

Canard, Granville US Army

[00:00:15.84] JOE GALLOWAY: When and where were you born?

[00:00:18.34] JACK CANARD: I was born in Washington, DC in June 19, 1940.

[00:00:23.87] JOE GALLOWAY: Pre-war model.

[00:00:25.91] JACK CANARD: Yes.

[00:00:26.44] JOE GALLOWAY: Me, too. Who were your family members?

[00:00:30.78] JACK CANARD: Of course, my mother and father, and I have four other siblings. I have a brother 10 years older, a sister two years older, a brother two years younger, and a sister 10 years younger.

[00:00:45.37] JOE GALLOWAY: Oh my. They spread them out 20 years.

[00:00:48.81] JACK CANARD: Yes, mother did.

[00:00:50.14] JOE GALLOWAY: And you consider DC to be your hometown?

[00:00:53.56] JACK CANARD: Actually, Arlington-- I was living in-- the parents lived in Arlington when I was born. I was born in Sibley Hospital in DC because it was the only hospital in the area at the time. And Arlington has always been my home of record.

[00:01:14.01] JOE GALLOWAY: What prompted you to enlist in the DC Army National Guard at age 17?

[00:01:20.71] JACK CANARD: Well, I have, as I mentioned, a brother 10 years older than I. He was in the National Guard when I was really much younger. And I looked up to him. And I couldn't wait fast enough to become a member of the Guard myself. So as soon as I turned 17-- I had to get my parents' signature to do it, but as soon as I turned 17, I joined the Guard.

[00:01:47.41] JOE GALLOWAY: What was your sense of the Cold War we were involved in before you entered the military?

[00:01:57.06] JACK CANARD: I really didn't pay too much attention to it, politics or the history at that period in time. I was very much of a mechanical-type person in school. And I took auto shop and that kind of stuff. And I actually started out as an electrician. So I was more interested in those kinds of subjects than--

[00:02:22.10] JOE GALLOWAY: The politics.

[00:02:23.00] JACK CANARD: --than the politics of the world, yes.

[00:02:25.22] JOE GALLOWAY: What were your impressions of the draft in 1957 before you entered the Army Guard?

[00:02:36.37] JACK CANARD: I don't know exactly how to answer that. I could compare that to today, where we have the all-volunteer Army. I think the draft was a very beneficial thing to have. It's a very necessary thing. And I hope someday we get back to a draft to have more people get experience of service to the military and to the country.

[00:03:03.34] JACK CANARD: As I say, I joined the guard in '57. At that time, they had what they called the RFA program, which was Reserve Active Forces training. And I went to-- right after I joined the Guard, I went on active duty for six months, which was for basic and advanced individual training, basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky, advanced individual training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri.

[00:03:31.81] And, of course, they're both engineer posts. And I was in an engineer unit at the time. And I mean, basic training was good. It helped me a lot in getting prepared for what I've follow on and did in the service.

[00:03:49.91] JOE GALLOWAY: What led you into Officer Candidate School?

[00:03:56.05] JACK CANARD: As an enlisted man, I had the opportunity to observe a lot of officers. And I just knew in my mind that one day I wanted to be an officer. So as soon as I was eligible to apply for OCS, I did.

[00:04:13.48] I got my commission through the Officer Candidate School and actually had to wait a couple of months until I turned 21 before I could be commissioned because I turned 21 on June 19 of 1961, and was commissioned on July the 1st, 1961.

[00:04:31.10] JOE GALLOWAY: Now, your OCS training was at Fort Belvoir?

[00:04:35.97] JACK CANARD: Yeah. Well, no, actually it was with the state National Guard OCS program. And in this case, because I belonged to the District of Columbia National Guard, we had an OCS school right there in the DC National Guard.

[00:04:51.54] JOE GALLOWAY: In DC?

[00:04:52.13] JACK CANARD: Yes. And--

[00:04:54.45] JOE GALLOWAY: I didn't know that.

[00:04:55.47] JACK CANARD: Yeah the program on Reserves bases is 14 months long. It took 14 months to go through the OCS program to qualify.

[00:05:04.77] JOE GALLOWAY: Were you there full time or part time?

[00:05:07.38] JACK CANARD: No, it was a part time thing, several weekends a month, and then there were two periods of 15-day active duties.

[00:05:17.47] JOE GALLOWAY: What other training did you receive before you deployed to Vietnam?

[00:05:23.50] JACK CANARD: Well, as I was commissioned in '61, I actually didn't go to Vietnam until '69. So I had, what, seven years--

[00:05:36.20] JOE GALLOWAY: Seven years

[00:05:36.74] JACK CANARD: --seven years. In that seven years, I had four schools that I had gone to, of course, the basic and advanced course, and then I went to the Engineer Officer Basic Course at Fort Belvoir, which was a 12-week course. And then I went back for the Engineer Officer Career Course in 1966, and that was a six-month course.

[00:06:02.63] JOE GALLOWAY: Sounds like they put you through quite a lot.

