

Lane: Kentucky

Interviewer: Okay when were you born?

Lane: 1914 January 18<sup>th</sup>

Interviewer: And what unit were you in during the war what division?

Lane: 342<sup>nd</sup>

Interviewer: That was the 75<sup>th</sup> infantry division?

Lane: 75<sup>th</sup> infantry division.

Interviewer: Okay if you could would you describe the area you lived in during the 30s and 40s during like the depression era was it rural small town?

Lane: Well it was Bowling Green Kentucky. My family moved to Bowling Green Kentucky and I grew up in Bowling Green Kentucky actually I stayed there until I went in the service. Which was oh I had four years in the service and I was sent to Camp Landing Florida to Texas to form a new division right after I went in. And I was out there and I accepted a call from Fort Benning Georgia to take officers training.

Interviewer: What did your parents do for a living?

Lane: They were in retail business retail business both of them.

Interviewer: What kind of things did they sell?

Lane: Shoe department and clothing department and generally retail at that time.

Interviewer: What was your school like?

Lane: School we had a very nice high school. I played football in the high school years and in and graduated from that. I had two years from up on the hill we call it on the hill Western and that was our basic training then I went in the service shortly thereafter. The war was just starting good when I went in service and after that everything happened. I went to Fort Benning Georgia, Camp Avery Virginia, Camp Landing in Florida from Florida I went to Texas and back to Fort Benning Georgia. Camp Landing I mean Fort Benning and I was sent from there to Camp Braveage Kentucky which is in Evansville Indiana there they prepared us for overseas duty in the 75<sup>th</sup> division we were all aboard got on the ship all aboard and came into England. Stayed there for one month and after a month in England we shipped to Texas. Oh this is my daughter Caroline.

Interviewer: Hi

Caroline: It's nice to meet you.

Lane: What was your name I'm sorry?

Interviewer: Oh I'm Robert Crummel

Caroline: Hi Robert

Interviewer: So what are your memories of the depression during the 30s?

Lane: Oh at that time I feared my mom and dad's job you might say. It was pretty tough going at that time people you just everybody was in the same boat and you just lived that way. And we managed to get through it let's put it that way.

Caroline: Well what did you what was it like? I mean what about being able to get enough food to eat?

Lane: Yeah mother and dad never did get down low they had a good job steady. Our income was steady but never did get down that low that we in the depression you couldn't get going. We had a pretty tough time of it. But we never to the point that we were really depressed.

Caroline: But what about people you knew?

Lane: Well sought various things to do but they managed somehow to get by very few had high living as we call it. Everybody managed to get by because everyone was in the depression and there wasn't any extra money to spend money.

Caroline: Well do you mind if I ask him some questions?

Lane: No that's fine.

Caroline: Well daddy how old were you do you remember how old you were when you were going through the depression?

Lane: I must have been 26 or 27 along in there.

Caroline: And what about do you remember anything about the grocery stores and the food supply?

Lane: Not everything the variation in the grocery area I guess we did our trading with the \_\_\_ grocery which was very nice. But nothing extra fancy just food just basic foods.

Caroline: They didn't have any of the extras during the depression they were just into the basics.

Lane: None of the extras

Interviewer: Now during the depression were you as far as politics goes were you a supporter of Roosevelt?

Lane: At that time yes.

Interviewer: Were you familiar with some of his programs from like the new deal?

Lane: Yes

Interviewer: Were you involved in any of those programs?

Lane: No not exactly but I remember them we were very much in favor nice fellow I liked him.

Caroline: What did you like about him?

Lane: His principles and the way he acted as a president should act. And it was right after the war and we were just beginning to come out of it you might say. Getting different jobs and bettering themselves if you could.

Caroline: I don't remember that what is the new deal you've obviously been studying it?

Interviewer: It was series of programs developed to sort of well help the people out and spur the economy you know try to get things back on track. So there were just different programs of that order.

Caroline: So you really saw that happening with Roosevelt you saw things start getting a lot better.

Lane: Right he was very favorable by most people. In fact most people benefitted by this new deals and so forth. So many things were happening about that time. War came along and well some of the well we were right \_\_\_ in the war years because he knew we were going the drafts support was pretty heavy at that time. But they had all the draft I never had service before my friend and I we went to various departments like navy and army the different ones the variations. And we finally decided on the army so we jumped ahead of the depression and joined the army.

Caroline: You joined instead of being drafted.

Lane: Right we were gonna beat the draft we didn't beat the draft but we headed off anyway.

Interviewer: So in the late 30s did you feel that war was inevitable then?

