

An Interview with SGT John Herbst
Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Veterans Remember Oral History project

Interview # VRT-A-L-2011-070

John Herbst, who served both in the Army National Guard and on active duty, and was served in Kosovo in 2002 as a military policeman, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library's *Veterans Remember – War on Terror* Oral History project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: 20 Nov 2011 Location: Macomb, Illinois

Interview Format: Digital audio

Interviewer: Robert H. Deveraux, ALPL interviewer

Transcription by: _____

Edited by: _____

Interview being
processed

Indexed by: Rob Deveraux, ALPL

Total Pages: _____ Total Time: 2:12 / 2.2 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on July 26, 2012.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

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Abstract

John Herbst, Veterans Remember, VRT-A-L-2011-070

Biographical Information Overview of Interview: Sergeant John Herbst was born on October 24th, 1975 in Orange County, California and grew up as an “Army Brat.” His father was an enlisted man in the Field Artillery, and latter was commissioned. John’s family lived on Army installations in Hawaii, Colorado, Oklahoma and Germany. His father retired after serving as an ROTC instructor at Western Illinois University in Macomb.

John enlisted in B Battery, 1st Battalion, 123d Field Artillery, part of the Illinois National Guard (also in Macomb) in December 1992. He served a two-year proselytizing mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormon) in Winnipeg Canada from 1995 to 1997. He then joined the regular Army, serving as a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) crewman in the 1st Battalion, 33rd Field Artillery (attached to 1st Infantry Division), stationed in Bamberg Germany. He did a brief deployment in Bosnia in support of the United Nations’ International FORce, (IFOR). He reenlisted in the military police, and was in training at Ft. Leonard Wood Missouri during the 9/11 attacks. He returned to Germany, and provided base security until deployed to Kosovo as part of the United Nations’ Kosovo FORce (KFOR) in 2002 where he was involved in enforcement missions against the illegal weapons trade, etc. He completed his service at Ft. Dettrick, Maryland, duty which included short missions escorting prisoners from Iraq and Afghanistan. At the time of the interview he was a senior at Western Illinois University, majoring in political science.

Subject Headings/Key Words: Military families; Army ROTC at Western Illinois University; DoD (Department of Defense) schools; IFOR (United Nations’ International FORce); Peacekeeping in Bosnia; Multinational Force, Military Police; United States Army Europe, post 9/11; B Battery, 1st Battalion, 123d Field Artillery, Illinois Army National Guard; MLRS (Multiple Launch Rocket System); 1st Battalion, 33rd Field Artillery, Bamberg Germany; 1st Infantry Division, Bosnia; Base Security during War on Terror; Kosovo, KFOR; illegal arms trade; IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices); service in Afghanistan & Iraq

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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Table of Contents

John Herbst – Veterans Remember (War on Terror)

Note: the introduction audio to this interview incorrectly states that it was conducted on November 19, 2012. The correct date is Sunday, evening, November 20, 2012.

Bold italicized clips are of particular interest

00:00:45	Growing up in a military family (father was part of Army Field Artillery)
00:05:05	Birth on an airplane over Orange County, California
00:06:00	John's childhood; was in High School when dad deployed to Desert Storm
00:09:15	Family's transition from military post life to civilian atmosphere in Illinois
00:12:20	Joining the Illinois National Guard
00:14:40	Bravo Battery, 1-123rd, Illinois National Guard, Macomb, Illinois
00:15:40	Living up to father's legacy in Field Artillery
00:16:50	Personnel in battery
00:19:20	Mormon proselyting mission in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
00:20:25	Transition to active duty Field Artillery
00:25:35	Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)
00:28:30	1-33rd Field Artillery, Bamberg, Germany
00:30:30	Short deployment to Bosnia with 1-6th Field Artillery
00:33:30	Transition to Military Police
00:38:00	Military Police Training
00:39:00	Personal experiences associated with 9/11 Attack
00:42:15	Leave cancelled, reports to training at Ft. Leonard Wood in aftermath of 9/11
00:52:00	Military Police mission in Germany post 9/11
00:59:00	Environment of pending and ongoing deployments in Germany
01:02:00	Unit preparing and supporting OEF (Operation Enduring Freedom-Afghanistan)
01:04:00	Difficulties with soldiers returning from deployments (law enforcement)
01:07:40	<i>Responding to an attempted suicide in Grafenwöhr (01:12:03 end of anecdote)</i>
01:15:45	Enforcement issues with soldiers of higher rank
01:18:00	Deployment to Kosovo in 2002
01:23:35	Movement of illegal weapons through Balkans
01:25:10	Personal assessment of people in the Balkans
01:29:45	<i>Problems with mines and minefields (01:37:34 end of anecdote)</i>
01:37:35	Weapons caches
01:38:45	<i>Cache under farmer's house (01:43:20 end of anecdote)</i>
01:43:20	<i>Raid on transfer point, man burnt to his own couch (01:47:41 end of anecdote)</i>
01:47:42	Kosovo in context of overall War on Terror
01:50:40	<i>Cujo the killer dog (01:56:38 end of anecdote)</i>
01:56:38	John's current life as a student
01:57:30	Answer to themed questions
	-religion and the War on Terror
	-feelings about Iraq and Afghanistan. Necessary wars?
	-Dad's feelings about Iraq (was a Desert Storm veteran)
	-Necessity of peacekeeping in the Balkans / contrast with Iraq-Afghanistan
	<i>-Civilian response to returning veterans (02:05:12 to 02:08:10)</i>

02:12:15End