[00:06:05.41] JACK CANARD: Yeah. And in addition to the career course, I also went to a spin-off course called the Prefix Five Course, which is to become a nuclear weapons employment officer. And I completed that course.

[00:06:19.40] JOE GALLOWAY: Did all of this training prepare you for what you faced once you arrived in Vietnam?

[00:06:26.53] JACK CANARD: I think it did. Had I not had those years of experience as both an enlisted person and as an officer, I probably would not have been successful in Vietnam as I was.

[00:06:44.12] JOE GALLOWAY: What rank were you when you landed in Vietnam?

[00:06:47.78] JACK CANARD: I was a captain, but I was on the major's list. And so they knew I was going to be promoted to major any day.

[00:06:55.57] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:06:56.12] JACK CANARD: And I arrived in Vietnam in January of '68-- or actually, December of '68 and received my promotion in February of 1969 to major.

[00:07:11.93] JOE GALLOWAY: Pretty quick. How did you get to Vietnam, and where did you land?

[00:07:17.34] JACK CANARD: We went by commercial air. As I recall, it was Tan Son Nhut Air Base I believe they called it.

[00:07:26.04] JOE GALLOWAY: It's at Saigon?

[00:07:27.03] JACK CANARD: Just outside of Saigon, right.

[00:07:28.89] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:07:29.18] JACK CANARD: And then from there, I took another aircraft from Saigon up to Da Nang, and then my vehicle from Da Nang going into the I Corps area at Quang Tri.

[00:07:43.27] JOE GALLOWAY: OK. What were your first impressions on getting off of that airplane in Saigon?

[00:07:52.60] JACK CANARD: Actually, I had served in Korea for a tour of 13 months in 1967 and '68. And I had very vivid visions of what Korea was like. And my first impressions--

[00:08:09.95] JOE GALLOWAY: Your nose wasn't as shocked as it might have been

[00:08:12.56] JACK CANARD: When I first got off the plane, I said, oh, God, this is going to be another Korea.

[00:08:17.26] JOE GALLOWAY: [LAUGHING] Well, except for the cold weather.

[00:08:22.82] JACK CANARD: The temperature was different. That's the only thing.

[00:08:24.83] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. What were your initial duties?

[00:08:30.74] JACK CANARD: The--

[00:08:32.13] JOE GALLOWAY: You were sent to I Corps to--

[00:08:34.87] JACK CANARD: Right. Initially I was supposed to go to the 1st Infantry Division, Big Red One. And after I had got there, they already had several other majors already looking for jobs. So they said, well, we can't use you here. So that's when they sent me to I Corps.

[00:08:52.75] And the 1st of the 5th-- the 1st Brigade, 5th Mechanized Division had gone over to the country in June of '68. And in January of '69, when I got there, they were in need of a company commander for the engineer company, which was attached to the brigade. And so I became the company commander. Even though I was on the major's list, they went ahead and gave me the company. And I kept the company for six months because it was a very large, unruly company.

[00:09:32.83] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:09:33.69] JACK CANARD: And the brigade went to Vietnam as a separate brigade. And so it had a lot of additional assets attached to the brigade. They sent one engineer company heavy, which I had, in addition to the three pioneer platoons that an engineer company normally has, I had an engineering equipment platoon, a float bridge platoon, water purification sections--

[00:10:00.35] JOE GALLOWAY: Mercy. You had almost a battalion there.

[00:10:04.05] JACK CANARD: Yeah. The average engineer company is usually about 128 people. The Company A at the time it went to Vietnam, it was upgraded to 256 members.

[00:10:17.90] JOE GALLOWAY: Now, you did that job for six months.

[00:10:20.79] JACK CANARD: Yeah, I did.

[00:10:21.72] JOE GALLOWAY: What did you do the next six months?

[00:10:23.97] JACK CANARD: The normal tour was a six-month turnover. And so each company commander had six months in the job and then moved on. And so I moved from the company up to the brigade headquarters and became the brigade engineer for my second six months of tour for the first year.

[00:10:42.06] JOE GALLOWAY: So you still had overview and overwatch of your old company.

[00:10:46.02] JACK CANARD: Of the company, yes.

[00:10:52.98] JOE GALLOWAY: What responsibilities consumed most of your time in each of those six-month periods?

[00:11:01.30] JACK CANARD: It was mostly trying to keep abreast of what was happening in real time, and keeping the brigade commander apprised of the situation whenever you could, and planning for future operations and future events.

[00:11:16.97] JOE GALLOWAY: You were located in Quang Tri?

[00:11:19.64] JACK CANARD: Quang Tri, in a place called--

[00:11:21.69] JOE GALLOWAY: That's pretty far north.

[00:11:22.80] JACK CANARD: Yes. Camp Red Devil was the installation. It was the northernmost compound in Vietnam. Now, we had some outposts all up along the DMZ-- Alpha 1, Alpha 2, Charlie 1, Charlie 2, the Rockpile.

