

## VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

**Veteran's Name: Robert E. Baden**

**Interviewer: David Meyer (O'Shea)**

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**Transcriber: Carol Slezak**

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**Interviewer:** This is David Meyer, son of Earl D. Meyer, Company H, 379<sup>th</sup>. Today is August 1, 2009. And we're in the Biltmore Oklahoma Hotel in Oklahoma City. It is 1:08 pm, and today I have the great privilege of talking to: sir, could you say and spell your name?

**Robert Baden:** I'm Robert E. Baden. B-a-d-e-n. Same as Baden Baden in Germany, and Robert Baden-Powell, who formed the Boy Scouts. That's what my name is.

**Interviewer:** What branch of the service were you in?

**Robert Baden:** Army. All the way.

**Interviewer:** And what companies were you with?

**Robert Baden:** I joined the 95<sup>th</sup> Division after graduating from West Point, and gong to the basic officer's course at Fort Bennet. I joined the 95<sup>th</sup> Division at Fort Sam Houston in April of '43. And I was assigned to the 379<sup>th</sup> Infantry, and I was a platoon leader. I did many other things. I was a rifle platoon leader ... as an extra duty I was the regimental staff judge advocate. That means I had to try all the hoods who were in a little trouble. ... And did a lot of different things. And I don't want —.

**Interviewer:** Go ahead, I'm just getting a broad overview.

**Robert Baden:** Okay. Then I was in World War II with the 95th Division, 379<sup>th</sup> Infantry, from that day I joined them at Fort Sam Houston, until I was wounded on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April in 1945 in the Ruhr Pocket.

**Interviewer:** So just near the end of the war you got wounded.

**Robert Baden:** Right at the end of the war. I was evacuated to England ... and eventually to the United States, and the war was over by that time. My division was on its way to Japan, and then the bomb changed all that, and they didn't go anywhere. They were disbanded, and I had the good fortune of having two years at West Point as an instructor in infantry weapons and tactics for the cadets.

And had a child before I went overseas, and I had another one at West Point.

**Interviewer:** And did you stay in the service?

**Robert Baden:** Oh, absolutely. Let me go back on that. This is a little bit of origin that I think is important.

**Interviewer:** Good, because I was going to go into that.

**Robert Baden:** I was born and raised in Peoria, Illinois. And my old man —

**Interviewer:** What is your birth date?

**Robert Baden:** September 3, 1920. ... Well, my father had been in World War I. In the aviation, as a mechanic. And he was very pro-military, and I grew up in that atmosphere. I wanted to go to college, of course, and those days when I was growing up everybody had not been going to college, because the immigration in the United States, the building in the United States, college graduates were much, much harder to find then, then today. And I wanted to go to either be a

lawyer, or to go to West Point. My father and my uncle, I had an influential uncle, and he was able to —.

**Interviewer:** So you had an influential uncle, so they were able to get you into West Point?

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, he formed a task force to get me an appointment. Headed by a major from WWI. And I got my appointment, and because I had a principle appointment, I didn't have to take the mental test. I went to Bradley Polytechnic Institute for a year, and submitted my grades. I went into West Point.

**[TIME 5:13]**

**Interviewer:** And how old were you when you went into West Point?

**Robert Baden:** I was 19. I guess I was 19. I was almost 19.

**Interviewer:** So you go into West Point, you're a cadet. What's that like in West Point?

**Robert Baden:** West Point is the greatest institution in the world. I'm prejudiced, but it's the truth [laughs]. When I went in as a plebe I was pretty well prepared, I think. This is not bragging, I think I had a positive and a happy attitude. They didn't get me down [laughs]. I would smile rather than do anything. And my nickname at West Point was O'Toole (PH).

**Interviewer:** O'Toole?

**Robert Baden:** Because I was a plebe, sitting at the mess hall table. The first classman in charge said – there were three plebes at the end – to me he said, What's your name? I said, My name is Baden, sir.

What kind of name is that?

I said, That's a German name. My mother's name was Sullivan.

He said, Okay. Well we're not going to call you Mr. Baden. We're not going to call you Mr. Sullivan. We're going to call you Mr. O'Toole. And to my advantage, I think, I was known as Mr. O'Toole, even when they were hazing me.

**Interviewer:** That's a great story. Now, how long do you stay at West Point?

**Robert Baden:** Well, West Point was a four-year course. The war was on. We were to graduate in June of '43. By the time we finished with '42, we were terribly short on man power at all grades, including lieutenant, and so West Point was changed from a four-year course to a three-year course. We were the class that had 3 ½ years, so that the next class could get out in three.

And the procedure was to select the branch you wanted to serve in. And it was like a score sheet. We had 400 infantry ... we were able to request assignment to the branch of our choice. And as long as there was enough of those spaces available to West Pointers you were assigned to that.

**Interviewer:** What made you choose the infantry?

**Robert Baden:** Oh, that's a long story.

**Interviewer:** Go ahead.

**Robert Baden:** Well, I was very militarily oriented, I think, and the war was on, obviously. And the anti-aircraft artillery of the Coast Guard were trying very hard to get more and more officers into the anti-aircraft. And the question was whether or not that was really a branch that you wanted to serve in at that time. Well, first class year, part of our curriculum was to go for two weeks as an officer with one of the divisions. So they sent me down to Fort Bragg with the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry

Division, and I and the company that I served in was commanded by a fireball. Young, really great first lieutenant who just loved the army, loved the infantry, and he loved me. I was there for two weeks, and he said, You've got to choose the infantry. I'll be so unhappy with you if you don't choose the infantry. They need you.

**Interviewer:** And what was his name?

**Robert Baden:** I don't remember his name. That's the terrible thing. I wish I had. There's another historical thing. That was my first job in the infantry – acting platoon leader, 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, Fort Bragg.

**[TIME 10:02]**

And through the years, to Vietnam, my highest infantry branch assignment was, I was the chief of staff of the 9<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in Vietnam, the same division I served in for that influential young lieutenant.

**Interviewer:** Full circle.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. ... So I don't know if I have you onboard or —.

**Interviewer:** That's great, that's perfect. That's exactly the sort of details you want to be able to dwell on. So you come back from Fort Bragg and you go back to West Point. And now this fireball has inspired you.

**Robert Baden:** Well, there's a lot more in my past than that. My wife-to-be, and I was a first classman, and I'd already asked her to marry me, I believe. No, no I hadn't. Anyway, we came back from the first class trip. It was just before fall started, and I asked her to marry me, and she said yes. So, why'd I bring that up?

**Interviewer:** That's okay, things come up.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. So then, also, we got married graduation day. We were married at the Catholic chapel. The war was on, but every half hour there would be a wedding. And I was graduated at 11:30 in the morning — I think it was 11:30. We waited a while, we waited until 3:30 in the afternoon [laughs]. And we get married. The guy ahead of me was Flip Flnelli (PH), from my company, and the guy after me was Jim Dempsey (PH), of my company. And Jim Dempsey's one of the guys who's interested in doing all these biographies.

**Interviewer:** Oh, good.

**Robert Baden:** And we had a very short honeymoon, and we went to Fort Benning to the basic advance course, and I had been assigned to the 95<sup>th</sup>. And I joined them at Fort Sam Houston, and my wife joined me down there. And after not too long a time, we knew that she was pregnant, so she went home to mom and daddy, and I finished all the maneuvers in the United States. And in those days when a child was born you didn't get — you couldn't take leave if you were, wherever you were. There was a war on.

My child was born on November 19<sup>th</sup>. I was out in the desert on maneuvers.

**Interviewer:** You were at Camp Coxcomb.

**Robert Baden:** You know it.

**Interviewer:** Sure, I know Camp Coxcomb. So when you joined the 95<sup>th</sup> as a platoon leader, what are your duties there?

**Robert Baden:** Well, I was assigned to the 95<sup>th</sup> Division, during let's say, whatever the date was in, early April, let's say. Those of us who were West Point graduates were regular officers also, and we were promoted as a group. Promoted from second lieutenant to first

lieutenant. The problem was that they waited until we had been in the division for a few weeks, then they promoted us to first lieutenant. And all the other second lieutenants would sit around saying, Those damn West Pointers, I'm working hard and they get promoted.

**Interviewer:** Yes.

**Robert Baden:** So if I arrived as a first lieutenant, my first assignment would have been a company executive officer or something. So, I went in as second lieutenant, and I was a platoon leader. But I had all kinds of jobs. I became battalion S2 there for a while. And then the S2 was in school, I served as the S3. All kinds of jobs.

**[TIME 14:55]**

**Interviewer:** Which one of those is intelligence?

**Robert Baden:** That's S2. S3 is operations. And so I did both [laughs].

**Interviewer:** What?

**Robert Baden:** It was a lot of fun. Oh, I told you I also was staff judge advocate.

**Interviewer:** There?

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, that's extra duty. When somebody in the regiment went AWOL, and things like that.

**Interviewer:** Do you remember any case?

**Robert Baden:** No ... They're mostly AWOL and disciplinary things. Special Court, it's not something you put them in jail for. You give extra duty and things like that. But I did [laughs], by the time I'd been there a while I got to know every quote hood unquote in the regiment. Now these guys would have disciplinary problems to their company. In my book they weren't hoods. None of them were.

And so, I'll jump ahead.

