RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CARLETON C. DILATUSH

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Mr. Carleton C. Dilatush on May 17, 1995 at Rutgers University, New Brunswick, New Jersey.

KP: I guess I would like to begin by asking a few questions about your parents.

Carleton Dilatush: Fine.

KP: Your father died in the great influenza epidemic of 1919.

CD: Yes.

KP: And you almost did not make it.

CD: That's correct. I was one year old.

KP: My stepfather has a similar story, he apparently was not supposed to make it.

CD: Both the minister ... and the doctor stayed overnight with my mother. ... Thank God I made it.

KP: What do you know of your father? You never met him.

CD: No, I never remember him, Kurt. I was only a year old when he died ... in 1919. He was 26 years of age. My mother was left with two children. My brother was 17 months older than I, so my grandparents, my maternal grandparents ... Daniel and Elizabeth Cook gave up their farm and came to live with us. So my mother then could go to work in Trenton. She used to ride the trolley from Hamilton Square into Trenton. And worked in the various department stores, my grandfather was elected ... freeholder of Mercer County, headed up the road department.

KP: When he was a freeholder? Was it the 1920s or 1930s?

CD: Had to be--because he died in 1930--so it had to be the latter part of the '20s. I can remember he used to take me out with him in the car to inspect some of the roads that were being built. It was very interesting.

KP: So your grandfather, in many ways, took the role of father for you growing up, it sounds like.

CD: Yes, yes he did. He died, when I was only twelve. ... And before I was ten, I started to pick strawberries, went to the farms, below where we lived. I used to pick strawberries, and the money I earned I brought home and gave to my mother. I went to the Mercer Rubber Company on Mercer Street in Hamilton Square, and the owner knew that I was not fifteen. I told him that I was fifteen and I needed a job, so he gave me a job in the rubber factory feeding tubing machine with rubber stock. ... So I worked there from the time I was twelve until between my junior and senior year at Rutgers. I worked every Christmas, every spring and every summer vacation. ... I don't remember having any vacation to be honest with you, so I'm used to work, but it was a

good experience.

KP: How old were you when you worked for the rubber company? You said that you were not fifteen.

CD: I was twelve years old when I started there. ... The owner knew I wanted to go to college. ... Later, my brother worked there, quit school, he quit his senior year in high school.

KP: So you knew at a very early age that you wanted to go to college.

CD: Absolutely, because having started to work in a rubber factory when I was twelve, and seeing how dirty it was, and how hard it was, ... my grandfather Dilatush worked there for years and years. He was working there when I applied. ... I guess, he was also a father image to me, because after my grandfather Cook died, at the age of twelve, my grandfather Dilatush was there.

KP: Took the role.

CD: Yes.

KP: And he worked his entire career there?

CD: He worked his entire career there. Yes, he used to run a huge press where they'd make these heavy wide conveyor belts ... for conveying coal at coal mines. He lived to be about 95 years of age. ... He retired when he was 85!

KP: Working in the plant?

CD: Yes, in the factory. Yes.

KP: What were his jobs?

CD: Well, he ran this big hydraulic press which was about 40 feet long. ... Made these wide belts or continuous belts. Yes, he was very knowledgeable at that. I worked at every other position in the factory. One time I was out there working on the big rollers, milling stock, and the owner came through, and called the foreman over. He said, "You take him off of those mills, I don't want him on there again." So I was taken off, because you know, you could lose your arm.

KP: How old were you when you were working on the big rollers?

CD: I guess by that time I was ... probably ... sixteen-seventeen.

KP: Oh, so you were quite young.

CD: Yes, I worked in ... every position in the factory, over my years. Because I started there in 1930, and I took the job between my junior and senior year in the summer of 1939, with Sheffield Farms in New York, because I wanted to determine whether or not I wanted to pursue my major, which was dairy manufacturing. So they gave me a job in quality control, at the Harlem Plant, and I was there for two weeks being trained. Then they assigned me out to Jamaica plant, and the World's Fair was taking place at that time, and my laboratory was on the second floor. I could see the fair, and I was on night duty; from 12:00 o' clock until 8:00 o'clock in the morning. I lived with a German family, and had nothing to do, during the day. ... I would sleep as much as I could during the day then I go into the dairy about 9:00 PM and the next morning I stay until 9:00 or 10:00 AM. Then I'd go back and sleep, and that's the way I worked. I was offered a job upon graduation. ...

KP: But you did not stay with them.

