

Veteran: Stanley Shakespeare, Korean Conflict Veteran
Interview Date: July 26, 2007
Interviewer: Alex Jolley

Int: Could you please state your full name.

Vet: Okay, my full name is Stanley B. Shakespeare. The B stands for Bulloch.

Int: And could you maybe spell Shakespeare?

Vet: S-H-A-K-E-S-P-E-A-R-E, and it's interesting Alex, I didn't learn to spell that 'til fourth grade. That's a hard name to spell.

Int: Okay, where do you currently reside with a city and a state?

Vet: Cedar City, Utah.

Int: Is this the same area where you resided when you were drafted or when you were enlisted?

Vet: No. I was born in St. George but my folks were living in, excuse me, I was born in Cedar City but my folks were living in St. George at the time, so I grew up in St. George and that's where I was drafted.

Int: In which branch of the service did you serve?

Vet: Okay, I was drafted in about August of 1953; I just graduated from Dixie College, into the United States Army. So I served in the army.

Int: Were you full time, or were you in a reserve unit?

Vet: It was full time. Back at that time the Korean War had just ended that month and they were drafting everybody that was physically able to be drafted.

Int: Where was your headquarters located?

Vet: Okay. When we were drafted we were taken to Salt Lake City. There were about fifteen of us from Southern Utah; Iron County, Washington County. Went through the induction center at Fort Douglas, Salt Lake City then we were put on a train and sent to Fort Ord, California, which is just south of San Francisco, right on the coast. They were training thousands of troops at that time for the Korean War.

Int: During what years did you serve?

Vet: Okay, from 1953 to 1955.

Int: What was the highest rank you achieved?

Vet: I was a corporal in the Army and that was the highest rank I achieved.

Int: Could you tell us some duties that you did as a corporal?

Vet: Okay. It's interesting, Alex, when I was drafted, the Korean War, while we were down there the first month they signed the truce, and so my company, and we were in the Flying Sixty-Third it was called in basic training. 180 men in that group, 170 of them they sent to Korea and the ten of us they sent to Germany. I was with the infantry, the Fourth infantry division in Germany. That's interesting that's the same infantry division that they used to send into Iraq when they invaded and went into Iraq, pulled them out of Germany and sent them into Iraq there, but that was 50 years after my time. I was sent over there as an infantry person, but when I got there, the commanding officer had me come in and said they needed a parts clerk in the motor pool to get the parts from the company mechanics to keep the jeeps and trucks running. While I was going to Dixie College, I worked at a garage in St. George for General Motors. They had G.M.C. trucks, Pontiac and Buick cars, and I worked that part-time in the parts service and so the, it wasn't a general, it was a colonel. After he interviewed me, he interviewed a young man from New York and that afternoon sent the sergeant over and said would I come in his office again. He wanted me to be in the parts department for the battalion headquarters, so that took me out of the infantry as far as being out with the soldiers, out training on the line, and for the next year and a half I spent there in the office with a typewriter getting the parts. No KP, no guard duty. Every Sunday we would go down to Frankfurt which was about 40 miles away, 'bout fifteen of us LDS, we would go to church there with the LDS servicemen. We really had a good assignment. The Lord took care of us. He knew what he was doing when he had me work part-time in parts department before I was drafted.

Int: Were you ever decorated for your service?

Vet: They gave awards or ribbons for serving in Germany as occupation and I had a bunch of 'em, but I had have a younger brother, when I got home just admired everything I had so I gave all of them to him. But they were occupation ribbons for the United States Forces in Germany at that time, that's what the ribbons were.

Int: Did you serve in combat or non-combat position?

Vet: These were non-combat. The Korean, the German War, the War with Germany, World War II had ended nine years prior to this and the United States and England had two different sectors of West Germany that we were controlling so the Russians would not come over and take over West Germany, the Russians had taken all of East Germany. So the United States had divisions over there that let the Russians know if they were going to try to come in by force, we would fight. Fact we had missiles that had atomic warheads on that we would have fired, shot into the Russians if we had had to.

