

Ceo E Bauer audio log

Veteran's Name: Ceo E. Bauer
Interviewer: David Meyer (O'Shea)
Date of Interview: November 22, 2004
Transcriber: Diane Fattig
Transcribed: June 30, 2009
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Note: PFC Bauer was recorded over 2 days in 2004 on a trip to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Liberation of Metz. These recordings are on three CDs so the log codes that follow will indicate the CD1/xx:xx (time code.)

CD1 Bauer log

- 1/00:00 Introduction. Bauer from Ithaca, Michigan. PFC Co I, 377th Infantry Regiment (95th ID)
- Was seriously wounded Nov, 8th (1944 in France) about 9 PM in the village of Maizières les Metz (north of the city of Metz) during a night attack on the Chateau Maizières Brioux where German troops were stationed.
- 1/02:21 Description of first patrol prior to planned attack. Co I Ordered to attack from SW Corner of the village.
- First patrol up toward the Chateau. Ceo's squad on right of gravel road. Hear enemy machine guns. Two backup squads open up on enemy lines allowing Ceo squad to crawl away then run back to Maizières les Metz. No injuries.
- 1/04:10 The night attack. Initially fell into shell hole Missed the first fight Description of enemy strung concertina wire. Extensive mine field.
- 1?05:50 Steve Bodnar (buddy) injured in leg (ends up losing the leg). Ceo advances by wounded Bodnar who cries for help. Ceo says, "Shut your damn mouth, you're not hurt."
- 1/6:50 Ceo advances to concertina wire. Ceo's Sergeant Griese tells Ceo to go through war. On concertina wire
- 1/7:48 Ceo walks through followed by privates Kellogg and Ahern. They ask him what to do. Move to left. Explosion wounds Ahead kills Kellogg. Wounds Ceo

Break to change location

- 1/08:50 Back to night attack. Bauer wounded. Lying in shell hole. German flare blazes up “light as day.” Bauer thinks they are going to shoot him “right there.” Then rolled into a shell hole
- 1/9:50 Called for help. Heard other wounded GI, Harold Gerrigan, assistant squad leader 3rd squad but wounded and can’t help. Ceo alone in shell hole. Feels water around him. Thinks its his own blood. Thinks he needs to make a tourniquet.
- 1/12:40 Assesses his own wounds. Left hand not functional. Wound on right leg behind knee. Makes tourniquet but nothing to tighten it with so gives up.
- 1/15:27 Decides he is fine enough to get back under to concertina wire.
- Revisits his fall into first shell hole (deeper). Slippery. May have been made when the 90th Division fought the Germans there.
- 1/16:25 Talks of past history of the conflict around Maizieres les Metz before the 95th arrived on the scene.
- 1/17:21 Ceo describes his crawl 20 yards back from where he is wounded to diamond shaped concertina wire.
- How you can crawl through “if you wriggle” because no barbs in it. Afraid he will run across a minefield like the one that got Kellogg and Ahern.
- Ceo describes plan of attack which left him led to him being wounded.
- 1/21:00 Bauer, Kellogg and Ahern go through concertina wire toward Chateau. Trouble nearly immediate. Kellogg and Ahern may have set off land mine but thinking about it afterward, may have just been caught and killed in German barrage.
- 1/21:47 Could have been a mine, a mortar, AA shell Don’t know what could have caused the explosion
- 1/22:15 Ceo survives barrage. Crawls to earthen country road that connects the Chateau with Maizieres. Country lane ¼ back to main road.
- 1/23:32 Rural Blasted hardwood trees give some protection.
- 1/24:02 Tries to walk. Falls. Didn’t know he had dropfoot with nerve cut. .
- 1/24:40 Crawls all the way toward outpost house. Description. Ditch not deep but a barrier to Ceo.

- 1/25:33 Ceo meets two I Co. men from the 3rd platoon = Darin and Steele - leaving outpost house. Names
- Ceo calls to them. Gives password. Asks for help crossing the ditch. They refuse. On a mission to tell men attack had failed and to come in. They leave. Ceo curses them
- 1/27:33 Ceo segues to talking about two comrades – Sgt Darin and PFC Steele – on mission “as dangerous as it can get except for actual attack”) ‘Darin kicked off mine” which blew off part of his foot and killed Steele.
- How Ceo visited the cemetery in Luxembourg Paid respects at Steele’s grave.
- 1/28:57 Ceo met Darin at reunion years later Darin did not remember but seemed bothered that Ceo was critical because Darin and Steele passed by the wounded Ceo. Ceo reassures him that they were on a dangerous mission and did the right thing but wonders if Darin believed him.
- 1/30:59 Ceo goes into house sees medic. Wounded treated in basement. Chaos. Enemy could have taken them if had known.
- 1/32:39 No one will take Ceo down to the cellar where the aide men/medics were. Throws a fit. Curses GodDam - Roosevelt Goddam Hitler Goddam Mussolini
- 1/33:20 A lieutenant takes Ceo down to the basement to the aide men/medics. Aide man bandages wounds

