

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY
NEW BRUNSWICK
AN INTERVIEW WITH CARL O. E. BOSENBERG
FOR THE
RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

G. KURT PIEHLER
and
CHARLES H. FLEISHER

NEW BRUNSWICK
SEPTEMBER 21, 1994

TRANSCRIPT BY
CHARLES H. FLEISHER

Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Carl Bosenberg at Rutgers University on September 21, 1994, with Kurt Piehler and ...

Charles Fleisher: Charles Fleisher.

KP: I would like to begin by talking a little bit about your parents.

Carl Bosenberg: Okay.

KP: Both of your parents were from Germany.

CB: Yes.

KP: They were both in the nursery or horticultural business.

CB: Well, my grandfather was in the horticultural business. He had five children, three boys and two girls, and all of the three boys stayed in the nursery business. One of the daughters married a nurseryman. So, basically, they remained in the horticultural business, yes.

KP: What prompted your mother and father to come to the United States?

CB: Well, his brothers and one sister had been here. ... They came during the years of about 1909 and 1912, or 1914, before World War I. My grandfather came over here in 1921. My father was the last one over there. I guess it was traditional that the oldest son carried on the business, or carried on in the footsteps of his father, so, my father, being the oldest, stayed over there until 1923. ... He felt that the inflation had gotten so out of hand [that] the value of money was nothing. Inflation got so bad that the industry paid twice a day, because, in the morning, they could go to the store and buy a loaf of bread with a wheelbarrow full of money, [laughter] and, in the afternoon, it took a wheelbarrow full and a half. So, he felt that that was not the place to try to raise a family and I think that was probably the prime reason for his leaving.

KP: Your father fought in the German Army.

CB: He fought in the German Army in World War I, yes.

KP: Which front was he on?

CB: He was on the French front, but, only for a short time, because he was wounded.

KP: Was he wounded very early in the war?

CB: Very early, and he lost his pinkie. That came off, and he had some shrapnel in his shoulder and things of that nature, and he didn't go back to the front lines. He was used in rear areas.

KP: Did he ever talk about World War I?

CB: Not a great deal. He didn't say too much about it. One thing that I do recall, he said, "War is a destructive device. Even if one pane of glass is broken, it's lost to the world forever. We're using up our natural resources," and, of course, that's a very minute thing, a pane of glass, but, it makes a point. ... I wouldn't say he was a pacifist, but, he didn't see any good coming out of the war.

KP: Did he ever see any of the war movies that came out in the 1920s and 1930s?

CB: No, I don't think he did.

KP: Did he ever see *All Quiet on the Western Front*?

CB: I doubt it. I doubt it.

KP: You were born in Germany.

CB: Yes, I was born in Germany.

KP: Do you have any memories of being in Germany?

CB: Well, I was three years old when we left there. I've got memories through pictures more than anything else. I can visualize the house that we lived in, and we were right close to a small, one track railroad station, and I recall that, when he decided to leave, he and my mom, they had a large crate built right on a railroad car, and put all of their furniture in it, and shipped it over here, to the United States.

KP: Why did your parents settle in North Brunswick?

CB: Well, his two brothers and sisters lived here. They all had nurseries. His youngest brother had a nursery on (Clyde?) Lane and Somerset. My Uncle Carl, his second youngest brother, was manager for the New Brunswick Nursery, which was on the corner of Howell Lane and Route 27, where Agway now is. His sister married a nurseryman who had a nursery on Howell Lane, also in North Brunswick.

KP: So, it was logical for your family to come to North Brunswick.

CB: Right.

KP: Your father went back into the nursery business.

CB: Oh, yes, he worked at the New Brunswick Nursery for approximately a year. We had rented a house on Livingston Avenue. Across the street from this house was a vacant lot. That kind of inspired my father to look into it. In 1924, after being here only a year, he bought the lot, eight

acres. In 1925, he started to build a house, well, he hired a contractor, and we moved into our own home in 1925.

KP: On Livingston Avenue?

CB: On Livingston Avenue. We're still there, not in the same house, [but], still on the eight acres. Just last year, in 1993, my daughter and her husband built a house on the back end of the eight acres. So, we haven't gotten very far in life. [laughter]

KP: No, you settled and really stayed put.

CB: That's right.

KP: What language was spoken in your household while you were growing up?

CB: In the household? German.

KP: How did that affect your schooling?

CB: Well, you see, I was fortunate. I had cousins here [that were] my age. I would say, I'm not bragging when I say this, within a month to six weeks, I was out playing with these kids and conversing with them rather well. You do learn languages very quickly when you're little, almost a baby, and I had approximately two years of time before I got into school. ... By that time, I could speak English.

KP: Did you mix up your German and your English?

CB: No, no, no. At home, we spoke German. I heard German. Then, it got to the point, when I started school, my mother and father would speak to me in German and I would answer them in English, [laughter] which was so much easier, but, that was no problem. Also, my parents went to night school to learn English.

KP: Were there many Germans in the nursery business in New Jersey or was it just your family that was involved?

CB: There ... were a few. In fact, Princeton Nursery, which is the largest in the Northeast, the man who owned it, he and my grandfather knew one another in Germany. ... One day, one of my uncles said [to my grandfather], "I'm going down to Princeton Nurseries. Would you like to come along?" So, he said, "Yes." He met his old friend down there at Princeton Nurseries, so, that was quite interesting for him. They were the (Flemers?). They too ... had a large nursery in Springfield, and they had one in Princeton, and then, I assume, there were other German families that had nurseries or greenhouses.

KP: It sounds like your family had a good number of nurseries in central New Jersey?

CB: Yes, I think we did, but, now, it's just down to my cousin and me. Our children are not in the business. Well, I shouldn't say that. Brian, my cousin's son, is a landscape architect and he's doing very well. ... My son is a biologist. He works for the Army Corps of Engineers in Louisiana. He has no interest in the nursery business. He's strictly an animal person. ... Well, my daughter has her Masters' in plant pathology. My cousin's daughter has a Masters' in fine arts. She went to the Mason Gross School of Arts, and then, she didn't find a very suitable job, so, she went back to Cook and got another MS in landscape architecture.

KP: The tradition continues.

CB: Pretty much.

KP: You attended the North Brunswick public schools?

CB: North Brunswick public school, one through eight, we didn't have a kindergarten in those days, and then, New Brunswick High School.

KP: Were most of the students in your school first-generation Americans?

CB: You mean the public schools?

KP: Yes.

CB: ... Probably, yes, as I think about it. We had a lot of Italian families. We had Irish, English, and Hungarian. I think that's about it.

KP: Was there a large Hungarian population?

CB: Not in North Brunswick as much as there was right here on Louis Street in New Brunswick. They all seemed to work at Johnson and Johnson.

KP: In the factory?

CB: Yes, because I got to know General Johnson rather well, because I did all of their work for them for thirty-five years, and, many times, he mentioned that the Hungarians put them on their feet.

KP: Really? Did they specifically seek to hire Hungarian workers?

CB: In fact, I think they had a program where they would pay their passage from Hungary to the United States to get them over here. They had quite a setup. Of course, they too started out a relatively small business, and then, mushroomed.

KP: What differences were there between North Brunswick and New Brunswick while you were growing up, compared with the situation today?

CB: Well, North Brunswick was a very rural area, there were many farms, and New Brunswick was a small city, which, I think, was born out by the fact that we didn't have a high school. Of course, many of the surrounding areas didn't have high schools neither. So, New Brunswick was, in essence, a regional high school. They had peoples from Milltown, Edison, Piscataway, Highland Park, North Brunswick, some South Brunswick. So, at the time when I graduated from New Brunswick, we had twenty-two hundred kids there. We were on a three-shift, staggered program. We started at three different times in the morning, had three different lunch periods, and got out at three different times in the afternoon, which, I think, in some respects, was tougher on the teachers than it was on the students. [laughter]

KP: So, there were students coming in from the surrounding farming communities, and then, you had the New Brunswick students who were city kids. Were there any tensions among the student body?

CB: No, I don't think there was tension. Some of these kids from the farm had already done half a day's work in the stable, cleaning the stable, milking the cows, and feeding the chickens, and they smelled like the farm. [laughter] They took a lot of heat for that, but, it wasn't too bad. I mean, we all got along. ... There was no violence in the school and we respected our teachers. It was not above a teacher to take a ruler and smack you across the hand, especially in grammar school. There was one that was very notorious for that. She had about a sixteen-inch ruler. You would hold your hand out and, boy, she would hit. [laughter] The spirit of the high school was very close in that [respect].

KP: Despite the fact that you all came from various districts.

CB: Even though we came from different districts, and I think that was due to ... the fact that New Brunswick had a very active sports program. A lot of these farm kids were good athletes and, if you were an athlete at New Brunswick High School, you got into the flow of things very quickly.

KP: You played 150-pound football.

CB: That was not until I came to Rutgers.

KP: Did you play any sports in high school?

CB: High school, I played soccer for one year, that's all, not too well, but, I only weighed about one hundred and thirty pounds when I was in high school. Then, I had no problem making the 150-pound team here at Rutgers, but, I did put on enough weight. My average weight at college was about one hundred and fifty-six, fifty-seven, so, I didn't have to work too hard to get the weight down and to play, and then, I wrestled at Rutgers in the one hundred and fifty-five pound class. That was ... a lot of fun. Of course, wrestling is not like football. When you get on a football field,

you have ten additional people and a guy that will give you a hand if you get in a tight spot, but, when you're out on the mat by yourself, you either win or you lose. [laughter] So, it was good. You have to stay in shape. You can't miss practice. You can't start eating a lot of junk food [or] drink[ing] a lot of water, because, right away, your weight goes up. I was never big enough to play varsity ball, but, I think we had a better schedule than the varsity, because we played ... in the league [where] there was Rutgers, Lafayette, Princeton, Yale, the University of Pennsylvania, Villanova, and then, they added Army and Navy. That was after we graduated. That was a much better schedule than the varsity ever played back in those days. So, in spite of the fact that we were smaller, we could brag that we had a better league to play in. [laughter] Oh, Cornell was in that group, too, ... and then, of course, they would come down to play here, and, the following year, we would play there, at these various schools, and no matter how bad our season was, if we beat Princeton, we had a successful season. However, the four, well, the three years that I was on the hundred and fifties, we had a better than average season, not that I contributed that much. ...