[00:11:41.25] JOE GALLOWAY: My recollection, at Tet, they tried very hard to overrun Quang Tri.

[00:11:47.46] JACK CANARD: They did. They did not overrun Quang Tri, but they did overrun Khe Sanh.

[00:11:52.41] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:11:53.39] JACK CANARD: And in fact, that was one of the missions I was involved in is after the Tet Offensive of '68 when Khe Sanh was overrun, then in '69, they decided they wanted to go back into Khe Sanh again.

[00:12:08.37] JOE GALLOWAY: They're going to reopen it.

[00:12:09.63] JACK CANARD: And we as-- at that time, the engineer company had the mission of doing a lot of the mine clearing and road clearing in getting--

[00:12:19.40] JOE GALLOWAY: On that lovely dirt road.

[00:12:21.09] JACK CANARD: --getting back over there, yes.

[00:12:23.91] JOE GALLOWAY: They reopened Khe Sanh again in '71 for the Laos operation.

[00:12:28.63] JACK CANARD: Yes. Yeah. I left Vietnam in '70.

[00:12:34.33] JOE GALLOWAY: You were gone by then.

[00:12:35.67] JACK CANARD: So I'm not too aware of what was taking place. I'm aware that there were some major operations, Lam Son 179, I believe, was one of them.

[00:12:48.26] JOE GALLOWAY: 719.

[00:12:48.60] JACK CANARD: 719--

[00:12:49.15] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:12:50.22] JACK CANARD: --was right after I had left. In fact-- well--

[00:12:54.52] JOE GALLOWAY: I went back for that one.

[00:12:56.08] JACK CANARD: Yeah.

[00:13:01.07] JOE GALLOWAY: What were your living conditions like down at the company and back at headquarters?

[00:13:08.40] JACK CANARD: One of the things that I have always been very proud of is when I first got there, we were in GP large tents. And shortly after that, the Seabees came in and built SEA huts, Southeast Asia huts that were wooden buildings with metal roofs. So the first couple of months, I was in a tent. The second four months-- or the final four months of my company time, we were in SEA huts.

[00:13:41.35] But one of the things that I was responsible for is-- we had water. We also had-- I had two water points, two 1,500-gallon ERDLators that we purified the water for the compound,

not only our compound, but several other compounds. And we always had plenty of water for showers, but it was always cold water.

[00:14:03.41] JOE GALLOWAY: Yep.

[00:14:03.69] JACK CANARD: So I had a water heater constructed out of these 50-gallon barrels and put a fire box under it, put a reserve tank up on a pedestal so that it would have gravity feed. And we were the first unit, and the only unit for a long time, to have hot water.

[00:14:24.87] JOE GALLOWAY: Hot water showers.

[00:14:25.74] JACK CANARD: Yeah. And a lot of the other units would come to our company and want to use the shower.

[00:14:31.88] JOE GALLOWAY: Want to piggyback on your showers.

[00:14:33.80] JACK CANARD: Of course, we let them do it as often as possible.

[00:14:39.45] JOE GALLOWAY: So sleeping was good, food was good. You were all right.

[00:14:45.62] JACK CANARD: I had an excellent mess section and good cooks. And in fact, one of the things towards the end of my company commander time, my birthday was-- 29th birthday was June 19 of 1969. And I was due to get--

[00:15:06.32] JOE GALLOWAY: You're a major by now.

[00:15:07.55] JACK CANARD: I was a major, yes. And I was due to give up command to the company at the end of June. And so since my birthday was being celebrated so close to the end of my tour of the company commander, the mess sergeant and the cooks baked me a big birthday cake. And I've got a couple of pictures of that if you want to see them later.

[00:15:35.62] JACK CANARD: I was impressed with the quality of people that I had in the company. Most of them were draftees. The only problem-- and again, I'm sure that other units had somewhat of the same problem. The only problem that I felt that was a significant problem was the drug problem.

[00:15:58.67] JOE GALLOWAY: Mm.

[00:15:58.97] JACK CANARD: The troops had unlimited access to drugs, and I had to deal with that. But as far as the quality of the members, today, I belong to two organizations. We have the Society of the Fifth Division, which actually has been in existence since 1919 because the division was in both the First World War, Second World War, and also the 1st of the 5th Mech was in Korea.

[00:16:27.28] JOE GALLOWAY: Korea?

[00:16:27.86] JACK CANARD: --in Vietnam rather. The society has been in existence all those years. And I didn't get involved with it until the year 2000. But starting in 2000, I started going to the yearly reunions of the-- we had a reunion for the company as a separate reunion, and then we had a reunion with the First of the Fifth Mech Society.

[00:16:56.51] JOE GALLOWAY: So you kept up with a lot of the people you served with.

[00:17:00.34] JACK CANARD: Yes. For the first 25 years, I didn't. I did not have any contact with anybody. And then one day, I got a call from one of my sergeants that had worked with me in Vietnam.

