

**Robert L. Crump and Wife
Narrators**

**Wayne Clarke
Mike Russert
New York State Military Museum
Interviewers**

**Interviewed on April 19, 2005
Elderwood Senior Center
Hamburg, New York**

RC: Robert Crump

WIFE: Wife (Mr. Crump's wife participated in interview due to Robert's stroke)

I: Wayne Clarke, Mike Russert

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

RC: Sherman, New York.

WIFE: New York, for place of birth. Robert Lansing Crump.

RC: Robert Lansing Crump.

I: When were you born? You can just give us the year, that's fine.

WIFE: 1920.

I: What was your education before you went to into the service? What was your educational background?

WIFE: Graduated from high school.

I: Do you remember hearing about Pearl Harbor?

RC: No.

WIFE: Oh sure, yes you remember. Do you mean before the service?

I: Yes. Do you remember hearing about the Japanese bombing Pearl Harbor?

WIFE: Yes, he does.

RC: Okay, yes, let her talk.

WIFE: He does, believe me.

I: Do you remember where he was?

WIFE: He was—we were not married—he was over on Lexington Avenue where he was boarding, and he heard it, and he called me and told me about it.

I: So you were going together at the time?

WIFE: Yes.

I: Did you enlist or were you drafted?

WIFE: He was drafted.

I: I see you were drafted in October 1942.

RC: Yes.

I: Now where did you go for your basic training?

WIFE: Fort Leonard Wood. Is that in Missouri?

I: Yes.

I: Now I notice you went into the engineers. Did you get assigned to the engineers?

RC: Yes.

I: What kind of special training did you get for that?

WIFE: Well, a lot of mechanics... lot of experience with heavy equipment.

I: Like earth moving equipment? Like bulldozers, and big trucks?

RC: Well yes, but not as much as what I did have because [unclear]... and then, well what else?

WIFE: Well, you were there for basic training, and then he'll ask you.

I: Where did you go from there?

RC: And then I went to... you remember where I went.

WIFE: Then from there you went to electrical school in Chicago.

RC: Yes.

WIFE: Coyne Electrical School in Chicago. And you had a course, I don't know, a course or something.

RC: Yes.

WIFE: And then you went to Detroit for two weeks into the Ready Power Company, to learn more about electricity, right?

RC: Yes.

I: Where did you go from there once you finished your schooling?

WIFE: Then, when you finished your schooling you went south to Camp Cleburn in Georgia.

RC: Yes. See I know all of these things but when I went through here, then it's where I miss [unclear] but she remembers things.

WIFE: Yes, I remember the things right, so do you remember but you can't talk about them.

RC: But I can't tell about them.

WIFE: Then from Camp Cleburn you went on to Plattsburg, New York.

RC: Right.

WIFE: Plattsburg Barracks it was called at the time.

I: Now, what did you do in Plattsburg, did you work in the electrical field?

RC: No, I was just—

WIFE: They were forming new companies; he was up there to form this maintenance company.

RC: Yes.

I: So that was the 969th engineer?

RC: Yes.

I: Once the unit was formed up, where did you go?

RC: Right there.

I: You stayed right there?

WIFE: You stayed there for a while and then you went on maneuvers, in Murfreesboro Tennessee. Then to the staging area, then to Camp Forrest, then up to Mount Standish where he left for overseas. Oh, wait a minute, we went to Fort Devens from Plattsburg. I'm sorry, from Plattsburg we went to Fort Devens.

I: Did you get married during this time?

WIFE: Yes.

I: When did you get married?

WIFE: We got married in June 1943.

RC: She knows me. [Laughter] She was always with me and she's a nice person. And it's a shame that I can't talk better.

I: That's okay.

RC: I had two years in here, that's what she told me that I left [unclear].

WIFE: But from Plattsburg we went to Fort Devens.

I: When did he leave for Europe?

WIFE: In May of '43. Oh, we got married in '43, so it would be '44.

I: How did you go over to Europe? Did you go by boat?

RC: Yes.

I: Was it in a convoy?

RC: No.

I: Just a single ship.

RC: Yes, it's a civil place, but with the civil [unclear].

WIFE: I wasn't there so I don't know.

RC: I did but [unclear] I got over there I did those, [unclear] and then I landed over there and then they—

WIFE: They left from Myles Standish, Massachusetts, and went to England. Was Liverpool the first place in England?

RC: Yes. And I flew, not flew but landed there from here. And then that's when [unclear] and then my sister, no...

WIFE: No, you went to Liverpool, England.

RC: Yes.

WIFE: And you stayed there until you went into the invasion.

RC: Yes.

I: So he participated in the D-day invasion?

WIFE: Well, it's still considered part of the invasion but it was...

I: D-day plus?

WIFE: D-day 28 I think.