Int: Were there any people of your acquaintance who have become prominent historical figures?

Vet: No, I don't think so.

Int: When you reflect on your military service, what is the most vivid memory of your service?

Vet: I had a lot of good memories. First of all, the church makes a big difference in a person's life. By belonging to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, we had the little Book of Mormon and the triple combinations we could carry in our pocket all the time in our jacket. We had an organization when I got there. One of the people in the headquarters who assigned different soldiers out to different companies, happened to be LDS. And when he saw my record come through, on the record it was at that time, and I'm sure they still do it now, they put the religion you prefer, and mine said LDS. And so he came to see me that first night I was over there, and he said, "Now, on Sunday, we get together and we go to Frankfurt with this bus that belongs to the army. We have a person in the motor pool who drives the bus that's LDS, and there's fifteen of us. We'd like you to come with us." So that really helps, staying close to the Lord, because every week we had a chance to take the sacrament, be with good friends that looked after us all the time. Those are wonderful memories. Let me tell you one thing about prayer. In the army, it's really hard to pray without other people being around. And, so at night after they'd turn out the lights, and in our company, I think a lot of them were like it at this time, the lights went out at ten o'clock. So after the lights were out for a little while, and everybody'd sleep, or seem to be asleep, I could slip off my bunk and say my prayer. Down at work, during the day, with the company headquarters there, we had a restroom we could go in and lock the door in the restroom, while we were using the restroom. So I would go in there, lock the door and kneel down, say your prayer sometimes, a couple of times during the day, and that really made it nice.

Int: Were there particular moments of religious or, any other moments of religious or spiritual experience during your service?

Vet: Yes, the Church have what they call area directors that would look after the service men in different parts of the world. And we had some stationed there in Germany, and we would hold LDS Conference down in the German Alps, which is by Switzerland, beautiful place. They would have this conference each year, and if I remember right, we may have had two a year, they would bring over some of the General Authorities, and there would be about 500 LDS people from all over Germany that were military, and we would get to go down for about four days vacation. And because it was a religious conference, it didn't take any time off of your regular vacation so you could have your regular vacation on top of that with the military. They gave you several days a year and that really made it nice.

Int: Could you tell us of your family life while serving?

Vet: Yes, I come from a family of twelve children. My father was married and had five children and his wife died. And so a couple years later he got married again to my mother, she had never been married, and I'm the oldest of seven. My father and mother would write me every week, some of my sisters and brothers would write every week. Back then you never called on the telephone. I never called home once in the year and a half that I served in Germany because it was too expensive. It cost something like five dollars a minute and you don't have that much money when you're in the service. So we would always send mail, but

every week I would get letter at least and I would write a letter to my folks and some of the brothers and sisters every week too and that was a wonderful experience. Good to have family to really support you. You'll see that when you go on a mission. 'Course you'll have email then so you can get it instantly. We would have to wait; it'd take about five days for mail to arrive in Germany from the United States.

Int: What were your experiences of joy and sorrow during your service?

