

CEO E. BAUER

November 22/23, 2004

Metz, France 60th Anniversary of the Liberation

Transcribed by Diane Fattig

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VETERANS HISTORY PROJECT

Veteran's Name: Ceo A Bauer

Interviewer: David Meyer (O'Shea)

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Ceo Bauer: I don't know whether you got my name.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: My name is Ceo E. Bauer, from Ithaca, Michigan.

Interviewer: What was your --

Ceo Bauer: I'm -- private first class. Company I, 377th Regiment.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: 95th Infantry Division. And I was seriously wounded on the 8th of November about 9:00 p.m. at Château -- the site of Chateau Brieux and just outside Maizieres les Metz.. ...

Interviewer: Was it cold that night?

Ceo Bauer: It was cold that night. At least it was -- about frost. It wasn't colder than that. It would be in the 30s.

And I Company was ordered to attack from the southwest corner of Maizieres, westward towards the chateau. And the first platoon was on the left of the gravel road...

Interviewer: ...Yeah...

Ceo Bauer: ... Of the 12-foot gravel road, and about a quarter of a mile west of Château Brieux.

The second platoon, I believe, was on the right. And we ..uh... we came to the edge of Maizieres while the 20 minutes artillery barrage placed on the enemy lines on Château Brieux, and on the enemy entrenchments -- both sides.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: And between us and the Chateau Brioux was -- we had patrols. We had patrols. For several days.

(interviewer checks earphones)

Bauer: We had one patrol, which I was on.

We had the right of the road as I walked into the enemy lines until we were halted. And that caused the enemy to open up with all of their machine guns. And so we knew where the enemy positions were.

Fortunately for the seven men that were on that spot, which was primarily the first squad -- the third squad, the first platoon, somehow or other we all got away without anybody being wounded even. We got away because we had two backup squads, one to the left rear, and one to the right rear, which opened up on the enemy lines.

It would be my belief that they essentially lifted their fire from us.

We could crawl away. And I ran away and -- ran away and came into our -- our left rear spot, and from there which -- I was the last one to leave, and returned to our lines and returned to Maizieres, which was the -- which was our position. We occupied Maizieres entirely.

And... uh... but to resume the night attack.

Initially I fell into a deep shell hole.

I missed the first engagement, somewhere in front of the German concertina wire. They had final protective wire strung along in front of their lines. And in the center of the gravel road in front of the Chateau was an overturned farm wagon. And then the wire resumed.

Presumably they -- in the vicinity of the concertina wire -- continuous, which it was -- would be a mine field. It was an extensive one. .

And I had actually -- now I have copies of the mine field that was intended to be there. Whether they had it all -- all there or not, I -- you know, it would be impossible to tell.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: But I understood just yesterday from the mayor, the former mayor of Maizières-les Metz, there were several Maizieres' citizens when they returned (sounds like "were frozen"?) Just learned that yesterday.

Interviewer: Every trip you learn something.

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. Correct.

Anyway, I missed the first fight with the machine gun, which was ahead of the line. I would think maybe the best of the German patrol that might have been suckered by our attack. Anyway, they were dispatched. I don't know but I -- I think our regimental book can tell us about that.

Anyway, Steve Bodner was injured in his leg seriously in that engagement. (6:00)

Interviewer: By rifle or --

Ceo Bauer: I think it was machine gun fire.

Interviewer: A machine gun?

Ceo Bauer: I think when they opened up -- that's what we think. You're never quite sure.

Interviewer: I understand.

Ceo Bauer: Could have been a grenade. But I went by him and I think I told him --

I think I was pretty harsh with him.

He was saying -- crying about his leg and somebody was there that he needed help. And I went by him and said -- and he was my best buddy and I said, "Well, shut your damn mouth. You're not hurt," (audience laughs) and went on by.

I was behind the attack. When I got to the wire, machine gun fire was heavy on us and my sergeant, a man name's Griese - G-r-i-e-s-e, from Woodrow, Colorado - was there.

And he said to me, "We'll clip the wire here. See if you can get through."
So I was the first man through that wire. I came through and then --

Interviewer: Were you crawling underneath?

Ceo Bauer: No. I walked through. You had cut enough I could go through.

The wire was something that was continuous. They could string it out. Had diamonds in it Just about enough to catch your butt.
But if you couldn't go through 'em you'd crawl through it

Anyway, I moved out a little bit to the left and then Kellogg and Ahern, who were privates who were really only about seven or eight months in the army -- I had more time than that. I had about a year and a half or so total.

They came through and I said to them -- they asked me what to do.

I just said "Well, go out a little to the left and lay down, and we got to have more men come through and get together." Well, we tried to go left from -- from the chateau But the fire came to be less that -- the machine gun fire was less that way.

Interviewer: Can we pick this up again in a minute?

Ceo Bauer: Yes. So that's what they did.

Interviewer: Yeah. And actually, shortly after that -- in order to pick it up good.

Interviewer: Yeah. Sure.

Ceo Bauer: An explosion occurred which wounded me, killed Kellogg.

Interviewer: Okay. We'll pick it there. [Interview recessed to change location]

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. Okay.

Interviewer: Let's start here:

Ceo Bauer: Yeah... I rolled over and over in the shell hole. And actually just prior to that, just after I was wounded --

I don't think I got this in - that a German flare blazed up. In fact, it was --the flare actually -- actually it was a flare that landed. It wasn't very far from us, you know, blazed up, light as day.

And I'll always remember laying motionless and thinking, "Jesus, they're going to shoot me right here." Because, you know, I was in the German line. And but nothing happened. The flare went down and then I rolled over and over in the -- into the shell hole.

And, of course, you immediately put up a call that I'm wounded and need help.

Interviewer: How long

Ceo Bauer: And --

Interviewer: -- did you have to call before they heard you?

Ceo Bauer: Well, no -- the only one that heard -- that answered was my assistant -- was our assistant squad leader on the third squad, Harold Gerrigan, of -- of Manasha, Wisconsin.

And he was a buck sergeant. And he answered that he was in the dark, that he was -- that he was wounded also and couldn't help me. And that he had to go back.

Bauer: Turned out subsequently he was wounded in the hand. And, you know, I still have contact with him today, you know, as of yet. He's still alive over there. He –uh

So I had no help. No help at all.

And I lay in that shell hole wondering what to do. I -- it was an old shell hole. It sheltered me quite well. And gradually the firing subsided. The machine gun firing and the -- whatever artillery was falling subsided.

And I would imagine it was after –and I -- I kept putting up a call periodically, which I thought was very faint. And I didn't realize that by the explosion had deafened me. So pretty much -- and so I was just hearing faintly but probably really putting out a call

And uh... So in rolling around there in the shell hole, I - it was an old one and - God, there was water in the bottom of it. And so I put my hand underwater and I thought, "Oh, my God, am I really bleeding?"

So I thought about helping myself.

Interviewer: About what?

Ceo Bauer: I thought about helping myself.

So that I – uh... I uh... I felt my wounds and the one on my face, my head, hadn't killed me, and the one -- and my chest over my heart hadn't killed me, and I wasn't going into shock, but I decided to - to try a tourniquet on my leg.

I was checking my wounds and really I was just trying to see where I might be bleeding that much to have -- to have blood in the foxhole which, of course, was water I realized after a while.

