

Elmo Anderson

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ELMO ANDERSON WWI

We'll boot camp I went to Ray Mississippi. I road the train from Salt Lake when I was drafted to Ray Mississippi when I got to mississippi they lined me up they got my name showed me where my bed was where I was going to stay every night in one of those army huts and towards the night I got home sick and started to cry O I was home sick. We'll o YA I had A staff sergeant name Soleto he was from texas he was pretty good guy.

Boot camp wasn't all that serious they made me go on the fire rang and shoot all the rifles I was a good shot ya know I could shoot good they made use take hikes but not very many of them ya know cause right after I got down there they needed ten chauffeurs 20 of use took the test I was one of the ten who passed the test so I became the chauffeur of A jeep, I became the chauffeur for kernel Fordner so I didn't have to take hikes or anything just take him in the field or any where he wanted to go that jeep was A brand new jeep all I had to do was wash it ya know take care of it.

I was a private first class and after assigning me this jeep I became a tech sergeant.

We'll after boot training I was there 6 mounts and they needed men over sea's so I was called to fight I didn't know where I was going to go so they broke me down from tech sergeant back down the private again because they didn't need jeep people they needed fighting men so i went to the ship boarded the ship I left mississippi they sign you up in alphabetical order see Anderson an

L anderson and 2 other Anderson and people who names start with A's see from there I got on A train on the train I went to vietnam training exercises and from there they said well called our names out and made us sign a will ya know just in case you don't come back but we were going over sea's but we didn't know were we were going Japan our Europe Germany We'l we made out the will I told them I was married so if I didn't come back ya know every thing would go to my wife Zona well I did come back (chuckle).

After there we got on the ship it was funny it was way after dark they were forced to give us our barracks we slept in these barrack and got fed the Army was ya know good to feed ya and after dark they made us go to bed we waded a while then they called and made us march down to the water and up on this ship I said ot o were going somewhere they marched us up on this great big o ship. Steven this ship held over 2 thousand soldiers well they gave us beds just single beds they where on top of each other these two Andersons one was from Tremonton and one was from down here in Esclante we became pretty good friends they put us together the sergeant said get to bed well we was tired we went fast to bed well when we woke up got dressed walk around and the doors on the ship was soiled steal i walked on the deck I looked every direction and all their was was water I said were is all the land we were just in the middle of the ocean and we were headed over sea's it took us 17 days to cross the atlantic ocean because we would go this way then the other way because we were trying to dodge German submarines because if they found us they would sink us and then we would have drills on the ship so if we went over board if the ship was hit we

would have to go over board I told these two Anderson boys i said there names was keith and fred i said if we ever had to just over board look were I go and come and get me because I don't know how to swim they said O.K but we didnt have to go over board.

Ya know Steven I seen something as we were crossing the water something that was really thrilling to me we had ships behind us a convoy we seen a american destroyer ship come around us a regular battle ship it could really move it was ya know looking for anything that might be ya know dangerous to us see we'll as the days went one of our boys appendicitis and called one of the sips to come aside of our ship they put him on a destroyer I thought that was really neat.

Going over sea's i wasn't worried i was kind of trilled some of us would let our feet hang over the edge of the ship and we would see whales and proposes and it was really neat we land in naples italy we was in italy in a big camp in tents for 2 or 3 week doing training like hikes and rifle practice. Then we went to France and got on another ship to go to france and we went threw the mediterrian two little islands called sardinia and something i cant remember We'll we went to France south marcia France but as we was approaching we seen several ships we had been shank by something they were lying half masked out of the water see our own Navy have bombed the sea shore because the germans were all over them parts.

Ya know one time on our way over I seen something really neat I looked behind us at the convoy and one of our ships disappeared

I hollered for my leader and he said wait a second and it came up it just explained ya know that the world was round.

We'll we got within about fifty feet of the shore and they told us to go over board so we went over board on the ship to the landing crafts the landing crafts to us to the shore.

