

Interviewer: Where are you from Me. McGlone and how old were you when you entered the military?

McGlone: I think about 30, 29 to 31 somewhere in there. I was on the first draft whatever it was.

Interviewer: You were on the first draft?

McGlone: Yeah but I didn't go because I was out of the country and missed it.

Interviewer: Uh huh

McGlone: But I went on the second one.

Interviewer: Okay where did you do your basic training?

McGlone: At Camp Roberts no no at Camp Forest Tennessee.

Interviewer: Yeah Camp Forest Tennessee and they you went to camp Roberts right? No you went to

McGlone: No I went to Fort Seal Oklahoma.

Interviewer: Oklahoma how long were you there.

McGlone: Oh about six months.

Interviewer: What were you doing in Oklahoma?

McGlone: I was at officer's candidate school I was learning to be an officer.

Interviewer: So you were there about six months?

McGlone: Yeah

Interviewer: And when you were through there what was your rank?

McGlone: Second Lieutenant everybody who graduates out of OCS graduates a Second Lieutenant or he doesn't graduate at all okay.

Interviewer: Now after Fort Seal where did you go?

McGlone: I got orders to go to Camp Roberts California.

Interviewer: What did you do while you were there?

McGlone: Well that's a long story. I was just a company officer I was in what they call a special training battery which I didn't know existed until that time. And they trained they trained troops who can't take basic training. They try to get them up to a point where they can train them. For one thing they couldn't speak they didn't have the language we had a whole lot of Mexicans, Cajuns from Louisiana who spoke only French and then we had about eight or ten native Indians who couldn't when you talked to them

you might as well have talked to the lamp post. You didn't know whether they heard you or not they just didn't react. So but I don't think they but they had one corporal that spoke English and he led them all over the place he took care of them. And the last I heard of them they were picked up to do the intelligence work.

Interviewer: So how long were you at Camp Roberts?

McGlone: About two or three months that's about all I can stand. Then I volunteered for the airborne.

Interviewer: You said you volunteered for the airborne?

McGlone: Yes ma'am.

Interviewer: Now once you volunteered for the airborne what happened next?

McGlone: Well then I got sent to Fort Bragg. I didn't know they had gliders and when my order come in it was for the 907th GLIFABM I knew what they FABM was it was field artillery battalion but I didn't know what GLI meant. And I couldn't find anybody who did know and the reason was it was so brand new that the word hadn't gotten around. But when I got to Fort Bragg I went to sign in at the post and I found out I was assigned to the 907th glider field artillery battalion and I went all through the war in that outfit.

Interviewer: Now you know that you were going to assigned to the glider battalion? Was that something that you wanted or did you just did you just want to be a regular paratrooper?

McGlone: No I wanted the paratroops.

Interviewer: So would have volunteered for the airborne if you had known.

McGlone: Well I thought that was the only airborne I knew of. I thought I was going into the airborne to the paratroopers. But I don't know after I looked at those gliders I never seen one before very few people had. I kind of wanted to find out how it operated. So and then by that time they wouldn't transfer me by the time I was familiar with the gliders they said you are gonna stay where you are.

Interviewer: What kind of training did you have with the gliders?

McGlone: What kind of training?

Interviewer: Yeah you know because the paratroopers had jump school.

McGlone: We didn't fly them we just used them for a taxi cab to get us from where we were to where we wanted to go. But we did have to do a lot of training and studying on lashing and loading they call it. Because not everything you put in there weights the same amount and there nor do all of the tie downs those are the things you tie the cargo on to. And they don't all carry the same weight so we had to figure all of that out so we'd have a balanced load when I got up in the air.

Interviewer: So from Fort Bragg did you go across seas?

McGlone: Did I go where?

Interviewer: From Fort Brag did you go to Europe?

McGlone: Yes well actually we went to oh Arbravani I guess a little town in Whale for a staging operation to get ready to go and from there we went into the beach at Normandy.

Interviewer: Oh so you were on the you were both in Europe and in Normandy?

McGlone: Pardon

Interviewer: So you were in Europe and then you were in the Pacific in Normandy?

McGlone: Oh come on the Pacific what's Normandy and the Pacific have in common?

Interviewer: I'm confused.

McGlone: Normandy is in France.

