

Interviewer: State your full name for me.

Grant: Beg your pardon.

Interviewer: If you could state your full name for me.

Grant: Spell my

Interviewer: Just say it out loud so we can have it on camera.

Grant: Charles F Grant

Interviewer: Okay and when were you born?

Grant: Where was I born?

Interviewer: When and where?

Grant: Montgomery County Tennessee

Interviewer: What year was that?

Grant: 41

Interviewer: Okay

Grant: 40 I was on KP the day I was 21.

Interviewer: And what branch of the service did you serve in again?

Grant: Infantry

Interviewer: Infantry and the primary unit that you served in.

Grant: The 7th Army

Interviewer: And what were your parent's names and occupations?

Grant: My past name?

Interviewer: Your parents.

Grant: Oh Vernon Grant and Viva Grant.

Interviewer: And what did they do for a living?

Grant: Farmers

Interviewer: Farmers do you have memories of the great depression?

Grant: Yes I do.

Interviewer: Pretty strong memories?

Grant: Dad was a farmer, raised four children two boys two girls I'm the oldest one in the family left. I have one brother still living two sisters still living no two sisters both dead deceased.

Interviewer: So the great depression did it affect your family pretty significantly?

Grant: Yes that was a hard way to go dad farmed during the depression.

Interviewer: So he was able to get the farm did he have trouble selling his stuff?

Grant: No tobacco was the main crop and dad said he got three cents a pound for his tobacco crop one year. Not enough to pay for the interest on the farm.

Interviewer: Were you old enough to have a job before you went into the service?

Grant: Labor I went in service when I was 20 years old. Was serving KP the day I was 21 we were the first units in the camp that I went in Camp Alice Texas the first unit sent in. First unit sent in we went to beat our rations the main rations we had we ate every goat there was in Texas. We stayed in Texas for eight months we moved from there to Camp Claiborne Louisiana we stayed there a little over a year all of us griping because we couldn't go over they wouldn't let us go overseas we was all young gung ho and wanted to get over there and fight. From England we went into France stayed there for several months and we went to we crossed the English Chanel all the sailors were griping about the limited meals we had. The first meal we had was for breakfast all of us infantry boys was griping we were the sailor were griping about the meal that we had and argued over hot cakes again. We thought that was eating high on the hog because we had been eating goats so long. From France we went into went into Germany we stayed back off the front line for about six months before we saw combat I was in the 4th platoon and just before we went into combat the lieutenant decided I was pretty intelligent boy, where he got that I don't know. And he got me transferred to the intelligence section and the first night in combat every one of us was captured. I had done been transferred so I didn't get it.

Interviewer: Very fortunate.

We stayed on the front line in Germany for I think about six months we saw combat for about six months before we were pulled back off the front line. From Germany we went into Belgium and we stayed there just a few months. Any way we were pulled back off the front line thought we were going to get to spend the Christmas Holidays on the line we bunked down over night the next morning they said for us to lead up get ready to go into Belgium. We stayed one night and then we after we hit Belgium the German line had got so thin and we didn't fight there much just a few weeks and they surrendered in Belgium. Snow knee deep the whole time we were in Belgium.

Interviewer: Cold?

Grant: And we ended up in a town of Brook Saw that was a mining town and they had a big mining camp there and of course they had the mining shower baths with the mining camp and we hadn't had a bath in three or four weeks you can imagine how we smelt. They the last battle we were in we pulled a rally like last Sunday evening and just about dark our artillery opened up and you can just imagine how much how many people were killed. Most of them were German of course we were lucky that the artillery was hard as they did but that wasn't long until they give up. And the next morning we went across the valley and they just kept pulling back and pulling back until they finally give up they give up the battle. We went across that valley and there was tanks jeeps motorcycles everything else knocked out where our artillery hit them so hard. That was pretty much the end of what combat we seen but we stayed over there we pulled back in Germany occupation. Stayed there nine months after the occupation one little town Brook Saw was declared an open town they didn't bomb it at all. And Hittelberg they also declared it an open town and you could tell where the planes went looked like a farmer's field just where those planes went down through there and bombed it. And like I said that was pretty much the end of it for us. Actually I liked the German people after we stayed there occupation of course there wasn't anymore fighting then. But I liked the German people more than most of the GIs felt the same way felt better towards the German people than they did the French people. The French people were sort f nasty there.

