

**Interviewee: Derrick Carnall**

**Interviewer: Malin Lundin**

**Date: 30.09.2010**

Interviewer: This is Malin Lundin doing an interview with Derrick Carnall on the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2010. Ok. I'm just going to start with a few simple questions. How – if you could just tell me your date of birth please.

Derrick: July 1919. I'm ninety-one.

Interviewer: How old were you when the war started?

Derrick: Twenty.

Interviewer: Twenty. And where were you living?

Derrick: I was living at Streatham at the time and in – in lodgings and we went to boarding in Hampshire, did three weeks training and in three weeks we were soldiers and bear in mind everyone of us didn't know one end of a rifle from another. But those Corporals and Sergeants, we didn't – we called them names but they were marvellous looking back on it as they turned us out smart, we knew what to do.

Interviewer: So were you conscripted then? Were you conscripted – to join the Army?

Derrick: Oh, yeah. Everyone was conscripted. I tried to volunteer but they wouldn't take me because I – I was so young, I was skinny, I was seven stone, five foot eight, glasses and the funny thing is that the – I had my examination for the Army on the 11<sup>th</sup> of November which is Armistice Day – and I went to the hall in Streatham Hill for my medical. Lots and lots of fellows there and when the cannon went and they used to fire a gun all over London for the two minutes silence I was absolutely naked and it was bloomin' cold and had to stand naked for two minutes – two minutes silence. Anyway, I wanted to go in the Royal Artillery because my father was in there, my uncle in it – First World War. They said, 'No, you're B1, you're not A1' and so they put me in the Royal Engineers which is a top class regiment.

Interviewer: Can you remember the day war broke out? The first day?

Derrick: Oh, I will never ever forget it. It was a Sunday, we're in lodgings in Streatham and we heard the Chamberlain speech and all of a sudden the sirens went and we all ran out. I was living in Kings Court Road in Streatham. Everybody come out of the houses all looking up in the air, 'Oh, they've started early', cos it was practice and within five minutes you had the all clear which is a long siren and then we realised that it was just practice. But everybody remembers where they were.

Interviewer: Can you remember how you felt that day?

Derrick: Excited, funnily enough. I can remember being with my father and a friend of his and having a drink and I was saying, 'Don't worry, it will all be over by Christmas'. And that's how – we all felt like that, you know, rearing to go. [unclear] when my training was finished I went up the Sergeant Major and said, 'I want to volunteer for France', he said, 'Don't worry about that son, you'll be there soon enough'. We'd finished our training in early Feb. And in early March we were in France.

Interviewer: How did you feel about the training that you were given? Did you feel like that prepared you for what you –?

Derrick: Oh yeah, very thorough. Very gruelling, started first parade twenty to eight in the morning and right till – bear in mind in January it was freezing cold, 1940 right till five o'clock and then very often you would have PT indoors or something indoors, one was in great big halls. Well, oh yeah, they didn't leave anything out. They were thorough because they were regular soldiers that trained us. We used to curse them cos they did put us through it but looking back you've got to be grateful, they prepared us for everything. I'll give a casing point they said when they gave us a rifle, they said, 'You never point that rifle at anybody, even if it's unloaded. The only time you point it at someone is if you're gonna kill them'. Now I never forgot that and I remember when – in Birmingham and the Blitz was on and I was on guard duty from ten till twelve and you have to – if someone comes you have to say, 'Halt, who goes there? Friend or foe?', and they say, 'Friend', and you say, 'Advance friend and be recognised'. They come forward and you let them by. A couple of these – our blokes<sup>1</sup> came and they were taking the mickey out of me, you know, you know, muck about. Now I had the only rifle in the company that had a cut-off which is a clip that goes over the – ten rounds of ammunition so you pull the bolt back, you wouldn't get a cartridge out cos it's a cut-off – yeah, take the cut-off, very rare but I had the only one. So I pulled the bolt back and they said, 'Don't muck about, don't muck about, alright', and they came and as they advanced, I pointed the rifle down and pressed the trigger and damn it a bullet came out. It hit the ground, ricocheted between the pair of them and hit the wall and, of course, the sergeant came running out, a lovely bloke, and a couple of fellows and I said, 'It can't be my rifle'. He said, 'Give us here, quick' and what had happened I'd picked up my pals rifle, which hadn't got a cut-off. So I nearly shot one of me own blokes in 1940 [laughs]. But that shows you the training of pointing the rifle down the ground, very important. Something you never forget. Yeah.