Interviewer: I'm confused I'm sorry I was thinking something else.

McGlone: Normandy is the coast of France. I went along there were a couple of other guys with me you know all up and down the coast of France.

Interviewer: Yeah

McGlone: Yeah alright we went in on Utah Beach alright now we are in France and we fought our way up a little ways but now we were airborne artillery. So when we have a mission it isn't to stood there forever it is to get a job done then when get it done we come back home. So we came back to England what's the name well I forget the name in England where we did so much training. Okay what else do you want to know.

Interviewer: Okay tell me a little bit about well you saw active combat then.

McGlone: Well I should hope so from Normandy now the next thing we invaded we dropped into Holland by glider. And the next thing we were at the defense of Bastogne which was over about to be overrun by the Germans.

Interviewer: Okay well let's start with Normandy.

McGlone: Alright let's start with Normandy.

Interviewer: Let's backtrack a little bit and let's talk about Normandy first.

McGlone: Yes

Interviewer: Tell me about it.

McGlone: Tell you about it?

Interviewer: Yeah what was your personal experience there?

McGlone: Well I never took my clothes off I never had a regular meal what do you want to know? I just kept we moved from one position to another it's a little job that I commanded a battery of six Howitzers.

Interviewer: What's Howitzer?

McGlone: Howitzer yeah.

Interviewer: What is that?

McGlone: That's a cannon.

Interviewer: Okay

McGlone: A Howitzer is a kind of cannon that sort of laves shells. I sat laves because they arch they don't go straight in like a riffle does. And we used mostly time detonating shells that means they burst at a certain time in flight. So they would burst over the enemy's head and not wait until they hit the ground. Every one of them were point detonating when they hit they ground they did detonate but ours were also set by time to go off just above the ground. I forget how much well enough to shower down and in fact a good many of the enemy that surrendered to our sector of the fighting came not from small arms from the infantry but from our shell burst artillery. And that was true wherever we went of course. Okay

Interviewer: So you went from Normandy to Holland you said?

McGlone: Yes ma'am

Interviewer: Okay

McGlone: And when we got through in Holland we had been there for oh I don't know I think I just read I don't know oh quite a few months.

Interviewer: In Holland?

McGlone: Yes

Interviewer: I believe it was just about two and a half months maybe.

McGlone: Could be

Interviewer: Two and a half.

McGlone: And we moved all along the H end of the corridor of course until we got up to almost to the bridge too far at geez I can't remember the name of it now. But anyhow and then we came home and this was almost Thanksgiving in fact I know we had Thanksgiving dinner in a camp in England. But we were supposed to get rested and Bastogne broke upon and we just jumped in trucks and took off for Bastogne. And we were there for how long I don't know.

Interviewer: Ya'll were there in December weren't you?

McGlone: Yes we were there for Christmas.

Interviewer: Now weren't you there for I guess for two or three weeks ya'll were with pretty low on supplies weren't you?

McGlone: We were what?

Interviewer: Low on supplies.

McGlone: Yeah we were I was down to one round of ammo in my battery. But I'll tell you a little story if you want to hear it about Bastogne.

Interviewer: Most definitely

McGlone: Remember it was cold

Interviewer: It was snowing.

McGlone: We were entirely surrounded

Interviewer: Yes

McGlone: We couldn't get any supplies but my battery had roast beef and champagne for Christmas dinner. How did they do it? Well we were preparing for a New Year's party back in Camp Mourmelon and I had a detail getting we were stationed near Reims in France which is champagne country. And there was no shortage of champagne surprisingly I thought there would be but there wasn't. But there was a shortage of containers or bottles for it. So you couldn't get a bottle of champagne unless you brought in an empty bottle. Well we had a detail running around collecting empty bottles and we put them in a big case that the Germans had left behind. And when it was time we went to Bastogne in such a hurry we just put the case of champagne in the truck which we had borrowed. We had to borrow the truck we didn't have any of our own because we are airborne we couldn't carry them. And what was going and the beef was from some cattle that were on a farm (the tape skipped) position. So I called my S4 Captain Platt told him to come down and get the cattle so he sent his assistant Mr. Chadwick he was a what do you call those guys they have a kind of commissioned rank but they are not commissioned. Mr. I forget and he brought the steers there were three of them little ones and (tape skipped again for about four minutes). And we got a resupply and we went on the initiative.