Interviewer: So were you ever impressed with the enemies fighting abilities?

Grant: I beg your pardon.

Interviewer: Were you impressed by the enemy's military ability?

Grant: Not much.

Interviewer: Not much was the experience of combat was it particularly traumatic? Do you remember your reactions to being shot at and having to shoot back and that sort of thing?

Grant: Well not too much.

Interviewer: Did your unit was your unit pretty close did they stick together pretty well?

Grant: Yes very much so.

Interviewer: And what did you do with like your free time or anything did you have much?

Grant: Well in after the war was over we of course they American soldiers had to have their beer. They set up the beer joints and all over the town.

Interviewer: Did you write a lot of letters and receive letters from family and friends?

Grant: Write quite a few I started to say email but email wasn't such a thing then.

Woman in the background: Yeh you don't even do email now.

Grant: We had a little sheet about like that we wrote free we the GIs wrote free we our family and all paid three cents I think it was.

Interviewer: When you were in the field did you get hot food or C-rations or?

Grant: We ate trucks brought the of course the kitchen was set up quite a ways back. But we didn't get we wasn't too close we got hot meals but a lot of the times none of the time hardly through the day light did we get hot meals and C-rations then.

Interviewer: And did you often sleep on the ground or in tents?

Grant: No we didn't sleep in tents we slept on the ground. When we was on maneuvers we maneuvered in Louisiana quite a bit and pine needles was our mattress and they made a mattress of it. There wasn't nothing like that overseas a lot of pine trees in Louisiana.

Interviewer: Did you ever feel sleep deprived while you were in Europe? Did you feel like you were getting enough sleep or not enough?

Grant: Not enough.

Interviewer: And were you promoted during your service time?

Grant: No

Interviewer: Never?

Grant: I was I made a PFC.

Interviewer: Do you feel like the promotions that were given out do you feel like they were deserved?

Grant: Some of them was some of them wasn't.

Interviewer: Were the officers and NCOs in your unit were they recent recruits or were they prewar career army.

Grant: Most of them were pre army.

Interviewer: And so you were part of the occupation force after the fighting was over?

Grant: I beg your pardon.

Interviewer: You were part of the occupation force for

Grant: Yeh

Interviewer: For how many months again? You said about six months after the fighting?

Grant: Yes

Woman in the background: How long did you stay in Germany after the fighting?

Grant: Nine months.

Interviewer: Okay what year did you get to come home?

Grant: We landed in New York January 46.

Interviewer: So you spend a you went in you said in 43?

Grant: No I went in in 41 or 40 and worked KP the day I was 21.

Interviewer: Okay and do you remember where you were and what you were doing when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

Grant: No I don't.

Interviewer: Okay did you do you remember expecting anything like that? Do you remember expecting the Japanese to attack?

Grant: I don't remember.

Interviewer: Did you read newspapers or watch newsreels or anything like that?

Grant: No we didn't have no newsreels. We read the Stars and Stripes that was the Army paper.

Interviewer: Do you remember listening to RDF after like any of his famous speeches?

Grant: No

Interviewer: And you were you enlisted in the Army is that right?

Grant: Yes

Interviewer: Were you at that time tested for IQ and skills?

Grant: No

Interviewer: Nothing like that? So it wasn't until later they started that.

Grant: Yeh

Interviewer: So tell me again where you did your basic training.

Grant: Do what?

Interviewer: Where did you do your basic training?

Grant: Fort Overthorpe Georgia.

Interviewer: Okay and so you said you participated in some maneuvers in Louisiana.

Grant: I beg your pardon.

Interviewer: You said you were in some maneuvers here in the states.

Grant: Yeh

Interviewer: What kind of maneuvers were you taking part in here? What sorts of things were you doing here in the states what sorts of maneuvers were you?

