

Sieckman Log

0:00 – Intro: Interviewer David Meyer son of Earl D Meyer Co. H, 379th, 95th Infantry. In French Quarter Holiday in Toledo, Ohio. Saturday August 2nd, 2008.

Interviewee – Dick Sieckman. Co. I, 378th Regiment of the 95th Infantry Division.

0:43 Final Rank story. At end of war, tired of being supply sergeant. Asked Capt. to be a private again and end work as supply sergeant. But in separation camp, a lot of ordinance and supply sergeant needed so they see my qualifications, give him the job and then made him a corporal.

2:35 6:23 Feb 21, 1921 Birthdate. Milwaukee, Wisconsin. On parents. Fredrick Wilhelm Sieckman and Hilda Plowman. Dad came from Germany at age 11. Mother born in U.S.

7:00 Early life during depression. Dad keeps home through “HOLC” program.

8:30 Circumstances when joined the service. 1942 in June 42. Enlisted. Navy and Air Force wouldn't take because of eyes (weak). Army offers a choice of “safe” positions – air force groundwork, ordinance- quartermaster so joined.

9:40 At reception center Ft. Sheridan Illinois word comes out that 95th Infantry to be reactivated and need 14,000 men. (mostly upper Midwesterners).

10:00 Serial number. By enlisting serial number starts with “3.” Draftees' serial numbers start with “1.” Still remembers it. (says it) Joined when 21 yrs old.

10:47 Where when heard about Pearl Harbor attacks. Working as a printing compositor. Was at bowling party when news came over the radio. “We knew things were going to happen.”

11:23 How did parents feel about your enlisting? They were concerned. Older brothers had deferment because of type of work. I couldn't qualify for a deferment.

Goodbye to parents matter-of-fact.

12:20 Brother takes to center in Milwaukee, then bussed to Ft. Sheridan, Illinois. From Sheridan to Camp Swift. One of the first people at the camp.

12:46 - Early day. Clue of what's ahead. First clothes line – asked sizes, given clothing, next morning reveille, line up. Sergeant says to Mr. Sieckman “When did you shave last?” Mr. Sieckman answers and Sergeant doesn't believe him and puts him on K.P for the weekend when he planned to go home.

14:30 Assigned to Co. I, 378th in late June, 42. On Basic training. 25 mile hike. The heat. Men falling out. From Camp Swift to Camp Polis to Ft. Sam Houston.

Other rude awakenings? Always rankled a little that Army promised choice of type of service so talked to 1st Sergeant who said “Wait until basic training is done.” At end of basic when back and Sergeant

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says, "you're trained for infantry.. have to stay." So... went to Randolph field and asked officer there for airforce groundwork ." Officer says must get release from unit so that's the end of that.

18:07 What did you do at Ft. Sam Houston. Drills, classes and maneuvers. Physical training. Conditioning to do the job.

18:55 The Louisiana maneuvers. Hot. Preparation for the Pacific. Found whiskey bottle, filled with water so always had some extra water. Treat with iodine or halozone.

20:20 Story of maneuver when Dick was supposed to be part of enemy detail, light off fire-cracker in helmet simulating enemy fire.

But dropped his match in dry glass. Fire, wind picks up. All stops while people put out fire. Never discovered it was he who had started it.

21:10 - On to Camp Coxcomb, Ca. Desert Maneuvers. Then to Indiantown Gap, PA.

Our supply sergeant caught padding requisitions, busted to Private along with assistant and I became assistant to a new supply sergeant. Title was "Armor Artificer." Description of job. Should be

Able to fix weapons, too but never trained. Learned on the job.

23:45 - Question about how react when the new guys, the ASTP college guys (Army Specialized Training Guys) Joined the 95th.

Some resentment from some guys. Not Mr. Sieckman. No problem.

25:35 – relates story of ASTP veteran, Hal Smith, who was hazed by a Lieutenant.

26:27 - Went on West Va. Mountain maneuvers. In supply. Description of job. Have whatever company will need.

26;27 – West Virginian maneuvers. Assistant supply sergeant. Duties as assistant. Duty to have everything the company needs .. rations.. food.. radio batteries...etc... Then from Indiantown Gap to Camp Miles Standish near Boston then SS Mariposa across to Europe.

28:00 Life on SS Marioposa on way over. Trip interesting and rough.

Zig-zagging trip to avoid U-boats. Description of trip and when water was rough.

29:42 -- return to US o the Mariposa too. Description.

30:17 - Land in Europe. Liverpool. Not much chance to mingle with British. Talks about finding pubs.

31:49 - From England to Normandy beach 2 months after D-Day. Assigned to 3rd Army Patton. No transportation to catch up with the front so 2 weeks in the apple orchards waiting.

Then put on "forty and eight" box cars (40 men or 8 horses). Description of inside of car width length.

Taken to front.

34:25 – West of Metz. Relieve the 5th Division.

1:24:55 - Advice to today's soldier – “Be lucky.”

1:28:58) Would you recommend service to young people now.? Depends on which unit. I would say go for Navy.

1:26:19 – Why do you think it's important to remember what happened there.

Need to have an sense of appreciation on what people have done, have treasured. Need to appreciate their own families. Some young people don't, many do.

1:27:52 - Words of wisdom? No don't think so.

Mr. Sieckman shows appreciation to interviewer's project. Interviewer tears up. Closes

1:28:39 - Closing