

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

The Nimitz Education and Research Center

Fredericksburg, Texas

An Interview With
Ernest S. Clifford
Crown Point, New York
October 19, 2011
157th Infantry Regiment
45th Infantry Division
Italy

My name is Richard Misenhimer: Today is October 19, 2011. I am interviewing Mr. Ernest S. Clifford by telephone. His phone number is 518-597-9466. His address is 446 Bridge Road, Crown Point, NY 12928. This interview is in support of the National Museum of the Pacific War, the Nimitz Education and Research Center for the preservation of historical information related to World War II.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Ernie, I want to thank you for taking time to do this interview today and I want to thank you for your service to our country during World War II.

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I appreciate that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the first thing I need to do is read to you this agreement with the Museum. If this were in person you could read it and sign it, but since this is by phone, let me read this to you. (agreement read) Is that OK with you?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, it is.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now the next thing I'd like to do is get an alternative contact. We find out that sometimes several years down the road we try to get back in contact with a veteran, he's moved or something. Do you have a son or daughter or someone we could contact if we need to locate you?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, I have a daughter that lives close to me.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's her name?

Mr. Clifford:

Constance Gilbert. (G-i-l-b-e-r-t).

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK, do you have a phone number for her?

Mr. Clifford:

It's 518-546-3201.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Let me read that back to you: 518-546-3201.

Mr. Clifford:

That's correct.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you have an address?

Mr. Clifford:

I don't have it off the top of my head.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's fine. What town does she live in?

Mr. Clifford:

Moriah, New York.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's fine. The phone number is the most important thing. Now, what is your birth date?

Mr. Clifford:

2-18-23.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you born?

Mr. Clifford:

Pomfret, Vermont.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have brothers and sisters?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, I had one brother and three sisters.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was your brother in World War II?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, he was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did he do?

Mr. Clifford:

He was in the Engineers in Europe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did he come home from the War?

Mr. Clifford:

He came home from the War, yes he did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is he still living?

Mr. Clifford:

No. He passed away several years ago.

Mr. Misenhimer:

If he were, I'd like to interview him.

Mr. Clifford:

No, he passed.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were any of your sisters involved in any kind of war work?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, my oldest sister was in the WACS.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Is she still living?

Mr. Clifford:

No, she's passed also.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you grew up in the Depression. How did the Depression affect you and your family?

Mr. Clifford:

Minimally, because my father was a farmer, dairy farmer, so we had plenty to eat off the land so it really didn't impact us too much.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Just not much cash.

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. Where did you go to high school?

Mr. Clifford:

At Woodstock, Vermont.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What year did you graduate there?

Mr. Clifford:

In 1941.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, December 7, 1941 Japan attacked Pearl Harbor. Do you recall hearing about that?

Mr. Clifford:

Certainly do.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where were you when you heard about it?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I was at a friend's house. I had stopped in about five o'clock in the afternoon I think it was and that's when I heard about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you feel that would affect you when you heard it?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I knew that we were going to be going to war, of course. I didn't have any idea of enlisting at that time but I was enrolled in what they called NYA. I think it was something that Roosevelt initiated to train people like me in crafts and I was learning to be a machinist at the time. So when I graduated from that I went into the machinist trade.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You started that when you finished high school, is that correct?

Mr. Clifford:

A few months after I finished high school. I started I think in late fall.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long was that schooling?

Mr. Clifford:

That was about six months for that training.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went to work as a machinist then?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to work?

Mr. Clifford:

In Springfield, Massachusetts.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do there?

Mr. Clifford:

I was a machine operator in a defense factory.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What company were you working for?

Mr. Clifford:

It was Package Machinery Company.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you go into the service?

Mr. Clifford:

In November of 1942.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you drafted or did you volunteer?

Mr. Clifford:

I volunteered.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You went into the Army?

Mr. Clifford:

I went into the Army Air Force.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. How did you choose the Air Force?

Mr. Clifford:

It was kind of a strange situation. I went to the Post Office in Springfield which was also where you signed up for the service. I had the idea of going into the Navy and I got there just after noon and it's closed for the lunch break so the Army and Air Force and Marines were still open and I knew I didn't want to volunteer for the Army so I opted for the Air Force. That's how I got in there. If they hadn't been out to lunch, I would have been in the Navy instead of the Air Force.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you regret not going into the Navy?

