

**Edward Gove  
Veteran**

**Mike Russert  
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Interviewers**

**Interviewed on July 25, 2007, 5:30 pm  
Best Western Motel  
Plattsburgh, New York**

**MR:** Could you give me your full name, date of birth and place of birth please?

**EG:** Edward Gove, date of birth 16 November 1934, and I was born in Brandon, VT.

**MR:** What was your educational background prior to entering service?

**EG:** 8 years.

**MR:** Did you enlist or were you drafted?

**EG:** Enlisted.

**MR:** What branch of service did you enlist in?

**EG:** Army.

**MR:** Why did you enlist?

**EG:** Because I felt like it.

**MR:** Why did you pick the army?

**EG:** That was the first recruiter I ran into.

**MR:** When did you enlist?

**EG:** 1952

**MR:** Where did you go for basic training?

**EG:** Fort Campbell, Kentucky.

**MR:** How long was your basic?

**EG:** 16 weeks.

**MR:** And in retrospect, do you think it prepared you for combat?

**EG:** Yeah it did actually. Because back in those days you really learned something. I took basic [unclear] first airborne.

**WC:** Did you go to jump school afterwards?

**EG:** No... I lucked out.

**MR:** Now, where were you assigned after your basic training?

**EG:** I went to 32<sup>nd</sup> anti-aircraft brigade in upper [unclear].

**MR:** Alright, what kind of weapons were you assigned to... the old World War II...

**EG:** 40 millimeter anti-aircraft guns and quad 50's.

**WC:** And what was your specialty or job with them?

**EG:** [unclear] a loader I'm not sure...

**WC:** A loader?

**EG:** I was back on the private so it had to of been a loader.

[Phone rings]

**MR:** Alright, so you were in an anti-aircraft unit in England. Did you stay in a base or were you staying with the English population?

**EG:** No, we were on a base, [unclear] aircraft base. That's where the anti-aircraft batteries were, around the air base.

**MR:** Did you get to travel much around England while you were there?

**EG:** Oh yeah, pretty much. What we wanted to do. Went up on the Coast a lot for training.

**MR:** How long were you in England?

**EG:** 3 years.

**MR:** Now is that where you met your wife?

**EG:** Yes.

**MR:** How did you two meet?

**EG:** That was too long ago.

**MR:** Oh okay...Uh-Oh. (Laughter)

**EG WIFE:** I'm not butting in either.

**MR:** Now did you marry while you were in England?

**EG:** Yes.

**MR:** Did you have to go through any red tape to do that or...

**EG:** yes. We had to get permission from everybody, through chain of command and background checks and all kinds of stuff. Took about 3 months to get everything approved.

**MR:** OK. Alright, was your wife able to come right back with you when you were reassigned?

**EG:** Yes... She came.

**MR:** So after you left England, where were you assigned?

**EG:** I went to Ft. Knox, Kentucky.

[Tape Change]

**MR:** So when did you return to the States?

**EG:** 1952... December '52... Sorry about that. December '55. What am I talking about '52?

**MR:** Okay, what was your next assignment?

**EG:** We went to Ft. Knox, Kentucky from there I went back to Munich, Germany. I was assigned to heavy tank battalion.

**MR:** What was your unit... recall?

**EG:** 76<sup>th</sup> tank battalion... Heavy tank.

**MR:** Now what did the 76<sup>th</sup> tank battalion do? Just patrol the area?

**EG:** We were assigned to some of the border unit, we had troops patrolling the border up through North Munich and mostly we played aggressors for the infantry and stuff like that.

**MR:** So you did a lot of war gaming?

**EG:** War gaming but we were armed to the teeth, all of us armed because we had troops on the border all of the time.

**MR:** Now what was your particular job...

**EG:** At that time, I was in communications and I was a radio technician... radio repair. It was fun, I was into it by that time.

**MR:** Now were you with a tank unit where you were inside that tanks or were you in a command post where you just repaired the equipment or... something...

**EG:** We repaired the equipment but yes we had the tanks and the APC that I stayed with the tanks with at all times. Wherever they went, I went.

**MR:** Alright, would you have like a mobile repair unit that could move with them?

**EG:** Yeah, we carried stuff and it was the headquarters track that was the operations vehicle and it was also part of the communications network for the company that I was assigned to.

**MR:** How long were you in Germany?

**EG:** 5 years.

**MR:** Was your wife able to go there with you?

**EG:** Yes, after what? About 6 months I guess, she came over.

**MR:** Now how did you like Germany? Were you able to travel around much there?

**EG:** Yeah pretty much yeah. We went down to Bunches Garden a lot and the [unclear] when we weren't in the field. We spent 9 months out of the year out in the field somewhere doing something, wasn't home very much.

