

Sherwin Allred's Service in World War II

That's when we joined the American Legion. I guess other than the Lehi National Guard, the buddies that we had in the army...we never did see again hardly.

There were three of us from Lehi, maybe four of us that were kind of friendly except for Morris Fox. Alan Webb worked for a jeweler in Provo who was an officer in the National Guard. We knew that the draft was coming and we were trying to decide what to do...whether to join the National Guard or be drafted. Alan came home one day and said that he decided that we should join the National Guard. That same day I received my notice from the government that I was drafted. So I couldn't go to the guard.

Mac Davis, another fellow here in Lehi volunteered for the draft and another fellow by the name of Morris Fox was drafted with me the same day. We had to go to Fort Douglas to ship out. Morris and I went to Fort Lewis, Washington. Mac got to stay in Salt Lake. And I felt kind of bad because I had a girlfriend here and if I got to stay in Salt Lake I would have got to see her some more.

But I got shipped for Fort Lewis. And eventually Mac got sent to California and eventually to the Pacific. And he was captured and taken prisoner and put on a ship to go to Japan. And the ship was sunk by a United States destroyer. That's how he lost his life. Alan Webb, of course, went with the National Guard and all those fellows came back.

Morris and I were sent to the 15th infantry in the 3rd infantry division and when Pearl Harbor came we were sent down to a marine base in California. And then we shipped to Camp Pickett in Virginia and then shipped out and made our initial landing in Africa, in French Morocco.

When we went to Salt Lake they gave you a chance to sign up for insurance, anywhere from \$1,000 to \$10,000. We both elected to go for a \$1,000. Of course, \$1,000 back then was quite a bit, . We were shipped overseas to French Morocco and we were the first troops to land on foreign soil. And as we progressed through the

country to Sicily and Tunisia, they changed the rules and allowed us to up our insurance if we didn't opt for the \$10,000, we now could go for \$10,000.

I remember that Morris didn't want to sign up for the \$10,000. He says, "What if I get killed, it won't make any difference." I said, "What do you think it will do for your parents." So I finally convinced him that he should sign up for it. And he was eventually killed. He was shot by a sniper and I know his mother and father got a check every month until they died. I often wonder how much anxiety she had every time she went to the mail box and got that check.

We fought with Patton. We fought under him in Sicily and Italy. We had been assigned to attack and overtake an observation post in Italy. We sent out a patrol to find a way to approach the observation post. We didn't want to go up the road because it would be too obvious so we went a round about way. So we sent a patrol out to find a place to cross the river. The patrol went out one night and found a place that we could cross.

But that very day, the enemy had blown up the bridge that crossed the river so we couldn't get up the road with our equipment and we didn't realize it until we went the next night to start the attack. We left our bivwack area about 2:00 a.m. And when we got to the spot, the river had backed up because of the debris and we couldn't cross there.

So we had to send a patrol out further up the river and in the meantime, we pulled back around the hill. They have terraces over there in height from 15 to 20 feet high. They then flattened them out and they then had a big steel bank and another terrace. And we pulled back on one of these terraces to be out of the sight of enemy.

While we were there we heard a plane come and we could see when it got in range that it was an enemy plane and it had been on a bombing run in back of our lines. Apparently it had been hit because one of the engines was smoking. He was low and coming along the river because that was the lowest place in the valley and he was trying to keep his elevation and he spotted us...the troops there. So he veered his plane and started towards us.

We knew that we were in for a strafing, so we all ran to get in a ditch that was at

the foot of the precipice to take cover from the bullets. We all escaped his strafing, but he didn't have quite enough elevation to get over the precipice and his plane hit the very top of the precipice and the momentum catapulted the plane up onto the next terrace with the exception of the engine that was on fire which rolled down the hill in a ball of flame and landed right on top of the battalion commander that had come up to see why we weren't making the attack.

It killed him, but you have to put those things behind you, because you have the war to fight. So finally, the patrol found a place to cross and we went up and made our attack but we had lost the benefit of surprise. We supposed that we would be up there and attack at the break of dawn so we had lost the element of surprise and the cover of darkness.

The fact that the plane had acted that way it did gave them an idea that something was up, so they were ready for us. We lost a lot of men, having high casualties so we called for air support. You are not always sure that you will get air support because they may not have a plane available. We waited some time and nothing came, so we decided that we better go because we had been ordered to take it regardless of the cost.