KP: Overall, you had a good three seasons.

CB: Right, and our coach was Tom Kenneally, who was an ex-Notre Dame man. He was a tough little Irishman and he used to tell us that, at Notre Dame, the underclassmen can't go into the varsity football locker room. They have to earn that privilege by being on the team. The freshmen were not allowed in the locker room and he had, not exactly the same, but, pretty much the same attitude here, which was good. I think the sports here at Rutgers did a lot for me. In spite of the fact that I should have been studying, I was up at the gym. [laughter] ... I'll never forget the first football game that I played as a freshman. I had an English class. We played that on a Friday afternoon and I had a class. I went to the professor and I said, "Sir, may I have the afternoon off? May I be excused from the class?" "For what reason?" "Well, we're having our first football [game]." "Oh, your football is more important than English." That's it, he let me go. He failed me. He gave me a six. [laughter] So, I had to take that in summer school. He didn't have much of a sense of humor. [laughter] I was serious about it. I mean, other than that, I never failed a class. He made no bones about it. ...

KP: Why did you choose Rutgers? Had you considered other schools?

CB: No, never gave it a thought. In 1933, my father got a contract with the university to do all of their landscape work, new planting, maintenance, from A to Z, here on the College Avenue campus, and then, after the university acquired land across the river, we did that. We did the Douglass campus. We did the College of Agriculture campus. So, I was indoctrinated long before I came here. ... Consequently, I just never thought of anywhere else.

KP: You assumed you would go to Rutgers.

CB: That's right.

KP: When you were in high school, did you assume that you were going to go to college?

CB: Oh, yes, definitely. That's another funny story. At the end of my junior year, I decided I wanted to go into the Air Force, Army Air Corps at that time, and ... a couple of us, other students and myself, went into New York, and they let us sign up, but, they said, "We can't consider you until you get your diploma." So, we came back from New York and, lo and behold, I ran right into my father. He said, "How come you're not in class?" "Oh, we had some other things to take care of." Well, he didn't buy that. He said, "You haven't signed up yet, have you? You haven't registered for the year." I said, "No." He literally took me by the ear, and took me up to the Registrar's office, [laughter] and we registered, and it cost him extra, because I registered late.

KP: This was in your junior year?

CB: Well, this was my senior year. Actually, at the end of our junior year, we talked about this, but, we didn't go to New York until our senior year.

KP: When you went to New York, was it before Pearl Harbor?

CB: Yes, it was in September.

KP: September of '41?

CB: '41.

KP: Why did you want to join the Air Corps?

CB: Why? I guess we thought it was exciting.

KP: Did you always want to join the Air Corps?

CB: Well, I had an idea. We talked, as students do, and that seemed to appeal to me. Now, how did I get in the Coast Guard? At the end of our senior year, we went into New York again, seven of us. We went to the Navy V-7 program and signed up there and went to the Coast Guard and signed [up] there. Well, I didn't go back to the Air Corps, because they didn't want me the first time, and I sort of changed my mind anyway. I didn't consider the Army. After I took two years of the ROTC, I wanted to get as far away from the infantry as I could get.

KP: Which experiences in the ROTC made you feel that way?

CB: Well, you know, ... digging fox-holes, laying in the mud and the water. No, that wasn't for me. I thought, "If I get aboard ship, if we get sunk, okay, that's one way to die, but, while I'm alive, let's sleep in clean bunks and have good food." [laughter] So, that's why. ... I was almost driven away from the Army. However, the instructor that we had, Colonel (Brabson?), was the most wonderful guy you would want to have. He was more than an instructor or an Army person, he was like a father to all of us, and we had another drilling instructor in our second year of ROTC, down

in the basement of the gymnasium, his name was Major Malone, and he was demonstrating to us how these shells go off. Have you heard this story before?

KP: Yeah, Mortar Malone.

CB: Mortar Malone, [laughter] and he dropped the shell in there and it exploded. [laughter] ... I guess that impressed some of the others, as well as myself.

KP: When you tried to enlist in the Air Corps in September, did you think that war was imminent, that we were definitely going to war?

CB: ... During the summer, I was on the draft list, I would have been drafted, and whether or not I would have finished out my college years is a question. Well, I didn't want to be drafted, because I was afraid I would have to go into the infantry, because I had two years of ROTC, and that's good training, and I didn't want that. I wanted a choice. I preferred to live a different life than the Army did.

KP: Were you subject to the peacetime draft, the 1940 draft?

CB: Yes, definitely. My cousin graduated in '39, was out in California at the time that the draft went into effect, and he was working at a seed production nursery out there. He came home because he was drafted. In the summer of '41, he went to Fort Dix. He figured, "Okay, I'll get it done and over with." Well, it never happened. Pearl Harbor came and he stayed for the duration. I saw that and I didn't want to get caught in the same vice.

KP: You majored in landscaping and horticulture, which seems like the obvious choice, considering your family background.

CB: Right.

KP: However, had you considered doing something else or did you know you were destined for landscaping?

CB: Well, let me put it this way, I think they taught me how to say botanical names before I said, "Mommy," and, "Daddy." They taught me how to say (*rosamultiflora*?), which is the botanical name for wild roses. They taught me the botanical name for plants and I guess I had a liking for it.

KP: There was never any doubt.

CB: No, there was no conflict whatsoever. By that time, my father was well-entrenched in business. So, it was just the natural thing to do.

KP: How did your father fare during the Great Depression?

CB: ... Well, after he arrived here, after we, as a family, arrived here from Germany, my mother got very sick. She died in 1927. So, we were here just four years, almost to the day, and she died, and it was just my father and myself. He had bought this piece of land. He had bought a house. He was in debt over his head, but, he got into the Depression with everyone else, but, he was never on any of these government programs. He was never on WPA or any government handouts. He always managed to find work somehow, to pay his debts, take care of me. ... Of course, his sister lived close by and I spent a lot of time over there. They had three daughters who were my first cousins and I sort of melded into their family. So, we lived only several hundred yards away from them and, after school, I would spend a lot of time there. [Because of] the fact that she had married a nurseryman, he had a nursery there. Again, I was right in the horticultural center.

KP: You grew up in nurseries.

CB: That's right.

KP: You mentioned that Harry Besley was your favorite professor.

CB: Oh, he was Ag Engineering. He was a terrific guy. Did you know him?

KP: No.

CB: Unfortunately, he's over at the Parker Home now, nursing home. He's got a pretty bad case of Alzheimer's, I guess. ... He was a very good professor. He worked with us in the field, with the Ag engineering, ... go out on a survey, that type of thing. He was right there with us. One thing that he told us the very first day, he says, "Fellows, I want to get one thing straight with you and that is, you don't have to come to my class. I get paid whether you're sitting in that seat or not, but, I would like you to be here." Professor Besley was a colonel in the Army and he became a brigadier general shortly after the war started. He spent a lot of time, I guess it was, training the command of the Army. I'm not sure that he ever went overseas. We had him for three or four semesters.

KP: In the late 1930s and early 1940s, did you think that the United States would be involved in the war?

CB: Well, it was quite obvious we would get involved, because Mr. Hitler was becoming very powerful. He was a fanatic, ... the way he was moving ahead, persecuting the Jews. You just can't persecute a whole race of people like that and expect to keep going.

KP: You were born in Germany. How did you feel about the rise of Adolph Hitler?

CB: My father felt that it was not going to be a good outcome. He didn't like that at all. When he came, when he set foot on American soil, he went to night school to learn English, and he said, "I'm no longer a German. I'm an American."

KP: You have a very distinct memory of this.

CB: Oh, yes, he was very much impressed by the United States. He said he could understand why Hitler came to power, because of the economic situation. He was holding a carrot out there for the German people, and they were in such desperate straits that anything that looked encouraging, they'd accept, and they did that. At the time, we still had a lot of relatives there from my mother's side of the family. ... They corresponded, but, they never wrote glowing letters about the rise of Hitler. A lot of their mail, I guess, was censored, so, they couldn't speak freely, but, he didn't like the fact that they were being censored. That just wasn't his way of doing things.

KP: Did you or your father have any concerns that you might be fighting against Germany?

CB: Oh, yes, that bothered him. One other reason for coming here was, he didn't want to see me involved in some kind of military action, but, of course, I got in.

KP: He really would have preferred it if you had not joined the military.

CB: He wouldn't have preferred it, he just didn't want to see it happen.

KP: He would have preferred if there had not been another war.

CB: That's right, and I think that when I was assigned to the Pacific area, it was a little more easy [on him] than if I had been in the European theater, because his sister's son, a first cousin of mine, was on a submarine, a German submarine.

KP: You literally could have been adversaries.

CB: Oh, yes, definitely, and that bothered him. So, when I received my orders to go to LSTs, and then, we got orders to go to the Pacific, he was much more at ease. He, as I mentioned at the outset, ... just thought that war was a waste.

CF: Did you have any enthusiasm about the rise of Germany in the 1930s?

