

Rev. George E. Barney
Private US Army
Narrator

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Interviewers

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Q: Good morning, my name is Gary Ford I am a history teacher at Rome Free Academy, this is Friday July 26, 2002. I am going to be interviewing the Reverend George E. Barney who was a member of The Big Red One division that was involved in the D-Day invasion on June 6th 1944 and the campaigns on through France that followed. Thank you.

Good morning Reverend Barney. Thank you for agreeing to help us with our class project on these oral histories.

GB: It's a privilege to share what happened to me during World War Two.

Q: This is what our project is and we can't wait to hear your story.

GB: Thank you.

Q: A question that I like to ask all the World War Two veterans are their first memories of the war. Whether it was Pearl Harbor or whether it was before Pearl Harbor or the war in Europe or Asia. So what are your first memories of World War Two?

GB: Well at that time I was sixteen and in high school and I remember Pearl Harbor but not too much about it because I was kind of young. It wasn't too much of a memory. But, yes, later on I thought about it. Yes.

Q: Were you drafted or did you enlist in the army?

GB: I was drafted.

Q: What year was that, please?

GB: October 8th 1943

Q: Where did you go for basic training?

GB: I went to Spartanburg, South Carolina.

Q: What kind of training did they give you there?

GB: I was training in communications. Telephones, line poles, wires, that I imagine were supposed to have been damaged during the war. That's what I was in. I completed everything but Morse Code, I couldn't get a hold of that, so I didn't complete the course.

Q: Was that by your choice, that type of training, or the army say this is what we need and this is what you'll do?

GB: That's where they put me, [laughs] I had no choice. In the army you don't have much choice.

Q: Did you feel like the training, looking back, prepared you for what you were getting into.

GB: Oh yes. You know the thing is I enjoyed it. I was in the state guard for several months, nine months, before I was drafted. I went to camp drum with the Mohawk unit. I enjoyed that very much, the training and everything. I just enjoyed it. I enjoyed being in the service, except until I got wounded. Matter of fact I would have stayed in, I think, if I didn't get wounded. That's how much I enjoyed it.

Q: When were you shipped to Europe? You were sent to England I imagine?

GB: Yes. I was held back from my unit in Spartanburg because they overlooked me having prescription glasses for my gas mask, which thank God I never used. So I didn't go with my unit. I left later. I went home, and then was assigned to go to Boston, Massachusetts and from there I left I think it was May 8th to go to England. It took us about two weeks to get there. I was in a convoy, we were sinking U boats on the way. I arrived in England I think it was around the 15th of May.

Q: Do you happen to remember the name of your transport ship?

GB: No, I do not.

Q: How many men were on board?

GB: I don't know that either. There was probably thousands because it was a big ship shipping replacements. That's what it was, to go over there and replace all those other soldiers that were wounded.

Q: Now, I understand you were a member of The Big Red One.

GB: Yes I was.

Q: That's one of the most storied divisions in the army.

GB: Yes, yes it is. I didn't know that at the time, I found out later. The thing is when I got over there I didn't know who I was going to be assigned to because I didn't finish the communications [training] so I wound up as a rifleman in The Big Red One. And I spent my nineteenth birthday, which was May 30th, in the compound. They wouldn't let you out or go anywhere until it was time to be shipped out, which was June 5th or 6th. So I was just in there until it was time to invade.

Q: Now how much prior knowledge of the invasion did you actually have?

GB: None.

Q: So you just knew you were getting ready to-

GB: I didn't know where I was going, I just joined this division and I didn't know anything about the Red One until later. I was just there for a couple of weeks and all of a sudden I realized we were going to make an invasion in France, but I didn't know where until afterwards.

Q: Any lasting impressions of the camp in England, or of England itself?

GB: Not at that time, when you were confined to the compound for two weeks and couldn't go anywhere I didn't know much about England. I did later because when I got wounded the first time I went to England and I had a chance to look around a little bit. Then I went back to Germany the second time because I was wounded twice.

Q: Okay, June 5th 1944...

GB: Oh, yes. I was loading up on a big ship, I don't even know the name of that [ship]. I can remember going to the docks with the rest of them and getting on the ship and waiting for that day. The only thing I can remember before the invasion just climbing down these rope ladders on the side the ship to get in these U boats, or whatever those boats were called to take you to the shore-

Q: LCDs?