Grant: Well we just went and stayed in the field I think we stayed in the field in Louisiana about a month I guess it was.

Interviewer: Do you feel like you were well prepared for your experience in Europe?

Grant: Well compared to now we definitely were not.

Interviewer: And did you how soon after basic training was it that you went overseas? How long did you spend in the states?

Grant: About two years. We all thought we wasn't ever going to get to see no fighting we wished we hadn't had after we got over there.

Interviewer: Do you remember you initial reactions to seeing the destruction in Europe? Do you remember did it change how you felt about the whole situation?

Grant: Well I felt like we were more justified in what we did then and what we're doing now. I am very much against the war in Iraq.

Interviewer: It's not Hitler is it?

Grant: I got a grandson in the Marine Core I don't know if this is his fifth or sixth year now. He says he's tried tried tried to get to go over there I told him boy you better take it from somebody who knows I said as long as you can stay in the states you better stay in the states.

Interviewer: Yeh so did you have other friends or family that served as well?

Grant: Did I have any friends in service?

Interviewer: Did you have like other family member or friends from home that?

Grant: Well I had three three cousins one of them well all three of them was in the Navy. One of them was lost at sea other than that I guess friends that I made after I got in the service.

Interviewer: Did you lose a lot of friends?

Grant: Not too many

Interviewer: And did you ever feel like you had a sense of the bigger picture of the war?

Grant: No

Interviewer: Kind of kept on what you were doing?

Woman in the background: Daddy wasn't Clifton in the service?

Grant: What

Woman in the background: Wasn't Clifton in the service?

Grant: Oh yeh he never did go overseas my brother.

Interviewer: Okay

Woman in the background: He didn't go overseas?

Grant: No he stayed in Shelby.

Interviewer: What kind of equipment were you trained with and what kind of equipment did you use?

Grant: Infantry

Interviewer: So it was just the basic.

Grant: That's front line doggies.

Interviewer: Woman in the background: He didn't hear what you said. Daddy, he said what kind of equipment were you trained with?

Grant: Oh the M1 riffle.

Interviewer: Were you ever wounded?

Grant: One little bitty hit in the left ankle. A jeep rolled in and run over a land mine.

Interviewer: Did you receive good medical treatment?

Grant: Yeh

Interviewer: Were you ever recommended for a medal?

Grant: No

Interviewer: Do you so were you involved in any of the famous landings?

Grant: No

Interviewer: And has your opinion of the war or your understanding of the war changed much since you over the years have you kind of come to see it in a different light at all?

Grant: I see it in quite a bit different light. Bush thought he'd send five planes over there and bomb Iraq and that would be all and he found out a lot different.

Interviewer: And when you came back to the states did you find work right away?

Grant: Yes sir for 31 years.

Interviewer: What is it that you went into?

Grant: The packing house.

Interviewer: Okay and I guess are there any other memories that stand out in your mind of your time in the service?

Grant: No not really I don't guess.

Woman in the background: Don't look at me I don't know.

Grant: I don't guess you do you weren't here then. I thought she was thinking about something. I told her most of what I told you last night. She said you never have told us nothing about it I don't' guess I have. She made me I remember something I told you that I told her.

Interviewer: Are there you think it's because it's not something you care to think about if you can help it?

Grant: No

Interviewer: I understand I mean I guess is there anything else you would like to say to whoever watches the tape or anything, generations to come pass it on to people.

Grant: Not that I can think of. I told you our division wrote a book about it?

Interviewer: No I don't think you did.

Grant: I couldn't remember if I told you or not. When the war was over they wrote a book Fortune Favors of Brave and I bought one of the books and I know I brought it home with me. She said she remembers seeing it one time. I cannot find it if we should happen to run across it I'll see that you get a copy of it.

Interviewer: Well thank you I might have to check it out see if it's in the library.

Woman in the background: I just wonder if it is.

Interviewer: Yeh I bet it is I bet that is. Well if there is nothing else I guess I will go ahead and press the stop button.