RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CAMERON I. ANDERSON

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH
and
KRISTIE THOMAS

ALLENDALE, NEW JERSEY
FEBRUARY 27, 2009

TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Cameron I. Anderson on February 27, 2009, in Allendale, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth and …

Kristie Thomas: … Kristie Thomas.

SI: Mr. Anderson, thank you very much for having us here today. To begin, could you tell us where and when you were born?

Cameron Anderson: I was born in Lincoln, Nebraska, on January 21, 1926.

SI: Your father's name was Carl Irving Anderson.

CA: My father's name was Carl Irving Anderson and my mother's name was Helen Loretta Strom. Strom is her maiden name.

SI: What do you know about your father's background? Where was his family from?

CA: Well, my father's dad, my grandfather, was a Swedish Baptist minister. … He graduated from a seminary in Chicago in 1895, a seminary called Morgan Park [the Baptist Union Theological Seminary, now the University of Chicago Divinity School], which it was one of the original philanthropic gifts of John D. Rockefeller. He supported this seminary. … Grandpa Anderson served churches in the Midwest and that's where my parents met, in Stromsburg, Nebraska. … He's one of three children--[his] brother's a doctor and his sister lived [until] she was ninety-two years old--and both [parents] on the parental side, they were born in Sweden.

SI: Did you ever hear any stories about why they came to the United States or what that journey was like?

CA: … Well, actually, they came to the United States for, really, opportunity. Partially, it was religious freedom. The Scandinavian countries, in that time, were state-controlled churches and they moved here, mainly, because of that, and same way on my mother's side of the family. Most of my grandparents and great-grandparents are Scandinavian born. So, my ancestry is really Swedish. … Being a preacher's kid, so-to-speak, they moved around a lot. They lived in Iowa, Nebraska, Michigan and Minnesota. My parents met … in Stromsburg, Nebraska, and I think they were married about 1920 and the reason that they got together was really … World War I. My dad had a brother who served in the military, here at Camp Merritt, [Cresskill, Bergen County], New Jersey, and my dad went to Hamline University [in St. Paul, Minnesota], and was, I guess, drafted or volunteered. I don't know what they did in World War I, but he was in World War [I], didn't go overseas in World War I, but served in the war. … During that particular time, … there was no money. Preachers don't make a lot of money now and made less then, and so, he and his brother went to school in St. Paul, Minnesota. Worthington, Minnesota, … where they were kind of growing up as teenagers, was a pretty successful agricultural area; it is today. It's part of the Great Plains, black dirt. You throw seeds in, you can grow anything down there. So, St. Paul, Minnesota, [was] about ninety miles away and that was the principal city and that's where they started school. … My dad worked part-time in a shoe store, Kinney's

Shoe Store, on Robert Street in St. Paul, Minnesota, and that kind of started … his career in shoe retailing and my career in shoe retailing.

SI: That all started before he went into the service.

CA: That was concurrent with the service, after the service, yes.

SI: How did your mother's family, or just her, make her way to Stromsburg, Nebraska?

CA: Well, the family, when they came over from Sweden, settled in Chicago, … on the South Side of Chicago, and it was a rather big family. … My grandma had, I think, ten siblings and it's quite interesting, because they couldn't support the family in Chicago. … He worked for the Pullman Sleeping Car Company, Grandpa, and so, they farmed out some of the kids to an uncle in Nebraska. … So, they had to kind of split up the family, because they were so poor, and so, my mother grew up in Chicago, went to high school in Stromsburg, Nebraska, between that period. My mother was; I forget what year she was born. … She was born about 1900, and so, she basically grew up in Chicago and in Nebraska, Stromsburg, Nebraska, which is a small, little, agricultural town about forty miles west of Lincoln, and she was one of eight children. They had big families on the Strom--I call it the Strom side of the family--(Ekstrand?) and Strom side of the family. That's the Nebraska side.

SI: Did you say Ekstrom?

CA: (Ekstrand, Ekstrand?).

SI: Your father was out of the service when they got married.

CA: Yes, yes.

SI: Your parents were living in Nebraska when they had you.

CA: … He had gone kind of through the ranks and he was a store manager and, in the Kinney Shoe Company, you moved from store to store to store to store, you know. They transferred and, shortly after I was born, he was promoted to a district manager in Birmingham, Alabama, … after I was born, and there's a picture of me and my colored mammy, in Birmingham, Alabama. That [was] probably 1927 to 1928. … My father continued managing the Kinney Shoe Stores and the one that I remember, when I was growing up, was when he was managing our store in St. Paul, Minnesota. … I guess my first recollection of that was probably, maybe, nine, ten years old, going to my dad's store and seeing all the shoes around, … but he remained a store manager his whole business life. He went from St. Paul, then, we moved to Wausau, Wisconsin, in 1939, and he stayed in Wausau, Wisconsin, until 1956 or 1957. Then, he managed a store in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and he passed away under unusual circumstances, in a store, in, I guess, 1960. The store had been ransacked. He came into the store on a … Monday morning … and the safe had been broken into and ransacked and he called the cops. … By the time the police came, … they found him just laying on the [floor], dead in the store. So, he was sixty-one years old. … His brother, who was a doctor, lived out here in Hackensack. … His brother had gone

through medical school, parallel, one in the shoe business, one a doctor, and his brother, as an aside, they both died when they were about sixty-one years old, within nine months of one another, both of heart trouble. One of the reasons I retired early--I retired when I was sixty-three years old--I said, "Cameron, you're entitled to at least one day of retirement." They had none. So, that was kind of the pattern of my [early life]. I have one sister. She's two years younger than I am and both of us, our growing up years, that you're really conscious about, are the years in Wausau, Wisconsin, went through high school there and went in the service there. …

SI: Growing up in the 1930s, the Great Depression was on and it was a difficult time for even the Kinney Shoe Company, which was successful. Do you remember witnessing any of the effects of the Great Depression, for the years that you would be aware of it?

CA: Yes, but, you know, when you're a kid, twelve, thirteen years old, … you're not conscious. [If] your dad has a job, you don't even know that the unemployment's out there. … The Kinney Shoe Company, always, you didn't get rich, but you had a job. … You always had enough. So, then, you know, in 1939 and 1940, '41, when you're a little more conscious of your environmental surroundings, you know, it really doesn't mean that much to you, as a kid.

SI: Do you have any memories of growing up in Minnesota, for example, what your neighborhood was like?

CA: It was a very, very common neighborhood. My parents rented a home. I think they paid about twenty dollars a month for a little, two-bedroom home on 1998 Juliet Street [Avenue] in St. Paul, Minnesota. … A streetcar ride was, I think you could buy five tokens for, I think, about ten cents a ride. Milk was about ten cents a quart, butter about twenty-five cents a pound, and, you know, we led a very, very common life. We always had a decent car. The first car I remember was a Nash. It wasn't a new car. My dad had bought it used. That's the first car I remember. It's the last car I remember that you could crank to start, and then, my dad [was transferred]. In the Twin Cities, you know, we left there in 1939. … I was, what, thirteen years old? I remember Groveland Park … Grade School, and we still communicate with a couple of kids that I was in Sunday school with.

KT: Wow.

CA: We had a very conservative home, Swedish Baptist, very, very, conservative, no smoking, no drinking, no dancing, or anything like that, very, very conservative. I had to sit down; on a Sunday morning, I couldn't read the funnies until we came back from church. So, my parents were very, very, I guess you'd call it conservative today, in their religious beliefs, … but we had a good time. It was cold, cold in the Twin Cities. Minnesota State Fair was there, [which] was always one of the big things that we looked forward to. … Well, we'll get into it later on, when you get into our thing, but we went back there and we lived there and went to school there, both June and I.

KT: What kind of a student were you in school? Did you like school? Was it something that you enjoyed doing?

CA: I was not a great student. I was not a great student. I didn't excel and, you know, I wasn't at the top of the class. I was in just about the middle of the class of everything, everything that happened. In fact, right here, I [have] got a little note that I put in my book. It's from a teacher, "Cameron has been very indifferent in class. He should get over this. You may get in touch with me." I was a daydreamer, a daydreamer. [laughter] So, I thought that was kind of cute. This was 1939 and I had, "Poor study habits." I kind of got a kick out of that, you know. [laughter]

KT: Yes, that is funny.

CA: Now.

SI: Growing up in Minnesota, were you involved in any kind of organized activities?

CA: Just Boy Scouts, and then, church activities.

SI: A lot of activities focused on the church.

CA: [Yes].

SI: Would you go to visit your grandparents often, particularly your grandfather the reverend?

CA: Oh, yes, yes, we would. I remember two things distinctly--number one, at that time, people, I use the word, they had a very close family relationship. You didn't go out, stay in a motel or any place like that--you stayed [with family]. Like, when Grandpa Nick and Grandma Anderson came down, Cameron and my sister, Gloria, we laid on the floor. … We didn't have enough beds. [laughter] … Let's see, there was something else I was going to say there and it missed me. … Give me the question again on that one; I lost my train of thought.

SI: Did you have a lot of interaction with your grandparents?

CA: Oh, yes, yes. … My grandfather died in 1937, so, I really have a vague recollection of Grandpa Anderson, but Grandma Anderson lived until 1944. She was seven years a widow and she'd rotate. She didn't have a home, but she'd rotate between the sister, the brother and my dad. So, we always had, seemed to always have, some relative around the house. … Then, my mother's parents [were] still living down in Nebraska, around Lincoln and Stromsburg, and one thing I remember is that, once, after Christmas, we went down there, but we went down there on the train. My dad put my sister, myself on the train, and I still remember that overnight train, in a Pullman, where my sister and I slept together in the upper bunk and my mother was down below, and I bet … I couldn't have been ten years old, but that was a very [vivid memory]. I can still remember that. That's a very vivid memory. That was my first train ride that I can remember.

SI: Traveling by train was much different then than it is now.

CA: Oh, yes, yes.

SI: It was a luxury experience.

CA: Yes. Well, at that time, it was a luxury, yes.

SI: Were you involved in the church?

CA: No, just a Sunday school attendee.

SI: When you moved to Wisconsin, what was that neighborhood like?

CA: Oh, … Wausau was a very unusual--not an unusual town--but it was a very interesting town, a smaller town than the Twin Cities. When we moved, there was only a population of twenty-five thousand, less than twenty-five thousand, a very, very stable community, heavily Polish, heavily German, an agricultural town, to a great degree. In fact, at that particular juncture in time, … talking back in history, Marathon County, Wisconsin, home of Wausau, had more dairy cows than any other county in the country. … I was back there for the sixtieth reunion of my high school class and, in the desk, in the motel, some dope from the chamber of commerce, they're still making that claim. In addition, it had an insurance company, which people [knew]. See, … a lot of people, when I'd say, "I grew up in a sawmill town in Wisconsin," would say, "Oh, I know Wausau." I said, "I know why--the insurance company." Then, I'd ask them the question, the sixty-four-thousand-dollar question, or, sometimes, I get a little bit more [creative], a free trip around the world on the *QE2* [RMS *Queen Elizabeth II*], if you can name me the original name of that company. There you go, there's your chance, free trip around the world, *QE2*. It was Employers Mutual, [now Employers Insurance of Wausau].

SI: Okay.

CA: What happened is, one of the most dangerous jobs in the world--may be, today, a coalminer in China--but, in those days, was working in a slaughterhouse or working in the woods, and Wausau was in the woods, and so, consequently, they had a lot of injuries. … I remember, going to 1939, … you saw it was a principal medical center for Northern Wisconsin, a lot of guys with arms and legs in casts and things like that. So, the consortium of these lumber companies got together and formed Employers Mutual, which later became the Wausau Insurance Company. … If you look right down there, there's a brick from the railroad station in Wausau that you've seen depicted in the magazines. I went back to our reunion. The station was kind of unkempt now, so, I just picked up a brick and took it home as a memento. [laughter] … My father was very active in the church. They always had a very active church life. We had a lot of friends that were farmers, farmers that would come into town, and the stores were open on Friday night. That was a busy night in the store, and it was kind of a nice place to grow up, you know.

SI: At that point, your father was a district manager.

CA: No, no. He was a district manager down here in …

SI: Alabama?

CA: In Alabama, but my mother got sick down there. She always had thyroid trouble. So, to make it easy, … he asked to come back up north, so as to be close to her parents, where they could take care of me and take care of her. She was kind of a sickly person in her early married life.

SI: When he was working in Wausau, he was …

CA: Store manager.

SI: Directly involved with the store.

CA: Yes.

SI: What kind of stores did they have then? I know Kinney went through several different types or models of stores.

CA: Just Kinney Shoe Stores.

SI: Freestanding stores?

CA: No, no, they were all downtown stores at that particular juncture. The shopping center stores didn't come in until, you know, 1950s, and '53, '54, in that time.

SI: The postwar period.

CA: Otherwise, it was just family shoe stores.

SI: Again, going back to the Depression and the economic pressures, was your father ever cut back in his hours?

CA: Well, no. … As I mentioned before, it was always steady work. You know, you had to have a store, you had to have an assistant manager, you had to have a staff--you know, you couldn't do it all yourself. … What had happened is, when he came up to St. Paul, Minnesota, from Alabama, the company had just opened a new store in St. Paul, Minnesota. My dad opened up that store, but what happens, sometimes, it doesn't live up to the expectations of management. So, … actually, he was demoted. In 1939, he was demoted and went to a smaller store in Wausau, Wisconsin. … I do remember, that was a very, very emotional time for our family, because we lived in St. Paul, we liked St. Paul very much. … When your dad is demoted, that is an upsetting thing, but I was only thirteen years old and you don't quite realize the impact. I realize it today--and I'll get into it later on--but that was the first time I saw my dad cry. … He was going to have to go to Wausau. We stayed in the Twin Cities; demoted in February or March, something like that, and we are going to stay and finish up the school year, and so, … instead of driving a car, he left the car with us. He went to the bus station and he broke down and cried, and that affected my whole career, because, we'll get into it, I had a reasonably responsible job in my career. … I've had to ask men to step down, the way my dad was asked to step down, and I believe that incident in my life, with my dad crying for the first time, made my

job harder, but, yet, more compassionate in the role that I had to play later on in life. I think it was a very important little segment in my life that I remembered that helped me, and maybe helped some people along the line as I progressed in my career.

SI: In high school, did you have any jobs? Did you work part-time after school?

CA: Oh, gracious sakes, here, … the answer to that is yes, yes, yes.

SI: Okay.

CA: Here, this is the opening statement in my memoirs and I start it off by saying the way I got started, and this is really true, "I was a fourteen-year-old high school student who was making a few bucks … bailing shoe boxes and shipping cartons in the basement of Store #114, Wausau, Wisconsin." … I was always a big kid. "On a Friday afternoon, my father would call me from the basement. The store was busy. He thought I could help ease the rush by lacing up a pair of fifteen-inch hiking boots on a customer. My career started when the customer said, 'Okay, I'll buy that boot.' I made out the sales slip. I was a shoe salesman on the way." That's the exact way I got started, and so, what happened is that this was the war years, hard to get help, and I was never an athlete. I never participated in any athletic event, because, every Friday night, when the football team was playing, what was Cameron doing? selling shoes, part-time. So, I can safely say that I've been financially independent since I was fourteen years old. [laughter] … One of my classmates, two years removed, was a very famous football star by the name of Elroy Hirsch. You probably don't remember Elroy Hirsch. They called him "Crazylegs" Hirsch, played for the Rams, died just recently [in 2004]. He … ended up as the athletic director of the University of Minnesota [University of Wisconsin-Madison]. So, I sold shoes, every Friday night and Saturday, and my dad would pay me four percent. Like, if I sold two hundred dollars' worth of shoes on a Saturday and a hundred dollars--my goal was to sell a hundred dollars' worth of shoes on a Friday night, after school, and, also, on Saturday--I'd make twelve, fourteen bucks a week. That was a lot of money for a kid. Man, that kept me in malted milks at the drugstore and kept me in Lemke's brick cheese and, man, I was rolling in the money. [laughter] … I did that right up to almost the hour that I went in the service in 1944. My dad couldn't get help. I was a pretty good salesman. Here's a report. They had a report from the district manager that they sent out every week. This is the bulletin, a kind of a promotional little thing about what stores sold and what they didn't sell, and look there, "Cameron Anderson was a star salesman for Christmas Week 1943."

SI: Wow.

CA: Made twenty bucks that week. [laughter]

KT: That is not bad.

CA: Oh, that was a lot of money. … Twenty bucks, that'd be probably ten thousand dollars now. [laughter]

SI: How large was the store? How many people worked there?

CA: Well, … it wasn't a big volume store. At that time, shoes were very cheap. We had children's shoes, you know, a dollar-seventy-nine, a dollar-forty-nine. Kinney was a popular-priced shoe store, comparable to what Payless ShoeSource would be today. The highest priced women's shoe was three-ninety-nine, highest priced men's shoe, four-ninety-nine. So, it was low-priced shoes. You had to hustle, but that's what it was back then. The company was pretty small, at that time, doing less than ten million dollars in volume, ten, twelve million dollars in volume, … but the store did about 125,000 dollars a year and made money. That's what they had. We had stores in Ashland, Wisconsin, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, La Crosse, all over. The Kinney Company was … really the first nationwide, family, popular-priced shoe store, started in 1894. [Editor's Note: George R. Kinney founded what became the G. R. Kinney Company, Inc., in 1894 in Waverly, New York. Kinney was purchased by the Brown Shoe Company in 1956, a merger that led to a federal antitrust case. In 1963, the F. W. Woolworth Company acquired the G. R. Kinney Company, Inc., renamed it the Kinney Shoe Corporation and operated the company as a wholly owned subsidiary. In 1998, the F. W. Woolworth Company became the Venator Group and announced it would close its Kinney Shoe Stores. In 2001, Venator Group changed its name to Foot Locker, Inc.]

SI: I was reading a little bit about the history of the Kinney's Shoe Stores. One of the things that jumped out at me was that, at the beginning, George Kinney never accepted credit, he only accepted cash. I was wondering if that had changed by the time you first started as a salesman. Did they accept credit? From what I understand, a lot of businesses had to run on credit during the Depression because nobody had cash.