I took over C Company from position of lieutenant. I took over C Company, the 379<sup>th</sup>. Had been in I Company. [*Sounds like – “that Tank Commander chap”...*] brought me over there. And who was my runner and my bodyguard? Shorty Hallock (PH), who was one of my hoods. And he was the most faithful son of a gun you'd ever find in your life. He and I were wounded by the same aircraft strafing.

I heard that fellow talk about C-47. I was on a C-47, you're goddamn right. And I was – and Shorty kept wanting a cigarette. He was my runner. He was wrapped in a body cast or whatever, couldn't smoke. I was feeding him cigarettes. And I was delighted to be on that C-47, regardless of what that guy Smith said. I went back to England as a – anyway that's jumping ahead.

But anyway, there's an example, a little vignette of.... There's always a job.

Lieutenants do everything they're told.

In a regiment there's three battalions, there are three lieutenant colonels, there are a bunch of lieutenants. Now everything.. All the social things we did were by regiment, and so all the lieutenants and captains in the regiment got to know each other socially, not strictly within the rigors or the structure of the company battalion. And so I knew all the lieutenants in the regiment, and the captains. They all knew me, etc.

**Interviewer:** How many lieutenants would a regiment have?

**Robert Baden:** Well, it would be 30? That's a battalion. No, battalion had four lieutenants per company, so 16...and so we had 60 in a regiment.

**Interviewer:** Okay, so just so I understand the structure, above lieutenant in a regiment, who's giving you orders?

**Robert Baden:** Company commander.

**Interviewer:** So the company commander is telling all these lieutenants what to do.

**Robert Baden:** He's telling the four lieutenants in his company. Then you've got the battalion commander above.

**Interviewer:** And what rank is the battalion commander?

**Robert Baden:** Lieutenant colonel. And the company commanders are captains. And the executive officer is a major.

**Interviewer:** And above the regimental commander is a lieutenant colonel?

**Robert Baden:** The regimental commander is a colonel. And then he reports to a two-star general. The one-star, that's another story, but they're assistant division commanders.

**Interviewer:** Thanks for making that clear. I learn things on the fly, and when I have a chance to have someone explain something to me, that's great.

So now you're at Fort Sam Houston and you're in a unique position because from what I understand from some of the enlisted men, there's not a lot of mingling between the officers and the enlisted men.

**[Time 20:07]**

**Robert Baden:** Bullshit.

**Interviewer:** Bullshit?

**Robert Baden:** Yes.

**Interviewer:** Okay, good. Tell me.

**Robert Baden:** Those guys are crazy. What the hell, how do you think a good commander, how the hell do you think I could be a good commander if I didn't know every goddamn thing that I knew of and found about if I didn't know and talk to these soldiers?

The biggest thing that soldier has is his name. And if you go around to your soldiers and you can call them by name, that's one of the first steps up in being a good leader.

And this bullshit about – it's absolu...so far from true, that it makes me want to upchuck.

**Interviewer:** So you're a good commander. [21:07] Did you see examples of commanders who didn't weren't so diligent? Because you're trained in West Point.

**Robert Baden:** I'm not going to go into that much.

**Interviewer:** I'm not asking for names. But that's one of the things the Veterans History Project likes to know – the difference between good and bad leadership. And you just gave me a great example of good leadership. With bad leadership, was it just a matter of them not bothering?

**Robert Baden:** I don't know. I really...

I know... that the reason I got command of my company - I served as a platoon leader through Metz and into Saarlautern, across the river Saar. And I was the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion. The 1<sup>st</sup> battalion eventually came across the open fields coming off of the bridge at Saarlautern. And I went over to make contact with the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion... Here was the battalion commander Toby Philbin (PH). He said, Hi Bob, how you doing? Are you

still a platoon leader? And I said, " Yeah." He said, "Well I think I'm going to get you over here."

Because I'd been one of his favorite lieutenants, even though he was in another battalion. Not too long, within a day or two, I was in command of C Company. I was in Command of C Company because the company commander was an utter failure. Now why? All kinds of things. And in modern day history, going to the reunions, talking to the guys that were in my company – those who were there before I got there — they all knew he was a loser. Soldiers know.

**Interviewer:** Soldiers know. People talk about you always with great respect. ... But that's great, thanks for digressing.

**Robert Baden:** [24:00] You want to come to modern days, the same subject?

**Interviewer:** Sure.

**Robert Baden:** I think it's terribly important. Jeffrey, my Jeffrey who was a successful, young, first lieutenant infantry in Vietnam. He'd been in college, specializing in women and parties. So I took the money away, and he volunteered for the draft. And he was by god going to do well. He went in and he did. And he went to OCS, and chose the infantry. Went to Hawaii with the outfit coming over to Vietnam.

**Interviewer:** What infantry was he in?

**Robert Baden:** He ended up in the Americal Division. He was 11<sup>th</sup> Brigade, destined for Vietnam.

**[TIME 25:00]**

I was already in Vietnam, deputy G3 of the army over there. And he could ask for a deferment because his old man was already over there.

There's the Sullivan Act or something, going back to WWII.

His buddy said, Jeffrey, don't put in for a deferment. Because if you get deferred and you leave here, in four months your old man is no longer with these guys he's training with, you'll go in there as a replacement platoon leader.

Where he was, he was one of the group. They knew each other. Now fast forward. His battalion commander was one of my officers when I was in the Pentagon, when he came out of there. And he spoke highly of Jeffrey. And Jeffrey spoke highly of him. And this dang commander was having reunions of the people in his battalion, particularly the lieutenants. And when Jeffrey died, Jim Franklin (PH), his battalion commander, came down to the funeral and gave the eulogy.

It gets me teary-eyed. That commander knew his troops. The thing about that time frame was that in that war battalion commanders could get into all these fighting areas in a helicopter, whereas the company commanders couldn't get in them by jeep on the ground. And this has been my theory: the battalion commander's word is that ... they did a hell of a great job in leading the young officers in their battalion.

Good leadership is not yelling and screaming. And all these stories about hazing and stuff. Hazing is – we did not haze. At West Point we hazed but it was in a gentlemanly way.

**Interviewer:** For instance, they called you O'Toole, a form of hazing but in a gentle way.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. ...



**Interviewer:** So as the judge advocate —.

**Robert Baden:** Staff judge advocate. I don't mean to be [rude], but...

**Interviewer:** No, that's fine, the correction. Because as they say, the god or the devil is in the specifics. So as staff judge advocate you were able to see a whole range of people that others might see as problems, but you could see them as human beings, and you could get to know them.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. But all this was extra duty, you see. I was responsible for that goddamn platoon, but I was running around arranging courts-martial.

**Interviewer:** Was this extra duty you wanted to take on, or was it assigned?

**Robert Baden:** It was assigned, because I was one of the few lieutenants who had any legal training. And at West Point we had a full year – a good, solid military justice training.

But that is a small part of my life. I only brought it up I guess to say that I had a feeling for the hoods [laughs], some other guys didn't. It's true!

**Interviewer:** And that made you a better leader.

**Robert Baden:** I don't know about that...

....

**Interviewer:** So I know at Fort Sam Houston they have Louisiana maneuvers.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, well that's when Robin, my wife, my beautiful wife, was pregnant. And we thought we were going to come off the Louisiana maneuvers and be stationed at Fort Polk. And I went down ... and I found a classmate, he and his wife were there and they were going to vacate this house, and I went to the realtor to have Robin join me down there. By that time we were ordered to desert maneuvers. So my wife stayed up in New York and had the baby in Manhattan.

**[TIME 30:37]**

**Interviewer:** So she's in Manhattan having the baby, and you're?

**Robert Baden:** I was doing all the rest of the stuff. It was fine. After we got back from the desert in early '44 we went to Indiantown Gap military reservation. I'm sure you probably got a lot of guys who have talked about Indiantown Gap, because oh gosh I guess there are more marriage pairs organized there than anywhere around. Because the people there were so damn friendly, and so helpful. Apparently...a lot of couples got organized there.

....

**Interviewer:** Indiantown Gap is where the ASTP guys come in. And I know from talking to both the infantry up to that time and the ASTP guys, that there was some friction between the two groups. One infantryman said to me, Yeah, these whiz kids coming in. People like Paul Madden would talk about it.

**Robert Baden:** Was Paul ASTP (*from the Army Specialized Training Program*)?

**Interviewer:** Yes. And he talked about how much respect he had toward the people who had been there. And how it was to come in and have to blend, and it took a little time for everyone to get accepted.

**Robert Baden:** Now my role – I don't know if Paul remembers this or not, but you talk about jobs that lieutenants do? When the ASTP people came in in large numbers, I don't know if we've got 500, or 300, but we filled up. And the regimental headquarters: Baden come up here. Organized the company to do all the necessary training for these ASTP so they're qualified to go overseas.

So I got a bunch of lieutenants together, and I trained all of these bright a-hoos, and I loved it. And when I got back to my company, we had some great ASTP guys. And through all these reunions I know, I would assume, that these guys know that I respect them highly, and that I thought they were terribly successful.

**Interviewer:** The ASTP people I talk to always talk about the leadership with great respect. They talk about how it was to come in and have to blend in, and it took a little bit of time for everyone to get accepted. But they felt that once they were in good physical condition the regular infantry accepted them. ... So you're the ones who arranged for their training — did the training.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, we'd ... and rammed the infiltration course, and make sure their marksmanship was up. We had to be sure that they had attained individually the same level of preparedness and training to go overseas like the rest of us. It was not anything to embarrass them or anything else.