But I didn't know that my -- I had a wound on the arm and I didn't know that my -- the muscle was so injured that my hand -- my wrist and my hand hung down.

And these or not hung down, but these two fingers hung hand down and my left hand wasn't functional.

But, anyway, I decided I had a bad wound on the leg right behind the knee, in the hollow behind the knee, and that's probably where the blood was coming from. And so we had a white cloth tied around our arm to identify each other in the dark.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: And I got that off as best I could, tried to get it around my leg. I did -- above the wound I did, and then I had nothing in the hole to tighten it up with. So my - I had left my rifle outside the -- outside -- I thought about -- when I rolled in, and I thought about getting out to get that to have the bayonet or the -- or something off from it to tighten it up with.

And then I went -- I decided not to do that,,that it was a bad idea. The face of the matter is that a tourniquet is not the best idea because if they're left on and functional, you know, they cut off the blood flow to an extremity and if you'd happen to pass out or if they're left on too long, then you've destroyed your lower leg or your lower arm anyway.

Anyways .. so that -- that happens. And that happened and would have happened sometimes. You were cautioned against it.. you know.. prior to combat.

So that probably was a good thing I couldn't do it.

And anyway, I'd lived quite a while and 30 minutes or so, and so I realized well, hey. Some of your teaching goes back to your childhood. There's the old saying God helps them that helps themselves, so I decided to -- hey, I believe I'm in good enough shape I can get back.

So I crawled back to the concertina wire.

Interviewer: Was it hard to get out of the shell hole?

Ceo Bauer: No. It wasn't that deep. That wasn't that deep, It wasn't as deep as the one I fell in on the attack about halfway out to the château. That was deep, and I had a hell of a time getting out of it. I think I said that earlier. I considered leaving the bazooka down there because I couldn't -- I couldn't seem to get up the slippery slope out of the shell hole. Which might have been a bomb hole.

You know, in the prior fighting there, in the month before -- because the 90th Division had been there, had taken Maizières over a period of a month there.

Interviewer: And the Germans took it back?

Ceo Bauer: Actually they -- the Germans occupied the city hall for a long time. The 90th Division was in there, in the north part, and the Germans still held the south.

Finally the Third Army and the entire Allied army was held up while Red Ball (*the Red Ball Express*) brought up supplies, and they had to have special permission to launch an offensive and use the artillery. So that's my understanding.

Bauer: Finally they got the -- finally they got permission to launch an offensive to take the rest of Maizieres. And which had just been done just before we got there by the 90th Division, ... 90th Infantry Division

Ceo Bauer: To resume --

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: I crawled back to the concertina wire.

Interviewer: About how far was that?

Ceo Bauer: Oh, it was only 15 yards. 15, 20 yards. I just nicely got inside it, you know, inside -- the concertina wire would be considered their final protective line, and it would be considered that point in which you delayed the enemy and could, you know, pick them off direct with a rifle or machine gun fire

Interviewer: How far was the concertina wire from the château?

Ceo Bauer: It wasn't very far. You were out there where the courtyard wall was. So I would say it was just, you know 20, 30, 40 yards to the courtyard wall.

Interviewer: So you crawled back to the con.. --

Ceo Bauer: ... Crawled back to the concertina wire.

And that smooth wire was diamond shapes, and just -- you can just crawl through it if you keep wiggling. Kind of designed almost to catch you, you know, but it's not -- no barbs or anything.

Interviewer: Oh?

Ceo Bauer: And I think it was -- it must have been premanufactured. It was continuous and must have been pressed in rolls so you can string it out.

It did string in front of the château and it strung out across to the to the south or to the right of the approach road to Château Brioux. It strung out across the field. I had crawled through it before on patrol.

And so... I crawled through that, struggled through that.

First I hesitated there and thought, "My God, it's mined. And if I go through, I'll probably kick off a mine like I presume maybe Kellogg or Ahern had when I was --"

Interviewer: Three of you were sent out?

Ceo Bauer: Oh, there was three of us out of the 11-man squad came through. Which is an 11-man squad and our entire platoon was – was. Was you know, attempting to get through the wire and go past the – .. the uh....

Our instructions were to go past the château on the left. And the second platoon was on the right of the road, to go past it on the right which would be the south.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And then the third platoon was to come -- follow -- on a delayed timing and enter the château.

Interviewer: And how long was it from the time you first got through the concertina wire with Kellogg and Ahern? How long do you think it was before you ran into trouble?

Ceo Bauer: Well, it was immediately.

Interviewer: Immediately?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. Within a minute or two. You see, they just came through the wire. I said go out to the left –

Interviewer: Yeah. 20:40

Ceo Bauer: -- and uh.. wait. Actually lay down and wait. And I laid down, too. And so within, you know, seconds.

Interviewer: Within seconds?

Ceo Bauer: Within seconds the explosion went off.

Interviewer: Do you think it was Kellogg and Ahern --

Ceo Bauer: And I kind of felt initially that they tripped off a they tripped off a mine. But on thinking afterwards in our discussions and reunions when we finally got together,

You know, there was such a barrage came in on it, mortars getting on the wire and in the -- and came -- came on the positions in front of the château there on the wire and beyond, that it wounded a very great number of our platoon and of the second platoon. And a good share of it was shrapnel from fire.

Bauer: So I -- I don't know what hit me. Whether it was a mine, whether it was a mortar, whether it was an artillery shell.

It could have been German 20-millimeter direct fire. They may have had some of those there. those smaller-shelled AA - which they used as personnel.

They just leveled them out, fired them direct so... .

Ceo Bauer: Anyway, I got through it. Then I was in a mode to get back. I knew the way back, so I had to go crawl -- crawl to the road. It's a grass... an earth... earth road, the Avenue de Briex now.

Interviewer: The one --

Ceo Bauer: When you came down to the château site. It's now a --- now a city street with curb and gutter and with just -- with, you know, houses along it.

Interviewer: What -- was that --

Ceo Bauer: That wasn't there. That was -- that was just a country lane literally that came out to the château. The road -- the lane to the château. So -- so you had -- you had to go back to -- it was a quarter mile back to the road, to the main road from Maizieres, which is south towards Metz.

So that was all rural, and Maizieres has grown out to the Parc de Briex, the site of the château.

Interviewer: So you crawled --

Ceo Bauer: So I crawled back to that -- I -- I crawled back to that road, that country lane.

And there were hardwood trees along it which had been hit by shell fire, but theythey furnished what you might call some -- some shelter maybe if you stood behind them, but if a shell hit them, you know, you'd get a tree burst. But when I got there I thought, "Well, gee, I'm in better shape than I thought. "Maybe I can walk."

Well, I didn't know that I had a drop foot, that I had a nerve cut. And so my first attempts to walk, I just

I staggered a little ways and down I went. And, ofcourse, in the dark I didn't know what the situation was.

So in that manner I proceeded back to Maizieres, rising and falling and heading back to Maizieres.

Bauer: When I got there, there was a ditch. I got to the outpost house. There was only one house to the west side of the road down to Metz, which was our outpost house, our furthest-south house, the one we had -- that I knew I would come to our -- come to a sentry and someone on guard.

And so when I got there, the ditch there wasn't very deep but it seemed almost insurmountable to me. Not insurmountable. Such a barrier to me to get through the to get through that. It wasn't very deep, two or three feet was all it was, but it just seemed like it was a barrier.