CA: Well, no, I don't quite agree with that. It was strictly a cash-and-check business, cash-and-check, that I remember, and the reason I can remember that [is] because I was Kinney sales manager in 1957 or '58, in that era, when we started getting the first credit cards. … At that time, everybody was somewhat skeptical of credit cards and the first experiment we tried was in Buffalo, New York, and I had kind of engineered the start of that. So, we didn't go on credit cards until the mid-'50s. Otherwise, it was all cash. The manager was responsible for the approval of the cards. One of the big problems, bank checks--well, you know, then, you got bad checks back. There were deadbeats in those days, just like you've got deadbeats today. So, the manager was responsible and, if they took a check for fifty dollars and the shoes were two-ninety-nine and that check bounced, that manager is [out] fifty dollars out of his pocket, but it was mainly a cash business. … I remember, in Wausau, the farmers really did pretty well, all dairy, and my dad had to keep--they didn't have a checkbook at home--but, [for] a lot of the farmers, we had to keep checks from the two banks in town, so [that] the farmers, "You got a check, to make out a check?" "What bank you want?" I don't think you can do that today. I don't think a merchant would have [checks], but I do remember that in Wausau. … Also, in Wausau, I was, I guess, in about my senior year, maybe before that, Friday afternoon was busy. I had a light schedule on Friday afternoon, I think one class. … I'd skip it every now and then and, you know, you don't know how they're keeping track of that with the teachers and, one afternoon, about four o'clock, three o'clock, who should come in the store? truant officer, because he wanted to see my father. He said, "I've got some dates here Cameron hasn't been in school. We want you to know where he's at." My dad said, "He was right here, selling shoes," and, there, I'm selling shoes [as] he's talking to the truant officer. So, I went out of my way--I

tried to help my dad out. I wanted the money [and to] help my dad out. Help was very, very tight during the war in Wisconsin. Wausau had a big dairy presence, but it also had a lot of paper mills and it had a big ironworks there that did a lot of defense work. So, there were a lot of jobs there and it was hard for my dad to get help and, you see, I was pretty good at it. I stayed pretty good at it until I retired, too. [laughter]

SI: You arrived in Wisconsin in 1939.

CA: Yes.

SI: Which was when the war in Europe broke out.

CA: Yes.

SI: Do you remember that being discussed a lot, among your peers or among your family?

CA: Oh, yes, yes, but the most pivotal point there was December 7, 1941. We always went to church and we got home [from] church and Sunday dinner, at that time, was always roast beef, mashed potatoes and gravy. My mother had a pot roast on. See, the pot roast'd be on while we're in church and all she had to do [when we got home] is get the green beans cooked and the salad made and the potatoes mashed, and so, we'd, you know, eat about one o'clock. … Then, my dad would take an afternoon nap and I had a bicycle, [would] ride around a little bit. I was on my own, didn't take an afternoon nap, but I always went down and had an extra dessert at a place called the Sugar Bowl. The Sugar Bowl was a combination soda fountain, malted milks and a candy bar, with a bar in the back and with a slot machine. At that time, you could have slot machines. There was a nickel slot machine in that thing. The boss of the place wouldn't let me play it and he always had the radio on and I'm sitting there, having a double scoop of chocolate ice cream with marshmallow sauce, [when] it come on the radio that Pearl Harbor had been attacked. I put down the fifteen cents, rode my bike home and said, "Hey, Dad, we're at war." … Little did you know--fifteen years old, right?--how that would affect your life. Even to today, that moment, you know, affected everybody, not just me, but that was a very, very distinct memory to me of Wausau. [Editor's Note: Japanese forces attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7, 1941, thrusting the United States into the Second World War.]

SI: Was that news a shock to you? Had you been expecting America to get in the war?

CA: When you're thirteen years old, no, fifteen, … you're not up to it, you don't have the [facts]. All you had is the record. News was sparse at that time. We used to get the radio from--Wausau had a radio station, but, if we wanted a lot of good radio, we'd have to listen to Milwaukee or Chicago. We had an antenna on the roof of the house, … but, when I look back, [it] didn't make any difference to me.

KT: How about your parents? Did they expect America to get into the war?

CA: Well, the war kind of came home. Well, first of all, the war came home, yes. Well, they talked about the war, because, you know, my mother … had a couple brothers that went in the service at that time. … My mother's sister was married to a preacher and he was a chaplain. He went in the service. My dad's sister was married to a Baptist minister--we had a lot of ministers in our family--and he went in the service. So, our family was touched by the war, but, yes, we used to read the reports of the war and things like that and discuss it in school and things like that. I remember, very distinctly, on the Monday after the affair with the ice cream, Pearl Harbor, telling my dad, is that we all sat in the classroom in Wausau, Room Number 159, and listened to Franklin D. Roosevelt. … You know, it's pretty hard to say how that's going to affect you when you're that [young]. It just didn't affect me.

SI: Do you remember any initial fear or panic in the area?

CA: No, no, the only thing that I kind of remember, yes, there were a lot of jobs. No fear, no panic, but you know what they did during the war? they had blackouts. They practiced blackouts. Along the East Coast, you know, they made them turn off all the lights, so that the silhouettes of the ships would not be reflected against the skyline. Well, we had, I think on at least I remember two occasions, in Wausau, where we had the fire drills. I mean, everybody turned out all the lights. I said, "Well, we're doing it," but, when I was back in Wausau and made the talk to our class … for the sixtieth reunion, I had them laughing. I told them what I've just told you. I said, "You know, I remember that a Mr. (Megan?)," who was an attorney, "lived on our block and he was the block warden," and a great, big, heavy-set fellow. … "I remember him walking up. I sat on the front porch. I thought it was kind of fun." [laughter] Anyhow, I told the class, I said, "You know, I remember Mr. (Megan?) patrolling our block," and I said, "I didn't quite realize it then, but I realize it today, that I didn't realize that Wausau was such an important target for the *Luftwaffe*. Why didn't they pick on Chicago? Why didn't they pick on Milwaukee? Why Wausau?" [laughter] I said, "Maybe they were making something at Marathon Foundry that we didn't know about." … That's a recollection of the war--and, obviously, rationing.

SI: Shoes were one of the major things affected by rationing.

CA: Yes, Coupon Number 13 was the first shoe coupon that was rationed. Then, you know, they rationed butter and all that sort of stuff, but it didn't seem to affect our life. What my dad used to do, we had some very dear friends that were farmers and my dad would rent some space from them. … In the spring, he'd buy a hundred chickens, put a hundred chickens out there and he'd go out and feed them, and then, he'd butcher them and we'd have chicken.

SI: Live chickens were not regulated, only processed chicken?

CA: No, no. Well, you could buy them, but it's cheaper to grow them out there on the farm in Wausau.

SI: Did you have a Victory garden?

CA: No, we had the farmers there, Dutch farmers. A lot of the farmers were Dutch farmers, people from Holland. In fact, I'm still close to one of the kids, a fellow [by the] name of Eddie Kruit, was my age--twins, they were our age. So, sometimes, I'd go out and spend a weekend on the farm, you know, just being out there, and, in the summertime, I got paid a few bucks. What they grew in Wisconsin are small peas. You seen these little cans of peas from Le Sueur, Minnesota? You know the Jolly Green Giant, remember that?

SI: Yes.

CA: One of the cash crops for farmers were these peas and they would put two, three acres of these peas in. The Jolly Green Giant would give them the seed, the fertilizer and everything and all they had to do was till the land and keep the weeds away, but the one thing they had to do--the quality of the pea is directly related to when it could be picked. … When Jolly Green come out there with their testing machines, those small, little, early June peas had to be picked, like, yesterday. So, I was out there pitching--they cut them with a mower--pitch them on a horse-drawn wagon and the Jolly Green Giant, at areas there, had a thrashing machine. So, I think they paid me fifty cents an hour, so, … I was a farm worker at one time, but I didn't like milking cows. That was not my bag.

SI: When the war, and the labor shortages, started, do you remember many people coming into town from other areas to work in the factories?

CA: Yes, oh, yes. We developed some dear friends from Ashland, Wisconsin. … They had moved over from Sweden and settled in Ashland, which is a northern thing [town]. They had about a forty-acre dairy farm in Ashland and the father had been an engineer and he … left the farm and came down to Wausau and worked in the Marathon Foundry, which was a hard goods manufacturing plant. … That's the only ones that we knew personally, but I know there were an influx of people for the manufacturing facilities. … We had no shortage of food in Wausau. We had no shortage of [gas]; we had gasoline, but you didn't drive that much. … Wausau was a small town. You could walk to work in the morning, you know. I was a mile from high school, so, you didn't [need to take a bus or drive]. You know, you can't even go down [to] the A&P [supermarket] now without going in your car. It wasn't like that then. My mother would shop once a week at the A&P store and that was about it. So, it was a different life, but you could go out and get your milk in the countryside. I remember, there was a farm near Rib Mountain. Rib Mountain was the highest point in Wisconsin. A family in church had a dairy farm--a lot of dairy [farms]. It was all dairy farms, whipped cream, heavy, that heavy cream, full of cholesterol, twenty-five cents a quart. [laughter] That's why I look like this today. You're doing a good job of getting me started here.

SI: You are doing a good job of talking.

CA: I hope it's going okay with you.

SI: It is, yes.

KT: I was going to ask if you remembered, in school, the bomb drills and how you perceived that as a student. Do you remember that at all?

CA: Jeez, I don't remember that.

KT: You do not remember doing that.

CA: What we used to have in school, both in [St. Paul and Wausau]; when we moved to Wausau, we had a junior high school, which was grade nine. Ten, eleven and twelve were high school. So, I was in the junior high school for one year when we moved to Wausau, then, three years in high school. That's the way it broke down, one year junior high, three in [high school], and the only thing I can remember is fire drills, used to have fire drills. … The alarm would go off and everybody had to go out. … That's the only thing I can remember in that vein, but I don't remember ducking under any chairs or anything like that.

SI: Was the school involved in any war related activity, like organizing scrap drives or paper drives?

CA: Oh, yes, oh, yes, scrap drives, saving your toothpaste tubes, because they were lead, and things like that, tire drives and iron and things like that. Oh, yes, I remember those, yes.

SI: Were you still involved in the Boy Scouts?

CA: No, I'd left the Boy [Scouts]. I was a Boy Scout in the Twin Cities, but I never joined the Boy Scouts in Wausau. I was too busy selling shoes.

SI: Rationing, as far as you were concerned, did not really affect the shoe business too much.

CA: No. Well, everything, in the shoe business, there was always enough coupons to go around. … The quality of the shoes went down. You had a lot of different types of soled shoes, plastic shoes and things like that. … I don't remember an escalation in price, because prices were pretty much controlled. … You know, when you come down to it, the war, really, was not any life-changing incidents, … for me as a teenager, no way, no way, except under one instance. The first kid that was killed, he was about four years older than I, in our church, was a young lad who had gone in the service, I think, in '40, '41, volunteered before the draft, by the name of Walter Ronnbeck. His parents were farmers. … He was killed in Attu, the original invasion in Alaska, and, when I was growing up, I think that's the only kid in our church that really died as a result of the war. [Editor's Note: In June 1942, the Japanese captured Kiska and Attu in the Aleutian chain. The US Army's Seventh Division led an invasion and campaign between May 11th and May 28, 1943, that liberated Attu.] … My parents were, as I mentioned, … very devout Christians and very compassionate, and I remember, when they got the news, my dad dropped everything in his store, went home, picked up Mother and went out to the farm and spent time with that family. My parents were very, very compassionate people, and then, we had a memorial service in the church and I remember that. … I was getting a little bit older then. I was about sixteen years old then, I guess, and you didn't say, "How's it going to affect me?" but, you know, "Hey, when is it going to get over?" but you never had that fear, "Am I going to go in

the Army tomorrow?" [I] didn't have that fear, but that was an impact on my life, going to a [memorial service]. You don't go to too many funerals when you're twelve, fourteen years old, do you?

SI: No, especially funerals for young people.

CA: Yes, yes.

KT: Did you ever consider enlisting in the war once you got to be old enough?

CA: Oh, no, oh, no. What happened during the war, we had to enlist in the [Selective Service]. … When you're eighteen years old, you had to sign up, and so, I signed up on January 21, 1944. [Editor's Note: The Selective Service Act of 1940 required all twenty-one to thirty-five-year-old males to register for the draft. These age parameters were expanded to eighteen to forty-five years of age after the United States entered the war.] Now, what happened at that particular time, six weeks later, I was called for an interview--not an interview, but a physical. It's kind of a two-stage thing. They take you, you go to Milwaukee for a physical. "Are you equipped to go in the Army?" and so, I was plain drafted. … Eighteen was the cutoff point. I don't know if you could enlist when you're seventeen or not. I don't remember that, but eighteen, you were drafted and we had, probably, about, maybe, twenty-five or thirty kids in our high school class that didn't get a chance to finish high school. They're drafted right out of the thing. … Then, a funny thing happened to me; not a funny thing happened to me. The day that I was supposed to get that physical, … I don't know if I've still got the notice for it, maybe in someplace here, I come down with scarlet fever. This would probably be in towards the end of February or March and I was laid up for [a while], couldn't go out of the house for four weeks. So, that postponed the physical. … Then, I went back to school, six weeks later. Then, in May, they sent me down to Milwaukee. I passed and I was inducted in the service in June of that year. … A little aside to that, just last Memorial Day in church, the pastor of our church--I go to the Free Church in Montvale here [Montvale Evangelical Free Church]--and the pastor said, "Will all the veterans please stand up?" … He said that, "We, as a congregation, want to thank you for volunteering to serve your country." I poked June, I said, "Man, I didn't volunteer. That draft board came and dragged me and threw me on that train." [laughter] So, I think that's the way that you kind of look at it, from a little comical standpoint, is that you just did it.

SI: What was it like when you actually had to go down to the train or bus to leave? Did your parents go with you?

CA: Oh, that's the second time I saw my dad cry. My mother was crying for a week before I left and, yes, it's an emotional experience, really is. … Wausau had two trains. It was on the Milwaukee Road, … a train called the *Hiawatha*. Milwaukee Road ran between Chicago and Minnesota, St. Paul, and all the way to Spokane and Seattle. … Hiawatha, as you know, is this mystical Indian chief who had a pair of magic moccasins that every step was a mile. You knew that, right?

SI: Yes. [Editor's Note: The Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, known as the Milwaukee Road, featured several *Hiawatha* train lines, including the *North Woods Hiawatha*,

started in 1936, which branched off from the main *Twin Cities Hiawatha* route at New Lisbon, Wisconsin, and reached up to Minocqua, Wisconsin.]

CA: And the *North Woods Hiawatha* left at one o'clock for Chicago. So, that's when we went down. We had to report to the draft board. Noon, they walked us down, about fifteen, twenty of us kids, put us on the *Hiawatha*. We had an early lunch at home. My father prayed fervently on my safety. My mother was crying, my dad was crying. We went down to the store and I left from the store, because of the draft board. They didn't go to the train and I said, "Don't go to the train. It's going to be too much, too much." So, I got on the train all by myself, with these other twenty guys. It was really quite interesting, because there's a little security and camaraderie [that I felt with the members of my] high school class. You'd been through things with them. … We got to Milwaukee. They gave us supper in Milwaukee. Then, we went down to Fort Sheridan, Illinois. They put us in barracks, got there at about ten o'clock at night, must have looked kind of bedraggled [bunch]. You know, kids, at that time, didn't have Louis Vuitton suitcases. I forget what I had. I think some kids carried their personal belongings in shopping bags, you know, and woke us up the next morning, fed us, put us in a field. "There's some sergeants over there. They're going to fill up their barracks as we start the recruiting process," and there is an element in my life that affected my whole life. One sergeant needed one person, "Cameron Anderson, go with that guy there." I wasn't [even yet] inducted in the Army and I was separated from my buddies. You talk about a life-changing experience, try that on for size. When you're eighteen years old, you don't know what holds for you, you have the camaraderie--all of a sudden, it's shattered and that changed my life. … I'll tell you about it more as we get later on into the thing.

SI: Were you separated from your group because your last name started with an "A?"

CA: "A."

SI: Yes, okay.

CA: Oh, that went all the way through the service. … One thing that you learned in the Army, … you're going to remember your service--your serial number, rather--as long as you live, and that's really true. Mine was 36992001 and that done a lot of things. After the war, … we made fifty dollars a month. You paid six dollars for insurance. So, if you get knocked off, your parents'd get ten thousand bucks. After the war, they added up all the premiums paid by GIs, all the benefits, and you got a refund. Guess who got the refund on the first day they sent out these checks?

SI: "A."

KT: "A," yes.

CA: "A," "001," I had my check on the first day. [laughter] Okay, I like the way this is going. … I don't want to talk too long on the thing, but is it going okay?

SI: Yes. You were separated from the group and you had not been sworn in yet.

CA: No, no.

SI: What happened once the sergeant took you away?

CA: Well, they take you to the barracks. They start running tests on you, give you a physical and start fitting you up with uniforms. … I think the process there took about seven to ten days and, you know, you get your shoes and you take a bunch of tests. … Let's see, I was inducted on, I think, the 26th, because, I remember, we were on a troop train about July the 4th. On July the 4th, we were on a troop train headed for Georgia. So, the process in Fort Sheridan, Illinois, was probably seven to eight days, ten days, something like that. … They put us on a troop train, didn't tell you where they're going, you know. They had security at that time, what they called security. The Germans wouldn't want to know that Cameron Anderson, you know, a warrior down the line, is on a troop train. "We're going to knock him off," you know. … One thing I do remember--in fact, I was thinking about doing this at Christmastime last year. There was an article on television that brought back some memories. … I remember, on that troop train, we boarded the troop train, we had Pullmans. It's July, hot, air-conditioning didn't work that good, … steam engine, you know, coal dust. … When we got to Georgia, we looked dirty, but, one night out, the next morning, we were in Evansville, Indiana, and I remember, very distinctly, the women of Evansville, Indiana, were there, serving us coffee and doughnuts. I thought, … when I look back, that is something, you know. We kind of took it for granted, "Oh, yes, nice you're here," but they had to get up in the morning, they had to make the coffee, they had to be down there and that, when I look back now, in what I haven't done in civic duty, that was really civic duty for people to do that, when you stop to think about it.

SI: How much of a shock was it to go from civilian life to military life, where, all of a sudden, you are under orders, you have sergeants yelling at you, the food is not so great?

CA: You know, I think it was easy for me, because we lived in a disciplined family, very disciplined, told you about my experiences, you know. I went to Sunday school all the time and we had prayer every day in our homes and we led a sheltered life. … We couldn't go to very many movies. We were isolated; not isolated. I don't … mean it in that sense, but we were a very, very devout family and, in the Army, I felt that the first thing that they tried to instill in us was discipline. … I can see it clear now, that we had some guys that were really bums. … When you're thrown in with the Army, … it's unbelievable how other people live, how other people talk, how other people act and things like that, because it's a homogenous thing and it's not the most [civil atmosphere]. Every other word is a cuss word and things like that, but the big thing was discipline and I never had any trouble with discipline. I felt that, "I'm going to do my best to do what they want me to do, because I want to stay out of trouble. … I want my bed [to] be perfect, I want the socks rolled up in a perfect way," … for one reason--I didn't want to have KP [kitchen patrol] over the weekend. I wanted to go to Savannah, Georgia, or have the weekend off. We'd usually get Saturday afternoon off and Sunday. So, discipline was one of the big things and I think that's what's wrong today in America. I wish we had a draft in America today. If some of these kids … that you see running around had the discipline of an army, just a year or six months, seventeen weeks [of training] is all I had, it would change America. So, discipline was a big thing.

SI: You were at Fort Sheridan for seven, eight days. Then, you took the train down to Georgia.