CB: Well, in the '30s, I was still in high school. My thoughts were elsewhere, including girls. [laughter] So, I didn't think too much about Hitler. ... When we came to Rutgers, it was a little different story. We had one fellow in our class who was wounded very seriously in [the] war. Unfortunately, he died in a fire after he came back.

KP: Vinnie Utz.

CB: He was a member of Kappa Sigma fraternity, right on the corner of College Avenue and Hamilton Street. Part of his hazing process was for him to stand on the porch roof of the Kappa Sigma house and imitate Hitler. I've never seen a better imitation, [laughter] and the students would gather around, and Vinnie Utz would stand up there like this, [Mr. Bosenberg covers his top lip] imitating his little mustache and what have you.

KP: What year was this?

CB: Oh, '38. '38, when we were freshmen.

KP: He was initiated.

CB: He was initiated. ... Everybody got a good laugh out of it. He was an excellent athlete, but, he lost an arm over in France as a paratrooper. When he came back, I think he was rather bitter about the whole thing. ... He coached athletics, so, it didn't slow him down any, the loss of that one arm. Well, I shouldn't say that, because I wasn't in his shoes. I guess it slowed him down, but, his attitude was still very good.

KP: He also served in the town council of Metuchen.

CB: That's right and that's where he died. He died at their home in Metuchen. He got out, and he thought that his father-in-law was still in the house, so, he went back in, and he never came out. It was quite a tragedy.

KP: New Jersey was relatively full of pro-German sentiment. Do you know anything about that?

CB: Well, here in New Brunswick, right on George Street, they had the Tornverein. It was similar to the Hungarian Athletic Association. My father was quite an athlete when he was young and he did join that. I never cared for it. He would go occasionally, three or four times a year, and then, they had a singing society. I can't think of what the name was, (Ave Aurora?). I only went to that two or three times and my father was not a singer and neither was I. In fact, when I was in eighth grade, [during] grammar school, my teacher said to me, "Now, you can stand up on stage, because you're graduating tonight, but, when we sing, don't you dare open your mouth." [laughter] I had no musical ability whatsoever.

KP: After Pearl Harbor, when you were drafted, you were supposed to report and, originally, you were not supposed to finish your last semester, so, you went before the draft board.

CB: Yes, the draft board was in South River. Dean Metzger was the Dean of Men here at Rutgers and I went to him after Pearl Harbor. I told him my six month deferment would be up in January. Of course, Pearl Harbor was 7th of December, 1941, and I said, "I would like to finish out my senior year and get my diploma. What do you think the chances are?" He said, "Well, let me write ... a letter for you," which he did. I took it to the draft board and I told them that I wanted to go into OCS. ...

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE ONE-----

CB: They said, "We see no reason why you can't finish out your four or five months," and they shortened our year from June until May, so, we actually graduated on the 10th of May, 1942. They

gave me a deferment until the 11th. I was very grateful for that. I expected that I would hear from the military a couple of weeks after graduation or even a couple of days after, but, nothing happened. I was home all during the remainder of May, June, July, and part of August. All the young fellows in our little community of Livingston Park, as it's called, North Brunswick, pretty much all had been drafted. Those mothers looked at me and wanted to know who I knew to stay out of the military. Well, I was at a point where I was almost afraid to go outside. So, one day, I decided to go to Washington to see Senator Barber, who was one of the senators from New Jersey. I went down there, and got to the Senate office building, and the receptionist told me that Senator Barber wasn't in [and] that he wouldn't be in, would I be willing to see his assistant? So, I said, "Yes." ... When I walked into his office, he said, "Oh, you're Carl Bosenberg." I said, "Yes." He said, "Well, I know your uncle. I bought all the trees and shrubs for my home and property from him. [laughter] What is it that you want?" I told him the story about the military. He said, "Sit quietly for a few minutes." He picked up the phone and called around to these different services and he said, "Do you have any choice?" I said, "Not particularly, except, I don't want to get in the Army." So, the Coast Guard gave him encouragement and he said, "You go home and you'll have a letter in your mailbox tomorrow morning," which is exactly the way it happened. Then, I went into New York and took a physical and I passed that without any problem. Three or four weeks after that, I found myself up in New London, Connecticut.

KP: When you went to New London, you even reported early.

CB: I got the train here in New Brunswick. It only took about two-and-a-half hours to get up there, so, I figured, "I would look around the town a little bit, and then, I'll go report in at the academy. Then, I'll stow my gear and I'll go out and see the town some more." Well, once I walked into that academy, I was in. [laughter]

KP: When you got to the academy, did you try to explain to them that you wanted to walk around the town?

CB: Yes. I tried to explain to them that I was to report that day, but, [at] no specific time, and I said, "I would like to spend the afternoon in New London." "Well, you'll spend it here in Groton, Connecticut," [laughter] which is right across the river from New London. Whether I liked it or didn't like it, I was in. We didn't get any liberty until the second month. The first month, we spent at Groton, Connecticut. The second month, we spent at the Coast Guard Academy. The third month, we were back at Groton and, the fourth month, we were aboard the *Danmark*. Of course, the primary reason we didn't get any liberty was the fact that we didn't have any cadet uniforms. We had our whites. They weren't going to let us out on liberty in those clothes. Until our uniforms arrived, we had no liberty.

KP: Did you know Paul Rork at the time?

CB: No, I didn't know him. I knew him at Rutgers, but, I didn't see him up there.

KP: He also went to the Coast Guard Academy.

CB: Right, right.

KP: Were you under a very rigorous training schedule?

CB: We were under a very good schedule, and, of course, a lot of it was physical, and, here at Rutgers, I got my right knee knocked out a couple of times in wrestling, and we had to go over a wall. When I landed on the other side, my knee went out again. ... I thought I would get bounced out of there. I talked to the instructor. He said, "What did you do at Rutgers?" I told him about the 150-pound football. I told him about the wrestling. He said, "Who was your coach?" I said, "Tom Kenneally." "Oh, anybody who played ball for Tom Kenneally is good enough for me." So, he said, "You just take this for a study period." I didn't have to take any more physical education. I had to run, but, I didn't have to go over the high wall and all that kind of stuff. Physically, otherwise, I was in good shape. It was just that one knee. I was lucky, that's all. One incident up there, before they excused me from physical training, they showed the fellows how to do some of these martial arts. This man was approximately my size and he was going to throw me. Well, I had the wrestling experience, so, I threw him. [laughter] After that, they were satisfied that I could handle myself. I didn't have to do that anymore.

KP: Had you ever been on a boat before you went to the Coast Guard Academy?

CB: Just on our journey from Germany to the US.

KP: You had really never been at sea.

CB: No.

KP: How did that go? Did you get seasick at all?

CB: I got seasick. While we were on the *Danmark*, it didn't bother me. It was a sailing ship. Once that healed over into the wind, it was steady, just as steady as can be. After I got my commission and I went aboard LSTs, they rocked, and they rolled, and they heaved, and I heaved right along with it. While we were in amphibious training, down near the Chesapeake Bay area, I got seasick. Then, after we went through the Panama Canal, we ran into a minor hurricane. I was seasick for three days. I prayed every day I would die. I had nothing left in my stomach to throw up, but, the watch would come down and knock on my cabin door, "Mr. Bosenberg, it's time to go on watch." I'd say, "Get out of here. Don't bother me," [laughter] but, I had no alternative. I had to go. So, I went up and I stood watch right ... on the port side of the [coning tower], where the diesel exhaust was, right where I got the benefit of all these diesel fumes. So, I stand up there. I wasn't worth anything, but, I was there. Unfortunately, I was, at that time, the junior officer, both in age and in rank. All the others were older than I was, so, I had to take the watch whenever they saw fit to give it to me, which was midnight to four in the morning, or, from noon until four in the afternoon. I would just carry my bucket with me. After the third day of seasickness, I came down and ate a whole box of saltine crackers. I was never seasick again while I was out there.

KP: You really had a rough shakedown.

CB: Oh, I had a rough shakedown. In fact, I had written a letter requesting a transfer to a shore station. ... They responded and said I could go to a shore station, but, I would have to get out of the Coast Guard. I said, "No, I'll stay in." We were out in the Pacific by then. I wasn't about to come home. ... Our first island that we hit, after we went through the Canal, was Bora Bora. Actually, it was a very picturesque island. It was beautiful. The harbor was unbelievably clear. I think we could literally see sixty feet down into the water. You could see the fish and everything, the animal life down there. Then, we went ashore. We were there about two days, I guess, two or three days. Then, we went on to American Samoa. We were detached from the rest of the group [that] we went out there with. There was one other LST and ours that were assigned to the Ellis Islands. They were under, well, not actually Japanese occupation, but, Japanese control. There were three of them, Nanumea, that's the smallest one, Funafuti, and I can't think of that [other] name. We were supplying the Air Force. ... We had air bases on each of those islands. We were supplying them with all of their needs, food, shells, gas, ammunition. Anything they needed, we transported back. We went back to Funa. We would go back to the rear area, to the supply ships, the big ships, and they would load us, and we would take the cargo on. ... We were on that for about, ... we got out there in August and we were out there until the spring, ... eight months, I guess. We had no enemy action at that time. Occasionally, we would see a Japanese sub, but, they weren't sinking ships. They were out there for observation.

KP: Did you ever launch any depth charges?

CB: We had no depth charges on our ship. LSTs moved too slowly. They're too cumbersome. They can't maneuver.

KP: How deep did your ship sit in the water?