So I met two I Company men from, I think, the third platoon coming out. One was the third platoon sergeant, Tony Darin, of Chicago. Tony Darin, D-a-r-i-n, of Chicago, and Edward Steele, S-t-e-e-l-e -- I don't know where from -- who had orders to go out.

And we had a password, you know, which I don't remember. And they -- either they challenged me or I challenged them and gave back the answering word, and then they came to me. And I wanted them to help me through the ditch into the château.

They refused, which is not unusual.

This is combat.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: And they refused and said -- told me that they were on a mission to go out and locate my first platoon sergeant, Sergeant Skelton. I believe he came from Illinois. That's S-k-e-l-t-o-n. He would be a tech sergeant.

And that the attack had failed and have him come back in. So they were headed out into the black on a dangerous mission, you know, to find somebody.

And so I knew how to swear and I told them what son-of-a-bitches they were in no uncertain terms.

And they continued on...

Interviewer: And you were still on the other side of the ditch?

Ceo Bauer: I'm still in the road. Well, of course, then I had to get down and crawl through the ditch, which I did, and right into the house.

Now, I should tell you that Sergeant Darin and PFC Steele went on out. Darin kicked off a mine, blew off part of his foot. And it killed Steele. And Steele is buried up in Luxembourg cemetery.

Bauer: At the time we visited there I -- just wandering through, I came to his grave, which I'm fortunate to have done.

So I paid my respects. And so I -- you have to remember that, you know, they were two men heading out just in the night toward the enemy lines.

That's about as dangerous as it can get except on the actual attack. You know, there was no firing going on at the time they headed out. It was -- it was over.

So -- so I did not talk to Darin for probably 30 years. He came to a -- came to a reunion and he came to two or three. He doesn't come to many. And I believe he's still alive. I haven't heard that he's passed away.

This is 19 -- or 2004. So -- and I talked to him and I asked him if he remembered. And he didn't.

Interviewer: He didn't?

Ceo Bauer: Not only that, this probably is not unusual. Some people do black out. I remember well, but it's so traumatic that they forget it and do not remember it. He did not remember that. He did not remember me swearing at him profusely and Steele, and he did not -- and he did not remember what his mission was. Can you imagine that?

So I told him, and the fact that I told him seemed -- at that late date seemed to bother him a little because he seemed to think that I was critical of him for not -- for not helping him. Not helping me, which I wasn't. I was just telling him.

So I said you shouldn't -- you shouldn't feel a lot better about it since you and Steele were heading out there on such a dangerous and critical mission.

But it still didn't seem to satisfy him, believe it or not.

And I kind of wondered if he believed me. So that's -- that's one of the things that happens, you know, in human nature.

I went on into the house in which I knew there should be our medic. And I don't think it's Dick Schoen that's here. He was a medic, platoon medic, but I think it was a Hispanic or Mexican medic, which I don't recall his name. But we had a basement full. The houses there had very good basements, quite often sheltered with concrete over the concrete tops for the floor. And the floor was -- you know, overhead where they're almost a shelter from -- they were a shelter from -- from artillery in that -- an artillery that exploded in the house above.

Interviewer: But it wouldn't go --

Ceo Bauer: But it probably wouldn't get to the -- I got -- I got to the top of the stairs. I'll tell you if the Germans -- if the enemy had launched an attack right then, there was complete chaos in that house and not very many men there, one or two guys and a lieutenant -- a lieutenant, I think, from -- they were in already from -- from heavy weapons company, which would be K -- yeah. It would be Company M. And I don't know his name.

But no one would take me down to the cellar to the aide man, and that was a barrier.

So I laid there and threw a fit. I laid there and decided to -- I was mad because I wanted to live and I -- I started to God damn. And I began right below God and I God dammed Roosevelt, I God dammed Hitler and I God dammed Mussolini and I God damned the guys who was there, you know.

And finally this lieutenant carried me down to the cellar in the basement to -- to where -- then to where then -- I think Gerrigan (phonetic) was there, my sergeant. And -- and several others was there in various with various kinds of wounds.

And then the aide man came to me. And the aide man, you know, essentially bandaged you up and wraps you up with bandages, checks your wounds, make sure you're not bleeding.

MR. MEYER: You want to stop here?

END OF CD ONE. 33 minutes 51 seconds

CD 2 Ceo Bauer

MR. BAUER: Where were we now? I was just cussing out Roosevelt.

Interviewer (Mr. Meyer): You were just cussing out Roosevelt, Hitler.

Ceo Bauer: Roosevelt, Mussolini and Hitler. I just told them what S.O.B.s they were to get me in such a state, such a position.

So this lieutenant came and -- I actually got down in the cellar. But, to resume, I got down in the cellar. And I stopped.

Interviewer: Did the Lieutenant?...

Ceo Bauer: Yes, he did. He was M Company, I think, and heavy weapons. And they had been providing 50-caliber machine what I recall gun fire. Support fire overhead. They had set up and fired it overhead during the attack.

I don't know whether he survived or not. I don't know his name so whether he survived the war in Europe, what happened to him.

Anyway, down there we had -- in the cellar there had to be 15 or 20 wounded men. And, as I said --

Interviewer: How many [*aide men*?]?

Ceo Bauer: Just one.

Interviewer: Just one?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. That I'm aware of. He came around to me and and, you know, bandaged me up. And, as I said, this one sergeant named Burns, I believe, who was in our -- think in our platoon, one of the other squad leaders -- I want to say he was from Chicago. But he -- he came over.

He was an older man, one of the older -- maybe original 95ers from activation. And he -- he didn't appear to be wounded very severely to me or there was nothing obvious, but he must have had something somewhere to be down there.

But he said to me, "Did you take your wound tablets?" That's your sulfa tablets.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: I said, "No, I lost them." Or something. Or I -- and so he said, "Well, you can have mine." You needed water with them. So I did, I took the sulfa down, sulfa tablets down.

Ceo Bauer: Along about maybe midnight or 1:00 o'clock in the morning, the stretcher bearers came and put me on a stretcher, took me up, out of the -- up the stairs and out into the street. And they -- which would be the main street running north and south in Maizieres.

Interviewer: Was that a dirt street or paved?

Ceo Bauer: No. It was -- well, I think it probably was paved there. It was cobbled street.

Interviewer: Cobbled street?

Ceo Bauer: It would have been cobble. I believe it was gravel or not paved south to Metz. I don't believe it wasn't, but I'm not sure. You know. And they led -- I actually had led, you know -- that road down to Metz went -- went south past the graveyard, which you will hear discussed in accounts. And actually the Germans really had -- had emplacements in there, in the graveyard. And that -- from the slag pile, which was to the east, which was removed probably in the rebuilding of Maizieres, that was the highest position. The Germans occupied that. They still occupied it. Because it had been attacked -- it was attacked at the same time by the by the battalion, I believe Company L, Company L. They were not successful either in coming up the sides and occupying it.

Interviewer: That's hard, coming up the sides?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. It would be difficult climbing it anyway.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: Let alone if there was resistance. They rolled grenades down on them and they were not successful.

But they took me outside, to resume.