GB: Yes. That was a sad thing too that I can remember, reports I heard later. That the one that was driving these things were scared. They didn't get in close enough and they opened the doors and let them drown before they got into the beach. Thank God when they opened the door to let us out I went up to about here [indicates mid-chest] and at that time I was carrying the bazooka rounds, and you know they were this long [indicates about three plus feet] and there was four to a package, [laughs] and I carried them on the beach, and it was too much for me and I got rid of them. Because we were pinned down, we couldn't move, we couldn't go nowhere.

Q: What was the mood of the men on the boat as you were headed towards shore?

GB: Silence.

Q: It was six o'clock so you were first wave.

GB: Yes. It must have been one of the first waves, I thought it was later but I could have been one of the first waves because we got pinned down on the beach. And I don't remember any talk or anything, I think, as far as I know it was very silent.

Q: Did they give you any special instructions as to what to do when you get there.

GB: Not that I remember, [chuckles] just get on the beach as soon as you can. And there was no cover there was nothing to hide behind. There you were on the beach. I don't know, I can't remember exactly if it was a captain or a colonel, he said-we had been there quite a while and a lot of them were getting killed- he said are we going to stay here and die or are we going to go forward. And so we said lets go, so we went forward. In other words we made it, you know? Different beaches had different obstacles to go over, but we did conquer that area were we were.

Q: Now while you were pinned down there on the beach what was going through your mind?

GB: [laughs] Well, now I can't remember what was going through my mind, what was in my mind at that time. But I know when he said to go forward, and when started advancing forward, and we'd hit the ground and get up and hit the ground and get up. And one time I remember that the bullets were so close it shot a hole through my canteen, so I mean that was pretty close. And also being a greenhorn I tried to help those who were wounded and the ones were in charge, the sergeant or whoever it was, would yell to leave them alone, there will be someone else to take care of them. So I learned that experience, that if anyone gets wounded someone else will take care of them.

So we went on forward into France. There was no fox holes in France, you know, it was all hedge roads. You had trees on each side and a little gully. And there was your foxhole. This was July 28th, I mean we were in these hedge rows and the German tanks were out there and they were shooting at us. One of their bombs landed in our trench and wounded seven of us. I was the least wounded, there were five others that said they could walk back. So they walked

back to the closest they could get to the medics- to the hospital. They said they would send somebody, because there was one young man who got wounded in the leg real bad, and he started bleeding. And he said to me 'can you help me' and I said 'yes' so I put him on my back and I carried him, because I was only wounded on my left hand, nothing serious. I carried him back and about halfway there I met the medics with stretchers and they took him and they said 'how about you?' and I said 'it's just some shrapnel in my left I'll make it'. And they said 'you came this far come the rest of the way'. And it's a good thing I did or I'd have lost my arm because the shrapnel was rusted. I was the last one to get waited on because there were so many, I don't know how many hundreds others there was, to be taken care of wounded worse than I was. So when they finally got to me my whole arm ached. And they said it was a good thing I came because if I had waited, who knew how much longer, who knows how much longer, I probably would have lost my arm. So I helped somebody else and I got to save my arm.

Q: Do you feel the treatment that they gave the wounded men was well done.

GB: As far as I know it was the best they could do, yes. They took care of the worst wounded first, and then they got down to the ones that were slightly wounded like me. They took care of us. As a matter of fact they shipped me back to England, which I didn't expect because I wasn't that bad. But they shipped me back to England and I was there for a little while, and when I was ready they shipped me back to my unit, but they were in Germany by that time.

Q: Two questions to kind of go over the ground you just traveled. Do you remember the first time you actually saw the enemy?

GB: Oh, boy. I could say on the beach they had these big concrete pillars and there were these soldiers in there with machine guns and you could see their helmets up there and that was the closest I got to see them at that time. I did later on, I'm sorry, later on we were advancing on to this village and I wound up with a bazooka [laughs], instead of carrying the ammunition, I wound up with the bazooka. And I saw a German in the window, in the second story window and I fired and I hit him. That's about as close as I got in France.