**[TIME 35:02]**

**Interviewer:** And how much time were you given to do this?

**Robert Baden:** I have no recollection – whether it was a month, three weeks, I don't know.



**Interviewer:** And then they went on the West Virginia mountain maneuvers, too.

**Robert Baden:** Oh yeah. They went right into them. I went on the West Virginia maneuvers.

**Interviewer:** Did you?

**Robert Baden:** Oh God, yeah.

**Interviewer:** What was that like?

**Robert Baden:** It was great. It was wonderful. I was not a mountain climber, but I'm serious, we had more good training in that division. We went down to that mountain area and – we learned to mountain climb. There was some scaling, but I didn't – we did a little scaling, you know? Oh, we did a lot of [things]. We did rappelling. We learned to rappel. And we had the rope bridges across the canyon. Three ropes. And we did all that. And we ended up the period that we were exercising – let's say maybe it was two weeks, I don't know. And we ended up with a mountain river crossing, and scaling that cliffside, and assembling and attacking that position. ...

And I have a picture of me in a backpack for the mountaineers. Ever seen one? It's completely different. Whereas a normal backpack is sort of snug around your shoulders, this backpack was down like this.

**Interviewer:** A triangle going down.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, down to a rib sort of thing.

**Interviewer:** Around your waist.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. I'm not doing a good job, but ... the weight at your hips.

**Interviewer:** Your hips, your center of gravity. You know, your descriptions are so good, I'm learning with everything you say.

**Robert Baden:** Keep up the flattery [laughing].

**Interviewer:** No, it's true.

**Robert Baden:** After we did those West Virginia maneuvers, we were a pretty goddamn good outfit. I believed that. So we must all have been pretty good.

....

The secretary of the army came out, and we did all kinds of demonstrations for him. And I believe it was June 14, which is Infantry Day in those days, June 14, and boy we did live fire exercises. And I was proud of what we were doing. I was still just a lieutenant.

**Interviewer:** And you're about 23 years old?

**Robert Baden:** At that time when we were in the ... I was 23, 24 the next September.

**Interviewer:** So the secretary of the army—.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. ... We really worked our tails off go get ready for his visit, and we were a pretty proud outfit.

**Interviewer:** As part of that, I just a movie version of someone on a stand, and people marching in front of him. What does he actually do in real life?

**Robert Baden:** Well, it's organized, of course. I can't tell you what all we did that time, because .... we were the ones out doing the field demonstrations for him. So we did live fire exercises; he was in the grandstand watching it. But I'm sure, yes, we had a parade for him, sure. But I was in the field.

**Interviewer:** And again, which regiment are you?

**Robert Baden:** Three seventy-ninth.

**Interviewer:** And you're the platoon leader.

**Robert Baden:** And company commander. Platoon leader in Company I. And I was the company commander of C Company.

**Interviewer:** My father is in Company H.

**Robert Baden:** I know Earl. I didn't know Earl in the regiment, but I got to know him at the reunions. And he was the jeep driver for the company commander of H Company. And I can't remember the company commander of H Company – he was a gnarled old shit.

**[TIME 40:20]**

That's a terrible [way to put it], don't put that in the interview. But gnarled is the only word I can come up with. And your father was his driver. And the company commander was a good guy, but introspective sort of guy. He wasn't ... and I was a lieutenant, for Christ's sake, you know.

Anyway, I liked him. But at the reunions your old man ... we had a good comradery. And your mother —?

**Interviewer:** His second wife.

**Robert Baden:** Boy, I was impressed with her, too.

**Interviewer:** She was wonderful. She died just after the Chicago 2006 reunion. ...

**Robert Baden:** Well, your father and I, our talking seemed to be oriented around air terminals, because we seemed to be flying in and out at the same time. No, we also, we sat at the table at dinner together and stuff. And I liked your father very much, but I was really impressed with that step-mother. Jesus. Not only smart, but she was just a great, wholesome...

**Interviewer:** She's salt of the earth. She was — strong backbone, strong feeling of respect. She liked to laugh. She would stand her ground. ...

**Robert Baden:** Jeep drivers, they see a lot. The jeep drivers see a lot. My jeep driver didn't make this reunion, Jerry Andrews (PH). He's a good man. He was my jeep driver. And it's a great relationship, you know?

**Interviewer:** I know there's a Mr. Newburn who Kid Schaeffer talks about. And Mr. Newburn came up to me at my first reunion, in Baton Rouge, and said, I don't want to talk about me; I just want to talk about my commander. I was his jeep driver, and he was the finest man.

....

So now you're at Indiantown Gap. Are you still judge advocate?

**Robert Baden:** Listen, to put that job into perspective, it's like: let's say you're a medical aid man in the hospital. But you have the extra duty of taking care of something down the street, on call or as needed in addition to your job here.

**[TIME 45:19]**

So the staff judge advocate job was extra, at night, et cetera. I only bring it up because it's one of the important jobs, and it's not easy to find a first lieutenant who's trained in the military justice system. So it's

a very small thing insofar as what I was doing. I was a platoon leader... I got into combat, and regiment called and said, I have some cases for you. I said, You can shove 'em up your ass. I'm fighting a goddamn war. You get one of those guys back there to do that.

I'm serious. I didn't say [those words] to the captain, but I said, No.

....

**Interviewer:** So from Indiantown Gap, you get the call that you're going to disembark and go to Myles Standish?

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. Myles Standish, where'd you get that?

**Interviewer:** I've heard a few things.

**Robert Baden:** Well, it's a part of my service in the army. Though I've got to tell you that we lived with a family in ... wonderful family. We had a bedroom and the baby. We had our baby, Chris (PH). And they were a local family, lived in a beautiful stone-hewn house across the street from a stone-hewn water mill. And the mother and father were really great people. He delivered bread for a big bakery there.

So when we'd come home at night I'd come home to my beautiful wife, our baby, and I'd learn to play pinochle with [the host]. And .... in our little marriage that was a wonderful thing for my wife, who was new to the army, just had a baby, she went through all that shit, but she was there. The Pennsylvania Dutch people were tremendous. I think that our division history should point out that we were so well received and helped by the Pennsylvania Dutch. They're not all Pennsylvania Dutch, but.

**Interviewer:** I understand. I know a little of that area.

**Robert Baden:** This is Annville. We were in Annville. ... South Oak St. South White Oak.

**Interviewer:** How did you find out you were going overseas?

**Robert Baden:** We knew. We knew we were in line.

**Interviewer:** You knew you were in line.

**Robert Baden:** Oh, absolutely. That was why we were at Indiantown Gap. We knew we were going overseas. Of course, we never knew the exact date of D-Day. But D-Day occurred when I was out in the field on training exercises. All D-Day. And we were needed over there, but we couldn't be accommodated. We were not needed in the D-Day. So we went out to Myles Standish, and we went in later.

**[TIME 50:05]**



**Interviewer:** Since you mention that, so you're out in the field, how does the word about D-Day come? And do people cheer, or what do they do?

**Robert Baden:** We knew it. We knew it.

**Interviewer:** I know. But the day it came, how did you find out and how did people react?

**Robert Baden:** Then it was a matter of making arrangements. It was a matter of getting my beautiful wife and daughter back in the hands of her parents. She was going to live in New York City. And we [laughs] – there was a war, gas rations, et cetera. But we had her father's car [laughs]. That's how I got back and forth from Indiantown Gap to the house. I had the old man's car. So I took them in and left them. Kissed them goodbye. And then I came back to division.

Oh, I can add some class to this. By this time her folks ... anyway, their kids were all gone, they moved into Sutton Place. Robin's folks. They had a helluva nice apartment there.

**Interviewer:** Do you remember the address?

**Robert Baden:** Forty-Second Place. Eldorado 56231 was the telephone.

**Interviewer:** That's a nice neighborhood.

**Robert Baden:** You're goddamn right. And it was under the rent control, and they had a magnificent ground level, 59<sup>th</sup> at Sutton Place.

**Interviewer:** I was a New York City cabdriver for 7 ½ years. So that's how I know Sutton Place.

**Robert Baden:** Oh, First Avenue there. Those merchants on First Avenue opposite Sutton Place, they were the community. They were the foundation of that community as far as I was concerned. They were the same people, they provided the services — drug store, newspaper, cleaning. I took my cleaning over to that cleaning establishment on First Street. My name's Bob Baden, B-a-d-e-n.

'Okay, Mr. Baden.'

For all the years my mother-in-law and father-in-law lived on Sutton Place, they'd go into the cleaners, they would ask for their clothes by the name of Baden [laughs].

That's a true story. But I think it reflects, or I felt I learned about New York City. And I was from Peoria; I spent a lot of time up in New York — West Point, teaching. New York is a collection of little neighborhoods. And there are people out in the United States who have no comprehension of that. ... And you know when you go from one neighborhood to the other.

**Interviewer:** And sometimes when you go from one end of the block to the other. On the Upper West Side, one end of the block was safe, but on the other end of the block you watched out.

Now I tell taxi stories. And I'm asked when I drove. I tell them '77-'85, and they say, Oh that's a classic time. That's when people would try to rob you all the time.

We didn't think of it as classic. We thought of it as trying to save your skin.

Anyway, so how did you get the order to embark? You move your family back to New York City, and then you get on?



**Robert Baden:** Bus or whatever we took. I don't think we took a train. We went up to Myles Standish.

**Interviewer:** And you're there for a few days. Is your job to get the men ready to get on the boat?

**Robert Baden:** Yes, but the thing is everything from that point on was done insofar as we had to do to get these individuals and their baggage aboard the ship.