And the stretcher bearers, four of them, you know, they hadn't been in combat long, and they hadn't been under -- under fire long. So I'll always remember the Germans were shelling intermittently, and a shell would go over and and further in Maizieres. When it come over they'd set me down and duck back in the doorway. Hell, it was already over. So I wanted to get back to battalion aide fast, so again I sounded off and said hey, they're already gone. Get me back.

You see, I was always -- always going, always doing it. So they got the message and they got me back a ways from there.

Now, they had come -- come with a Jeep. I would say too far forward because they didn't carry me over two or three blocks, and they had their Jeep and they loaded me on it and took me to battalion aide, which is in a house back up in the center of Maizieres.

Ceo Bauer (cont'd): And this is the paradox that when I went in there, when I had -- they set me down and I had to wait for a while before the battalion surgeon -- and I have his name. I had it yesterday. Right now I don't have it. Herbert, Captain Herbert, whom I knew because he'd been with us, while I'd been there. And he had to patch me and patch up a cut on my face before. So I knew him. And before -- and when I was in the USA and when I'd run into something in the USA and, you know, kind of cut my face when I was training.

Interviewer: So you knew him from way back?

Ceo Bauer: Well, not way back, but while I was there for -- he was -- I'd been there and he'd sewed up the cut in my face right here really. It was a -- where I'd -- actually where my buddy Wagner had hit me with a bayonet during bayonet training with the scabbard on the bayonet.

I don't want to tell you that. That's beside the point.

Interviewer: Yeah. That's beside the point.

Ceo Bauer: But so the paradox was, was here was -- was the sergeant I'd cussed so much, I'd cursed out so much for not helping me. He had -- of course, he was back there already being attended to ahead of me, and he was the one that -- his -- the man with him, Steele, had been killed.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And Sergeant Darin.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And had a portion of his foot blown off, I presume by a bouncing Betty. It bounced up and then exploded and killed Steele. That's what I think. I had some presumptions.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: So they took me in there. Captain Herbert looked at me, said your wounds are not serious. They didn't penetrate your internal -- internals, so we'll -- so you're not -- you're not in great danger. Of which I didn't really quite accept. Didn't tell him, but you don't necessarily believe that.

Interviewer: No.

Ceo Bauer: That's what they would tell you. So they -- their treatment was to bandage your wounds and send you back to the field hospital. And so that's what he did. You know, check them and bandage them and send you back.

Interviewer: Where is the field hospital?

Ceo Bauer: And it was back -- back of the lines, not far. They got me there by putting me on a -- on a stretcher on a they had their Jeeps rigged up open where they had a ratchet. You can be -- you'd be outside laying horizontally, looking up at the blue.

Interviewer: Or inside?

Ceo Bauer: And they took you back. I think they could use two put two on, but I don't recall the other person.

Interviewer: Do you remember the ride back?

Ceo Bauer: Yes, I do. That's what I'm leading to.

He had given me a shot of morphine, and so while I didn't realize it, I was hallucinating. And, of course, since out there at the château there had been what you'd call a fireworks display of machine gun fire -- and the Germans used tracer bullets in their -- so their machine gun trajectories were very, very evident And so I wasn't looking ahead, but I kind of felt like I was looking ahead of the Jeep down the road. And I hallucinated that there was machine gun fire across the road right at my stretcher level, although I wasn't too much concerned about it, and I kind of anticipated when I'd get there it would probably get me. But being, you know, doped up I didn't -- didn't jump off the stretcher or anything. And it took a couple instances of that before I realized in my drugged mind just imagination.

And so I don't remember a lot beyond that, and maybe the morphine took over because -- but I arrived at the hospital before dawn.

And they may have given me some more morphine. But I woke up in the morning, and about the first thing I remember is a colonel, a bird colonel, coming to me. And uhhh.. I remember him coming to the bed next to me and he had -- he awarded the purple heart down the line, and he awarded mine.

And he -- he said -- he said that he would -- he'd put it in my effects and he just had one, and he would -- it would accompany me, a purple heart, which it did.

Interviewer: It did?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. And I have it yet, naturally, that medal!

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: I remember one man -- it's a typical reaction of wounded men. They're kind of in what I'd call a go-to-hell club, giving the colonel a hard time and wondering what the hell he was back there doing awarding purple hearts in a safe position when he should be up there on the front line. You can just imagine that would occur.

Interviewer: But would people yell and be insubordinate?

Ceo Bauer: We weren't being insubordinate.

Interviewer: I mean but would they just yell like, "What the hell are you doing back here?"

Ceo Bauer: Oh, he would say it in forceful language. He did. So I heard it. I didn't. I had more tolerance than he did. He just did that.

So, anyway, their procedure in the hospital when they took me in for -- and, by the way, I had to wait for surgery for a day or two since I was not serious. They had a priority system, the serious ones went first. I would have been a couple days.

By the way, I have that account. I wrote it down. My account.

Interviewer: Is that in your book?

Ceo Bauer: Parts of it, elements of it are. He had to cut it down, but I have other parts of it which I probably ought to send you, except that I haven't got many copies. I better get some. And I've always been going to -- every 10 years or so I upgrade it a bit.

I'm not like Joe Januszkiewicz (*95th Infantry veteran/oral historian*) with it. I like to fish and hunt too much.

But so to resume, their -- their treatment for me when I got there, they put me out to -- for surgery, was to sew up these two wounds, put sutures in them, leave the others open, and they packed them with Vaseline gauze. They were quite extensive, wide-open wounds. There was one on my arm, which really laid this muscle all open.

And so they put the Vaseline gauze in there and wrapped it up. And actually my hand hung kind of like that and those two fingers hung down. I couldn't -- since

I had no muscle strength, couldn't function them. These three were sticking out.

Interviewer: Did they bother you?

Ceo Bauer: No. When I got back to England, they diagnosed that as a nerve injury, but they -- when they took me in there to the hospital when I first got -- went to the hospital near Cardiff, Wales, they sutured this together and the muscle grew back together. And I laid in bed and I started -- kept wiggling my fingers, and soon as it healed, I started picking my -- there's not anything particularly wrong with that left hand except maybe I don't have as much grip as I had, but I can improve it a lot with the wall right now. And there was no problem there. But they diagnosed me that -- I better go back to the hospital.

Interviewer: All right.

Ceo Bauer: The field hospital, because I had a big wound here. And --

Interviewer: Under your knee?

Ceo Bauer: Under the knee. Did not cut the tendon, but it really damaged under here. And while I -- and they - they didn't -- they didn't do a diagnosis there as to what was the basic problem. That was when you got back to the to the permanent hospital or to the hospital back in England or wherever it was. It could have been in France. Is everything working all right?

Interviewer: I think it's fine.

Ceo Bauer: So they did the same thing there.

Then I moved to the post-operation tent. The "postop tent" they call it.

The weather was bad, rain or snow, whatever, and I remained there for another three or four days before they -- I could be flown out or before they could move us out. On a bed -- on a bed in the field hospital. And, quite frankly, it was old home week. Most of my -- my platoon members were there.

Interviewer: In the hospital?

Ceo Bauer: In that postop tent.

Steve Bodner was over therewith his leg off. My buddy, Steve. He wasn't talking much and I couldn't talk to him.

But some of the others walking -- that were ambulatory, walking around, came over and told me, you know, that he was being sedated, that he had a leg off. They'd had to amputate it and that he wasn't -- he wasn't communicating. Wasn't too happy and wasn't communicating. That's kind of what I got. Yeah.