**MR:** Alright, when you returned again to the states, where were you assigned after that duty?

**EG:** Fort Hood, Texas. First airmen division.

**MR:** How long were you there?

**EG:** 10 months.

**WC:** What rank were you at that point?

**EG:** I had to of been an 85 I guess at that point. I would say, yeah, 85.

**WC:** Were you a specialist 5 or a buck sergeant?

**EG:** I was a sergeant; cause at that time I was still on communications at that time. I had to of been a sergeant. It was a long time ago... dates are... But yeah I was there 10 months maybe, 11 months at the most. Then I went back to Germany again with the 14<sup>th</sup> airmen cab.

**WC:** Were you doing basically the same type of work over there?

**EG:** Yeah, I was with A troop which was one of the units and I had the headquarters company operational vehicle. I was the operation sergeant for the unit for mostly 4 years, 5 years I was there. I was there for about 5 years that time.

**WC:** Okay, and after that 5-year period where did you go from there?

**EG:** Back to Fort Hood, Texas. Back to the first airmen division and from there I went to Vietnam. It was in between those two, it was 1962 when we were down there the first time when we had the Cuban Crisis. We spent a lot of time out in Florida playing games with them. We wanted to see if we were going to invade Cuba or not. I was with the first string that was supposed to go in. If I had gone that was gonna be what we were doing,

**WC:** Did you have any additional specialized training when you were down there? That or were you just ready to go?

**EG:** Just ready to go. We do our jobs. We were on a training exercise in the field down in Fort Hood, they closed the training cycle down and said "okay we're going to close it early. Go home and come back in about noon time." Just dumped our gear everybody

went home and around 6 o'clock that night we were no longer having fun. We were drawing ammunition and weapons and getting everything ready. At midnight that night we were on our way to Florida to board the LSD's.

**MR:** Did they have the LSD's there ready to go?

**EG:** They were all there ready to go.

**WC:** How long were you down there for?

**EG:** 3 months, at least 3 months. We got back in December, must've left whatever the month the Crisis was October I think... September?

**EG WIFE:** December. The baby was born while you were gone away.

**EG:** We were there for 3 months, we lived in the Gulf Stream Racetrack. That's where I lived, that's where my unit lived. Once they came back in off the water and we just sat there waiting to see what was going to happen and they sent us home.

**WC:** Now when were you sent to Vietnam?

**EG:** 1968, '78, 10 years, October, September, '68, August, ah, long time ago. Yeah, August '68 I guess.

**MR:** Did you go over with the whole unit?

**EG:** No, just individual replacement.

**MR:** Whereabouts did you land in Vietnam?

**EG:** At a city called An Khe, it was in the central highlands. I was assigned to the first and 50<sup>th</sup> infantry 173<sup>rd</sup> brigade. For the next year we trolled the highway and chased Charlie.

**MR:** How did you feel about Vietnam, the weather, how did you feel about the weather?

**EG:** It was pretty nice it got chilly at night sometime.

**MR:** You were in the central highlands so it was...

**EG:** It would get chilly up in the mountains at night but the weather basically was fine except during the rainy season then you could count on you set your watch by 3 o'clock every afternoon you would have a downpour. It was guaranteed every day. We would get ready for it and cover up everything and it would come down. That's when we'd be most alert, when it was raining, because that's when Charlie would come out to play with us.

**MR:** What kind of weapon did you carry?

**EG:** I was on an APC, armed personnel carrier. We had 3 and 60 machine guns, and 50 caliber machine gun and 79 grenade launchers, of course they're individual weapons.

**MR:** What did you carry individually...

**EG:** M16.

**MR:** Did you every have trouble with your M16?

**EG:** Nah, I never used it very much. Used the M60's a lot. If I used the M16 we were in trouble, something's wrong with the tracks. The trains had broken down or something and we were on the ground when we weren't supposed to be. We were recon unit again. We spent our time protecting bridges, patrolling highways and running sweeps through the woods every day for a year.

**MR:** When you made contact was it with the VC and MVA or...

**EG:** Well some VC but mostly it was MVA. Up in the highlands it was because they were coming down to [unclear] and Cambodia, into that area, it was mostly full core and hardcore MVA. There were some VC there obviously because there always was but most of the units we ran into were all hardcore MVA.

**MR:** Did you have very much contact with the Vietnamese people?

**EG:** Yeah, we had some with the mountain yards, a lot of contact with the mountain yards. We would go into their villages at night, you know sleep through their villages. A lot of times we were out at night and got caught in the dark and [unclear] in the villages. They were good people. They were dependable.

**MR:** Do you think the Vietnamese army was dependable? Did you have much contact with them?

**EG:** Yeah I had some contact with them. Let's say when they came on the bridges at night, they'd be out on a sweep or something and they'd come out on the bridges at night, we'd keep a [unclear] on them the whole time. We could never be sure that they weren't north Vietnamese soldiers dressed as a south Vietnamese soldier. We just didn't take any chances because they would turn on you in a minute. A lot of times it was because they were North Vietnamese dressed up in a south Vietnamese uniform. We had no way of knowing. Our [unclear] would be more apt to know and they were North Vietnamese that had been captured and turned to our side. We had two of them in my unit, my track carried one and one of the other tracks carried one. They would know, they would say "bad". When they said that we would just keep guns on them all night long. They so much as moved, probably would've shot them. They knew they had better not because they were being watched in most cases. It wasn't that bad. I mean, the tour was fine. We were in contact the whole time but, you know.