**[Time 55:01]**

Our jeeps and all that stuff was gone as far as I knew. And all the lieutenants were in BOQ [Bachelor Officer Quarters], and there's a crap game down the [laughs]. And I had the – one thing, if you're married on payroll you get an allotment for your wife and kid. And I shipped out \$25 or something, whatever I needed for food. And so we get to Myles Standish, and at one point they said, Oh, there's a craps game, or blackjack, I'm not sure.

In any event, these guys, other lieutenants, had been pretty good, and I lost my ass. So I had to call Robin and I said, I won't do it again, send me \$25 [laughs].

Oh, and my grandfather's sister, my great aunt, lived in Scituate, south of Boston, down on the cape, in a Colonial, an old, old, Colonial. Magnificent place. Her husband was a lawyer in Boston. They lived on Beacon Hill. In the summer they were down at the big house they had there. So I went to visit her. I'd seen her over the years off and on, but I hitchhiked over to my great aunt's house. She cooked me some lobster, then I hitchhiked back, and then went overseas.

Later when we were stationed in West Point, I think I'll take my wife and my little baby Chris to that same place up there.

There was a sense of recognition when I said Scituate. Is that —?

**Interviewer:** I did children's theater around the area. In New York City, I was part of the oldest children's theater company, and we would travel around and do shows all around Boston and the Massachusetts area. So there's some recognition.

So now, what ship are you on going overseas?

**Robert Baden:** We're on the America.

**Interviewer:** Which used to be the West Point.

**Robert Baden:** Two-thirds of the division was on that. I think that's right. A lot of people. I don't know if we had any of our jeeps or not. But I knew that I was the abandon ship's (CK) officer, ran around with a life vest on, and, again, at that stage the unit integrity is high, except that all you got is you and your guys. And they got a place to sleep, and we got certain duties. But that's about all you can do.

**Interviewer:** As an officer, did you stay on the deck?

**Robert Baden:** I have no idea, except that we had dormitories, sort of, for the officers – bunks. ... [Talks about there being so many troops that they were stacked on the ship in layers.]

**Interviewer:** Every day would you call your men together?

**Robert Baden:** Nope, there wasn't enough room. I'm positive we didn't do that. And I'm not sure how we handled abandon ship (CK). Because at that time I was the abandon ship (CK) officer for the ship. I was running around screaming at people.

**Interviewer:** Just doing drills?

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. I guess we did drills. I've been on so many goddamn ships in my life I can't remember.

**Interviewer:** Do you remember anything about the trip across?

**Robert Baden:** Yeah, it was pretty good. Straight – bang. But we were scared shitless because in the Channel there were examples of American ships being sunk. Now I don't know when we went over where that situation stood. But looking back in history I remember we lost, oh my God, one ship with a whole regiment on it and things like that.

**[TIME 1:00:16]**

So anyway, what that was for us as individuals, in my case [as an officer], I didn't have a platoon, I moved around to do things. And my company commander didn't have a company to move around and do things. They had to sleep, get up, eat mess when they're told to, use the ... And we had some drills. It was a matter of getting our ass overseas. And the greatest day was pulling into Liverpool. That's where we got off.

**Interviewer:** And what was that like?

**Robert Baden:** Well, it was great – there was England! And we went down by Manchester, Winchester, and we trained and stuff but it was

primarily getting ready to go across the Chanel. We had to keep them from — keep them exercising and all that.

**Interviewer:** I know some people were at Camp Barton Stacey —.

**Robert Baden:** Well, we got off — Barton Stacey was, I thought, the railroad station. But maybe we were there.

**Interviewer:** So one gentleman I'm thinking of was on some estate. I forget what he called it. ...

**Robert Baden:** I'll give you an irony. When I was wounded in the Ruhr Pocket, the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, went to a field hospital, air vacs waited, to England. Where did I end up? Right outside of Winchester. Liverpool Winchester. ...

My runner, he was a great kid. He was one of the hoods. And he was my runner and he was really good. He'd protect me. I was the old man, see? He got the hell shot out of him when I got shot. He had at least eight or 10 holes in him; they had him all wrapped up. We went to the British Hospital. ...

And they operated on my foot and stuff. And I said, I want to go to the enlisted men's hospital. So, we go over there [laughing], I'm looking for Shorty Hallock. He came whistling. He said, Hey Chief, they didn't hit a bone, I'm fine. ...

English girls [laughs].

Oh Shorty.

Of all these years of our reunions I've never been able to find Shorty and get his tail here to this reunion.

**Interviewer:** Why doesn't he want to come?

**Robert Baden:** I've not been in contact with him after the war. I just know he's from Chicago.

**Interviewer:** That's another great story. So when you're at Winchester for how many ever weeks, when do you first see evidence of war? Some people say it's when they went into London.

**Robert Baden:** My West Point roommate by this time had transferred to OSS, Office of Strategic Something. Anyway, he became airborne qualified, I went into see him and he was in great shape. I won't go into that.

I don't know. The big thing I do know is the food in London was the worst damn food I'd ever eaten in my life in those days. So far as seeing damage, maybe I did. Winchester, that area, is beautiful. It was beautiful and it's still beautiful.

**Interviewer:** I went there a few years ago, went to the Cathedral. We took a day trip from London. Went to see Stonehenge, then Winchester, then Bath, on Christmas day. ... The Winchester Cathedral wasn't heated; it reminded me of that big cathedral in Metz. When it's cold you just sit there in your coat.

So, your job in England now is to keep the men ready to go overseas. Did you leave on liberty ships from Dover?

**[TIME 1:05:38]**

**Robert Baden:** We left – right in the vicinity of Winchester. We left from the same ports that they were invading left from. And we were on, I guess they were liberty ships. They were ships for personnel, and we went down the side again to a landing craft, still doing that. And on the entrance by this time, I don't know if they wanted to make sure we

didn't get our feet wet, but it was all not under fire. It was a regular ship, we didn't take long.

**Interviewer:** So you get to Omaha Beach, and what do you do?

**Robert Baden:** We went inland a short ways and set up camp. I'm not sure how we did all that. The World Series was on. I think that's right. And Patton was racing across France and Germany, and Patton said, I ran out of gas and fuel. And so we set up the Red Ball Highway. So they took my regiment, took all the trucks but one per battalion I guess, to deliver food. And they took whatever men they needed, and we formed some truck companies.

Here again, what does the lieutenant do? The put me in charge of a truck company. Now wait a minute, wait a minute, that's not true. I was the S3 of a battalion of trucks. And we set up our little end route, headquarters near Paris Gardens ...

**Interviewer:** Versailles?

**Robert Baden:** Yes, Versailles.

**Interviewer:** So the starting point is near Normandy. That's where you load up.

**Robert Baden:** Wherever they had the stuff, we took it forward. And then when Patton got enough supplies up there we broke down our Red Ball units, went back, got our units together, we went up to fight.

**Interviewer:** I have one question about the Red Ball. They drive day and night, don't they?

**Robert Baden:** You could only drive the vehicles so many hours safely. So these people had to have their breaks. And those breaks, by and large, were back at the base camp.

**Interviewer:** At night where there any pin lights? How did they see? Moonlight?

**Robert Baden:** I don't know. Because we had air superiority for god's sake. So I don't know. ... It's not something I even remember.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So they disband the Red Ball —.

**Robert Baden:** Send us back to our units, put our trucks back where they came from.

**Interviewer:** And where do you go now?

**Robert Baden:** We went up to the Moselle River line at Metz. And basically what we did is we went in and relieved the 5<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division that had the [inaudible] knocked out of it.

**[TIME 1:10:06]**

And my company, our first stop was south of Metz, across the Moselle. We went over and relieved some units on the east side of the Moselle where the 5<sup>th</sup> had been, but the 5<sup>th</sup> couldn't get into Metz. And I'm not sure how long we were there, but I got some body bags coming down off the hills there, and then we went back.

**Interviewer:** Are you near Fort Driant?

**Robert Baden:** I'll tell you about that. Then we came back across the river onto the west side of the river. That was where the 379<sup>th</sup>, as you look at the way the troops were aligned, the 379<sup>th</sup> was on the west side of the river, from the right-most boundary of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, on up.

Guess who was at the right-most boundary? At Ancy-sur-Moselle, and I was there with the platoon to patrol and occupy. And I&R, Intelligence and Recognizance platoon, was there, and [interrupted by passerby].

**Interviewer:** So you are on the far-right boundary at Ancy-sur-Moselle.

**Robert Baden:** Yes. Have you seen the sand table here at the museum?

**Interviewer:** No, but I have Joe Januskiewicz's book here. As you talk I'll look it up.

**Robert Baden:** ... We were outposting on the Moselle as far south as you get in the division ... and I lost some people. Fort Driant, they were shooting the hell out of it. We'd come out, and we did too much fooling around, and they'd start shooting at us. We had a French intelligence group down there, I'm not sure whose territory it was, but I went in to visit with them and ... But anyway, one guy there he had a cold or something. They were doing a heat cup treatment all over his back, and that was to suck all the bad stuff out [laughs].

**Interviewer:** So you walk in on that?

**Robert Baden:** They were like, Come in! And then also they gave me some old wine. And goddamn did that hit me. Here I'm simon-pure, on C-rations – I don't think we were able to bring food down, because we were under complete observation.

**Interviewer:** [Shows map from book, they discuss, but it's not the right map.]

**Robert Baden:** It's Ancy-sur-Moselle, but we were, we were outpost in. We lost a man. Had one killed from fire from Fort Driant, I guess.