Mr. Clifford:

Not at all. I'm happy it turned out this way.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Good, good. Then where did you go for your basic training?

Mr. Clifford:

Went to Ft. Devons that's where I was inducted and then for my basic training I went to Miami Beach.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How did you travel down to Miami?

Mr. Clifford:

By train, troop train.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that train trip?

Mr. Clifford:

Uneventful. It was an eye-opener for this farm boy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Had you been that far from home before?

Mr. Clifford:

The furthest I'd been was Washington D.C.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened when you got down there?

Mr. Clifford:

The basic training lasted about two weeks. From there I went to Sioux Falls, South Dakota for radio school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you do during that two weeks in basic?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, it was a lot of the regular training that they do. I don't have a recollection of what I did do. We were set up in a fancy hotel, the Floridian it was called.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have a lot of marching?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, quite a bit of marching and calisthenics of course.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any kind of weapons training there?

Mr. Clifford:

No, not there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then you went to South Dakota?

Mr. Clifford:

That's right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Another train trip?

Mr. Clifford:

Another train trip.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened in South Dakota?

Mr. Clifford:

It was damned cold. When you got there from Florida to South Dakota, it was quite a shock. It was 30 degrees below zero and 38-mile-an-hour winds when we got to South Dakota. Uncomfortable. That was radio school.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What all did you do during radio school?

Mr. Clifford:

It was training in both how to operate radios and how to repair them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have Morse code?

Mr. Clifford:

This was mostly Morse code and not voice.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And you learned Morse code there, then, right?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was it learning Morse code?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I enjoyed it very much. It was like learning a new language.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you still remember any of it?

Mr. Clifford:

Quite a bit of it, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

That's something you don't forget, do you?

Mr. Clifford:

I didn't use it a lot later in the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How long was that radio school?

Mr. Clifford:

It was eighteen weeks.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You also repaired the radios?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, learned how to repair them and operate them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else beside radio work at that school?

Mr. Clifford:

No, other than the regular training, lot of marching, five-mile hikes, seven-mile hikes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any weapons training at that point?

Mr. Clifford:

No, not there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you finished the radio school, where did you go?

Mr. Clifford:

From there I went to Virginia, trying to think of the name of the—Ft. Patrick Henry I believe it was. We were attached to the 45th Infantry Division and we were taught amphibious landing techniques and that sort of thing. Lot of weapons training there, shooting, learning invasion techniques. That training lasted about a month and then we were loaded on a troop transport with the 45th Division and set off for Europe.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, what company were you in, what regiment?

Mr. Clifford:

I was attached to the 45th Infantry Division.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in a particular company or regiment or battalion?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, the 157th Regiment.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was that a rifle regiment? It was a regular combat regiment, right?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in a particular company or??

Mr. Clifford:

I don't recall what company it was.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you in the Engineers there or what?

Mr. Clifford:

We were to provide communication between the Air Force and the Infantry because the Air Force had their own frequencies and transmitting equipment that wasn't compatible with the Army. So I was to provide the interface between the two.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were actually in the Air Force but you were attached to the 45th division?

Mr. Clifford:

I was still with the Air Force.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Tell me about that trip overseas.

Mr. Clifford:

Well, lot of zigzagging and once in a while they would drop some depth charges. Of course, it was a big convoy, escorted by destroyers. Every once in a while was a submarine alert but there was no successful sub hitsanywhere in the convoy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What kind of a ship were you on?

Mr. Clifford:

Trying to think of the name of it but I can't. I guess it was a Liberty Ship if I remember correctly.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How were the accommodations on that ship?

Mr. Clifford:

Had plenty to eat of course but it was really crowded. I usually slept on the deck.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there much seasickness?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I didn't feel all of that. It was fairly calm all the way across.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you leave from?

Mr. Clifford:

From Newport News, Virginia.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you go to?

Mr. Clifford:

First place we landed was Oran in North Africa. Landed there and did a dry run for the invasion. So we did a mock invasion there that lasted about a couple of days in North Africa getting ready to go on to Sicily.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you went into the beach, what kind of ship did you go in on?