CD: No. ... I felt that ... I wanted to get into sales. I didn't like being confined to a laboratory room. ... What I had to do was be responsible for standardizing creams, and we use to take frozen cream and fresh milk, and standardize it for either whipping cream, or light cream. We made buttermilk, ice cream mix, butter ... . It was very, very interesting. One time I remember there was a milk strike in upper New York State, ... truck drivers I recall. I remember this trailer came in, this big tanker, and I tasted the milk, this was about midnight, ... and there was something wrong, but it tested okay on acid content and ... butterfat. But there was something wrong with the taste, it just wasn't right. So I condemned it, I refused to unload it. Then they had someone check me out, ... and they agreed, and they sent the tanker to the Harlem plant for making butter. By the next morning the whole tank was sour. We believe that perhaps somebody dumped a can of sour milk in with the rest of the milk, and by the time it went through the night it had completely soured. ... Anyhow that was a feather in my cap ... to find that for them, because if that had ever gone into the processing unit you can imagine what would have happened.

KP: You mentioned that you preferred sales over lab work. I also imagine that working the graveyard shift also added to that.

CD: ... I think probably working as I had to in the Mercer Rubber Company and there were times that I wouldn't even sign out. I would work seven days of the week, because the factory owner asked me, "Do you want to be night watchman? The regular night watchman is going on vacation." So my card would be in all week and then for the next two weeks, because I'd be there as a night watchman. ... Also, our home wasn't too far from the factory, ... about a quarter of a mile, and so my brother would get my lunch to me or my dinner, or my mother, or someone.

KP: How many people did the Mercer Rubber Company employ during the 1930s, roughly?

CD: Oh, I'd say they probably employed about 150-140, something like that.

KP: So it was a fairly substantial plant.

CD: It was, yes ... .

KP: Did they ever unionize in the 1930s?

CD: No, ... they did not, you know, as I grew older and worked there as I was starting college, some of the men ... used to resent me, because being a college student, and I went out of my way to do things for them. I remember when I was here, in psychology, I wrote a paper on the experience I had. ... I got a good mark on that paper, but it was ... quite interesting to see how some people ... felt that you shouldn't be going on for an education, and they had to work ... in the factory.

KP: So you detected some resentment?

CD: Yes, I did. But that was over a short period of time, because I worked all the time, and I worked hard, and they knew that I was ambitious and didn't loaf on the job. If there was something I could help them with I'd go over and give them a hand. It worked out okay.

KP: How did the 1930s affect the rubber company?

CD: ... This was right after the Depression. ... I worked 55 hours a week in the summer, and as soon as I was finished with school I'd go ... to the rubber factory, and I think I earned ... seven dollars and sixteen cents a week, or something like that [for] 55 hours. And I used to take that home and give it to my mother. I also had two lawns that I mowed ... after hours, after I finished the factory, and I received a dollar from each of those, so I had about nine dollars and sixteen cents a week that I would give to my mother. She in turn would give me fifty cents. So I learned at that point in time, that five cents of that went into my Sunday School envelope. And I had 45 cents and I thought that ... I was loaded. On a Saturday night, I'd go to the movies, and afterwards have enough money to buy a sundae or a milk shake or what have you.

KP: How important was your contribution to the family, the nine dollars you gave to your mother?

CD: Well, I think it was very important to her. ... I started in the factory in 1930, so anything that I could do to help her was something ... really needed.

KP: Was your mother able to stay employed during the Depression?

CD: Yes. ... My grandfather and my grandmother lived with us, ... but there were the expenses. I remember my brother and I, and my grandfather Dilatush, used to go ... to the woods and cut trees in the winter, as a matter of fact, with the owner of ... the rubber factory. We would cut up the trees and limbs for firewood, and haul it home, and ... that was our fuel. Because in those days ... in the Depression years, we didn't buy coal, we were burning wood in the heater.

KP: Did your mother ever get laid off at all from any of her department store jobs?

CD: I can't recall if she did. I think she kept pretty busy. And ... the trolley ran at that time from Hamilton Square into Trenton which is about five miles, and, of course, all the trolleys disappeared in time. The same here in New Brunswick when I started here as a freshman in the fall of '36. I remember I had bought a motorcycle; ... second hand, state police bike, Harley-Davidson. It had been turned in. I bought it, and I only had about $156 saved for college, because I was helping my mother along the way. And I would commute from Hamilton Square to New Brunswick [in the] morning, and at night I'd go back, it was 25 miles each way. My mother would prepare sandwiches for me ... I remember I love[d] cheddar cheese and cheese sandwiches were pretty much what I had. ... I commuted for three months on my motorcycle ... before I was injured playing 150 pound football. ... I was given a job in the fraternity ... dusting, mopping and making the beds. It was another student and I who did this for three years, and that's how I earned my room.