CA: Yes. Then, I went down to Camp Stewart, Georgia. … At that particular time of the war, you know, they had trained--this is 1944. The invasion, it had happened on the 6th of June, right? … I'm in the war late in the game, thank goodness. Maybe I wouldn't be here if I had got in the war earlier in the game. … So, I was assigned to a [unit]. Camp Stewart was a training ground for antiaircraft. They had ninety-millimeter guns. So, we were trained under ninety-millimeter aircraft guns and we'd shoot at targets up there. … For whatever reason, my aptitude test showed me I had certain characteristics, so, I was put in radar. I was a radar operator. We had a forty-foot trailer and we had all these radar dials and a big antenna going up, and so, I was a radar operator. Other guys worked on the gun crew and things like that and we spent seventeen weeks in Camp Stewart, Georgia. Now, in addition to that, you learned how to shoot a rifle and, you know, you have your kind of basic military training. You'd take long walks and things like that, but the basic training, … when I come out of there, my MOS [military occupation specialty] was a radar operator. … After [being] there seventeen weeks, this was about in November of '44, I got my first furlough, only had one furlough, 1944, first two weeks of November. … I came home to Wausau, took the train from Waycross, Georgia, up to Chicago, the train they called the *Dixie Flyer*. … That was the crack train between Jacksonville, Florida, and Chicago. The *Dixie Flyer*, that's kind of a nifty name and you had two nights sitting up and you didn't mind at that time, you know, and I got home … on furlough in Wausau and I had to go back to Georgia on Thanksgiving Day 1944, had to go back to Camp Stewart. … In the process of assignment, you had this whole battalion of guys, maybe a thousand guys, that were being trained in antiaircraft. They had four batteries, you know. They were all going on different assignments. Well, my assignment was, I was supposed to go to Fort Bliss, Texas, for advanced radar training. Now, separating radar training with the technical aspects of what the repairs are, "How you going to fix this thing if something goes haywire?" all I did was operate the dials, turn on the switch, operate the dials, but … they were going to train me on, "Hey, if something happened to the inside of that, how you going to fix it up?" … So, I went back to Camp Stewart, Georgia, for whatever reason, I don't know, and, at that time, it was about mid-December. I don't know when they were going to send me … to Texas, don't know that. You don't know anything in the service. You really don't care, you really don't care. The Battle of the Bulge started and they looked ahead and said, "Hey, man, what we need is infantry." [Editor's Note: The Germans launched the Ardennes Offensive, later known as the Battle of the Bulge, on December 16, 1944.] So, this whole group of guys that I was with were all transferred into the infantry. We got on trucks one day, mid-December, trucked us up to Camp Gordon, Georgia, and we were in the infantry. They gave us seven weeks of advanced infantry training. All that did is you mean you walked farther. [laughter] You had the same gun, the same pack and you had infantry training, and don't think--you know, they talk about superb training. It's a bunch of baloney. I have only thrown one live hand-grenade--that was my training on hand-grenades. [laughter] You talk to guys, I'm certain, during your things, that threw hand-grenades all the time, right, infantry guys? My training was one hand-grenade. … Then, when we finished that, we sat around a little bit, and then, we started getting ready for overseas. … You have any questions on the training aspect, before we get overseas?

SI: Yes. You were at Camp Stewart for quite a while.

CA: Seventeen weeks, … and then, [in] that interim between going to Georgia there, I was just lying around. We did nothing, tried to stay warm. Boy, that's cold country in the wintertime down there. You had these barracks, you know, no windows--I mean, just had windows and boards--and you had a little pot-bellied stove that you put coal in. If you didn't put some in--you've got to put coal in at night--[if] it was out, you're going to freeze your rear-end off in the morning. You wouldn't want to do that.

KT: I was going to ask about what you did in terms of keeping yourself occupied while you were just sitting around. Did you play games? Did you talk to each other?

CA: Well, we'd go into [town], weekends. We were on the post all the time. Well, we did some guard work, we did some light training, things like that, but, really, … when I look back, not much of anything. We'd go down and go to the PX and drink a little five-cent Coca-Cola in the evening, but we didn't do too much in that interim period. You're very busy from seven o'clock in the morning until [bedtime] in the training aspects, the seventeen weeks, but, while we're waiting, everybody's waiting, "What's going to happen?" That's what you do in the Army, you wait a lot, and we pulled guard duty and KP and stuff like that, but no major training, but that was only about three weeks, I think.

SI: When you were assigned to the antiaircraft unit and you were working with the radar, do you know if they had to investigate you at all before they let you work on radar?

CA: I don't have the slightest idea.

SI: Okay.

CA: I think it was all on the score. … They did a lot of aptitude tests and, even though I might have been a daydreamer when I was seven years old, or eight years old, whenever it was, I scored pretty good on those tests. … It's just the "luck of the Irish," I guess.

SI: Would you do many field exercises at Camp Stewart? Would you simulate shooting down aircraft?

CA: Oh, sure, sure, yes, we had fire missions. … They did about everything. … One time, we had a gas attack. You had to carry your gas mask with you. One time, over the area--they had it all lined up--all of a sudden, a plane comes across and drops tear gas. … They tried to simulate most of that, but, as I get back, a lot of it was discipline and, also, … just the physical nature of your body, you know. They tried to make men out of you and put you in good shape, gave you some stamina.

SI: Do your drill instructors stand out in your memory as being particularly tough?

CA: I think, … in retrospect, I think that the movies have made the drill things much stronger than they actually were. … Maybe you see [General George S.] Patton … jumping up and down on drills and things like that. I don't remember … any of my training guys. One or two might have been just a little unfair, but it never bothered me. I was able to roll with the punches. Some

guys couldn't roll with the punches. I mean, we had a couple guys from Kentucky--those guys were always in some sort of trouble. Thank goodness, they were always doing dishes and, Saturday night, in the mess hall, I wasn't. … As I get back to it, being in the Army is really a homogenous thing. … You know how a kiln works, you know, you're smoothing out stones and things like that? That's what the Army is. Boy, they put twenty guys in a barracks and you share your life together and you're going to come out different than you went in. Some guys couldn't take it. Well, there's still today, you know, the suicide rate is up in the service, … but a big difference in people, a big difference in people, and almost all of us had the same education. We're just out of high school.

SI: It must have been a real shock to you, coming from this strict religious background, to be in a barracks with people cursing and drinking.

CA: Oh, yes, yes. You get in the baser phase of life, but you have to be strong enough to avoid it. Sometimes, you can join it. You can sit down and drink six beers at the PX for ten cents a bottle. I never did that. Guys that did it might have suffered the next day.

SI: Do you remember any African-Americans also training at that base?

CA: Oh, yes, yes. They're completely segregated, complete segregation. … I can make an interesting comment on that question. Wausau had no blacks, none, zero, and Chicago had them and things like that. You could see them [if] you go there, but my first association or touch with segregation [was] when I got off that troop train down in Georgia, Waycross, Georgia, and saw the colored and white bathrooms. So, I was eighteen years old before you knew that there was a problem in America, but, you know, during the war, the blacks, you hear about the Tuskegee Airmen and the blacks played an important part, but, down in Georgia, … they trained in a separate area and things like that and we had nothing to do with them. [Editor's Note: From 1942 to 1946, Tuskegee Army Air Field produced single and multi-engine pilots who later served overseas in the 99th and the 332nd Fighter Groups in North Africa and Italy.]

SI: What about men in your own training unit from different parts of the country? Did you meet people from the East and the West Coast?

CA: Oh, sure, yes. We had, yes, down in Georgia, there, … it was kind of a combination of [men], because I'd been separated right away, separated on the parade field there in Fort Sheridan, and then, when I went down to Georgia, it was another separation. So, we had, in our training, … our barracks had about twelve. I think there was about forty-eight guys in a platoon, something like that, and we had them from all over the country. We had some hillbillies, I talked about. … It was pretty much a cross-section, I would say, except I buddied up with a fellow by the name of Robert Ables, A-B-L-E-S. He was a New Yorker, at that time, and he was a Jewish boy and he was very smart. … When we were finally [assigned], I was assigned to radar, remember. … Because he could speak German, he was assigned to Fort Meade, Maryland, and went into the intelligence part of the war and ended up … interrogating the Germans, because he had a language thing.

SI: Was the infantry training tougher, in terms of the drill instructors? Did you have bivouacs in the field?

CA: Oh, yes, we lived in the field. I was always in reasonably good physical shape. I'd never had any problem with that. As I mentioned before, I was pretty well-disciplined and I figured, "If the Sergeant could take it, I could take it," and so, I never revolted, tried to do everything that they wanted me to do and do it in a [satisfactory] way. I didn't want to [do poorly]. You know, they instill a little fear in you, too, you know. … I don't remember. In the Camp Stewart area, where I had a sergeant, that we had two or three of them that went through, because they were in training, too, so-to-speak, the platoon sergeant that was unfair to me, didn't get mad at him, didn't get mad at me. The physical challenges, I met. I never fell behind when I was holding a pack, walking [with] a pack, was able to do most things. So, I was a good, average soldier, I think. [What] I found out in the Army, early, is that you don't want to be too much of a show-off. I don't think guys generally like--we call them "brownnosers," you know--and try to impress someone by extraordinary deeds. I did what I was supposed to do, that was it. "Don't volunteer for nothing. Just do your job," and I didn't go very far in the Army. All I was was a corporal, but I went in late in the game. … I mean, they're not going to make officers out of eighteen-year-olds, you know, because they were past that. … I wasn't going to fly a B-17 bomber. I was too young for that. So, I was just plain, old infantry fodder. …

SI: When you were at Camp Gordon, you mentioned before that people would not do their best or they would try to fight the system. Did you see more of that once people knew they were going into the infantry?

CA: No, no, not really, because that was an unusual experience, because we had Air Force guys with us in that infantry training. I'm a buck private. You don't get any lower than that, and we had sergeants from the Air [Force]. They had taken men out of the Air Force and threw them into the Army now, as infantry training. So, you had a combination of rank, you had a combination of services, and, you know, anybody that was breathing, they put him in the infantry at that time, because that's when they really knew that the end of the war was [coming]. You could see the war's not going to last forever in Europe, been over there, but, Battle of the Bulge, they needed infantry, almost like we need today in Iraq. [Editor's Note: Mr. Anderson is referring to the 2003 War in Iraq.] You need soldiers on the ground. So, early in the war, they trained all the pilots and all those glamour guys, … but, in the end of the war, they needed infantry guys, but my training in antiaircraft helped me out. We're going to get into that later on.

SI: Do you have any questions before we go overseas?

KT: No.

SI: Okay. You had this period of sort of waiting around, and then, you eventually started heading overseas.

CA: Yes, yes. … Let me just see here--what have I got here that might jog my memory just a little bit? …

SI: Let me just pause the tape.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: May I start recording again?

CA: Yes, yes.

SI: Okay. We were just looking at your scrapbook from World War II. You were talking about how you left Boston.

CA: Yes. What we did is a two-stage thing; we'd finished our infantry training down in Georgia, no more furloughs, no more nothing. They put us on a troop train and carted us up to Fort Meade, Maryland, which is one of the staging areas before you went overseas, and we spent about three or four days there. Why we stopped there, I don't know. They could have done the same stuff in Boston, but that you don't know, [in] the Army, you don't care, "Do it, Cameron. You're going to be here." So, we spent a few days in Fort Meade, Maryland. … I knew I was going to be there, so, my dad came out. He came out, visited his brother and we spent one day together. I was able to do that, and then, we said good-bye again. Then, it was up to Fort [Camp] Myles Standish, which was, … at that time, a secret--I don't know how big a secret it was--embarkation port. … From there, a couple of days there--had a northeaster there, we had to dig out the train that carried us to the pier in Boston--and we boarded the ship, [which], at that time, was called the [USS] *West Point.* It was a modern ocean liner that was renamed the *West Point*. Its original [name] was … the [SS] *America* and we landed--they got you over fast, but coming back was a different story, took a month to come back--I got over there in eight days. They landed us in Glasgow, Scotland. [Editor's Note: The USS *West Point* (AP-23) was originally the United States Lines' flagship *America*.]

SI: Did the ship go over by itself, with no convoy?

CA: Oh, yes, yes, had a blackout at night and the bunks were four high. You ate two meals a day. You know, fortunately, I never got seasick.

SI: Was that the first time you had been on a boat?

CA: Oh, yes, sure. Everything's a first. For some guys, it was the first time you've ever been on a train. You know, you're really going through some of the experiences of life. … So, we ate two meals a day and lounged around and landed in Glasgow, Scotland, put us on a train, went all the way the whole length of England, down to Southampton, and put us on a boat called the *Twickenham Ferry*. Now, there's a picture of it right there. Now, how I got those pictures, I don't know, I don't know.

SI: Yes, because, clearly, you are on the ship.

CA: Yes, and, at that time, I was Company E, Second Platoon, Company E, Second Infantry Replacement Battalion, February 10th. That's the last letter home. You could write, "Free," and

it was passed by a censor. [Editor's Note: Mr. Anderson is referring to a letter in his scrapbook.] When you got to Myles Standish, up here, you were quarantined and that's when I had to send this home, a change of address. … So, then, we get overseas.

SI: How long was the ferry ride on the *Twickenham Ferry*?

CA: Overnight, I think, just overnight, yes. Guys got seasick again there. I was fortunate. … I'm a sailor--I have Scandinavian blood in me. We like the sea and I've never been seasick, but, boy, I've seen guys seasick. … We landed in Le Havre, put us on a troop train and ended up in Liège, Belgium. That must have been towards the end of February and, lo and behold, you know what happened to me? I got sick again. Now, you're in a replacement mode. You probably heard from other GIs, went over [as] replacements, you know, so, … we're in this replacement mode. There's probably about forty guys here. We had trained together. They kept you together, you know. … As I mentioned earlier, there's a camaraderie and they liked to put them into battle as groups, because, apparently, you know, [they] watch after one another and things like that. … We're in Liège, Belgium, and we had spent a couple nights in a boxcar in the wintertime in Belgium and I come down with pneumonia. … This group was assigned to the 106th Infantry Division, my platoon. … The reason I know it was the [106th], all my mail went to the 106th, and, in Liège, Belgium, I was shivering and shaking. I had a temperature of 105. … I said, "I've got to go to the doctor." I could hardly move. I went to the doctor and he put me in the hospital. I was going, in the ambulance, to the hospital in Verviers and the group that I [was] with was going into battle. … They were assigned to the 106th Division. They had bandoliers around their neck. So, I was protected, somehow. Can you see that?

SI: Yes.

KT: Yes.

CA: And so, I was in the hospital for about a week. I'd come back through the replacement system, ended up in Verviers, Belgium, in another replacement depot, in an old schoolhouse that had a pot-bellied stove and there was a group of guys. This is where I really got my experience in combat. Have you heard of the 101st Airborne Division? There were guys going through that replacement thing who'd just come out of the hospital that had been part of the Battle of the Bulge and part of the drop in Arnhem. They had been wounded. … We'd sit around that stove, couldn't go outside, keep warm, curfews, and that's when I learned about just how tough the infantry guys had it, really, really tough. So, then, we're sitting in this thing here. … One day, they called my name. I don't know how long we were there--seven, eight days, something like that. Then, nothing for me ever moved fast. "Anderson, we've got a spot for you," and that's when I was, one guy, went to the 264th Field Artillery Battalion, because of my experience in the field artillery, in the antiaircraft artillery, and so, I joined my outfit on March the 10th, 1945, and that's my first day in combat. So, that's the timeline. Now, you explore any portion of the timeline there that you want.

SI: How was the medical care when you had to go back to the hospital?

CA: Oh, that was fine, that was fine. … The first stop was a field hospital and a field hospital is just a series of tents set in the field, mud. They had wooden racks, we had pot-bellied stoves and it was relatively [modest], you know. I'd never been in a hospital before. … I don't know if they had penicillin there or not, but they treated me. I was in two hospitals, a field hospital, and then, a kind of a general hospital, and it took about a week to get me back in shape. … I had no problem with the medical care. I thought it was pretty good--better than fighting the war as an infantry guy. You know, you've got to take a positive outlook on these things here. [laughter]

SI: How was your morale in this period, when you were not attached to a unit and you were going through the replacement system?

CA: Jeez, I tell you, you know, I was ambivalent about it, because it happened to me so many times, you know--back in Georgia, separated, separated back in Fort Sheridan, Illinois, separated. I developed a certain amount of self-reliance and confidence and, in my Kinney memoirs--I have a book of my whole Kinney career right here, my memoirs--I try to psychoanalyze myself from a standpoint of self-reliance. … I wrote a series of essays over a period of time. … I did this for my kids and my grandchildren, and one of these essays is this--I wrote twenty-seven essays--"Why was Cameron Anderson so independent?" … It helped my business life, because, … as I mentioned, the most shattering experience that I can remember was separation with my high school buddies. Man, you're [all alone] and that gave me a self-confidence, … an independence, that, at one point in my career, I was criticized for it, "You're a little too aloof. You're a little too far away," but I found out that that helped. In my career, when you're working with men, you don't have to feel close to anybody. You can make decisions, independent. Am I making myself clear?

SI: Yes, you have a certain detachment.

CA: Yes, yes, and a boss has to have that. You can't get close to an associate that reports to you, play poker with him on Friday night, Saturday night, go to church with him on Sunday, run around with the kids and have a true and honest business relationship. You might have to fire that guy, you know, in the ultimate. So, that independence has been very important in my life.

KT: Coming into the depot as a replacement, did you feel like the guys who had been there and were established there were sort of looking down upon you?

CA: Oh, yes, yes. Well, no, at that point, in talking with the guys in the 101st--now, that's the first combat guys that I ever talked to--they didn't talk down to me. You know, they were friendly guys, didn't talk down to me, but I had an awe of them and I also had an inferiority complex, that I haven't done as much as they did, … but that was short lived. We were there four, five days, then, we're gone and they're gone, but that was the effect that I had on that. … I never felt [that] I was looked down upon at all.

SI: When you first joined the 264th, as Kristie was saying, were they distant? Did they not want to accept you at first?

CA: Oh, boy, no.

SI: Do you know if you were replacing somebody who had been wounded or killed, or were they just building up the force?