Interviewer: And then Patton came in a few days after Christmas didn't he?

McGlone: Well Patton came in but we were about ready to go by the time he came in because we got our resupplies we were preparing to attack. But I don't know how much was left now this I'm not sure of I don't know how much of the Germans was left to attack. Because they picked well I don't know if you want to hear this. I think they made a big tactical error in Bastogne the Germans did I'm glad they did but the way I thought and analyzed it and lately I've read that some of the others said they kept hitting us in one spot. Today here and so on if they had sent their all fours against us all at once I think they would have just slaughtered us but they didn't so we came out on top. And then what happened well

then soon I got released and sent home and I came on a ship. Going over we were on a ship they called the Straffnator and it took us longer to go across the ocean than it took Columbus because the ship became disabled. And when we started out from I think from I don't remember from New York I'm pretty sure yeah and there were vessels it was a big huge convoy. Vessels almost as far as you could see in every direction and planes overhead and we took off. And I don't know whether it was the next day or the day after but I got up and looked out and there wasn't a ship in sight they had forsaken us. And we were bobbing around like a cork out there because something I don't know what happened to the machinery to that vessel and it couldn't keep up. Well they weren't gonna stay back just for us but we did get into St. Johns Novi Scotia New Finland New Finland to have the ship repaired. And they repaired it we thought they thought but you see the channel the harbor there was like a soup bowl. There was only one little channel you could get into and in that channel there is only one little space big enough for ocean going vessels. So when we were coming out they scraped they didn't miss that clearing well enough so they scraped the side of the ship on the rocks there. So we went out and they had to turn around and come back in for repairs. This time they took us off of the ship and we sat there for oh I guess about a week and then we got a new one. Oh we got a beautiful ship this time and I'm gonna tell you what a little crony mess that first one was and what a beautiful new one was. But then we got to Liverpool and from there we went to our base in England. And what else do you want to know?

Interviewer: Let's back up to Normandy.

McGlone: Alright

Interviewer: Okay so you were part of the airborne coming into Normandy?

McGlone: No I came in over the water. I was airborne but there wasn't room for all of us to land there in Normandy.

Interviewer: Right right

McGlone: So some of us had to come now I had a battery and the battery went in in three different sections. Two airborne in two different ships and one of them dropped by parachute depending on what the assignments were. My forward observers I think they were all dropped in.

Interviewer: Now once you got there what was your specific job?

McGlone: To take Carentan okay.

Interviewer: Okay

McGlone: My job was to always support the infantry but the infantry I was supporting was supposed to take Carentan and they took it. It took a little doing but they got it. Well that was the beginning well this one little town there on there and of course all of the rest of the outfits were doing the same thing and gradually pushed the front on up.

Interviewer: Now what was combat like in Normandy?

McGlone: What was it like?

Interviewer: I just that really fascinates me to hear you talk about combat I mean what did you feel like what was it like seeing your friends

McGlone: Well it's just like you see in the movies you're doing your job and you don't pay any attention but you know you're liable to get smashed if you're whether you're looking or not that's the difference. They are shooting at you all of the time or I'll tell you about mine particularly.

Interviewer: Okay

McGlone: The vessel I went in on I think it was a liberty vessel but I'm not sure. But it's a it's not big as ocean going ships you know but it still is a very big ship. And we were supposed they had made no arrangement they had what I call a taxi to pick you up and take you on shore this thing couldn't go all the way up on the beach. So if we anchored in the harbor and we were supposed to get an LCI landing craft infantry to bring us in. Well there weren't any coming to me at all well they were hovering around I call them taxis. So I can't remember where I got that megaphone but I borrowed a megaphone and whenever I would see an empty one I would scream at him come get. And I sat there overnight and all that time they were shooting at us they didn't specifically pick ours out of the target because I know I know how they do that and they didn't do it. But I finally got a boat to come along one of the landing craft to come alongside of the ship and we went down over those rope ladders you've seen them you know what I mean?

Interviewer: I know what you're talking about.

