

**UKHMF TESTIMONY TRANSCRIPT
– GILBERT KING**

[Rt: 37 mins 22 secs. Artefacts 2'.15"]

A024_L002_07275B

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10:00:00:00

Gilbert King

My name is Gilbert King, and I helped liberate Belsen camp. Thank you.

[Fade to black and back up]

10:00:09:16

Gilbert King

Well, I was born in Alma Green. I'm 97 years of age, and er, what else do I want?

10:00:18:23

Interviewer

Tell me about your parents, where, where did you grow up?

10:00:22:17

Gilbert King

I grew up in Alma Green, in me-, er, in me local house there, and er, I went to school in Alma Green, and left school at 14.

10:00:35:22

Interviewer

And is that when you became a furniture maker? Is that your first job?

10:00:40:12

Gilbert King

The chair making?

10:00:41:14

Interviewer

Yes.

10:00:42:05

Gilbert King

Yes, yes, that was my first job.

10:00:45:06

Interviewer

And what, what kind of chairs did you make? What kind of work did you do?

10:00:48:19

Gilbert King [*talking over Interviewer*]

Various kinds.

10:00:50:07

Interviewer

Go on then.

10:00:50:12

Gilbert King

But mostly dining chairs.

10:00:52:18

Interviewer

Okay.

10:00:53:09

Gilbert King

Dining chairs and public chairs or, sometimes I got a few Windsor chairs.

10:01:01:03

Interviewer

Wow, you were very -

10:01:01:16

Gilbert King

You got-, in the chair making, you sort of had two or three different trades: Windsor, Diner and Stuff Over.

10:01:12:24

Interviewer

Okay, lovely. When did you meet your wife and when did you get married?

10:01:16:23

Gilbert King

Well, I met my wife when she was at school. And I was just left school. We come very close fr-, er, friends and continued as till she left school. And she started, er, work, and she worked as a, a, a mistress for children, for a local man at Great Kingshill. He, er, he, he owned a very large house there and had quite a few working for him. And er, I continued, er, courting her, right up till I, I joined the army, where I got married when I was 41.

10:02:05:22

Interviewer

So you courted her for a very long time then?

10:02:08:04

Gilbert King

Yes.

10:02:09:16

Interviewer

And how old was she when you got married?

10:02:12:04

Gilbert King

19.

10:02:14:20

Interviewer

Okay. Can you tell me the dates again? I'm, I'm a bit confused. So when did you meet her? At school?

10:02:21:02

Gilbert King

At school, yes.

10:02:22:02

Interviewer

And how old were you when you married her?

10:02:24:23

Gilbert King

20, 22 I was.

10:02:26:17

Interviewer

Oh, 22, I see, okay, I understand. Lovely, well, that's wonderful. And how long were you married?

10:02:33:15

Gilbert King

53 years.

10:02:35:02

Interviewer

Fantastic.

10:02:35:18

Gilbert King

And I, I, I lost her, bless her. Er, she, she passed away in my arms.

10:02:41:21

Interviewer

Oh, that must be very sad for you.

10:02:43:18

Gilbert King

Yeah, she had a massive heart attack. 53 years we were married. And we had three lovely children.

10:02:51:04

Interviewer

What's the secret to being married for 53 years?

10:02:55:18

Gilbert King

Well, give and take I suppose. Er, I can't, er, I can't give any other, er, any other thing other than give and take.

10:03:06:22

Interviewer

That's lovely advice for all of us. So you told me that you joined the army. Can you explain the conscription process? How did that happen, you joining the army?

10:03:16:02

Gilbert King

Well, the, the thing was with the -, with the conscription you see, war broke out in, er, October, er, '39 and conscription, er, was, er, began then by the government. And we had to, er, register and sign. And, er, sign our name for conscription. That's how I come to start with the army, having to, er, sign me name and er, wait for me, er, medical. I had me medical in the, November of, er, 1939. And I had me con-, er, call up papers in, er, March 1940. And I, went to, er, er, I, er, I did -, I was joined up in 1940, and I, I had to get, er, report to Taunton.

10:04:24:02

Interviewer

Right.

10:04:24:21

Gilbert King

And that's for Taunton, I joined up in the forces.