CA: Well, the 264th, the best I can do--you know, you go down to Washington, I've been through … the National Archives and I've got stuff that I've got from them about the outfit--as far as I can figure out, … the 264th had only five combat casualties. You know, we were on the frontlines, but … the infantry guys in World War II, you know that from your past experience, they're the guys that fought the war. I mean, we were a mile and a mile-and-a-half back, our guns--the eight-inch howitzers in the outfit, nine miles. Man, we were living in houses every other night, you know. I mean, we really had it pretty good, you know, as compared to … the infantry guys on the frontlines. So, we had it pretty good. Another thing that happened, when I joined the 264th, you're alone, you're alone. There was another fellow that came in, fellow's name was (Willard Kurtz?). He and I were two guys, went to the 264th on this--they sent a truck down from, at that time, Verviers was about forty, fifty miles from the frontlines, which was the Rhine River--and you've got to make your friends again. … So, we come in about five o'clock in the afternoon, met the Captain, told us about the outfit, and he says, "Why don't you guys go upstairs and sleep tonight and you can meet your gun sergeant tomorrow morning, Sergeant [Ken] Perry?" and we did. The next morning, Sergeant Perry comes down, says, "Okay, you're in my group. You're in my gun crew," and so, I went out to the field. … Bad Godesberg is where I met combat for the first time, and that's where I met a true friend, who is a friend even today, fellow's name is Chris Meleanos. We come up there. The gun crew, it was about seventeen, eighteen guys. … It was in a town called Bad Godesberg, right on the Rhine River. I can show you on the map, if you're interested. … It had just moved there from a position. … What we did is that, in town, … they chased the Germans out of the houses and the GIs moved in. So, every other night, we'd have a house to sleep in. Well, we went out there and, when you were out in the field, then, you have some place to spend the night, because we worked every other night, just like a business. Combat is completely different than training. You've got a job to do--you work from six in the night to six in the morning. You may be up all night long, but, then, you can sleep all morning long. A fellow comes up and says, "Hi, Cam, Cameron," knows my name, he says, "I'll take care of you." He says, "I know it's tough coming in," and, to this day, he's my personal friend. … What we did is that, you know, you have guys describe foxholes for you, right? What we did, picture a bed, a mattress, a hole in the ground, like about twelve inches deep, the size where two guys can sleep--he says, "You stay with me." They had some straw in the bottom and he befriended me in combat and I'll never forget that. He's in a nursing home down in Milton, West Virginia. He's my best friend. I haven't seen him for a few years, but we've been together since 1946, … yes, '46, [1945?], and he befriended me. … That brings me up to combat. I'll tell you what, turn that thing off--we'll go down to get a hamburger, because I see we're not going to get done.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Thank you very much for lunch. It was a very nice treat. When we left off, you were just getting into combat and you had met your good friend Chris.

CA: … Okay, actually, we're starting off on March 10th, in Bad Godesberg. Bad Godesberg is right on the Rhine River. The Rhine River had been crossed on, I think it was the 9th, 8th or 9th of March, and we were in a firing position there. [Editor's Note: The Ludendorff Bridge at Remagen was captured on March 7, 1945. The bridge sustained heavy German counterattacks until it collapsed suddenly on March 17th.] So, I met Chris for the first time, spent the day there and spent my first day as a gun crewman firing the gun across the Rhine River. We were about a mile from the Rhine River. Bad Godesberg was the town where Neville Chamberlain and Hitler, they had three meetings prior to World War II, one was in Bad Godesberg there, and so, we started the gun crew, loading the ammunition and you did everything. [Editor's Note: British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain and Adolf Hitler met on September 22, 1938, in Bad Godesberg to discuss Hitler's demands that the Sudetenland, then part of Czechoslovakia, be annexed by Germany.]

SI: When you worked with the antiaircraft unit, you had not done any of the work on the gun.

CA: No, no.

SI: How much did you have to learn on-the-job?

CA: Yes, it's all job learning, yes. … In retrospect, it was somewhat simple. There were some main functions. What happens, we had a telephone. The phone call would come down, "Fire mission." Then, you'd rush out and, first, there was one guy--you had to set the azimuth on the gun and the elevation, and this way, here. So, there were a couple guys that did that most of the time. The rest of us, some of us would load the shell on the; let me get one picture here for you. …

SI: Sure.

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: Breech.

SI: We are looking at a photo of your gun. What size gun was it?

CA: That's an eight-inch howitzer and it was pulled by an M4 tractor, like that. There's a guy digging in, right there, … and so, you all had a thing. Over here, we'd have the shells. … You had a two-hundred-pound shell. You had somewhere around forty, forty-two pounds of ammunition powder that went into the breech of the gun. You closed the gun and, first of all, that's a ramrod there. You'd lift up this gun, you'd push it into the breech, and then, ram it home with this thing right there. Then, you covered it with camouflage.

SI: You said it would take two men to hold up the shell.

CA: Yes, two hundred pounds.

SI: The shell was in a special cradle that would let you do that.

CA: Yes.

KT: Did you stay with the same men, working on the same gun, throughout the war or did it not really matter which one you worked on?

CA: … When I look back, it was just, "Who got there first?" The most important thing, first, was to get this gun turned, so that it was pointed in the right direction and elevated high. The fire mission would come down. They would say, "Fire mission." Then, they would say the type of shell, "HE [high explosive] shell, POZIT [proximity] fuse." They had different types of fuses. … Then, they would give you the azimuth, "Right, twenty-six degrees," so many degrees in height, and then, you'd load it in. You'd say, "Ready to fire." Then, they would call down and tell you when to fire it. Now, we never fired, you know, a hundred rounds at a time. The biggest fire mission we ever had was twelve rounds, at one time, and that happened on the other side of the Rhine River, when they had a big breakout on the Rhine River, when they encircled the Ruhr Pocket. [Editor's Note: Following the capture of the Ludendorff Bridge on March 7, 1945, and the expansion of the bridgehead at Remagen, the Allies carried out several crossings of the Rhine in late March. On March 22nd, the US Third Army crossed at Oppenheim, followed by landings at Boppard, St. Goar and south of Mainz in the days following. To the north, beginning on March 23rd, Anglo-American forces made a combined airborne and amphibious assault near Wesel. The US Seventh Army made a successful landing near Worms on March 26th. With all four Allied armies across the Rhine, the First and Ninth Armies moved to encircle the Ruhr Valley, the heart of German industry in the west. By April 1st, elements of both armies met at Lipstadt, trapping German Army Group B. Over the next two weeks, the Allies destroyed the German force, resulting in the surrender of over three hundred thousand German troops by April 18th. According to monthly unit reports, the 264th Field Artillery Battalion was engaged in reducing the Ruhr Pocket from April 3rd to April 17th.] … That was the biggest fire mission that I was ever part of, twelve rounds. Otherwise, it was, you know, two, three rounds here, two, three rounds there. … We did a lot of firing at night, because the Air Force could keep the Germans [in hiding]. They couldn't come out because of the Air Force in daytime. So, our battalion had an airplane and they would go up and spot targets … during the day and get the coordinates and we'd fire them at night. Then, maybe, they call it "time on target," you might have a round now, might be able to sleep for two, three hours, then, you'd have another one. …

SI: Let us say you got a call for a fire mission. How long did it take to actually load up the gun and fire it?

CA: Oh, just a matter of minutes, two, three minutes at the most. Yes, it was pretty fast, because you were prepared. … Depending upon the type of fuse you want, … you'd have to screw a fuse in. So, that might take a little time, and then, you never knew the powder charge. The powder charge, for the want of a better expression, … it was like a cigarette with three different parts, a main part and two small ones. … A white bag charge seven was the maximum charge, forty-two pounds of powder, but white bag six was, they snip off a little bit, like the filter on a cigarette, and that was another bag. … That's the way they adjusted the range based on [elevation]--a lot of geometry going into that--and even the temperature of the powder. Cold powder doesn't burn as fast as warm powder. So, we'd have to report back in the pit where we had the powder--or,

you know, it's just laying on the ground, really--we'd have to report the temperature back every once in a while, because cold powder just didn't go off, and, if it was damp, … when you fired the gun--we didn't have goggles, we didn't have earmuffs--and, at nighttime, you get blinded, just like a flashgun going off. So, you always tried to look away, because, if you were looking at the gun and that flash went off, … you were blinded, and so, that's what we did.

SI: Your first stop was in Bad Godesberg.

CA: I tell you, I was scared to death when that gun went off for the first time. I got out there at eight o'clock, nine o'clock in the morning, "Fire mission." "What do you want me to do?" They didn't know what to do with me. "Just watch." So, the next time, I grabbed that, I figure, "I could do that," lift up that tray and ram it home, and, pretty soon, you get on-the-job training. One guy pulled the lanyard. The fellow that pulled the lanyard, once you closed up the breech, you had a little thing, like a twenty-two-caliber cartridge, you inserted that, because that is what fired the powder, and he had to put that in and close the breech, and then, hit the thing. … You would have a little race then. If you had battery three rounds, you see who'd get the three rounds done first--a little competition there, all done. Then, that was it. We'd go back to sleep or start throwing the football with Chris Meleanos. My buddy, Chris Meleanos, now, see, we're sitting in the hole there and he's my buddy, but he was a star football player in Ohio in the '40s. He's a little older than I am and he loved playing football. He was an all-star running back in the State of Ohio. … Martins Ferry, Ohio, is where he was born, raised. He was a classmate to a very famous football player called Lou "The Toe" Groza [Louis Roy Groza], played with the Cleveland Browns. So, that was kind of it on the firing line, and then, … when you're done there, when they wanted you some other place, they would march order you. They called out, "March order, we're going to move on." So, we're in Bad Godesberg there, right. … We had been there, we had been in Bad Godesberg; got another story on Bad Godesberg. You know what *bad* means in German? "Bath," right; you knew that. Just up the street from where we're on the outskirts of town--you know, we didn't set these guns up, you know, on 42nd and Broadway. We're out in the boondocks, because … we've got to have room, fields. We were there six days. We went to the hot baths. They had an outdoor pool there, did our washing, everything like that, in the hot thermal baths in Bad Godesberg. … Then, at the time we were there, the bridgehead over the Rhine River was one mile deep and four miles wide and they were pushing, because they had captured the bridge. You're familiar with that. They had captured the bridge and they were putting troops across, troops across, troops across, and, of course, we supported them. We were firing over the river and over these infantry guys that were over on the other side. … Then, for whatever reason, they moved us down right to the base of the bridge … in Sinzig. … In the meantime, the bridge had fallen down, and so, we fired from there, and that's where they accuse the 264th of being responsible for the destruction of the bridge. They said, one of the commentators, I can't put my hands on it real fast, … said that the concussion caused by eight-inch howitzers firing helped weaken the weakened structure of the bridge and it came down. Number two is that you have never interviewed anybody that was buzz bombed. One of the commentators wrote about the bridge, when the bridge was captured, you know, that [it] cost a lot of people their lives, the Germans. … Hitler didn't like that and they had enormous antiaircraft defenses around the bridge and, every night, the Germans would come in and try to knock down the bridge while it was still up. … They also put frogmen in the river. They were floating down the river. They were going to dynamite it. They had to get rid of that bridge. …

They launched--I have the date someplace here--six buzz bombs from some place in Belgium, the V-2s, to come down to knock out that bridge. One commentator said, "One, they came down in proximity, but they missed by a little bit." One missed by thirty miles--it landed in Cologne. [laughter] So, I say one of my deeds in World War II is that I was buzz bombed. [laughter] [Editor's Note: German Fieseler Fi 103 V-1 guided missiles acquired the nickname "buzz bombs" for their distinctive engine noise. V-2 rockets were German long-range ballistic missiles first launched against Allied targets in September 1944 and used against forces in the Remagen Bridgehead area. Mr. Anderson conflates these terms here.]

SI: How close were you to where they landed? What was that like?

CA: I don't know. … I really don't know. I didn't know about that until I started reading about the war. I didn't know about that over there. We had been shelled. When we were in the position in Bad Godesberg, my first shelling, where inbound shells [came in], was in Bad Godesberg. Someone had spotted us, or whatever it was, and we had some "eighty-eights," [the German eighty-eight-millimeter artillery piece, an antiaircraft and antitank weapon]. An eighty-eight was a very famous German field gun and we had been bombarded, but no one got hurt. They missed us, but it went off maybe two, three hundred yards from our position in Bad Godesberg, and so, we were under fire there. … Let's see, then, we got march ordered to cross the bridge.

SI: What went through your head when you were first shelled like that? That was the first time anybody had ever fired at you.

CA: That's the first time anybody didn't like me, fired at me. I didn't know what it was. We heard a, "Zoom, boom." "Whoa," and the guy says, "Inbound," and so, Chris and I, we jumped into our pit, and then, it was over. You know, it was real fast. I don't know, maybe seven, eight rounds come in, "Bing, zoom, bing, zoom, bing, zoom." Yes, we didn't like that, … didn't like that a lot a bit, … but, then, what happened there that was pretty good, we were there a long time. They had thrown some Germans out of the houses in town. The company headquarters was in a house. They had a house for the mess thing, taking over a house. They put the ovens, furnaces, ranges in there and cooked. So, we'd come into town to eat, yes. Then, we'd go back out in the field, but, at that time, it only took about eight or nine people to fire the gun. We'd work shifts. You'd work from six in the morning until noon, get the afternoon off. Then, you were on all night long. So, it was one night, one night, one night--that's pretty good. Actually, in combat was a heck of a lot easier than in training. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: So, you know, being in combat, we went through that, and then, sometimes, we'd only stay in the gun position for a matter of hours, sometimes a couple of days. …

SI: Do you know how many guns were in the battalion?

CA: Twelve. They had A, B and C, four guns apiece. There were twelve eight-inch guns in the battalion, then, they had a service company and a headquarters. Now, service company had the

trucks. They would drive back in the Communication Zone and get the ammunition and bring the food up. We were fortunate that we had hot food all the time, except for just a couple instances where we had very, very long marches, and we had a cook that was really terrific. I haven't seen him since then. He'd never come to any of the reunions, but that guy, what we had is powdered milk and powdered eggs, that guy was a magician. The whole time that … I was with the 264th, we always had pancakes for breakfast.

SI: Wow.

CA: Not bad.

KT: Not bad.

CA: Not bad, and I never got a chance to thank him for it, didn't thank him for it then. That was his job then. You know, eighteen years old, you know, you're not conscious of other people's feelings. You really aren't--I wasn't, you know. You're over there, you're dirty, you're tired and cold. You see, this was just at the tail end of winter and you had a pair of long johns on, you had a pair of khaki pants on and you had a pair of dungarees on, or, you know, fatigues. You had three layers of clothing, to stay warm. … We had no overshoes, we had no gloves, could never get them, and that's spelled out right here in this diary, here. So, you know, it wasn't pleasant, but it wasn't like sitting in a hole with a rifle as an infantryman would have done. So, then, on one day, we went, march order. … The bridge was captured on the 7th of March. They installed two pontoon bridges on the 9th and the 10th. The bridge fell on the 17th and the 264th crossed on the 20th of March, and I kind of get a kick out of this. In one of the magazines that I got about World War II, this picture was actually taken on the bridge. Here's the old bridge, had fallen, see; these two bridges were put up. This picture was taken on March 20th, and who knows? maybe that's me crossing the bridge right there. … We got a march order in the afternoon, four-twenty, went across the bridge--everything takes time--and we were ready to fire again by midnight that night.

SI: When the unit was moving, what were your responsibilities? What would you typically do?

CA: Me? just ride along, because what you had was this--this is the way we traveled, just like that, and we traveled in here. …

SI: You would have the M4 dragging the gun.

CA: Yes, and then, we had a trailer, ammunition in here, had ammunition here, and then, you had a big tarp and that was the gun. … One thing we did, boy, we could make mud. Oh, jeez, could we make mud. … Then, we had a fellow that drove. … We had one guy who was a driver, two guys could drive. Sergeant Perry, the boss, could drive the tractor and one other guy was the tractor driver. I never drove that tractor at all and that was it.

SI: Did you mostly take orders from a non-commissioned officer or did you have any contact with an officer?

CA: Yes, we had a lieutenant that used to--I don't remember. Yes, Captain (Smith?) would come around, occasionally, but, mainly, Lieutenant (Bierman?) would come around, … but we took all the orders from Sergeant Perry. He was the boss. … It's his son who is a PGA golfer. Did I tell you that, that there's a very famous PGA golfer by the name of Kenny [James Kenneth] Perry? His dad is still living, lives in Franklin, Kentucky, and he was the boss. … Only one time, I think, we goofed up, Chris and I. It's the only time I could remember [that] Sergeant Perry really let us have it. When you're in combat, you're so tired, you can't see straight. You can sleep. I've actually slept [in] this thing, moving along the road at twenty-five, thirty miles an hour, didn't move a whole bunch [faster], sleeping, and this thing made one hell of a lot of noise. It's like a jet engine. … We only had one phone for each gun and someone was assigned and [would] take that … phone with him, near them, in the evening, sleep with it. [The phone would] go off, you're the one that had to fire a fire mission and you're the one … that had to send the commands now, "Azimuth, elevation," and so on, and so forth. One night, we didn't hear it. We didn't hear anybody call, "Fire mission." We missed it. The next morning, "Where in the hell were you guys last night?" We slept through a fire mission, because you're so tired. Here, you've got a gun going off and you're not more than--we're never more than--you see that woodpile out there? That's about as far away from the gun as you would be. Can you imagine, something goes off, the ground is shaking and you can sleep through it? You're tired, tired, tired, but you really don't know it, but, yet, you are tired.

SI: How far away would you be from the other guns in the battalion?

CA: Oh, probably less than a hundred yards.

SI: Okay, you had actually slept through all these guns going off.

CA: Oh, yes, yes. … You know, when you look back, they had to do certain things. … They didn't like them lined up, you know, one, two, three, four. … They tried to stagger them just a little bit, because they figure some guy could come through and strafe you and hit all the things. So, they kind of staggered them, but, sometimes, we might be, maybe, half a mile from another one of the batteries in the thing, but they usually kept within seeing distance the four guns in a battery. … Let's see, there's something else I was going to tell you. Oh, another thing that they did is that they did a lot of firing off of maps. You know, they had very detailed maps, coordinates, … but, yet, you had to be more accurate than that. So, usually, when you went in a gun position, like we went in this gun position in Sinzig, it's a new gun position, they would send one gun down early, set it up, fire some rounds. We always had a forward observer out there on the front lines to see where those things are going to go, so that they could register all the guns off of that. … Our gun was only taken one time. You go up, you're right down the front lines with the infantry and you're digging in, and then, they call and [you] fire, and then, hope they could see where they went off. [laughter] You know, you hear a lot about people, now, shooting your own troops--same thing. So, that was one of the things that they did. … We ended up in--well, you can see here. Here's the month of April--look how many fire missions we were in, many towns we were in.

SI: Yes, there are at least ten, more than ten, displacements.

CA: Yes, now, what happened, … they started the big drive on the Ruhr Pocket, I think about March 27th or 28th, and that's when we had the big fire mission of twelve rounds. After that, the war moved very, very rapidly and we couldn't move rapidly, you know. It just took time to dig out those guns and things like that. … Therefore, all these things here, you know, these are "one night stands." In some places like that, we didn't even fire a round. We just put in and waited to move on, but, during the month of April, we still fired twenty-seven hundred rounds--divide that by twelve, so, that's about a little over two hundred rounds a gun.

SI: The previous month, you had fired over six thousand, right?

CA: Yes.

SI: Yes. That seems, to me, an extremely high rate of fire.

CA: Yes, yes. I think that's what got me my [estimate]. With this information here and the detailed information in my mother's letters, I was able to pinpoint when I was there and I divided by the days I was on the frontline, by the number of rounds the battalion fired, divided by twelve, and I was pretty close.

KT: How detailed could you get in the letters to your mother? You were talking about censorship before. I had heard, previously, that you could not really say where you were or where you were going.

CA: Nope, no. You had to say [that] you're somewhere in Germany. … They took censorship off, I think they did, after V-E Day [Victory in Europe Day]. V-E Day was, what, May 6th or 7th? [May 8, 1945] something like that, and I think, at that particular juncture, they took it off of Europe. Then, I could tell my mother, "Well, I'm in Munich, Germany. … Look on the map."

KT: Okay. You were able to use your letters to figure out where you were.