Q: Second-

GB: -We almost, let me say this. It was on July 28th when I got wounded, it was my brother's birthday. While we were advancing our captain got killed and so they put a lieutenant in charge which was a greenhorn and he advanced so much forward that we were surrounded by the Germans. So the sergeant or master sergeant or whoever was in charge then said 'I'm sorry but we're getting out of here because we're going to get captured' so he took over the command and we backed out of there. Which just a few seconds more he said we would have been captured. I remember that very clearly. And we got back to where we were supposed to be and then we advanced forward, and then I got wounded.

Q: Did the lieutenant reprimand the sergeant?

GB: No, no, he was a greenhorn willing to obey. Because this sergeant [had been] in Africa he had been around for quite a while. He just took over, I don't remember the lieutenant saying anything. He was just so glad I guess to let someone who knew what they were doing take over. Which I'm glad he did because we all would have been captured.

Q: From what I've read moving through France through those hedgerows in Normandy was about as tough and vicious going as the American army had ever gotten into.

GB: Yeah, yeah because they couldn't get in a trench and get really protection. Because you

were in the open, those trees are not going to stop shells; they aren't going to stop bullets. So really it wasn't too good.

See I went from Normandy to Le Harve [France]. And we got almost there and then I got wounded and the rest of them after they got so far turned around and started going to Germany. Like I said, I was wounded on the 28th of July so I was shipped to England and then came back and when I got back my company was already in Germany. They had passed the Siegfried Line, all those concrete pillars. When I returned to my outfit I saw those because they were just on the other side of that line [his company].

Q: Technical question, were you pleased with your equipment. You mentioned the bazooka. I know early in the war they sometimes had a problem making them fire. Worked well when you used it?

GB: Well, I only used it that one time. When I joined my outfit I was only assistant squad leader because the others had all been wounded or killed and there was only one left and that was the sergeant in charge. He and I were in Normandy and he was the only one left and when I got back he made me buck sergeant, or assistant, which I never got, they put it for it but I never got it.

So, I had a machine gun, the kind that you carry in your hand. [mimics holding gun with both hands] I didn't like it, it was too heavy. I gave it to somebody else. It was not for me.

Q: Was that the Thompson?

GB: Yeah, I got a regular rifle. I said 'that was enough for me'.

Q: Was that rifle the Garand?

GB: The M1.

Q: Did you have a man with the BAR?

GB: Yes that's what I meant, that was the one I had. It was too heavy for me. So I gave that to this one crazy guy, I forget his name now. He took that thing, [laughs] he took that thing and he went out alone with it and killed some Germans and captured some and brought them back. I remember that very clearly, he was crazy. But I didn't want anything to do with the BAR. I was happy with the rifle. It was a BAR that just wasn't for me.

Q: What happened to the crazy guy?

GB: As far as I know he was still living when I got buried alive in Germany. He was still going.

Q: I wanted to talk about that next, if you're ready, about being wounded. In this case once and then again. Tell us about that please.

GB: [emotional pause] I joined my outfit, exactly I don't know where. But they were advancing forward and they were going to be on top of a mountain for an observation for artillery. We were all, our company at least, were stuck up on this mountain. Before then I remember when we were advancing and we had advanced one time at night, so the Germans wouldn't know where we were or what we were doing. Instead of walking in the snow we walked in the riverbed. *In the winter time*. Now I don't know how many hours we walked and walked and we finally got to the Hurtgen Forest the Black Forest. It's so black you can't see daylight except on the sides, you know. On the outsides. You couldn't dig a hole because it was frozen. So we laid there and it was very sad because the next morning- it was only by the grace of God I guess that I didn't freeze to death- but many froze to death. And a lot of them, which I