KP: And that is how you were able to live in the fraternity?

CD: Yes, and I ... developed a **Saturday Evening Post** route, and I took chapel attendance. In those days we had to go to chapel, as you know, four days. I was given the job in my sophomore year checking chapel attendance, and you had to do your turn on Sunday. I remember when I was courting ... my beloved wife, whom I lost eight years ago, when I was courting her ... in Mount Holly, I used to drive down, in an old car. ... I used to come back on a Sunday morning ... check chapel attendance, and she used to ask, "Would you come back?" She knew I didn't have the money for gas, so she'd give me two dollars to buy some gas to ... return. So I was also carrying, at that time, from the cafeteria to the infirmary the food, twice a day. That was another job I had, working my way through college.

KP: Going back a little, you knew you wanted to go to college at an early age, how well did the Hamilton Township schools prepare you for Rutgers?

CD: I would say, pretty well. ... Another thing I didn't tell you, one of the jobs I had when I was in high school, I used to get up at 1:30 in the morning and go out on the dairy truck and deliver milk. I guess that was what influenced me to major in dairy manufacturing. I always wanted to be a doctor when I was a little fellow, but I didn't see how that was going to be possible. ... In the summer, the man who owned the dairy operation used to come to the Mercer Rubber Company and talk to the owner, and say, "I'd like to have young Dilatush ... for two weeks. He knows all the customers and how to operate the equipment. ... I'll pay him ten dollars a week more than you're paying him." "Okay, you can have him for two weeks." So I'd go work at the dairy for the two weeks. Of course, during the day we had to process the milk, and then we'd go out 1:30 in the morning and deliver it, and come back and it was a lot of cleaning up of bottles, and so on and the processing procedure. And then I'd sleep in the ... late afternoon until 1:30 in the morning.

KP: When did you find time to do school work?

CD: ... As I said, I worked on the dairy truck, I'd come back and I'd take my shower, get on the bus, and I'd go to Hamilton Township High School which was out on West Broad Street, Trenton. I think now they call it Hamilton West, as they have Hamilton East, ... which they built later in Mercerville area. ... We didn't have football, because one of the players had broken his back a couple of years prior to that. They ruled football out in high school, so I played soccer, and we were Central Jersey group 3 champs. I used to practice for soccer, I'd hitchhike home, ... have time to do a little studying, get a little sleep, get up and go out on the dairy truck. But I survived. I guess we found in those days, you didn't need too much sleep. Maybe four or five hours, you were lucky.

KP: Your brother did not have the ambition to go to college, at least in the late 1930s. Did he ever go to college?

CD: No, he did not go to college. ... He went to work in Mercer Rubber Company. Later he became an electrician and plumber. He did well, but I don't think he ever had the interest of going on to college.

KP: But it sounds like you always did.

CD: Yes, always did, yes.

KP: How did you come to Rutgers? Why Rutgers?

CD: Well, I can remember ... one of our teachers at Hamilton Township High School, ... talked to me, ... I think he taught us biology, when I was a junior in high school. He said, "You ought to consider Rutgers." ... Then later I talked to the owner of Mercer Rubber Company, whose name was ... Fritz R. Sayen, S-A-Y-E-N. He had gone to school with ... President Robert Clothier ... at Haverford Prep School. ... Mr. Sayen had the opportunity ... to get a college education, but he chose to go around the world, and that was his education. He was a very brilliant person, self-educated, and he called President Clothier when I was going to start that fall, and President Clothier gave me a $100 scholarship. But I broke my leg my freshman year, and I was out of school for seven weeks and missed a lot of labs. I had some incompletes and my marks didn't hold up so I lost the $100 support. But by the time I ... graduated ... my average ... was 84.7.

KP: Had you thought of any place else besides Rutgers?

CD: No, I hadn't. I had an invitation to ... take a look at Cornell, but I said, "No, thank you, I'd only be wasting your time and mine, because Rutgers is where I want to go."

KP: You were quite the man about campus. I saw that President Clothier introduced you to a freshman reception in 1939 and I read the remarks he made. How were you able to do all these major activities?

CD: ... At the time he introduced me, I had to speak to the student body, as president of the student council. When I started at Rutgers, of course, all the jobs that I had, and the exposure I had in the chapel, ... of course, at that time we were under 1,600 ... students and four years here and you knew everyone by the time you graduated. The freshmen would come in, in the fall and you'd have a chance to get know them also before you graduated. ... I started out my freshman year ... working as a manager of debating. I remember ... I couldn't type, so I hunt and peck letters--to arrange for radio debates. Professor Reager was then head of the speech department, and I worked with him for four years and ended up finally being manager of debating, my senior year. ... I was elected President [of the] student council and the thing that I was most surprised to receive was being tapped as the president of Cap and Skull.

