I'm sure they didn't but anyway they shoved the doors shut and there we sat all night.

Interviewer: In the cold?

Gore: In the cold and then the next day they hauled me back to the 2<sup>nd</sup> division and they were in some dug outs again with covers on them. It was somewhere around Elsonborn but I don't know where.

Interviewer: Just a minute I have to find out whether someone is showing to that. What is this? (Looking at a picture)

Gore: I think that's I'm sitting I think I've got a better picture of that. It think that's me sitting there. That's a Sherman M4 model it had the 76 instead of the 75.

Interviewer: Is this Normandy or is this Belgium?

Gore: No that's up in Germany.

Interviewer: That's in Germany

Gore: After we crossed the Rhine.

Interviewer: Okay so you're back with your unit it's January of 1945.

Gore: Yes

Interviewer: Where do you go next?

Gore: Went from took Rockrath and Krinkhill back. You want to do this again?

Interviewer: Yeah I would actually.

Gore: Now there's all kind of things I could tell you because.

Interviewer: Then let's not rush let's do this next week.

Gore: If you want to.

Interviewer: I'd like to I'd like to let's just do this next week okay. (Tape ends)