

**Donald Buske
Veteran**

**Interviewed by
NY State Senator Patty Ritchie's Office**

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Oswego County Legislative Office Building**

DB: Well, I signed up myself basically. I was working at the time in Kingsford's Machine Shop as a machinist and they had me out on leave because we were doing some work for Fitzgibbons' for the tanks and they had me out on leave because of that.

Interviewer: Because of you enlisting?

DB: No. Because I was doing machine work for the tanks and they wanted to keep me on those parts so they had me out on, what are they called I don't remember.

Interviewer: Leave or...?

DB: Well it wasn't leave but I don't know what they hell they called it. I can't think of it. But anyway they had me out on that and I wasn't satisfied with that. So I called them up and asked them if I could enlist even though I was out on this leave or whatever and they told me absolutely so I went down and I enlisted.

Interviewer: And what year was this?

DB: That was in '43, March of '43

Interviewer: So what branch of the military did you end up serving in?

DB: I was in the army.

Interviewer: In the army, so where did you go for your basic training then?

DB: I went to Camp Edwards, Massachusetts in those days for my basics.

Interviewer: And what was protocol there? What were some of the things that you were taught?

DB: Well naturally, combat, without any question, infantry maneuvers, and basically it all had to do with combat which we did, naturally.

Interviewer: Any favorite memories from your time that you spent at basic training? Did you make any good friends?

DB: Made new friends of course and some of them are from Corning, New York awful nice guys and we got to be quite friendly of course and good friends and they were great, they were great.

Interviewer: Now how many weeks did you spend in Massachusetts for your training?

DB: I'm thinking it was 8 weeks

Interviewer: So a couple of months you spent there

DB: If I remember yeah

Interviewer: So once training got all wrapped up, did you get a chance to go see your family before you were stationed elsewhere?

DB: Yes, I did, I had a leave granted to me at that time, 30 days at home and then of course...

Interviewer: When you left home to go elsewhere did you get a little teary eyed? Family get a little bit nervous for you?

DB: Oh yes, absolutely, you betcha, certainly was and of course going overseas when I passed that Statue of Liberty, you couldn't believe the feeling that went over you.

Interviewer: What was the feeling?

DB: Just, well, just my god this is my country and I'm leaving it, you know? And the statue of Liberty was just beautiful as we went out in the water.

Interviewer: Did it fill you with a sense of pride?

DB: Oh you better believe it. You better believe it. All pride, yup and then I went over on the Queen Elizabeth so it was only three days, very short trip going over.

Interviewer: And where did you end up?

DB: Glasgow, Scotland. That's where we landed and then we went from there by train over to England and through the channel there between England and France and that was quite a different scene of course.

Interviewer: How so?

DB: Well, you saw guys that had been in combat and they just seemed to be a different breed which I guess they probably were really but we went right to Le Havre, France and right on up from there right on up into combat and I was with General Patton's Third Army

Interviewer: Oh wow. Did you ever get the chance to meet or talk to Patten

DB: Yup well I had a chance to see him a few times in combat and over combat and respected the man tremendously but I was only there my god I think was only like three or four days in combat when I got wounded.

Interviewer: So what sort of combat were you involved in?

DB: Well infantry, basic individual combat if you will. I ... been in the woods if you will overnight near Luxemburg and the next morning we came out of the woods and there was a field in front of us with a hedge row across a ways away from us and we started across the field and from that hedge row machine gun fire erupted on us and that's when I got hit. I got hit in the right arm and knocked my rifle out of my hand and I went down of course and as I tried to get my compress to stop the bleeding, every move I made, they'd open fire on me and I was down on the ground trying to get my compress out and I couldn't get it because every move I'd make he'd open fire and the bullets went through my backpack I heard them thud and hit and go right through the backpack.

Interviewer: Oh my gosh

DB: And I had my steel helmet on and I had my head down with the steel helmet (motions to indicate the helmet was pressed up against the ground) and at times when I moved he'd open fire and the bullets would hit the dirt right in front of me underneath my helmet and the mud would spurt right up and the bullets right underneath my helmet and I tell ya I never done so much praying in all of my life as I did at that particular time

Interviewer: How did you get out of that situation?

DB: Well we were attached to the fourth armored division and all of a sudden up came a tank and the tank pulled right up in front of me in the hedge row right where they were firing and a guy opened the hatch and boy I tell ya if I could have got him I would have kissed him right then and there but anyway he opened his hatch and he says the medics are coming right behind me, soldier you stay right where you're at and don't worry about a thing and then he closed the hatch and he swung to turn around and he literally blew that hedge row boy to pieces and then he opened the hatch and said you're all right you can move or do whatever you want to do the medics are right behind you they'll be here in a minute and he took off in the tank and sure enough the medics were there right after he said that and they cut my jacket off and everything and gave me morphine and took care of my wounds and got me back to the ambulance and then from the ambulance they took me to the army hospital in Gneiss France and that I spent about a month there after surgery and recuperating

Interviewer: So what happened after your surgery and your recuperating time? Did you have to go back home?

DB: No, what happened when that time came the hospital notified my command unit that I was rehabilitated and ready for service did they want me back. Well holy Christ they were down the next day and picked me up and right back up to the front I went.

Interviewer: Were you anxious to get back into action?

DB: Oh no I didn't want any part of it I'll tell you but you had to do what you had

to do, so back I went and I was there until the end of the war naturally.

Interviewer: And where were you exactly when you heard the news that the war had ended? Or what were you doing?

DB: Well, we were in Czechoslovakia at that point and pulling duty and we were pulling overnight duty so to speak because you had troops and everybody going all around and you didn't know who was who so we were more or less on patrol keeping things where they should be if you will and so we got the news that the war had ended and my god we just we had just taken a town and the town had a warehouse for cognac and we were there at that warehouse and it was loaded with cognac and of course the war ended and our guys were hilarious and I couldn't deny them, they right if you will to enjoy some of that cognac and boy they had a wonderful time and I was always proud of allowing them to do that. Course was against the orders but at that time you didn't think about the orders you wanted to enjoy the moment which we did and our people were hilarious which we all were that was a great feeling and from there on of course I went to Frankfurt and got ready to come back to the united states and the same feeling when I come back and saw that statue of liberty. Beautiful. But I'd do it again in a minute.