CA: Yes. Well, no, no, not from the letters; … you couldn't talk about what you were doing. I'd just say, "Hey, I'm fine. I hope to be home soon," things like that, "I love you," you know. … One time, I wrote a letter and I mentioned something, where I was, and they sent it back to me. They didn't black it out, they just said, "Hey, you can't say that, Cameron, can't say that." … I tried to be a good son and sent a letter home every day, so, … 357 letters wasn't bad.

KT: How often did you get mail back? How easy was that?

CA: Oh. … When I went overseas in February, my mail stopped. I didn't get any mail for--because of this incident in the hospital, changing from the 106th to the 264th--I don't think I got any mail until the latter part of April. I was, probably, almost, maybe, two months without hearing.

SI: You had been shelled when you were firing at the Remagen bridgehead.

CA: Yes.

SI: After this rapid move started, were the Germans able to offer any resistance that would reach you?

CA: Not that was visible to us. The infantry moved very, very fast, … but, when I was there, we're shelled two times, once in Remagen and once on the other side of the bridge, in a town called Willroth, which is … just on the eastern side, and we could actually hear the gun go off and the shell come in and that was heavier stuff then. The eighty-eight was fast; this was a big, big shell, and that's the only time that I was under fire, except during the period around the Remagen bridge, because the Remagen bridge, they were protected. … See, we were close to Remagen from the 10th to the 17th, almost a week, and, every night, the Jerries would come over and they had amassed a series of … the antiaircraft guns around there and you could almost read at night with the fire of these, because every fifth round was a tracer round, fourth or fifth round. So, it was very, very heavily guarded. … The V-2, I'd like to tell the story, but I never heard them go off. I don't even know if it happened, but some guys said it happened, but we were close enough that if one had come down near us, we should have heard it, but, you know, we made one hell of a lot of noise with our gun. Then, I couldn't hear anyhow. [laughter] … Your questions help a lot. I don't want to ramble on here.

SI: It sounds like you had good access to food and that sort of thing. What about showers or clean clothes?

CA: In the whole time I was in combat, until mid-May, only one time were we sent back to a quartermaster shower. They set up a great, big field with a tent, hot water showers and a change of clothing. Only one time did I ever go back there. I was able to get clean clothes. Otherwise, we would just wash them, you know, hung them out to dry. … Only one time I remember going back there to get clean clothing and a shower. Otherwise, we were cleaning ourselves out of a helmet and things like that. I remember, … in one spot, we had--well, of course, we got cleaned up here in Bad Godesberg, but I wasn't too dirty then, because I'd just got there. … Then, if we got oil or something like that on our stuff, we had gasoline--we could dry clean our clothes with gasoline. It was pretty good. [laughter]

SI: You mentioned that you stayed in German homes every so often.

CA: Yes.

SI: Did you ever interact with the Germans at all? Did you speak with them at all?

CA: … At that time, they had a fraternization policy, that you couldn't talk to Germans. They didn't want the GIs to go out and have sexual relations with the German girls, which GIs do, you know. They could go crazy, and they enforced that pretty good, but where we were, we just had farmhouses. We were not in the cities, where the people were. The German people that we saw were pretty good. They were farmers. They had eggs, they had chickens. In fact, we had a guy from Kentucky by the name of Hub, Hub Jackson. He didn't like GI food. … For the want of [a better term], he was an honest to God hillbilly. He had his own frying pan. He'd cook his own [food]. He'd go out and get chicken and cook his own chickens, get his potatoes. He had a

frying pan, he'd cook for himself. He didn't like GI food. It's the first time I've ever seen a guy ring the neck of a chicken. Hub Jackson, he was an old-time Army guy, must have been forty years old.

SI: Really?

CA: I don't know if he had an eighth grade education or not, but it was his job to clean off the ammunition. The ammunition would come off the trucks, it would just drop on the ground. … The ammunition had a [driving] ring around it they called a (ran?), which, when shoved into the gun, was brass, it clicked in there and it was the one that gave the rotation to the shell when it was fired. … It was his job to make sure the ammunition was clean. That's the only thing he did, and cook for himself. Hub, never saw him again, but he was an old-time Army guy from way back. He must have been forty years old. … At one time, when … the artillery was pulled by horses, he was one of the guys that did it. So, you had a variety of experiences, a variety of guys there, and I was probably the youngest one of them. At that time, I think, they had a regulation that no eighteen-year-old could be in combat. … I don't know, you might research that sometime, but I read that they didn't want [that]. You know, the guys that were seventeen and eighteen that were killed probably lied about their age. … I had read some place--I didn't clip it out, I should have--that they didn't want too many eighteen-year-olds killed and I think that's one of the reasons I went overseas late, because I wasn't nineteen years old until January and they had me overseas almost to the day after I was nineteen.

SI: I think I have heard that nobody was supposed to go into combat before their nineteenth birthday.

CA: You heard that before, then.

SI: Yes.

CA: Okay, good.

SI: I do not know how well the Army enforced that. In reading these reports, one thing that always comes up is the lack of supplies, but I am not sure if they are entirely accurate or if the reports are, perhaps, playing up the situation. Did you feel like you had a shortage of supplies?

CA: Well, to be honest with you, you, as a gun crewman, really didn't care. … That was really not my problem. I never realized, until I got this, you know, that we were short. You had no way of [knowing]. You know, in the Army, they didn't tell us a lot, didn't tell us a lot. I do know that it was cold with no gloves, I knew that … no overshoes was not a good thing, … but we can't get them, but, you know, I don't think anybody made a federal case about it. Through here, at one time, we didn't even have rags. You know, the guns have oil and things like that. We got oil and certain things. We didn't have just plain, old rags to wipe off some of the guns. We were dirty. … I sometimes wonder how I smelled, might have had BO, you know. [laughter]

KT: Did that affect the morale of the group at all?

CA: Oh, no.

KT: You just sort of banded together.

CA: Morale, that's interesting--I never even thought about it. We got along good together. We had a lot of fun, played … penny poker, and Chris and I would throw the football and I thought we had a good time. We just wanted the war to get over with and save our fannies, so [that] we didn't get shot, but you had no fear being on the frontline. You know, we could have been snuffed out at any minute. We were always within shelling distance of the Germans. We never went back for rest. Infantry would take troops back, you know, ten, fifteen miles, and give them a rest. We were on the line--this outfit was on the line--continuously, the whole time. They went into battle, what? in October and they were on the line the whole time, … but equipment started wearing out. Very interesting, take a look at [this]--to show you how things were coming about, oh, here, April 1st to April 30th, down on the bottom, maybe it's not the same one I got, but, there, we're talking about the march. What happened, on April 18th, after the breakout, we're up in the northern part of Germany. …

SI: We are looking at a map now.

CA: Yes. We had gone from the Remagen bridge almost up to the towns of Zuschen and Gronebach, in the Kassel area. Kassel's right here and, at that particular juncture, about April 18th, … we were transferred to the Third Army. We were in the First Army up to here and what happened is that the guys that were running the war felt, the intelligence, that Hitler was going to make his last stand down in Berchtesgaden, in Southern Germany, and so, one commentator that I have some place, I can't dig it out, [explains] that Patton asked for some crack troops from the First Army. … [General Courtney Hicks] Hodges, who was general of the First Army, I think, at that time, gave him the III Corps, which we were part of. So, we were transferred over to the … Third Army. … We started on, chasing the infantry, chasing the Germans, from Kassel, right up here--here's where we came across the Rhine River, kind of like this--275 miles down to Wurzburg, in this area here. … Then, one night, we got strafed there, but the commentary in that right there, this is where our equipment started breaking down. … Our machines were having [problems], the radiators were giving out. We'd have to stop every ten, fifteen miles and pour water and find a lake, find a creek, put water in the radiator, and some of the tracks were worn out. They would throw the tracks, and it took five days to go 275 miles and the highlight of that was when we were strafed on the nights of April 18th and 19th--lost one man and lost a trailer of ammunition, like that one right there. So, actually, I was shot at twice and strafed once, closest … the Germans came to getting me, but, in here, you talked about, the conversation started on, the breakdown of equipment, and, on this page, it pretty much tells the story on it. It just started wearing out.

KT: It is interesting that you just did not really notice that, when that was so heavy in the documents. You said it did not really affect you.

CA: No. If we had to wait five hours on the roadside to fix something, so what? You're under no timetable. You didn't have a dinner reservation at Joe's Ratskeller in this place here. You're

just there. … It's amazing how time, as far as I [was concerned], didn't mean anything. … You had a watch, but even that didn't mean anything, because you didn't know what day it was. You didn't care. Like, one time, you come down, they said they're going to have a church service--it's Easter Sunday. We had no idea it was Easter. You know, it's just [that] everything goes together. Now, it's not discipline, it's just that that's the way war is, I guess. I don't know how they do it over there, … how they did it in Vietnam or how they're doing it in Iraq, but we had no timetable for nothing, man. We were given our marching orders--okay, we take the gun up, put the gun down and hope we get a hot meal. That was it.

SI: Would you get the *Stars and Stripes* or any other publications?

CA: Yes, occasionally, yes. They would come down [with the] *Stars and Stripes*. In fact, you know what I have? … I have some editions of the *Stars and Stripes* down there in my collection of World War II media, as well as all the issues of *Yank* Magazine, which is kind of interesting reading. I don't know what I'm going to do with all this stuff when I die, but the kids will probably get a loader out here, but, to expand on that, you really don't know, you really don't know. They just said, "We're firing over the Germans in over the Rhine River." You don't know where you're at. … You're nineteen years old--you don't have any experiences in life. You never studied geography. … You don't know where the town of Notscheid is, or Munich. You might have heard of Munich before, but you didn't know anything about Bad Godesberg or anything like that. Nineteen years old is pretty young, pretty young to grow up. You grow up pretty fast. … Two things that I remember, when I first saw the first American dead--that's a life experience--and, also, the first German dead.

SI: Do you remember where you were when you saw that?

CA: I saw the first German dead … when we crossed the Rhine River. We moved up almost to the front lines. When we went across the Rhine River, it was about four miles from the river to the front lines. … We moved up. We were almost right with the infantry and there were still some dead Germans there, but the GIs were the ones that were being carried back on Graves Registration. That wakes you up pretty good when you're nineteen years old. The reaction, … it's kind of sad, but, yet, by the same token, "Hey, boy, I'm glad it's not me." You take a kind of a different outlook on it. You don't know all the heartaches that's involved or anything like that. … You haven't been through those experiences of life. You're doing great with the questions--keep them coming.

SI: Do you remember when the news broke about President Roosevelt passing away?

CA: Yes, no particular feeling one way or the other, "It's too bad--on with the job."

KT: Was Truman accepted?

CA: Who?

KT: When Truman came into office, after Roosevelt died, was he accepted? Was it indifference?

CA: I really don't know, I really don't know. You know, you're so far removed from the reality of what's going [on] around you that at least I didn't. … You didn't have access to a lot of news. You get, you know, the *Stars and Stripes*, I don't know, maybe, once or twice a week and you'd read it and see where you'd been, but this is not like today. You know, you didn't have television. … When you look back on it, you're kind of in a war vacuum, just doing a job, waiting to get out of there.

SI: Your unit took some prisoners, particularly towards the end of the war as the Germans were collapsing. Did you have any personal experience with that?

CA: Yes, one personal experience. … When the war ended, we were outside of Erding, Germany, outside of Munich, in a town of Erding. We had followed the war all the way down and, when the war ended, we were in a town called Erding, which is down near Munich. … Oh, by the way, the airport in Erding is the town where the current international airport is in Munich, today, but it is also the home of the Messerschmitt ME 262, was their first jet aircraft, and one company of the 264th guarded that airfield. Now, I never got to it, but what we did there is, the war's over and it was disorganization. … Chris and I, and a couple other guys, were assigned to a roadblock, like down here--let's figure a crossroads in a farming area, just on the outskirts, maybe a couple houses around, there's some woods--and we just stayed there and, if any Germans come along, pick them up, take care of them. Lo and behold, out of the woods comes about eighteen Germans holding a white flag. … They were old. They had a lot of old people in the war at that time, and so, we lined them up, frisked them. First of all, what you're looking for is guns, right. They had thrown all their guns away. They were surrendering--no guns, no pistols, no Mausers, no Lugers--and we lined them up, and then, we kind of searched them. They had bread and things like that and one poor guy had a knife and we're supposed to take all the knives away. It was, you know, kind of a hunting knife, and patting him down, I said, "No, no, we've got to have that." He said, "Oh, no, no." What the guy did, he took out his false teeth and showed me how he had to have that knife, so [that] he could clean off his false teeth. So, I let him have that knife. [laughter] Good Cam, considerate, and then, the trucks'd come along. We'd load them on to trucks and that's the last we'd see them. … That's the only prisoners that I personally captured, but what they did is, they sent the 264th, the Battery A, we had a certain number of roads that we had to guard and intersect and pick up prisoners. Then, they went off to a compound someplace and we lost complete sight of them, but we never had any contact with the German families. … I never personally had to chase anybody out of the houses--someone else did that. … I look back, that's kind of mean, isn't it, huh? chase a person out of their house, but, yet, you're living in a hole. I remember one time that we'd been out, we hadn't had access to homes in one of these places, I was happy to sleep in a barn, because it was dry. So, you had a feeling that, "Hey, okay, let me be comfortable. Let them live with their neighbors." … They chased the Germans out of the houses. A couple houses we had were pretty good around Munich. I remember one there, they had a cook stove in it. We'd cook rice and things like that, made our own supper and things like that, but contact with [the] Germans, I couldn't speak German, had no contact, whether good, bad or indifferent, … I with the Germans, anyhow, except way after the war. They'd come around, do your washing for a pack of cigarettes and things like that, which is a different story.

SI: What do you remember about the day the war ended, or was declared over?

CA: Just another day, both of them. We were outside of Erding, in Erding, when it happened, and, really, it's just another day. … No cheering went on, at least I don't [recall] evidence of cheering, and, "Well, we're glad that's over with." In August, when the war was over with, we were in Henfenfeld, Germany, and we got a bottle of beer. That was it--no cheering, no girls kissing us or anything like that, just done. … Then, [in] the interim between the end of the war … in Europe and the thing [the surrender of Japan], we were getting ready to go overseas. They had said that we were going to eventually get to Japan and we said, "How in the Sam Hill are they going to [do that]? They're not going to move these guns to Japan. They're falling apart now." So, I often wonder what happened. I left those guns, in August of 1945, … around a swimming pool in Schwalbach, Germany. I wonder what happened to them, but you're elated--hey, you made it through--but, you know, there was no Times Square celebration. Maybe there was in other places, but not where I was.

KT: Were you worried about going to the Pacific? Did that ever cross your mind?

CA: Well, it's different. … I've been through the war, February, March and April, and I made it. It's not that bad, you know--you take it. … I never had a fear. Concerned? I'm more concerned about my parents and things like that, you know, "What if something happens to me? You know, is somebody going to knock on their door?" and things like that. I wanted my parents to know that I was safe and protected. … The unusual thing that happened, during that particular period--let's kind of assume we're done with the war now itself, the mechanics of the war, set the guns in and everything like that. We did different occupation duty and what happened is that we were between Nuremburg and Munich, a couple times, in Southern Germany, and why they left, didn't let someone sit for two minutes in one spot, always kind of raised the question that, "Hey, you're on the move all the time, you know, let us sit here." What happened is that we were given orders to--oh, hey, I want to show you this, too. This is kind of interesting--turn off your thing.

SI: Sure.

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: But, we were scared. … We were riding. … This is a picture of going through the saw teeth [antitank barriers] on the Siegfried Line. This is the way we looked riding across the Rhine River. We all jumped off and sat on the top of the tractor pulling us across the Rhine River and we'd taken our boots off. We said, "Hey, jeez, [if] the thing goes…" because the bridge was still under attack. There were no shells when we went across the bridge, but here we are, standing up here, sitting up here, except for Sergeant Perry and the driver. There were about twelve, fourteen of us standing up … on the top of that thing there, going across the Rhine River. … This whole thing weighed forty tons. They had three of them across at a time. You could see a big dimple in the bridge. Now, what happened is that we were given orders--in there, dig that out--we were given orders … to go to this town here, town of Henfenfeld, and, in this castle, there are about, roughly, a hundred displaced people. Displaced people were not concentration camp people. These were German workers--these are [people taken] from Western Europe, Yugoslavia, that were workers, but they weren't slave workers, but they were displaced people--and they were all

over, scattered all over. … They had nothing, absolutely nothing. … Our orders were to get these people out of here, put them in a truck and take them to a camp where they could be cared for. So, Chris Meleanos and myself, and a couple other guys, were a forward group, because it took a long time. We moved in two pieces, the fast group with trucks, and then, the big tractors. "Take those people out of there." We go into Henfenfeld--not one person could speak German--and the *Burgomeister* of the town says, "Boy, I'm happy to get rid of them. They were just [there], but don't go into that room in the castle." Well, you don't tell a GI that's been living in the field, "Don't go into that room." You want to know why? They're hiding something and what are they hiding? not girls, but wine. So, we go into that room, Chris and I--the castle had been ransacked--and that's where I picked up that document and sent [it] home to my mother. … This is a replica of it. This was laying on the floor there. So, I picked it up and sent that home to my mother, in, you know, an envelope, and that's what popped out in that box of things in Wisconsin, in St. Paul, Minnesota. … There's a photo of it right there and what it is, it was written on sheepskin, not parchment, but a sheepskin, and what it is, it's a document that shows who owned a certain property. There were two towns, Henfenfeld and Engelthal, and some people had cut wood on land that didn't belong to them. There was a property dispute, to put it very simply, and they had, at that time, in 1382, you read it--realize, in 1382, the Black Plague is going through Europe, right. You know that, 1492, Columbus sailed the [ocean] blue, right? You know, was it 1528 [1517] that Martin Luther put the hammer to the doors in [Wittenberg]? So, this was pretty old, and so, I sent it home to my mother. I didn't know about it at the time, and so, there it sat, in Wausau, Wisconsin. They still lived in Wausau when it got there in '45. … When they moved to the Twin Cities, it was still in that box, in the fifty-seven letters, and that's how I came across this document here. … In '72, after she passed away, I brought it home. … I had this German couple come over. They had translated the document, "From the year 1382." "No, no," I said, "it can't be." He said, "Oh, yes." It was a sealed document. You can still see the knife [mark] here. … When I got it, it had a piece of what they called wax embossment on it, with a band through it. It was an official document. … It sat in a box from '45 to '72, untouched. '72 to '75, it was here, someplace in the house. In '75, I had it translated, and then, I tried to find out about it. … I ran into a German one time in Munich and he was a college professor. I said, "I got this document. Can you help me? I couldn't find [out] anything about it," and I had called one of the libraries in New York and no one cared about it at all. … I said, "Well, what I'll do is, I had it framed." It was a very lovely thing, memento of World War II. What was very interesting is that when I had it framed, the guy down in Ridgewood who framed it said, "You know, I can't get those wrinkles out. Is it okay, Mr. Anderson, if I iron them out?" It's been folded up for thirty years, for three hundred years, and so, then, in 1990, what happened? There was another GI that stole a very famous artwork. This is the true spoils of war. This particular theft of the Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, which is an embossed [book] covered with rubies and diamonds and gold, commissioned by Charlemagne. Charlemagne was that in-between king between the Dark Ages, the fall of the Roman Empire, about 500 [AD], and the Renaissance, about 1500. Charlemagne was about in-between. [Editor's Note: Charlemagne reigned from 768 to 814 AD.] He tried to lift people out of the Dark Ages and … he did that with a certain amount of art. He commissioned this thing right here. … This particular Gospel was in a cave in Quedlinburg, which, after the war, was in East Germany, was part of a church there for years and years and years. … This GI lieutenant, he happened to be in the artillery, just like me, knew a little bit about antiquities and artwork and he knew about it and he stole it and sent it back to Texas. In 1990, he had died. His family put it …

