



WWII Veteran Interview: George Lawrence Buhler

Note: WWII Veteran Interview, George L Buhler completed this questionnaire in his Mandeville, Louisiana home on 24 July 2009. Interview questions were adapted from the Library of Congress Veterans History Project at <https://www.loc.gov/programs/veterans-history-project/about-this-program/>.

Section 1: For the Record

1. Date and place of the interview
George L Buhler completed this questionnaire in his Mandeville, Louisiana home on 24 July 2009
2. Name of the person being interviewed
George L Buhler
3. Interviewee's birth date
23 Apr 1921
4. War and branch of service
World War II, George served in the Army
5. What their rank
Staff Sergeant at time of discharge
6. Where they served
The European Theater

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Section 2: Jogging Memory

7. Were you drafted or did you enlist? How old were you?
Drafted at age 21
8. Where were you living at the time? With whom?
Algiers, La. With my mother, dad and 2 sisters
9. Did you have any feelings about the war?
I wanted to enlist in war service but was rejected because of poor vision
10. What service **branch** did you join? Why?
Army – drafted
11. Do you recall your first days in service?
Yes sent to Camp Beauregard, near Alexandria, La., for processing
12. What did it feel like?
Very regimented - getting shots, physicals, being issued uniforms, etc.
13. Tell me about your boot camp/training experience(s).
Sent to camp Polk, La. For training - everyone a stranger – finally I got up and asked "anyone here from New Orleans" this little fellow got up and said "I am" - it was Lionel booth - we became fast friends. Boot camp was rigorous. At one point my eyeglasses broke practicing hand-to-hand combat with an officer. I survived.
14. Do you remember your instructors?
Sgt. Fleming - Sgt. Beaty - Lt. Phelps
15. How did you get through it?
Ok. I learned marching in high school. I had previously served 9 months in the Civilian Conservation Corps and was familiar with barracks living, etc. The physical training was rough but was a good experience. I found that after these three months I was physically stronger than before.



Section 3: Experiences

16. Do you remember arriving and what it was like? Where exactly did you go?

To camp Polk near Leesville, La. There I joined the 11th armored division and remained with them throughout the war. We arrived late at night - everyone was tired from the trip. All I remembered was loud music playing - evidently to welcome us.

17. What was your job/assignment? Did you see combat?

Yes, I did see combat, especially in the Battle of the Bulge. I was assigned to fire direction center with the 490th armored field artillery battery. First to computing gun settings for our 105 mm guns. Later in combat I was promoted to assistant fire direction chief.

18. Were there many casualties in your unit? Were you or any friends injured? What were the circumstances?

Five killed in action - several injured in combat, which were headquarters battery only.

19. Tell me about a couple of your most memorable experiences.

Crossing the Rhine River at Andernacht, Germany. Before that landing Liverpool, Germany- everything seemed so strange.

20. Were you or any friends a prisoner of war?

No

21. Were you awarded any medals or citations? How did you get them?

Only the usual ones that everyone else who participated received:

- **American campaign medal**
- **World War II medal**
- **European, African, Middle Eastern campaign medal**
- **Army of occupation medal in Germany**
- **Also, while in training received excellent in sub machine gun firing medal**

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Section 4: Life

22. What did you miss most?

Life at home

23. How did you stay in touch with your family?

Through mail and several visits home while in the states

24. What was the food like?

To me it was O. K. - sometimes very good.

25. Did you have plenty of supplies?

Yes

26. Did you feel pressure or stress?

Sometimes

27. Was there something special you did for "good luck"?

Attended mass every Sunday while in the states - and in combat when possible.

28. How did people entertain themselves? Were there entertainers?

Some drank a lot of beer- I concentrated on ice cream and sweets. Bob Hope and Shirley Temple were among other entertainers - also movies.

29. What did you do when you were on leave?

Visited relatives and friends.

30. Where did you travel while in the service?

New York City once while stationed nearby. Only with my unit when we were moved - like moving from Texas to California.

31. Do you recall any particularly humorous or unusual events? What were some of the pranks that you or others would pull?

One humorous, but potentially dangerous event. We were advancing further into Germany when our advance was halted. I figured we would be there for a while as so often happened, so I jumped out of my half-track into the ditch to take a crap. No sooner had I done this than we heard gunfire ahead. I pulled my pants up and got back into the half-track and had my machine gun ready in 30 seconds.