CB: Well, that's a good point. ... The bow, when we were empty, was only about three-and-a-half feet in the water and the stern was only about ten feet in the water. When we were loaded, we could carry approximately three thousand tons. The bow was down about six-and-a-half feet and the stern was down about twelve feet. We went back to Nanumea. They had secured the island. It had an airplane runway. They had some ammunition trucks parked along the runway. Part of our crew went ashore, and, while they were ashore, how and why these shells started to go off, I don't know, but, they did, and everybody just dove for the ground. We thought that it was a Japanese attack. Well, it turned out that it was our own shells. It was all small caliber stuff. When they came back, they told us about it and everybody got a good laugh, but, luckily, the gasoline tanks didn't get hit, or else, there would have been a major explosion. Another experience we had in the Ellis Islands was, on Funafuti, the natives were very friendly and we would go ashore. We got in there quite often and we would trade with them.

KP: What did you trade with and for?

CB: Well, they came out in their ("push-push pow-pows,"?) we called them, and we traded flour, or any type of food, for fruits, bananas, that type of stuff. Of course, we didn't give them our best flour, and, one time, we gave them a bag full of maggots, [laughter] but, I don't think they cared. Anyway, they sent us an invitation to come to a (seva-seva?), which was one of their festivals, so, we accepted. Those of us who were not on watch that night went ashore. I'll tell you, the food was all grown right there on the island. Some of it was very tasty and, some of it, we didn't eat at all. It was a good evening. There was a lot of singing. They'd sing a song, then, they'd ask us to sing a song. Well, I did sing there, yes. [laughter] It didn't make much difference. We did learn a couple of their words, like (tufa?) is, I can't remember the word, it meant good night. We sang *The Yellow Rose Of Texas* and all that kind of stuff. They thought that was great. We kind of liked their singing. They said, "If you have free time, feel welcome to come ashore." So, this other officer and I, his name was Dick Snape, ... went ashore. They said, "The liberty boat will take you ashore and will pick you up at," whatever it was, "2100," I guess. "Be at the dock." So, Dick and I were a little bit late. The boat wouldn't wait for us. We were about from here to College Avenue. At the end of the dock, the guy said, "So long," and he took off. So, we were stranded on the island and ... we weren't supposed to be there. That was strictly a no-no, to stay on one of those islands. So, we tried to decide what to do. So, there was a small bay and there was another little island where they had their pigs. So, Dick and I waded across this little bay and we slept with the pigs all night. We built a fire. He was a cigarette smoker, so, he had matches. We took turns trying to sleep, because the pigs would come over. They were curious. [laughter] They'd come over and see what was going on. We stayed there 'til dawn, and we said, "Well, they'll send a boat for us." They didn't. We went back to the larger of the two islands and sat on the dock, waiting and waiting. Nothing happened. Finally, they sent a chaplain. [laughter] The chaplain came to see if there was any mail on the island for us. That was about four o'clock in the afternoon. That's the only way we got back to the ship. When we got there, the fellow who was the executive officer, he wasn't even executive officer, he was a first lieutenant, he said, "I'm going to have to put you men on report." He was LD. He wanted to put us on report. Well, there was nothing we could do about it. We were wrong. He did. He put us on report. Everybody said, "How are the pig islanders?" [laughter] That was our title from then on, as far as the crew was concerned. They have a mast court and we explained to them what happened. We said, "We were on the dock. They could see us, but, they [left]." "Well, maybe you weren't there on time?" So, we were restricted for three days to the ship. Well, to be restricted out there is no problem. There's no place to go anyway. [laughter] So, we didn't mind that. We didn't mind that at all. It was kind of fun.

KP: This island, did it seem like something you had read about in National Geographic?

CB: Yes, definitely, lots of palm trees, lots of coconut trees, that is, palm coconut, coconut palm, and red fruit, mangos, the most beautiful birds, parakeets, cockatoos.

KP: Were there any Europeans on the island, except for you?

CB: No, no, there was strictly natives. ... One thing that impressed us about these natives was that the men were big. They probably weighed two hundred, two hundred and twenty-five pounds, and they were solid. They would swim out and they'd catch these fish by hand and bring them back in.

They had their own nets. They were really strong, strong men. Elephantiasis was very prevalent out there and their legs were blown up and their genitals. It was not a pretty picture, and, of course, the girls out there, ... most of these girls, by the time they were fourteen or fifteen, had one or two children. By the time they were in their twenties, they were old women, so, they weren't very attractive. One time, I think it was shortly before Christmas, we went back to American Samoa and they had an officers' club. We spent Christmas Eve at the officers' club. There was a young lady there who was part native and part Chinese. Without a doubt, she was the most beautiful girl I have ever seen. So, they did these native dances for us, and her movements, ... the way she moved her arms and her hands, it was really beautiful. Then, we got over to English Samoa, and that was much more populated, and it had roads, dirt roads, but, they were roads. While we were there, we went to one of the outdoor movies. Dick Snape and I, we got to be pretty good buddies, because we shared the same stateroom. We were going to the movie, so, I said, "Well, Dick, I got to put on a clean uniform. I can't go like this." So, I put on a new uniform. Oh, the show that we saw was Bing Crosby in *White Christmas*. That was a real tear jerker out there. So, we were walking home after the movie. We were out on the road, and along comes this jeep, and it hits me. It just caught me on the side, and spun me around, and I fell down in a ditch. My nice, clean uniform was all mud, [laughter] and I got up, and I started to run after this jeep. Of course, I couldn't catch him, but, I saw where he went. He went to the enlisted mens' club and I ran there. I went in looking for the guy who was the driver. [laughter] I was ready to beat him up. Dick was right behind me and he said, "Hey, don't get into a fight. You're the one that's going to lose," if a commissioned officer and an enlisted man fight, you know. I said, "Well, okay." He calmed me down and we went back to the ship. We went to the commanding officer. We had to tell him the story. Nothing happened, fortunately. It was just one more experience that we had out there. Another experience that we had, we were on firing practice, the plane was pulling a sleeve, and, when I was in charge of the three guns that we had on the stern, two .20 millimeters and one three-inch, .50, these .20 millimeters had a tendency to jam, and it was the responsibility of the officers to un-jam them. So, I told the three guys who were at the gun turret to get out and I went in. I got a screwdriver to try to get the shell out of the gun barrel. Of course, the barrel was red hot from the shooting. I put asbestos gloves on. I couldn't get the shell out. So, I finally just took it, twisted it, and dropped it over the side. When this hot barrel hit the water, there was a big cloud of smoke, steam. The Captain yelled down, "What's going on back there? Bosenberg, report to the bridge." So, I went to the bridge and he said, "What did you do? What happened?" So, I explained to him, I said, "Which was the better thing to do? Take the risk that this gun might explode or to drop it over the side?" He said, "Well, you did the right thing," but, for a few minutes, he was a very, very angry captain that I should have done anything like that. I felt that I did the right thing, because I didn't want to jeopardize everybody that was in the back. So, those were some of the experiences we had. After we left the Ellis Islands, we went to have our ship repaired, because, after all these beachings, our bottom was [full of] big holes, from the ship banging on the coral reefs. Then, we went to one of the other islands where they had dry docks and they said, "Well, you'll be here for two or three days." Well, we were there almost a month. While we were there, we managed to acquire a jeep, which was quite an acquisition, and what did we give them for it? Two crates of eggs. [laughter]

KP: Was this the jeep you took with you after you left?

CB: We took the jeep with us. You see, we could beach and bring the jeep right aboard. We got the jeep from the Marines. We didn't steal it. We got it legal. We took it to the motor pool and they put a new engine in it. By the time we left, we had a nice little vehicle. It was good for all of us. We could get supplies on the island. We never had enough trucks to transport stuff, so, ... the smaller things we could put in the jeep. There, again, we were at the movies on D-Day, Europe. ...

KP: June 6, 1944.

CB: We were at the movies. They had some pretty nice nurses there. So, we had gone to the hospital ... One other thing, you could not take the nurses out unless you had a loaded .45.

KP: Really?

CB: Because the natives there were not that friendly. ...

KP: Which island was this?

CB: I was just trying to think of the name, New Hebrides. They had a hospital there and the LD at the hospital checked your gun to see that you had it loaded. That was to make sure the nurses didn't get molested out there. They weren't taking any chances. If you wanted to take them out, you brought your own protection. While we were at the movie, they broke in and said the troops had landed in Europe. Then, of course, everybody cheered. We figured it was that much closer to the end. We left there and came back to the same hospital and asked the same nurse ... to go out with us to the movies. Unfortunately, her brother had been killed in the European invasion, so, in spite of the fact that she was happy that they had landed, she lost her brother. See, you have good and bad. Then, from there, New Hebrides, we went to Guadalcanal. They didn't have any charts for the harbors, except German charts.

KP: Which you knew how to read.

CB: By that time, I had made navigation officer. I was the only one aboard who could read these charts. So, the Captain said to me, "Carl, do you think you can get us in and out without running aground." I said, "Well." Naturally, there were no aids to navigation, because the Japanese would have used them as well as we did. So, I said, "Well, I know what they're talking about. I can read it." So, I took them in and we stayed there. Then, I took them out. We didn't have any mishaps. Then, we went across the bay to an island called (Talasea?). As we approached, there was a billboard atop of the hill. I'd say it was sixty by forty. It said, "Take off your ties, roll up your sleeves, and kill Japs and kill more of the little, yellow bastards. Signed, Admiral Halsey." Now, we were only there for a short time. Then, we went to Eniwetok and the invasion of Guam. We went there on D-Day. We had alligators, which was the nickname for the LVTs, Landing Vehicle, Tracked. You get to know these fellows. You talk to them. We discharged these alligators about six or seven hundred yards from the beach and one of them, just as he started up the, can't call it a ramp, as he left the water and started on to dry land, the bottom of the alligator was exposed and he took a direct hit. It penetrated and exploded and the guys who were inside were just garbage. That

was a rather sad thing to see. I had never seen such a display of firepower than on the approach to Guam.