saw later when I went back to England the second time for the nervous problem I had. I saw some of these men that were with me with their feet cut off because they had frozen. And really touched me, that hurt me, because why not me? Why weren't mine frozen and cut off. Well I knew later why, because God had a calling on my life, but I didn't know that back then. So then we advanced out of the woods and we got up on top of this mountain. I don't know why but it seemed like the ground was different because it wasn't in the woods we could dig a hole. We were there quite a while. First time was a single hole that we started digging, then I had a replacement I was in charge of. He had just came. Now listen, things were so bad toward the end of the war, they were calling people from [inaudible, possibly indicating low offending inmates? Different occupation?], the replacement I had didn't have a trigger finger. That's how bad it was towards the end to find replacements. So he was with me and I was taking charge of him because I knew what to do. So I said 'dig your hole' and he started digging, and I dug mine over here [indicates to the right]. It was raining, so naturally the trench started getting some water. I heard these bombs coming, shells, and I said 'hit it'. And he said 'I'm not going to hit that with water in there'. Well I did, I hit it, I knew better than that. And after it was all over and I got up [shakes head] he didn't make it. He stood up and he got it right through the head. And I felt bad about that and I lost my mind. I lost control. I was going around crazy because I blamed myself and the sergeant and slapped me in my face and it brought me out of it. And I carried on from there.

They said from now on everyone from now on will have a double foxhole, and why I do not know to this day, double foxhole and you better cover it up. I really don't know how we covered it up, but we covered up every foxhole. Because they were shelling us, it was for protection. I don't know how many days we were out there but I heard a noise one night, because we were in our holes at night time, you don't get out of your holes at night. I heard a noise and I asked 'who's there' or 'halt' or whatever it was. Nobody answered. At the area where I heard the noise I just kind fired my rifle, just kind of like this [indicates short sweep]. The next morning we got up and the area where we thought I heard the voice there was some blood. So I had hit somebody and I'm pretty sure it was a German setting up a machine gun to wipe us out. All the evidence that was there was the blood.

So anyway, one night we were in our foxhole, another young man that was with me, a replacement. The shells were so bad a bomb landed directly in our hole. It was a big bomb, they said from one of the railroad guns. And it completely buried us. Well, it was time to move out the next day so they said they went by my hole three times and the third time they went by they heard a groan. I didn't know that because I was unconscious. When the sergeant, the one I told you about that I was with at Normandy, when he said he saw I was buried he said he blew his stack because I was the only one from back then, you see. He went crazy and [inaudible]. So anyway they heard the groan and dug us out and I was unconscious and the man in the hole with me died. Was killed. I didn't know why then either, but now I know why. I was in a hospital for at least three weeks in, well, I think it was France. Paris France, for three weeks. I couldn't talk, couldn't walk. Couldn't do hardly anything, couldn't eat or go to the bathroom. I was just useless for about three weeks, I was unconscious for three days. And for three weeks I was useless I couldn't do anything.

So they sent me to another hospital, another hospital and another hospital. I thought that having this nervous condition that they would ship you back home. Well they didn't, and I was very disappointed. Instead of shipping me back home, cause they shipped me to England, I was there, they shipped me back to Holland, to Antwerp, for army occupation. They were still dropping buzz bombs on Antwerp and I was on guard duty and I froze. At night time, it was at night time. And I froze. I was there all night long in that position, I couldn't move. So they finally came to replace me and put me on different duties. Finally they put me in a hospital

and took care of me and finally shipped me back to England. Then finally I got home. I thought I was going to be sent right home, but I didn't. I wound up with this railroad company, can you imagine, here me with a bad back. That's another thing that happened to me, When I got buried alive not only did I have problems with my nerves, with a nervous condition, but also I had trouble with my back. Sacroiliac back, which I still do. I still have troubles with my back. So I thought they would send me back to the states, but they didn't. When I did get back I was in long island at the hospital there. And from there I got medically discharged [from the army].

Q: Do you remember the date?

GB: That I was discharged? Well let's go back to when I was wounded. I believe it was November 17th 1944. And then when I got discharged I think it was November 18th 1945. So I was about two years and two months in the service...

Q: Well, Sir, you have definitely seen more than your share of World War Two.

GB: Yes. [Laughs]

Q: That Hurtgen [Black] Forest was a slaughterhouse that in some ways got overlooked because it lead into the Battle of the Bulge. Which kind of stole the attention-

GB: I missed that. You see that was in December and I was wounded in November, so I missed the Battle of the Bulge. At least I wasn't in the Battle of the Bulge. I was in England with the nervous condition, which I had for seventeen years.

After I got discharged they finally decided that I was alright to be discharged and they said, [emotional pause, chuckle] Excuse me. They told me, you need to go back home where there's love and they can take care of you and recuperate. I just smiled, I said well, [chuckles] I wouldn't receive that in my house because my father was an alcoholic and there was no love there.

