

## **Training in England for D-Day**

Now I was in Scotland, where I saw my first air raid. They put everybody into a bomb shelter. I didn't want to go into the bomb shelter so I hid in some weeds nearby so I could see what was happening. I could see the bright sky from the search lights, the bombs in the distance and hear all the noise. But it wasn't near me at all, it was way down south. I didn't think it was much of an air raid so it didn't bother me. I was glad to see it.

The next day we got on a train and went right through London and everyone of those guys who were with me in Buffalo were now in the 4<sup>th</sup> Division. That's where they started the 4<sup>th</sup> Division. We went right through London and the only thing I saw of London was looking out through a dark window. We went way down to the southern part of England across the bay from Falmouth.

They called the soldiers of the 4<sup>th</sup> Division into a big room to give us a speech and one guy came up to talk and said, "We are looking for volunteers to go into a Special Brigade. He said, "You don't have to do this, it's a volunteer group. This is for the Normandy Invasion. The first wave. And some of you won't be coming back." And that room emptied out about 50 percent. But some of us joined. And that is how I got into the 531<sup>st</sup> Special Brigade, an engineer group. That's when we got some really tough training, it was tough, a lot of that training was with the rangers. We were not allowed to walk, we had to jog everywhere we went. I had special training for almost one year, solid training and never had a pass to go to town, or a leave to go out or anything. One weekend I had off in one year. That's all I ever had off.

I watched these women shooting anti-aircraft guns at the airplanes flying around because this is where the ships were parked and

the Germans were trying to bomb the ships. That was exciting for me. I was only eighteen years old. But now I'm in the 531<sup>st</sup> Special Brigade. I wrote my mother a letter and told her about the Brigade and the guys jumping out of airplanes and all the bombs coming down. She sent me a letter back, a short letter, and she said; "Warren, you read the 91<sup>st</sup> Psalm. This Psalm in the Bible was written for you. Keep it. She gave me that Psalm, and I read it, and I carried it with me. I still read it today and know that it was God's promise for me.

The Special Brigade had very severe training. We would go out in the ocean on ships and practice invading an island, and make landing beaches. One practice was called "Operation Tiger." The 4<sup>th</sup> Division was in it, the 531<sup>st</sup> Brigade and the Navy. They sent us on boats in the morning out into the ocean of the English Chanel.