[00:17:11.75] And he said he had been trying for several years to locate me. And he told me about this reunion that they were having. And as I say, I didn't find out about that until 2000.

[00:17:23.95] And the first one I went to was in Kokomo, Indiana in the year 2000. And from that reunion, we started building contacts. Right now we have about 25 people that were all members of the company, and when I was there as commander, that are all involved in these reunions now.

[00:17:43.00] And we get together almost every year. I've only missed two since 2000. And I'm going to miss it this year because it's in San Diego, and I have another conference I'm involved in at the same time.

[00:17:55.00] JOE GALLOWAY: Uh-oh. Now, did you, in Vietnam, form friendships with men from different racial and social backgrounds that you might not otherwise have had in civilian life?

[00:18:08.98] JACK CANARD: I'm sure I did. But the racial issue was not an issue for me. As I say, I belonged-- for 10 years before I went to Vietnam, I belong to the DC National Guard and also served in two different active duty tours, both in Korea and in Italy prior--

[00:18:29.91] JOE GALLOWAY: So you were dealing with--

[00:18:31.35] JACK CANARD: Right.

[00:18:31.62] JOE GALLOWAY: --people of all racial backgrounds?

[00:18:33.95] JACK CANARD: Right. And there were a number of non-white Soldiers or members of the units. And it was just never an issue for me. It's just they were good Soldiers.

[00:18:47.55] JOE GALLOWAY: Now, you mentioned the drug problem. With a draftee Army, a lot of the social tensions back home came pretty directly to the military in 12 weeks or whatever basic--

[00:19:04.48] JACK CANARD: Yes.

[00:19:04.81] JOE GALLOWAY: --they got.

[00:19:05.98] JACK CANARD: Right.

[00:19:06.75] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you experience and witness that among your troops, both racial tension, social tension?

[00:19:16.49] JACK CANARD: Yeah. I don't recall any major issues with racial tensions in my unit or in the units that I was involved in. The only problem that I really felt was a major problem was the drug problem, the drugs being too accessible and too many of the kids were using.

[00:19:39.85] JOE GALLOWAY: What, if anything, could you do about that?

[00:19:43.09] JACK CANARD: Well, I was probably a little more effective than most other company commanders because I was a major in commanding the company, and I had the authority to give a field grade level Article 15 versus a company grade. And that had a tremendous impact on the members of the company. They knew that if they did not do things right, that they were subject to a field--

[00:20:07.88] JOE GALLOWAY: And you were going to hammer them.

[00:20:09.06] JACK CANARD: --they were subject to a field grade Article 15 rather than a company grade.

[00:20:12.84] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:20:13.17] JACK CANARD: So that helped in my-- benefited me greatly.

[00:20:18.00] JOE GALLOWAY: What did you and your fellow officers, troops do for recreation, off-duty activity, if you had much of that?

[00:20:28.20] JACK CANARD: We didn't-- I don't recall we had much off-duty time, at least during the time that I was the commander of the company, and even the brigade engineer. Of course, we had organized R&R. Towards the end of my tour as brigade engineer, I went to Sydney, Australia for R&R, which was an excellent two weeks. But as far as the daily activities, we had a basketball court set up in the company area. And a lot of the guys would play basketball when they had time to do that.

[00:21:06.56] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:21:06.81] JACK CANARD: But as far as myself, I was always involved in either planning or trying to be involved in the operations of the company and what was going on.

[00:21:19.02] JOE GALLOWAY: Do you have specific memories of the popular culture at that time, by that I mostly mean music, that if you hear a song on the radio it takes you right back?

[00:21:31.74] JACK CANARD: Oh yeah. In the '70s, of course, all of the what I like to refer to as hippie-type songs--

[00:21:39.99] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:21:41.09] JACK CANARD: --they're very distinct today. And when I hear them, I can immediately identify them, yes.

[00:21:51.04] JOE GALLOWAY: What was the primary role of your engineer company that you commanded? What were you building? What were you doing?

[00:22:01.15] JACK CANARD: While I was in command of the company, the company was a separate engineer company supporting the brigade. There were three maneuver battalions. There was an straight leg infantry battalion, a armored battalion, and a mechanized battalion.

[00:22:22.23] The brigade commander-- and this happened before I actually got there. The brigade commander felt that he would be more effective by having each one of my engineer platoons attached to the maneuver battalions. And the result ended up being that they were used more as infantrymen than as engineers because they were just another source of bodies that could fight the war.

[00:22:51.71] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you find that effective?

[00:22:54.03] JACK CANARD: It was not effective from an engineer standpoint.

[00:22:56.48] JOE GALLOWAY: Right.

[00:22:57.12] JACK CANARD: And, of course, one of my main thrusts the entire six months that I commanded the company was to get those--

[00:23:05.93] JOE GALLOWAY: Back together.