Lane: Yes it was just all that was going on and since. But I should have gotten my dates I don't know the date that we entered the war but we eventually did. But I bounced around myself as an operation officer at \_\_\_ Texas and Camp \_\_\_ in Florida Camp \_\_\_ Kentucky. Then we got ready and went overseas and I was overseas about a year and a half and had a pretty tough time of it. I was lucky of course in a lot of ways but anyway we made it just fine.

Caroline: Well do you want to hear his stories at that time or what are you trying to?

Interviewer: Sure well what was when you went into basic training what was that like? Was the discipline rough was it hard training that sort of thing?

Lane: Well it wasn't easy training it was disciplined training. If you did what you were told to you got along fine I found. And one was to go was the right way the army way and basically it ended up the best way. There was things we learned overseas in fighting that wasn't in the manuals example shells came in either over or close by was it coming in. You learned things they couldn't put in the manual but we all survived it not all of us a lot of us survived the things.

Interviewer: Where was it that you did your basic training at?

Lane: Basic training let's see it was Camp Landing Florida.

Interviewer: Then as an officer I guess you went through some sort of special training?

Lane: Yes

Interviewer: Okay where was that at?

Lane: Well actually my basic training was about scattered all over the country. I was in Texas for part of it part of it in Texas part of it in Florida. So actually my basic training was scattered all over the country. But I'd like to say one thing that's true I was a staff sergeant staff sergeant over the platoon in Texas and that's when I was called to be an officer and I was changed from a sergeant to a second lieutenant. And moved up to first lieutenant then made captain over a period of time. My old battalion commander who was the battalion regiment officer he became a casualty right after the start of the Battle of the Bulge he was killed. And I just took over his duties and continued on with his duties as battalion officer and stayed with it until the war ended retired as a captain.

Interviewer: Now in 1941 the Japanese of course bombed Pearl Harbor. Do you remember how you heard about that and what your reaction and emotions were?

Lane: Well the war had just ended in Europe and they took our divisions over to Europe to process other divisions in Europe because they were headed for Japan the war in the Pacific rather. And our division was accepted as processing all of the other divisions over there that were headed for Japan. The war just being over they sent us to \_\_\_\_\_ Camp \_\_\_\_\_ that was in France. And we were trying to basically anyone that had been in the Pacific we tried to help them out basically anyone who could do it. They were a fine bunch of guys and right before they left.

Caroline: So what was your impression with Pearl Harbor happening?

Lane: We were shocked.

Caroline: Where were you then? Where did you hear the news?

Lane: Camp \_\_\_\_\_ City the war had just ended in Europe and we were processing the divisions to go over to the Pacific Theater and it happened that way. And we were sending the division's across the United States to the Pacific as fast as possible.

Interviewer: So how was your decisions you said you decided to go in the army as opposed to the navy. How did you come to that decision?

Lane: Well as we knew nothing about any of them just in our own minds the navy department we just didn't like the attitude of the recruiting officer. The others officers the air force was closed down for the time being they had filled up. So we went into the army because that was our choice of the three for various reason but we accepted the army. And I'm glad we did because it was rough rough training but we made it I guess is the important thing. And to me out overseas a lot of fighting in the meantime personally I accepted the promotion over there what they call battlefield promotion. And then I went on up to be captain.

Interviewer: So you enlisted in the army and eventually you were chosen to become an officer.

Lane: Right

Interviewer: How what do you know what that decision was based upon was it your performance, your education or?

Lane: Well I'll tell you during the Battle of the Bulge for example my commander he was a captain and he became a casualty during the Battle of the Bulge. And I was his assistant I continued on his job or his duties all through the Battle of the Bulge and other parts of the war. And

Caroline: Well daddy what about General Fluke because he was.

Interviewer: He was a colonel at that time.

Caroline: He was a colonel okay. Had you been doing anything for General Fluke at that time?

Lane: Oh lord yes the three of us were on the jeep.

Caroline: You and the captain who got killed and General Fluke would ride together in the jeep.

Lane: Right

Caroline: Okay so it was your skill that got you promoted obviously.

Lane: Well frankly I did a lot of the work we were trained it as regular as what we were doing and.

Caroline: What was your main job? Tell us if you need to take a little break daddy.

Lane: No

Caroline: Okay do you want a little water?

Lane: Well

Caroline: I'll get you a little water. He's just getting over a cold.

Interviewer: Oh yeah

Caroline: And I'll get you a little water.

Lane: I have a map showing fighter everything we did overseas I drew a map for the division. And the battalion commander had X number of copies made for the guys to know where they were and what they were doing.