We went to what you call we march all the way ya know infantry we walk to Ursa to Leon France 2 or 3 hundred miles we hiked carrying our rifles on pretty nice roads this is were I seen my first dead germans and our air force had come along their see when we first landed the german 19 army started getting away from us they didn't have no trucks we'll the had trucks but no gas so they used hoarse and buggy to hold their equipment our air force destroyed almost the whole german army horses and all then the americans would come along with bull dosers and scrape everything off the road the road like horses and stuff then we'de go on.

we'll when I got to leon France we stayed their for about two night then about four in the morning I heard my name called they said get your pack ready and come go with us we got in these trucks and went to the front lines where the real action was we could hear the shooting it was just before we got out the trucks they gave us plenty of ammo we shot a 30-06 we'll we was on the front line.

We'll the first thing we got dropped off and climbed a steep hill man it was steep as just we got up the top the germans were there so we had to dip a fox hole and get in the hole and we

grabbed our little shovels and dug the hole but we couldn't dig fast enough so they said get back man shells were coming from all directions ya know that's on thing about it the one thing I'd do was obey my sergeant I listen to every word he said I 'd didn't know what to do but he always knew what to do so I listened. We'll it started to get dark I seen more dead germans than any where else.

We'll after that we didn't have to dig fox holes no more because right when we get some where the Germans would just start running so me and another kid I never knew his real name I just called him pollack because he was from poland but he was on our side ya know we took a fox hole together then it started to rain then we put canvass on top to keep the rain out we set there and all a sudden a big peace of shrapnell come threw that canvas and right by our feet so I reached down to throw it out but it was real hot so I dropped it so he reached down and threw it out. Then my buddy pollack said do you know how to pray and I said ya I know how to pray and he said will you pray for me and you for our safety I said sure I will, what he was he was a medixe ya know if any one got shot he would run over and give them first aid me and him got to be pretty good buddies.

We'll I prayed for the both of us. He said thanks then early in the morning the sergeant came along and said Anderson and his name he said come along were moving out and it was so dark you couldn't even see your feet and he said were going down off this

steep hill and you follow me and go single file and in order to stay together you reach ahead and grab the guy in front of you grab a hold of his belt so we wont loose each other so off the hill we went single file a hold of each others belt and when we got down to the bottom it was getting pretty light out and then we went over a little hill it was still A raining A little bit and then we came to A little stream of water and like I say we didn't have no rations or nothing because we were foot soldiers so we had K rations for breakfast at this little stream of water there were C rations and K rations C ration there was a cookie a bar of candy and a cigarette that's was all that was in there so what I did was eat he cookie and the throw the rest away.

O.K we started up the hill O my word just as we started up the hill you know we wern't in single file we just started up the hill like a bunch of sheep all at ounce Steven I never heard so much shooting in my life they were coming from every direction boom boom boom boom next thing I knew it I got hit in the back it knocked me down I went right straight down I just staid there and the firing just kept coming I had my steel helmet on I tried actually if I could have done I would have crawled in side of that thing because I could hear the bullets a coming so I thought may be I get hit by a great big one that will finish me off but the shooting quit all at ounce and just after it quit I looked around and it was getting day light about then I felt pretty good it hurt so bad we'll it burnt not hurt it burning someone hollered at me it was my buddy from the fox hole he said andy were you hurt I said in the back he

said A minute while I help these other guys those some of had them been hit by shrapnell had cut there legs off and hit in the back of the head he didn't know what hit him he was killed instantly. Anyway he came over to me when he got finished with all those other guys I was still laying on my belly he said O ya you got A hole right threw ya see I was dressed with my army shirt and A combat jacket and A rain coat and on top of that I had A blanket rolled up under my pack and that shrapnell had went threw everything right into my hide he just took his knife and cut me open and said he could see it he said all just give you first aid don't worry you'll be alright don't move, pretty soon hear came two guys carrying a stretcher picked me up on that and trotted across the field to a first aid house from there I went to the hospital that was november the 5 1944 and I was in the hospital from then until january the 23 with a wounded back.