McGlone: Alright and they had regular landing or unloading gear to put my howitzers and jeeps in the vessel. And then we started out for the shore the beach and we got a burst and artillery shell hit right pretty close in front of us and got our attention. But one then broke right behind us and I began to wonder and then one on the side of us I could tell there was some artillery forward observer was zeroing as a target. Finally and this is funny there is a bridge on the back of that thing and there were four individuals I don't know who they were well they were running the ship. They had on cloth caps of some kind on not emblems and I was on the bottom of the ship looking back at them. Well when that third or fourth round landed it almost hit the ship it went right beside it it shook us up quite a bit. And those four guys went down like that like punching Judy show and they came right back up just as fast and they all had helmets on. But instead of continuing on to shore because this guy had our reigns and I hate turning around and going back out to sea. And after a little while he turned around and came in and we came in unaffected. Now my howitzers were pulled by jeeps. And we had water proofed those jeep at Arbravani at Whales that I told you about before. We thought we had but they all took off and they were going one after another right to shore and they all quit right in the water. I there went my howitzers without the howitzers I've got nothing I can't contribute. But the core of engineers came along with winches and winched them all out we dried them and got into business. And I don't know how much circulation this thing might have somebody might answer this question. I have an idea that I fired the first artillery in Utah Beach now that's part of Normandy in the war. Other than a Navy fire of course they had been firing in there all the time but I mean the first ground artillery. Okay

Interviewer: Okay now we talked about we just got through talking about Normandy combat then you went to Holland you said.

McGlone: Yeah

Interviewer: Now was the combat similar or did it

McGlone: Well it's just the same after you get on the difference between combat and any other operation any work that you do is in combat somebody is shooting at you all the time. And you've got to try to operate without getting hit. Because if you get hit you are out of business.

Interviewer: Did you have a lot of heavy gear on?

McGlone: Oh yes indeed yeah.

Interviewer: Explain talk to me tell me a little about your gear that you had on.

McGlone: Well we were afraid of a chemical warfare. I don't know that we were afraid of what I mean the army in in general was prepared to defend itself against that. So we had in addition to our regular uniform that we wore we had impregnated geez I forget what you call those overalls that we had to wear that were impregnated with some kind of stuff against chemical warfare. So this was our uniform in addition to that we had a pistol belt that had, I'm not going to remember all I'm sure. An entrenching tool, a mess kit that is the whole mess gear, an a patch an a pouch, an ammunition pouch that was all on there. Now I was an officer I also had a 45 automatic hanging on there what else did I have quite a bit of stuff. Then of course we had the helmet you know what the helmet consisted of.

Interviewer: What

McGlone: Three part pieces you didn't know that? One was a stocking cap like with a little beak on it then there was a plastic cap that fits tightly over that and then the iron I call the helmet on top of that. So that's quite a bit in itself.

Interviewer: Yeah

McGlone: So we had all of that stuff hanging on us and besides that we had our packs which were supposed to have three days of rations supply. One of the soldiers' boxes of cigars or boxes of candy and other stuff and that didn't matter but we did have that on there too.

Interviewer: And then at Bastogne I want to talk about that again. You were talking it was cold and I know it was very cold weather wasn't it like three feet of snow when it was really snowing a lot?

McGlone: Oh yeah there was a lot of snow not three feet nothing like that.

Interviewer: What did you really do to keep warm because I know that you didn't really have a lot of supplies while you were there for a while? I mean did you dig your fox holes differently?

McGlone: Well I don't know what we did to keep warm and they make a lot of you know a lot of talk about that. But I really can't remember suffering from the cold.

Interviewer: Really

McGlone: Not in Bastogne I have suffered from the cold for example I remember one night we pulled into Ulm in Germany this is away from Bastogne. And I don't know we were going from someplace to

another and when I finally got out of that jeep I knew I was up and walking but I felt like I was still sitting down I was almost frozen it was so cold. But I don't remember it being that cold in well I had my trench coat I'm sure I know I did. Do you know what a trench coat is? It's like an overcoat it has a detachable lining and we had the lining in it so but it was cold there and I guess a lot of the guys suffered from it.

Interviewer: Now when were you say you went to Germany Ulm Germany is that what you said?

McGlone: Ulm

Interviewer: Ulm Germany when did you say you went there?

McGlone: I don't know what I was doing I know I was taking my battery from here to there and we went through Ulm that was all.

