

## Maurice Flynn Audio Log

Veteran's Name: Maurice Flynn

Interviewer: David Meyer (O'Shea)

son of Earl D Meyer Co H/379<sup>th</sup> IR/95<sup>th</sup> ID

Date of Interview: **August 7, 2010, (Cambridge Mass. Reunion)**

Transcriber: Carol Slezak Transcribed on: Sept 6, 2021

Log compiled by: David Meyer, June, 2025

Note: Mr. Flynn came to the reunion supported by his wife and children. Mr. Flynn's speech was sometimes halting and his memory needed coaching. His wife, Hazel, his girlfriend before the war and wife after the war prompted him to give more detail.

Halfway through the interview, Mr. Flynn took off his shoes and socks to show the interviewer the twisted damage done to his feet due to severe frostbite during the winter of 1944 in Europe. A harrowing sight.

- 00:00 August 7, 2010 introduction; Maurice J. Flynn was with A Company 378<sup>th</sup>. Attending the reunion with his family, grandson James Flynn and wife Hazel
- Birthdate Sept 5, 2023 Born in Huntington, W.Va.  
Pearl Harbor vaguely knew where it was. Joined soon after.
- 02:45 Joined Army because girlfriend (eventually wife) Hazel's father was active Army since 1915. Wanted to join same service as her father. Still in college studying law Joined 1943.
- 04:45 Wanted to fly an airplane. Taken from college after deferments. Trained Sheppard Field, Texas.
- Not married until after war but was close to Hazel.
- Made it into flight training in Pullman Washington That training was disbanded because they needed men for the infantry
- Made application for training at Pullman Washington and got to fly.
- 07:45-8:59 *Other veteran comes to ask about an interview the next day Sunday*
- 9:00 Back to Mr. Flynn Went into second basic. Replacement. Was put in unit sent to Europe and eventually into the 95<sup>th</sup> ID in Europe
- 9:48 Interviewer recaps. Mrs. Flynn mentions he had gone to Ft. Jackson South Carolina as basic training center. Hazel visited him there.

- 10:33 Travel to Europe on USS Mauretania. Returned on the USS Mariposa  
Mauretania 15,000 people almost  
  
Landed in Liverpool. Shipped south to a collection place
- 12:03 Then much a smaller boat (liberty ship?) takes him across the channel to the  
"units active army" in Europe
- 12:39 Landed at Omaha Beach in Normandy. Then assigned to 95<sup>th</sup>
- 13:02 Main job in the war. Rifleman and BAR man. Other BAR man gets hit. Job  
given to Mr. Flynn
- 13:40 On basic training Army, War. Activity. Assigned to unit. Remembering  
details.
- 16:00 Didn't go to Metz. Mr. Flynn is prompted by family to remember details.
- 16:37 Recap. 3 days after landing in Normandy he is assigned to the 95<sup>th</sup>. His  
Company is A Co. 378<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment.
- 17:00 The Frozen Feet. They didn't have enough boots for the replacements (the new  
people coming.) Worst winter in Europe. Feet frozen, Had to keep going  
"Lucky he didn't lose them" says Doctor said didn't know what would happen.  
Maybe fall off. Very painful
- 18:20 Mr. Flynn removes shoes and sock so interviewer can see the "deformation"  
  
Was very lucky no amputation. Feet have twisted deformed toes curling in many  
directions. Shocking. Frozen into deformation.
- 19:45 When defrosting was so painful and circulation began so painful. In third hour  
unbearable. Had to take a pill (morphine?) every four hours.
- 20:29 Lots of people had feet amputated. Mr. Flynn was lucky  
  
Became a runner of marathons even when 70 years old!  
  
Mr. Flynn puts his socks back on by himself. Mr. Flynn expresses surprise that  
interviewer is interested
- 21:45 Did the frozen feet take you out of the service? Out of combat?  
  
No. Went to hospital. Soon as I was defrosted ...
- 22:14 In hospital twice - once for feet and once for finger damaged in a pillbox.