END OF CD ONE 33:50

CD2 Bauer log

- 2/0:00 Ceo repeats that Lieutenant from M Company took him downstairs to the medic in the basement.
- 15 to 20 wounded men and only One Medic. Bandaged Ceo up.
- Then a wounded squad leader, Burns, from Ceo’s platoon asks Ceo if he took his “wound tablets” (sulfa drugs). Ceo says “No.” Burns gives Ceo his own tablets.
- 2/02:35 One am. Stretcher bearers come take Ceo to street
- 2/03:24 Ceo digresses talking of the “slag pile” which the Germans occupied and which was attacked the same time Ceo was moving against the Chateau Attack on slag pile was not successful. Germans just “rolled down grenades” on the US attackers.

- 2/04:33 Back to the stretcher bearers. Four of them, Not in combat long. Would put Ceo on the stretcher until they heard a shell coming and go hide in the doorways. Ceo yells to get them to come back and pick him up again.
- 2/05:30 Carried him 2/3 blocks to their jeep, loaded Ceo up and took him to an aide station in the center of Maisieres.
- 2/06:10 Battalion surgeon, Capt. Herbert looks at Ceo's wounds. (Ceo had known him from USA training accident and Herbert had patched him up.)
- 2/07:50 Ceo has to wait while Sgt Darin (who had left Ceo in the ditch) is treated in front of Ceo because a bouncing betty had blown off part of his foot and killed his buddy between the time they passed by Ceo and the time Ceo got to the aide station. Paradoxical to Ceo.
- 2/08:05 Herbert bandages Ceo and proclaims wounds not serious and sends him to the field hospital in the back of the line
- 2/09:05 Rides on a stretcher rigged up out in the "open (on the outside of the jeep) ... laying horizontally looking up at the blue."
- 2/9:35 The ride back. Morphine makes Ceo hallucinate so on the ride to the field – sees tracer bullets thinks it's just a matter of time before "they get me."
- Doesn't remember much after that. Arrived at the field hospital before dawn.
- 2/11:10 Arrives at field hospital before dawn. A "bird colonel" going "down the line" awards Ceo a purple heart ("I have it yet, that medal.")
- 2/12:20 Man in hospital berails Colonel for giving out medals and not being on front line. "Go to hell club" Typical of wounded men.
- 2/13:01 Had to wait for surgery couple days because "not serious."
Surgical procedure. Wide open wounds. Lists wounds.
Put gauze in some. Hand hung down. No muscle strength No bother now
- 2/14:57 In England diagnosed as nerve injury. But at Cardiff Wales hospital muscle healed.
- 2/15:38 Sent back to field hospital because of big wound under knee.
- 2/16:35 To post-op tent. Remained four days before moving out. Old home week. Most of platoon members were there (e.g. Steve Bodnar who was uncommunicative after leg amputation.) Memories of other in the field hospital.

- 2/20:40 Ceo leaves after sixth day. Sees Charles Coleman who subsequently developed infection and dies.
- 2/21:24 Wounded man points to wound – a foot or leg almost taken off – says “This is my Million Dollar Wound” – ticket to ZI (Zone of Interior aka “home”)

Ceo realizes he himself has a “Million Dollar Wound.” Won’t have to return to the front line again.
- 2/22:44 Flies back to England to hospital there.
30 or more shrapnel wounds so in pain. Hadn’t had a bowel movement and no one noticed.

On overload of medical system. Serious cases (not Ceo) prioritized.
Ceo gets enema “Little comes out” but still backed up Doesn’t complain.
- 2/26:50 Surgery on the back of his knee. Still no bowel movement.
- 2/29:10 May 12 days without bowel movement – Ceo scared to tell Doctors
- 2/30:05 Ward surgeon notices Ceo is worried. “What’s wrong.” Ceo tells him.

Hold Ceo over a bed covered by a rubber sheet. Enema and laxatives and the Ceo fills “the bed pan and the bed with one big Swoosh.”
- 2/31:17 Break in interview
- 2/31:25 Ceo sings 95th Infantry Division Marching and Drinking Song
- 2/32:48 Ceo explains the discrimination in the original version of the song.
On “the Quartermasters Corps” - had many blacks. Also call “The Jewish Infantry”

33:30 End of CD2

CD 3

- 3/0:00 Nov 22, 2004. Ceo Bauer PFC Co I 377th/95th ID
- 3/00:59 Dec, 1944 Army Hospital Cardiff Wales Having had operation.
Major operations were: Left forearm temple left chest

Disabling wound behind knee left leg Nerve injury partial drop foot – left foot.
Needs to have nerve surgery Suture nerve