10:04:28:14

Interviewer

Okay. Um, so you did your training in Somerset, didn't you? Is that -?

10:04:33:04

Gilbert King

Yeah, I did good training there. We done our training on a large [*airstrip?*], done our march and what have you, and done our training, until we were posted outside to our wartime station. This, I got booted out, and made our way to Frinton-On-Sea, Clacton. That's where we, we, er, we, er, stayed there for two years serving on a two inch, er, six-inch naval, naval gun.

10:05:12:12

Interviewer

Did you feel that it was safer there than to be in Europe at that time?

10:05:15:23

Gilbert King

Yes I did, very much so. I, it saved me a lot, er, well, worry, I suppose. Because I mean you were, you were stationed there, had nobody to worry you, other than just guarding the coast.

10:05:35:05

Interviewer

I'm reading here that your favourite aspect of the job was to get, to get the beers in for all the boys. Is that right?

10:05:41:06

Gilbert King

Well, that was when we got up to, um, up to, er, we, we left Frinton and we had to form another, er, battery up at Southwold, in Southwold, in, er, Suffolk. And it was there that I had the job of being the, um, [*coughs*] the, the, er, lorry driver, because they only had one truck, er, because of the, you were, well, er, you, you [?]. And er, it was one, one of my jobs during my tour of duty during the week, we should go to Adnam's brewery and get the beer. And on the counter there was a barrel of beer, and the old chappy behind the bar used to say, "oh, help yourself to a pint, Gilbert." And er, I, I used to have a pint of beer a week.

10:06:45:18

Interviewer

Aw.

10:06:46:01

Gilbert King

That was beautiful.

10:06:47:07

Interviewer

I bet it was. So tell me then, moving from Frinton-On-Sea to Europe, what happened?

10:06:54:14

Gilbert King

Well, I, I eventually come in one night and said, I said I got a move to, er, 63rd Anti-Tank, that's the regiment I finished up with, that's the regiment I went into, Belsen camp with. And er, I had move down to Hemel Hempstead. Of course, when I got to Hemel Hempstead, moved into Hemel, Hemel, well I moved out of coastal ar-, er, artillery, which was static to, er, field artillery which was all, well, you, you was on the movement all the time. And that was when I started moving all over the bottom of Europe, er, Much Hadham in Hertfordshire down to Folkestone, along the coast and what have you, and gradually got to, um, near, er, oh dear, where, where, where, we were, um - oh, I got it for, I lost it for a minute.

10:07:58:03

Interviewer

Don't worry. So you travelled through Europe, is that what you were saying?

10:08:02:08

Gilbert King

I,

10:08:03:07

Interviewer

This is through England still, so how did you get -, what was your first posting to Europe?

10:08:09:05

Gilbert King

Well, we were moving around, and we tried to get up to near, to, er, [coughs] Brighton-on-Sea, when all our tr-, all our vehicles were waterproofed. This was to-, for the invasion. For some reason or other - why I don't know - but it came that they, we got to go up to Tilbury and out load the boats that were taking the supplies across. So this we had to do. And we never went across until October. In October, we moved down to Newhaven. From Newhaven, we crossed from Newhaven to Dieppe. Now that is a, that took us seven hours, seven hours to -, and a normal peace time trip takes four hours. So you can tell how rough the seas were. And we tried to get to Dieppe. Get kitted out again, and er, [coughs] get ourselves sorted out, and we made our way up through Abbeville, Lille and er, and er, Brussels, where we caught up with the fighting force. So, how much more do you want, do you want to go?

10:09:37:22

Interviewer

Well, I'm very interested because your memory is very clear, isn't it, about your route? So that must have been a very stressful time for a young man.

10:09:43:10

Gilbert King [*interrupting Interviewer*]

Well, I could tell you right through to Belgium .

10:09:46:15

Interviewer

Yep.