Interviewer: Right

Lane: So I made a map I had access over there they didn't have. And

Interviewer: So how did you travel over to Europe was it on a ship I guess?

Caroline: Daddy do you know where that map is?

Lane: I was just telling him I meant to get all of that together so he'd have a picture of it.

Caroline: Do you know where the map could be?

Lane: I'm asking him if it's possible for you to drop by tomorrow so you can pick it up?

Interviewer: I can do that.

Lane: I thought I would spend the afternoon getting those together. And also somebody in our division seemed to write up the history about our division. What they did I hope it will answer a lot of your questions. And then the map I drew up for the division I \_\_\_\_\_ I wish I still had it it's around here somewhere.

Caroline: Well we have copies of it too Ann and I both have it. But that was one of your main jobs wasn't it daddy? You would plot out where the attacks were getting ready to occur next and you designed the map. So what you were doing was showing them.

Lane: Yeah through the war years I lived with all kind of divisions maps would be received. Some that were printed some that the army had printed some time we'd get aerial photographs of the area we would attack. Also if we needed a tank battalion we would request a tank battalion be attached to us and they would attach us to a tank battalion.

Caroline: So you would take those different maps that were coming from different directions and then you would design a map from that? Is that how you got the information?

Lane: No we were taking a map we were supposed to fight a certain section. We would be given maps of that particular section they would be broken down we called it in threes. Our battalion it was three battalions in each divisions and we would be given a certain the first battalion sector of one of these maps. Anything in front of us for attack purposes it would be for us if we need like a tank battalion or whatever we needed we'd get it. But anyway went through that and fortunately we went through it.

Interviewer: What was the trip like over to Europe on the ship was the ship crowded?

Lane: Yes

Interviewer: Did you get seasick or anything?

Lane: I sure did I'll never forget at time people were smoking. I had a cigarette lit up I smoked half a cigarette and that's it no more smoking. Smoking was out for me then I quit then going over the food made me so sick I got seasick. And I remember I couldn't eat a bit all the way over but I managed on cheese and crackers and at mealtime I managed to eat cheese and crackers. And that was it that was my menu going overseas cheese and crackers. I was seasick I just couldn't stand it in fact you had those hallways those big ships instead of being perpendicular like they should be they'd be at this angle angled. You'd be coming down trying to straighten yourself and look down the hall and door would be

going this way and it would be back over this way. And for some reason I just couldn't take it all and I did get seasick pure and simple. But most of the guys did whether they admitted it or not. And going over there were so many of them I went over with the 17<sup>th</sup> division this big ship where we slept a lot of time had hanging bunks one, two, three down the wall of the ship and I was number two. I remember distinctly going over I was number three just below the water line no number two. That's where we slept on the side of the ship and nothing for we all got across anyway. Big ship those were enormous ships.

Interviewer: And your ship landed in England is that right?

Lane: No it wasn't in England I forget now South Hampton. And it was pronounced as Whales South Whales and anyway we were there for about a month or so overseas. So after training there for about a month they sent us to overseas to prepare us for overseas. And actually the war had been going on they were in pretty bad shape you know. So we were there and they shipped us anyway overseas we were at Lahara France and they were in combat we were going up the coast and it was rough.

Interviewer: What was your first combat experience like? Was it what you expected or.

Lane: More than I think expected except how real it was but most of us while in England our colonel had his ship fixed up somebody said we were gonna be cold over there. He fixed up plywood fixed it up pretty tight so you could get warm. We got overseas and hardly got on shore good and this blast just tore the side of the jeep all to pieces so bad that the colonel had to get off. We thought we had got moved in front of the full blast enemy artillery. But it so happened it was our artillery we had moved too close to the full blinds of and our artillery had torn up our jeep. Somebody just tore up the plywood around the jeep anyway.

Interviewer: So when you get into France this was how long after D-Day was this? Was this a couple of months after the allies actually invaded France?

Lane: Actually it was we were there about a year and a half. I won't be able to tell you the exact date I'm sorry. I don't know the exact dates.

Interviewer: So other than France you were in what Belgium, Holland different areas?

Lane: Yeah Belgium, France, Germany of course I don't consider England. England was tore up pretty bad they were still trying to tear up England when we got there. But

Interviewer: What were your impressions of the British people?

Lane: Very nice very different actually they were very similar to us. In the army certain regulations and it carried it through it even if you were in the army our regulations were similar to those in England. The people were very nice but hard to understand sometimes you know they talk fast slurred across some words we're not used to. But they were very understandable of course when we got overseas first off out of the box we had to pay off the men in French franks. French franks you know were a lot different than anywhere else.