I wondered if they were going to send me back to the front lines or send me home I got my orders to go back to the front lines I thought O know We'll I went back to the front lines. Then when I got shoot again shot in the leg that was in the later part of january o that was cold it was snowing deep we had snow caps on we got in A battle in the forest early in the morning this one german picked me off see they were organized in squads and 1 scout 2 scout 3 scot we'll I was 1 scout I went behind a pine tree and laid on my belly because their was a german in the tree a head of me just A shooting boy he was really shooting he started making for me and he finally hit me in the foot boy I let out A holler I didn't move I



laid their he came came out from behind that tree and wanted to finish me off when he came out I took that old m1 and it held 8 rounds in a clip I emptied the hole clip down he went. Then my company commander knew I was first scout and someone said it was Andy and he said were you hit I said in the leg he said turn around and go back remember were we seen that old cabin and I said no I don't and he said you turn around and go to that old german cabin and find it so I turn around and headed out and he patted me on the back and said good luke andy.

We'll I crawled for a ways then I decided to get up and try to walk when I got up I could feel the blood down in my boots I had over shoes on over my combat boots. I walked for a ways I didn't know were that cabin was then I seen some lights it was a jeep coming across the field so I decided to go faster in hopes that he would see me and sure enough he seen me so he stopped he knew that I have been wounded he said I don't know if I got room or not I have a whole bunch of wounded in hear he said I got room so he got out and grabbed me around the waist and set me up on the hood and he said now grab ahold of the windshield. We'll I was doing pretty good until he hit a ditch and I slid down in front of the the jeep he cussed me and said we'll hang boy did he cus me finally he put me back on and took me to the first aid station and I went to the hospital again I was their from the 1 of april till july. Then Steve I thought this makes A second time I got to the hospital and I got to the point that I really didn't care their was no use and I said my prayers but I began to get disgusted and I thought we'll

I don't know if i'm going to make it or not more more I got to the front lines the more I thought to heck with it to heck with it I wasn't afraid I got to the point were I wasn't afraid I seen them germans shooting so I just kept shooting back at them.

We'll the war was starting to come to A end so we ended up in nurremburg Germany that was a big city boy that was a big fight over that city nurrembeg was bombarded so back by the army and the air force we'll we walked and walked so much most of our guys were so tired we came to an old school and our company sergeant said you guys can go in here and catch some sleep and down the street was a german battalion so my commander came over to me and said will you keep guard over this street and keep an eye on this street with this machine gun he said no one wants to guard this street and I said I cant sleep anyway I set their all night but nothing happened so morning came along and he really thanked me cause he couldn't even get nobody to even take shifts with me. Then they lined us up and we walked threw the central part of nurremberg we were still getting sniped at but german soldiers were surrendering to us right and left I had german solidgers walk up to me and hand their guns to me. We'll I was looking for some souvenirs to send home.

We'll he assigned me first scout again I was to go ahead of everybody. Then I seen a ladder that went down into the ground and I said I'm going to look down in this hole he said go ahead and be careful I lit this candle and went down and I found about twenty soldiers in this hole they were ready to quit just waiting for

someone to come and get them I went down 2 more flights and all together I brought out over 200 Germans down in the hole to show their complete surrender they stacked their rifles in neat order and stacks after stacks of pistols so I took six pistols for souvenirs. It was for that that I received the bronzed star.

Well after Nuremberg surrendered then we went to this river and crossed on some trucks that had propellers or something. Then we came to a town that I don't know the name of it. Me and my company commander was always together and we became pretty good buddies we were in Austria we started searching houses for soldiers who had left the army and went home.

Then our little communications phone rang and our commander answered it and he said Andy I got good news Kesler in this area wants to surrender his troops and he said let's me and you walk to the edge of town then we came to this big highway and waited a pretty soon coming towards us was hundreds of hundreds of hundreds of German troops that had surrendered it was the greatest sight I have ever seen in my life it was May the 7 1944. I still didn't get to come home they took me to Germany for a whole year after the war and all we did was circle the country looking for weapons and I sent 3 or 4 rifles home. Then I made it home around Christmas time in 45 like I think I just barely made it Christmas eve.