

**Joseph Brandi
Veteran**

**Leonard Philip
Interviewer**

**Interviewed at Hoosick Falls Historical Society
Hoosick Falls New York**

Q: Where do you live Joe?

JB: Hoosick Falls.

Q: What'd you do before you went to the service Joe?

JB: I graduated from high school, then I went to work for the CollASTA(?) Company.

Q: All right, what year did you get out of high school, do you remember?

JB: `36.

Q: And then you went to work for CollASTA?

JB: Yup and then I went to New Jersey with the [unclear], they were part of the CollASTA company and I went down there to New Jersey and worked with them. I stayed down there till I retired later.

Q: I see, but when you were working for this company did you get drafted? Did you enlist? What happened?

JB: I got drafted

Q: When was that Joe? When you got drafted?

JB: In `42. And went to Kent Forest, Tennessee joined the 80th Infantry Division. And we trained there for about a year and then we went to Arizona in the desert, trained in the desert. We thought we were going to Africa, but the last minute they switched and in a hurry, they sent us over to the European area, we landed in Scotland and we stayed there about two years in Scotland and from there we went to northern France. And when I was in France there we got fighting and we got shelled by 88s, I was knocked out and landed in the hospital for about a week to two weeks. After recuperating they sent me back to the front. That's when we started fighting following General Patton. We followed General Patton all the way till he ran out of gas. We couldn't keep up with him in the beginning because he was going so fast and we were walking, so eventually they rounded up a bunch of trucks, threw us on the trucks and we finally caught up to him. That's where we started fighting the front. When we were there, that's when we got shelled by 88s, it was then that I got hit and returned back to the hospital. I stayed there for about 2-3 weeks. Then they sent me back to my original outfit. Then they sent me back up to the front again. They kept me there for a couple of weeks, figured I had enough, they pulled me back and they asked me where do

you want to go? I said I want to go to the quartermaster corps. They said they oh we got something better for you to do. So, they gave me a group of MPs. They gave me a whole outfit of MPs, and sent me out in to some village just protecting the people and protecting the GIs that were stationed nearby. So we did that till I got out of the service.

Q: I see, but it said in one of the clippings you got a slight wound. Was that at that time you were talking about or was that another time?

JB: No, that was another time. At the beginning I got hit first then I was knocked out. And then later on I got hit again. Eventually, I recuperated and I was all right after that.

Q: And how long did you spend up there in France, you know not as an MP?

JB: We fought in the land for oh idk probably half a year. In the front. And we had one incident that I told you about before. We captured some German soldiers, and we were taking them back, we finally got up to where the village was and the Frenchmen were all screaming the women screaming, and we said what's the trouble? And they pointed out to one of the German soldiers. And I didn't understand French so we had an interpreter explain to me. He said that they want to take that guy back and they'll treat him decent. I said ok. So, we gave him to him to take him back. So, we started marching and turned around, and there he is going of the hill with the Frenchmen and all at once after he got of the hill we heard a shot. Found out that they killed that German soldier. And I had to find out and said what was the problem you know? And they told me later they said that as the Germans were going through the village, there was a little girl standing in the doorway, an eleven-year-old girl they said. And this guy turned around with his machine gun and shot her. So, they wanted to kill that guy so they did I guess.

Q: I see, all right so, you stayed in the front and then they made you an MP and charged you with running the village and now you're coming into 1945?

JB: Yeah, and while I was there my sister Mary she had an operation, she was bad. And I asked in the meantime can I come home, because I was out already there and they said no and we waited there a while. Finally, they came through and said you can go home if you want. I said it's too late now, my sister is already buried. They said well you can go home though. I said ok. So, I came home.

Q: You had a lot of points probably.

JB: You didn't have to have points the Red Cross wanted me to cause of my sister dying.

Q: So, you came home and what happened then? I mean did they discharge you when you came home right away or?

JB: They gave me a furlough. They sent me home for thirty days. And kept me down that way in Virginia, waiting for a discharge. So, they kept me down there

for a few weeks. In the meantime, going up and actually waiting to get discharged. And there from there I got back home.

Q: All right when did you get out? Do you remember about when?

JB: In July of `45.

Q: The war was over in May in Europe in `45 and then August the Japanese war was over. So, you came home and then what did you do?

JB: I went back to work.

Q: In New Jersey or did you come up here?

JB: No up here.

Q: I see, so you worked up here?

JB: Yeah, I worked at [unclear] down here and then they moved to New Jersey and that's when I worked down there.

Q: So, you worked in Jersey and you lived in Jersey then?

JB: Yeah and then I retired in Jersey and moved to South Carolina and lived down there for three and a half years. And then I moved back up here.

Q: Now you got married? Cause I know your wife.

JB: Yeah, married after I got out of the service and the wedding was in `45.

Q: I see, and did you have any children or?

JB: Oh yeah, 3 children 2 boys and a girl.

Q: And your wife?

JB: She enlisted in the [unclear] she worked in the hospital. She came out after I did. She retired in the first part of `45.

Q: Ok, Now, is there anything else you can tell us about the service? Or about Hoosick Falls? You told me a story about your mother when I was talking to you the other day, I think that's good to put on tape.

JB: When I came home from the service, they were telling me that my mother went to get her citizenship papers and they wouldn't give them to her cause she couldn't read or write. And that kind of provoked me because here we are the four of us fighting for this country and they wouldn't give her, her citizenship papers. I said if I knew where that judge was I'd [unclear] get my mother her citizenship papers.

Q: So, there were four of you in the service?

JB: Four of us in the service all over seas. I got wounded on top of it, and here they were and wouldn't give her, her paper. It was terrible I thought.

Q: Yeah that's the way the thing works.

JB: When I came home I asked her if she wanted to try again, and she said she didn't want to. Once was enough.

Q: All right, is there anything else you'd like to tell us about? That you can think of, you know because these are going to become permanent tapes. Whichever you want to tell, we don't dig, we just want to know anything you'd like to tell.

JB: I remember digging a fox hole and of course we had these can rations and I got canned spaghetti. And I hadn't had spaghetti in a long time. So, we dug our foxhole and I opened the can up ready to eat the spaghetti all at once the captain told me come on pack up we're leaving. I said the heck with this I'm taking my can and I ate it right there. So, I finished that off.

Q: Yeah because I had some Vietnam guys in and they were telling me about digging fox holes, they had to dig them as deep as they could, so the water would wash out. So, you dug a lot of fox holes?

JB: Yeah, we had a fella from Philadelphia, he was in my outfit. And when we were in the service in training he always complained he had blisters on his feet. And the 25 mile hikes, he'd always fall back. We had a Jewish lieutenant he had a nice nose, he was lieutenant Wussen (?), and this guy hated him cause he thought he was picking on him all the time so he says some day when we get over there, don't you turn your back on me cause I'm going to give it to you. When we got over they were the best of pals they fought side by side and they were the best. I'll never forget that lieutenant, when we were charging up the hill he got shot. And that soldier he came back home after he felt real sorry that he had treated him like that. He worked hard too, he admitted everything too, he was trying to do what was right. He just kept picking on him all the time.

Q: Do you mind if I ask you how old you are? You look, so good.

JB: 83 years old.

Q: Your Brother is 85 I think when I interviewed him. You look in great shape.

JB: Well I feel pretty good.

Q: Well we thank you, if there's nothing else we thank you for coming.

JB: Thank You.