Anyway, I had many spells of nervous conditions that I wanted to get rid of them. So I wanted to kill myself. I almost killed my dad one time in the bathroom, but my two brothers and mother grabbed me, because I had one of those nervous attacks. There was no control. I was going to doctors and taking pills. And so finally I was in a construction business with my dad building house but they had a recessions in 1940-something. [inaudible]... they laid off thousands of people and we had two houses we built and we couldn't sell them and I was shook up by that and I thought I was going to lose everything, my house and everything. So I had a nervous breakdown. Instead of going to a hospital they sent me to a doctor in Little Falls which was a psychiatrist. I was going to him for at least a year. It started off every week and then every month. I was going him for quite a while with pills, I was getting better- yeah. But the pills, I was getting better with the pills. But with the pills [scoffs] with the pills they lift you up and calm you down [shakes head], but it was a battle. It's not good.

So, from there if you want me to continue the change of my life after that.

Q: Before we go there. A couple things. You mentioned the sergeant that you were so close with.

GB: Al, yes, I knew Al Lowenthal. He was a Jewish boy, he and I were so close because, hey, if you start out in the war in with a guy in Normandy and wind up with him in Germany... You see when I came back as a replacement we greeted each other were glad to see each other. That's when the master sergeant or whoever put me as assistant squad leader to him and because of that we were so close. So when this happened to me [being wounded], why...

Well, hey, let me say something. This is a miracle. When they sent him back to England and he recuperated and then they sent me back to England and we were in this kind of a replacement- where they ship you to this place and then they ship you back or send you home, they send people different places.

Q: What did they call them? Repo Depots or something like that?

GB: Yes, thank you, yes. I'm there, and I'm walking down this great big, great big wide... it wasn't a street... Just a big wide area. I'm walking down there for I don't know what reason or where I was going and all of a sudden I look up and I see the sergeant. And when he saw me we got so close and he just ran and grabbed me and he was so happy. And at that time as far as I know he had recuperated from his shock or injury and it was just a miracle that I saw him at that time. And I never saw him again.

Q: At least you saw him then.

GB: Yeah, isn't that something?

Q: Where there any other men like the sergeant that left a very strong impression? Other people you served with?

GB: The only time, like I say, was when I was in the hospital. And I had a nervous breakdown in Antwerp I was in a hospital there and there was a young man there. I don't know why he was there. His name was Rick Mason. He took care of me, because I had headaches so bad I put my fist through a wall. I guess they call them migraines now. He just kind of took me over and helped, I couldn't talk I was stuttering. Couldn't write. I don't know that I ate very much. But when I got this concussion which happened to me when I was buried alive I lost a lot of weight. I was 175 when I was in the service I went down to 157. SO I was didn't have much weight on me, and he helped me in any way he could to continue in the hospital.

Q: Physically and mentally...

GB: Yes, he was a very good friend of mine. He really helped me so I appreciate him very much.

Q: Would you say that the officers that were in charge, whether it was the lieutenant and captain in your own unit... were you part of Patton's third army or Bradley?

GB: No it Bradley's, the first division it was Bradley's. Well, I thought it was quite an honor later on, when I found out about The Red One, the first division that I would be part of it. Because they were famous in World War One and also they were in Africa and they were in Italy and they were in all these different countries fighting and to be part of that I thought was quite a privilege.

Q: Do you remember V-E day or V-J day? I know you were recovering at that time.

GB: You mean, May?

Q: One was in May and one was in September.

GB: Yeah, where was I? May 7th when the war was ended in Germany, was that in forty-five?

Q: Yes.

GB: Where was I then? I must have still been in the service, I didn't get out until November.

Q: Would you have been in Long Island then? Were you still there?

GB: Yes, I probably was there because I went from England to Long Island to the hospital there to get treatment and that's probably where I was. I don't remember it now, [chuckles] I was getting treatment, you know, for a nervous condition I wasn't myself. I was on pills. Doped up. So I don't remember too much about that the war was over in Germany. But, Japan, yes I was out of the service, I think, I don't know where I was but I don't have too much recollection about it.