Interviewer: Right

Lane: So that was a currency at that time French franks. So I had to pay all the men I had to do my part and help pay the men what their payroll would be in French franks. Their payroll was similar to what they would draw in American money for it wasn't very easy to do. But that's why they broke it down in so many ways we all had to participate bringing it down so we didn't spend all of our money which we deserved. And what else?

Interviewer: Well let's see during the Battle of the Bulge now what were the conditions that you fought in? I imagine it was pretty cold.

Lane: Well I didn't tell about the weather. I understand later that this was the coldest winter that they had in years. The Battle of the Bulge was fought mostly in snow deep snow and supposed to be the coldest winter that they had. And you know from the day we went in there there wasn't a spark of fire you were always in the dark wherever we might be the lights. There was a pile one little light that I had while I was there. I had a camera to use I used that camera I had that to because you see each battalion is broken down into companies and the army breaks itself on down like that. But each company you see has its own \_\_\_ and what have you but anyway each company would have a section that they go through that would be my job after we got in the division as to the breakdown on the to the battle in front of us. We usually we fought two and one we kept one company back as a reserve to back up the area the other two might be needed. So we managed to get through it somehow.

Caroline: Well daddy tell him what it was like driving through the streets when you went through on a jeep with General Fluke and.

Lane: Yeah it was \_\_\_ a city sometimes they'd tear a city all to pieces. I'm not talking kidding they didn't just take one building and tear it up this building over here and tear it up. The whole city and the Germans a lot of times would do this before we got there just before we'd get to some places. The Germans know they are defeated or going back at the same time they would tear the roof off a church roof off just like that. They wouldn't tear it down but blow the roof off and have things like that. And the Rhine River which we had to cross there the only bridge across the Rhine River all the way up into Holland the Rhine River was the only access was across the Rhine River. Except we I was we were down in Florida I mean France what you call Coal \_\_\_ pocket we were sent to England and it was rolling along. And one of the main object was crossing the Rhine River up at that end in northern end. Any way they had a hard time getting across our division was set up to help them cross the Rhine River. Anyway after we got across the Rhine River which \_\_\_ somehow we got across we finally got across the river. And the colonel and I the first group but I never forgot how \_\_\_ an experience crossing that Rhine River a pontoon boat that the engineers put together real quick. And for our battalion but having a jeep going across that Rhine River the boat was sagging down in the middle because of the weight of the jeep and so forth. But that was a frightening experience.

Caroline: What the bridge dipped a little bit?

Lane: We didn't go across on a bridge we used pontoons.

Caroline: Pontoon boats?

Lane: Yeah you know what they are?

Caroline: No



Lane: They are great big size boats you put in the water and the engineers \_\_\_\_ with a small passage way that you go across the bridge boat to boat used to call a \_\_\_\_ bridge. But anyway that's the way we crossed we went across in a jeep you had to be awfully careful.

Caroline: Now wait a minute now you're talking about going across in

Lane: The Rhine River.

Caroline: In a boat

Lane: A pontoon

Caroline: A boat so what about the jeep?

Lane: We had it with us all the time.

Caroline: So the jeep went over the bridge, here you go daddy here's a little water.

Interviewer: Were you ever wounded?

Lane: Never wounded.

Interviewer: No

Caroline: But didn't weren't there explosions right in front of your jeep or right at your jeep with you and Colonel Fluke?

Lane: Oh yeah

Caroline: Tell us a little about that.

Lane: Well it's hard to say there were several times we'd be caught like that. In war years it became self-preservation. You followed orders but you had self-preservation for example. Sometimes a shell would come over you'd get to the point you could tell if it was coming over if it was short whether it was about to come in or if it was coming in. You could detect that yourself which way it was going to go.

Caroline: Remember that time you told me about being in that bombed out building and there was a lady.

Lane: Oh that was in Belgium.

Caroline: In Belgium okay.