- 3/02:40 Army hospitals overwhelmed with casualties from the autumn and from the Bulge so just sent to “Zone of Interior” (back to the USA) for nerve surgery there (Should have been done immediately but no staff.)
- 3/03:20 We called it “The Million Dollar Wound” – got us home, out of combat, and easy living with sheets and good treatment.
- Though stayed in army no promotions because not on duty
- 3/04:10 Sailed home on liberty ship, “J.W. McAndrew.” January, 1945 Paritally ambulant but didn’t have the right kind of brace
- 3/06:02 In storm, Ceo gets seasick for day and a half . (No vomit but miserable understood why men would jump overboard
- 3/07:00 Into NY Harbor at night. Medical corps leaves them waiting to get off. Processed by medical doctors who were officers. Talk back to them
- 3/08:30 To Halleran General Hospital in NY for processing. Received first pay. Also got a haircut. Then sent to Nicholas General (hospital) in Louisville, KY. Fitted with a good brace that wouldn’t let his foot drop.
- 3/10:12 Gets furlough home. Parents proud. Introduced at basketball game. People get excited watching the game but Ceo says, “It’s only a game.” Different viewpoint after combat
- III/11:03 Public accepts you but can never “really communicate” because they don’t have the background.**
- “You got sick of it... because they’d sympathize... you didn’t want any sympathy. You didn’t need any. You didn’t feel as though you should get any. You were injured not sick.”**
- After a while you clammed up. ... Weren’t able to explain what happened to you.**
- 3/12:07 **People come up say “My son has been over there...” (Ceo thinks “but not in the infantry”)**
- 3/12:30 **Still true today. General populace has no background to understand the military or combat.**
- One of the problems of the nation. Don’t understand Iraq is more like guerilla war not WWII**

- 3/13:07 After leave returns to the hospital. Friends were back there (other patients) but no one from 95th
- 3/14:42 Waited for months for them to repair the parneil nerve. Until after Roosevelt died (April 1945)
- 3/14:12 In for operation. Doped up on morphine but not enough. Given more.
- 3/15:09 To Post-op ward.
- Revelation when see guys in body casts. Memories of the ward. Guy falling out of bed (drunk?) with big body cast. Loud
- 3/16:47 After 3 – 4 weeks cut off his leg cast (leg had been bent at 90 degree angle to get slack in nerve to suture it together
- So had to straighten it out a little a day.
- 3/17:37 Furloughs to Ithaca, Michigan. Then back to hospital but if you were good enough, furloughed again.
- 3/18:22 In summer, given 30 days to help work on farm. At end sent telegram and they gave him another 30.
- Leg improves. Soon as he could he got the brace on and could walk and run pretty well. (Summer of 45)
- 3/19:47 Went back and put on good duty. Didn't have to make up bed. Could play Red Ball (card game) in afternoon. Laid around a lot. Radio headphone
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- 3/21:55 Story of man from 5th Division in bed next to Ceo. Confronted by junior officer saying woman in Iceland where 5th had been stationed who says "You're the father of her son. Do you want to sign away allotment or bring her to U.S.?" Man says "Bring her here. Might as well get something for my money."
- 3/24:22 There were four of us with similar injuries (drop foot) that stayed on same ward. Ceo the only one who had recovery from suture of the nerve
- 3/24:50 Ceo relates army career. A long time but never much on active duty.
- January 43- August 43 – Kansas Guard (35th Infantry)
- 3/25:55 Then ASTP two and a half quarters at Carnegie Tech. Engineering until April 1944 Basic engineering

- 3/26:11 Then to 95th ID at Indiantown Gap, PA 95th ID at half strength. Every squad had seven or eight men Put in same squad as Steve Bodner
- 3/27:26 Out of army in early April, 1946. Army kept Ceo until they needed to operate again within a year. When they saw motion they discharged him.
- 2/28:15 Back to before discharge. In 1945 Deer hunting when on furlough. Got telegram to return to Louisville and then to Ft. Custer (Battle Creek, Michigan) Played redball. (cut off).
- 3/30:17 Ceo explains how 20 years ago (mid 1980s) began writing letters saying that women shouldn't join the infantry because of the casualty rates.
- 3/31:30 Officials writing back sent standard letters not addressing Ceo's concerns – that there was not an emergency that necessitate killing America's women (by sending them to the infantry).
- 3/32:05 Final words. How American public doesn't understand infantry – you get the orders and you do it. Movies and media don't communicate that when you are “ordered to attack, you attack”
- 3/33:15 Sum up – Do it all again. Believe in America and our policy promoting freedom, democracy – we are the light of the world and our military is what allows us to extend those benefits to the worlds
- 3/34:22 Closing Name rank serial number PFC Ithaca, Michigan. Co I, 377th IR/95th ID

End of CD 3 – 35 minutes 23 seconds

Total interview 1 HR 43 MINUTES