Interviewer: So you – you went to France in – in March 1940.

Derrick: March 1940, we was –

Interviewer: Can you tell me a bit about that?

Derrick: We landed at Le Havre at about four o'clock in the morning, pouring with rain, freezing cold. Had one of the finest meals I'd ever had, MacConicky (??) soup, it was known as, a stew, it was beautiful. We had our tinned dices and I filled that up and from there we went to Rennes which is the capital of Brittany and we were stationed there and from there we moved up to the front line to a place

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<sup>1</sup> 5 min

called Abingcorde (??) which is just in front of Abeville which is the main marshalling yard in that part of France. Great railway junction, cos I was in the Railway Company and then in front of us was Arres St. Egmont (??) and the –. We were there, we retreated a couple of times and came back and eventually ten of us were sent on detachment and so many years after they found out, you know, where the rest of the company went, who got killed and who didn't, you know. You just didn't see them anymore so you wondered where they got posted or killed or anything. I've got a list there of people killed in Rennes station back in the end of May and early June and two of our fellows were there. Then as I say, it was in the evacuation of the Saint-Nazaire, as I say we had this petrol depot and we were attached to a regiment, the Royal Pioneer Corps and when we retreated we disabled both our engines which were diesel electric and then we blew up the petrol depot. Smoke was black you couldn't see the sky and the pioneer corps went up the line to defend. They had to give us a chance to destroy everything that we could all the way through and then we retreated, it took about three days to get to Saint-Nazaire. Tom and Dieder (??), converted wagon (??) got on the furnisher van to – they've both run out of petrol and just walked the rest of the way. Spent a lot of time on the beach of Saint-Nazaire and eventually got taken off and luckily we didn't get on the Lancastria and as I say, as we got onboard the – the Oronsay, the German bomber came over and the first bomb went down the funnel of the Lancastria and it sunk. When we got to England, we got to Plymouth as I – and they gave us a wonderful welcome which we stayed all night picking up survivors, including a lady with a baby and that baby turned up at Saint-Nazaire last year. She's seventy odd, yeah, and I met one of the ladies [unclear] who was also on the ship.

Interviewer: Ok.

Derrick: And she was an English lady that lived in France but -

Interviewer: How did you feel about returning to – to England after being in France?

Derrick: Well, we were a bit – a little bit down the fact that we'd been forced to retreat but once we landed, the reception we got was marvellous. But, you see, when – when you go home and told people, no one would believe you cos Churchill put a black on the news, he wouldn't let the public know about Saint-Nazaire because they were so upset about Dunkirk that he didn't want to disclose more losses and they were –. I say anything – the figures vary from five to nine thousand lives lost<sup>2</sup> that afternoon. But many, many were captured, they couldn't get on the boat. So when I told people when I was at leave they found it hard to believe, I said, 'Well, you've got to believe me cos I was there'. Then we went to Birmingham and we were there for the first Blitz and they bombed New Street Railway Station, we were sent there to clear the railway line cos being a Railway Company. Next platform was an un-exploded bomb and the Royal Engineer Bomb Disposal were defusing that, we had an eye on that bomb, we thought if that goes up we're all gone. But fortunately they were successful and from Birmingham we got sent to Donnington which was the Midlands. Woolwich Arsenal, all the London people were there from Woolwich Arsenal, we –. Oh, I don't know how many