Mr. Clifford:

An LCI landing craft with a jeep that had the radio equipment in it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were several other people with you doing the same thing?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes. Each regiment had its contingent of people doing this.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How many people in your particular group with you?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, there was a lieutenant in charge of the jeep that I was in and had a counterpart with another lieutenant with another jeep. Had two jeeps. One had the Air Force radio equipment and the other had the Army equipment.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now you operated the Air Force equipment?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Who operated the Army equipment?

Mr. Clifford:

Another Air Force guy. Went to the same school I was in Sioux Falls.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I didn't know whether it was an Army guy or another Air Force guy.

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, it was another Air Force guy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How were those practice landings there at Oran?

Mr. Clifford:

It was quite uneventful really. It was calm so we had no trouble getting ashore.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where did you board the LCI at?

Mr. Clifford:

We went over the side of the ship on the nets, the landing nets, and dropped into the LCI.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, the LCI has the two ramps, one on each side, is that right?

Mr. Clifford:

No, it has just one in the front.

Mr. Misenhimer:

OK. It was a Higgins boat, LCVP?

Mr. Clifford:

That's right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

I just wanted to clarify. So you go in on the LCVP and they'd drop the ramp and you'd get off with your jeep, is that right?

Mr. Clifford:

With the jeep, right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else happen there at Oran?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I think we bivouacked for one night and then they took us back to the ship on our trucks.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Clifford:

Then we sailed towards Sicily for that invasion.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What happened there?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, the night before the invasion the sea got really rough and there was some fear that they would have to cancel the invasion, it was so rough but later in the night the seas calmed so by morning it was just a heavy swell so we were able to go ahead with the

invasion. But during the night the cruisers and the other escort vessels were shelling down on the coast where we were going to invade so it was heavy shelling all night long.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What date did you land?

Mr. Clifford:

It was July 10.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was that the first day of the invasion?

Mr. Clifford:

It was. We went in with the third wave of the invasion. We were supposed to go in about daylight but because of the heavy seas the night before we were delayed. It was about eight o'clock when we landed. There was very little resistance. Apparently there was pretty much a surprise to the Germans. We took some sniper fire but no real resistance to speak of.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, you were with Patton's army, is that correct?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what happened?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, we were fired on by a couple of snipers as we came over one hill and then we saw them running across the field quite a ways away. Nobody was hurt. We could see some

paratroopers that had been injured by them and the first town we came to was the one they were shelling the night before and it was pretty badly damaged but the people were ecstatic, happy to see us.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then what?

Mr. Clifford:

We bivouacked that night, in the outskirts of that town and the following day we went through Ragusa, one of the larger towns in southern Sicily. We were there a couple of days. Then we convoyed along the coast to Gelh, then worked our way up the middle of the island to near Palermo, then along the northern coast towards Messina. So I stayed with them, our group stayed with the invasion for thirty days and then August 10 we were pulled back to Palermo so we were out of the fighting.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, were you communicating with the Air Force planes during all this time?

Mr. Clifford:

The Air Force was really scarce there. There wasn't much American Air Force activity, there at all. There were plenty of Germans buzzing around but not a lot of Air Force planes so we never did actually contact any planes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you just rode along, then?

Mr. Clifford:

Rode along, watching the war happen.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, in your letter to the magazine, you mentioned about the paratroopers being under friendly fire. Tell about that.

Mr. Clifford:

Well, as I said in the article, the night that it was happening I rode back so I didn't see any of that action. As we drove from Ragusa there were quite a few planes that had been shot down on each side of the road. Some of them were still smoking as a matter of fact.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were there bodies in those planes?

Mr. Clifford:

I think they were all taken out by then.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What's some other things that happened on Sicily?

Mr. Clifford:

The Germans got stronger as we got further into the island. There was a lot of delaying tactics, shelling. The German 88s were kind of impressive. We got pinned down a few times by artillery fire. I never got a scratch though.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was anybody in your group wounded or killed.?

Mr. Clifford:

I don't recall anybody was wounded or killed. I know one of the guys was pinned down behind a stone wall once. But I don't think he was injured.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How close were you to the front line?