**[TIME 1:15:36]**

**Interviewer:** Anyway, so when you're there, when you say outposting, what is your job?

**Robert Baden:** Keeping somebody there, first. Keeping somebody there, and patrolling. And they went to give us these idiotic directions: I

want you to patrol north, and you gotta use the whole platoon, because we don't want these patrols real weak [etc.]. So I woke the whole damn platoon in the middle of the night, and said, Keep yourself quiet. Quiet, quiet, quiet! And I'd take a part of the platoon, three or four men, and I'd patrol ahead. Then I'd bring the goddamn platoon forward. It was the most idiot direction I've ever had. Fortunately, I didn't lose anybody because of it, but I learned some guys got the cough [fakes cough], in the middle of the night. Get your ass out of here.

**Interviewer:** Well, that's interesting.

**Robert Baden:** Well, that's true, you know.

-end first file-

second file:

**Interviewer:** They send you, and you're outposting, and this is when, early November, late October?

**Robert Baden:** Late October. It was late October, I'm quite sure. However, I don't have a specific date on that. When we did the final attack, my platoon and the other parts of I Company went up behind Gravelotte, which is a focal point. And I attacked to the south and east, and took St. Hubert's farm on top of [inaudible]. Another platoon in the company took Moscow Farm. And what we did, we went between the major forts that night, and let them sit on their asses back there when we went down into the rest of Metz.

Now it sounds – that's as good a description I can give it. Like, when they finally said, Okay, you can get off Fort Jeanne d'Arc (CK), I came

back through the regimental CP.... So this will give you a good example. There wasn't any sitting back.

**Interviewer:** So, if you're between the forts, the forts are still—.

**Robert Baden:** When I was there they didn't have any visibility. That's my understanding. ... They didn't have any forces to attack me. And somebody on St. Hubert's Farm, then we had another over here. ...

Every division of the platoon leader and the company commander is what he sees, of course. And who sees the whole thing? I didn't know what the hell was going wrong with everybody else. But I was in radio and wire communication, and we had certain codes of what we were to do.

**Interviewer:** How would a message come to you?

**Robert Baden:** We had some codes for – I'm not sure what, but one of them was to withdraw. ... We used a 536 radio, and we had field wire. Now, we may not have been able to depend upon the wire, because the wire would be so exposed. It may have been just radio. But we had codes, simple codes. I can't remember what they were.

**Interviewer:** Would they be numbers or words?

**Robert Baden:** I can't remember.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So they tell you to take St. Hubert's?

**Robert Baden:** That was part of an overall plan. I was given a sector, and they gave me an engineer to do the demolition on top of the fort, and I attacked right across an open goddamned field, and we only lost one man, and that was the engineer, the guy attached to it, because when they started shooting at us we had trained ourselves to follow Patton's orders and straight ahead, straight ahead, straight. And the

engineer flopped down and he was killed by mortar or artillery. It's a terribly sad story, but that was...

Anyway, so we sat on top of that fort. They didn't attack us and we weren't told to go any further.

**Interviewer:** So you're like sitting on the head of the fort, and the fort can't reach you.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. That's a little bit of an exaggeration. But we were a part of the war...

**Interviewer:** So what's the next order you're given from there?

**Robert Baden:** We were told at night, because that's the time to get out of there because we weren't subject to any fire. So we just came out, went out to Maison-something down the valley, and the rest of the troops is down there. And by this time, the holes between the forts were becoming porous, and we were taking Metz. It's simple.

**[TIME 5:17]**

And we had Thanksgiving dinner down there.

**Interviewer:** I've heard different things about Thanksgiving dinner.

**Robert Baden:** I'm not sure it was on Thanksgiving, but we had a Thanksgiving dinner.

**Interviewer:** With turkey and everything?

**Robert Baden:** Goddamn right. Well, I don't know, I think it was turkey.

**Interviewer:** Dick Schoen had told me where he was, which I think was north, when the Thanksgiving dinner came they didn't have any utensils so they just ate it with their hands. ... So you go into—

**Robert Baden:** Well, let me stop it there. We didn't do anything of significance when we got through Fort Jeanne d'Arc (CK)...and get down to that part of Metz, all built up. And the next thing I remember of course, two things, Thanksgiving dinner, and then we need some troops down in Metz to give out the decorations. So here I am, platoon leader, I was to take one of the units, and I was pissed. Of course I gather all these goddamn high-ranking guys, getting these medals, you know, and we were the guys...

**Interviewer:** You were the guys who did it.

**Robert Baden:** Yes. I would never say anything about it, but being honest, I was – but what the hell.

**Interviewer:** Yeah. So the high-ranking guys get the medals.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. But I – I won't deny it.

**Interviewer:** Is that in the big celebration at the liberation?

**Robert Baden:** Well, it certainly was the honors parade. Whether it was – I don't know. Because after all we were just combat troops. Came down there, went back. Then we went right straight through Metz, as you know. We went across the open area. ... It's amazing to me that we were able to do what we did, between November 22 and the 1<sup>st</sup> of December when we took the bridge across the Saar River.

**Interviewer:** you covered a lot of territory.

**Robert Baden:** Goddamn right. Three seventy-eighth did most of that advancing. I'm just talking about now from Metz toward the Saar River. Then the 379<sup>th</sup>, we came in and took the bridge intact, crossed the river at Saarlautern, and so that was the 379<sup>th</sup>. ... I'm giving, 378<sup>th</sup>, you've got to give them credit. They went across that countryside, after we got out of Metz.

The three stars and all of them arguing, as I read in history: what are we should attack, we gotta attack the British, and we ain't ready, blah blah. We ain't ready. So he attacked, and by that proved that he was right. And not that we could get through the Siegfried Line, that was the second line of defense. But anyway, the 378<sup>th</sup> did a magnificent job crossing that area.

**Interviewer:** So then you come up to Saarlautern – I know a few things about that from my father, and also I talked to someone who was on the bridge when you caught it.

**Robert Baden:** First battalion took the bridge. Toby Philbin.

**Interviewer:** I talked to Mr. Jefferson, he was on the bridge. He talked to me about seeing the man bayoneted, a German. He had told me – I think this was in Metz – he told me that the person who did it, the German was about to make communication, make a call. And this one American soldier had just been notified that his brother had been killed. So he bayoneted the German.

**Robert Baden:** I don't know. Toby Philbin was the guy who shot the engineer who was about to blow the bridge. Tank commander.

**[TIME 10:16]**

**Interviewer:** And that's 1<sup>st</sup> battalion?

**Robert Baden:** That was the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion.

**Interviewer:** And where are you now?

**Robert Baden:** We're just outside of town, with orders that before daylight we would go down through... Oh, L Company took the close side of the river down to the close end of the bridge. The 1<sup>st</sup> battalion ... took the far end of the bridge and established the bridgehead. I and K

came down the river, crossed that bridge, and before daylight, ready to attack in Fraulautern.

And that was a brutal, brutal day. December the 3<sup>rd</sup>. We ran right into the toughest part of the Siegfried Line. And I don't know how many men we lost in I Company. I was the platoon leader. But we lost three platoon sergeants, killed that day. So that's a dramatic bit of statistics. Bill Campbell (PH) and I were the two rifle platoon leaders. The other platoon didn't have one I don't believe. And I'm trying to think of the platoon sergeant, he was killed. But this was a terrible, terrible day. We were successful, and ...

Oh, two companies, I and K, I guess, tried to coordinate the jump off across this open area. Fiddle-farting between commanders – one guy, we were supposed to attack before daylight. And they were fiddle-farting back and forth. I pissed my pants [laughs]. I know when I knew it, but they were just so goddamn – they didn't know what the hell they wanted to do.

When we finally got going, dawn had come, and we got the hell beat out of it. But we took at least one house on the other side in the Siegfried line, and we had our whole company that was left of it in that house. And from then from there on we expanded, and we never lost the area.

That was where I told you, 1<sup>st</sup> battalion, after we attacked for one day or two days, then the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion attacked. I went over to make contact with, because I was sort of the closest part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> battalion with the 1<sup>st</sup> battalion. There was Toby Philbin, the battalion commander – I don't know if I told you this story here today – and he says, My God, Baden, how are you?

I says, I'm fine.

He says, Are you still a platoon leader?

And I said, Yes I am.

He said, Well I'm going to get you over with me.

And within two days I was over commanding C Company. They had had a real problem. Since this is a documentation, I won't go into details. But they had to change command. ... But that's a true life ... Philbin says, Oh my God, I need your help. ...

**Interviewer:** So your men in I Company, who becomes the commander there?

**Robert Baden:** I was not a commander, I was a platoon leader. Oley Olson (PH) was my company commander, a Virginian, with a nice sort of Norfolk, Hampton-area accent. Good guy. Good guy. He was lucky. He had his webbing shot off of him that day, for example. And one of our weapons platoon leader, what's his name, we were holed up in this damn building and Ernie, I'll think of his name later, he was weapons platoon leader. The Germans put a hand grenade down a pipe from a wood-burning stove, a chimney pipe, and dropped a grenade down there. Injured several people. Ernie lost his sight as a result of that. This is an example

**[TIME 15:41]**

And we had to leave wounded people all over that field out there. And go out at night to get them on back and to medical care. My Rocky Rauch (PH) was my platoon leader. He was my runner, and radio [operator]. And he was wounded. And I had to leave him. I got him into safety where he couldn't be shot by anything coming across. And I said, One of us will be back and get you.