Lane: Moving up to the Bulge the Battle of the Bulge. This lady the civilians were gone out of the building the old lady this very old lady was still there in this building we had taken the town village. And somehow the Germans kept watch on this old building and a shell came in hit just behind the building missed the building. I knew the third shot was going to come in this it's not in training but it's true. You know that third shot they had you bragging it in they called it but the third shot that's the first shot

rather missed the building went in behind. The next shot hit in front of the building which got one of our men. I told this old lady she couldn't understand me at all. I said the third shots coming in here I told her at the time I said we've got to do something here we are in this one room this old lady and myself. Anyway a shell came in I heard it coming a shell you knew it was coming in right away. Any way she couldn't understand me and I couldn't understand here at all so I just grabbed her and put her shoved her down under this table if it comes in this room we will have a little protection. Shovel here down under this table anyway a shell came in sure enough it came in not our room but the room next door in this old house. But went in the other room in the engineering department so the engineers caught it. And what they had loss I don't know but you can imagine what it would do to their equipment anyway I took care of that little old lady. And while we were up there in Holland right after that over there you'd be surprised at the canals the Holland people use for passageway up there. Unbelievable they are as wide as this street down here so two good size boats could pass each other I guess. But anyway we came up on one of these big canals and channels full of water what have you \_\_\_\_ it had been drained out of water on one end. Anyway

Caroline: Daddy you want a sip of water?

Lane: Yeah I'll take a little sip.

Caroline: Okay

Lane: Anyway we had our attack was supposed to be across this channel canal and so we had the engineer department come up. They measured carefully across this canal which I said was as wide as that street out there build a gutter. And then they came up and measured and they constructed enough equipment steel equipment that they laid across this real quick. Well they brought it up and that was fine we were all in the boat the men were all ready to charge across it was too short couldn't use it. All that time wasted the men are all ready to go so all we had to do was contact the engineer department to get a bulldozer from somewhere I don't know where it came from they brought this big bulldozer up and they started it up and they got it cranked they came together. I'd say started to push one side our side of the dirt completely filled up this canal at this place anyway they stayed there and filled it up. They got it filled up where our men could walk across it and stay there until our men could go across it. Filled up this canal with dirty water I mean mud anyway we got across that was good to complete our action.

Interviewer: Now as your unit actually moved into Germany now did the German resistance did they fight harder or did they start giving up?

Lane: No the way of the division actually there was minimal resistance to us because it was tough terrible. They were heartless with their cruelty. Anyway we done the very best we could there was kind of cushion between us and the very front there. There was a \_\_\_\_ kept moving out of sight there actually on the front line you saw very few civilians. It's like Ann being told by the boy who used to live over there in Belgium Brussels when they started heading towards across coming through Belgium. He and his family moved out in the country somewhere which was a good idea because if anything inside building they were torn down. Anyway that's some idea of what the civilians all over Europe there was a little bit of a cushion.

Caroline: So they would just get out of town go move to the countryside.

Lane: Uh huh they were just countryside. But

Interviewer: What do you remember about Germany about the country was it a pretty country?

Lane: Yes in fact in Germany to me I think the city especially because it was destroyed very nice country. The scenery was pretty the atmosphere was good except the actual civilians I'm not saying that about them I didn't see any civilians. The whole towns disappeared where they would go would be on back in back of the line somewhere I don't know where they'd go. I know cities below Germany you know that's a big city. I saw two people saw two people they were all by themselves. I thought about a village they were cities those cities the size of Clarksville pulverized.

Caroline: Pulverized?

Lane: Pulverized

Caroline: Uh huh

Lane: For some reason or artillery for some reason went on \_\_ it just pulverized the city.

Caroline: I was just gonna ask daddy what was it you remember Colonel Fluke became a general Colonel Fluke.

Lane: Yeah he moved up a major general.

Caroline: Major general and then after the war he sent you Christmas card every year he' always say what would he say?

Lane: Oh just a nice little note.

Caroline: But he'd always say I'll never forget or thank you. What was it daddy there was something.

Lane: Well it was our association together see I was with him all through the European War.

Caroline: Right

Lane: He and I and the driver.

Caroline: Major Fluke, you, and the driver were going everywhere.

Lane: I always joked about it but this colonel that we have up here Colonel Fluke he likes to be up front where the men are. Of course that means I was with him. But we got through somehow.

Interviewer: So when the war actually ended in Europe how long do you remember how long you were still stationed in Germany before you got to come home?

Lane: Well actually I was on one more month I'll tell you what when you were overseas at that time you had to have 65 points they called it points 65 points to be eligible to come home. Well my division came home a month earlier than I did my whole division. Well I was sent to antiaircraft department and I

didn't know anything about antiaircraft. I was sent anyway I had experiences there and eventually sent back to Paris as a battalion CO antiaircraft \_\_\_ the city of Paris. And this battalion had all these battalions I was sent back to the headquarters in Paris because who was in charge there was sent back to the United States. And I was transferred from the \_\_\_ battery to the regimental headquarters antiaircraft unit. And I stayed there I guess a month because at that time to transfer then we had quite a while then. Anyway we got ready at the end of that month ready to close out that unit well a funny thing. The very night before we were shipped out to \_\_\_ those jeeps for example we were responsible for every jeep that was assigned to them the trucks and everything else. So what happened the very night before someone stole one of our jeeps and I didn't know what in the world we were going to do they were a very expensive piece of machinery at that time even after the war. So we, excuse me just a minute I need to move my leg. Anyway we they were \_\_\_ I was about a month overseas finishing at the time with the engineers antiaircraft.