RC: That's true, that there. And then my sister, not my sister [unclear].

WIFE: Honey, I can't understand you either so I'm sure they can't because I don't know what you're saying right now.

RC: When I met my sister, not my sister [unclear].

WIFE: Your sister was never over there.

RC: No, but wait. Sister [unclear] was there.

WIFE: Are you talking about Jill?

RC: No, my sister.

WIFE: I don't know. Your sister was never over in Europe with you.

RC: I know but she's the one that went down here and told me that I lived there [unclear].

WIFE: We don't know what you're talking about right now. Come on now.

I: After the D-day plus 28, whereabouts did you go? From Normandy?

RC: [unclear] Oh, I wish I could talk, all those things.

I: It's alright, it's alright.

RC: It's a shame that I can't talk.

I: That's okay.

WIFE: I know he just kept moving along in France, but I couldn't tell you.

I: Do you know exactly what he was doing? Was he operating equipment?

RC: No.

WIFE: They were mostly repairing equipment. You know? Because it was an engineer maintenance company, and they spent most of their time repairing or trying to come up with new ideas on how to use this, what they had learned.

RC: Yes.

I: So you were repairing like trucks and jeeps and tanks?

RC: No, just the people.

WIFE: People? You were in contact platoon. And they would also go out when they were told that somebody was in trouble, that something had broken down somewhere or something, it was up to the contact platoon to go out and see what they could do, that's the type of thing that they would do.

RC: [unclear] the years here, all those years I had those things here. And after that was done there...

I: Were you ever under combat fire? Were you behind the lines?

RC: There were not many, but we had [unclear].

WIFE: But were you ever right up there in the front?

RC: Yes, at first, [unclear]. Oh that's a shame, because I can picture, I know all those things so well.

I: You landed in France, did you get into Germany at all?

RC: Yes. First, [unclear].

WIFE: But you went through France, you were in France on the VE day, but when did you go to Holland? After that?

RC: Yes, that was after that, because I knew the people over in the [unclear].

WIFE: But you did end up in Germany.

RC: Yes, I did.

WIFE: And where were you in the Battle of the Bulge?

RC: Not quite, because it was close to there, and they turned us out [unclear].

WIFE: But your contact platoon, under Lieutenant Web, got some kind of a kind of commendation for some work that you did with a bridge. It wasn't Remagen Bridge, but it was a bridge.

RC: No, but there was help, helping there.

WIFE: I wish I could tell you more about that, but I can't.

I: Now when the war ended, did he come home soon after that?

RC: Yes.

WIFE: Well, let's see, the war ended in August, right?

RC: Yes.

WIFE: And you were home by October?

RC: Yes.

WIFE: Yeah, you see how he got points. By that time we had a child, so we got extra points for the child. He got twelve points or something like that.

I: And that gave him enough points to come home.

RC: Yes.

I: Did you ever make use of the GI bill after he came back?

WIFE: Just to buy a house, you know.

RC: Bought a house... let her talk.

I: Did you ever use the 52-20 call? It was unemployment insurance, twenty dollars a week for fifty-two weeks.

WIFE: No, he was very fortunate. He came home, he signed up on the railroad, and he could go back to work any time he wanted. He was very fortunate there, you know, his seniority went right on.

RC: It went right on, yes I did. [Unclear].

I: Did you ever join any veterans' organizations?

WIFE: American Legion and VFW.

I: Did you ever stay in contact with anyone that was in service?

RC: No.

WIFE: Well, you did up until just before you came here. There were two friends that we had. We were three couples together when we were traveling around with the companies, while we were here, and we stayed friends all those years. After the war, we got together and then from there on every few years we would get together with them. One was from Georgia, and one was from Roanoke, Virginia. And they were in the same company, you know, state together. But I'm sorry to say, that Bob and I are the only ones left out of the six of us.

RC: Yes, the other ones died.

I: Well, that happens.

RC: Oh, I know and it's true, and she was still with me, and she was my sweetie pie all the time, that I met her and I [unclear] sweet to me. Oh, it's terrible that I can't even...

I: No, that's okay. Don't worry about it. How do you think that your time in the service changed your life?

RC: No, well, it's because I love her, [unclear] here twenty five years, how many years was I with her?

WIFE: How many years were we together?

RC: No, her, before then, but then I married her but then I went to them, they had the twenty five [unclear].

WIFE: Well, I never found that the service changed him very much. You know, he was a very dependable person before, and was the same way after he came home.

I: He went right back to the same type of work.

WIFE: Right. He was on the railroad for forty years.

RC: Oh, yes. Because I liked it there, and she liked it with me too, because things were [unclear] better here, but then I lost two of the friends here, and then I lost here, and I left my wife, the people here...

I: So you lost your friends?

RC: Yes, I did. [Unclear].

I: Thank you very much.