

Richard 'Dick' Greene
Veteran

John (Jack) R. Koltz
Interviewer

Interview on 26 May 1994
Baldwinsville Messenger and the Baldwinsville Public Library

JK: I have been friends with Dick Greene, he is a laid back, quiet fellow. The Messenger dated Thursday, 14 June 1944, had a letter his father had wrote while his son who was in England with the Big Red One, the most famous division in the United States Army. It's now the 50th Anniversary of the Invasion of Normandy.

JK: Where did you perform your Basic Training and how many invasions where you involved in while you were a member of the Big Red One.

RG: I was in Basic Training in Camp Cross, South Carolina and was in three invasions. North Africa, Sicilia and D-Day.

JK: Where did you train?

RG: We trained in England for the invasion of North Africa and the invasion of Sicily.

JK: Could you tell us a little bit about England at that time, the people and training before the invasion and D-Day.

RG: We didn't have time to meet people when I was England, because we were strictly in training. But the few I did see seemed to be confused, they didn't know whether to be friendly or not. There was build-up of equipment coming into the country for about year.

JK: Did you see any airstrikes, planes landing?

RG: We weren't anywhere near the air bases, we were in the field training.

JK: Before you were going to invade France and fight the Nazis, where did you go?

RG: We were in a marshalling area for about 24 hours before they loaded us on ships in Portsmouth, England and some went out of South Hampton. There were 24 hour operations loading the ships with a tremendous amount of cargo.

JK: What increment and which Normandy beach did your regiment land on? And weren't you wounded?

RG: Our Army Code was Easy Red, we were in the third wave to hit Omaha beach. I was wounded as I was coming into combat, and was there about 4 or 5 hours before we were evacuated. We had a doctor and 3 or 4 Aid-men right on the beach helping us while the shells were coming over. I was put on a hospital ship for two days before returning to England to recuperate.

JK: Did see any more combat after that?

RG: Oh yeah, I returned to my unit, the Big Red One, in France, on the outskirts of Paris. Even though it was declared a free city, the Americans weren't allowed in Paris. They wanted the Free French to recapture their own capital, their own city. We had the city surrounded, but the Free French came in and took the German prisoners.

JK: After Paris where did your unit go?

RG: After Paris we went on up into Belgium, we got held up for a while in the Battle of the Bulge. After that was over we went into Germany, and then swung over to Czechoslovakia.

JK: Were the Nazis still in Czechoslovakia at that time?

EG: Oh yeah, we drove the Germans out of Czechoslovakia.

JK: Was that your last campaign?

RG: Yes, The Nazis surrendered while we were in Czechoslovakia.

JK: Thank You for this interview, I have known Dick for a long time, and he hasn't changed much.

Transcribed by Misty Straus 18 Feb 2015