32. Do you have photographs? Who are the people in the photographs?



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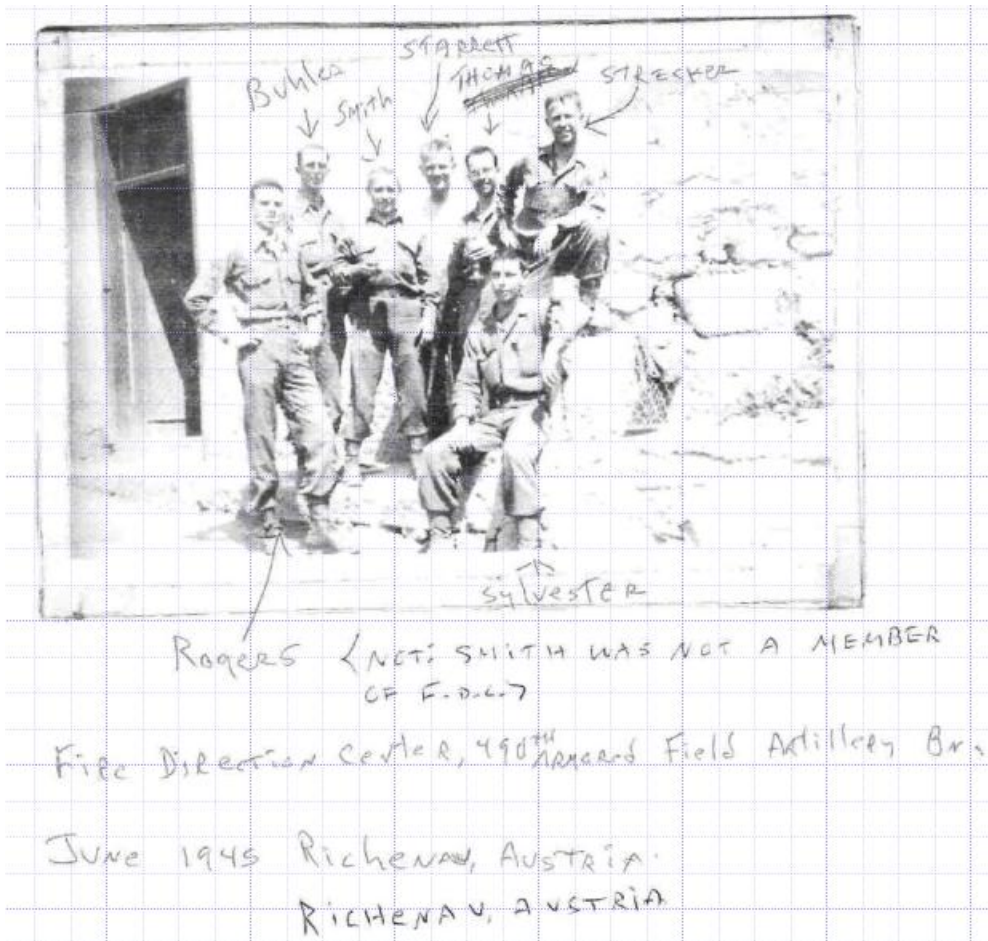
Yes - see attached

33. Did you keep a personal diary? Letters?

No

34. What did you think of officers or fellow soldiers?

Most were very nice - just like people at home. Some sergeants and officers liked to show their authority.



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Dad - digging a
Foxhole somewhere
in Germany.



George Buhler + Joseph Alper
He was born in Russia. We became
good friends - Lost TRACK OF
him AFTER THE WAR



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Section 5: After Service

35. Do you recall the day your service ended? Where were you?
Camp Polk, Louisiana - November 19, 1945
36. What did you do in the days and weeks afterward?
Renewed my friendships in Algiers and made new veteran friends. Had a good rest before going back to work.
37. Did you work or go back to school?
Went back to work and school at Tulane University for 2-1/2 years.
38. Was your education supported by the G.I. Bill?
Yes
39. Did you make any close friendships while in the service?
Yes - Lionel Booth in Metairie, George Rogers in New Jersey, Theodore King in Connecticut.
40. Did you continue any of those relationships? Did you join a veteran's organization?
With Lionel booth -yes. Lost track of George Rogers. Theodore King passed away last year or so. Joined the VFW - veterans of foreign wars. Also joined 11th armored division association attending all local and national reunions.



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Section 6: Later Years and Closing

41. What did you go on to do as a career after the war?

Accounting and purchasing.

42. Did your military experience influence your thinking about war or about the military in general?

Just wars are necessary. The military can be a great experience, but you must abide by the rules.

43. If in a veteran's organization, what kinds of activities does your post or association have? Do you attend reunions?

The 11th armored division still has national reunions - the next reunion will be in August 2010, then the association will be dissolved.

44. How did your service and experiences affect your life?

The good values I learned in the service and the studies at Tulane helped my career.

45. Is there anything you would like to add that we have not covered in this interview?

I am glad I experienced the war in combat and am thankful came out OK.