And we did. But that's a very tough ... The mission was to take out the goddamn other side, so I had to leave Rocky and pick him up later. And he understands that, to this day. He got out, he became an accountant.

**Interviewer:** That was a difficult decision for you. Your job is to make hard decisions.

**Robert Baden:** Well, of course. Is to lead. ... There's a big difference between a platoon leader job and a battalion commander job. And I learned that early on.

**Interviewer:** Tell me the difference.

**Robert Baden:** Well, the difference was that I learned – I was the tank commander in Korea for a while, I was major. But anyway, I think the difference was – and I told somebody this when I was growing up – I said when you're a platoon leader or even a company commander, you can get everybody out in front of you and look them all in the eye and say: All right, here's what you and I are going to do.

And you can follow them closely because it's not too big a group of people. You have direct influence, direct ability, to make sure that what you tell gets done. When I went off to national guard duty, where I had no command authority, I was only to help to train them. And I had to learn there that you get things done through your influence.

If you're a battalion or a regiment, you can't – you can only do it by teamwork, and your influence, your clarity. But you can't line your whole goddamn battalion or regiment up. And that's that way in government. So many things. People don't understand.

**Interviewer:** You made that very clear. Many problems happen, I think, because of lack of clarity. And some people with influence don't have clarity.

**Robert Baden:** I can't go much beyond there, either. You put your orders out, but when you get higher up it's a matter of having some mechanism of following up.

**Interviewer:** So now you're commander of Company C. Does that change your rank?

**Robert Baden:** Oh, of course. I was supposed to be promoted to captain. But some of these assholes ... they got slightly wounded, went to the hospital, came back, they weren't commanding any company I don't think but they were on the roll. They were taking the goddamn position that was blocking my promotion. Wasn't until I got wounded that I could get promoted.

**[TIME 20:18]**

I didn't do it on purpose, God [laughs]!

**Interviewer:** So now are you still a lieutenant?

**Robert Baden:** Yes. I was in command. There's no doubt about that.

**Interviewer:** Okay. So you're in command. And you're on the far side of the river in Saarlautern. So what's the next thing you do?

**Robert Baden:** There's all kinds of things. We fought house to house. And there was a big — last year, we went to the mill, that goddamned, I had that son of a bitch under control, and we were relieved by somebody else, and they let it go. We got back, we had to fight for it.

So it was house-to-house fighting. It was all these very advanced artillery and weapons. And what we really did. we were in a stalemate there, and along came the Bulge. Elements of the 26<sup>th</sup> Division came down to relieve — fought off Pennsylvania, had the hell beat out of them. They had been relieved of the Line, the 3rd Army had gone up there. But to give you an example, we were in a situation there in

Saarlautern of fighting house to house, and a lot of exchange of fire, and we had 60 mm mortar, and we had the base plates frozen into the ground.

And we had those damn things as well registered as an artillery piece could be, because we had them stabilized, we knew where our targets were, and we were very effective with our 60 mm mortars. It's not the only thing we had, but we had the 60 mm. Twenty-sixth Division comes in, all beat up, I said, I'll take our mortars, but let's exchange base plates. ...

He said, Base plates? We haven't used these goddamn mortars for so long.

No wonder they got the hell beat out of them. Going back that night, it was an open field in the Ruhr back, and then we were in a place where there was to be, there was a guard should have been at the bridgehead. Coming from a bridgehead, here's the bridge, here's where we'd gotten to, and I guess we came down this road like this. Okay, a sentry was required there.

Now these guys had just come in, we'd done the replacement, we're trying to go back over here to the other side of the river. And I knew where that guard was. And I reached around the corner and grabbed the son of a bitch by the neck. And he didn't even know I was there. He was hiding.

So I said, No wonder you guys got the hell beat out of you.

Now that's not – I shouldn't [say that].

**Interviewer:** That's okay. That's the truth. You know, when you talk now, I don't think you're showing disrespect, so don't worry about that.

**Robert Baden:** Well then what happened is the Bulge had occurred, and they got the hell beat out of them, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army went out to relieve the Bulge. That's what we did. I was company commander.

**Interviewer:** Now the 95<sup>th</sup> had to hold the Line with some of Patton's troops for the Bulge. Do you come up at the end of the Bulge, or where?

**Robert Baden:** Let me put it this way. I'm not sure when the Bulge occurred, but when the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army went north, we left Saarlautern and left the 26<sup>th</sup> Division up in there, and we went north. To be very frank with you, I saw no evidence of where we really got into a fight. But by this time, I think that the Bulge had been pretty well reduced. And the next thing in my memory, the big thing was, we went from the Ruhr to the Rhine, after the Bulge. That was a storybook offensive. Mobile. Very mobile.

**[TIME 25:14]**

My regiment was attached to an armored division. Because the armored division because ... they needed infantry. And that was a showcase-type operation to clear out the Germans between the Ruhr River and the Rhine River. And we went right up north – ended up right opposite Dusseldorf.

**Interviewer:** When you say storybook, what do you mean? Did it just go so well?

**Robert Baden:** Well, no. Yes and no. Yes, it went well. We as infantry had our only real fighting as a part of an armored outfit. And we moved fast, and we didn't get bogged down anywhere. Whether that's to the armored's credit or ours, but we moved like hell. And like seeing Germans that had been literally run over by the tanks as they moved forward. And we ended up with a couple of divisions squeezing in the

small area between the Rhine and the head of the Ruhr, and we had to say, Who's going to go where [laughs]?

And that was where we first saw buildings with literally whole basements full of civilians that had taken refuge. And they were there – they got caught. But there was no large-scale injury or damage of the civilians. And we had no real problem. That was opposite Dusseldorf.

**Interviewer:** What's your next command?

**Robert Baden:** We were in — there's a town right out of Dusseldorf. And when we got there, it was not like the other parts of the war when we were on house-to-house fighting and the Siegfried Line.

Let me just get my thoughts here. .... Oh, we got one platoon across the river intact at Dusseldorf, and the Germans set the destruction. So these guys were able to get back. They almost got the bridge blown out under them. So that – Dusseldorf is a half a mile away, it's across the river. We'd shoot over there every now and then, but it was like peace time in this little town, I'll think of it. And we had a whiskey warehouse. Belongs to the Germans. Have you heard of it?

**Interviewer:** I've heard of it, but I haven't heard the story.

**Robert Baden:** Okay. This was in our town [can't remember name]. Anyway, Okay, you guys put a guard on that cognac warehouse.

One of my guys who comes to the reunions a lot, he would be here, he'd love this story. Mexican. He got drunk one night, and some other guys got drunk one night. We were like in an occupation. We weren't fighting. There's nobody shooting. And I was, Oh my God, how'd he get drunk? And when I looked, the whiskey warehouse was on a slope, with its backside down on a lower level, and these guys had taken a bazooka boom through the back side of it. So I start correcting all that, and ...

then 3<sup>rd</sup> Army or 9<sup>th</sup> Army, anyway, a core headquarters 2 ½-ton truck showed up with some lieutenants: We're down here to get a ration of cognac for headquarters.

**[TIME 30:14]**

And the guard said, I'm not allowed to give you that. I'll have to call the headquarters. He called right up to the regiment. The regimental commander came down and: What are you gentlemen doing here?

We came down for our ration of whiskey.

You ain't got no ration here.

Now the story — I cannot document this — the story is he had these lieutenants did a 6x6 before he sent them back. And he got his ass canned later on by the corps commander. He was a gung-ho regimental commander.

**Interviewer:** Yes, he was gung-ho.

**Robert Baden:** Yeah. But that story I can document everything — I can't document the 6x6, because when the regimental commander was involved in that, this company commander stayed away. ...

**Interviewer:** Were you involved in Ensdorf at all?

**Robert Baden:** Yes, but that's backwards, way back. When the 378<sup>th</sup>, and I should give them credit for it, they were doing such a helluva good job going across. Then we came and skipped through them and we went up on the north side, then we went down and took that bridge intact at Saarlautern.

Okay. Within a day or two after that, the 378<sup>th</sup> came into Ensdorf. And they had a hell of a time. They got across, but they had a much tougher time than we did. And I'm not criticizing or anything. See, they had a

hell of a time. That's the difference. We had the crossing under control. They didn't.

And I got one of my West Point, class ahead of me, 378<sup>th</sup>, he's written quite a few war stories in some of our papers. Old age memory [can't remember the guy's name]. ...

**Interviewer:** That's okay. So now we're back in Dusseldorf. We can continue to finish up, maybe tonight. Because I still have some questions.

**Robert Baden:** I don't know if —.

**Interviewer:** You're doing so well. Let's keep talking. Where are you on your list?

**Robert Baden:** We're down to ... crossed the Rhine. I can give you this.

**Interviewer:** Great.

**Robert Baden:** I won't give you my later career. ... But, after we went over the Rhine, we did some sitting in reserve and stuff like that in Belgium.

**Interviewer:** Where did you cross the Rhine?

**Robert Baden:** I'll tell you. We crossed somewhere north of this whole area ... one of our outfits crossed north of Dusseldorf, all that area. On the north side of the Ruhr. And then we followed them, and we went several miles inland. And then we turned to the south, and we crossed the Lippe River, which was an east-west river.

And we then, we attacked to the south, toward Dortmund. And we were behind German front line. In this fight — I was the company commander, of course — A Company and C Company were given objectives, given a zone. Which we hadn't been able to do that, we

always were elbow-to-elbow at the attack. We were not elbow-to-elbow. We went objective to objective, like an armored unit. ...

