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Veteran**

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Interviewers**

**Interviewed on November 22, 2002
Rome Free Academy H.S., Rome, NY**

Q: Mr. Ferlo, when were you born?

OF: May 19th, 1921.

Q: Pearl Harbor December 7th, 1941, what were you thinking? Where were you?

OF: On that day, I was an employee at General Cable Corporation working as a lathe operator making dies for wire joy [joining?].

Q: Did it affect your decision to join the Armed Forces?

OF: It did. I just did want to get in, quite badly, but I had a critical job, and I was doing it for a while. However, there were already five of my brothers in the service. I'm sorry, four of my brothers.

Q: Interesting. So, what branch of service did you end up joining in to?

OF: Infantry. I took basic at Camp Croft in South Carolina.

Q: So, you enlisted in the army?

OF: No, I was drafted.

Q: You were drafted, interesting. How long did you end up serving in the Army?

OF: Two years.

Q: What was your final rank in the Army?

OF: It was Corporal.

Q: What was your unit?

OF: 80th Division, Companies? You've got it all.

Q: What theater did you serve in?

OF: European theater of operations.

Q: And you trained for the Army in Camp Croft?

OF: I took basic camp at Camp Croft, South Carolina... I mean basic training.

Q: Any people you met there that pertain to the rest of your life or experiences?

OF: Well frankly, I didn't recall any of them. I did go in with some people from Rome [NY]. Do you want me to name them?

Q: You don't have to.

OF: I went to Camp Croft with two other Romans.

Q: Is there anything else you'd like to share about your experiences there?

OF: Well, it was quite a grind. Up early in the morning, you probably have heard about it at home, basic training is up early in the morning. Then to rigorous training all kinds of training rifle, working in mud, making digging fox holes.

Q: Did you receive any specialized training or just like a normal soldier-

OF: General infantry training with respect number 7 4 5.

Q: When you were in basic training, did you realize what you were getting into?

OF: Oh yes, I did.

Q: Well, where when did you arrive in Europe?

OF: I arrived in Europe in September of 1944, and we went to Southampton England and within two day from Southampton we move over to France and we went in on Omaha Beach which was already taken by the allies.

Q: How many days after it was taken that you come for weeks, months?

OF: Well June was D-Day and right there, about September 20s timeframe so it was pretty well taken. I did see a lot of the after effects of it though.

Q: So, what was the most interesting thing about Europe prior to your first encounter with the enemy? Anything you remember specifically about Europe?

OF: Well, when I first got to France it rained day and night for a little while and we camped out on the tents, pop tents. My impression, we were out in the woods actually it was desolate really, my first day.

Q: When was your first encounter with the enemy?

OF: The best one I could remember is that. I'm thinking of him. I can't really spell it right now but we were taking that position and not to leave it skirmish, but it was a small battle. We did take it down.

Q: How did you do that? How'd you ...

OF: Well as I recall it was quite a while ago, 57 years ago. We went in under a totally unbalanced from our own friendly fire overhead support fire and we started to search out homes of the enemy. It was more or less a very urban type of fighting. I was my baptism to fight this.

Q: This was your first encounter?

OF: Yes.

Q: Any lasting effects from the battle?

OF: Why we push that? I don't remember. I didn't have time.

Q: Any transcript you said you heard while General George Patton speeches and what was that like?

OF: A very emphatic and gung-ho type speech. Hit them and knock the hell out of them. And this happened during a lull in our fighting through southern France well it was really middle France.

And we had our little lull, this was prior to the break when the belt broke up north there.

Q: How did his speech affect you personally? Did it really motivate you and get you ready to fight?

OF: Well, when General Patton's hope you generally got motivated but if you didn't you know why. Of course, he brandishes his silver- handled over on either side there was a full Vestergaard.

Q: How did the men around you act after he spoke? Were they just as fired up as you?

OF: Oh yes, frankly we were all fired up. We were anxious to get out of there and air raid the enemy.

Q: So, you did take place in the battle of Bulge Shore, correct?

OF: Oh yes sir.

Q: And tell us some of your experiences there. If you don't mind?

OF: Well, the Bulge, if I can remember correctly. On December 18th of 1944, General Bradley who was in Luxemburg gave a call to General Patton. I mean that's when we were down unrest to rush up some troops and practically the whole division and government trucks. It was about one hundred and thirty miles away of bringing something parameters of distance. We went up and did I mention the eightieth division mission was to watch and guard Luxembourg City. As a matter of fact, I think I made a note of that. I'll probably tell them later.

Q: You can tell them now if you want. I'll encourage it.

OF: I'm glad I made a note of that. Ok, I'll repeat what I just said. December 18th of 1944, General Bradley called General Patton, division commander while we were pushed through southern France during the lull. The Germans had begun a counter-offensive in the northern front through the Ardennes which is a major offensive commonly known as the Bulge. This was our division was ordered to quickly move north. The mission being to protect the city of Luxembourg from the rapidly advancing German army cops.

Q: Your mission succeeded right? Did your mission succeed?

OF: Well obviously, we won the war. Will some of this be taken out?

Q: Sure, if you want.

OF: No, I mean the absolute dynamic between doesn't count.

Q: Oh sure.

OF: It's up to you people. Okay then.

Q: Okay, anything else?

OF: While we were in Luxembourg in December that year that 8th division stood on the west side of the Our river. O. U. R, in Luxembourg. Our regiment and three 17th regiments cross the Our river in the salt boats pre-dawn hours. Very little opposition during the crossing into the Willendorf, Germany occurred.

Q: Very interesting.

OF: May I continue?

Q: Oh yes please.

OF: That was in December 1944, if I could go back a little bit and I go with November, our regiment took the high ground. This is prior to the bullets. After digging in to hold our position, the Germans mounted their counterattack. I was horrified, my heart skipped a couple beats.

*From 11:20-14:22 the tape is inaudible.

OF: Finally, after January 1945 the skies cleared and our allied forces with our air force coming in to do some balance, which led to the initiated what we call the red race to the Rhine River. This occurred between January and March, on one of the occasions I had my brother Guido G.U.I.D.O who was with the 16th mechanized cavalry under General Patton and I for the same side. During the Same battle.

*From 15:05- 26:44

OF: I took French in high school. Mrs. Clark taught French, that was before your time.

Q: That takes patience.

OF: My son teaches Spanish anyway the French people as a whole or excellent like to put simply, I stayed at their house all we could. If we had some urban fighting to do with used your ability otherwise, we would spend our time out feeling and looking as best as we could and parcels.

Q: This there anything else you want to say about any experiences that we might have missed or?

OF: I got all day.

Q: If you have a couple more, we have time.

OF: There was a little humor sometimes out there.

Q: That'll be good.

OF: I didn't write much down to tell you the truth

Q: Well, that's fine.

OF: I'm trying to think off the top of my head.

Q: We have a lot of information already. So, if you want to throw in the towel, alright?

OF: Maybe I should at this time. It was quite an experience of course. I'm very lucky to be back home. That's great.

Q: Thank you Mr. Ferlo, I appreciate it.

OF: Thank you.