Q: Before we started taping we mentioned also the medals you received, I know you got purple hearts citations...

GB: Yes and good conduct and I don't know how many, a couple others, and like I say I don't have my discharge with me so I can't remember all the different citations and medals I think there were three or four different citations. You get a little pin [indicates left shirt breast] that's blue and they put stars on it for each battle you're in. I think there were four on mine. Other ones I can't remember right now.

Q: Well certainly Normandy and the Hurtgen forest those ought to be big medals for those. As you look back on your experience in the war itself anything that was most interesting or most unusual or inspiring?

GB: Inspiring... [chuckles]

Q: Or unusual or interesting, anything.

GB: I don't know. I think I was still in France, I wasn't Christian at that time. And I can remember quoting Psalms Twenty-three: 'Although I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I shall fear no evil...' And I didn't know what I was repeating because I didn't know the bible. But I did remember saying that. And I guess God had his hand upon me because there were so many different times I could have been killed, but I came through it all. Trying to think of some other times or circumstance and conditions I went through... [pause, quietly] Thank you, Jesus. Hallelujah. [pause] I can't think of anything right now.

Q: It's okay! It's okay if you can't. As you look back at the meaning of all this. Any lasting statements that you'd like to offer, any perspective that you've like to give?

GB: Well, just let me say this. I was very young man, I was nineteen years old. And when I made the invasion of Normandy at Omaha Beach with the first division, I was scared to death. It was an experience I'll never forget. As far as I'm concerned, to express it I guess I'd have to say it was worse than hell itself. It was terrible. When you hear different ones screaming because of being wounded or people getting killed on each side of you, it's an experience you never forget. I have always wanted to go back to Normandy but I never had the opportunity or the money. To go back, they have these celebrations ever year. But I want to say that one time our pastor went to Russia and then on the way back he went through France. I don't know why he got in the area where I was but he went back to Normandy [emotional pause, breath] he picked up some stones for me. Pebbles. And brought them back to me. [laughs emotionally]. So that's the closest I ever got to going back to Normandy. I made a train ride twice, I was in Spain ministering, and I made a train ride twice going through France but I never got to stop to go to the area where I was.

Q: From what I've seen, not only of our veterans but of the French have done an excellent job of commemorating and sanctifying that beach and the areas around it.

GB: Yes, probably someday I would like to see it. But, who knows. If I ever get the opportunity.

Q: I've made that same promise to myself. It's one of those places-

GB: Well the army is finally making a memorial in Washington D.C. for World War Two veterans, or all the European veterans. They've been waiting for years and years and years to do it.

Q: They also have one in Bedford Virginia specifically for D-Day.

GB: Really? Well then, I got to pray about going there one day because I do have friends in Virginia. And maybe I'll get to go there I've heard of that one, matter of fact, I saw pictures of it in the paper with the statues and things. Quite an experience.

Q: In your life since World War Two, what would you like to tell us about that?

GB: Well, I suffered for seventeen years of a nervous condition. Off and on, not continually because I had to work. In construction work. I was in construction with my dad, building houses and every kinds of remodeling. I loved it, I loved working with my hands. But then everyone once in a while something would happen or would cause me to have a spell, why then I'd have to take some pills to calm me down or pick me up. Anyhow I was in this condition for seventeen years. By the grace of God through the sickness of one of our children. Babies, he was only a year old. We found out he had leukemia. Through his sickness my wife came back to the Lord and through his death I came to the Lord. Found out that I needed to change my life. You see when I was in the world I was involved in everything possible. I was in American Legion I was Vice Commander, chairman of this chairman of that. I was always out and never home. Also I was head of the [Sovereign?] Grand of the Odd Fellows, I was involved in a lot of different things. Heart funds, you name it I was in it.