10:09:48:05

Gilbert King

I could do. Well, we, we, er, we get up to Brussels, and we caught up with the [?]. We tried to go -, wandered around in different parts of the thing, and we got up to Boxmeer [*Coughs*]. Here, Boxmeer, we were acting infantry. And we used to go out every other night onto the other side of the town, and, and er, get into the trenches, and er, stay there behind the, the big bank that would run the, er, side of the, the, er, river Meuse, and er, in case of any invasion of Germans. On this particular night, um, he, he, he, he give us, we-, one of our chaps, opened fire on, er, on, er some of them and that caused a little bit of chaos. Anyway, that particular night it was quiet, but the following night he, he mortared us, that was eight Moaning Minis. And he dropped those down on top of us. And it was through these that one of them, nearly had me in my trench, and it appears I had the perforation of the ear, and a bit shrapnel in my arm and what have you. And that put me in Eindhoven, I went to Eindhoven, and from Eindhover, I went to, er, later went to Brussels. Brussels was walking wounded, I wasn't, er, terribly hurt. But I, I was there for a few days, then I was registered and told to return to unit. This I had to do to catch up with me unit. And as I was going to -, catching up with my unit, going up through Holland now, I was nearly commandeered to go down to the Ardennes. That is where the Ger- the Americans were making their, er, er, what's the word for it? Where they, er, where they made their [*purge?*] and pushed Germany back. Anyway, after a time we got organised

again, and we were in a position, that we were going up towards the Rhine. We got to the Rhine, and we're told that the-, by the officers, that the RAF were coming to bomb, er - oh, dear, dear, I've lost the words - I'll think of it in a minute - out of existence. This they did do. And we crossed the Rhine in the support of the Six Airborne. And in doing so, we made our way up through Germany towards Northern France – and we come to a place called Celle.

10:13:03:09

Now, Celle was a very large military town, and it was holding many military people. And it was here that our offices had us together and said that the German military had approached them and asked them, ooh, saying that they'd, being inside Belsen, I found it to be covered with, ooh, typhoid. So they were worried that it would escape outside and contaminate the operation on the outside. Our troop said, yes, they would take over, it'll be in the morning. And the Germans gave them a 20-mile zone. This was to [?]. So they said get, get in the morning, boys.

10:14:06:17

So in the morning we arrived, made way, made ourselves available, and er, C troop of, of, er, 448 battery, opened er, er, entered the camp and was met by a large range of yelling inmates. They were shouting for joy. And I thought, well, it's all very well really, but it wouldn't be quite so joyful if they'd of known what, er, er, they, they, um, they were going to give.

10:14:59:14

Anyway, I saw Jo- Kramer, he was being brought out of the building which was housing Germans. And he was handcuffed, handcuffed, and er, sat on a chair ready for, er, I suppose for disposal. Er, one of the, c-, captives walked up towards me and he, er, he knelt down and kisses my boots. And this was, well, yeah, I suppose, it's [?]. It must have really brought tears to my eyes.

10:15:55:12

We continued up and through the camp, meeting a lot of the war, the, er, skeletons that were laying around. Looking through the windows, you'd see the, [?] laying on the floor, mostly dead. Well, they were dead, but a few were alive. And you continued to and the more you got up into the, the area, the compound, as one would say, you saw across the way, large rows of pine trees. These were in lines, and they were neatly piled with, er, skeletons all the way through. This must -, this gave us a terrible feeling really. Well, it's difficult to, to, just say how you feel about skeletons. They look part of the -,

10:17:01:15

and er, the other side were several large trenches. These were mostly filled with skeletons. And our soldiers were just started to make them- help fill them.

10:17:28:18

From here on, my job for a time was, er, feeding. And little could you do about feeding if you had no food to feed them with? So [?], with politeness, we got on to the touch of Americans, asking for their supply of army rations. But this, when we could receive it was like, [coughs] not much use giving it to them. It was like giving a baby baked beans. And you were, they were, we were killing them as fast as we

could do.

[Section below has been moved up from the end of the interview]

10:18:21:09

Interviewer

You were guarding the SS, is that right?

10:18:24:07

Gilbert King

Yeah, for a little while.

10:18:25:08

Interviewer

Can you tell me about that?

10:18:26:20

Gilbert King

Well, it was a question where we all had a little duty of guarding the SS. They were putting us -, kept until they were taken away [coughs]. And, er, one little incident that happened was there was a corridor in the huts which you could walk back along the floor and see each room as, as you got the inmates in, you got the prisoners in. And there was a little hole there, a spyhole which you'd look through. And I looked through it one night, it was these Germans, after I looked through it, oh did we both jump. We really jumped. No, other than that, no, they weren't there long before they were taken away.