in the market, wanted to sell it, three million dollars, and that's where it came to light. They'd scoured the world for these Gospels and they were down in Texas, White Rock [Whitewright], Texas, in a bank down there. … When this all came to light, the *New York Times* called that, "The biggest art theft of the century." They claimed they're worth two hundred million dollars. [Editor's Note: Joe T. Meador stole several items, including the Ninth Century Samuhel Gospels, while his unit, the 87th Armored Field Artillery Battalion, was stationed in Quedlinburg, Germany, in April 1945. After Meador died in 1980, his heirs attempted to sell the material and succeeded in selling the Samuhel Gospels to a West German foundation in 1990 for three million dollars, which triggered an investigation by the US government and news media.] So, what happened is that … [the] *New York Times* has always been pretty good, *New York Times*, kind of a Jewish newspaper, and they're very cognizant of the plight of the Jews in Europe … prior to World War II, because a lot of the wealthy Jews had their wealth confiscated from them, in addition to all of the horrors of the Holocaust, and so, it was a big item to a fellow by the name of Bill [William H.] Honan. [Editor's Note: William H. Honan is a cultural reporter for the *New York Times* who helped track down the objects stolen from Quedlinburg.] … They did a lot of write-ups about it and there was an article in the *New York Times* about this theft, right here. … A fellow by the name of Bill [William M.] Voelkle was the curator of Medieval Literature [Medieval and Renaissance Manuscripts] at the Morgan Library in New York--you know, J. P. Morgan--and I called him up. I said, "You know what I got? I've got a document from the year 1382. I saw your name in the paper." I told him, quickly, the story, "I want to find out about it." … What I did is, I sent him a copy of this. It's all I had. I didn't know where I got it now, you know, I just didn't know, and I did that in 1990. That was about in May of 1990 and never heard from him. July went by, August went by; in September, I got a phone call, says, "Bill Voelkle, from the library. We found out about your document. It's a very important document. It was in a library … outside of Nuremburg, Germany. It was inventoried before the war, it was inventoried after the war--a lot of pieces are missing. They'd like it back." So, "Okay." "Where did you get it?" I had no idea. So, I did a little detective work. … I still have, someplace--oh, I'm getting all mixed up here--I still had my World War II address book, had a couple names in there, Chris Meleanos, Joe Lozowksi; goes to show you, you make friends back there, but you forget about them, you know. Everybody, you go on with your life. You go to college, you come home, you get married, all that stuff, and so, I said, "I've got to find out about this now. I've got the document." First thing I did was go through all my mother's letters that I saved--nothing there. So, Joe Lozowksi lived in Linden, New Jersey. Now, you've been by, both of you've been by, Linden, New Jersey, on Stiles Avenue, off of Route 9, the Esso tanks. I go down there the Labor Day of 1990, I knock on doors. The address I had, non-existent any more. It's an empty lot. So, I knocked on doors and I had a picture of Joe. … I said, "Does this name mean [anything to you]?" no one. I saw some old people, … "I'm on a wild goose chase. Can you help me?" nothing. … I gave up. On the way out of town, I saw the police station. So, I went in the police station. I said to the sergeant behind the desk, I said, "Hey, I'm on a wild goose chase, maybe you can help me. I'm looking for a Joe Lozowksi that used to live on Stiles Avenue such-and-such." He said, "Maybe I can help you." He went in the motor vehicle license registration. "Joe Lozowksi lives in Mountainside." So, we tailed it out Route 22, get off on Mountainside, knock on the door, "He moved three years ago." [laughter] Take the picture, went to the next-door neighbor, I said, "I'm looking for Joe Lozowksi." "Oh, I remember him, still hear from [him. We get a] Christmas card." "Would you happen to have his address?" He lived in St. Augustine, Florida. Yes, so, I called him up, Joe, get acquainted once again. He wasn't

with the outfit at that time--struck out. So, then, I say Chris Meleanos is my good buddy, I had nothing to do with him from '45 until 1990, follow me? He was good to me then and … just one of those things. It's regrettable. Martins Ferry, Ohio, I called up Martins Ferry, Ohio, "Is there any, in the phonebook, listing for anybody by the name of Meleanos?" "No Meleanos." I knew he was Greek. I said, "Do you have a Greek church in town?" "Oh, yes." "Give me the address of the Greek church, phone number." So, I called up the Greek church and says, "Do you have any parishioners in the church by the name of Meleanos?" "No." So, what do you do next, Cameron? I said, "Will you give me the name of the three oldest parishioners in the church?" told him … I'm trying to find these people, "Give me the phone number." I called up one, didn't remember him; the third one, not one. The fourth, "Oh, I vaguely remember. They moved to Logan, West Virginia, right after the war." So, Logan, West Virginia, and that's where I [was] reacquainted with Chris Meleanos. He remembered picking up these things in here when I told him the story and he had two of them. I says, "Chris, … they offered me a trip. When I said I'm going to give it back, they'll fly me back there," which they did do. "Oh, we threw those away years ago. That's World War II, all done." So, that's the way I was reacquainted with Chris and Chris told me then that the last few years, they've had reunions of the 264th. So, I said, "When's the next reunion?" "Oh, it's in the spring." So, that's when I started. I went to the reunions. That's where I got acquainted with Sergeant Perry and the rest of the guys and that's where I found out that we picked that thing up in that castle in Henfenfeld. … Then, in the process, two things are very interesting. You read in the papers all the time now where we're recovering things from Germany, that things are being returned, you know, big paintings. There was one big return recently, a Jewish family by the name of (Sheely?), had some very, very prominent paintings [stolen]. … I think they were in a museum in Czechoslovakia. Well, there's a thing that they call provenance, which is a tracing, history, of the ownership of these paintings. … The fellow that I worked with in the German government, a fellow [by the] name of Willi Korte, after this whole thing … started coming together, because he was working on this right here, he's the one that discovered where these things were down in Texas. He's kind of an art attorney-detective. His name was just mentioned in the *New York Times* three weeks ago. He's still in business, making his living returning this stuff here, and that's … where the whole process started of taking it back to the rightful owners and, therefore, the article in the *Times*, and I got a little publicity out of that. It was a nice thing to do. They flew Mrs. Anderson and I back there. We went to the castle and gave it back to the owner. So, that was one of the highlights after the war, as far as I was concerned.

KT: Did you ever worry at all about prosecution?

CA: Yes, yes. … In one of these articles, I was talking to a guy from Texas and I said something--I was scared that I would [be indicted] when they [found out that I had taken the document]. Well, first of all, I told Voelkle, I said, "Don't reveal my name," and, when he called up and said that they knew about the article, I said, "Oh, you can tell them my name." I figured I'd be safe--I'm doing something very, very good. … I told this one guy I was scared to do it, because I thought they might have some black Mercedes pull up in front of the house and take me away. … Oh, here, "'One of my first worries [was] that I might be prosecuted for holding stolen goods,' he recalled. Instead, the German government is flying him over to personally return the documents." …

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: What was kind of interesting, … I was the first GI to go back to this little Bavarian town of Henfenfeld. … The people who were very instrumental in doing this were the people in the Bavarian Archive [Bavarian State Library and State Archive] in Munich. We flew into Munich first and spent some time there on the return of the document and, there, I got a copy of all of the American Military Government activities that happened in that part of the world. You know, once the GIs got out of there, the American Military Government came to the forefront. I got that and they were very, very kind, because I was the first GI that had brought something back like that and the press in Bavaria did a very lovely write-up on me in their paper there. I kind of felt like a hero of some sort. … The mayor of the town had a little luncheon for us, and the town hadn't changed.

KT: Was that the first time you had been back to Germany since the war?

CA: Well, no, I was fortunate to one degree, that, when I got going in Foot Locker, is that our big customer was Adidas and Puma and their offices are in around Nuremburg. … Germany, in Munich, they have one of the biggest sporting goods shows in the world, where they not only show shoes, … but skis, [in a] million square feet of exhibition space. … So, I went back there to attend the shoe shows, but, also, to make friends with our major sources, because we, very quickly, with Foot Locker, became their largest source. … Their headquarters are in a little town outside of Nuremburg by the name of Herzogenaurach, … but that was before 1990. All this stuff took place in 1990, … after I retired. I retired in '88, … really, in '89. So, I had been back to Germany and I'd got that picture up there with the bridge. So, I'd been back to Germany, but nothing to do with this document, because I met the original founder of the company, Adi Dassler, and was a guest in their home and things like that, when you're a big customer--as they say, when you've got a big pencil--buying a lot of shoes, because Foot Locker was the first major company that had a lot of stores. They did a lot of business with, you know, individual shoe stores, like Shaun's Shoe Palace of Slippery Shoes and Kristie's Style Headquarters for Sneakers, and things like that, … but we had to teach them how to run a business, where we come in and buy up to, "Take ten thousand pair of that shoe," and things like that. So, we actually had to teach them the volume chain business. Okay, now, you get back on track where you think we should be.

SI: Is there anything you want to say about the occupation or the war before we talk about coming home?

CA: Oh, the occupation. Well, during the occupation, … you know, you talk about what you do, you had a job, … but, yet, because of my point structure, in September and October of that year, they started breaking up the 264th. Some guys had been in, had seventy-five points, could go home. I didn't have any points, so, I stayed and I was transferred out of the 264th, into another outfit, the … 216th Field Artillery Battalion. So, my career kind of changed and, during that period, in the fall of that year, I was on a ten-[day trip], took a … ten-day trip to, furlough to, Switzerland. This is other than guard duty and occupation duty. … Then, in December and January of '45 and '46, there was a sign on the bulletin board, "Anybody that wants to go, if you have an interest, there's a technical school in England." So, I went to England and spent

November and December up in England attending a school there in how to be a draftsman. … Then, I came back from that, spent a week in Paris. … I never smoked, had a lot of cigarettes, stayed in Paris for a week, … bartering cigarettes, come home. There was another sign on the bulletin board--I didn't know when I was going to get out--that Patton, one of Patton's dreams was the fact that the ultimate enemy was Russia, he wanted a certain number of troops to be ski troops. Guess who had skied as a kid? Cameron Anderson. Guess who signed up? Cameron Anderson. Guess who spent six weeks living on the top of the highest point of Germany? Cameron Anderson, and I skied down the Zugspitze. It's the highest mountain [in Germany]. Now, I'm not Bode Miller or any of those guys, but I did ski twice down the Zugspitze. It's the highest mountain in Germany. As a kid in Wausau, [there was] a lot of snow. I skied a little bit, and so, I saw a little bit of Europe in the meantime and it just worked out that way. So, that was in, I think, March, and then, I left for home in May and out of the service. That's about it. That's kind of the highlights.

SI: Would you say that you were restless to get home or were you just happy to be going to all of these places?

CA: Oh, sure. Oh, you want to get home, you want to get home. … Doing what I did, … you know, it wasn't boring, but you're away from home. You know, you're in the Army, … period, that's it.

SI: Once you came home, were you discharged right away or did you have to serve additional time?

CA: Oh, no, that was almost a continual process. … We sailed from Bremerhaven, Germany, and it took about six weeks. Oh, hey, by the way, we're going to Switzerland here in another month. I'm going back to some of the places I was in Switzerland during the war. I never had a chance to do that. … We sailed. I sent a telegram to my mother on May 9th, I stopped writing to her on May 9th, "Much love to the sweetest in the world. Stop writing. Home early in June," and I sent that May the 9th. … We embarked from Bremerhaven, Germany, on the 22nd of May, 1946, coming back on the SS *Elgin Victory*. That baby, … I wonder if it's still sailing. Boy, that was slow, and then, we landed in New Jersey, at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, and was processed there and went … from there on a troop train to Fort Sheridan, Illinois, where I was inducted, and was discharged on--when's the date of my discharge here?--June 28, 1946. So, I was in the Army almost two years to the date, and then, they gave me travel money, … twelve dollars and thirty cents to get from Chicago to Wausau at that time. My parents were still in Wausau, so, went back to Wausau and worked for my dad in the shoe store, decided I was going to go to school, went to a Baptist school in St. Paul, Minnesota, Bethel College, and then, left there in two years and went to the University of Minnesota and started my career in Kinney in May of 1949.

SI: What did you study when you went to school?

CA: Business.

KT: That was your major the whole time or did you change?

CA: I don't have a degree. … I never finished. I did three years and they offered me a good deal in Kinney's and I took it. So, I started my career as an assistant manager in a shoe store in Minneapolis and, after two years, I got my first store in Madison, Wisconsin, and then, Madison was the start of … my career in Kinney.

SI: What do you remember about those early years? What was it like to run a shoe store at the start of the 1950s, with all of the GIs settling in suburbia? What were the challenges of that time period?

CA: … We were married in 1950. … I didn't have a store yet, but I was doing pretty good, you know. I was learning the trade as an assistant manager and things like that and it was a good job. I wasn't getting rich, but, you know, we had everything we needed. We had a new car. June was a nurse, so, she was working. So, you know, we did pretty good. … In 1952, to answer your question, … it was a competitive area. You wanted to do better than anybody else. You see all those guys on that bulletin there? You wanted to be number one, you wanted to be recognized. You wanted the biggest sales gain, if you were a store manager. If you were an assistant manager, you wanted to be the best salesman in that store. You wanted to excel--you wanted to be the best window trimmer, you wanted to be able to do the books, you wanted to do everything. You kind of learned you wanted to be the best, because we knew, in our company, the cream would go to the top and the company wasn't so large that you could get lost in the shuffle. … I was fortunate enough to do a good job and not get lost in any shuffle. … Then, as guys retire, as guys fail and change jobs, positions opened up and that's the way it opened up for me. In 1952, the manager of the store in Madison, Wisconsin, was demoted, wasn't doing a good job. In a shoe store, it's a very personal thing. You had to be a good shoe salesman, first of all. … You've got to do a lot of things--and a lot of things very good--and, if you miss a few of those things, it's recognized right away. … Instead of having a sales gain, you might have a sales loss. If you have too many people on the floor, you're not going to make any money. You've got a lot of different gauges of performance and, you know, this [the prewar sales bulletin] is one of them right there, boy. I felt pretty good. Here, I'm fourteen years old and I'm the fifth best salesman in the area. So, the manager was demoted [in 1952] and the reason he was demoted is he and his wife were running the store and he hadn't been trained properly. He wasn't a good shoe salesman or he was lazy or something like that. So, I was checked into that store. The district manager went in, fired the guy and here comes Cameron Anderson. We take an inventory, gives me the keys, "It's your store." Now, I'd been assistant manager in one of the bigger stores, so, I knew what was going on, and so on, and so forth. … I just did a few things and, all of the sudden, … the sales gains were there in that store.

SI: Do you remember what you did to increase sales?

CA: Yes, yes. … Have you ever been a bridesmaid in a wedding or anything like that?

KT: Yes.

CA: Where you have to have shoes tinted?

KT: Yes.

CA: At that time, we sold, in our stores, white linen shoes, Stock Number 91221-92221, three [dollars], ninety-nine [cents], tinted any color, yellow, pink, blue, anything. Now, in our Minneapolis store, we did pretty good with them, but I got in this store, this store manager didn't have enough of them in stock and he had them buried in the window. I was checked in in May, which is prom time, graduation time. So, I wrote a letter to a guy in New York and I said, "Hey, I'm the new manager. Give me a chance. Send me 144 pair of those shoes." So, when I got them in, a couple weeks later, I tinted one pink and yellow and baby blue, put them on the front of the window, put [out] a big sign, "Wait one hour, you get your color," something like that, I said. … In business, you don't need … to sell everything on every shoe, but that was enough to give impetus to the store and, all of a sudden, I'm in the store less than six weeks and I'm having big sales gains. The other guy had losses, and it was because of that one little thing. Now, maybe I was a better shoe salesman, I cleaned up the store, I cleaned up the windows, trimmed the windows and things like that, and that got me started. … The fellow that answered my beck-and-call--first of all, when you're a young guy, we didn't call New York at that time. Boy, … New York was on such a high hill there, that you're just a lowly store manager. I wrote him a letter, … but, on the bottom of the letter, I said, "Give me a chance," and he gave me a chance and I thank him every time I see him. "Hey, you know what, (John Homsley?)? You gave me a chance," and so, … I developed a good sales crew. In the shoe business, have you ever been in a shoe store where you walk into a store and you've got to poke around and no one comes up and waits on you and you're kind of on your own. … Hey, someone will say, … "Can you help me?"

SI: Yes.

CA: You've been that [way]? Not in my store--you always had someone on the door of that store, [who said], "Nice to have you come into our store today. Can I help you?" did that, and another thing that we did in the store, high pressure, a lot of people look at shoe salesmen as high pressure. "A pair of socks, need some socks?" you've been confronted by that in a shoe store? "Need the shoe polish? How about a pair of house slippers?" you know, a little high pressure. … One thing we did was what we called "TO." Selling shoes is a highly personal thing, you know. When you and I buy a shirt or a suit, they can cut that baby and make them fit, right? let it out, take it in, so on, and so forth. Shoes [have] got to kind of fit and, sometimes, it's very difficult for a gal or a guy to find a shoe they want, so [that] it really fits. … Sometimes, the salesman, he'd get tired of the customer, sometimes, the personality, because this was all one-on-one salesmanship. This wasn't racks, like you have in Payless shoe store or a K-Mart store, it was personal service, and we had what we called the TO and a TO was this. If Kristie comes into our store and she said, "I just can't find," the shoe that she wants, "This one doesn't fit, wrong color," things like that, and [if], pretty soon, you kind of sense that Kristie is getting a little teed off, she might go without buying, the standard thing was, "Say, you know what? I'd like to introduce you to the manager of the store, Cameron Anderson. He's been a shoe salesman for a long time. Maybe he can find one for you. You see all those shoes on that wall? We've got ten thousand pair of shoes up there. You know, we might find one that's right for you, just give us the time to do it." … I did that. I took every TO in every store when I was a store manager--high pressure, if you want, but I thought it was customer service--and that's another little key to success. … I did that all the way up my career, until I was promoted to district

management, and then, I tried to teach that philosophy. We all talked about it, but it's one thing to talk a philosophy, another thing to do it, and it's that kind of philosophy that works, but the tough thing is to get people to do it. … Somehow, my personality and the way I led the troops, they did that. So, I was pretty successful as a district manager.

SI: You told us at lunch that Kinney, as a company, had not really done a lot of development in terms of upper management. At this point, they had kept the same older generation of employees in place.

CA: Yes.