Mr. Clifford:

We were right at the front line much of the time.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You were right there, then. What else happened on Sicily?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I did see Ernie Pyle one time. He was with our regiment. He was an interesting fella.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get a chance to talk to him?

Mr. Clifford:

I did not. I listened to him talk but I didn't actually talk with him.

Mr. Misenhimer:

But you were close enough that you could hear him talking then.

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, within a few feet.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else happened?

Mr. Clifford:

Nothing of importance I guess.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you leave Sicily?

Mr. Clifford:

After we pulled back to Palermo. We stayed there I think about a week. There was a German air raid that came very close to where we were bivouacked. It was in the middle of the night. A lot of anti-aircraft fire but none of them were hit but there were quite a few German planes buzzing around, searchlights picking them up. Shell fragments dropping around us from the anti-aircraft shells. We left Palermo the end of August on a ship that was carrying Italian war prisoners, probably a thousand of them or so on the boat. They'd let them on deck maybe for an hour or two every day and we would guard them with our rifles. They were not a problem, of course. So we went to Algiers, Algeria. That's where we disembarked. The prisoners disembarked and from Algiers we were flown over to Iran to a replacement depot for reassignment. We stayed there about a month and then I was assigned to an outfit in Tunis which was a total reconnaissance outfit.

Mr. Misenhimer:

And what did you do there?

Mr. Clifford:

Let's see. We weren't there very long, just a few days and then the whole photo unit was shipped to Italy, southern Italy. The name of the town we went to was Foggia and the photo lab was set up there in a school building and this is where my radio training was utilized.

Mr. Misenhimer:

In what way? What did you do there?

Mr. Clifford:

Now photo recon planes of course took photos along the coast or wherever and the photo

lab would analyze the photographs that they took. The results of those were encoded and we'd send the encoded messages to the bomb outfit. They would decide on their bombing runs based on what they found in the photos. But what we'd do was take the results of the photo lab and transmit it to the bombing base so they could decide where to bomb. So it was Morse code. Would be an eight-hour shift, seven days a week. I think perhaps being subject to the Morse code for that length of time damaged my hearing. I'm getting disability for that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You had a headset on then, right?

Mr. Clifford:

Right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now did your headset come into both ears or just one ear?

Mr. Clifford:

Both ears.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What else happened?

Mr. Clifford:

That was pretty much the routine for the next couple of years. We were not in any danger from that point on during the war. So I spent the rest of the war years there in Italy.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were you always at Foggia or did you move to another place?

Mr. Clifford:

We were there for perhaps a year and a half and then they moved the whole operation south to Bari in the southern part of the peninsula. We were there for the remainder of the war.

Mr. Misenhimer:

You did the same thing there?

Mr. Clifford:

Same thing, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Let me go back and ask you a couple of questions about Sicily. On Sicily did you have much interaction with the local Italian people?

Mr. Clifford:

Not a lot, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you carry a weapon on Sicily?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, a Springfield .03.

Mr. Misenhimer:

The .03? The bolt action?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes. Bolt action, right.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now in Foggia did you have much interaction with the local Italian people there?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, I did. Quite a lot of intimate action with them. I learned to speak the language fairly well, too.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Were they friendly?

Mr. Clifford:

Very friendly, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you carry a weapon in Italy there, then?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I did not have my weapon. My rifle was stolen from me on the ship back from Palermo to North Africa.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get in any trouble for that?

Mr. Clifford:

No. I did not. Some merchant marine stole it from me. The merchant marine was operating the vessel we were on.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Then where were you when the war ended?

Mr. Clifford:

I was back home on leave at my parents' farm.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When did you come back from over there then?

Mr. Clifford:

It was in late July of 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now May 8 of 1945 was when Germany surrendered. You were still in Italy then, right?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes. I left Italy in July 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When Germany surrendered, did you have any kind of celebration then?

Mr. Clifford:

Not really, no. We were elated that it happened but we didn't celebrate.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Was there talk of sending you to the Pacific?

Mr. Clifford:

I was fully expecting to go the Pacific, yeah.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you were home when the war ended, when Japan surrendered?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any celebration then?