**[TIME 35:20]**

And so we attacked south. We were quite successful. We got all the way down near Dortmund, and there was a town, Solde, S-o-l-d-e, and we came up — morning to night was how our attack worked. We were really moving, moving, moving. We got up against Solde, and we get terrible fire from that town. And it was ... we get pinned against ... the only part of the town we could get to was the gas house. A little bit out of the town, a little knoll ... the hill over here. And those goddamn two German artillery were shooting from over there, into this gas house.

**Interviewer:** On top of the hill.

**Robert Baden:** Yes, to this gas house. I got in there. I got up on the second floor, and started — had my artillery [inaudible] officer get down under cover, and he did the communication with our [inaudible] and I did the observation: over, left, right. And I knocked out those two son of a bitches. Those two guys.

Then we went up that road, and I was deaf from the fire. Company headquarters was following me. One of the platoons had already gone up this way, and another platoon was the next street over. And I'm looking back, flashes came up the road at me. I couldn't hear.

It was our — American fighter planes had been out strafing, et cetera. Hadn't found a target. They came by us, and hearing some German tanks burning, they were marching up the road behind them, they thought we were German, and they shot the hell out of us. Made two passes, I think, until they realized they were shooting their own troops.

And I was knocked down. I knew I had something wrong with my left leg or foot. Shorty, my runner, he had holes all over him [laughs]. And one of my guys later wrote an account of all this. He became a newspaper writer in the Seattle area.

**Interviewer:** What was his name?

**Robert Baden:** I know his name. Farmer. I think. Anyway, he said that I said, I don't want to get evacuated, just bundle me up!

He said I pulled a gun (CK). He said, You pulled a John Wayne [laughs].

And Toby Philbin came down. And I said, I can go on, just bandage it up.

He said, Baden, you've got a serious wound there. I've got to send you back. You and your runner. And he said to my exec: Take over.

My exec fell apart. He's the guy who I had replaced. And then they put the weapons platoon leader in. And ... we're evacuated to Paderborn, and I was operated on. And that morning the company exec showed up at my bedside, saying I couldn't take it. But I'm not going to tell you his name or anything. The thing is, the soldiers in the outfit knew about these problems, and in fact, the guy Art German, who is the writer, he writes very well, and he covers this whole thing about the exec. And even today when I talk to the old C Company guys again, they knew that there was a problem with that exec.

**[TIME 40:13]**

**Interviewer:** Now when you look at someone who can't take it, and you're in that wartime position, how do you view him? With sympathy, or something else?

**Robert Baden:** Well, I don't know. Because — I don't know. I had all kinds of little things. Like the guy on patrol, he wouldn't stop coughing? I didn't take any stripes away from him, but I knew his weakness.

Do you realize – I can do this, I guess. At Metz, two battalion executive officers were court-martialed for cowardice after we took Metz. In two different battalions, the exact court-martial for cowardice. Majors.

And our battalion surgeon, I liked the guy. He was going to be a psychiatrist. He loved to tell stories. Because we were drinking in Metz or the club or whatever when we were training. He had all these psychiatric stories. When he was running the aid station at Metz under heavy fire, he went nuts. So we get all kinds of that. And it's not – it's my opinion, but I'm quite sure that no one, I don't think anybody's every made a real study of the number that went nuts. But they were there. And some of them on down at the company and platoon level, they'd become court-martial cases. But the battalion exec – one of them ended up dishonorable discharge. The other broke into 2<sup>nd</sup> lieutenant, I understand.

**Interviewer:** So now you're back in the hospital. You're feeding Shorty cigarettes. Shorty's happy because —.

**Robert Baden:** He has had his experiences with the British women!

**Interviewer:** So are you in Great Britain?

**Robert Baden:** Goddamn right. I was still there ... Chester.

**Interviewer:** Oh, you're in Winchester.

**Robert Baden:** Not Winchester. Chester. Up underneath Liverpool. ... And I finally got sent home. The European war had ended of course. And there were still – I'm not sure where the atomic bomb fit in there – but I came back and my wife of course was still living on Sutton Place with her folks. And so I wanted to lay the groundwork for what kind of job I'd get whenever I came out of the hospital. So there's a thing called networking.

So I went up to West Point [laughs], and I asked around. And Father Murdoch (PH), this Catholic chaplain who married my wife and me, and he says, Go see Lt. Colonel So-and-So. He's got the infantry attachment. I went down, this guy fell in love with me. And he asked for me. He asked management. When I got out of the hospital, that's how I got my job.

Now I don't pull any punches. I was goddamn well qualified, it was just what he wanted. That was right out of combat. And I was high ranking at West Point, et cetera.

**Interviewer:** When they got you, they were lucky.

**Robert Baden:** Goddamn right [laughs].

**Interviewer:** Because they got someone who not only knew the theory, but knew how it went in practice. Let me ask you a few more questions before I forget. When we were in Metz, I recorded a man who lived in Santa Monica. By the time I got him his recording, his wife said, Thank you very much, it's good to hear his voice, he died three days ago. So I went to the libraries in Los Angeles and asked them to set me up in a meeting room, so anyone who wants to talk can come in, and I'll do the same thing I do with the 95<sup>th</sup>. And so what happens is I find veterans from Vietnam come in to talk.

But for Korea, what company were you with?

**[TIME 45:45]**

**Robert Baden:** In Korea, I was a senior major. I got over there and the armistice had just been signed. And I was made a battalion commander. And I had a battalion for four months, and they finally filled in with a lieutenant colonel. And I was not promoted at that time, because the war was over. ... But I was battalion commander, and

assistant battalion G3. It was the time when we were trying to – going from the wartime position to a defensive position along the DMZ. That was my primary role, was planning that defensive position.

**Interviewer:** And Vietnam?

**Robert Baden:** Vietnam I had great jobs. I had been a colonel for quite a while, and I had commanded a training brigade at Fort Benning at the start of the Vietnam War. Because we had to go with draftees. The president would not declare an emerge so we had to toss all our plans into a bucket.

So anyway, I was involved in the appointment of the first troops to Vietnam. I went over there '55-'57. The troops had been in there for a year, and I was deputy G3 of the army. But that was a good job. But the 9<sup>th</sup> Division chief of staff was leaving, and he was a friend of mine. He and I went to infantry school together. And the minority commander was my classmate. And by this time as deputy G3 I had run a study for Westmoreland about getting the 9<sup>th</sup> Division farther down in the Delta (CK). So the 9<sup>th</sup> Division chief of staff was going to open up.

G.G. O'Connor was the commander. I had known him ... I knew every goddamn thing about that division and the Delta (CK), because I was tracking the story for West Point. What can we do about such and such. I won't go into details.

So they said, Listen, we got to get Bob Baden down here. Shit, he knows all about everything we're doing. And this guy from the armored center – they didn't say it, but, first, he's armored. I don't know if they said that. But he came up and took the job I had as the G3, and I went down and took over chief of staff, 9<sup>th</sup> Division. It was a great job.

I was there sometime before Tet hit. So I was there ... we were very successful, my division. We were very successful in that attack. And

then G.G. O'Connor, it was time for him to go home. And the guy coming in, I will not use his name because... The guy who was coming in, I didn't know. And he kept writing messages to us that he was going to bring some water-walkers over there; people who really know how to fight a war. We're going to come in and show you guys [blah blah].

**[TIME 50:00]**

So my CG left, and I was in charge of the new guy, who was also bringing his own chief of staff in. So I continued to be chief of staff like I'd always been, and there came a time when he gave some orders about attacking certain things. And this meant that I had to pull some helicopters away from some brigade commanders temporarily. Jesus Christ, you'd think I'd committed a mortal sin. And this new guy, YOU MADE A DECISION LIKE THAT??

Well, I'm your chief of staff, and you had to get 62 helicopters, and I had to get two ... Well anyway, to make a long story short, his chief of staff was coming in, and we didn't get along. So I went up to the G3 of the corps up there ...

And the other guy, the fellow with whom I did not get along, didn't do me any damage on my efficiency report, but over the ensuing years we never really got into a friendly conversation.

I got to know Westmoreland a hell of a lot better than I knew that guy.

**Interviewer:** Did you like Westmoreland?

**Robert Baden:** I worked for Bruce Palmer, Westie's deputy. And that was my man. Westmoreland was lucky to have Bruce Palmer. And I'm not criticizing Westmoreland. Going back to the Pentagon, he was chief of staff and Westmoreland remembered me.

**Interviewer:** When did you retire from the service?

**Robert Baden:** I retired 29 years and one month. Thirty years after being commissioned. The 1<sup>st</sup> of January 1973. In the meantime, it had become evident I was not getting my star. And that was also one of the reasons I went to Pentagon — if I didn't get a star, there was plenty of things to do there. And my last job was a really great one and I didn't get promoted.

So anyway, I went to Army Management School, and I'd been — let me put it this way: I'd gotten completely involved in computers, the new approach, computers. And I was assigned as a free colonel to the comptroller, where there was a free brigadier major general, Autry Maroon (PH), who was in the 95<sup>th</sup> Division. And I went to work for Autry, and we had been into regression analysis — the use of developmental statistics, and formulas, and factors, to use in the army budget. And we were successful. ...

Anyway, Housing & Urban Development called my boss, John Kelstrom (PH), who was my boss and comptroller: I hear you guys are doing stuff with development factors.