So we had our attack and were finally able to root them out with mortars and machine guns and hand grenades and finally overtake their positions. It was on a little high hill that had a little path that had been worn down over the years with wagons and stuff running over the top and the rain had washed it down a little and there was a little bank on both sides of the road. One side was the mountain. The enemy had dug holes in the mountains and in the bank down below the road which is what made it so hard to get them out. And we had just barely secured the positions and we heard another plane coming.

This time we recognized it as our own plane that had come to give us the support that we needed. We hadn't called back to tell them that we had taken the position and they had no way of knowing that we had taken the position. So we knew that we were in for a bombing so we all ran and got in some of these fox holes that the enemy had built

along the bank. We got in those fox holes and I had no sooner got in, something told me to get out. I don't know how much religion people have, but I felt like something greater than me told me to get out of that fox hole. So I got out and I just gained my feet when the bomb hit. I could hear a muffled shout from one of the men still in the fox hole that I had just exited say "Oh, my God we are buried alive. Everybody start digging." I could feel them scratching on my legs. But it was too late. The bomb had broke loose part of the hill and it had all slid down over them and buried 16 alive.

We were able to dig one out on each end before they suffocated. And that's when Morris Fox escaped the burial but he got shot by a sniper. I've always had kind of a feeling of guilt that I was able to come back and he wasn't. Out of about a hundred and forty some odd men in the company that went out, when we were relieved later that day by another company, there was only 29 of us left.

There was a lot of things that happened that I can look back on now and I don't know whether they were things of promptings. I remember that we had a new commander assigned to our unit and he wanted to be able to lead an infantry company which we were part of.

This was in Sicily and we had been assigned to cut a highway that the Germans were using to transport equipment and troops. And we made an amphibious landing and finally got our objective and we had stopped in a little village that had some houses. And we were holed up in the houses and barns and sheds to keep out of sight of the enemy.

At that time I was the company operations sergeant. And the commander said, "Sergeant, have the troops assemble in the streets." And I said, "Captain, don't you think that that will draw enemy fire. Shouldn't we wait until it gets dark?" And I guess he didn't like an enlisted man telling him what to do so he said, "Sergeant, have the troops assemble in the streets." So I went and told them to get into the streets. And I decided that I would leave. So I pulled away from the company about 50 yards and sure enough it drew enemy fire. When I joined the company later that night after it got dark, there had been eight killed and several wounded. So I don't know...

I was there three years and eight months. Well, we landed in French Morocco and we went over two or three different areas. I can't remember the names of them now and finally ended up in Tunisia. They made a commando battalion out of one of our infantry regiments, and we were sent to Tunisia. We got in on the tail end of the battle that they had there with the Desert Fox and the English troops. And then we made an amphibious landing on Sicily and made another amphibious landing at Anzio and Salerno.

No, I got to come home. (before the war was over). They came up with a plan where I was...it was called a rotation plan. The first soldiers over there could be replaced and sent back to the United States, and I was one of those because I was one of the first ones to land on foreign soil. I could have come home six months earlier....they had it that it was only about every six months, but I had a different job then, a kind of important job and they asked me to stay until I trained someone else. So I told them that I would. So I didn't get to come home until six months later. Our unit got called up and went to southern France and they made the main invasion on France when I was coming home.

Of course, I wasn't over there then, but I guess there was jubilation that it was over. I don't remember, really. I don't remember what went on. We talked about it in veterans meeting one night, that these people that are coming back from these wars are given a big hooray and I don't remember anything like that when I came home nor did any of the other fellows. They just came home and took their old place in society.

Oh, there was a lot of men that served from Lehi. But we were in the first draft That was the only time I was ever lucky, that my name was drawn out first. A lot of men went from Lehi. But some of them went in the National Guard and some were drafted later. I don't know just what happened. You can see the list out there. I guess there must be several hundred there.

Well, some didn't have to go to war. They worked in the mine and they were exempt.

I felt that it was my duty. I was the right age and I was single and I felt it an obligation.

Had I not been drafted I would have volunteered. But that was just a way of life then and it isn't that I liked it, but I felt that it was my obligation and duty and we went to see what we could do. And I think for the most part, most people in the war were that way. We had some people that thought that they ought to be home.

No, and Truman had been criticized for dropping the bomb on Japan but I think that it was the best thing that ever happened. I'd like to shake his hand for it, because I think that it saved a lot of soldiers lives. It's a sad thing to have to kill so many people but in a sense they asked for it. They were the ones that started the war by bombing Pearl Harbor. So I don't have any resentment for him dropping the bomb on them. It's a sad thing, but that's the way it is