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<sup>2</sup> 10 min

acres of ground, we had a whole complete military railway attached to the main line. We had our own train drivers, firemen, signalmen and I was there for – till '44 and then I weren't – I was sent out East, India and all over in India and, well, what is known as Pakistan and also Bangladesh. It was all India in those days and then from there we were told we were going to – go to Singapore. They dropped the atom bombs on Japan so they surrenders so when we got there all we had to do was round them up and sort out the civilians. They were all starving, they had no food. But the one good thing that the top brass as we called them and the Army did, they passed orders down that every Japanese soldier had to be – have his shoes and socks confiscated because the Japanese, the one thing they've got is pride. They're very proud. To take them away was insulting them and that's the finest punishment you could give them. We had twenty to thirty thousand prisoners and you could hear them marching to the docks and you could hear [claps hands in pace of footsteps]. It was the bare feet on the road, you know. We worked – they worked in the docks and everywhere else. I was there till 1946 and I got home the day before Good Friday 1946 to my sweetheart.

Interviewer: So you spent almost four years in England – serving in England?

Derrick: Let's see 1940 – yeah. Yeah, about four, yeah.

Interviewer: H-h-how did you feel being based on the Home Front?

Derrick: Huh?

Interviewer: How did you feel about being based in England, on the Home Front? Did you feel –?

Derrick: Well, it was ok. It depends where you were as long as you were doing something useful, you know. Sometimes in the Army they gave you jobs just to keep you occupied but as long as you felt you were doing something useful. Being at Donnington, it's – it was – it was an achievement. I mean, we – we shifted so many so many trucks. That was a letter from ROC and if you read the bottom, we were – we were handling four thousand trucks a year we finished up nearly eleven thousand. As it – we worked nearly 24 hours, we worked all night as well, you see. Night as well as day sending guns, ammunitions, stores of all sorts, ok, and my – my wife, my sweetheart, she worked in the depots as a typist.

Interviewer: Ok.

Derrick: And, you know, sending arms to Turkey, and all sorts of places. All round the world, you know. Now, we probably had twenty or thirty sheds in the depot containing all sorts of thing. And –?

Interviewer: What was the – the best part about what you were doing?

Derrick: Well, I'm sure it's being abroad but, of course, I didn't enjoy being apart from my darling but the one thing, always stuck in my mind, never once so crossed my mind that we'd lose the war<sup>3</sup>. If

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<sup>3</sup> 15 min

you talk to anybody who's left, I don't think anybody did. We all – we always thought we'd win the war. It was down to Churchill, pure and simple. But there was only one time in my Army life where I got a bit down so I thought, I think after about five years, I thought to myself, 'When's this war going to end? You know, it seemed never ending. And, of course, didn't get the chance to celebrate the victory in Europe cos I was in India. But – and then, of course, when the war was over in Singapore, they kept us out there and a Member of Parliament from Labour Government come over to talk to us and he'd get a right grilling. I mean, I was number twenty eight to be demobbed which is a very low number, so it should go quick and by us all getting up and talking to him and telling him forcibly that you know, we should be coming home they speeded it up and it's a marvellous sensation to go home and a nice lie-in. Now I could have flown home in – on Dakota but the Dakotas were crashing about two a week. From the Dakota came the – the PA-back1-11 Now, I was on the Comet, the first jet after the war, but the old Dakota was Douglas – people from America. Anyway, they were clapped out so I said, well, I – I've – six years I've – I've saved my life, I'm not gonna lose it – I'll wait till the ships comes and I did. I probably waited a couple of weeks longer than I needed to at least I got home in one piece. It was one of a feeling to get home, one of a feeling.

Interviewer: So did you let your – your wife know – or your girlfriend as she probably was then – did you let her know that you were coming back home?

Derrick: Well, yeah, but by the time she got the letter I was home, you know, [unclear] mail – terrible.