Caroline: Dad what did you do when they stole the jeep? Did you find the jeep?

Lane: Oh yeah what happened they stole this jeep and we were returning the next day. The first sergeant antiaircraft group said I think I know who has this jeep and we thought he was kidding. Somewhere this jeep was all destroyed but it looked pretty good just the shell of it everything was gone out of it you know they'd steel anything. So everything was stole out of this jeep the only thing left was shape of the jeep and the steering wheel.

Caroline: And the steering wheel.

Lane: This guy told me the sergeant if we take that jeep put it on the truck they'll never notice it. So we took this jeep cleaned it up put it on top of this truck you know setting down here looking up at the jeep on the truck that looks good. So we were going through there this guy was checking everything off so he checked us right on through checked us on. So we got away with that one.

Caroline: Well but they got their jeep back. They got their jeep it might not have been all in one part.

Lane: That's right they got it the order checked out we had x number of jeeps assigned to us. We checked out just right.

Caroline: Hey daddy when you went through that city I don't know excuse me just a minute.

Lane: Now what questions do you want to ask anything special?

Interviewer: Well when you actually arrived back into the United States after the war had things changed a lot here in American since you had been gone or?

Lane: Well yeah especially it was about a month after our division came back until we came back. Anyway I had to have 65 points so we came back the \_\_\_ came back because we had 65 points. And anyway he we came back the division came back but they were toilet papered and everything else you know all the windows and all the crowd everybody was so glad to see everybody coming back from overseas. Big crowds enormous noise.

Caroline: All the confetti and what do they call it tinker tape?

Interviewer: Tinker tape yeah.

Lane: Anyway we stayed out in the harbor overnight that night the next morning I thought boy we're going to go through all the tinker tape there is and all the people \_\_\_\_ and carrying on. Morning came we got back on the shore there wasn't a sole in sight. A little army bus waiting for us took us to the first army camp. Alright they were we were back they weren't doing it but we were back anyway. That's good the war was over.

Caroline: The people weren't you in France just before you came back to this country?

Lane: Yes

Caroline: How did the French people treat you?

Lane: Well they were so thrilled to be happy to be free.

Caroline: Right

Lane: Do as they wanted to be.

Caroline: Uh huh so what would did they do did they?

Lane: They didn't do anything special we were there as you know as people we were there. They were kind of used to us so we cleaned out France \_\_\_\_\_ and then we'd go through the Battle of the Bulge and all that kind of stuff through the years. And that was a year and half you might say.

Caroline: But did they ever say thank you?

Lane: No

Caroline: No they didn't say thank you.

Lane: They certainly should have.

Caroline: They didn't history is repeating itself.

Lane: Live and let live was the best they had.

Caroline: They still have that attitude then. Daddy what was the feel of I just remember you talking about when you would drive through the cities that had been completely bombed out. And you and Colonel Fluke would be you all would be going ahead of everybody right into the cities right? And the earliness of you all scouting things out or whatever in your jeep and not knowing who could be up in these buildings ready to shoot you.

Lane: Well I will say these cities were more smaller villages but Colonel Fluke had told members of our division as you go through a small town he said if you have sniper fire from any building tear it down. Don't try to go in there and try to get somebody out just as you go through those town if there is sniper fire from any building tear it down.

Caroline: Uh huh

Lane: And we went through the villages they were \_\_ anyway. But there was no end to it.

Caroline: But I just remember you talking about the eeriness of going through those bombed out towns.

Lane: I can't even explain it to you all of building to the chimney I don't mean part of it blown up I saw some like in \_\_ France \_\_\_\_\_. The Germans had taken everything the whole cities there was ashes just gutted.

Caroline: Gutted uh huh

Lane: It was a shame people don't realize the damage that was done at that time. I know I didn't before we got there even in our sector I heard that before we got into the Germans one down they had \_\_\_ up there the city decided to eliminate the problems. But our colonel a little higher he said cover it up so the bulldozers covered up it was some kind of vegetation where a small town was before and completely covered it up with bulldozers or what have you. And smoothed it over and they planted corn or something over it \_\_\_\_\_. But France does need corn they don't believe in that. We were overseas picking up food we were not permitted to eat anything that was over there overseas food we were not permitted. The army took care of us but I saw nice little restaurants I say nice but they were the type they were small but they had something. But we weren't supposed to eat anything that they had we couldn't eat at any of the restaurant which we didn't we did a pretty good job of that.