[00:23:07.20] JACK CANARD: --platoons released from the battalions back to where they could be controlled as a company asset. Now in addition to that, I did have the equipment platoon and the bridge platoon, and we had a lot of separate missions, construction-type missions and so forth. And I used those--

[00:23:25.80] JOE GALLOWAY: Right. But if your bridge platoon is off supporting infantry as infantry--

[00:23:30.18] JACK CANARD: Well-- yeah, only the three line platoons. The 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Platoon of the engineer company where the three that were attached to the--

[00:23:38.61] JOE GALLOWAY: That were attached. They couldn't take the heavy equipment.

[00:23:41.22] JACK CANARD: Right, the heavy equipment, and the motor pool, and the bridge platoon and--

[00:23:47.42] JOE GALLOWAY: They stayed with you.

[00:23:48.51] JACK CANARD: --water purification detachment all stayed under my control. And I was fortunate that towards the end of my tour as company commander, I finally got the brigade commander to see the light. So when I left the company and went to brigade engineer job, then the brigade commander released the three platoons and let them go back to the company. And the company started functioning as an engineer company again.

[00:24:14.99] JOE GALLOWAY: Now at some point here, you were seconded to support the 3rd Marine Division. How did that come about?

[00:24:23.19] JACK CANARD: When the 1st of the 5th Mech arrived in country in June of '68, the AO was then occupied by the 101st Airborne Division. The 101st Airborne Division moved out and went south at the same time the brigade arrived. And the only major maneuver unit that was left in the northern I Corps area was the 3rd Marine Division. So when the 1st of the 5th Mech Brigade arrived as a separate brigade, they attached it to the 3rd Marine Division for operational control. And so we did a lot of work with the Seabees and the 3rd Marine Division.

[00:25:08.39] JOE GALLOWAY: You got along well?

[00:25:10.19] JACK CANARD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Everybody sort of had the same mission over there. That was to survive. And we got along well.

[00:25:19.10] JOE GALLOWAY: Now your area of operations in I Corps, did that remain pretty steady throughout your tour?

[00:25:28.11] JACK CANARD: With the 1st of the 5th Mech, yes.

[00:25:30.51] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:25:30.80] JACK CANARD: And at the end of my first year, I really wanted to serve with the 101st Airborne Division. So I volunteered to extend my tour for another six months to get an assignment with the 101st. And as it turns out, I had specifically extended so that I could become the operations officer of the engineer battalion, 326 Engineer Battalion.

[00:25:55.73] But just as I got there, they initially assigned me as the operations officer. I hadn't been an operations officer more than a couple of weeks when they had a real need at the division headquarters to replace the assistant division engineer. So I was moved up to division headquarters and--

[00:26:16.46] JOE GALLOWAY: Was that good for you, or-- ?

[00:26:17.99] JACK CANARD: Well, it was good from the standpoint that the living conditions were a lot better at division headquarters than they were at company headquarters. And I worked directly on the staff of the division commander and briefed him on a daily basis on the engineer activities going on in the area. And I guess from a career standpoint, it really helped me, too, because it gave me experience that I probably wouldn't have otherwise had.

[00:26:45.13] JOE GALLOWAY: Now this was-- you're going for 18 months on your tour now.

[00:26:49.82] JACK CANARD: I was there for a total of 18 months plus a few extra days, yes.

[00:26:57.45] JOE GALLOWAY: Could you describe for us-- you worked with several different outfits during your 18 months. Can you describe the quality of the leadership in each of those units, and how it was different, if it was?

[00:27:13.40] JACK CANARD: Well, obviously, it was different from the standpoint that they were different levels. My first six months, I worked at company level. And then for the second six months, I worked as a brigade engineer, and that was at brigade level. It was not quite like working at division level. And then when I moved up to the division engineer position at the 101st Airborne Division, I was working with the division staff. And--

[00:27:40.96] JOE GALLOWAY: Each of those commands, what was your judgment of the quality of leadership that was available there?

[00:27:50.60] JACK CANARD: In my eyes, it was good. I mean, I did--

[00:27:53.46] JOE GALLOWAY: Throughout?

[00:27:53.73] JACK CANARD: I didn't have anything to compare it with that was not good. I mean, it was-- I consider myself a part of that leadership in the positions that I had. And I thought we did very well on all of the things that we did.

[00:28:10.74] JOE GALLOWAY: Could you describe for us significant actions that you participated in? There was a lot of fighting going on up in the--

[00:28:21.52] JACK CANARD: Yeah. We-- one of the main things-- back at the engineer company, when I was company commander of the engineer company, one of the main things we had to do was clear roads every day. The Vietnamese would come in and bury mines in the roads at night. And then before we could send vehicles out in the morning, the engineers would go out and find the mines and clear them out. That was one major activity.

[00:28:46.76] We had a lot of civic action projects that we were involved in with the different villages, going in and helping rebuild huts, building bridges and roads within areas that were really lacking in those items.

[00:29:05.79] JOE GALLOWAY: Digging wells, that sort of thing?

[00:29:07.74] JACK CANARD: We never dug a well.

[00:29:08.58] JOE GALLOWAY: Never did a well.