Interviewer: Can you remember how you felt when you – when you saw her again?

Derrick: Ah, just marvellous. Absolutely marvellous, fell in each other's arms, you know, and the family all disappeared in the evening so we had the – the evening to ourselves on the settee [laughs]. Cuddling and kissing, you know, saying sweet nothings to each other and planning the wedding. My hardest job was to get somewhere to live because I spent every evening – I got a job in the Board of Trade cos I was in the men's wear trade before the war, I was an apprentice, and we couldn't get anywhere. Some of the places were pigsties, you know. By a sheer bit of luck people that lived next door to her parents in Donnington in Shropshire, their mother and father lived in Beckenham and they had a couple rooms going. So they said, 'Tell Derrick to go and see them and if they like him they'll let you have the rooms. So I went and saw them and we got on like a house on fire. They were a lovely old couple and those two rooms were a little paradise. We had no hot water, no bathroom, the lavatory was in the garden which is alright in the summer but it was murder in the winter. But we were – we were blissfully happy. Absolutely – the happiest time, we were there for five years. The happiest years of our sixty odd years, were those five years. I was saving and appreciating what we got and when we bought our first house and I've been fifty-five years in Bexleyheath. Our first house, we couldn't afford to furnish it properly. Today, they get married and have everything, you know. I went five years without carpets in the landing and the bedroom, you know. You bought as you went along, wonderful times.

Interviewer: So you were quite young when the war started, did you feel by the end of the war that the war had changed you?

Derrick: Oh, yes. No doubt about it. I was lucky in one way, you see, I went, I was sent to boarding school at ten as my father married for the second time and my step-mother didn't want me. They put me in a boarding school and this particular school in Harlow, it was St. Mary's College Harlow, they started at five and going up to twenty and the bullying there<sup>4</sup>, you know, – you think bullying is a new thing. I used to watch and I used to think, well, 'You're not gonna bully me' and I realised that the strong take away from the weak but the smart take away from the strong. So my only way was to – I always had a capability to make people laugh and that's a great thing. I never refused a dare – no – not even to this day and so that made me hard and tough and the other three years I spent was at a place called Ripley in Surrey which was lovely. The happiest days of my school life, Ripley in Surrey. And being at boarding school toughened me up and directly – I hadn't been at work for, I couldn't get on with my stepmother, I said, 'It's no good'. So he gave me ten shilling a week to help towards my board, I was only earning fifteen shillings a week, which is about seventy-five pence in these – in today's money, and with that ten shillings, which is fifty pence I was able to survive. Each year you got half a crown a week rise, so that's twelve and a half pence, and when you're twenty you're earning one pound twenty-five a week. When you're twenty-one that's doubled, and just before I'm twenty-one I was called up in the Army, [unclear] and then I couldn't get my job back because they were bombed. They offered me a job in Ireland but I wouldn't take it so I went to the Board of Trade for three or four months and then and then someone in the trade said, 'Go to George Hodgkinson, work for him and one day that business will be yours', and it was. I spec – funnily enough, I specialise in regimental and club ties and serve so many military people and I sent ties to General Mont... – Field Marshall Montgomery, I sent him an Eight Army tie he ordered and General Bill Slim, he was a Field Marshall when he finished. He had a Fourteenth Army tie. General Lord Ismay – yeah. I've had a wonder – my son only said the other day, he said, 'Dad, you've had a good life'. I said, 'I haven't, I've had a great life'. Great life.

Interviewer: That's good.

Derrick: I'm lucky, I've had ten lives. Ten – two before I was three, my pram ran away, we hit a lamppost and I returned and a bus had just started had just started to start – stop. This is what they tell me, this is in Forest Gate. My pals, when I told them the story they said, 'Derrick, they took the handbrake off. They wanted to get rid of you' [laughs]. And another – when I was three I got a little whistle out of – a cracker at Christmas and sucked instead of blow and it stuck in my throat. My father said my face was as black as Lucas Knocker (??) and my Gran forced her fingers down and got it up. I've had a stomach lining burst twice, once going to America. If it happened on the first half of the flight I would have been dead on arrival. I was on the Lewisham train crash. Four lives during the war.

