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Question: That -- back to Dijon, France, do you remember what one of your fondest days was, being there in Dijon, flying missions? Something that really sticks out as being a day that you were --

Answer: Well, yeah. Most of the time we didn't have very good weather. But when it was -- in fact it was Easter Sunday. On Easter Sunday, beautiful day, lot of sun out. We had had our briefings, we were out there just -- out there by the airplanes, just waiting to -- for the armament people to get them armed, get them fueled up. And sitting there, sitting on a bomb, in fact, and had some chalk and wrote messages to Adolf on the -- on the bombs. And then later that Easter day, went over and dropped them, I think on Heidelberg, I believe, the rail yards in Heidelberg that day. And we had a couple more things over there that I found interesting. In 1947 or 8 I was in Air Force school down in Florida with two or three hundred or more students. And had a colonel up there to speak. The subject was communication. And he had a big map on the wall with butcher paper on it, he peeled that off, and there's a map of Europe, and France, Germany, bomb line, always shown there in red. God, that looks -- and he had a route on there. Yeah, that looks familiar. And his lecture that day was on the -- the failure of communication. And my unit was involved in that. The 8th Air force had been in Schweinfurt, Germany, which was a ball bearing capital of Germany. All the ball bearings made there. So our strategy sessions in Washington decided to stop all the rolling stock in Germany. We'd get rid of their ball bearings. That would stop everything. So they had these thousand B-17 missions, two or three of them to Schweinfurt. To destroy the Schweinfurt ball bearing factories. And the poor B-17's got shot all to pieces over there. Lost lot of -- sometimes high as ten percent or more, losses. Well, what, a year or two years after, the German Army was retreating through Schweinfurt, Patton's Army was out in front of them, and the Army calls for air support. So that's us. So during the night we get bombed up, go over there in the morning and bomb those Germans.. army out of Schweinfurt. So we went there and dropped our bombs and went back and got debriefed, and boy, we did more damage on that one mission than the 8th Air Force did in all the missions they flew with a thousand airplanes. Well, we'll just do it again. So bombed up the airplanes, went back that afternoon, and unloaded another salvo on Schweinfurt. And we got -- we got a Presidential citation for that mission. It was really great. Anyway, these years hence, this colonel was telling us what really happened. The Army, sure enough, called for air support. But before all that could happen, they had driven the German Army out of Schweinfurt completely through town, but they knew we were coming, they couldn't stop us, so they retreated so we could bomb the town. So we bombed it. Then they took it again. But again we were coming, so they had -- they had to take that town three times so we could bomb it and get a Presidential Citation. But if that isn't ridiculous thing you ever heard of? God, we thought we were doing good. And those soldiers out on the ground, they were just cussing. And I -- had to get out of town so we could drop bombs on them, Jesus.

Question: You know when you look at everything that the war and everything that's been written about it, and televised, do you think there's anything that's been left out of the common history of the war?

Answer: No, I believe not. But since this series is being done for education purposes, I - I would like to comment on those concentration camps in Germany. I had, say a month after the war I believe it was, we moved into -- near Munich. And about ten miles from our base down there was a concentration camp, Dachau. We had heard a little about it so, well, we'll go over there and look at it. So we went over there. And at this time, Patton's Army -- his soldiers, had taken these SS German troopers and had them behind the barbed wire. And the SS guys, you know, they -- they were the supermen of -- they were lounging around on the ground over there and we were outside the fence, you know, laughing at them. We had our 45's on our hips and they didn't have anything, and besides, they were in the wire now.

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But we went through there, through those store rooms there, oh hell, larger than this, a lot larger, white walls, and they're shoe print, heel mark prints, six feet high in there. Where they'd stored these bodies, just thrown them into that -- into that room. Just terrible. And -- and where they burned these bodies out there. There was a tree with a limb hanging -- convenient limb up there, that big, and the rope mark in that thing where they'd been hanging them, was cut into that tree a half inch or more, into that big limb. From a rope mark. And the walls where they'd stood them up there to shoot them. All these marks in the wall yet, you know. And blood -- dried blood still there. And it was just amazing that people could do that to people. And I find it appalling now, that there are people, including some in Germany, that say this thing never happened. Just terrible.

Question: Did you meet any of the Dachau survivors when you were there?