Interviewer: Were you glad once the war ended were you glad to get out of the army?

Lane: Yes we had become such a fighting unit all of us become such a way of life in a since we became a fighting unit. And it kind of just evolved we all worked together so well and we lost an awful lot of men. And I was so proud the war ended because we could all go home our division as a division which is great. But food wise

Interviewer: So almost 60 years later how do you think World War II affected you in the long run? Does it affect the way you think about things?

Lane: Yeah the big thing all of us when we came back if you've got a job right after the war you better hang on to it because you do get old I've proven that.

Caroline: But what did the war do to you I mean how did it affect the way you thought.

Lane: To be proud to come back and feel safe walking down the street the business down here are still our business I mean it was just like you wake up from a bad dream peaceful and quiet here.

Caroline: Free you were free to do what you wanted.

Lane: Free of course it also you relinquish an awful lot of power that you once had being an officer. I was talking about how the army hangs on to you. I didn't get my discharge until I got back to Bowling Green back a short time. But great news we were out of the army. The army stopped but we came all the troops that were in the south training soldiers' different homes different places what not. I was in Bowling Green Kentucky and there were other officer's homes little further south. And we had to assure

the ones up there in \_\_\_\_ that we would take care of the trainload of troops on their way down. Said you've still got a little bit of time in the army so we want you to take care of the troops all the way down. Well all the way down to Bowling Green they didn't give one bit of trouble what so ever. They were so glad to be back home but anyway they asked us if you have any trouble you're responsible. They still had us in the army at that time we were so used to discipline that we certainly had to take care of them which we did. But they were so glad to be home and just as quiet as a mouse everybody glad to be home.

Lane: Go ahead

Interviewer: I was just going to say is there anything else you'd like to add or clarify or maybe anything I forgot to ask that you thought was important?

Lane: Well those are the little highlights the important years. The \_\_\_\_ year go to school and I can't remember for like through experience at my age you've got to keep a little money if you make a little money keep a little on the side so day you might need it. Of course I'm beginning to \_\_\_\_ it.

Caroline: Now daddy how was your salary handled while you were fighting the war? Was it just put into your bank account then automatically? You never had any you never used any of your salary I guess during the war.

Lane: No I don't know what happened to it. I might have used part of it to the salaries each one of us when we came out it was \_\_\_\_ anyway. What little I had I hanged on to it saved which surely was an asset to me because Ruth and I were married right after the war and I had a little savings saved up I had money that I could get the essentials. So we had \_\_\_\_ and so that was a great thing right there. And I think when you come out of the army you are an individual do what you want to do you go on and do it.

Caroline: But daddy most of the time you were in the jeep right with colonel or General Fluke?

Lane: Yeah

Caroline: So you all were scouting you all were.

Lane: One thing at the beginning we were not scouts \_\_\_\_\_.

Caroline: Okay

Lane: If we were going to check an area one of the companies would send a unit as a \_\_\_\_ the group area. But as far as the colonel and I we stayed up front we didn't stay so far in the front all the time if anybody wanted to shoot him.

Caroline: So what were you all doing all the time?

Lane: Well he was going over the records always going over the records what was going on at that particular time where we were having trouble you know. He would stay busy all the time.

Caroline: And what were you doing with him?

Lane: I was we were moving up to where we were at the time whatever was going on what I said was going on we were all the time my job was to know where we were all the time what was going on and which I was lucky enough to do. I had pinpointed any time when and where we were why why we were there. Who was behind us who was in front of us a whole bunch of stuff.

Caroline: So you and colonel or General Fluke were working the strategy all the time for the troops.

Lane: Right

Caroline: So you could make decisions as to where to go next. So that was basically your what you did.

Lane: Well the big picture came from division headquarters which you know was bigger and bigger. The core was army the different division commanders would tell us possibly what area we were going in and bring it on down through the division the core. And they would bring it down into smaller area sections the battalion would go into. And that would be our area and they would bring it on down into regimental size to the battalion size. So we were \_\_ different times. Slightly variations so we were all the way down the line to divisions down to army and then right on down to the core regimental then the core. So we were actually broken down from the division.

Caroline: How many people would be in a division do you remember?

Lane: A division well see you had nearly 20 something thousand in a division.

Caroline: Okay

Lane: Being broken down.

Caroline: And then how many people would be in a regiment?