Interviewer: Okay

McGlone: And I can tell you something I noticed in Ulm. They told us how precise that they could they called it the Norton bomb Norton sight I guess they had them on airplanes. And they told us how precise they were we said oh this is some of the army propaganda. But in Ulm that whole town was practically leveled it was just a bog pile of rubble. Except the cathedral in the middle it looked like they just shaved off all around they didn't have that's just an observation. But I wasn't doing anything there except driving through.

Interviewer: Just passing through.

McGlone: But it was cold and snowy you looking for a clock?

Interviewer: Yeah I was just wondering how you were doing.

McGlone: Oh it a quarter till four I've got to

Interviewer: Well let me just ask you a couple more questions and we'll wrap this up.

McGlone: Alright

Interviewer: You say from Bastogne you came home from there? After there you went back to

McGlone: Well no more action because shortly after that the Germans surrendered. I'll tell you one day after that I was going again from here to there I forget just where it was early spring. The first real nice spring day and everything was great I was going down this highway with my battery behind me. And I knew there was a big cross over we were coming to and when we got there it was full of Germans gee hundreds of them maybe thousands. And but they didn't bother me so I figured and I guess what was happening they were surrendering in such large quantities that we couldn't handle them. They just said just keep moving they let the officers keep your side arms their own officers to take care of the prisoners. And just kept moving back and they had taken a break at this corner. Now I wound up personally in well our battalion did in Vanauken Hill Germany and I occupied a little resort hotel with my battery that had been untouched. The first thing we got into all during the war that hadn't been blasted at all everything worked two walk in kitchen. And I engaged a few young German gals to be the not the

KP oh they did do KP work but they were serving the lunch and I didn't tell anybody about this so when the GIs came in for lunch that day they saw all of those girls back there. Instead of all of the GIs that they usually see in there sloppy stocking caps boy you should have heard them you may have no you weren't alive but your folks maybe heard them all the way over here. But we stayed in that little place and from there I got orders and to go home and so before I got yeah before I got the orders I took a leave what they call a UK leave. And went to geez I took almost a month to take six days you got your leave of six days I think it was maybe seven plus whatever travel time it took. Because you couldn't buy any public transportation you had to get there on your own feet so to speak. So I went by jeep, plane, dog sled almost everything I finally got to England where you had to go to get this UK leave and into a certain place I forget now where that is. But anyhow the guy that was issuing them said where do you want to go? I told him I want to go to Ireland he says where do you want to go north or south? And I said I thought the north was off limits he said we just opened it up today or the south was off limits we just opened it up today. So I was I and another GI were the first two that got into Ireland the southern part now you don't understand I guess the northern six counties in Ireland never succeeded so to speak from Brittan they were all they were part of Brittan. The rest of them are Irish independent and they were oh I can see them I can't remember words they were anyhow they weren't in the conflict they were neutral. So you weren't allowed to go in there but as he said we just opened it yesterday because the war was over and he said so you can go in there. So we went in and I had a ball in Ireland and when I came back to my battery I had been transferred in the meantime to the 17th airborne. Who was stationed then in France in oh I forget the name of that town and I had to take command of a battery there too. But that didn't last too long before I was on a ship back to the states. When I got here I came into Boston took a train back to Fort Sheraton Illinois to be deactivated and then so home and to bed.

Interviewer: Okay I have a couple more questions for you.

McGlone: Alright

Interviewer: Okay the whole time you were in combat in Normandy and Holland and all did you ever feel like you weren't going to make it home?

McGlone: Never gave it a thought.

Interviewer: Or you just did what you did and never think about it?

McGlone: I'll tell you I always have done sedentary work office work you know.

Interviewer: Yeah

McGlone: And I thought I would like to have a little more adventure I didn't know how I could do it but they drafted me and I said here I go. And that's the way I cut out of there the first assignment I had as an officer because I wasn't gonna get any action there. I wanted it so I got it well one day I was going from my battery position from one gun position to another sort of somewhere in there. And I started across this field and it opened up on me geez the skies were raining and I hit the dirt I'll tell you you can hear the gunner the German gunner pull the lanyard over there. Not when you can't hear him pull it but when he pulls it and the trigger you'd call it hits the shell in the cannon you can hear that there's a little explosion to blow it out you can hear that. But you can't hear the shell for quite some time afterwards so what happens when you'd hear that first sound you'd hit the ground see which way that shell was coming. If it's coming toward you it always sounds like it's coming right straight in your ear if it doesn't