KP: Was this your first beach landing?

CB: That was our first beach landing, yes. We had been attacked at sea by aircraft, but, we never went in on a hot landing until D-Day on Guam. We arrived there about six o'clock in the morning. Well, there was just one continuous explosion of shells. They had re-fitted the LCIs, which were landing craft-infantry, into rocket ships. They ran from here to that building behind us, up and down the coast. They just pumped these rockets. Only two airplanes got off the airstrip. We got the rest of them. I say we, there were battleships, there were all kinds of destroyers, all kinds of aircraft. One of them fell into the ocean and the other one was shot down. From there, we went to New Guinea, then, we went to Moritia, which I had mentioned. Then, we returned to Moritia, back to New Guinea again. They had released our engineering officer and I want to show you a letter that the skipper wrote. He wrote the letter to his wife. Read this part.

KP: [Reading the letter] "Dear Bo, Betty surprised me the other night with every letter I had written from the time I went to sea on the 24th until after I was relieved from *Eridanus*, AK-92. I'm going over them. She and I both thought we should send you this copy of my letter on October 15th 1944."

CB: Read it.

KP: The highlighted part?

CB: Yes.

KP: [Reading] "Bo and Wilson left us last week."

CB: Wilson was our engineering officer.

KP: "Poor Bo, when he came to say good-bye to me, he started crying. I felt pretty badly myself. He's such a good egg, but, an SOF like you. We lived together."

CB: I still haven't figured [out] what the SOF stands for.

KP: Oh, you have not? [laughter] "We lived together for twenty months, and, in that length of time, you became pretty good friends with those you like. A better officer I couldn't have had. Whenever things were going badly, and my nerves were ragged, and there were jobs to do, I would turn them over to Bo and never had to worry that they would not be handled properly. Nothing was too much for him and he stuck with tough jobs until they were completed, no matter the hardships. When I had to get ashore and Bo was aboard, I didn't have to worry about anything. I never had to fear that he would not take care of everything. Now, he's gone, and I hope we'll be his shipmate again, someday, and don't go telling Bo what I said about him." [laughter]

CB: Apparently, he wrote that letter to her after we left the ship, or when we were about to leave the ship. We promised that if we went through Chicago, which we did, we would call his family, so, that's why he put that in there. I think that was a pretty nice letter.

KP: Did you remain in touch with him after the war?

CB: Oh, he is the greatest guy. He is a rear admiral, or he became a rear admiral. Whenever he came to Washington or anywhere within the vicinity, he'd call me. One time, I was up to visit my friend, Snape, up in Connecticut. His home is up there and the three of us went out to dinner. Then, he had arranged a reunion at the country club here in New Jersey and he invited the entire crew.

KP: You had a reunion?

CB: Oh, yeah. Naturally, we all figured we'd chip in. Well, when we got there, the tables were all set, red, white, and blue, flowers on every table, little flags on every table. He had a fellow come in with a video, audio video. At the end, we all offered to pay for this. He said, "No way. This is on me." Well, he can afford it, but, that's not the point.

KP: Yes.

CB: He is a wealthy man. I'd say he was worth about ten million. He owns a tug on the Mississippi River which is the largest tug. He has invited me to come out there, or any of the other officers to come out, and he will take them on a run from Chicago down to New Orleans and back.

KP: You should do it.

CB: I should, but, I never did. He was a great man.

-----END OF TAPE ONE, SIDE TWO -----
-

KP: This continues an interview with Carl Bosenberg on September 21, 1994, at Rutgers University in New Brunswick with Kurt Piehler and ...

CF: Charles Fleisher.

KP: You mentioned that, on the invasion of Guam, you got to know a number of men who served on alligators, LVTs.

CB: Right.

KP: Were many of them veterans of previous landings?

CB: That, I don't know.

KP: What did you end up talking about with them?

CB: Anything except the invasion.

KP: What parts of the country were they from?

CB: That, I don't know.

KP: So, you tried not to talk about the invasion.

CB: Yes, because, when you go in like that, you anticipated casualties. Fortunately, only one of them got hit [of] those that went in. Then, I came back to the US on November the 1st.

KP: 1944?

CB: 1944. We came into San Francisco. As we passed under the Golden Gate Bridge, there were people up there throwing money down on the deck. We came back on a huge transport. It had about six thousand troops. I was standing watch. I was standing the senior LD watch, because the executive officer on that ship, after we had left New Guinea, he said, "If there is anybody who has experience standing watch or done any navigating, please, come to my office." So, I went, and he asked me what I did, and I told him I navigated. He said, "Okay, we'll make you the senior LD, so you don't have to stay in that little stateroom twenty-four hours a day." It also permitted me to eat meals with the crew, that is, the officers. The only thing we didn't like was that the skipper from that particular ship, he was an old mustang who had come up through the ranks, and he insisted that, when we come to have chow, we put on our blues.

KP: You had to wear your dress blues?

CB: We had to wear dress blues to go into the ward room. We didn't like that. Worst of all, our dress blues had been in a trunk. Aboard the LSTs, you never wore dress blues, so, we were permitted to come in and sit at a separate table. [laughter] That was okay. At least we had chow under comfortable conditions. When we were approaching San Francisco, I was standing watch. I took a fix of our position. The officer who relieved me took over and I went down below and went to sleep. Well, we were to be in San Francisco the following morning. When I woke up, we were still out at sea. So, I went up and I looked at the chart. This guy was a lieutenant commander and I was only the JG at the time. I said, "You made a mistake on the morning location." Well, he said, "Who are you to tell me I made a mistake?" I said, "Well, we're not where you say we are on this chart." I didn't want to dispute the man. I was only a passenger. So, we sailed for another hour or so and, pretty soon, a blimp came out looking for us. [laughter] Then, he believed ... that we were about one hundred miles south of where he thought we were. So, I went back to him and I said, "Do you still think you know where you are?" [laughter] Well, the blimp took us into the harbor in

San Francisco and, as I said, when we went under the bridge, the people up there just threw money down onto the deck. I don't think there was a dry eye on the whole ship. Everybody was so happy to get home. Then, we pulled up to the pier and we tied up. I said, "I'm going to be the first one who's going to be ashore." Well, I jumped up on the rail and, as they let the gangway down, I jumped onto the gangway. [laughter] Sure enough, I was the first one ashore. I got down on my hands and knees and I kissed that ground. I had gotten back [on] the 1st of November, 1944. We had to wait in San Francisco approximately a week, 'til they cut orders for us. Well, I got thirty days leave and I got two days travel time. I came back to North Brunswick. By then, it was the middle of November. I was coming from the South Pacific. I froze. I put long-handled underwear on.

KP: Your blood was really thin.

CB: That's right. We were anywhere from four to five degrees north or south of the equator all the time. I had long underwear on. I put my blues on. It was fine to put them on there. I had a big trenchcoat and I still froze. I reported in to the Army. They said, "Where do you want to go?" This is strange, nobody ever asked me where I wanted to go. They just said, "Here are your orders. You go there." [laughter] I said, "Well, I could go to the Eighth Naval District, which is New Orleans, because we had (left the state?)," so, it was more familiar and I figured it would be warmer down there. So, when I got to New Orleans, I reported to personnel. The officer looked at my chart and said, "Well, you've had plenty of sea duty. You've had this, you've had that." He said, "What would you like to do?" I said, "This is too much. People keep asking me what I want to do." I said, "What did you have in mind, Sir?" He said, "Well, we have twenty-seven bases along the Gulf Coast. I'd like to send you to Pascagoula." I said, "Is it in the United States? If it is, I'll go." He said, "Yes. Of the twenty-seven bases that we have, Pascagoula is number twenty-seven. I want you to go there and put it in first place." I said, "Okay, I'll do my best." So, he cut me my orders and sent me to Pascagoula. The man that I relieved had never been out of the country. He had no experience in shipboard life.

KP: How long had he been in the Coast Guard?

CB: Well, he had been in, probably, going on two years. So, he stayed there with me approximately two weeks and taught me the ropes. Then, I took command of the base. It was biological and chemical warfare. During the two weeks that I was there for observation, I noticed [many] things. ... You just couldn't run a base that way. The first thing I did when I took over, I restricted the entire base for three days. That made me very unpopular.

KP: I can imagine.

CB: Then, I came down [at] midnight and called a fire drill, after I restricted the base, and I had everybody fall out for muster. There were about fifteen or twenty people missing.

KP: How big was the base?

CB: Well, I had one hundred and twenty enlisted men and three officers. I took the names of the people that weren't present. I called them into my office the following morning and read them the riot act. I said that, "The holiday is over. I'm here for one reason and that is to improve the status of this base." I could see that there were a couple of top petty officers and chiefs first class that were spending a lot of time at the bars. This was top secret stuff. I mean, we all had to get top secret clearance to go there. I would make a round of the bars at Pascagoula and get the military police to bring them back to the base. One fellow gave me a really hard time, so, I put him in chains, overnight. We had no brig, so, I chained him to the radiator in the office. Well, the following morning, after having slept off his drinking from the night before, laying on the hard floor, he was very weak. I said, "I'm going to transfer you out of here." "Well, I won't do it again," he said. I said, "I'm sorry, but, I got to send you out." So, I sent him out. He went out into the North Atlantic. He went into some kind of patrol out there. Well, I transferred about five or six others, got new people in. In a period of six months, I took them from number twenty-seven to first place. At the beginning, it was tough, because I told them, "I was sent down here with a specific order. I'm going to try my best to accomplish it." I said, "If we have muster at six o'clock in the morning, then, I want everyone out here at six. I don't want them at 0602, or 0605, or telling me you couldn't find your shoes. Come out barefoot, I don't care, but, I want you out here." Finally, one of the admirals came down from headquarters and gave us a citation for [being] the best base on the Gulf Coast. My time there was a very pleasant one, in spite of the fact that the beginning was tough. They saw that I was fair to everybody. They accepted that and this fellow that I transferred out and had him sleep on the floor overnight wrote me a very nice letter saying I could not have done him a bigger favor, that he would like to come back and see me. While I was there, that was it. I was the commanding officer of the base and I was single, so, I had to do all the banking. That's how I met my wife. [laughter] She was working in the local bank in Pascagoula, not Pascagoula. In Biloxi, there was an air base, a big air base. There was a place there called Broadwater. That was a real hangout for the military personnel, both from there and our little base. I met the colonel there at the air base. We got to be rather friendly. He'd call me up and say, "Carl, can I go out on your patrol boats and go fishing?" He said, "If you want to, you can come down here, and find some pilots that need some flight time, and you can go out flying with them," which I did, [laughter] in B-17s, while I was there. I got there shortly before Christmas and my wife and I were married in June of that year.