So some others came by, depending on the severity of their wounds. I will always just remember, though, this one private named Cagiano who had a cast on his hand came by and talked to me. And he said -- I think I -- the reason I remember it was because he was kind of trying to put the make on one of the nurses. So I remember that.

The guy next to me, I -- was named Ross and out of another platoon, and I didn't know the extent of his wounds, but I -- the doctor did come through once, pick up his chart.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Ceo Bauer: And for me.

Interviewer: For you?

Ceo Bauer: And he read the wrong chart. So it was all right.

e noticed it. You know, he said -- well, he looked and said, "Well, that's not you." And but I know Ross -- this is about all I know about Ross's wounds, but they were femur wounds. I don't remember whether in both legs or not, but his legs were --he was wounded in the legs. And Ross was a very fast runner, our fastest and best athlete, and I think he'd been a college athlete. And I have a feeling his athletic days were probably over, at least as being a -- you know, a good athlete. I had a feeling.

Another -- there was another young fellow over there who didn't appear to be too bad at all named Charles Coleman, who when I left -- when -- Ross left before I did.

Ceo Bauer (cont'd): He was a smoker, and when they came to get him, he -- he said to the nurse -- he was from Georgia. And he said to the nurse there when they transferred him to a stretcher, said, "Would you please get my cigarettes from under the pillow?" She looked.

There was no cigarettes.

She said, "Ross, if you wanted some cigarettes you should have told me." I remember that. You know, I wouldn't remember that incident but for that.

And so but when I left after -- about the sixth day, I went past Charles Coleman, who was younger than me.

He was also an army student in a training program studying engineering at one of the colleges. He talked to me about Bodner. And said, you know -- and I didn't think he was hurt very bad, but he subsequently later developed an infection and died.

Interviewer: No.

Ceo Bauer: Right. Right.

Interviewer: Oh.

Ceo Bauer: So that kind of grieves us a bit.

Interviewer: Oh, sure.

Ceo Bauer: All of us.

So anyway, I went out to the plane, muddy field, and I guess a C-47 that they used then.

I remember the pilot -- there was somebody standing in the doorway of it looking out at the field, and I remember one man whom I kind of -- looked a bit older than me, but he was over on one of the other stretchers and he had a leg -- or a foot pretty well off.

And have you ever heard the term "million dollar wound"?

He kind of stuck his foot up in the air a little bit, pointed to it. He said he was quite happy about it. He said, "See this, men? Here's my ticket to the "Zee I". The "Zone of interior". I'm going home.

This is my million dollar wound."

So that's -- you've learned something there if you never heard it before.

Interviewer: No.

Ceo Bauer: I heard that term many times in the hospital.

And I had a million dollar wound because I -- I didn't have to return to the front line and possibly get killed, and so I was going to live the good life in the army hospital system the rest of my career, as was that man.

Ceo Bauer: So we flew back to England. I don't remember anything much about that or where we landed.

I don't remember much about the first place we landed, but it was not the hospital I was treated in

But the next day was a train ride to that hospital over in Cardiff, Wales. And during that time you still laid on the stretcher there and hurting because your whole body with extensive shrapnel wounds, 30 or 40, is kind of sore.

Interviewer: Oh?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. So – I got to that hospital. I don't – I don't even know the name of it. We didn't particularly care where we were even -- a lot of men never knew where they were when they were on the line or even cared to find out. Then -- then -- we got there and the first thing they did –

All of this time I had never had a bowel movement.

Interviewer: No?

Ceo Bauer: No.

Interviewer: For -- since how long?

Ceo Bauer: And I had been eating for seven days, since I'd been wounded.

And so they knew about that.

This – this wasn't anything unusual. You see, while they were moving you back or even in the field hospital, there was a – it probably wasn't -- you know, I think the system was overwhelmed with casualties, the system we were in.

And because of the medical necessities, they treated those that needed treating. But they would give you -- they would -- if you couldn't urinate, you know, they would treat that with a catheter or whatever was necessary. But to have a – but to have a bowel movement, no treatment. You'll get that when you get back to the hospital.

Interviewer: What did you do?

Ceo Bauer: But it took a week. Well, I didn't do anything. So and didn't particularly -- wasn't particular --so -- but I wanted to live and I did eat everything they gave to me.

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: Kept piling it up in my system. (Laughs)

Interviewer: So --

Ceo Bauer: Well, this isn't the end.

Because -- because the first thing they did was they were aware that they had to do those things, so they gave me an enema.

So the guy that did it was not too swift a warden boy, ward man, and he took me -- it hurt, but he took me in and sat me on the toilet.

You know, I had the man -- you know.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: Well, it didn't work really. So there might have been just a little bit come out, but I think he looked and I guess -- I guess he thought, "I can say he had one."

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: But I didn't.

Interviewer: Oh?

Ceo Bauer: So, you know, I'm 21 years old

And uhhh.. I didn't tell anybody else. I went back to the bed and they -- they prepped me to be operated on, and

after a day or two and took me in and did surgery to suture the wounds. They sutured this one up here and they -- they did a skin graft here.

Interviewer: Behind your knee?

Ceo Bauer: And they sewed this up.

Interviewer: Okay. Your arm?

Ceo Bauer: My arm. And then he did what they had to do otherwise. This was practically healed up by the time --that time since it wasn't deep and just came down as a superficial wound, two wounds.

There was two wounds here, but they seemed to cut looking for the shrapnel, and joined them together. So I've got a scar about three inches long there.

And so I still had not had a bowel movement.

(Laughs) So -- so I -- So I -- it was two or three days later that the -- that --

Interviewer: Two or three days beyond the seven?

Ceo Bauer: The surgery.

Interviewer: So, okay.

Ceo Bauer: Well, if you add it up, it was seven.

Interviewer: Plus three?

Ceo Bauer: And two is nine.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And three --

Interviewer: Oh, no. Is 12?

Ceo Bauer: Is 12.

Maybe more. I don't remember how many days exactly. But here I was a young guy and I thought well, hell, if I'm not going to die from my wounds, I'm going to die because I can't have a bowel movement. (laughs)

So I was scared to tell them. Thought maybe that was the end. (Laughs) So -- well, I can laugh. A sense of humor.

Interviewer: It is funny.

Ceo Bauer: So -- so finally the battalion -- or not the battalion - , the ward doctor --

Interviewer: Yeah?

Ceo Bauer: -- surgeon -- I ought to have his name. I want to say Wireman (phonetic) or something like that. That may be close.

But on the chart he must have spotted something when he came through with the head nurse there. He came through every morning on inspection to inspect the patients.

And he -- he stopped at the -- at my -- and he said, "Bauer, what's wrong?" So I told him.

He says, "Oh, that's no problem." And he proceeded to give the nurses hell.

And they brought a -- they brought a -- they brought the -- they put a rubber sheet on the bed, put me up on the bedpan.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And they put a screen around.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And they gave me whatever they give you.

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: The enema. And I always sum it up by saying I filled the bedpan and the bed with one big shawoosh.

CD 2 ends with this following track – Ceo Singing the 95th Infantry Marching and Drinking Song

Ceo Bauer : This is the 95th Division marching and drinking song:

Primarily drinking.