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<sup>4</sup> 20 min

Oh, I can go on and on. Ha, so what the good Lord got in store for me I don't know. I've been a very lucky fellow. I've got a wonderful family here.

Interviewer: Yeah.

Derrick: That's my son there, daughter-in-law, they took me to Bournemouth. That was a wonderful reunion.

Interviewer: So when – when you were posted to – to India in – in forty-four, what were your main duties?

Derrick: Well, by that time I was in the Port Maintenance Company. So obviously the idea was to take over the dock should anything happen. The object of the army being in India, they were frightened the Japs might come across the board, from what is now Bangladesh. I think it's Guwahati (??), across the river, and we had a detachment over there called the [unclear] Transport, what they used to transport what they used to transport arms over to the troops in Burma. So they obviously – the exercise was – the British Army was gonna be a buffer on the – if the German – if the Japanese invaded India, which they didn't. So there again we were – I was sent on detachment to different places, you see. But a wonderful experience, I mean, India was such an education. The poverty – the sheer poverty living next door to richness and opulence, you know, the Taj Mahal Hotel which is magnificent place but behind that is slums<sup>5</sup>. Have you seen the film Slumdog Millionaire? You haven't, well, if you do see it, and it's something you should see, it's not exaggeration. I mean, now, in the North of India baby girls born, they kill it. Baby girls are no good. Boys are good, they beg. Very often they cut the kiddies hand of, which is perfectly true so they earn money begging because they can never work. They're known as the untouchables, you see, in India.

Interviewer: So how would you say your life on the Home Front compared to with your life in India?

Derrick: Well, my life – going to India changed my outlook on life a lot. I realised how lucky I was for a start. How lucky we all are, we have to see how the other half live, you know. What we consider just ordinary is sheer luxury to them and it makes you humble. And it – I made – I made some good friends. I love the Hindus, gentle people. While I was out there they had the Hindu-Muslim riots and we were detailed to break them up so we had to – rifle, ten rounds in, fixed bayonets, rows of two, rifle at port. If you're going to fire a shot, fire it in the air, you mustn't kill anybody. But you can bend your bayonet towards the crowd and push your way in front of them. They were throwing stones and sticks and everything at each other so in the finish they got so fed up on that both sides turned on us [laughs]. Throwing sticks and stones at us. My tin helmet had many indents in it, I'll tell you.

Interviewer: How did you feel at this time when you between the Hindus and the Muslims?

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<sup>5</sup> 25 min

Derrick: I felt a great sympathy for the Hindus. You shouldn't take sides but I did do. You know, I had some Muslim friends but I love the Hindu people which are now India, you know. Pakistan is the north of India, I suppose, and, of course, poverty stricken really. I mean, I did get up to Hyderabad briefly, I mean, that's why this Afghanistan war which is completely unwinnable. The – it's mountainous up there, those mountains are all full of tunnels, miles and miles and miles, going of floors. You could send an army in there and you wouldn't find them. But they can find you. So – and then I went down to Chittagong for a while, that was – that's in now in Bangladesh which is a terrible place. The monsoons were – were terrible, you know, frightening, a couple of months non-stop rain. You – you're just soaked to the skin. But it's so warm that you don't notice it so much, you know. You dry up and you – not exactly dry up – I remember once I was at a place called Kalyan, stuck out in the wilds and there was a little old cinema about six miles away, rigged up for the troops and we walked in this monsoon. Absolutely soaked and we sat in the seats in this cinema and when the lights went up the whole place was full of steam cos it's come off everybody's uniform, cos they're all wet, you see.

Interviewer: Returning to England and when you served on the Home Front had you met your – your future wife at this point?