SI: You were one of the first beneficiaries of their attempt to bring new blood in.

CA: Yes.

SI: Can you tell us about that again?

CA: Oh, the Kinney Company was not a large company in the early '50s and, probably, [was] doing less than forty, fifty million dollars' worth of business when I was promoted to district management. … In '54, the company still had the remnants of the executives that had carried the company through the Depression and someone had the vision, that, "We've got to get young blood," so-to-speak, "moving up through the ranks." … Based upon my performance in the Madison store and Fargo, North Dakota--I managed two stores--you know, I just had added sales gains, kept the store clean, worked hard, so [that] I wouldn't get fired. There's a little fear in here, too, [if] you do a lousy job, knowing my dad had been disappointed one time in his career--not because he wasn't doing a good job, but they expected the St. Paul store to do X number of dollars, [he] did ninety percent or eighty percent of it and they're going to try someone else, you know. That's what happened to my dad. So, then, there's a little fear there, you know. After all, I've got a wife and our daughter was [born]. We were married three years before we had any children, you know. Hey, man, you've got to have a paycheck coming to you. … I didn't inherit anything in my life. So, there's a little fear factor in there. So, that kind of keeps you going. So, I was fortunate enough that I had some of these talents that they recognized and they pulled me out. I was passed over about six or seven different guys in that district, who had more experience than I did in running a store, but they're a little bit older than I was. Whatever they saw in me, the guys that selected me for the job, didn't see in someone else. So, I was my dad's boss at one time. … My dad wrote an article in the *Kinney World* [the company's house organ]. He said that was a real thrill, for his son [to be] district manager. That's a pretty big job, yes. I made ten thousand dollars a year--that was not bad in 1954--plus expenses and a car. Man, I was high on the hog.

KT: Not bad at all.

SI: Where were you living at that point? Where were you based out of?

CA: Well, St. Paul, Minnesota, when I was promoted to district manager in '54, in Minneapolis, Minnesota, but I was in Fargo, had managed the Fargo store. I'd done a good [job]. The

Madison store did about 120,000 [dollars], the Fargo Store did 250,000, so, that was a promotion, more salary, bigger bonus. … Then, I went from there on to district management. The Fargo store didn't even do that much, 225, 230, and we had some stores [that] were doing three to four hundred thousand, in Minneapolis, but … I went over those guys and some of those guys were really teed off, that, hey, here's a young guy that went above them, but … someone had a vision. Can you see how, instead of taking an old guy, fifty years old, because he's been around a long [time], just take a young guy and see what he can do? and that's … a good management philosophy for me. … Likewise, they did the same thing when I got the East Coast running very good. They put me out in the Midwest and gave me more challenges. Sometimes, I think … you can give people in management challenges that may not [be] beyond their ability, but they've got to reach to succeed [at] it and that's a good thing. You've got to reach. So, every job that I've had, I just didn't grow in it, I had to reach a little bit to make that new job successful.

KT: Did you feel stressed out at all by the pressures of management?

CA: Oh, yes, yes, it's a dual thing. Number one, at a certain phase of your life, you're worried about your family, you're worrying about your career. My dad had been demoted. … When I look back, that was a very startling thing that happened, and so, you feel that. So, you want to do a good job, really for yourself. The results in the companywide, you know, speak for themselves, but you're kind of worried about yourself and I was worried about myself as a store manager. I worried about myself as a district manager. In Minneapolis, I had about twenty-five stores--I wanted all those twenty-five stores to perform. So, you have responsibility. You travel [to] a store, spend a day in the store, make sure it was clean, make sure that he was ordering the merchandise and doing everything that you could do, and then, try to give him a [boost], buy him a steak at night and take him out to West Fargo and buy him a steak at the West Fargo Grill and get some of those Northern potatoes that they do a great job [on]. … You like hash brown potatoes? best place, Westside Fargo Buffet, Fargo, North Dakota; [laughter] take him, buy him a steak, you know, make him feel good, give him a lift. … Sometimes, you had to kick him in the rear-end, too. People are different. So, when it comes to management, you know, you've got to apply many, many different techniques to motivate people. Some guys just don't motivate, you know, got to get rid of them. … Let's see, where we going? I got off on that damn Fargo again. … What were you on, training, Shaun?

SI: We were discussing training. Kristie had asked if being in management was stressful.

CA: Yes, stress, okay, the stress is … getting people to perform. You've got two sections--really, three sections--yourself, getting your people to perform, and then, number two, when you're president, you worry about, "Are you doing enough running the company?" … You feel for your people, "Are you providing the opportunity, are you providing the security, for your people? Do they have adequate dental plans? Do they have medical? Are their salaries correct?" You pick up different things that you worry about, in addition to, "Hey, am I doing a better job? Are my people? Am I doing a better job than people in the industry? Is Kinney doing better than Thom McAn?" [Editor's Note: Thom McAn was once the largest shoe chain in the United States, reaching its peak in the 1970s. By the 1990s, changing consumer trends resulted in downsizing, and currently Thom McAn no longer exists as an independent retailer, but as a shoe line in Kmart stores within the US.] You pick up an individual challenge to be the

best booker, as to who wants to be the best shoe company. The proudest moment in my life was when I had the largest shoe company in the world. I had a champagne reception for the people, took them up to the World Trade Center. I was a charter member of the World Trade Center Club, way up on top. We had a champagne party up there when we hit two million [billion?] dollars. That was a real thrill for me, because I figured I had done as much as I could do. … That's why, when people fail, I always said to myself, "Did they fail because of something that I didn't do to help their career along?" … Those are three different areas of, if you want to call it stress, but … those are things that are very vivid for me. You have good questions--you've got to give me another one. [laughter]

SI: I would like to go over your career chronologically.

CA: Okay. … Where am I here? [Mr. Anderson reads from his memoir], "Cameron Anderson, number one, 1940-1944, part-timer, Store 114, Wausau, Wisconsin. 1945-1946, US Army, 264th Field Artillery Battalion. 1947, '48 and '49, Bethel College and University of Minnesota. 1950-1951, Assistant Manager, Store 639, Minneapolis, Minnesota. 1952-1953, Manager 94, Madison, Wisconsin. 1953-'54, Manager 307, Fargo, North Dakota. 1955," this was the big promotion, "District Manager, Minneapolis, Minnesota." Those were stores that stretched from Sheboygan, Wisconsin, through the Twin Cities, to Billings, Montana. "1955, District Manager in the New York area." I had the stores in the New York area. That was a real [challenge]. You talk about a real challenge. Remember, I talked about challenges? That one almost did me under--I was lucky to get out of here. …

SI: Before we go on, can you tell us what the challenges of that period were? New York is obviously an immense metropolitan area.

CA: Yes, yes, and we had a lot of small stores here and they had not been doing that good. The central expansion of our company was a Midwestern company. … While we're based in New York, we had more stores in the Midwest, for whatever reason. … We had a lot of competition in the New York area and the New York area [of Kinney] had not grown. So, they gave me that area and, for a year, we did pretty good. … Then, in 1959, I did okay, got another promotion, and that's when I operated all our stores along the East Coast--roughly draw a line from Pittsburgh south to Pensacola, Florida, everything east of there, border to border, coast to coast. That was a big job, [because] that was about a third of the company at that time. … Then, whatever I did, I did good enough that they say, "Hey, I might go someplace." So, that's when they said, "We're going to give you additional opportunities and a different exposure to the rest of the world," and I went back to the Midwest and lived in Chicago and operated our stores from Cleveland to the Rocky Mountains. We'd had a division on the West Coast at that time. So, I had operated two-thirds of all the stores. … I'd just about been in every town in America, knew every shopping center. It's up to a divisional manager to put his stamp on all the real estate, you know, all the malls. Someone had to approve them, … we had to sign off on those things. So, the responsibilities were all over the place. You've got to have the right shoes, got to have the right people and things like that. So, you had a lot of administration to do and a lot of decisions have to be made. Now, he could decide--if I don't want a store in Elmwood Shopping Center, you don't get a store in Elmwood Shopping Center. If you wanted a store in the Garden State

Plaza, you put [in to] the real estate department, "Hey, get us a store there." So, you had, really, quite a bit of authority.

SI: Had the company come up with the strategy of focusing on enclosed malls at this point or did that come later?

CA: Well, no, that goes hand-in-hand. … There's two steps there. You had, basically, strip malls that began early. One, a classic strip mall, I don't know if you've ever seen it, is down here in East Paterson, [New Jersey], … Elmwood Park Shopping Center. It was just a strip of stores, sometimes [with a] J. C. Penney, usually a variety store, a Woolworth or Kresge's, and an apparel store. That was the first one, strips. … Some of the first major malls in America were Southdale [Center] in Minneapolis, [Edina, a suburb of Minneapolis], which was designed by a big architect, Arthur [Victor] Gruen, Northland [Center] in Detroit, [Southfield, a suburb of Detroit]. These were the 750, million square foot malls and they started a little later, the strip malls, probably 1952, '53 and '54, and we opened up in those. We were fortunate that we had the finances to open up in just about any location. We were never limited, so-to-speak, in the '60s, because of financial restraints, and in the late '50s. Did you ever remember a store, Robert Hall [Clothes, Inc.]?

SI: No.

CA: These are apparel stores on the highway. Well, in the late '50s, '57, '58, '59, and through the '60s, … before the big super malls got going, there were roadside stores. If you come up Route 17, you passed an old Kinney Shoe Store. It's a green store now, Metropolitan Plant [and Flower] Exchange; you probably missed it. … Down in Woodbridge, New Jersey, where [Routes] 1 and 9 intersect, just north of the Parkway, there's an old Kinney Shoe Store there. We opened over five hundred freestanding stores on the roadside. That was a very brilliant strategy and we don't do it today, because, well, first of all, there was more growth, but it gave us an unusual position within the market. One time, we had, I think, fifty freestanding stores in Los Angeles, but, then, as the big malls developed in the '70s, those stores felt the impact of that. The store on Route 17--when you go down Route 17, past Ridgewood Avenue, you look on the left--we closed that store up and went into a shopping center, the big shopping centers. … One time, we were up to thirteen hundred Kinney Family Shoe Stores, when I left, and so, then, we took every mall in America. A mall opens up--we had a store in it. We had very few shopping centers that we missed, that we didn't have a presence in, and the same way with Foot Locker. Foot Locker, we started in '74 and, initially, we had to limit ourselves to certain markets, like, we had, I think, eight stores in Minneapolis and St. Paul before we opened up any in Milwaukee. In other words, we'd saturated the market, and so, that's the way we grew. … Okay, does that answer that question?

SI: Yes. When you were managing the East Coast and the Midwest, you were, at that point, mostly focusing on the freestanding stores.

CA: Well, yes, yes, freestanding, strip, because, at one time, we were taking the strips, the malls and the free standers. We had three different type stores that would fit the popular price shoe market.

SI: Were you in charge of all the styles and brands under Kinney or were you focusing on the Kinney brand? Would they have different management for these other brands?

CA: What brands are you talking about?

SI: I know today, for example, they have Foot Locker, Lady Foot Locker, Kids Foot Locker.

CA: No, no, the Kinney brand was Kinney alone. We had no brand names at all in that. We had our own brand names. … Educator was a name that [we had].

SI: I am thinking more of the name of the store rather than the brand of the shoes.

CA: Oh, just Kinney, yes.

SI: It was just Kinney. Did Stylco come later?

CA: Stylco? Well, that was a division in discount department stores. In other words, you could look at a Stylco store and you didn't know that was a Kinney Shoe Store, I mean, that it was managed by Kinney. … We operated Stylco departments in, you know, K-Mart type stores. Grand Way is an example, Gemco on the West Coast and Turn Style in Chicago. … We had the stores in the Woolco stores, too--remember Woolco? [Editor's Note: The Woolco discount retail chain was operated by the F. W. Woolworth Company from 1962 to 1982.] So, we had a division that operated that and that came under my leadership when, in 1971--or '74, it was--when … I was given the whole US operation. My whole job up until '74 was just Kinney Shoes in the United States. At that time, we had … an executive vice president and I reported to him, the guy that ran Stylco reported to him, the guy that--we had a small chain of women's apparel stores we called Susie [Casuals]--they reported to him. So, we had an Executive Vice President US and, on a table of organization chart, I was one of those guys, but … I did most of the business in Kinney Shoe Stores and that was up until 1974. … So, you had the sales manager of the Kinney Shoe Stores and your primary thing--the buyers didn't report to you, they had a vice president, who I reported to and who the buyers reported to--and mine was advertising, motivation, meetings, all the store things, keep the stores clean and things like that, … as well as the real estate and things like that. … Then, the other guy handled the buyers and that lasted until '74. … At that particular point, I got all the US operations then. I had the Stylco, had the Susie Stores, apparel stores, had the Kinney Stores, the whole enchilada in the United States, except the factories. The factories always reported to the president. … At that time, because I was in charge of US operations, that is where the responsibility for Foot Locker fell on me. … At that time, we'd bought a company in Australia and we had expanded into Canada, but I had nothing to do with that. … I was part of the purchase of a company in Australia. They'd give you different assignments, you know. It's not strictly straight-laced, but one of the guys in the company, … one of the executives, had been to a shoe show in Canada and we were one of the first shoe stores that opened up a store without windows, just pull up a gate. … A guy from Australia by the name of Williams ran into this other guy and said, "Hey, you know, we have a family company [Williams the Shoemen] in Australia and it's a lot like your company. Our company is getting old. Maybe you might want to look at us," and it was kind of an open

invitation to go down there. … The president of the company, at that time, assigned me and another fellow to go to Australia, said, "Go down there, take a look at that company." Why? I don't know. They did twelve million dollars' worth of business, twelve thousand miles from home. I didn't quite understand, but I'll take a trip around that. … In the meantime, we had had the Woolco stores and Woolco, … Woolworth, wanted us to look at their operation in England. So, the guy says, … "As long as you're going to Australia, why don't you stop in England, too?" So, another guy, we made a trip around the world, first trip I ever made around the world, … twenty-four hours from New York, three stops, San Francisco, Honolulu, (Nandi?) and Sidney; then, on the way home, Perth, Singapore, Beirut, Rome and London. It's kind of fun. I thought it was pretty good for a kid from Wausau, Wisconsin, moving up through the ranks, get a big assignment. [laughter] So, we went down to look at the company and came back with a very favorable [review]. The thing was just like us, bought them for three-and-a-half million dollars. It's now the biggest retailer in Australia. … So, while in a company you get, you know, some straight-laced assignments, there are other things that you have to do, and so, that's where we bought Australia. Now, we're down in Australia. I think I must have made twenty-five trips to Australia in that period of time.

SI: You told us this at lunch, but I would love to get how Foot Locker came about on tape.

CA: … Okay, Foot Locker. In Kinney, we had done a really remarkable job selling, because we were a low-priced company, … athletic footwear. Athletic footwear, in a degree, for a gal like Kristie, was just a pair of little, we call them tennis shoes, white ones. You had your red, yellow and blue and things like that. … You probably never heard of Joe Lapchick. Joe Lapchick was a big-time Eastern basketball coach, was one of the original Celtics, which … I call it "the white man's [Harlem] Globetrotters." They did exhibition games in the '30s and he was a college mate of one of the presidents of the company and we licensed him. We sold Joe Lapchick Tennis Shoes and every kid in America had a pair of tennis shoes. You've had a pair. You probably had [Converse] All-Stars. Kids who wanted a three-[dollar-and]-ninety-nine-[cent] shoe bought Joe Lapchick's in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and we did a tremendous job on that, really a tremendous job. … We knew how to buy them, we knew how to merchandize them, we knew the quantities we needed and we really excelled on that. The reason we know we excelled is that we did a lot of consumer research, number one, on advertising awareness. They know where you're at, what do you sell, what's your feeling towards a Kinney Shoe Store. … The other [reason] was--I call it a product--I liked this one very much, because I felt, when I was running Kinney, I knew every shoe that was sold in America. I knew that, in Detroit, that you had to have a special shoe where the neoprene rubber would stand up to the oil in an automobile plant. So, we put a special sole on shoes just for Detroit, individual merchandizing like that. So, we were able to see our strength and our weaknesses, and we had weaknesses, too, and we tried to correct that and capitalize on the strength, which is elementary. … A fellow by the name of Bob Lando--I missed his name downtown--was an attorney in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, that opened up the first complete store that sold athletic footwear. [Editor's Note: Robert and David Lando opened the Athlete's Foot Store, which was the first athletic footwear specialty store of its kind in the United States, in 1971.] Here, before that, they were sold in Herman's [World of Sporting Goods], Modell's [Sporting Goods] and, you know, might have a little shelf of Converse shoes in the branded line shoe store. … What happened was that I saw this store and I took a look at our

numbers, compared our numbers with [theirs], and I say, "Hey, you know, we know quite a bit about athletic footwear," and I said, "Maybe we should try a branded name store." …

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: Where was I so rudely interrupted?

SI: We were talking about Foot Locker and Bob Lando.

CA: Yes, Bob. Boy, you're good at remembering. … I saw the store out in Kansas City. You know, as they sing in the opening song in *Oklahoma*, or one of the songs, "Everything is grand in Kansas City," and so, I looked at the numbers, come back. … I'm going to find it, I'll show it to you. I talked to the president of the company at that time and I says, "You know, maybe we should try it out," and I wrote a business plan. … How come, Kristie, you made me take all these books down here and I can't find what I want?

KT: I made you take all the books down.

CA: Yes, it's your fault. [laughter] …

SI: Athlete's Foot was the name of the store in Pittsburgh.

CA: Athlete's Foot was the store and I actually give them credit for it here, in my memoirs. I'm repeating from my memoirs now, is that I wrote--here it is, right here--this is the original grant, take a look at that. … That's the original document that I wrote that outlined the store, what I was going to do with the store, and we got the go-ahead based on that letter. … I got approval in the first part of 1974 and we got the first store, merchandised the first store, and opened in September of the same year, which is not bad.

SI: The report is called, "Kinney on the Move: Sports and Stuff, New Growth for 1974 and Beyond."

