CD2-60
Stanley Ferguson
Invasion of Sicily

It's a journey and a half I can tell you for the simple reason it was the stormiest weather we'd ever known, even the sailors were sick. Now you can imagine three of us in the bottom of this little flat boat. And it was dark, it was tossing about. They gave us some tea but it was a waste of time because we got more over our faces when the boat was tossing up there. We were travelling along and it started to get light and I saw the top of these cliffs looming. But I couldn't see over he top of the boat. I mean there was 2000 ships there but I never saw them. Saw this range of hills so I said to the lad "Oh, we're getting near there, get ready". And all of a sudden there was a 'boof', just like that, and we stopped quick. And I said "Oh, we've landed". But when he let the front down we were still out at sea in about 30 or 40 foot of water, he'd landed on a sandbank, and on the wrong beach. "Get off", I said. "How deep is it"? "Get off". And I was the first one off. Well you can imagine what it was like how deep was the water, all that distance? Well thankfully it was in a cove and it was like a millpond, the water. So I heaved down and heaved down and it went over the mudguards and came up, up, up to the waterproofing, there was about four inches left and it stopped and I levelled off. So as I pulled along the fellah behind me he swung left as the Army practice was spread out you know – he disappears. All I could see is the tin hats sticking above the water. Thankfully they all got out. But this was the funny part. There was no tank traps, there's no barbed wire, there was no mines and nobody fired a shot at us. And I can't help but thinking that if the whole battalion had landed there that war might have finished so much quicker. Not a soul in sight.