KP: In Mississippi?

CB: In Mississippi, and we're still married, forty-nine-and-a-half years later. [laughter]

KP: How did she feel about coming north?

CB: How did she feel? Well, her father was a civil engineer and he had moved state to state. Wherever the work was, he went. He had worked for the government for many years, building railroad junctions, and railroad spurs, and dams, and all kinds of things. So, she was accustomed to moving, but, she had never been out of the South. She was in Mississippi, she was in Alabama, she was in Texas, Louisiana, but, she knew that I was from New Jersey and that we would go back to New Jersey. She really didn't have a choice. [laughter] We've had a good marriage, two good

children. Our son is now forty-four. He has been with the federal government as a wildlife biologist. He got his Masters' here at Rutgers in biology. He said, "Dad, I'd like to get another degree," so, he went over to Cook and got another degree in wildlife biology. He got a job with the federal government and he got his fifteen year pin this past spring. My daughter got a Masters' in plant pathology. She has three children. The oldest one will be fourteen in November, Kate is eleven, and the little guy is six. ... This past year, 1993, I gained a lot from the purchase of our property and that's where they built their house. So, the little guy, the six-year-old, I said to him the day after school started, I said, "What do you like about school this year, Scott?" They call me Opa. That's German for grandpa. "Opa," he said, "I like recess the best." [laughter] So, I guess that about concludes it.

KP: Oh, no, I have more questions. Regarding the Guam invasion, you said you were shocked at some of the attitudes of some of the GIs coming back from the island.

CB: Yes, I was, but, I don't know how to [explain it]. ...

KP: You said that a lot of them had taken gold teeth.

CB: That's right. It was a fact. They had done it. They didn't deny it. What were you going to do?

KP: Were you surprised?

CB: I was more than surprised. "How could you do this? The guy was dead and you took the teeth out of his mouth." "Well, he was a slant-eyed Jap."

KP: What did you think of the Japanese? I mean, they were our enemies. They were also trying to kill you at times.

CB: We had no love for them. Guadalcanal, when we were there, it looked as though someone had cut ... every tree on the island off about six foot high. They weren't cut off, they were shot off. It was tough going. We were also at Bougainville and we got Japanese fire, so, he didn't go in too close. We didn't stay too long. We went in, but, we didn't stay. We got our cargo unloaded and got out of there. We got bombed from the Japs while we were in the Ellis Islands. They came down and bombed us.

KP: You saw a lot of enemy fire.

CB: Yes, we did.

KP: How many of your crew were injured or killed?

CB: Nobody, nobody. We had a fellow [who] broke his leg. That's because he slipped on a wet deck. [laughter] We had another fellow who was very seriously hurt from the boat davit. The handle hit him, caved his nose in and some parts of his face in, but, we had no one [killed]. After I

left the ship, they went to Iwo Jima, they went [to] Okinawa, they went to the Philippines. They sat in the harbor at Okinawa as an ammunition ship for a couple of months.

KP: Even after you left the ship, no one got hurt?

CB: Nope, nobody was ever hurt. Somebody was watching over us.

CF: The guys that you said came back and had no bones about what they had done, were they just regular, average guys?

CB: That's all. We saw them when we put them ashore and we saw them when they came back. Oh, they thought it was funny.

KP: You also mentioned that you did not like the use of flame-throwers.

CB: Well, I never saw one used, just from what they told us. I guess, when you're in combat, you do things that revert to the animal instinct in man. Like I say, that sign that said, "Kill Japs and kill more Japs," that was our mission. On our convoy from New Orleans to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, we had ships sunk just ahead of us.

KP: By who?

CB: German submarines. Can't blame them for doing their job. We didn't like it, wished we could have gotten them. We had destroyers and everything with us, but, they couldn't pick them up. We went from New Orleans to Guantanamo, Guantanamo to the Panama Canal, and then, "Bye-bye, baby."

KP: Were there any regular Coast Guard men in your crew.

CB: [In] our crew, we had one chief who was a career man. He had stripes on his arm, hash marks on there from his elbow to his wrist. He was good. He taught me how to navigate. They taught us how to navigate at the academy, but ...

KP: He really taught you how to navigate. [laughter]

CB: That's right. It was a very interesting experience. For those of us who went through this, and ... were not wounded in any way, and came back in one piece, you could not buy anything better, that good.

KP: Would your life have been different if you had not had these experiences?

CB: I don't know. I mean, it would be hard to say. I probably would have stayed home. I would have been in business for my father. I would have married someone completely different.

KP: Did you travel much before the war?

CB: Well, when I was thirteen, we went to the Chicago World's Fair. My father's [brother] and his wife, my aunt, and his son, Henry, who is Rutgers, '39, and my grandfather, and me, five of us went out there. There was a reason for it, other than going to the World's Fair in Chicago. My father got US patent number one on a rose, which was quite a feather in his cap. My uncle, who was in the wholesale end of things, he used to grow about a hundred thousand of those a year. They were in a position to know these people who might be a likely distributor. He got a company in Pennsylvania, right across the river, right across the Delaware. ... They became the distributor for this rose. Well, my father sold the patent to my uncle for the big sum of twelve hundred dollars, but, in 1931, a patent for twelve hundred dollars was a lot of money. He needed it. So, my uncle got the royalties for every plant that these growers grew. They had to pay a nickel royalty. When we went out to the World's Fair, we stopped, I think, at every nursery along the way that sold these roses or that had the permission to grow roses. There, my cousin, Henry, and I would go through the rows and would count how many there were, so that we had some control. ... We did that both on the way out and on the way back. So, it was a business vacation.

KP: Had you been to Washington before you went to see Senator Barber?

CB: No, I don't think I'd been to Washington.

KP: You had not been to New England, either?

CB: Yes.

KP: You had been to New England before the academy?

CB: Well, yes, just barely been to New England.

KP: Okay.

CB: Barely. Of course, afterward, I went to California and all across the states, south. I learned a lot. It's surprising how much I learned in the Coast Guard that I can apply in our own business.

KP: What did you learn that you could apply to the nursery business?

CB: Well, we do tree work and they taught us things with ropes and knots that I never would have thought of. I taught them a few things.

KP: What did you teach them?

CB: Well, do you know what a boatswain's chair is?

KP: I have heard of it.

CB: Well, a boatswain's chair is something you put over the side if you have to do work on the hull, like painting or whatever. A man goes over on the boatswain's chair, and he chips the paint and repaints it, or whatever. ... The Navy had a very good knot that they used to put over the side. I said, "I can do better than that." He said, "What do you know that we don't know?" So, I showed them. I put the rope around the railing, made the knot, and jumped over. I could go down on it and stop wherever I wanted to. He said, "Where the hell did you learn that?" [laughter] I said, "We aggies aren't too dumb." He liked it, so, he had the rest of the guys learn it and they used it. So, I mean, rigging. When you take a big tree down over somebody's house, you can't drop a limb that big through the roof. That was probably the biggest thing that I learned, was types of rigging. When we were in Guadalcanal, the ship could not go in as far as we wanted it to, so, we had to make a bridge that ran from the ship to the beach. We had a boatswain on there from Ohio. Boy, he did a tremendous job. In a couple of hours, he had a bridge from ship to shore.

KP: Had you thought of staying in the Coast Guard?

CB: Well ...

KP: I mean full-time. You stayed in the reserve.

CB: I was a full lieutenant when I got out. An active duty personnel officer, a full commander, said, "Carl, why don't you make the Coast Guard a career? You're only twenty-six. I'm sure you would like it if we could make you a lieutenant commander within a short time." I said, "Commander Crawford, where is your home?" He said, "Well, I'm from Connecticut." "Well, I'm from New Jersey and that's where I'm going." [laughter]

KP: You really felt a pull toward New Jersey.

CB: When I was out there, I had my father send me books that I used as textbooks at Rutgers. I would sit up on the bridge and read about soils, plant physiology, and so forth.

KP: You knew you wanted to go home.

CB: That's right. I'd be up there on that midnight to four watch, midnight to four in the morning. I dreamed of the Raritan River Bridge. [laughter] No, seriously, I pictured it in my mind. I was anxious to get back. I wanted to come home.

KP: Your captain was from New Orleans.

CB: No, no, ... our first captain was a Princeton man. Our engineering officer was a Harvard man. Our first navigation officer was a Yale man. Our captain, after he became captain, the picture I showed [you], he was from University of Michigan. Our first lieutenant was from the University of California, and Snape was from the University of Vermont, and I was Rutgers. So, we had quite an Ivy League [crew] aboard. [laughter]

KP: What was your first captain's name?