CA: Yes, you like those names there? Funny thing there, you know, when you travel a lot--tell you how the name got started. A fellow on the other side of town was our visual merchandising director and he was a pretty good guy and we started to talk. We talked on the train going in, "What should we do?" you know. I said, "We've got to get a name." So, I said, "Give me a list of names." We put a bunch of names down. … I always tried to be out of the office by about four-fifteen, so [that] I could be home with my family. You travel a lot. We started the meeting [at] about two-thirty in the afternoon, discussing names with the advertising department, things like that, and, you know, go through all these names, [like] Sports and Stuff. You'll notice that the name here is Sports and Stuff. … Anyhow, Foot Locker came up and, in making decisions, … someone has to make the decision. … You could study things for indefinitely, but you've got to make a decision. So, after everyone made their appeal, up and down, didn't like this, didn't like that, "Foot Locker, what is Foot Locker?" "It's a thing you have at the end of a cart, at the end of a bunk in the Army." I says, "Okay, has everybody got your two cents' worth in?" I said, "I'm going to make a decision right now, but, from henceforth forward, I don't want anybody

second guessing the decision. I want everybody working to make it work. The name is Foot Locker." I picked up my bag and went home and that was it. [laughter] One guy said, "Oh, jeez, we've got to study it. We can have a research group on it." I said, "I've got to have it signed tomorrow if we're going to get a store open. I've got to give a name to the sign maker," and that's the way the name got started. Then, the story I told about George Konogeris and the thing, you know, I called George, "Hey, we're going to do it. If you see anything, give me an idea." … First of all, hey, you've got to realize that originality, you know what originality really is? undetected plagiarism. [laughter] That's the way I feel with Foot Locker. I gave Bob Lando the credit for the thing, I don't [deny that], and, within the company, I had so many guys contributing ideas that I was pretty generous in my praise, "You did a great job." Pretty soon, every one of them felt that … their idea was the whole nut that held the whole thing together. I had one guy that said that--he wrote in a letter one time, I wasn't president at that time--said, "We should have one of these athletic footwear stores in every mall in America." "Well, where in the hell are you going to put them if you don't put them in the malls?" and I blew my stack twenty-five ways. I said, "He thinks he's making his contribution," but … that would be like me telling Winston Churchill, "I think the best thing we can do [is] have to have a cross-Channel invasion. We'll be able to get Germany, you know." You know, you've got to be very …

SI: Yes, it is very obvious.

CA: You know. … I've got a note right here, "On the Field of Conquest." I call them my dazzling essays; this is the real story of business life. On my essays that I wrote, the top part is this, "It's easy to get blamed for a loss and hard to get credit on the crowded stage of victory," thought that was kind of nifty. [laughter] Well, you know, everybody likes to get a pat on the back and think they contributed, but, if Foot Locker had failed, it'd have been on my doorstep. … What's interesting, we had to get some shoes, right? [I] called up Adidas, "Hey, this is Cameron Anderson, Kinney Shoe Company." "We don't do business with chains like you." [I] call up Puma, "Oh, no, no, we don't sell shoes in cheap stores like you." So, what we did, my display director lived over here and one of my buyers and I, we went out and visited the major companies, on their turf, with signs of pictures of our store, [and explained] what we're going to do. "Be delighted to sell [to] you." Three years later, we're their biggest customers and we sold shoes at their prices. We didn't cut prices. … We set on value, quality and service and I went out and sold shoes in California in the first store that opened up. You take a look at a store, you can build a store, but you're going to change that store. … So, I was selling. … In my whole career, I never told a mother that, "Those shoes on your kid are forty bucks." When I did it for the first time, I kind of jumped back, because I figured I was going to get socked. [laughter] We were not used to selling forty-dollar shoes. Anyhow, we're sitting around the store that night. You look around the store [and ask], "How's it working?" … It was a store that had a gate that comes down. You've seen these gate stores. So, underneath, we had a blank spot, like above our doorway there. "Oh, let's fill it up with something." I said, "Let's make a sign. Let's call ourselves, 'America's Most Complete Athletic Footwear Store.'" … I said, "That's our goal--we're going to live up to that," and we did. Then, the rest is history. [laughter] How long [is] this thing here? This dialogue's going to take a month for someone [to transcribe]. Who transcribes it?

KT: Me.

CA: Oh, my God, oh, I feel sorry for you. You come back, I'll buy you another sandwich someday. [laughter]

SI: At lunch, you had also mentioned that in-between the founding of Foot Locker and when you became president, there was some resistance to spreading Foot Locker.

CA: Yes.

SI: Why was that and what shape did that take?

CA: … They were scared it wasn't going to work and, yet, I had the sales--they're good. "You get ten stores this year," ten stores, something like that, and even with the vast power of persuasion and what I wanted to do, I couldn't … [convince] them [to open more stores]. … No, I'm not going to get into that, because … I don't think the president at that time and my boss at that time were convinced that it was a lasting thing. I was at a funeral in New York sometime, '76, '77, and the president of a very major shoe company tapped me out. This was an industry guy that passed away. He says, "Cam, what are you going to do with all those stores when they stop buying sneakers?" This is a guy that ran a company bigger than Kinney, and so, there was a lot of [skepticism]. They didn't understand it or maybe I was, you know, on the other side of the coin, and I think this is maybe more true. The way we operated our stores, the way we merchandised our stores, the way that we could ask developers, the people, to make shoes for us--some of the shoes, they made just especially for us--helped create the industry. Now, another big thing that happened, companies like Converse could have done it, companies like US Keds--you ever have a pair of Keds, with the little blue tab in the back?--could have done it, but Nike came on and did it, with basketball. Basketball, we knew, in our stores, was very important--Reebok didn't do it--and we knew the power of basketball. So, we knew how to merchandise it and how to buy that. … I still think that we should give Michael Jordan a heck of a lot of credit, because he broke that barrier. When you have kids with hundred-dollar bills standing in the front of your store, wanting to buy a pair of his sneakers and we're the only ones that got them--I had it kind of easy, really. Now, it's a different story. It's a different story now because you pick up [where] Modell's and everything got a whole line of shoes, all half price, but it's affected the margins. They're not making the money that I made as a percent, or anything like that, now, but it's in the formative days where we really did [great sales]. … Everybody wants a piece of success and I've had to beat the doors. I don't want anybody to get overly praised for their part of Foot Locker--I mean, I bless the team. I've been very, very thankful I had a team that put it together, but there is no one on the outside that, if Foot Locker would have failed, that would [hesitate] to say, "Well, it was Cam's fault."

SI: Once you became president in 1979, it seems that you really took off with the idea of differentiation of store brands. Is store brand the right term, for Lady Foot Locker, Kids Foot Locker?

CA: … Well, no, no, actually, what I did is that we still had the same store brands, but, number one, I didn't have to … [concern] myself with the discount business, because, … when they closed up the Woolco stores, our discount business went down the tube. We had some other

accounts, but I didn't want anything to do with that. So, we closed them up. … The Kinney Shoe Stores were still very, very good and we had some of our best profit years in the '80s. The '80s were good years for retail. We had a recession in '81 and '82. That's when we had ten percent unemployment in the United States. Now, whether we're heading for that now, I really don't know, but, anyhow, in the '80s, … I had a very, very successful run as president. I didn't have too many worries--that Kristie tried to remind me of [laughter]--but you have worries. … I took a company that had over a hundred million dollars in debt and, when I left, we had a hundred million dollars in cash. We're the largest shoe company in the world. Yes, anybody can sit down and find a fly in the ointment, but I've got enough numbers here, I can kind of knock them guys down. [laughter]

SI: Where did the idea come from for Lady Foot Locker and for all of these different store divisions?

CA: Oh, that was simple, that was simple, "Let's open up a Lady Foot Locker store," just like that. We designed the Kids Foot Locker going in on the train one day with my friend on the other side of town. That was no problem at all. Then, of course, we did the parallel thing up in Canada, too, at that time. … You know, that was just a natural [progression]. … We had some pretty good guys, pretty good buyers and … a vision. … An example, we had the general manager, … in 1975, I put a guy in charge of Foot Locker. I kind of ran it in '74--in '76. For a couple years, I ran it, along with the district manager. It was kind of a toy, to be honest with you. Anything you put in it worked, … but, then, I had expanded the buying staff, but, from the standpoint of the advertising, it all ran kind of piggyback with Kinney. You know, they did a little on Foot Locker, a little on Kinney. … Then, I divided the thing up in '78 or '79, something like that, so [that] they had their own responsibility. We had to get our own warehouse and things like that. So, it was a freestanding unit from '79 on, something like that, and [had our] own buying staff, own floor, and we were in the Woolworth Building, had our own floor, so that they operated independent of any other division of the company. Now, of course, from the standpoint of accounting and things like that, … that was all handled at a corporate level.

SI: Is there anything else to note?

CA: Well, I'm putting it in your hands. I don't know if I'm answering your question. I'll go on here, and then, I'll stop and it's up to you to pick up the pace.

SI: Are there any other achievements from your time as president of Kinney that you would like to talk about? What do you think was your greatest failure? What was something that did not attain the level of success that you thought it would?

CA: No, it's like George [W.] Bush, "I never had any failure." [laughter] Well, let me think about that before we go on--I guess, from on the outside, was my recognition of the industry. … We had a trade association and, as president of the company, and even before I was president, you have to participate in that. There are nationwide, industry-wide problems that have to be solved and our company was always at the forefront of that and that … took time in Washington; as an example, the picture with George Bush there.

SI: The photo is with George H. W. Bush.

CA: And the shoe industry was very, very competitive. It was really cutthroat, when I looked at it. We used to get together at our various trade conventions and things like that and be friends, but, jeez, in the marketplace, it was really, really cutthroat. As an example, Thom McAn, when we opened up the first freestanding stores, Thom McAn grabs that idea right away and opened freestanding stores right next to us. The shoe industry had been created--we were monkeys, we were all the same--we changed the label in some of the shoes, we all bought the same penny loafers, from a company up in Maine, put a Kinney label, a Thom McAn label, [an] Edison Brothers label in. So, there was really a sameness to the shoe industry and very, very, competitive. … A lot of those companies aren't with us today. The Kinney Shoe Company went by the wayside in the early '90s. They don't exist today, neither does Thom McAn. Florsheim used to be an eight-hundred-million-dollar company, does 120 million today. So, it's a vibrant, competitive industry and we didn't have anybody that, you know, necessarily patted you on the back. The Woolworth Company had a lot of trials and tribulations. We were very important to their success and, you know, you like to get a pat on the back every now and then. … I guess my greatest pat on the back is this right here, is that … we did have a critic of the industry, a writer. He wrote a newsletter about the shoe industry. … At the end of the decade, he wrote a piece here, he called it "Sports Intelligence." Oh, by the way, this [photograph] is the original team that did Foot Locker, right there. You know what that is? That's in 1975, in Las Vegas. I told the guys, "We're going to have a contest and, if we do good at back to school, I'll take you all to Las Vegas." "What are the rules, Cam?" "I told you the rules. If you do good, you make me happy, we're all going to go to Las Vegas--no rules." We all went to Las Vegas and this is probably the most important meeting, that when I look back on that, we had, because these were the store managers, these were the buyers and things like that. … For four or five days, we did nothing but talk about what we've done, what worked, what [we] didn't do and what we could look forward to. … If we didn't have that meeting, who knows? but we were able to have that meeting. It was good. The guys went to Las Vegas. … Here, a guy wrote a thing, "Shoe Intelligence: The Top Fifteen of the Millennium."

SI: Yes, you sent us this.

CA: Oh, I sent you that. … I was pretty happy about that.

SI: Was that at the end of the 1980s?

CA: … Oh, yes, that was long after I retired, … and so, I felt that that recognition was pretty good. Here's a copy of one of my [talks]--here, read that. I don't know if you can read it. When I used to make talks, I would print them out, but, then, all of a sudden, I'd want to change them--I never retyped them. … This is what I said about those who were on the fence--you mentioned that in the other thing, you know--and I took a shot at them in my retirement. I figured that I could do it when I'm making my retirement talk. I went all the way around the country, sixteen manager meetings, made the same talk, and, you know, you have to be kind of careful when you start criticizing or question or don't get on the bandwagon, and I was determined [that] guys that irked me a little bit during the formative days were not going to get on the bandwagon when it was good. Is that selfish, Kristie? What would you think about that?

KT: I do not know.

CA: "Jeez, if you weren't with me … [then], why are you with me now? Just because of the glory," you say.

KT: I think that is true.

CA: Yes.

SI: Today, do you still stay in contact with any of the people in charge of Foot Locker, even though you have retired?

CA: No, no. After twenty years, they don't even recognize you in the store anymore. You know, things change. … When I retired, we stayed right here and I had Kurt Janke, Larry (Larson?), I had three guys in the area here that were executives, fellows that grew up with me in the company and worked with me. [I] had a couple of guys down in Jersey, had a real estate guy. We had about six or eight guys here. We'd get together and say how great we were, you know, a self-admiration society, but, you know, after twenty years, this is not the cheapest place to live in the world. Number two, we lost some of them, some of them gone to Florida, don't like it up here. So, I really only have two guys left here that were, you know, quote, "executives" in my era, that I was their boss through the '80s and the '70s. … It's now Foot Locker. So, from a piece of paper there that you just read, that's what transpired, but it's thirty years [ago]. … It's been a good thirty years. I'm eighty-three years old now, still able to take nourishment and all that sort of stuff. So, that's kind of nice.

SI: It is remarkable how the whole concept of Foot Locker came about.

CA: Oh, another thing that I was particularly proud of is that, when you're in the Foot Locker business, you try to do things, have some public relations projects and things like that, and we developed some very nice "non," quote, "business" business service to the people. … A football coach was very helpful to me, a fellow [by the] name of George Allen, the old football coach, whose son was the Senator from Missouri. He was chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports during the Reagan years and I was a special advisor to the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, which was pretty good, because that was an organization, by the White House, that was used to promote good health in America and things like that. [Editor's Note: NFL and NCAA coach George H. Allen served as chairman of the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports from 1981 to 1987. He was the father of George F. Allen, who served as Governor of Virginia and US Senator from Virginia.] So, I got a chance to meet Donald Trump, sat on the dais with him, Donald Trump and George Allen, and met [Charles Burnham] "Bud" Wilkinson, the football player. … George Allen was a good friend of Richard Nixon, who lived over here, and he had an open house, not an open house, but he had a reception there, got a chance to meet him. [Editor's Note: Former President Richard Nixon lived in Saddle River, New Jersey, from 1981 to 1990.] So, yes, I got a chance to meet some of the, quote, "dignitaries" of the sporting goods field. I used to get a lot of razz on that. One guy [said], "Cameron, I can't believe that you're on the President's Council on Physical

Fitness and Sports and you're as fat as you are." [laughter] … Let me see, I've made a couple of notes here, see if there's something.

SI: From what I read, Foot Locker was very involved in encouraging things like cross-country and basketball camps for kids, for example.

CA: Yes, they were on last week. … They sponsor that Slam Dunk contest, [with] the NBA [All-Star Weekend], yes. We did a lot of that. Oh, hey, there's one thing that I want to [say]. You talked about--this is going back now to the war--that I thought I'd pass along, because it really affected my life and I think you might be interested in it. I don't know the exact dates--I have them someplace, but I'll be doggoned if I can find them--but the Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated April 23rd, 24th or 25th, in that era there, and we moved into Erding, Germany, after that five-day, … 275-mile trip where we got strafed and dug water out of the roadside to keep our radiators filled. [laughter] [Editor's Note: The Dachau Concentration Camp was liberated by American forces on April 29, 1945.] … That really must have been--I'd like to have seen what we looked like, eating K rations and all stuff like that--and we got down to Munich and that's when we were in Erding and that must have been about the 7th, 8th of May. … The one you got, you have a different one than I have, I think there are some dates in a couple of those that go beyond, I think. …

SI: What are you looking for?

CA: I'm looking for the date that we were in Erding, Germany. It'd be towards the tail end of it.

SI: I see May 5th through May 11th.

CA: Yes. At that time, we had a lieutenant, Jewish lieutenant there, and what was his name? I remember he was a Jewish guy, but, anyhow, he said, "Would anybody like to see a concentration camp?" … He said, "I'm going to get a six-by-six truck. You can get over and we can see Dachau, see what it was really like." So, I got in Dachau, one of the German concentration camps, when it was like you see on television today, and it … really affected my whole life, because I saw things that you couldn't imagine, unimaginable things--people still in the crematoriums and things like that. … Up until I read one of Eisenhower's books, I could never understand why Eisenhower permitted the troops to go in there, until he said, this is fifty years later, he wanted as many GIs to see that as possible, because, sometime in the future, people will say the Holocaust never happened, and that came about. … Of all the things that, quote, "affected" my life in the service, that one was really profound. … Today, I cannot look at the news. You see in newsreels, every now and then, you know, carting out the bodies and things like that--I can't take that. As an example, I didn't see the movie *Schindler's List* [(1993)] --I couldn't take it. So, that's one of the more somber things that happened. It affected me, you know, a hundred years later. I thought … I'd like to have that put into the notes, because it's one of those things in life.

SI: Sure.

CA: I hope no one ever sees it, never has to go through that again, but, when you see something like that, you can't believe it. …

[TAPE PAUSED]

CA: He kept the [Army] Air Force Band going during the war.

SI: This is Ray McKinley.

CA: Ray McKinley, and, on July 1, 1945, Cameron Anderson was one of forty thousand other troops in Nuremberg Stadium that attended the concert by the Glenn Miller Band. Not in here is the fact that we also were entertained by Ingrid Bergman, and Jack Benny. Oh, hey, here's something else I sent home. This is an Esso roadmap from a gas station--I forget where I stole this one [from]. You know, … on those articles in the *New York Times*, he didn't have to say I stole the article. You know, on my original notes, when I made my original notes on the 1382 [document], I said, "People are going to say I stole it--I rescued it," things like that, but everybody says I stole it, so, I stand convicted on that. Well, that's another thing I stole. Okay, … we've talked about a GI looking real combat-y there, and then, I mean, … that's the way we looked. We talked about standing with the boots off, going in the Rhine River. Here's … part of the gun crew that we had. This is Kenny Perry; this is the golfer's dad. We talked about him. Let's see what we got here. I told you that we were flashes; we got our march order to cross the Rhine River at two-o-five in the afternoon and we were, eleven howitzers were, ready to fire at midnight. So, that's not bad. That's, … from two o'clock until midnight, ten hours to get across the Rhine River and … ready to fire. We talked about the gun, the crew, the breech. … We had to be careful here. We didn't want to fire in these trees. That'd be bad. … When we fired here, we looked … up the gun to make sure we were high enough. Otherwise, you'd get a tree burst and that was another no-no. … This is where the outfit got started, went here, all the way around here, the Battle of the Bulge, Bad Godesberg. This is where I joined them, right here, all the way up here, down to here, all the way down there and I've been back to a lot of these spots, but … you can't recognize anything today. I thought for sure I could see some of the holes we dug by Bad Godesberg and, you know, … it just doesn't work out.

SI: Later on in the 1970s, when you went back to Germany for business, would you conceal the fact that you had been there during the war? Would you avoid the subject?

CA: No, not at all.

SI: It was not a big deal.

CA: No, not a big deal, not a big deal. They really welcomed us back in these towns, in where I picked up the document. They were very nice to us there and that town hasn't changed that much. … It's kind of an interesting story, to some degree. I hope there's something in there that might be helpful or, you know, might bring back some memories to somebody that reads it.

SI: It is very interesting.

CA: … In my career, not too many people have gone from a lowly shoe salesman without a college degree all the way to the top, to develop the largest shoe company in the world, and got industry recognition. So, I feel, you know, reasonably good about myself.

KT: You really have quite an interesting story.

SI: It is a real American success story.

CA: And I'm delighted that I can participate.

SI: We are very happy that you chose to participate.

CA: I hope that it's helpful.

SI: Yes, thank you very much. We appreciate all of your time.

CA: Oh, it's not my time--I like talking about myself. [laughter]

SI: It was really great to see all of your materials. Thank you again for everything.

----------END OF INTERVIEW----------

Reviewed by Jessica Ondusko 9/18/09
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 2/20/13
Reviewed by June Anderson 3/8/13