Answer: No, I didn't. All the survivors were long gone. But our Army troops who were guarding these prisoners. Course those GIs -- they'd been fighting through Africa and Italy and France and -- they'd been fighting those Germans for a long time. And it looked to me like Patton had personally picked each one of these guards cause they were big guys -- big GIs. And they backed a truck up at the end of the day, backed a truck up to the gate that had these guys out in the woods, cutting wood, the prisoners. And they had a line of GIs here, a line here, these prisoners jump off the truck and walk in the gate. This one GI reached out and grabbed a German by the collar and picked him up like you would a kid. And set him down here. And didn't say a word. And the German reached in his pocket and brought out some tobacco and handed it -- put it in the guard's hand. The guard picked him up and put him back in. No word ever spoken by anybody. But the guard knew what he wanted. He wanted that tobacco, and they weren't allowed to have any. I asked one of the guards, these supermen ever give you any trouble? He said oh, sometimes they try to out there in the woods, they get smart ass. I asked him well what do you do? Well, we just have them pick up a log and hold it over their head. For how long? He said until they fall. And I thought sounds good to me. I spoke with some of the German people around that neighborhood, though, ten miles away. And asked them did they know about going over there. And they said they didn't know. They knew something was there but they didn't know what it was, and -- and I had to believe them. That they -- they did not know what was going on over there. Of course they knew something was there.

Question: Did you walk through the barracks at Dachau and see the bunks and all that?

Answer: No, I didn't -- I didn't go where the sleeping quarters -- just where they were killing them and burning them, getting rid of them. But during the last months of the war, they didn't have any fuel to burn the bodies with and that's why they just stacked them up like cordwood. They had no way of getting rid of them. And so they just stacked them.

Question: I was in a small concentration camp in the Belgium in the '70's, and originally it was a Belgium prison, it was completely underground, and Germans had the prisoners remove 250 million -- it was 250 million cubic yards of soil to cover it. And I walked through there and even that many years after the war, there was this feeling. It was like a tangible thing. Did you see anything like that when you were in Dachau?

Answer: No, and in fact I went down there some years later with my wife and went through there again. But it had been cleaned up a little bit in those years. But I think that those rooms with the footprints up on the wall were still there, I believe. That -- that was a -- I think it's important the world never forget that. And I think it's important too that the world never forget there weren't just Jews there. People seem to think on account of the Holocaust, it was a Jewish problem. It wasn't just Jews. It was a lot of German protestants were in

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there, if there were, you know, on the opposite side of the regime. And a lot of Polish, and all kinds of people other than Jews. But the Jews would have you think that it was only Jews that were exterminated. But they weren't; there were all kinds of folks.

Question: When you were back in -- before the concentration camp, back at base or on a long flight to a bombing run, was it sometimes tedious or monotonous?

Answer: Oh, no, no.

Question: What about if you were -- had bad -- did bad weather ever keep you on the ground?

Answer: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Question: Sitting in your tent, it was raining and --

Answer: Oh, yeah, snow, yeah.

Question: What did you do to break the monotony then?

Answer: Well, played a lot of cards, gambled quite a bit. And in France, you know, France is known for its cognac and so we shared that with them quite a bit. And if you ever --

Question: Did you ever meet any French girls from around the villages around there?

Answer: Yeah, yeah, had to. The French men were gone, somebody had to step in. It was the humane thing to do.

Question: Did they come out to the base or --

Answer: Oh, no, no, we never had any out to the base.

Question: So in Dijon, the town center, you'd go in there and --

Answer: Yeah, we had a club in -- in Dijon that we frequented.

Question: So the French women were impressed by American aviators, I take it?

Answer: Well, yeah, because we had candy and we had cigarettes and we had liquor and they thought, I guess, we had all the money in the world. But I -- I didn't mess around with those girls too much over there. But my little dog, where I got that dog was a nearby farmer, right, right next door. We had, on our dining room table, which was a big six foot long planks nailed together in a tent. And our cooks were really not gourmet cooks. They got peanut butter in a gallon, olive drab colored gallon can, and orange marmalade, and butter. In that container. And they would open and serve it by taking a cleaver and hitting it that way turning it, hitting it again, peel the corners back, and set that on those planks. And it'd stay there forever. Till the marmalade turn to sugar. And it's not very appetizing. Anyway I had a gallon of that butter, and I traded it to that farmer for a dozen eggs and that little dog and a chicken. And the butter, I'm sure was rancid anyway, but still he got the better deal. I was going to cook that chicken, so I put him in a bucket, put him on my little stove in there and turned that 120 octane fuel under that. And got my buddies, I said well, we're going to eat good tonight, boil that chicken. And we started drinking cognac and boiling that chicken. About every half hour I'd go stick a fork in it and every time it got tougher and tougher. Well

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finally after two hours that fork wouldn't go in that damn chicken. That was the toughest chicken. We ate K-rations for supper that night. Couldn't eat that damn chicken.

Question: What happened to the dog?