10:19:13:01

Interviewer

We've talked to, talk! we've spoken to, um, somebody else who was part of the liberation forces, and he said he was so angry with the Germans, when he saw what they did, when he saw the suffering that...that they'd metted out to people, and he had to hold himself back from wanting to kill them, do you remember feeling angry with the German forces when you met them?

10:19:37:16

Gilbert King

Well, it's difficult to, to remember that, that type of thing. Anger comes a bit difficult really.

10:19:51:09

Interviewer

At that time, you wanted to capture all the SS, didn't you? You didn't want to injure them in any way -

10:19:57:02

Gilbert King

Yeah, well, well, we -

10:19:58:06

Interviewer

- so that they could stand trial.

10:19:58:12

Gilbert King

We got the SS women; we got them cornered. Irma Grese was there, we met her before they was taken away as prisoners.

10:20:14:00

Interviewer

Do you remember anything about her? Can you tell me anything about what she looked like or how she was?

10:20:19:18

Gilbert King

Yes. She was rather a tall girl, blonde hair, and I can remember to this day, yeah, that's one thing, one person I can remember because she was so prominent, being taller than the others, and being blonde.

10:20:39:03

Interviewer

Do you remember anything of what she did at time?

10:20:42:06

Gilbert King

No, other than, er, her ill treatment of the prisoners, that's all I know.

10:20:48:11

Interviewer

Did you see any of that?

10:20:50:00

Gilbert King

No.

[Inserted section ends]

10:20:52:23

After this, we, we had to wait, we had to, we, we got a water line on.

10:21:02:12

But after this, we had to wait for the medical which arrived on-. We were there about four days, perhaps four to five days, and from this on, we er, we er, we had, er, orders to leave and continue our role of, er, warfare.

10:21:31:07

So we left Belsen and continued towards, er, er, so, er, Lüneburg Heath. And this is where they said that Monty had signed the, the, war truce. And er, I thought then, oh

dear, well done. That's me and my war time finished. I continued walking up through, making my way up through, Lüneburg, and was, stopping there a little while, a few days, doing me casual tour of duties. That was on parading [?] at the end of the town hall, etc.

10:22:25:18

And then we were told then to get together that we would make our way up to Kiel, which was going to be our final, er, resting place. Before reaching Kiel, we passed Hamburg. And Hamburg was, er, virtually flattened to the ground. The RAF had done a marvellous job. On reaching Kiel, I've done my usual tour of duties, awaiting my, er, release from the army. And this I waited for and when I relieved my release, I made my way back to England.

10:23:21:19

On reaching England, er army camp, and I had to have, have another medical. This was to see whether I could serve in the Far East. I had the medical and was told that I was quite a capable of serving in the Far East and my book was stamped as such. But in the course of this time, the Americans had dropped the bomb. And this was a good job to me because that ended the end of the war. And by doing that, that ended the war for me. In that case, I was [?] given my release. And er, given my bits and bits and pieces,

10:24:13:15

and I made my way back to Holmer Green, to meet up with my wife and children. And to start, having a couple of days, and then start my job again, chair making at er, Mendy Street, good old Mendy Street, where I continued, and that's it. That, ladies and gentlemen, I feel concludes the end of my story into Belsen. And I feel it is about, some I've missed, and some I've gained. Thank you.

10:24:56:09

Interviewer

Thank you very much for that, Gilbert. That was -, it's extraordinary to think as a young man that you started off as a chair maker and you had that huge experience. And then that,

10:25:07:02

Gilbert King

[Well, lot got left out you see?]

10:25:10:00

Interviewer *[talking at the same time]*

Yes, can I ask you a little bit more, do you mind if I ask you some more questions?

10:25:13:08

Gilbert King

No, not at all.

[Cut for direction]

10:25:15:09

Interviewer

Before you went to Belsen, did you know anything about the concentration camp and what was happening there?

10:25:21:11

Gilbert King

Not a thing. Not a thing.

10:25:25:15

Interviewer

What had you been told?

10:25:27:09

Gilbert King

Eh?

10:25:28:07

Interviewer

What had you been told about what you were about to do?