[00:29:09.21] JACK CANARD: We didn't have the assets to dig a well. But we did do a lot of bridge work, and we did a lot of roadwork. And that was at the engineer level.

[00:29:19.44] When I became brigade engineer, one of my biggest accomplishments was the brigade was working out of a bunker that was dilapidated, falling down, and not very safe at all. So right after I became brigade engineer, the brigade commander asked me, with the use of the engineer company, to build a new bunker for the brigade headquarters to operate out of.

[00:29:47.85] The only material we had was bridge-building material, which was the McNamara supplies that we had stockpiled over there. So taking bridge-building material, I built a bunker that was partially underground, mostly underground, and had about 5 foot of earth over top of it after the bunker was finished.

[00:30:15.03] In '70, when we came out of Vietnam-- and I got this from-- information when I was at the engineer school, in '70 when we came out of Vietnam and evacuated the northern I Corps area, they tried to destroy that bunker with B-52 bombs.

[00:30:33.74] JOE GALLOWAY: It didn't work.

[00:30:34.67] JACK CANARD: It did not destroy it. They ended up having to send engineers in and destroying it from blowing it up from inside.

[00:30:41.49] JOE GALLOWAY: Inside, yeah.

[00:30:42.14] JACK CANARD: Yes. So that was a big accomplishment as brigade engineer. And then for the last part of my tour, when I was with 101st, we did a lot of air recons and that sort of thing. And there was one major activity that I will always remember the details of.

[00:31:07.74] One night we were in the-- it was about 10 o'clock at night, and a rocket attack started coming in on-- at that time, I was at Camp Eagle, which was outside of Hue. And a rocket attack started hitting Camp Eagle. And so they had an ammunition storage area, and they had a bunch of 40-millimeter rounds that were stored that they used in the gunships on the helicopters.

[00:31:38.00] JOE GALLOWAY: Right.

[00:31:39.20] JACK CANARD: One of the rockets came in and exploded next to the ammunition dump and blew the ammunition in all directions. Some of it went off, others didn't. But it also started a fire. And they were concerned about the fire getting to other ammunitions dumps and blowing up.

[00:32:04.95] We had fire equipment there at Camp Eagle, but they couldn't get the fire equipment into the area where the fire was. So myself and two other enlisted men, my Jeep

driver and one other person that was with me, we went in and we cleared all these 40-millimeter rounds out of the way. So we made a path for the fire trucks to get into the area where the fire was.

[00:32:30.99] And for that--

[00:32:32.03] JOE GALLOWAY: What were you using on that unexploded ordnance, shovels or your hands?

[00:32:36.96] JACK CANARD: Just picking them up by hand, and carrying them over, and gently placed them off to the side to make this path for the truck to be able to drive into it.

[00:32:47.07] JOE GALLOWAY: That's pretty sporting.

[00:32:48.39] JACK CANARD: And for that activity or that action, all three of us got the Army Soldier's Medal for Heroism.

[00:32:57.21] JOE GALLOWAY: There you go. That's an impressive decoration, that is.

[00:33:02.82] JACK CANARD: Yeah. That's my most prized one. That's the one I think the most of.

[00:33:12.65] JACK CANARD: I can't speak to the medical aspect of it because I wasn't involved in that. But from an engineering standpoint, we derived several new methods of clearing mines. One of the vehicles that I had in my heavy equipment platoon was what we call a "combat engineer vehicle." It was a M60 tank with a dozer blade on it and 155-millimeter demolition gun. And we would use that to-- when we would discover tunnel complexes and so forth, we would use that to explode those tunnel complexes without having to have Soldiers go in and blow them up from the inside.

[00:33:59.23] JOE GALLOWAY: You were shooting them with a 1-5-5 round?

[00:34:02.34] JACK CANARD: Well, it actually shot a demolition shape-charge that was the size of a 155-millimeter round.

[00:34:09.20] JOE GALLOWAY: Wow. That's impressive.

[00:34:11.39] JACK CANARD: And when it hit its target, it would explode inward, and that's what destroyed the bunkers. And after I left Vietnam, I came back for my next assignment to Fort Belvoir, and I was an instructor at the engineer school for three years. And I used all the learning that I learned in Vietnam as a means to teach the new guys going through school.

[00:34:39.06] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:34:44.98] JACK CANARD: I guess the best day was when I celebrated my 29th birthday, and they made me a cake. I enjoyed that. That's very memorable. And, of course, the incident

with the 101st where we were clearing the rounds out and fortunately did not get injured, that's very memorable to me.

[00:35:11.32] JACK CANARD: I would say, if I had to answer that question, I had-- during the six months that I commanded the company, I lost one Soldier. And it was--

[00:35:21.07] JOE GALLOWAY: Just one?

[00:35:21.79] JACK CANARD: Just one. And it was not through a combat action. He was a young kid, about 19 years old. He got a hold of a bunch of alcohol, he got intoxicated, and went to bed. And while he was sleeping, he vomited and he choked on his own vomit. And that was the only death that I had in my six months.