Well Vince Serney (PH), my contemporary, and old friend and associate. And John Kelstrom said, I'm not doing it, Bob Baden's doing it.

**[TIME 55:01]**

Because I worked for Kelstrom. So here's your network now. [Inaudible] knew me because we worked together on the staff in the Pacific. And he got me over, and I briefed the assistant secretary of administration. This guy, the contact, was the senior civilian in that administration. He's the guy who was nonpolitical. And when the presidents change there's always one guy who stays; he was that guy. And boy did they like what they saw, what I was doing. So I retired from the army on the last day of December, and I went to work for HUD the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January. And I

was the full colonel, and Vince was brought in as a GS15. Well, there was a woman got involved in there. She had to add her two cents – I was going to work for her. She said, How about coming in as a 14? And my kids ... they said, Daddy, if you like what you're going to do down there the hell with he. Go in as a 14, because you'll get promoted to 15.

Anyway, you said how did I retire? I didn't retire! I went to work for HUD [laughs]. And I was a project manager in the field all the time, and I got appreciation as a civil servant that was very, very good for me. Because I like what I saw. I tell you, there's some dedicated people working for this government. Many, many places. And you can't paint them all with the same brush. I know that everybody knows that, but by God I saw some great ones out there.

**Interviewer:** Let me ask you a few ending questions. I appreciate all your time. You've covered so much.

In WWII, who was the most important person to you?

**Robert Baden:** I don't know. ... To me? I don't know.

**Interviewer:** Who was a great influence on you?

**Robert Baden:** I don't know. ... I was in this [95<sup>th</sup>] division. I had a lot of, all kinds of acquaintances and friends and seniors. When we got into the war – I don't know. I could say the fact that Toby Philbin dragged my ass out of that mire and gave me a company, I could say that. Nothing wrong with that.

He would be flattered to hear me say that. He's a good guy. I don't know if he's still alive. He was in this division, you know.

You ask that question, and I start getting into all this. Well, my old man, when he, my dad, he always said, There's nothing you can't do. And he

was great. He had been a WWI vet. And I think he had me with my feet on the ground. There's all these little things.

Like when I was going from junior high school to high school, my old man said – and in those days it was college prep subjects – and I was doing college prep. And my dad said, I don't give a damn what you take in college prep, but you're going to take public speaking. And when I was a sophomore I went into the drama class, public speaking. We had a woman teacher who was a knockout. She was tremendous. And I was in the plays and stuff. And junior, I ran for class president. I won the son of a bitch. I probably would never have gotten there if I hadn't taken public speaking. ... But that's not your question.

**[TIME 1:01:09]**

**Interviewer:** Sometimes the question is also to prompt memories like that. They also want to know: In WWII when you talk about battles campaigns, is it the Lorraine Campaign and the Ruhr Pocket? How do you answer that?

**Robert Baden:** Well, whatever you give the name to the fall months at Metz, one. And then taking the Saar Bridge and opening that up. It didn't get us through, but it also – the Germans knew they were getting holes in their line. And the Ruhr and the Rhine was a piece of cake. And back across the Rhine, I was so successful it was ... We recaptured more Americans from the Germans. I had my own Amtrak [laughs]. I didn't get a chance to really enjoy it because I was wounded a few days later.

**Interviewer:** Were you part of any labor camp liberations?

**Robert Baden:** No. That was – no. I was wounded on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April. Now, south of us – I don't know if it was the 95th Division units – but south of the pocket, all kinds of German POW camps. Is that what you're talking about?

**Interviewer:** Yeah.

**Robert Baden:** Up where I was, no.

**Interviewer:** And what medals or special service awards did you receive?

**Robert Baden:** Well, I got a couple Legions of Merit. Two. And I got the red and white one. And I got the Korean Service Commendation medal, and the Army Commendation medal. Two purple hearts. Two bronze stars. I'm giving them in the right order. And I got a Croix de Guerre from the French. ...

**Interviewer:** When did you start going to the 95<sup>th</sup> reunions?

**Robert Baden:** That's interesting. Eighty-two, 1982. I had retired from the army. I didn't know there was a division association. I was in HUD, Housing & Urban Development, and for whatever publication it was – Aha, 95<sup>th</sup> Division has got a reunion at Harrisburg. So Robin, my first wife, [didn't want to go]. So I went up alone. Swede Lundberg (PH), who was a classmate of mine, was in the 95<sup>th</sup>. He and I got together. And we had a good time, and from then on I was hooked.

And the next time we went to Harrisburg, it must have been a couple of years [later], Robin, my wife, went with me. And when we toured Indiantown Gap, a bunch of us in the same bus, somebody said, We ought to put a sign, "Kilroy was here."

And Robin said – and she had been married to me and she was familiar with me – she said, NO, we should just put a big plaque up here saying that the 95<sup>th</sup> was here. And the guys said, Oh yeah!

So Saturday morning, we had the Saturday morning meeting, I get up and said, A bunch of us on the bus would like to do this.

**[TIME 1:06:21]**

And oh my God, some of the lieutenants from my regiment, they said, Oh, I'll help you! And they came up. I formed a committee, and those sons of a bitches didn't do a thing the first year. So I got Jimmy Robinson (PH), Pat Thornton (PH), and a guy named Hall (PH), they all live out in that area. We put the son of a gun together, and we quietly canned the guys who had been the volunteers [laughs]. They were talkers.

So anyway, I claimed credit for the monument. And I give partial credit to my first wife, because she said, Let's do it!

**Interviewer:** Would you recommend military service to young people today?

**Robert Baden:** Of course.

**Interviewer:** The current 95<sup>th</sup> gave me a series of questions. First, how do you think the war of today differs from WWII?

**Robert Baden:** Well, the wars reflect politics. That's the first statement. World War II was the culmination of decades of conflict between the west and the east, the north and the Middle East. Palestine and the crusades. So then it became Germany and Russia versus us. And my family was very international. And they were very supportive of us supporting Europe. My father had been over there in WWI. And so WWII is hardly to be called a politically designed, politically conceived war.

Now, forward to the world situation after the war. It became a conflict between the United States and the west, and the Soviets. And it was called containment. And it was to contain the spread of communism, et cetera.

And when Korea hit, I was in Germany, having completed a three-year, wonderful tour. And I can't really characterize that except it was a reflection of the containment policy. So we had to go to the aid of Korea.

Vietnam was again a matter of, still, containment. All over the world. China was getting a little stronger, et cetera. And I was involved in every phase of the planning for Vietnam. And all our plans were defensive in the Southeast Asia area. And they were in line with our policy of containment. The political part of that, which also we can see in Iraq, is that President Johnson realized we had to put something ashore, some combat troops. And when he decided to go into Vietnam, he made a political decision that we're dead in the politics if I declare an emergency, so I'm going to do this with draftees, and the regular army.

**[TIME 1:11:09]**

And it knocked the bejesus out of all of our planning. Which was difficult. ... And [our planning] was — it had to be in response to a positive attack or movement by the communists into that area. And in fact, in Vietnam they did have all kinds of [movement] into South Vietnam before we got over there.

But the political side there was to do it, to pay too much attention to politics. And Bruce Palmer, I was on his staff, and for whatever reason Bruce Palmer liked me. And when he went flying across the countryside, more likely than not he'd take Bob Baden. And we had our own little jet prop. ... That's when I said, I cannot for the life of me understand why that political decision was made to put us into this war with just the regular army and draftees.

And he said, Well, Bob, obviously some of our military seniors went along with it. And that's all he said. So he was saying somebody accommodated the political decision.

Now Iraq, political as bejesus. And manufacturing intelligence, it's absolutely ...

So, nevertheless, you ask if I'd recommend military service? Absolutely. Absolutely. Because our military leaders through history have been faced with a political aspect when they make their decisions. I can't give you too many. But the British King had to take armies and go on crusades. That was political. I can't give you all the details, but that was political.

**Interviewer:** Why is it important to remember what happened in WWII?

**Robert Baden:** That's a stupid question. What do you want? I mean, I can do all kinds of things. Trace it back to the crusades, to the Balkan area, the Greeks. What are you gonna—?

**Interviewer:** That's a perfect answer. Here's the last question I'm going to ask you. This is a question from Ken Burns, the historian. I spoke with his producer once, and asked what her favorite question was.

She said, Have someone close their eyes, and take a deep breath. And ask them: Tell me a story you've never told anyone before.

**Robert Baden:** I guess I'm a talker. Because I don't know. A story I've never told anyone before. Well, if it was embarrassing I probably wouldn't tell you.

**Interviewer:** One person talked about just being lucky. Anything that comes to mind.

**Robert Baden:** I don't know.

**Interviewer:** Or something you'd like to say to your grandchildren, or great-grandchildren.

**Robert Baden:** Procreate, and love your offspring. ... I am so damn lucky. I have four kids. I've lost one. But I have eight grandkids. Only one's married thus far. And I have a beautiful great-granddaughter. I have kids that are so damn good-looking and smart. I got two lawyer granddaughters. Anyway, going on. And I've got Dot's family, a girl lawyer, and great-looking kids.

And I say – now this is not something I've held to myself, I've told everybody – I think our offspring have increased the gross national product of this country by a significant amount. And that's the truth.

**Interviewer:** Well, this is David Meyer, son of Early D. Meyer, Company H, 379<sup>th</sup>. It's my great pleasure to talk to, could you say your name one more time?

**Robert Baden:** Bob Baden.

–end–