10:25:31:08

Gilbert King [*interrupting Interviewer*]

Well, I never been told nothing. None of us had been told. When we, when we went into, into the camp, when we [?], we didn't know we were gonna find all these, er, skeletons. All new to us.

10:25:47:13

Interviewer

Do you remember how many people you were with? Who, who was with you at that time? How many were in the unit?

10:25:54:06

Gilbert King [*interrupting Interviewer*]

Well, I, I don't know. But I, I suppose you're talking about a battery of about 40 people.

10:26:00:04

Interviewer

And do you remember what time of day you arrived?

10:26:04:13

Gilbert King

No, I can't, not really, other than it was morning. I suppose it would be about eight o'clock ish.

10:26:11:05

Interviewer

Um, what -, when we've spoken to people about their experience of Belsen, I've asked them what is the biggest memory, and most of them say the smell. Can you describe the smell?

10:26:23:09

Gilbert King

Well, it was a, it was a very persistent smell, but it was more of a stench, you know. A pfffft coming up, coming up and that, and that. Yeah, yeah. But you, you soon got used to it, you know.

10:26:39:01

Interviewer

It must have been very shocking as a young man. This was -

10:26:41:22

Gilbert King

It was.

10:26:41:23

Interviewer

- your first experience of anything like this.

10:26:44:08

Gilbert King

It was. To see the amount of them. The amount of them. In the, in the pine trees you, you, you're not talking about hundreds, you're talking about thousands.

10:26:58:14

Interviewer

That must have affected you very deeply?

10:27:00:17

Gilbert King

It did. I was -, well, I say it did. I suppose it did, yeah. But we were prone to that. hardship kind of thing - war, hardship - I suppose you grin and bear it really.
[Coughs]

10:27:19:11

Interviewer

Can you tell me the story again about the inmate who kissed your shoes?

10:27:24:09

Gilbert King

Well they, they, they just run up - this one did - bent down, kissed me shoes, and as I say, what could I say? It, it, it shocked me really.

10:27:46:16

Interviewer

Can you describe what Belsen looked like for somebody's who's never, obviously,

been there, but has never understood anything about a concentration camp like that?

10:27:58:17

Gilbert King

Well, all I could say is it's a big area with buildings and what have you. A few, like these pine trees and what have you, a few other shrubs and what have you. And you've got all these, er, bodies all, all over the place, all in different sections and different thing. I mean, there was a, a big pillar there, a big, er, pillar of shoe leather there, that was high as a h-, nearly high as a house. So you can tell how many bodies there were to make that amount, er, big heap up. Secondly, there was, er, three great trenches, that, er, where they kept their potatoes, turnips, swedes and that. But there was none there, no food, no food at all. All we were looking for -, we, we did have, the water laid on.

10:29:01:05

Interviewer

Um, can you remember what your job was as a unit? What were you asked to do at that time? What were you doing in Belsen?

10:29:14:14

Gilbert King

Well, I think that's, comes a little, very vague. I seem to think I would have done more on the feeding side.

10:29:25:06

Interviewer

So you were trying to give the inmates food?

10:29:27:23

Gilbert King

Yeah, yeah.

10:29:28:17

Interviewer

And what food was available to give them?

10:29:31:06

Gilbert King

Well, just as I say, sort of this here canned stuff and what have you, you know, army rations. Little I forget really now.

10:29:43:22

Interviewer

Can you tell me a bit more -, nobody's told us about the pile of shoes that you've just described. Can you, can you explain that a little bit more?

10:29:50:24

Gilbert King

Do what?

10:29:51:16

Interviewer

You've just told me about the pile of leather, of the shoes. Can you tell me a bit more about that because nobody else has told us about that yet?

10:30:00:10

Gilbert King

No, well, in my photos, there's a photo of it. This great big, high, high building of shoe leather which were actually accumulated there for all the inmates that were that were killed. So it tells you about them thousands and thousands that were killed. Yes.

10:30:29:17

Interviewer

In the years since Belsen, In the years since Belsen, it must have been very hard to forget what you saw during those five days. Have you found that difficult?

10:30:39:17

Gilbert King

Well, I, I, I don't know, I don't particularly think too much about it. It's a long, long time ago now, and things are in the past now. I may talk about it, but even so, unless I'm asked, I don't talk about it.

