



# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Clarence Berbaum

Part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois  
World War II Stories project

Interview # VR2-V-D-2007-042

Clarence Berbaum, a radio repairman for the United States Army during World War II, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of the Illinois Public Media – WILL AM-FM-TV Central Illinois World War II Stories project.

Interview dates & location:

Date: 15 September 2007

Location: Illinois Public Media, Urbana, IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Jesse Phillippe, Illinois Public Media affiliate

Technical Support (cameraman, etc):

Transcription by: \_\_\_\_\_

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Interview being  
processed

Total Pages: \_\_\_\_\_ Total Time: 53 min/ 0.88 hrs

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on (   date   ).

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

© 2007 Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library

# Abstract

Clarence Berbaum, *Veterans Remember*, VR2-V-D-2007-042

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Clarence Berbaum was born on November 5, 1919 in Champaign, Illinois. He graduated from Champaign High School in 1938. He was drafted when he was twenty-two years old on February 11, 1942. On the night he left his family for the war, he told his father that he did not think that he would be returning.

After Berbaum was inducted at Camp Grant, Illinois, his groups of inductees were sent to Fort Knox to learn basic armored training. Next, Berbaum was sent to Pine Camp, New York, for the 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, where he was responsible for driving a tank. The following fall he enrolled in a radio school in Fort Knox, Kentucky. He returned to the 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division, which was now in the deserts of California. Berbaum received a chance to join the Division Signal Company, while in California, because he had operated on radios previously. After several months, the Division moved again to Camp Buoy, Texas. Berbaum applied to the Army Air Force and luckily received Air Force cadet status in Mount Pleasant, Iowa along with five months of college. After graduation, he was told by the company commander that the school was closing, and he could either return to his uniform or enter into the Infantry.

Upon entering the 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry, Berbaum served in the in the European Theater. He helped with radio repair, roughly one mile behind the actual battle line. The 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry first encountered the Vosges Mountains, where they captured the citadel of Biche, France. Later, another significant and casualty-filled battle at Heilbronn, Germany took place. By the time the war ended in Europe, Berbaum and his division were circling Stuttgart, Germany. He then trained for future battles in Asia until Japan surrendered; Berbaum returned home in 1946. After the war, he continued his interests in radio, television, and even created a documentary of his army career.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Champaign, Illinois; radio repair; hand radios; wire communication; Camp Grant, Illinois; Fort Knox, Kentucky; Pine Camp, New York; 4<sup>th</sup> Armored Division; Division Signal Company; Camp Buoy, Texas; Army Air Force; 100<sup>th</sup> Infantry; European Theater; Vosges Mountains; Concentration Camps; Biche, France; Heilbronn, Germany.

**Note to the Reader:** Readers of the oral history memoir should bear in mind that this is a transcript of the spoken word, and that the interviewer, interviewee and editor sought to preserve the informal, conversational style that is inherent in such historical sources. The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library is not responsible for the factual accuracy of the memoir, nor for the views expressed therein. We leave these for the reader to judge.

## **COPYRIGHT**

**The following material can be used for educational and other non-commercial purposes without the written permission of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library. "Fair use" criteria of Section 107 of the Copyright Act of 1976 must be followed. These materials are not to be deposited in other repositories, nor used for resale or commercial purposes without the authorization from the Audio-Visual Curator at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, 112 N. 6th Street, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Telephone (217) 785-7955**