do that you forget it so you pick yourself up and move until you hear some more. Well that's what I was doing I was going across this field that way and I got to thinking you know when I was sitting at a desk I was thinking I'd like to have some action and this is about as much action as you can get. And it isn't any different than the desk all I could think of is when are they going to quit because they can't shoot forever when are they going to quit so I can go about my business. That's how I was scared onetime when the Germans sent an airplane over to bomb us at night it was those air bombs are scary because they will knock out a building two blocks away you know. It's a I was a little scared that night and another night for no reason we had moved position and I was out in the middle of a great big plain. This was at Bastogne this was near a little neighboring town called Bizory Bizory I don't know how the French and Belgium's say it. And it wasn't so much scared as it just seemed eerie out there I felt lonesome on that white plain. But that's all other wise I think most fellows felt that way because if you get scared you'd probably go nuts. In fact I had a few of my men we had to evacuate because they were so scared. And one of them practically from our own rounds that were going over his head from some heavy artillery back there shooting over our heads. It scared him so that he just went berserk. They took him back and I don't know what they did to him they gave him back to me after they had him cured.

Interviewer: Okay and I've got another question for you. When you came home back to the United States did you stay in the military or did you just get discharged?

McGlone: No I joined the reserves though.

Interviewer: What kind of work did you do when you got out of the military?

McGlone: Oh I was in mortgages with the Federal Housing Administration. Not mortgages per say mortgage insurance. And then I got called back in for let's see I can't remember things anymore for Korea.

Interviewer: Yeah

McGlone: Well I did all of my shooting from a desk in Chicago by that time. So I didn't that didn't register too much.

Interviewer: Now you had wife didn't you?

McGlone: Oh yes a wonderful wife.

Interviewer: What did she do the whole time you were?

McGlone: Well I suppose she went around with the boys that have to go in the service I don't know.

Interviewer: But she was there waiting on you when you

McGlone: No she didn't I laid an egg just before I went overseas. In fact when I was overseas my first child Biff was born and my wife was kind of close to that operation I think. And so she spent the next two years while I was overseas taking care of Biff living with her folks.

Interviewer: So your little girl was two when you came home.

McGlone: Yes

Interviewer: And she had never seen you?

McGlone: She had never seen me and she could care less.

Interviewer: Well I know how two year olds are and some of them you know if they don't know you they're not going to look at you.

McGlone: No

Interviewer: But what was her reaction toward you your little girl?

McGlone: She just another stranger she didn't react at all really.

Interviewer: Yeah

McGlone: But then until see it was hard to get a place to live in those days. I finally bought an oh I guess you'd call it a bungalow a nice little house that we moved into and we took her with us. And pretty soon we were buddies after she knew me.

Interviewer: Uh huh

McGlone: And I had three other children two boys well a total of two boys and two girls. And one boy the older one was killed in Vietnam killed in action in Vietnam.

Interviewer: So looking back

McGlone: Yeah

Interviewer: On your whole WWII experience

McGlone: Yeah

Interviewer: Are you glad you were there?

McGlone: Yeah having come through it unscaved I'm glad. It was an experience that a lot people don't get to have. A lot of people don't want it and I probably wouldn't if except I was drafted. I did get wounded twice.

Interviewer: Oh really

McGlone: Oh well not once I got hit in the ear here I wouldn't have bothered with it was this ear I guess I don't know but I couldn't stop the bleeding and I knew there was a aid station nearby so I went in and I had them patch it. He put me in for but the other time was in Holland it was so black dark at night in this part of Holland or at this time I don't know which. You really literally couldn't see your hand in front of your face and I got hit in the eye I don't know by who or what. And I well I went to the medics and he patched it and he did something to it and I had to go back every, I don't know how often and have it

looked at. And he looked at it and patched it again and the last time I went back he took the patch off and he said alright and he was going to patch it again he said but if it hadn't reached the point it was now I was going to send you home because it wasn't going to get better. But it was on the mend so but see there I was running around with them shooting at me and I've got this great big patch on.

Interviewer: You've only got one eye looking at you.

McGlone: But it didn't hurt. Alright

Tape ended