Vet: Well, joy, I think we just, when you're twenty-one years old, and I was twenty-one when I was drafted. I had never left St. George except to come to Cedar City to visit Grandma Bulloch and the cousins up here. I had never been farther north than Cedar City, and the only time I'd gone to Las Vegas, we went down as Explorers once to see Boulder Dam. And those are the only two times I had left Washington County until I was twenty-one years old. Oh, wait, one other time when we graduated from high school as seniors, our seminary group went to Salt Lake to conference. But I had not been out of St. George. So when I left St. George and went to Germany, I saw a complete, different world. Fact it's interesting, Alex, people ask about the weather in St. George. I didn't know St. George was hot until I came back from Germany; got back in the summer. That's when I was drafted, in August. So we got back in July, and I said, wow, where did all this heat come from? It'd never been hot until I'd been away for a couple years and all of a sudden it was so hot. One of the sad experiences, this one I've told quite a few times, but it's still pretty touching. Just a minute here. About a month before I was to be released to come home, the Red Cross sent a message to headquarters telling me that they wanted to talk to me. So I went over to the Red Cross office there and our, Kirschcans(?), was the name of the headquarters in Germany where we were stationed, and they said we have an email, not an email, they didn't have emails back then in those days, we had a telegraph, telegram from the Red Cross in America that your youngest brother has died. And they said, "Your little brother has died, that he was burned to death. And I had two little brothers, one that was three years old, and one that was six years old, and I didn't know which one they meant. And I didn't find out until we got home they had already, they were having the funeral the next day and they didn't think, Mother and Dad thought that I'd be fine not to be there, and so I came home by ship, and it took a couple of weeks for me to get home to find out which little brother it was that had been burned to death in a fire in our back yard. Fact, right where your grandparents' condo is. We had a shed right in back of the house when I was in high school, I had a motor bike. And I'd drive it out to the garage right there after school and bring it home and put it in that little shed which was built right on to the back of the house so that when it rained it wouldn't get the motorbike wet. And dad had put a bale of excelsior in there that they used to put on some of the plants in the garden when you're planting a garden to keep the moisture on. And my littlest brother, the three year old, was playing with one of the Miles boys across the street from us, they were great neighbors and great friends, they were both three years old. And they'd gotten some matches from the little Miles boy's house, brought them back and made a little fire in the back in that little shed. The bale was right here, the back of the shed had a back on so you couldn't so you couldn't get out, you had to get out the front, and started the fire. And when he made the fire on the bale, a whole bunch of smoke came up and he ran around the house screaming, and Mother was in the living room and she saw him run by and heard him, so she ran out back to see what had happened and she could see the smoke. When she looked in there my little brother was back in there behind the bale and just scared to death. She grabbed the

bale to pull it out, and when she pulled it broke and just a big puff of smoke that killed him, asphyxiated him right then before the firemen could get there, and couldn't revive him. But that was pretty tough because, like I say, I didn't know just who it was or what had happened till I had gotten home. That was one that, you know, I'll remember always.

Int: Could you describe your feelings of support from home, like your family and your country?

Vet: Alex, one of the things you learn when you leave America, and are gone for a period of time, you really appreciate what a great land America really is. You know when they talk about this is the promised land, the Lord saved this land for good people, you can really see it. Because there's a real difference in the world, on how people live, and the kind of conditions they live under, and the kind of freedoms they have. Western Europe, after the war became free like we are. But their freedom's still not as good as ours. And other people that claim they have freedom; there are a lot of things that are not free for them. For example in China, the Chinese constitution says they have freedom of religion. That isn't what we call freedom. Freedom of religion meant that you could belong to whatever religion you want. Over there, freedom of religion means that you can belong to two or three churches that had been there for several hundred years, but no one else is allowed to have any religion or any new religion brought in. There's so many freedoms that other people think their country's great. Chinese students at the university thought they had the best country in the world, but they don't have what we have, they've never seen the difference. That's one thing about the founding fathers that set up this government for us, were inspired of the Lord. They set it up, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, according to the way the Lord wanted it, so we could use our free agency, in all ways, and have opportunities to make decisions. When you're gone for a while, I came back and saw the statue, the Statue of Liberty, I'll tell you, I was crying. Barbara and I were back there a couple of weeks ago, on an American History, Church History tour. We went out past the Statue of Liberty. It means a lot to you when you've been gone and see what that really stands for. So we are truly fortunate to be Americans.

Int: So did you feel support from your country while you served?

Vet: One more time.

Int: Did you feel support from your country while you served?

Vet: The United States really supports the military. I've got to say that, you know, the government does all they can to make life good for the military in foreign countries.

Int: What were the physical conditions under which you served, like, was it jungle, desert?

Vet: We were in Central Germany, and in central Germany, their climate is similar to Cedar City. Have cold winters, summers about like our summers, both spring and fall beautiful, would be very similar to these in Utah that are a little cooler. It wasn't like St. George, St. George is hot, but up here you know, it's cooler in the summer and the winter, very similar to that close to the big cities. The Fourth Infantry division is on a base that's about the size of Cedar City. They had, I think about, 6,000 troops there when I was there. And the cities around there were smaller

German cities. Frankfurt, which was a large city, the size of Salt Lake City, was about 40 miles from where we were. It looked very much like it did here. You could go up on the mountains here, you could go up on the mountains around where we were, look about the same.