Derrick: I met her in, as I say 1940. It would be 1942. That's right cos she – she was born the 25<sup>th</sup> of May 1925 and I met her a week before her seventeenth birthday and I knew as soon as I met her and I take these pictures as I've told you, she said, 'I'm going away for a week to Blackpool with a friend'. Another girl, oh, and I was so – so upset, you know, I couldn't wait for the week to go for her to come back. I was lucky, I was with her for – from 1942 to '44. We had a couple of years I used to see her practically every night and go home. Mind it, it took three months for – before<sup>6</sup> they let me indoors cos I had a passage way between the two houses, you see, and, of course, when I took her home every night, we'd be kissing in – in the passage way and then one night a voice said, 'Heidi, you can bring him in if you want'. In his stern voice and then I met mother and father [laughs]. So –

Interviewer: So what did you use to do? Did you use to go to the cinema and –?

Derrick: Well, yes, there wasn't much to do. Cinema, pubs, of course, but I was lucky as I said, I got in with – this huge depot had their own civilian club. A couple of thousand people worked there. I was the only soldier who got in with a family who used to invite me for a meal. Me and another fellow, now and again, they said, 'Would you like to come down to the club?' and I said, 'Oh, yes', and they signed me in and I got on well with everybody and the fellow I went with, he wasn't struck so he didn't carry on. But I did and I got friendly with so many people that they more or less adopted me and so I used to go there every night and it was social, you know, you played darts, they had snooker there and everything. But, you know, before I met the wife, all I did was drink, you know, with the lads. Ten pints a night, that was nothing, you know.

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<sup>6</sup> 30 min

Interviewer: How did you cope with the challenges on the home front? Say you were working very long days and the blackout and rationing and air raids and so on?

Derrick: [Laughs]. Oh, the air raids, they were – I never went in – I never went in a shelter, I went out in many, many air raids. My philosophy was, if it's gonna hit me, it's gonna hit me. Never would I stay indoors. When I went home on leave, I was glad to get back mind, because the air raids siren went six o'clock every evening, regular clock work and the all-clear eight o'clock in the morning. Fourteen hours of bombing, on and off. As I say I was at Streatham at that time and sometimes my father and myself would go up into the – the bedroom and look out the window and see it all, you know, whereas, my step-mother and sister would be under the table, in the dining room. So, oh yes, I've been out – I remember once I went to Streatham Astoria and I walked back from there and air raid all the time, bombs dropping around and shrapnel pinning around. But, you know –.

Interviewer: How did you feel about that – being so vulnerable, really?

Derrick: Huh?

Interviewer: How did you feel about being out in the air raids and having all this danger around you?

Derrick: No, no. You know, it's just, like, you ran and I don't know. It was a bit of a thrill, really. I can honestly say that I wasn't afraid. If I was afraid I wouldn't have gone out. But, you see, my philosophy was, if you stuck in, they've won. It's the same as the cinemas, you know, if you're in a cinema during an air raid they stopped the film and words come up, 'There's an air raid in progress, those who want to leave the cinema can. Those that don't can stay and we will continue with the program', you see. Nearly everybody saying, watch, so, right, if you're gonna get killed get killed watching a film. Like the Windmill, the great Vaudeville theatre in London, it's motto was we never close. Cafe Royal, they got bombed during the war, even one of the Underground, people used to shelter, the Londoners, that got bombed and thousands got killed. It's a case of luck but, no, but to be cooped up somewhere, not for me.

Interviewer: Did you not trust the shelters or was it going down and – and being underground that –?