Lane: A regiment I don't know that was before you got in these different units and you had to stay you had to stay to do what. I mean you do what they tell you to do.

Caroline: So General Fluke was in charge of was it a regiment or?

Lane: General Fluke he was a lieutenant colonel in charge of the battalion.

Caroline: Okay and how many people are in a battalion?

Lane: Oh roughly now at the beginning sorry to say this but we had a company is supposed to have 200 men. But at the end when we were gathering up our men at the end of the war it was sad very few trucks very few men left. We replaced a lot of time too.

Caroline: So you were in a company or before he was I'm sorry I don't know the difference between a company and a battalion do you?

Interviewer: Uh huh

Caroline: Oh okay



Lane: You break it down go on down it's hard to remember but when they got when it comes down order to me. General Fluke would say when it got down to the company he's would decide what company he wanted to put where in back and so forth and \_\_\_\_ formed the division. Then

Caroline: So are companies under battalions then?

Lane: Yeah

Caroline: You've got like a battalion how many people are in a battalion?

Lane: Well you have I'd say close to 1,000.

Caroline: So division is 20,000 then a battalion would be maybe 1,000 and then maybe you have 10 companies under that with 100 people in each company.

Lane: You see you break it down there's a lot more to it you have so many tank battalions antiaircraft I mean you get away from the actual fighting men because you start taking other units if they were there. If we needed some tanks we would call to get tanks to come help us out. All of us had backup units and you'd call them to get assistance just like any company. You take any company get to a company level all these companies I'm talking about they needed help more help there was always a company that belonged to them to their battalion they'd help out. And three companies were committed tow companies committed and one a pretty heavy load heavy artillery or something. So the company that we kept in reserve a third company would help that one company out that was having trouble.

Caroline: So Colonel Fluke he became the General he headed up a battalion and then there were certain number of companies under that and so you and he were figuring out where the different companies needed to be going and kind of the strategy is that what he was doing?

Lane: If you reached down to the battalion and say you came down the line in a battalion area because there were all these companies then the colonel can take on the battalion heading. Like moving different ones like if we needed help in the battery or the artillery he in turn could.

Caroline: Call it up.

Lane: He in turn could call for help.

Caroline: Okay

Lane: His job was more or less as a commander. My job was more or less to know where we are and give him details on a country side to have a map of that particular area we kind of \_\_\_\_ they would take a picture of that area and bring it out in co-ordinance on the map and mark the size per foot give us an opportunity to put men where they needed to be placed.

Caroline: So you and he would take that map and then.

Lane: Yeah that was my job where we were and what we were and approximately where the enemy was supposed to be. I could show him on the map where we were \_\_\_\_ which way was the best way to go that was his job to make the decision.

Caroline: Make the final decision. Didn't you draw some maps though?

Lane: Oh yeah

Caroline: So how did you so what did you take the maps that they sent to you and then you analyzed those maps and then made up a map with your plan or what?

Lane: What we did they were called overlays a lot of time a company commander would have a full-fledged map the co-ordinance you had to live with co-ordinance at that time which was right. In fact I can \_\_\_\_ the co-ordinance.

Caroline: You mean by co-ordinance you mean like a quarter of a mile?

Lane: No on the line it's a little square you've seen it on maps.

Caroline: Like each little square would represent a quarter mile or something.

Lane: You'd need one of those little squares and in an area you would bring it down almost to a fine point. The army the funniest thing about the army but it's the core you've got a map of some of yours they could almost tell you where you were at that time.

Caroline: So you would take the map explain how you did the maps again.

Lane: Well the map would come down as a whole from the division.

Caroline: You'd get one map from the division right?

Lane: Yeah

Caroline: Okay

Lane: But they in turn would send one map for the division one for each battalion a copy rather.

Caroline: They'd make a copy for each battalion okay.

Lane: Then reach one to me and then I'd \_\_\_\_ but we lived also with overlays. An overlay would be with a master copy what they wanted to do with our section the first battalion follow the second through there we'd follow that the army \_\_\_\_\_. But our first battalion knew they were coming down see well I'd make an overlay showing each company where his particular sector might be so I made an overlay of each where each sector would be. To whatever he needed that would be his sector C company or B company or whatever A company. That's it we worked with a pretty smooth operation for a while and \_\_\_\_ to go.

Interviewer: Well do you have any more questions you'd like to ask?

Lane: What questions do you have?

Interviewer: Well actually I'm pretty much finished with my questions.

Lane: You came in with a lot of questions all ready.

Interviewer: Oh well I pretty much asked them.

Tape ended