Mr. Clifford:

No, there wasn't. I was really relieved that I wasn't going to be reassigned to the Pacific.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you came home from Italy, how did you come home, on a ship?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, another troop ship.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was that trip home?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, it was much more enjoyable than the trip over. Coming into New York harbor and seeing the Statue of Liberty was quite moving. There were fire boats with hoses shooting in the air escorting us into the harbor. A nice homecoming.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were overseas, what would you consider your most frightening time?

Mr. Clifford:

I think probably the anticipation of the invasion that first day. I was really nervous that night.

Mr. Misenhimer:

How was the morale in your outfit?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, it was high, very high.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of the various officers that you had over you?

Mr. Clifford:

Had no complaints at all about them.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did they know their job?

Mr. Clifford:

Oh, yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When were you discharged?

Mr. Clifford:

In September 1945.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the highest rank you got to?

Mr. Clifford:

That was corporal.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you got out did you have any trouble adjusting to civilian life?

Mr. Clifford:

No, none at all.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you use your G.I. Bill for anything?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, I went to school in New York City for about six months, another radio school. But I was only getting sixty dollars a month for living expenses and I was eating into my meager savings so I wasn't able to finish the course.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you join the 52-20 Club?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I don't remember that.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever see any USO shows anywhere? What did you see?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, I remember seeing Irving Berlin for one, Frank Sinatra, Bob Hope.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Where was this?

Mr. Clifford:

Bob Hope was in Palermo. Irving Berlin was in the town of Foggia and I don't remember where I saw Frank Sinatra.

Mr. Misenhimer:

It was overseas, though, right?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you have any experience with the Red Cross?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes, the answer is yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was the experience?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, they would serve coffee and doughnuts of course.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did they charge you for them? Did you have to pay for your coffee and doughnuts?

Mr. Clifford:

As I recall it, no, I don't think so. I'm quite sure we didn't.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get home with any souvenirs?

Mr. Clifford:

I did bring back a pistol which was stolen in later years so I don't have that any more.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Any other souvenirs?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I took a lot of photographs. I had my camera sent to me after Sicily and took a lot of photographs during the next couple of years which I still have.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you ever hear Axis Sally on the radio?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, I did.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What did you think of her?

Mr. Clifford:

Enjoyed the music very much. You always took it for what it was: propaganda. It didn't hurt me but they hoped that it would, I guess. Good music, though.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now on April 12, 1945, President Roosevelt died. Did you all hear about that?

Mr. Clifford:

Yeah, we heard it a day or so after it happened. It was a sobering experience because of course you didn't know what Truman would do, what kind of President he would be.

Was quite a bit of doubt in the beginning as to whether he'd be a good President or not.

Turned out that he was but at the time we didn't know.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What was your worst day?

Mr. Clifford:

Day of the invasion.

Mr. Misenhimer:

What ribbons and medals did you get?

Mr. Clifford:

Had those medals with me today. Hold on a sec, getting out my discharge...Distinguished Unit Badge, Headquarters Army Air Force, that was January 16, 1945. European/African Middle Eastern Theater campaign ribbon. That's about it.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Did you get any battle stars?

Mr. Clifford:

I did but I don't recall what they were.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Do you know how many battle stars you got?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I don't recall.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Now, when you got home, could you see any changes in this country?

Mr. Clifford:

Well, not that I recall, no. Much the same on my parents' farm I think. Didn't change much. My first eighteen years there.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were overseas did you ever see that sign "Kilroy was here"?

Mr. Clifford:

Oh, yeah, sure. Saw a lot of those, yep.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you had any reunions?

Mr. Clifford:

I have never have, no.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Have you kept up with anybody you were in the service with?

Mr. Clifford:

No, I have not.

Mr. Misenhimer:

When you were there in Italy was it basically the same people all the time or did they

change them around quite a bit?

Mr. Clifford:

Pretty much the same people.

Mr. Misenhimer:

So you were there together for at least a couple of years?

Mr. Clifford:

Yes.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Anything else you recall from your time in World War II?

Mr. Clifford:

I don't think of anything else.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Well, Ernie, I want to thank you again for your time today.

Mr. Clifford:

OK.

Mr. Misenhimer:

Thank you for your service to our country.

Mr. Clifford:

Little loss of hearing but I'm getting old and a little forgetful now.

End of Interview

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