10:30:57:06

Interviewer

It must have been very hard to go back to normal life straight after being in Belsen, do you remember much of that time?

10:31:03:03

Gilbert King

No, I don't. I don't.

10:31:04:20

Interviewer

Okay.

10:31:05:10

Gilbert King

No, you, you've got me there a little bit.

10:31:07:12

Interviewer

That's okay. No problem. Um, can you tell me about how important it is you think for people to understand that period of history?

10:31:17:04

Gilbert King

Well, I think these, I think this literature should be open to everyone, I think films

should be open to everyone, and everyone should know and see all the parts of Belsen.

10:31:36:03

Interviewer

How much of your experience did you share with your son? Did you tell him about what you'd been through?

10:31:42:03

Gilbert King

Well, bits and bits as you sort of go, go along with it, you, you do a bit, and a bit, and a bit.

10:31:51:04

Interviewer

Do you think it's important to tell children of the younger generation about what happened in that time?

10:31:56:13

Gilbert King

Yeah.

10:31:58:18

Interviewer

Um, have you been giving talks, while you've been reflecting on your life, about your involvement in Belsen?

10:32:04:24

Gilbert King

No. No.

10:32:06:12

Interviewer

No? Do you think it's good to talk about things?

10:32:10:12

Gilbert King

I do.

10:32:12:01

Interviewer

Does it make you feel better?

10:32:14:07

Gilbert King

Well, I think, er I think everybody should know about it. It should never happen again. And no way it will happen again.

10:32:24:18

Interviewer

Why do you think it did happen in the first place?

10:32:28:12

Gilbert King

Why did it happen?

10:32:30:12

Interviewer

Why do you think?

10:32:32:24

Gilbert King

Well, 'cause you had a man like Hitler. That's where it all started from. And if you can sum -, if you can sum Hitler up, he would sum the, the problem up.

10:32:49:04

Interviewer

You must have felt very proud to be part of the Army when you were younger?

10:32:55:14

Gilbert King

Well, I don't think you -, I don't think you took it as being proud, you took it as part of your job.

10:33:01:20

Interviewer

You felt it was your duty?

10:33:03:15

Gilbert King

Yeah.

10:33:04:13

Interviewer

Mm. Um, do you think we have learnt very many lessons about what happened in that period of history?

10:33:12:03

Gilbert King

Well, I think a lot of people have, er, learnt from it. I'm sure they have. I think anybody's got to learn from it.

10:33:21:18

Interviewer

What do you think is the main lesson that we can learn from it, from [sic] future generations to come?

10:33:29:08

Gilbert King

Well, you got me there a little bit. You, you can't get into that predicament again

where you, where you, er, persecute, persecute a, a nation like, er, Hitler did the Jews, they were really persecuted. And there's no reason why that should ever be done again. There's no reason they, there's no reason why they should ever been persecuted. They're no worse than anyone else, a Jew boy. No.

10:34:05:11

Interviewer

Did you change the way that you lived your life after the war?

10:34:09:19

Gilbert King

Not to my knowledge. I, I think it's just a question that -, you come out the forces and you just carried on what, what you done.

10:34:21:03

Interviewer

Gilbert, this interview, um, will be able to be seen by generations of people, and to have a chance to listen to you talking is very special because you witnessed history. Do you have a message to your grandchildren's grandchildren about that time of history and what we can learn?

10:34:42:18

Gilbert King

Well, I, I, I don't know that I can give a lot of, er, information really. What can I say? All you can give is, er, to say, give and take, and er, treat everybody equals.

10:34:58:19

Interviewer

Okay. Um, is there anything else that you'd like to tell me Gilbert, about that time? Can you, your, if there's something you feel like we haven't discussed that you want to say.

10:35:07:02

Gilbert King

Well, I, I, I can't because what happened after, you see, when we left Belsen, the medical people come over, another unit which were non-combatant units, non-combatant units, to, er, clean up. They were left there at Belsen. So we knew very little then.

10:35:39:12

Interviewer

How long were you in Belsen? It was about five days, wasn't it?

10:35:42:01

Gilbert King

About that, about that. Yeah.

10:35:43:01

Interviewer

Yeah, so can you say that, that I was in Belsen, how long were you in Belsen?