[00:35:49.30] Now, there were more after when Larry took over the company. And even after that, there were a number of casualties. But for my six months, I only had to deal with that one.

[00:35:59.01] JOE GALLOWAY: One, yeah.

[00:36:05.67] JACK CANARD: I personally didn't have contact with any of those. My contacts were all with the 3rd Marine Division when I was up with I Corps.

[00:36:14.28] JOE GALLOWAY: They were allies of a sort.

[00:36:16.30] JACK CANARD: Yes. Well, yes. Yeah, you can consider the Marines allies.

[00:36:25.29] JOE GALLOWAY: How much, if any, contact did you have with the Vietnamese people-- army, civilian, villagers?

[00:36:34.15] JACK CANARD: Very little in my role with the army, with the Vietnamese army. But I had a lot of contact with the civilians because, as I say, we had some what we call civic action--

[00:36:48.02] JOE GALLOWAY: Civic action, yeah,

[00:36:49.10] JACK CANARD: --projects that we were working on. And we would go into different villages and repair their roads, and in some cases, build bridges. And there was a language barrier. You couldn't talk very much, but at least we did interface with the--

[00:37:08.76] JOE GALLOWAY: What were your impressions of the Vietnamese people that you had dealings with?

[00:37:15.21] JACK CANARD: Generally speaking, I would say good because-- I mean, I still have Vietnamese friends today. My barber is a Vietnamese that was over in Vietnam at the same time I was. And quite frequently, we get in discussions when I'm sitting in the barber chair, and he's cutting my hair. But I've always gone to a Vietnam barber ever since I've been back.

[00:37:42.35] JOE GALLOWAY: How much contact did you have with your family back home during your combat tour?

[00:37:49.23] JACK CANARD: Other than through normal letters-- and I was not good at writing letters. I would probably only write a-- if I wrote a letter a month, that was good. A couple of times I may have written two letters in a month.

[00:38:03.72] But other than exchanging information by letters, that was the only contact I had with them.

[00:38:08.76] JOE GALLOWAY: You didn't use the MARS phone or anything like that?

[00:38:11.58] JACK CANARD: No, that was-- I wasn't even aware of those availabilities at the time I was there. And in the letters that I would send home, I never discussed any of the operations or any of the details about what was going on because my mother was-- she was worried sick constantly anyway about me being there.

[00:38:31.77] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah.

[00:38:32.13] JACK CANARD: And I just never said anything that would give her any cause to be more worried than she normally was. Access to Vietnam radio, there was one station that they called--

[00:38:43.53] JOE GALLOWAY: AFRS.

[00:38:44.71] JACK CANARD: --AFR in Vietnam. And I had a portable radio. And whenever I could, I would listen to that station.

[00:38:52.68] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you get Stars and Stripes newspaper occasionally?

[00:38:55.92] JACK CANARD: They were there occasionally. But more so when I got to division, I had more access to that than I did at the company level.

[00:39:11.34] JACK CANARD: I left Vietnam in July of 1970. And my next assignment directly out of Vietnam was to join the instructional staff at the Army-- at the Fort Belvoir Engineer School.

[00:39:27.54] JOE GALLOWAY: So you were going home?

[00:39:28.95] JACK CANARD: Yeah. And I lived right in Arlington, which was 20 miles from Fort Belvoir. So I was very fortunate in that respect.

[00:39:37.11] JOE GALLOWAY: What was your trip home like?

[00:39:43.97] JACK CANARD: I've done some thinking about this, but I can't remember anything that stands out vividly. I mean, it was a very subdued trip. I do recall that there was a general tendency to be rejected by the population on returning from Vietnam.

[00:40:05.57] But my continuing on active duty and being involved with the military, I had little contact with the outside that I had to depend on anyway.

[00:40:15.83] JOE GALLOWAY: You were inside the perimeter?

[00:40:17.53] JACK CANARD: Basically, yes.

[00:40:18.92] JOE GALLOWAY: And stayed there?

[00:40:20.00] JACK CANARD: Yeah.

[00:40:23.93] JOE GALLOWAY: Now, you remained in the Army, in the Guard, for a full career?

[00:40:31.11] JACK CANARD: Yeah. Actually what happened was after Vietnam, I then got an assignment to Fort Belvoir, was there for three years, then I got an assignment to Germany, and was there for three years. And after Germany, I probably received what we always refer to as the curse of death. I was given an assignment as an Army adviser officer for Reserve units.

[00:41:02.47] JOE GALLOWAY: Hmm.

[00:41:03.25] JACK CANARD: So I went to Fort Knox, Kentucky, and I became the Army adviser for engineer units in southern Ohio and northern Kentucky. At that time I was due for promotion to lieutenant colonel. I was passed over for lieutenant colonel. So as a result of being passed over, I was then rified from active duty in--

[00:41:33.63] JOE GALLOWAY: Back to the Guard.