Int: Do you have any regrets about your service?

Vet: I don't. You know one of the things that I've really felt grateful for, when you do the best you can, the Lord opens opportunities for you. And as you keep accepting those opportunities, you do what you're prompted to do, staying close to the Lord, you really have a great time. The only thing I say I might regret would be, well I wouldn't really regret anything. I'd kind of say maybe the time it takes, but I really feel that people should be willing to serve the country. Now, where it's a volunteer army, I would not recommend young people volunteer to go into the army because the influence of other people around you. When we were drafted, there were a lot of good LDS kids in the units. And even though when you get in Germany and there are only, there were only two, well I was the only one at headquarters company of 150 men, but with the sixteen that were in our battalion, you know, that makes it nice, but it does make a difference. My philosophy is the country is valuable enough, that if they need you to serve, to help defend America, you ought to have, we ought to have the attitude that I'm going to do my best to do that. Fortunately we don't have to right now, and I hope we don't have ever have to again.

Int: What is the single most positive experience of your service?

Vet: The single most positive experience, wow, that's a tough one. It wouldn't be a single, but the last year that we were there in Germany, there were three of us LDS, took, we had a month's leave we had accumulated, we traveled all across Europe. We visited thirteen different countries in a month. Had a wonderful time. One of the advantages back then, and they still do it, they had what they call military flights. And we could fly from Frankfurt, Germany to Paris, France for one dollar. Wherever the military plane went, you could pay one dollar and they'd take you. So we flew to there, we took the train down to Italy, flew from Italy to England for a dollar. Now we had a great time, so that was a good experience, on seeing all the sights in Europe before we came home.

Int: How has your service colored you current political, social, or religious views?

Vet: Okay, number one, I think military is very important. Because in my belief, the Lord said we should defend our families, and our country, I think it's very important. The one thing I feel bad about in Iraq, fact I was just reading it in the Book of Mormon when President Bush made the announcement that they were going to attack Iraq, the Book of Mormon, the Lord told the people to not be aggressive, don't make the first strike. If your enemy fights you, you go after them, and defend your country. But don't you be the aggressor and make the first strike. And this is what President Bush did not do. He claims that the terrorists caused the first strike. Well that didn't come out of Iraq, and I think that was the big mistake they had a lot of bad intelligence that he was following and was not true. In the very beginning, I questioned that when I read that in the Book of Mormon, I thought, Ooo, we're in for trouble. I hope we can get out of there peacefully, without losing too many more we do need to defend the people that are there.

Int: How do you feel about the current conflict in Iraq?

Vet: Well, I feel that's a real tough situation. You know, and we're going, we've got to do something to keep the civil war erupting so that they don't kill half their country in a civil war. But at the same time I think we ought to pull out of some of those areas and let them work out their problems, and us just stay back in a base, maybe a hundred miles away, so that we can keep Iran and others from stepping in. But let the Iraqis spend more time negotiating and less time fighting each other.

Int: If you could give advice to the service men and women of today, what would it be?

Vet: Number one, stay close to the Lord. I watched a program the other night, and Afghanistan, we've got quite a conflict going in Afghanistan, and Osama Bin Laden group up in the mountains, and these were some of the special forces they used. I can't remember the screaming, it wasn't the Screaming Eagle, but it was like that that we had in WWII. With special forces they took into places. Before that group went, they got in a circle, and the Chaplain, said a prayer for them. If we've got the Lord on our side, things are going to go much better no matter where we are in the world, and especially in the military. And I think that's the real key that I would give any of them. Stay on the Lord's team no matter what church you belong to, stay close to the Lord, and let him direct what happens.

Int: Thanks for letting me interview you Mr. Shakespeare.

Vet: You're welcome Alex, I appreciate you, you're a great young man. I appreciate that and I appreciate your families support Alex.