

Drafted into the Army

Hello, my name is Warren Goss. I was born in a little village called Glenshaw, Pennsylvania. I was raised on a chicken farm. My mother had five girls and three boys. Two grandmothers also lived in that house and we all had to work hard just to make ends meet. It was during the depression, and I did all the work I could to help to earn money for my mother. I had many jobs as a boy and I would often skip school to go to work.

I had one job delivering papers as a paper boy. I got a call one day to come up to the store and sell papers because the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. I didn't even know where Pearl Harbor was, I had no idea what was going on. Cars were stopping on the street, people were buying papers and not even asking for their change. Everyone was excited and wanted to know the news. At that time everyone got involved, the men and women, in supporting the war effort. Even the children at school would help by collecting things and saving gum wrappers. Anything they could do to help the soldier boys.

I was sixteen years old and not old enough to join the army so I joined the Pennsylvania Auxiliary. This was a really good outfit for training young men as home guards. I was surprised, they taught us how to march, salute and obey. They also taught us how to fight in hand-to-hand combat and fight with bayonets. We did practice maneuvers like blowing up things with powder puffs. When I turned eighteen years old I was then drafted into the army.

After I was drafted into the service, they sent me to Indian Town Gap, Pennsylvania and then down to an island on the Chesapeake Bay, Maryland, where I had my first military training. My basic training was four weeks long, and after that four weeks they sent me back to Pennsylvania to Camp Shenango for another week and then put me on a train to Buffalo, New York. There they questioned you, showered you down and shaved you, and gave us all our equipment – guns and uniforms and put us on a boat sailing up the Hudson River to New York City.

When we arrived in New York they put us in a big building for one night or two. We slept there one night and as a young guy I was anxious to see New York

City. I had never seen it in my life. I did go into New York one evening. I had never been there before. Then we had to pack up and get on a troop ship called the Aquitania. We left New York and went across the ocean to Glasgow, Scotland. It took fourteen days to get there. The ship zig-zagged all around to dodge the submarines as we crossed the ocean.

When we got to Scotland as I was coming off the dock I said to one of the guys, "Well boys, you are now in England!" A group of women in uniform were standing there and one of them walked up to me and said, "You are not in England, you are in Scotland!" So that was my first day over there. And then the air raids started and I saw my first air raid. They put us in a Quonset hut which they made for an air raid shelter.