(Mr. Bauer sings:)

"We're Captain Bolton's boys and we're raiders of the night.

We're dirty SOBs, but we'd rather make love ("f*ck) than fight."

Second verse:

"What will you do in the infantry?

"It's easy enough to tell.

"They put a pack upon your back and send you straight to hell."

That's right.

"The infantry, the infantry, "The dirty sons of bitches,
"They wipe their ass on broken glass and wonder why it
itches.

"I'd rather be a pimple on a syphilitic whore,
"Than be a first lieutenant in the drum and bugle corps."
(Laughs)

Here's the chorus now.

"Hi dee di dee, Christ almighty,
"Who the hell are we?
"Rim ram, God damn, the 95th infantry!"

(Applause)

There's other verses.

Interviewer: Do you have the other verses there?

Ceo Bauer: I don't know. That's all I remember. I'm going to get copies, give to the general and others.

(Addition spliced in)

Ceo Bauer: We used to sing that it was the Quartermaster's Corps. The reason for that was some discrimination in that the Quartermaster's Corps in the segregated army was pretty much Black.

So I took it out and we can sing “The Drum and Bugle Corps”

Wouldn't go nowadays.

Besides you have some Quartermasters of your own

Interviewer: Yes

Ceo Bauer: And also, also, we referred to it also as “The Jewish Infantry”

Interviewer: Why?

Ceo Bauer: Because it was staffed by a lot of Jewish officers.

Interviewer: What? The Quartermaster's Corps?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah

Interviewer: That's interesting.

END OF CD TWO – 33:30

Begin CD 3

MR. BAUER: We're resuming Today -- I guess November 22, 2004. Ceo Bauer.

Interviewer: And your rank?

Ceo Bauer: Was PFC.

Interviewer: PFC. Company?

Ceo Bauer: Company I, the 377th regiment, 95th Infantry Division.

And this is December 1944, and I'm in the hospital, army hospital, near Cardiff, Wales. And I've been -- I have -- I have been operated on for -- for -- for treatment of wounds.

Interviewer: And how many --

Ceo Bauer: The wounds have been -- well, multiple wounds.

Interviewer: Would you list them again?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. The multiple wounds -- the major ones were on my left forearm; my left temple; and my chest, my left chest.

And left side there was one. And then the disabling wound was behind the knee on my left leg. No broken bones. And actually I'd -- the telegram home said that I was wounded slightly.

Interviewer: Hum.

Ceo Bauer: But the wound -- wounds were such that I had a nerve injury and a partial dropped foot. I had a dropped foot -- of my left -- left foot, so that I couldn't pick it up normally.

So I needed a -- I needed to have nerve -- nerve surgery to suture the nerve together and to repair that and get -- get regeneration of the nerve to -- to see if you -- if the -- you could recover the motion of your left foot.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: ... to pick it up.

Now I said previously somewhere to you that I felt the US Army hospital system was overwhelmed with casualties from the offenses in the autumn and the Bulge, and that -- that the nerve injuries should have been sutured and repaired immediately. But they didn't have the staff there to do it, and so you were sent home to the USA, which was referred to as the Zone of Interior, for nerve surgery there.

Ceo Bauer: And so I had said before that was what we all called a million dollar wound, which got us home and which got us -- got us out of combat and -- and also which made for easy living with sheets and hospital treatment and kind of a good -- good atmosphere for the rest of our careers..And so I went -- army careers I mean.

Interviewer: Yeah. Sure.

Ceo Bauer: There's no promotions, though, because in the hospital that's it. You know, there's no promotions there. And so you're not on duty. You're in the hospital. So I was shipped home.

Interviewer: What month?

Ceo Bauer: In January of '45. Sailed home on a liberty ship.

The JW McAndrew was the name of the ship. And it took several days. I was partially ambulant with kind of a brace on my left foot, so I could walk around some, be careful. It was a makeshift kind of a rubber band because I hadn't got the -- they hadn't the knowledge, evidentially, at the hospital to put one on like I saw later.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: Which was improved steel brace --

Interviewer: Did it hurt?

Ceo Bauer: I didn't have much pain then. The pain was all prior to that. And I was pretty well over the pain, so I was happy.

Interviewer: How was your walking?

Ceo Bauer: Well, my walking wasn't good, but --

Interviewer: I mean did you have to use a cane?

Ceo Bauer: No. No.

Interviewer: You just walked on your own?

Ceo Bauer: I just walked on my own.

If I had had the recommended brace, I would have been fine. They had one pivoted, a steel brace that supported the ankle.

Hell, after I got one of those I could play football, and I did. And softball, you know, back -- back in the USA.

So what I did was -- what they did, they --

Oh, everything went fine returning until we got in a storm off the east coast, a couple days out yet.

And when that happened, I was going down the companion way to eat breakfast and I -- the ship changed course just as I took my bacon and eggs and tray and set it on the -- we stood up to eat.

And I'll always remember, I stood there. I didn't know anything was wrong, and I picked the bacon up to here and I was seasick.

And that's a terrible feeling.

Interviewer: Oh, yeah.

Ceo Bauer: Until the storm was over for a day and a half I just couldn't face the world. So that's the only time I've ever been seasick in my life, but I swear to God there must be people that jump over the side when they feel like that because -- did you ever have it, sir?

Interviewer: Not -- not to that degree.

Ceo Bauer: I didn't vomit or anything. I didn't.

Interviewer: You didn't?

Ceo Bauer: No. Just felt terrible. So anyway, once the storm was over, I was okay. And the last day we came into New York harbor and waited there for the --

Interviewer: What did it feel like to come into New York, to see the statue?

Ceo Bauer: Well, I didn't see it.

Interviewer: You didn't?

Ceo Bauer: No. I don't recall that I did.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: Maybe I did. Came in at night.

And we were a bit perturbed at the -- at the medical corps. They left us waiting there for a while to get off and, of course, being in the hospital, wounded in the hospital system, you're an untouchable. You know what I mean?

Interviewer: Uh-huh.

Ceo Bauer: A privileged class. I'll always remember this one guy ahead of me, he'd been wounded once on Omaha Beach and then he'd really been wounded in -- up towards Germany.

Boy, he had some big chunks of shrap that they removed from him.

But he still was going pretty good. But I'll always remember when the medical doctor, I -- or one of the medical people -- and they was all officers there. I think he was a major.

Ceo Bauer: And he said to him, "What's the matter with you?"

Well, naturally he said, "Well, how the hell do I know?" You know. "You're the doctor. You're supposed to know."

That's the way the guys would be. So we went on in to Halleran General and we were just processed through there.

Interviewer: That's in New York?

Ceo Bauer: That's New York.

Interviewer: Okay. Halleran General.

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. And that's the first money I got of any consequence.

And they give us each \$25, which is quite a bit of money back then.

Because we hadn't received any pay for quite a while but not any reason to get any (money) over in the hospitals in England --

Interviewer: -- No--

Ceo Bauer: -- or in Wales. So we -- I was ambulant, walking around. And I got a haircut. Hadn't had one. And for which -- and, you know, got -- I was pretty -- we really needed one. And so did the others.

Interviewer: How long was your hair at that time?

Ceo Bauer: And then -- well, we were only there to be processed. And then I was sent by train to -- along with many others with similar injuries to me to Nicholas General Hospital in Louisville. Louisville, Kentucky.