10:35:49:08

Gilbert King

About four to five days.

10:35:54:01

Interviewer

Do you remember where you slept when you were there?

10:35:56:03

Gilbert King

No. I suppose we slept in the army huts I suppose. I couldn't say that I know. That's got me there, got my mind.

10:36:05:12

Interviewer

Don't worry. It was a very long time ago, wasn't it?

10:36:07:13

Gilbert King

That it is.

10:36:08:18

Interviewer

I'm amazed that you can remember anything. Do you feel happy with everything that you've told me?

10:36:14:00

Gilbert King

I think so.

10:36:15:03

Interviewer

Yeah, nothing else?

10:36:15:16

Gilbert King

Yeah, I suppose if you go back, if you went back again you'd find out more things I could relate really. Some things I remember, some things I forget.

10:36:27:13

Interviewer

Have you been back to Belsen?

10:36:28:23

Gilbert King

No, I haven't.

10:36:29:19

Interviewer

Would you like to go back?

10:36:30:17

Gilbert King

I would of done.

10:36:32:03

Interviewer

Why?

10:36:33:00

Gilbert King

Well, just to say, just a matter of, I've been back, that's -, just a reason saying that I've been back. Not because there's anything to see - there's nothing - they tell me - to see now. But er, but perhaps a stone monument or summat. But I would of just loved to have made the journey back.

10:36:59:20

Interviewer

Do you think you would have been emotional?

10:37:02:14

Gilbert King

Well, I don't know but, that's, that's my only -, regards Belsen, that's my only wish, really, was to have a trip back.

10:37:18:01

Interviewer

Just so that you feel like you could put a full stop in that part of your mind?

10:37:20:16

Gilbert King

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ARTEFACTS

ARTEFACT 1: scan of a photograph of Gilbert & army friends captioned 'Germany 1944'

No commentary

ARTEFACT 2: scan of a photograph of Gilbert winning a 220 yd race for C troop in 'Keil (Germany) 1945'

No commentary

ARTEFACT 3: scan of a photograph of Gilbert running a relay race, Laboe Sportplatze

No commentary

ARTEFACT 4: scan of a photograph of Gilbert doing a high jump, Laboe Sportplatze

No commentary

ARTEFACT 5: scan of a photograph of Gilbert at Laboe Sportplatze presentation

No commentary

ARTEFACT 6: scan of a formal photograph of Gilbert and colleagues in army uniform

No commentary

ARTEFACT 7: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and army friends lying in a garden

No commentary

ARTEFACT 8: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and army friends in front of part of a tent

No commentary

ARTEFACT 9: scan of a photograph of two soldiers in front of a track vehicle

No commentary

ARTEFACT 10: scan of a second photograph of Gilbert and a friend standing in front of a tracked vehicle

No commentary

ARTEFACT 11: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and two friends on the step of a wooden hut

No commentary

ARTEFACT 12: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and a larger group of friends outside a wooden hut

No commentary

ARTEFACT 13: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and three friends with rifles

No commentary

ARTEFACT 14: scan of a photograph of Gilbert sitting on the wheel of a gun

No commentary

ARTEFACT 15: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and five army friends

No commentary

ARTEFACT 16: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and five friends outside a wooden hut bearing the sign 'Moie Joe'

No commentary

ARTEFACT 17: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and three friends on a doorstep

No commentary

ARTEFACT 18: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and four friends sitting on the limber of a gun

No commentary

ARTEFACT 19: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and a friend leaning against a brick wall

No commentary

ARTEFACT 20: scan of a photograph described as Baltic battleground 1945

No commentary

ARTEFACT 21: scan of a photograph of Gilbert getting a haircut from an army pal

No commentary

ARTEFACT 22: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and army mates drinking pints

No commentary

ARTEFACT 23: scan of a photograph of Gilbert standing on an armoured vehicle

No commentary

ARTEFACT 24: scan of a photograph of Gilbert's wife, Irene

No commentary

ARTEFACT 25: scan of a photograph of Gilbert back home with baby son

No commentary

ARTEFACT 26: scan of a photograph of Gilbert, his wife Irene and daughter standing on the front step of their house 'Bright Syde'

No commentary

ARTEFACT 27: scan of a photograph of Gilbert and Irene

No commentary