CB: Captain Henry C. Slack. I'll never forget, he was from Summit, New Jersey. He didn't have as much enthusiasm as the second one had. He didn't have the men behind him as much as the second one. I think, for the second one, I'd have done anything, but, the first one, they resisted him.

KP: Why do you think that was?

CB: Why? He just ... had a different personality. He was friendly, but, he just didn't have the personality. It's the same as civilian life. There are some people that you hit it off with right away and others you never really get close [to]. That was the difference between the two men.

KP: Initially, you had a very Ivy League crew. What did you think of your fellow officers?

CB: We had good officers. We had good officers.

KP: Did any of them have any sailing experience?

CB: Yes, Dick Snape had a lot of sailing experience. Phillips, who was the navigation officer, he went to Yale. He had a lot of sailing experience. The fellow from California had a lot. Arnold Sobel was from Chicago. He had gone to the University of Michigan. He had a lot. So, they were all pretty well attuned to the sea.

KP: You were the landlubber.

CB: I was the landlubber, but, I learned very quickly.

KP: You mentioned that there was one regular Coast Guard man in the crew and the rest of the crew were enlistees.

CB: All reserves.

KP: What parts of the country did they hail from?

CB: Strangely enough, the majority of them were from the Midwest, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa. A lot of them were from Texas. We had one poor guy, he was from Louisiana. His name was Monton and every time we called general quarters, he would run to the head. He never went to his assigned station. He always went to the head. We wondered why. Well, one day, I don't know who asked him, he said, "I had two ships shot out from under me." He was just plain scared, that's all. Why he thought the head was safer than any place else is hard to find.

KP: Do you know where his other ships were sunk?

CB: I don't know if it was in the Atlantic, or if it was in the Gulf, or where ... he had two ships torpedoed. They went down. He was saved both times, so, he wasn't about to try for a third time. [laughter]

CF: Have you done any sailing since the war?

CB: No. ... My son-in-law had two small boats, outboards. They're not boats, they're toys. I mean, our ship was three hundred and twenty-seven feet long. That's longer than a football field. It was pretty tricky, and to dock a ship like that takes a lot of skill, and it's a challenge. I like that. These little things. ... [laughter] Of course, we had the liberty boats. One of the boatswain mates ran them. The officers never ran them, so, I didn't get a chance to handle them. Yes, in Pascagoula, I had three sub chasers, and three picket boats, and one personnel boat. [I] used to run those out sometimes.

KP: On patrol?

CB: Yeah. Well, just to go out with it, but, other than that, [not at all]. That was such a high technical base. There was Army, Navy, Coast Guard, the Canadians, and Australians on that base.

KP: What was your mission? Was it just research?

CB: Oh, they did the actual operations. They tried it out.

KP: On what?

CB: Pigs, animals. We transported pigs and goats out to the island. The actual operation was [on] Horn Island, which was twelve miles out in the Gulf. They used to tell us that a vile as big as your thumb would kill half the state if it got loose. It was highly technical. We had physicists, we had chemists, we had MDs. It's far above my head. All I was was administration.

KP: You were responsible for the base. How many civilians were there?

CB: None. They were all military, all of them. Well, the Navy had one officer there. His office was right across the hall from mine. He took care of the Navy contingent. They had two meteorologists, because weather was very important to us. If the wind even looked like it was going toward shore, the operation would stop. We had other highly technical people there for research. I only actually went out to the island twice in almost the year I was down there. They didn't want us out there. It was too dangerous.

KP: Were there any facilities actually on the island?

CB: Yes, they had facilities there. They had labs and things there. ... When they let these chemicals loose, those pigs would drop dead like that, in a matter of seconds.

KP: They did both chemical and biological warfare?

CB: Biological, yeah.

KP: Even though you had a good background in the sciences, this was above your head.

CB: Oh, we reported to the district, which was the Eighth District, and they reported to Camp Detrick, Maryland. The point was not to talk about it.

KP: Yes, which might be one reason why they sent you to take charge of the base.

CB: That's right.

KP: You were facing a really lax situation when you reported there.

CB: The fact that I was German, that didn't matter, never entered into it. When the guys went out at night, they'd get drunk and get loose tongue. We couldn't stand for that. People would ask, "Well, what are you doing out there?" "Well, we're growing cabbages." [laughter] "We know you take animals out there." "Well, we feed the cabbages to the animals." We wouldn't give them any straight answers. The civilian population around Pascagoula, they had an idea what was going on. Our biggest problem was to keep the fisherman far enough away from the island so that they wouldn't get hurt. Those were good fishing grounds for oysters and shrimp. They didn't like us at all when this was going on. They were restricted.

KP: They were unable to fish?

CB: Our boats had to go out there and chase them out. We never prosecuted any of them.

KP: However, you still had to chase them out.

CB: We had to chase them out, sure, because, if they got a whiff of that stuff, then, they would never come home for supper, potent materials. Like I said, I had a lot of good experiences that you couldn't buy.

CF: Do you think that you were assigned to the Pacific specifically because you were of German descent?

CB: No, no.

CF: You could have just as easily been assigned to Europe.

CB: I could have. Up at the academy, when we were about to be commissioned, they sent a flyer around. It gave us ... three different choices. "Where would you like to go?" I marked the Aleutian Islands. Why I wanted to go out there, don't ask me, 'cause I don't know why. [laughter] That just

seemed to be the place I'd like to go to see. Well, I got as far as Seattle. When we left the academy, ... six of us were sent out to Seattle. ... They detached me from that group and made me the watch officer of the district office. ... The others were sent out to Seattle and were put aboard ships, some kind of a patrol boat. Not one of them made it. They were all killed.

KP: How? At sea?

CB: At sea. I was there two weeks, I was on watch, and this dispatch came through, "We need so many lieutenants, so many JTs, so many ensigns." ...

-----END OF TAPE TWO, SIDE ONE-----

KP: You were sent to Maryland.

CB: I went back to Maryland.

KP: How long was your amphibious training?

CB: Training? Close to two months. ... See, we went ... as passengers on a Navy LST. In addition to the Navy, we were assigned to the LST. They operated it. We were just there to observe the process of beaching the ship, and retracting it, and picking people up from the sea.

CF: What were your other options when you picked the Aleutian Islands?

CB: Well, the other choices were [in] the North Atlantic. I knew I didn't want to go there. ... I got seasick and I found that out rather early, so, I didn't want to go there. ... I had no thought of going out to the Pacific. Naturally, they sent me from sub-zero weather to the hottest part of the Earth. [laughter]

KP: When you were in the Coast Guard, how were relations with the Navy?

CB: Well, of course, we ribbed each other a great deal. ... Actually, the relations with the Navy was good. We used to tell them, "Look, any details you guys don't want or you can't do, we'll do for you." [laughter] Then, they would give us the old story, "We [have] rung more salt out of our socks than you shallow-water sailors." [laughter] There was real competition there, but, it was always friendly competition. Our biggest problem was the British sailors.

KP: Why British sailors?

CB: Oh, we got in fights with them all the time. [laughter] When we were down there in Maryland, we were [at] Norfolk. It was a tremendously large naval base, [and, also], Newport News, which was also a naval base. ... We would catch buses and taxis that were going to Baltimore. On the way back, it was the same problem. Everybody would wait to the last minute to get on a bus or a taxi, so they could get back on time, because we were on a deadline. ... Many a

night, we got tangled up with the British. [laughter] We went aboard their ships. They let us come aboard as visitors. In fact, one of their warships had been badly damaged, was there in port for a long time, then, we went over to a battleship. ... Can you shut that thing off? ...

KP: Did you encounter any other foreign navies?

CB: No, but, we had a lot of Australians aboard while we were out in the Pacific. Boy, they were good fighters. They were terrific.

KP: Did you have good relations with the Australians?

CB: Yes, we did. We had good relations with them. They were tough, and, also, we had some natives from, ... what's that big island? These names escape me. I'll have to read up on it again. They were all black, but, boy, could they fight. They didn't want guns. They just wanted machetes, that's all. ... I will say this, we worked with four different Marine divisions out in the Pacific and we never once had a problem when we had Marines aboard. We had as many on our LST as four to five hundred passengers. They'd sleep on the deck. They'd sleep anywhere. We didn't have that many bunks. We never had a problem with the Marines. Five or six o'clock in the morning, they'd be out on the deck with an officer doing calisthenics. They kept them busy. When the Army came aboard, we had to lock up everything, because they stole us blind. [laughter] One night, I was on watch and the boatswain mate came up and said, "Mr. Bosenberg, they broke into one of our food lockers." "Well, let me stand watch." ... So, I said, "Well, I really shouldn't leave my post here as LD." So, I got one of the junior officers to take my place, and I went down, and, sure enough, they had broken the lock on the hatch, and they were in there, in the compartment where we had all of the canned food. I couldn't blame them for that. They didn't see any fruit out there. ... They were opening those cans and were eating the fruit. What was I going to do, put them on report? So, I said to the petty officer, they were sergeants and stuff, they were eating right along with them, [laughter] I said, "Look, I haven't seen anything. Just get them out of here, okay? Clean up your mess and get them out of here." Well, I had it mentioned in the log. Of course, the Captain read it and he said, "Well, we can't let this go unmentioned. We have to address it." So, he called the officer of the Army group that was responsible. "Is there any particular charge?" He said, "You're here as passengers and you'll do things our way." He said, "We understand you guys haven't eaten fruit, ... pineapples, peaches, plums, and all that canned [fruit]." We had these big cans, gallon cans. He said, "You'll have to be a little tighter with them," and they were, but, whenever we had Army troops come aboard, everything got locked up, [laughter] but, the Marines, no problem.