And there I was given a -- processed, and then they fitted me with a good brace, steel brace, that fastened -- came up and around and strapped on my leg under the knee and was pivoted. Wouldn't let the foot drop.

Interviewer: Oh, good.

Ceo Bauer: So that's what I said.

You could play football in that as long as your leg was --

Interviewer: And you said you did?

Ceo Bauer: Well, I played some football and softball, yeah.

And I got a furlough home. And it was in the winter. I went home. You know, your parents are proud of you, you go up at the basketball game and they introduce you and you stand up.

And I remember saying to my parents, you know, the -- everybody was all -- and the game was close and they're all -- they're all excited.

And I said, "But it's only a game."

You know. So you had a little different viewpoint already, because you'd been in combat.

Interviewer: Sure. How did the people at home accept you?

Ceo Bauer: Oh, it was great. They accepted you great.

You know, being World War II. The only thing, the public back home never can really communicate with you because they have no background to communicate with you.

And quite often you got sick of it after a little while because they'd sympathize with you.

You didn't want any sympathy. You didn't need any.

Bauer: You didn't feel as though you should get any. You didn't feel that way. You were injured, but not sick.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: You know, and you're able to be home and around.

So after awhile you probably kind of clammed up. They would -- since they -- the things they said to you, you know -- and you couldn't -- you couldn't -- you weren't able to explain what had happened to you.

Interviewer: So you're not able to explain what happens to you?

Ceo Bauer: Right.

Interviewer: And they're giving you sympathy like you're sick?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. So --

Interviewer: The wrong sort of things?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. So one of the other things was -- that I always particularly remembered was that they'd come up always --

They'd always say "Well, I have a son that's over -- and he's been over there for, you know, two years and he's been right in the thick of it."

(Ceo thinks) He probably was in the quartermaster corps or something, you know, and not in the infantry. But they had no way of -- no background to understand the army.

Ceo Bauer: And that's still true today. The general populace - if they've never been in the military - does not understand the military.

Or they don't understand the army nor they don't understand combat. That's still true about Iraq.

It's one of the problems for the nation. They don't understand that it -- that it's more a guerilla war and it's not like the war in Europe or the war in the Pacific.

It's not -- general's nodding back here. He's putting his fingers up.

Yup.

Bauer: So, anyway, I went back to hospital. I liked to go back because, hell, my -- some of my friends were back there. There was always a turnover of guys.

Some that I'd met in the hospital. No one from the 95th that I would have been with.

So they proceeded then -- it was kind of a priority to be operated on, so I was -- they did not operate on me to repair that peroneal nerve -- that was a peroneal nerve, to suture it, until -- I was waiting -- until Roosevelt died.

I was listening to the radio and Roosevelt had passed away. Our president.

Interviewer: Somewhere in April?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. So I -- so -- in April 2005. *(sic)*

So they prepped me and took me in and operated on me with a spinal shot, spinal block. Some things you remember. I just remembered it right now.

They had you, you know, with some morphine, I suppose, doped up, and they were working on my leg back there. And I was on my stomach. And I must -- the morphine must have -- must have, you know, wore off.

Interviewer: Yeah?

Ceo Bauer: And one of the ward boys of the help hospital came into the -- he moved past me and looked at me and saw my eyes and he moved his fist like this and I moved.

And then I disturbed them back there. *(referring to people during the recording)*

Interviewer: Yes.

Ceo Bauer: And so they -- then they gave me -- they put me under with enough to put me under then and said, "Don't do that again." It wasn't my fault.

And so I went into a post -- postop ward, a different ward, with -- again, with different people.

That's the way the military is. It's always different people.

Ceo Bauer: And that was kind of a revelation in that those guys in the -- some of them had been there a little while and they had big body casts on, things like endocasts in every direction. All kinds of wounds in there. And --

Interviewer: How many people were there; do you think?

Ceo Bauer: Well, on a ward there would be -- on a ward there would be 50 maybe beds down the line. You have a nurse and ward boys and things like that. People help.

Because I remember the first night in there some guy with a body cast -- they got a little liquor in there sometimes and this guy fell out of bed with a big bang. I'll always remember that, you know. Which -- which --with a -- well, an entire body cast, that makes quite a crash.

Interviewer: Yes, yes.

Ceo Bauer: So -- so I -- you know, I was good. I improved.

And they -- as I improved, they -- they put a -- they -- I was probably three or four weeks or so, and then they could cut the body cast -- or the cast. It was just a leg cast, up to the -- not a body cast. And they could cut that off then and then they put a brace with a turn buckle in it.

My -- that -- my leg was bent at a 90-degree -- close to a 90-degree angle as you could be to get the slack in the nerve, to get -- to pull it down and suture it together.

Interviewer: Sure. Sure.

Ceo Bauer: So what they had to do is just slowly then so many turns a day keep turning it out to straighten the leg out --

Interviewer: -- Okay--

Ceo Bauer: -- slowly. So then they gave me a furlough.

Interviewer: Well, how long --

Ceo Bauer: -- And I went home on -- I went home with that leg bent somewhat.

Interviewer: Where was home?

Ceo Bauer: On crutches. Ithaca, Michigan, where I still -- where I live today.

Interviewer: You still live there?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. And I don't remember the sequence of furloughs. I -- I probably got my leg straightened out there and then probably had a two-week furlough and then I went back again.

Bauer: And it would be my opinion that the -- our hospital system was loaded with casualties and they needed the beds. So if you were good enough back, you went again on furlough.

And in the -- in the summer then, you know -- I was a farmer, or my parents had a farm, and when I went home in the summer, even though my parents weren't working the farm and didn't live on it, the doctors gave me 30 days.

And said -- said when you get -- when you get at the end of 30 days, send us a telegram. Give us an excuse and then we'll give you another 30.

Because -- so that's what I did. I sent a telegram and said I was -- I was working on the farm, helping cultivate corn, something like that. And I got another 30 days.

But what they were doing -- and my leg improved along. And I had -- so when I got -- you know, as soon as I could, I got that brace on and, you know, as I got it straightened out, I got the base on, and I was walking and I could run fairly good. I couldn't run 100 yards, but I could do it, you know. Do pretty well. So then --

Interviewer: What month is this now; do you think?

Ceo Bauer: Well, that would be in the summer of --

Interviewer: '45?

Ceo Bauer: '45. So then I went back and they checked me and they sent me home again in the fall. And when we -- should tell you that when we came back, we just put on a robe and we were on the ward again. Good duty.

I hope so, I facetiously say now, because if I'm ever drafted again I'm going to put on my hospital robe and check into the hospital. (Laughs)

So -- because, you know, all we did was -- we didn't have to make up our bed. We got up in the morning and we -- we -- you know, we ate breakfast and then we came back. I don't think they let us play cards until after -- until-- until after supper. Well, in the afternoon or after supper.

But I know we played a lot of Red Ball, a lot of -- which is, you know, with a lot of cards. And we'd -- and actually we tended to lay around a lot. We had radio headphones. We just had a good life. And we'd go over and get milkshakes at the PX

Interviewer: Radio headphones? They just had a radio?

Ceo Bauer: Well, they just a system to bring in -- yeah.

