

Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Gerald ‘Andy’ Anderson

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember – WW II Oral History project

Interview # VR2-V-L-2019-063.1-3

Gerald ‘Andy’ Anderson, a World War II veteran who fought with the 1st Infantry Division from Sicily to the end of the war, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library’s *Veterans Remember – WW II* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Dates: Sep 30, Oct 9 & 2019

Location: IIS Studio, Springfield, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio/Digital video

Interviewer: Mark R. DePue, Director of Oral History, ALPL

Technical Support (cameraman, etc.): Mark Suszko, videographer at IL Information Service

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

**Transcript
being processed**

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 1:24 + 1:35 + 1:25 / 1.4 + 1.58 + 1.42 = 4.4 hrs.

Session 1: Growing up during the Depression in central Illinois & military training

Session 2: Service with the 1st Infantry Division from Sicily to early Dec 1944

Session 3: Fight at Battle of the Bulge to end of the war, and post-war years

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on November 5, 2019.

The interviews are archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Abstract

Gerald Anderson, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-A-L-2019-063

Biographical Information/Overview of Interview: Gerald ‘Andy’ Anderson was born on December 2, 1922 in Cass County, Illinois, and grew up in tiny Oakford, Illinois. His father was a tenant farmer, but after the stock market crash of 1929 he could only find work as a farm hand. Andy’s mother died in 1934 of pneumonia, leaving his father to raise nine children alone. Andy attended one room schools for a few years, and graduated from Petersburg High School in 1940, where he excelled at sports.

Anderson was working at Allis-Chalmers manufacturing, helping build tractors for Russia when Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941. He was drafted in January 1943 shortly after turning twenty. Following basic training at Camp Hood, Texas he received further training as an infantryman and was shipped to North Africa in June 1943. He was sent to the 1st Infantry Division (the Big Red One) during the division’s fight in Sicily in late July 1943. He was assigned to the Ammunition Engineer Platoon of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 16th Infantry. In November the unit was shipped to England, where it underwent several months of training and preparation for D-Day in Dorset County. While there, Andy maintained a correspondence with a young woman he had met in Pennsylvania while on pass.

The 1st Infantry Division landed on Omaha Beach on June 6, 1944, with Andy landing in the second wave. The division participated in the fight in the hedgerow country of Normandy, in the Falaise pocket, then moved quickly across northern France. Anderson was injured near the end of the unit’s fight in Aachen and was evacuated to England. He missed the division’s fight in the Hurtgen Forest but rejoined his platoon prior to the Battle of the Bulge, where the Division held the northern flank of the bulge. He stayed with the unit until shortly after VE Day, and in September he shipped out for home from Marseilles, France. He was discharged at Fort Sheridan, Illinois. When he arrived in Chicago, the young woman he had corresponded to the entire war, Josephine Hillman, met him at the train station. They married in 1948. Andy has attended several of the D-Day reunions, including the 25th, 50th and 75th. He also attended the opening of the World War Museum in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Subject Headings/Key Words: 16th Infantry Regiment, 1st Infantry Division; D-Day; Omaha Beach, Josephine Hillman; life in rural Illinois in the 1930s; combat at Aachen, Germany; fight in Hurtgen Forest; Battle of the Bulge; treatment of casualties; General George S. Patton; General Terry Allen;

Note to the Reader: Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

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