- 22:42 Mr. Flynn “Lots of things like that happened and you had to just drive right over it.”
- 22:57 Shrapnel in eye from explosion in arsenal.
- 23:12 *Interviewer says goodbye to dance partner and other veteran.*
- 23:51 Talks about shrapnel from explosion.
- 24:49 Years later – not many years ago – at eye office And he could see “this eye with that eye” (cross eyed?) Corrected itself
- 26:12 Questions about Army. First fought in France then Germany.  
Where his feet froze
- 26:40 95<sup>th</sup> in action Mr. Flynn comes in as a single Put on the front line  
Accepted by veterans there as another soldier.“
- 27:23 I was a “red hot rifleman” Every bit of training (helped)  
Expert rifle badge. Was good with rifle even before the army.  
Knew what he was doing,
- 28:14 First saw action in France. Replacements placed where needed. Two here,  
five there. Spread out to divisions. Mr Flynn sent as a single replacement to 95<sup>th</sup>
- 29:00 Thought that his college education would make him an candidate for OCS but  
foot injury “slowed me down.” After treatment went back to same unit until end  
of war.
- Commission as Second Lieutenant after the war. Then 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant.  
Then honorary Colonel
- 30:46 After war straight to reserves. as a Grade 4, Buck Sgt. 4<sup>th</sup>
- 31:20 Service in Ruhr pocket. All the way. Until the end of the war in Europe Krefeld,  
On liberating Displaced Person Camps.  
“We saw those people but did not enter them.”
- 32:05 On fighting the German army as the end of the war. Germans had little air  
support. “Their infantry against our infantry... We’d have a ground battle, and  
kick them out... they had to retreat, retreat retreat”.

- 34:00 On communicating through letters during the war with Hazel. Happy to get letter from her - "Yes indeed, yes indeed." She get letter from him, anything sensitive crossed out.
- 35:03 Hazel's father was in China Burma India theatre. Wanted to be in WWII but was too young. But in War I just missed it but in active duty after.
- Hazel's father a "model" for Mr. Flynn. Proud of Mr. Flynn.
- 36:22 Came to the unit on a Saturday. Mr. Flynn on what he carried with him. Nothing frivolous like 10 cans of fruit juice. "No way." No lucky charms.
- 37:05 Read Bible when he could. "Kept me focused... It's there.... It's real."
- 37:41 Close calls. You had to forget what he (the enemy's doing) and do what you can to "put him out."
- 
- 38:03 Family coaches Mr. Flynn to tell a true story About running into Germans on the Siegfried line. Mr. Flynn tells bits and pieces and his family who had heard the story before tries to keep him on track. About hiding behind a tree.
- (The following is pieced together in the best the interviewer can)*
- Mr Flynn's unit coms to a place at a fork in a major river. Germans are on the bank on Mr. Flynn's side. "We were on a mountain looking down of them.
- Will Germans retreat across the river? Mr. Flynn's unit expects an attack. Establish a skirmish line. Germans know Mr. Flynn's unit in the woods. Approach to attack.
- Mr. Flynn hiding behind tree and "all of a sudden out of the woods, I saw gray people marching. Didn't want to make a noise. We saw them
- We opened up on them. Dropped one and the Germans open fire chopping at tree with bullets to get to Mr. Flynn. Our line held them bottle down on the ground They couldn't retreat to the river.
- We stopped them. Saw us and just stood there. Didn't fire a aingle bullet because we were in a firing formation. This on the Siegfried Line.
- 46:59 On Roosevelt's death Sad. Bad Day. Truman turns out to be "gusty guy"
- 47:42 Story of when Mr. Flynn was in hospital waiting to hear the band leader Glen Miller play in Paris but Miller is shot down over English Channel and dies.

48:13 How long in hospital. Long time. Serious wounds.

48:46 What medals do you have. Battle Stars Two Purple Hearts.  
Bronze Star with oak leaf clusters

Went straight to reserves after the war. Loved the army. Went to law school  
Hazel teaching Married in 1945. Mr. Flynn opens a law office.

50:15 Living back in Huntington, W. Va. Lived there all his life.

51:29 Mr Flynn's grandson James tells story that Mr. Flynn when he surprised the  
Germans told him in which Mr. Flynn Retreats into a house where 95<sup>th</sup> wounded  
GI lay dying from shrapnel in femoral artery.

53:00 On return. Doesn't dream of the war. Readjusted to life quickly. Stayed in  
reserves. With training and background offered 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant

54:05 Would you advise military to young people now.  
"Get serious and go. Get as much military training as you can."

54:23 How did military change you. Had to be intense and do what assigned to do.  
Did you like Commanding Officers "Had to trust them."

55:28 Anything else you wanted to talk about?

Mr. Flynn says he always wanted to write something but lawyer work took up his  
Time. Clients clients. Didn't have time.

56:00 Interviewer thanks them. Tells Grandson James that new memories will come  
back.

Interviewer tells of release form for VHP. What will happen to interview.

58:15 Friend to remember? George Varpolos. Others

58:55 For the frozen feet I was separated You didn't time to commiserate.

Knew their first names. George, Jim.

59:32 Closing and thanking  
Mr. Maurice Joseph Flynn Co A, 378<sup>th</sup>.