Well it wasn't good for my marriage. [emotional pause] So one day when I realized that if I didn't change I wouldn't be married very long. So one day I went to church with my wife [emotional breath] and the pastor says, he didn't even preach a salvation message, but he said 'if anyone needs a change in your life the Lord can do it.' Well I certainly did need a change in my life because I was going down the drain, and our marriage was going down the drain. Anyway I came forward and I gave my life to the Lord and he also filled me with his power to overcome and serve him. And also my wife had a nervous condition and the Lord also touched her and healed her of her nervous condition. One day there was a visitor, a pastor visiting, and the elders came to the house because the baby had passed away of leukemia at fifteen months old. They wanted to know how we were continuing, how we were doing, I wasn't a Christian, you know. I didn't get saved until December 18th. They came over talked to us and see how we were doing and they found out I had this problem with my nervous condition all these years. And so they just asked me 'do you believe that the God can heal you or touch you?' And I said yes. I've been reading some magazines, from this evangelist and I believe god can do the same thing in these days with me. Anyway they prayed for me and laid their hands on me and instantly I felt the power of God go through me and instantly God healed me of this nervous condition I had had for seventeen years.

Well I was so grateful and my wife was so grateful about what he had done for us that we prayed about it- I was still in business, in construction, in fact I had my own construction business at the time- and we were so grateful we wanted to do more than we could for the Lord, so we prayed about it and got direction to go to Waco Texas which was a training program. Instead of going to bible school this church had a training program to go into any ministry the Lord had for you. I didn't know what mine was going to be when I left New York and went there. We sold our business, my business our house and everything and my faith we just moved down there to Waco Texas. And we were there for training. But during that

training the church had these trips they made to Mexico and during one of these conventions they had they invited anyone who wanted to go to Mexico. And I thought that would be a great idea, go to Mexico and see this country and that city. So I went, three car loads of us went. [laughs] sleeping on benches, floors, we traveled 5000 miles in three weeks. But at that time the Lord kind of touched my heart that maybe someday I would be going back to Mexico. I went to Waco not only for training, but I also wound up doing construction work for the church. They had bought a new campground, a Methodist campground that was fifty years without no work. So I was working there and then I was making trips when I'd finish a job I would go to Mexico and come back. And one time I went and the Lord spoke to me there and said he wanted me to go back and be missionaries. So I came back and the Lord had already spoke to my wife that we were going to go and so we agreed together. We didn't go right away because I still had work to do, construction to finish on the campground. But we went and by the grace of God we were missionaries for over thirty-five years. So I think God for changing my life and giving me hope. And a desire to help others. I just think God for the opportunity that we have. And that we still are going on, I'm still going on, I'm seventy-seven year old and people think is time to retire, but my wife and I agreed already that we are going to go on as long as we can. We've had a word or prophecy, some people don't understand that but it's when God speaks to you directly. That he still wants us to continue but travel as much as we used to, because we used to travel a lot, well for over thirty-five years our life has been travel, travel, travel. We did live in Mexico for twenty-one years, raised up churches, raised up national workers.

Then the Lord gave us a call to go to other countries. So we moved out to Irving Texas where our church is, Living Word Church is there. We worked out of that church and we go to other countries now. We've been to Spain and other countries. But the lord said you're not going to travel as much, it's time to settle down. But I believe in my heart... We've had counsel and talked with different ones to make sure this is the lord. And we believe that we will establish and be working one day in a bible school. And it said that I would be a father to those of this generation that needs to grow up and know the lord and serve him. So I believe the Lord still has work for us and I'm really grateful that I still have my health and I can still serve him and do what he wants me to do.

I just appreciate what the Lord has done for me and my wife. And all our children. We have four children, and the oldest is forty-six. He's a professor in English literature in the University of Oklahoma. Right now he's not serving the Lord, but the other children we have, Bill, Joanne and Dalene are serving the lord they all have a ministry with music. And I appreciate that also. So the Lord has been good to us and we still come up here. The reason we are up here in this area, because we used to live here. We have churches that support us and we go every weekend and visit and minister the Word of God and we thank the Lord for their being with us and helping us always all these years.

Q: Revered I definitely thank you for sharing an amazing story.

GB: Well it's the Lord he does those things today, and he changes people lives and gives them a hope and they carry on. And they can be a benefit to the people, you know? In the church or outside the church. I think God for that, and I think for me, I think the best calling you can have upon your life is to serve the Lord especially as missionary, I think that's a special calling. [laughs]

Q: And you heard it!

GB: Yes.

Q: Well thank you.

GB: Thank you for the privilege of being able to share my life and how God changed it.

Q: It's an honor to hear it.

GB: God bless you!

Q: God bless you.