Derrick: I didn't like underground, no, no. No, no. I rather be up – up above, yeah. Most of us would, it was only when you were made or ordered to take shelter that you did but that didn't happen very often. No, it's – it's in the spirit of those days, you know, and when the East End of London –. A wonderful thing about the war was everybody was so friendly, everybody talked to everybody. Everybody helped each other and I've got – I've – I get on my hobby horse now because I'm treated as a war hero, that's rubbish. The heroes of the war were the women. Without the women this country wouldn't have existed. How do you think ran the country? All the men were at war, alright, there were men that were necessary<sup>7</sup> for the home front and stayed. But the women drove the ambulances, they drove the buses, they were conductresses, they run the railway, except driving it, alright. Hospitals,

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<sup>7</sup> 35 min

factories, made the ammunition, guns, planes. They were in the army, navy and air force, yeah. They've got an empty plinth at Trafalgar Square they should put a statue of a woman up there in praise of what they did during the war. We wouldn't have a country to come back to and that's not recognised and I think it's terrible. Plus I'm very fond of the ladies and always have been, yeah.

Interviewer: Ok.

Derrick: That's what I truly believe. I mean, you think, I mean, her mother she used to work, you know, twelve hours a day and then she's got to do shopping, got to queue up, you know, ration cards, you know. What have we got today? Oh, we have two sausages each, you know, so you queue up with fifty people with a coupon to get two sausages, you know, to feed for four. So, you know, everyone was in the same boat and so -. And when you think of blackout, there's very little crime - there was crime, obviously, you always get people that bad that they take advantage of any situation. But by and large, girl - a girl could walk on her own with no fear what so ever, they can't do it in daylight these days, you know. The thought of touching a girl or old people - out of the question, wouldn't be tolerated. So - comes the end of a long journey and as I say, it's been a wonderful life and I was privileged to be loved by a lady like her.

Interviewer: If you could summarise your war experience? How would you -?

Derrick: Well, at twenty you're young and stupid and all of you couldn't get in the war quick enough. You know, it was an adventure, we didn't know what to expect, you know. Last war was four years, Great War, we'll get it over before then, piece of cake. No problem, you know. So you couldn't get in quick enough and, well, when we went to France, oh, the Germans have beaten us, you know. We never had a chance, they had more equipment than us. I mean, our company had one anti-tank gun and didn't have any ammunition.

Interviewer: Did you feel like you were ill-prepared to - to go to France?

Derrick: No, well, in Ashford we - we all had a rifle, a bayonet and twenty-five rounds of ammunition. Each man was issued with that, well, we didn't know any different, twenty-five rounds, that's it. You've got three hundred men multiplied with twenty-five of them, huh. So - but, you look back and when you see what the Germans had. They were prepared and we were un-prepared. We didn't know that until you knew what they had. They'd been preparing for years. My father, he was called a warmonger because he said for years, I can remember when I was growing up, 'It's gonna be a war. The Germans are gonna be at it again'. He said, there's only two people right in this country, Winston Churchill and S.H.C., which is his initials and he proved to be right. But, no, I don't know whether we were too stupid to be frightened or not. A couple of times, hair stood up on the back of your neck but [sighs] some of the sights weren't all that pleasant but all in all a wonderful experience and talk to anyone - there was some terrible times during the war but there was some wonderful times as well. Yeah.

Interviewer: I don't have any more questions, is there – is there something that you feel like you want to add? That you haven't had the chance to – to talk about?

Derrick: I don't know. It's a – I look back at it, six and quarter years, it's a long, long time. And as I say, I've met some wonderful fellows, ah. People you trust your life with and a pleasure to be with, an honour to serve with but they've all gone now. I've got memories and I think what we achieved at that time was worth fighting for, unlike Afghanistan and Iraq, which was not worth fighting for. Iraq wasn't and Afghanistan isn't<sup>8</sup>. We achieved something. We achieved the impossible I think, led by the greatest man on earth. Winston Churchill, and – I don't know. I think I've been pretty lucky all in all and in some small way had a little bit to do with the victory. That's about all I can say.

Interviewer: Ok, thank you very much for talking to me. I'm going to turn this...

**End of Interview.**

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<sup>8</sup> 40 min