**MR:** Now you received a purple heart?

**EG:** I have.

**MR:** What happened, could you describe that for us?

**EG:** We got into an ambush and everybody in the unit was wounded one way or another from strap metal or something. We walked into a heavy weapons MVA battalion, I walked into them with 4 tracks and 28 men that day. It was a little rough before we got there but we managed to survive. Our medic that was on the track with us, we did a good job of getting all the stuff out of it that he could. Of course I was scheduled to go on R and R that day when we got hit. When I got to Hawaii Rose was picking scrap metal

outta me while we were there. She didn't appreciate that too much. "What's this?" "Oh just a piece of metal, nothing serious". And the first one I got hit in the arm, I wasn't in the country, I had just been there the first day. We were in orientation and [unclear] hit the compound that night. We got mortared, I had a piece of scrap metal from that. Messed my arm up for a week or ten days. Still messed up up a little bit, it hurts right now.

**MR:** What do you think about the medical care you received?

**EG:** In Vietnam?

**MR:** Yeah.

**EG:** It was as good as it could be, I mean we had a hospital in An Khe. I shipped some of my people back to that. We had a couple guys that really got hurt, had tracks blow up and one of them had his foot blown off. We shipped them back into there and they were taking care of them and they never backed out [unclear]. But no, medical was good as you could get it in that part of the world. You know, matter of fact the helicopters were great. Those guys, if you called for them and there was a way of sending a chopper down, they would do it regardless if they were under fire or what, they'd come in and get the wounded out. Even if it meant, a couple times they got shot down during the process, trying to get our people out.

**WC:** Now were you a platoon sergeant at that point?

**EG:** Yes, it was a year.

**MR:** When did you leave?

**EG:** When did I leave?

**MR:** Yes.

**EG:** 1968 oh, 1969. Came back and went to recruiting. Got fed up with raiding tanks and EPC's so I went into recruiting.

**WC:** Where were you stationed as a recruiter?

**EG:** Right here in Plattsburgh.

**MR:** How long were you a recruiter?

**EG:** 5 years.

**MR:** Now when you were in Vietnam were you aware of the anti-war movement?

**EG:** Um, yeah. I just didn't believe it.

**MR:** Did you have any problems when you returned?

**EG:** Nobody would give me a problem.

**MR:** Did you have any problems as a recruiter directly after the war?

**EG:** Only one. They had a protest down at the federal building. One day when we were there they weren't going to let us in there and they weren't going to do this and they

weren't going to do that. Marine core and us and [unclear] and the selective service. We said "get out of our way". They didn't want us so we went in [unclear]. At that point we started getting people coming in and they said this and that and we pulled them in and we enlisted four of the people in the army. They come in and they start their talking and [unclear] talking. It was touch and go there for a while, they were trying to keep us out of the building. We said "No. You're not keeping us from our jobs." So we just went in. Kind of fizzled down after a while when they saw that we weren't really going to pay much attention to them.

**MR:** You retired after you had this recruiting position?

**EG:** Yeah, after 22 years I had enough. I quit. Retired. I retired in '74. I put down a lot of time.

**MR:** Did you ever make use of the G.I. Bill at all?

**EG:** No, not really. I made use of a training program that the military allowed. But I didn't go to college under the G.I. bill or anything like that. I took 3 months or 4 months of training and TV repair underneath them. I got that and then I opened a business for myself and went to work [unclear] and in my mean time I worked on TV's anyway.

**MR:** Did you ever stay in contact with anyone that served with you?

**EG:** Yeah, I know quite a few of them. Got some guys right here in Plattsburgh that were around.

**MR:** Did you join any Veterans organizations?

**EG:** Only thing I belong to is the AMR, American Military Retires, that one I do belong to. I used to belong to the Legion but I don't know. It was up in west Plattsburgh and I kind of...

Wife: What about your Vietnam group?

**EG:** That's got nothing to do with the Veterans.

**MR:** How do you think your time in service had an effect on your life?

**EG:** I enjoyed my time in the service. I've never had anything this big in the military, I've enjoyed all that time. It was a good life. Didn't pay nothing, but it was a good life.

**MR:** Do you ever read anything about Vietnam or watch any of the movies?

**EG:** Nah, I don't any movies from Vietnam. I'll watch World War II movies and Korea movies. Anything they put out now or read books about stuff but I don't particularly care about watching Vietnam stuff. Mostly because it's kind of phony.

**MR:** Alright well thank you very much for the interview.

**EG:** Okay well glad to of helped.