KP: So that was a big surprise?

CD: It was. Incidentally, ... I was also a debater. I know, one trip I went on as a sophomore, I took a trip with the 1938 seniors, Professor Reager sent me ... and Dick McCormick was one of ... the group which I drove. We were gone for a week ... . Also I worked for four years on the **Scarlet Letter** and I ended up ... editor-in-chief of the **Scarlet Letter**. Played 150 pound football four years. ... I enjoyed being busy.

KP: Given the range of activities you participated in, it almost seems that you would be someone who should have majored in the liberal arts, instead of dairy farming and manufacturing. Had you ever thought of that?

CD: In my electives, I took as many courses as I could, that I thought would be helpful. Actually I ended up with a minor in educational psychology, and I don't think there's any better combination than having psychology, no matter what you pursue. Even later I found, as I was in the business world, so many times you would use reverse psychology on someone. I mean they would say, "Oh, your price is too high." Well, ... the people have to have increased wages and benefits, and this was when I was working with cork, and I would say, "Well, you know, you don't have to use these plastic top corks in your table wines. You could buy the aluminum or metal caps." "Oh no, marketing wouldn't permit that, because it connotes quality," and I said, "That's right." So the modest increase of four or five percent or whatever it was, I said, "Certainly you should be agreeable to that."

KP: You were in many ways at the top of the hierarchy of the class of 1940, and of the campus. Did you see any divisions present at Rutgers, between classes or within classes in general?

CD: Division, no.

KP: Did you find living on campus made a big difference in how ...

CD: Well, I had many ... commuters who were friends. And I'll tell you, when I played lightweight football--I played ... four years--there was a chap, his name was Ernie Baxter. He ... drowned in the service ... in Virginia. This was after the war, some accident. ... Ernie Baxter

was black, a very fine chap. He was also a backfield player on our team, but there wasn't any feeling, none whatsoever. [It] didn't occur in those days. You didn't think about any racial problems.

KP: So you did not see any tension between the commuters and those who lived in fraternities?

CD: Well, there was some competition. ... Yes. I know that ... certainly it would be apparent when you had elections, someone was ... running for something or other; they were a commuter, yes. I don't think there was any tension between the two. I think that those that had to commute felt, well the rest of you are lucky being able to live here, but we also enjoy the university and the going out for different programs, and so on, on the campus. For different sports, and different organizations, or what have you.

KP: One of the standard questions I always ask--there are a number of standard questions-- but one is Dean Metzger. Everyone has a view on Dean Metzger. What do you remember of him?

CD: Well, Dean Metzger ... was a great person; he was an exceptional person. I can remember in the fall of my senior year, this was in the fall of 1939, ... Civil Aeronautics Authorities, at that time established a flight program at Rutgers, and I think a few other colleges, where you could learn to fly an Aeronca Chief, ... and it happened to be the Hadley Airport out here. ... I had to apply for the course, pass the physical and so on and then I withdrew. Dean Metzger called me into his office, he said, "Dilatush, tell me. ... Why did you withdraw from the course? Everybody should learn to fly today if they can." I said, "Dean, I would love to. But, ... I don't have the 40 dollars to pay for the insurance and the ground school, ... materials that you need." And I said, "... I had to withdraw." He said, "I'm going to give you this 40 dollars--loan it to you. You pay me back whenever you can, sometime in the future." He reached into his pocket and he gave me the 40 dollars. I did go ahead and enroll, and I did learn to fly here, and soloed in May 1940. I can remember when I went into the service I would send him five dollars every month. I was making $21 a month when I was in the service, paying for the old soldiers' home, your laundry and I would send him five dollars a month until I paid it off. He was certainly a great person, a great person.

KP: What about President Clothier? You were a student council president, and he in fact introduced you when you addressed the freshman class in 1939.

CD: President Clothier was a great president, in my judgement. I can remember also he took a group of us over to the World's Fair. This is before our senior year. As I mentioned while I was working there that summer, ... I guess we were juniors then, we went over to the World's Fair, can't remember exactly, but there were four or five of us that he took over. And I can recall another occasion, he invited a few of us ... to his home, across the river when ... Willkie was running for president. ...

KP: Wendell Willkie?

CD: Willkie, yes, ... so we went ... to the President's house to meet and talk with him. ...