Answer: Oh, I kept the little dog and great dog. And when we came home in about October maybe, November, we went up to, by train to Bremerhaven, not Bremerhaven, well I forgot the name of the city in France. And several guys had dogs, and of course everybody wanted to bring them home. So I went to the flight surgeon. He gave me some sleeping pills. He said just give her one of these and keep her quiet for a couple hours. So I guess he did that to all the boys who had dogs. And we line up to get on a Navy ship we're going to get on to come home, run by the US Navy.. transport. So we're all lined up there, with our B4 bag and barracks bag here and got the dog in this bag, she's fast asleep. Fellow up ahead of me there's got a German Shepherd. Big German Shepherd, in a bag like that. And the gangplank going up to the ship was just one person wide and two bags, you could hardly get through. Well that old German Shepherd woke up and he got out of that bag and the GI owned him was afraid to claim him, afraid they'd jerk him off the ship, you know, and he couldn't go home, investigate or something. So he -- not my dog. So he went on up the gangplank. Well the dog sniffed around, he finally tried to follow his master, and he couldn't get through for all this people on the gangplank. There was an officer standing on the gangplank, a Navy officer, hey guys, stand aside there, let that dog up. So everybody stood aside and the dog went up and found his master. Well I took my little dog down to the stateroom and tied her up underneath my bunk short enough that she couldn't stick her nose out even. And we weren't out of the harbor maybe an hour, ship's captain came on the PA system. All you fellows that brought dogs aboard, be in my cabin in fifteen minutes. I said oh, God, I don't know if I should own up to it or not, but I guess I better. So went up there and there were probably a dozen of us. And he said now, he said now, you brought those dogs on here and I want you to have those dogs. So I'm going to assign a locker back on the fantail and I'm going to assign a sailor to clean up, feed and water the dogs, and all I ask of you, twice a day, you go down and walk your dogs on the deck for fifteen minutes, twice a day. And when you get off the ship, I'd advise you take them off the same way you brought them on. Or they going to confiscate them. I'll never forget that captain doing that. So we did that. Put our little dogs back in there in a place and my God, he had a sailor back there, you know, tending those dogs for the whole trip across the Atlantic. And we took them off the same way. I kept that little dog for a lot of years.

Question: What was the name of your dog?

Answer: Madam. Madam. Little French Madam. I was in San Antonio with her two years later I guess and I had to go away for a trip and left her with a friend who had a chain link fence. Frank would take care of her. Yeah, well I came back and he said the first night I was gone, that dog was gone. I thought, oh hell. I went to the dog pound, I put ads in the paper, never saw my little dog again. And about couple three months, something, I picked up the San Antonio Light Newspaper. On the front page of the newspaper was a dog, lying on her side, with a kitten nursing her. But she had her head up. I said hell, that's my dog. And had the people's name and address. I went to their house, middle of the afternoon. Nobody was home. When I knocked on the door I heard that dog in there. I guess she smelled me or could hear me or something. She was having a fit to get out. And the lady came home and opened the door and that dog jumped and hit me right in the chest, and I had pictures of her, and told the lady and she says well, yeah, okay. And then soon her little girl came home, about seven or eight year old girl. And the mother told the girl that that was my dog and I was there to get her and take her away and the little girl started crying. I said oh, God, I

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can't do that. I said she got a good home, you're taking care of her, I said just keep her here. Just take care of her. I left her there for those people.

Question: Pretty sad day for you, huh?

Answer: Oh, yeah, yeah. I missed that little dog yet. She was a good one though.

Question: Did the girl know about the dog?

Answer: Oh, yeah, I told the mother and little girl about where the dog came from. Got her for a gallon of rancid butter.

Question: Did you ever wonder what happened to --

Answer: Oh, yeah, but I'm sure they took good care of her. I asked them, what -- why is that dog with a kitten? She said well they had a mother cat got run over but she had left this little kitten, and some way or other the dog got with the kitten and started nursing that kitten. But she was kind of like that. When she'd get around a rabbit or something, she'd start, you know, loving rabbits.

Question: Not much a hunting dog, huh?

Answer: Oh, no, no, she was not a hunter. She was a lover. And she slept with me in my sleeping bag. But she'd always get in and go all the way down to my feet. And that felt good, I liked her in there. And people could walk by the tent all night long, she'd sleep. But if it was a Frenchman, not American, I don't know how she could -- she'd come out of there and go out there and bark at him. And then I'd go to sleep again. Then she'd come back in with her feet wet and her belly wet and go back down there in the sleeping bag again.

Question: Well thank you very much. Interesting -- this is the first pet story we've had.

Answer: First pet story, oh.