Ceo Bauer: Some things I recall that -- we had one guy from the 5th Division that was there with a -- next to me in the bed for a while, and he had -- I remember him because he had -- his trademark song was, "Ol' Shepard has gone where the good dogs go. Ol' Shep will roam no more."

That was his trademark song.

But one day out of the hospital office - an officer came in, and they he said to him -- I was laying there listening to them, and he says -- the 5th Division had been in Iceland for a long time before they went to Europe. He was -- I think he was a private first class or lower.

He says we've got a petition in here from a woman in Iceland that says you're the father of her -- her son or whatever.

Ceo Bauer: And they said -- he didn't give him any options. He said -- he said you're the father and she says -- he says, "What's your pleasure? Do you want to -- do you just want to sign away your allotment or do you want us to bring her to the USA?" I'll always remember his answer. He said, "Well, I might as well get something for my money. Bring her here." (Laughs)

The general liked that, huh? Good. That's good.

So -- so -- so the -- I -- you know, hell, the guys would move in, move out. You didn't consistently -- except I did have -- foreman, are you still okay? I moved that.

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: There was four of us that were about the same kind of injuries that were able to stay together on one ward.

Two of them have already died, and I don't know about the third one.

I did keep track of them after the -- they had more serious dropped foots than me in that their sciatic nerve was cut.

And I -- and in my writings I only saw one of them physically. And -- but none of them said that they got any recovery from suturing the nerve, so they always had a floppy foot, no control at all.

And they always did.

I got another furlough. I had a lot of furloughs.

You know, I was in the army a long time.

Bauer: Never much on active duty because I spent from August of '43 when I came out of the 35th Division - I had -- I was in the 35th Division from January -- that's the Kansas guard -- from January '43 until -- until August 1943. So that was about eight months. Seven, eight months there.

Then I went to army student training (*ASTP*) and I was there until April, which I was studying basic engineering. And I survived to do two and a half quarterly terms at Carnegie Tech. And I studied physics, chemistry and --

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: -- and the sciences and basic engineering.

Then came to the 95th Division as -- at Indiantown Gap from there. And because I was infantry, the infantry-trained men went to the infantry. The engineers went to the engineers.

And I think some of the Air Corps went to -- Air Force went to the Air Force. Although they- if there's any question, they sent them to the infantry - I think because they needed --

Interviewer: They needed --

Ceo Bauer: They needed infantry.

And the 95th Division was really about half strength. They really -- every squad had about seven, maybe eight men -- I think our squad, though, there was four new men. Bodner and me -- Steve Bodner and me.

Interviewer: Were you in the same squad?

Ceo Bauer: Were in the same squad. And two other men who were recent draftees. I could have given you that early, but I backed up to that.

Interviewer: That's okay.

Ceo Bauer: So that's where -- that's where Steve Bodner and I are -- he came from *ASTP*, but he only got six weeks at another college. So --

Interviewer: So -- and you had two quarters?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah. I had a year's college credit so --

Interviewer: So when did you finally get out of the army?

Ceo Bauer: I got out of the army in April 1946. Early April.

And the reason they kept me was that they kept me – they needed to know in a year whether they needed to operate again. Whether it worked.

And when they called me back and -- to check me and I -- asked me to move my -- my toes and pick up, they saw motion and so then they -- then they said they would discharge me.

Now, I should back up and --

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: Back up and tell you, but in '44 I liked to deer hunt. 28:20

Ceo Bauer: Yeah, but in '44 I liked to deer hunt.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: So it was just on schedule. Deer hunting is November 15th in Michigan, so I had a furlough then and I went deer hunting with my parents -- or with my father and a group in '45.

Interviewer: In '45.

Ceo Bauer: And, hell, I was out in the woods, in the swamps and just like whatever. Still in the hospital.

Interviewer: So you --

Ceo Bauer: Still a hospital patient. I didn't -- I didn't get a deer. Didn't get a buck.

Didn't get a shot. But back then we'd see 30, 40 does and fawns every day --

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: -- rolling by us with -- we just had way too many in the woods immediately north of -- yeah, well, immediately -- about 40 or 50 miles north of Ithaca. There wasn't -- believe it or not, there wasn't deer around us in the farming country then. There is now, all kinds of them, but there wasn't then. That's beside the point, though.

Interviewer: That's okay.

Ceo Bauer: So what I was called back for, I got a telegram called me back to Louisville. And all they called me back for was to be sent to -- to Fort Custer to -- oh, to -- I forgot what you -- rehab. For rehab.

Interviewer: Where's Fort Custer?

Ceo Bauer: Battle Creek, Michigan.

Interviewer: Okay.

Ceo Bauer: So I went down there, and I was down there about two weeks waiting to be shipped up. We played redball all that time.

I remember I had to borrow -- I needed money to go back on the train so I had to borrow --

Ceo Bauer: Maybe 20 years ago I started to write letters

when there seemed to be a move on to move women into -- by the women's movement to say women can do anything and move them into the combat ranks.

That's all very fine, but I don't think they ought to be in the infantry because -- because of the casualty rates.

And so I did write letters and sent them to, you know, our -- our officials nationally.

Interviewer: Did you always get answers?

Ceo Bauer: And always got -- they just pull a letter and don't even address what you wrote, you know. They send letter A or letter B or whatever, and they send it out to you and so you don't get anything.

But what I said in that was -- said in that memo was that -- that infantry combat was such that I -- well, I really wound up saying what emergency is it that we need to carry -- kill America's women? We need -- and, you know, wound up that way. I said I didn't see any emergency.

And since I -- I even quoted the Civil War, too.

Ceo Bauer: My great grandfather's company, you know, and so -- which was pretty severe in the Civil War. You know, in the Union job. So but I've still got copies of the memo somewhere if I could locate it.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Ceo Bauer: I got a lot of things, you know, so -- but I've --

Interviewer: Do you have any final words to say?

Ceo Bauer: I don't think the general public understands infantry combat at all.

Interviewer: If you could tell them what -- something about it --

Ceo Bauer: And not only that, it's very difficult to explain to the public the military.

Interviewer: Sure.

Ceo Bauer: They don't --

They do not understand the concept of the military and that it's not like civilian life when you can do something and in the military you get the orders and you do it. So -- and a good share of the populace doesn't grasp that concept at all.

Or the -- in the movies and the media don't -- don't put out the idea so they can understand it. There's some -- there's some concept or some indication that it -- you know, you can do it or you don't have to do it. Well, hell, when you're ordered to attack, you're ordered to attack, so you do. So that's what -- that's what that is.

If I had to sum up, I'd -- I'd do it all again. And I believe in America and I try to say it sometimes, even tried to say it today, I believe -- I believe in our role as the leader in the world and I -- in our foreign policy of -- of promoting freedom, democracy and human rights. We are -- we are the light of the world and our concept -- and it's our military that -- our military that makes it possible to preserve us our sphere of influence and -- and extend those -- extend those freedoms and those benefits to the people of the world.

We're engaged in it now

Interviewer: To finish up Do you remember your serial number? Name, rank and serial number?

Ceo Bauer: Yeah.

Ceo E. Bauer, B-a-u-e-r, army serial number - 36420598.
And private first class, from Ithaca, Michigan. That's --

Interviewer: That's great.

Ceo Bauer: And Company I, 377th Infantry 95th Infantry Regiment, 95th Division. Yeah.