[00:41:35.14] JACK CANARD: Yeah. And this was in 1977. I immediately went back to the Guard as an active member of the Guard. I started a job with the Guard as a technician because they were looking for people at that time.

[00:41:53.70] And very fortunately in March of '78, they started this program called the AGR Program, Army Guard Reserve Support Program. And I was one of the very first officers to be picked up-- well, at least within the DC National Guard, was the very first one to be picked up on the AGR program. I was then able to stay in the AGR status until I completed my 20 years of active federal service.

[00:42:26.57] Title X of the code says that for a Reserve officer who completes 20 years of active federal service, he must be retired. So I was forced to retire in August of '85 after completing 20 years of active federal service. And at that time, I was a full colonel and retired as a colonel.

[00:42:51.05] JOE GALLOWAY: Did you have any difficulties readjusting to life after 18 months in combat?

[00:42:59.41] JACK CANARD: I don't think I had any problems adjusting. Again, I went to the engineer school and became an instructor. And, of course, everybody-- all the students that had never been in combat or war always wanted to hear all the details they could hear about what it was like, and what you did, and this, that, and the other. So I had a pretty enjoyable tour with the engineer school being able to teach.

[00:43:27.48] JOE GALLOWAY: Do you think that your Vietnam experience changed you for better or for worse, affected your life afterward?

[00:43:36.72] JACK CANARD: Oh, I'm quite sure it did. And I would say for better because it gave me a better perspective on all things that can happen in this world. And it was all part of learning.

[00:43:56.74] JOE GALLOWAY: Did your experience in Vietnam affect the way you think about troops coming back from our wars today?

[00:44:09.04] JACK CANARD: I'm just glad we didn't have to deal with IEDs. The--

[00:44:15.49] JOE GALLOWAY: Booby traps were bad enough.

[00:44:17.50] JACK CANARD: --booby traps were bad. And dealing with known mines and how they operate it was bad enough. But today with these improvised explosive devices that the engineers are dealing with today is just incredible.

[00:44:32.38] JOE GALLOWAY: People don't really understand.

[00:44:34.50] JACK CANARD: I know.

[00:44:34.99] JOE GALLOWAY: And I saw six 1-5-5 shells in a hole laid side by side, and then about 100 pounds of plastique on top of that, and three five-gallon cans of gasoline on top of that.

[00:44:52.84] JACK CANARD: Right.

[00:44:53.44] JOE GALLOWAY: I don't care what hits that, it's going to die.

[00:44:56.63] JACK CANARD: Yes, absolutely.

[00:44:57.74] JOE GALLOWAY: Terrible. What do you think the Vietnam War meant to you and your generation?

[00:45:09.64] JACK CANARD: Well, there were a lot of protests about it. There was a lot of people that disagreed with it. I never considered myself a protester.

[00:45:19.97] I mean, I was a part of the military, and I enjoyed being a part of the military. And it was my mission to do what I was asked to do, and I did not resist doing that. But I was aware of so many other people's attitudes about it and why they did not agree with it.

[00:45:45.16] JOE GALLOWAY: Are there lessons you took from your service in Vietnam that you would like to pass along?

[00:45:57.47] JACK CANARD: Lessons I'd like to pass along. I can't think of anything. I mean, again, the things that I learned over there I passed on at the engineer school for the following three years. And I think I was very successful at doing that.

[00:46:15.81] As we've gotten into later times, I mean, it's been 50 years ago now since I was in Vietnam. But I am involved in civic groups, and I belong to all the organizations, the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The Disabled American Veterans, all of the various groups. And quite frequently, we have conversations about the Vietnam War and what's going on today.

[00:46:45.72] But with the knowledge that I have from what I learned when I was over there, I'm able to carry on a conversation in those discussions.

[00:46:52.71] JOE GALLOWAY: Yeah. Have you visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial?

[00:46:56.75] JACK CANARD: Yes, I have.

[00:46:57.75] JOE GALLOWAY: And what are your thoughts when you go there?

[00:47:00.18] JACK CANARD: It's a very, very solemn experience, not only the Vietnam Veterans Memorial but the World War II Memorial, and all the memorials over there.

[00:47:11.63] JOE GALLOWAY: You've obviously heard about the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War Commemoration Project. You're part of it today.

[00:47:21.05] JACK CANARD: I've heard about it. I have received the pin. I don't know too many of the specific details. I don't wear the pin because I'm not a pin person.

[00:47:36.25] I'm in the Masons. And one of the things that Masons do is wear pins, and I've never agreed with wearing pins. I do wear two pins. I wear the flag on my lapel, and I wear my highest rank in the Masons, and that's the only two pins I wear.

[00:47:55.81] JOE GALLOWAY: Colonel Canard, thank you for coming in and sharing your story with us.

[00:48:00.38] JACK CANARD: I thank you. These are my original low quarters from when I was on active duty.

[00:48:05.94] JOE GALLOWAY: They've held up well.