KP: You could trust the Marines.

CB: No problem. They kept them so busy, they were tired. They were too worn out. [laughter] I was one of the athletic freaks, anyway. ... The Captain made me athletic officer. That was a co-lateral duty I had. ... I was dumb enough to put on a sweat suit and go out to the airstrip, at one hundred and fifteen degree temperature, and run a couple of miles. So, the Captain made me athletic officer. ... I would take these guys out on the deck and put them through the paces, tire them out. Out there, there was nothing to do.

KP: In other words, when you had troops aboard ship, they had all this time to kill?

CB: That's right.

KP: Did they gamble a lot?

CB: Well, there was some gambling, especially after pay day, [laughter] and that only came, you know, there was a schedule, but, we could never keep it. That was another thing. ... I'm glad I had the opportunity to do this.

KP: You said that the food in the Coast Guard was a lot better than in the Army or the Marines.

CB: Oh, the pilots, as soon as they saw us come anywhere near the island and they knew we were going to land, would fly back to base, get in their jeep, and come aboard for chow. [laughter] That's how we could make all these deals, you know, for the jeep. We had bicycles. Our guys, in Panama, they stole a motorcycle, took it apart. Well, they pushed it up the gangway, onto the ship, and they took it apart. They took all the parts down into the engine room. The Captain found out about it before we left the dock and he made them take it back up and reassemble it. [laughter] We did keep two bicycles. We took them out into the Pacific with us. ... In American Samoa, we could go bike riding. Anybody could use it, enlisted men, so, anybody could use it. Snape and I took the two bikes and we went riding through the island when we went past these native huts. They're all up on stilts. ... We saw this old gentleman sitting out on the steps, so, we thought we were real smart. We knew about two words. ... We stopped. ... We said, "Hello" in Samoan and we tried to talk to him. He was sort of grinning. We said, "What the heck is this guy grinning about?" you know. He said, "You can talk English to me. I was in San Francisco for twenty years," [laughter] but, Samoa, American Samoa, was a very pretty island. That's where the movie *Rain* was made. We saw the location where they had shot this picture. There was a Catholic monastery there. That was very picturesque, and, as I mentioned, British Samoa was even more developed. Of course, the British had been there many, many years before us. ... We were in American Samoa for Christmas and we were in British Samoa for New Year's. ... At the officers' club, they let the girls come in. All of the officers brought their own, they were all natives, and I don't know how I got talking to this one. I think it must have been a Saturday night. I said, "Well, can I see you tomorrow?" She said, "Yes," and she told me where she lived. When I got to there, it was in the evening. When I got to the hut, the whole family was sitting around in a circle on the floor. The father was reading the Bible. I was thinking, "What have I got myself into?" [laughter] Her name was (Saya Towa Toma?). I'll never forget that name. She was a very nice young lady. She had been to New Zealand for two years, and had gotten to college for two years, so, she knew English, and her father was very proud of her. I said to her, "Where can we go? What can we do?" She said, "Let's go to church." Oh, God. [laughter] Anyway, we went to church. Then, I took her home. ... When we were in port like that, we had one day on and two days off. I said, "Can I see you tomorrow?" and she said, "Yes." ... She worked in an office. I went there around quitting time. I walked her back to her house. While we were walking back, this group of, I don't know if they were Army or Marines, they came along in a jeep. "Oh, what the hell are you doing? You're walking with a

sailor," you know, this and that. She said, "Get out of here. I'm with this man. You guys get out of here." ... They didn't like sailors, because we came and we went. They were the permanent occupants of the island. We were cutting in on their women. [laughter] One thing I will say, ... within the community, within the natives, they were very well-organized. They had a chief and a talking chief. ... As I said, they had children at a young age. They were very strict. Once the guy got married, that was it, no pussy footing around. ... If you had two or three kids at your house, when meal time came, you didn't send them out or anything, they ate with you. They were part of the family. I think that the morals kind of broke down after our people got there. They were very loyal to one another until American soldiers and sailors came. [laughter] I always admired that. When it came to be bedtime, and they had a couple of strange kids, it didn't make a bit of difference. They'd stay.

KP: Did you have salt water or fresh water showers?

CB: Oh, we had a good engineering officer and he had taught those people how to work those evaporators. We had fresh water showers. We used to give water to the patrol boats that were an escort to us. They would come alongside and we would give them fresh water.

KP: Which must have made them very happy.

CB: Very happy, that's right. He was a good engineering officer. I don't know how they made out after we left. Last time I talked to him was probably the early part of the summer. He said, "Why don't you come out here to Chicago and spend a little time [with me]?" ... See, we used to do a lot of work for Johnson & Johnson. We did all of their grounds for thirty-five years. I did a job for them up in Eastern Surgical on Route 1. It was a major job, drainage job, I did for them. I saved them about a thousand dollars. The engineer was transferred out to Chicago. After he was out there for a while, he gave me a phone call. He said, "Carl, I've spent sixty thousand dollars out here on drainage and I'm still getting water in the basement. Would you consider coming out?" He said, "I know what you did for us, and, just in case," ... so, I said, "Okay." So, I went out there. Of course, I took advantage of it. I called Sobel while I was out there. He and his son, this engineering officer and I, had lunch together, which worked out very nicely. ... It was at a time when they were on a two week shut down [at] the plant. This engineer was my rod man on the (high pod?). ... I got all of the information and came back home. I calculated what I had to do. I drew these plans. The following year, he sent me a picture. It improved, so, that was interesting. ... Our civilian work, the fact that I had done surveying at Rutgers, I knew how to use the instruments. When you use a star finder and things of that nature, it's the same. Every circle has three hundred and sixty degrees. ... It all dovetailed right in, the fact that we were at the academy as a cadet. I was one of the few people who had had college mathematics. A lot of them there were history people, [laughter] political science people. They don't get mathematics. ... They made me a tutor. So, I was lucky and I say it. Somehow or other, you can put these things to work. ... I know having been in the military has opened a lot of doors for me in business.

KP: In terms of your horticulture, that you knew your clients?

CB: Well, just to get to meet them, to get to talk to them. Most of them turned out to be engineers or business administrators. ... Rutgers helped, the fact that you had a college degree, but, the fact that you were in the military, that is such a [large] part. ... You'd be surprised how many people I ran into [at] J and J, and DuPont, and these different commercial enterprises, that had been in the Navy. Well, right away, the barrier was broken. If you want to make a sales pitch, they'll listen. [laughter] Now, it's easier to do it that way than to come in cold like just Joe Blow. ... I know it worked. I was never sorry that I had the military background. I think that most young men would be better off if they had a year or two of military training. They would look at the world with a little different perspective. ... When I tell my kids, not what we did in the Navy, particularly, but, the way we grew up. The first school I went to had no inside plumbing.

KP: In North Brunswick?

CB: North Brunswick. It was a two-room, wooden school with two little outhouses out there, one marked, "Girls," the other one, "Boys." ... We didn't have thermostats that you walk over and change the heat or shut it off. ... Who ran air conditioners back in the '20s? Nobody had air conditioning. When I tell my kids that, of course, now, they're old enough to understand, but, as they were growing up, ... "Come on, dad, you're kidding."

KP: None of your children went into the military.

CB: I wanted to have Bo go to Annapolis or to the Coast Guard Academy. I would have liked that. ... I even met Roger Stabauch down at Annapolis and had him talk to Bo, but, he said, "I enjoyed coming down here and I enjoyed the fact that Stabauch would talk to me," but, he said, "I don't want any part of the military." What are you going to do? He's happy where he is. He got into the Coast Guard auxiliary down in New Orleans, but, he didn't get into anything practical. That Coast Guard auxiliary was just beginning, which is okay. I would like my grandson to become a naval officer.

KP: You would like to have a naval officer in your family?

CB: I would. Now, this little guy is fourteen. He's now in the eighth grade. Last year, he was in the seventh. They gave him the SAT tests and he scored a thousand, which a lot of kids don't score when they apply to college. ... At the end of the year, in addition to his report card, they put his grades on a graph, a bar graph. ... He had one subject where he made ninety-seven. All the others were ninety-eights and ninety-nines. He was classified as being in the top one percent of the country. So, I tell my daughter, I said, "Either he's going to be a moron or a genius. [laughter] I know he could get into practically any school he wanted to with those kind of grades and he's not a sissy." That's the thing. He likes baseball. He likes soccer. ... He just made the soccer team in middle school. He's very happy about that. I would like to see one of my grandchildren go into the service. I think it has served me well and I think he would benefit from it also. People say you only learn bad things from the military. That's not true. ... There's a lot of good things. So, that about winds it up.

KP: Have you ever gone back to the Pacific?

CB: No.

KP: Why?

CB: I still have a hankering to get to Australia.

KP: You never made it there?

CB: No. ... When they were ready to let me go from the ship, the officer who wrote my orders, a full captain, he used to come aboard for chow all of the time, he got to know us, he said, "I think you're ready for R&R. Would you like to go to Australia?" and I said, "Yes." He said, "I can do that for you. I can give you command of a ship out here in the Pacific or you can come back to the States." I said, "I [will] take number three." [laughter]

KP: You really wanted to get home.

CB: Not that. I was playing the percentages. We were so lucky. Sooner or later, your luck runs out. I figured, "I got this far. ... I just don't want to take any more risks and, if I have a choice, I'll go back to the States." He said, "Okay, I'll send you back." That's about it.

KP: Well, thank you very much.

CB: Well, it was longer than I anticipated. ...

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

Reviewed by Bojan Stefanovic 1/27/00

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 3/25/00

Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 4/6/00

Reviewed by Carl Bosenberg 6/00