KP: So you got to meet Willkie close up?

CD: Yes. ...

KP: You mentioned that Professor Reager was your favorite professor? What made him stand out?

CD: Professor Reager ... was a wonderful professor. ... I knew that I needed classes to learn how to speak properly and so on, and I enrolled in my freshman year. Matter of fact, I had seven terms, seven semesters that I took speech during my ... four years at Rutgers. ... He was a wonderful person. He used to have me to his home occasionally, for dinner with he and his wife, and his young daughter. It was a nice association, very fine person.

KP: Any other professors that you remember well, for better or for worse?

CD: Well, I remember Henry Keller. ... He taught economics and was a fine professor. I remember out at the College of Agriculture we had a professor by the name of Harry Besley, ... who taught us agriculture engineering. Our paths crossed later when I was in the 50th Armored Division N. J. National Guard, after the service and ... he was in the infantry reserve. He did eventually become a general. ... It was the 78th Reserve Infantry Division ... and he was promoted to a one star general. I don't think he's alive now, I think he's deceased. Bill Archibald was in the same unit; he was class of '41. I don't know if you've interviewed him or not.

KP: Not yet.

CD: He went on, he became a major general in the reserve. ... The highest I got was lieutenant colonel.

KP: It sounds like you really liked public speaking, and in fact the carry over to debating. What do you remember about the debates you had and the debating team? Debating was much more important in college life of the 1940s.

CD: Well, ... it was much more important, but I think that there were many others on our debating team that were better, much better debaters than I was. ... I enjoyed it, but I guess ... learning to speak properly and well was something I realized you needed in business. ... I can't say that I'm one that likes to just get up and talk ... . I think always the first minute ... until you get your nerves settled down, you do have a little adjusting to do. I guess everybody experiences that. I think even Dick McCormick would say that today. And Reager said that at the time, Professor Reager said that it's only natural that when you first start to speak, you would have feelings such as that.

KP: Do you remember any of the issues you debated? Do you look back at some of the debates

you participated in?

CD: Yes, I remember we were debating the Wagner Labor Relations Act. That seemed to be a very popular subject ... .

KP: But you had experiences as both sides. You were now in college, but you had really known what it was like to work in a factory.

CD: Yes, yes I did. ... I don't know the other subjects we had, but it was one of the most important I think at that point in time. Because I started to work, ... as I said, when I was only twelve. I received a social security card when I was just a young fellow. Matter of fact, when it was first started by President Roosevelt. ...

KP: How did you come down on the side, do you remember what position you took?

CD: Well, sometimes they'd make you argue for, and make you argue against. I mean, this is debating, you know, you'd have to ... do what is specified.

KP: You were a Republican in the 1930s?

CD: Yes, and still am.

KP: What did you think of Franklin Roosevelt though, and the New Deal?

CD: ... I thought he was a great president. ... And a good example here, too, what happened with the WPA. The stadium, the initial stadium we had and the log cabin out at the College of Agriculture, now Cook College were WPA projects. I thought he was an excellent president.

KP: So even though you were a Republican, you still had a lot of sympathy.

CD: Yes, ... and respect for him.

KP: Did you ever hold a NYA job at Rutgers?

CD: Yes, I did, I had an NYA job when I was here my freshman year. ... I used to go out to the College of Agriculture, and I washed windows at Bartlett Hall as it is now, animal science. I used to wash the beakers, ... butter fat test bottles and so on. Now as I sit ... there on the platform for commencement at Cook College, and ... reflect back at my time, look at those windows ... in the distance ... at that building, I think how grateful I am to have earned a degree here at Rutgers. Absolutely. I think we only received sixteen cents an hour, that wasn't much, NYA, wasn't very much, but it all helped.

KP: How do you think most of your classmates felt about the New Deal and about Roosevelt? Say in 1936, how many do you think were for Landon and how many were for Roosevelt?

CD: I couldn't answer that, Kurt, I don't have a feeling for that. I don't know. We used to have discussions, but I can't tell you. ...

KP: You knew you wanted to go into dairy manufacturing.

CD: Yes.

KP: But one of the things I noticed of a lot of people who were in the classes before World War II, is that a lot of people really did not know quite what would happen to them, because of the Depression, and the lingering effects of that in the late 1930s and early 1940s. How confident were you in terms of getting a job?

CD: Well, as I mentioned, working at Sheffield Dairies in that summer between my junior and senior year, they offered me a job. The reason ... I remember ... Mr. Harrison came out from the executive office in New York, and he called me one day. He said, "Dilatush, I'd like to come out to see you." I said, "Fine." So he came out, I think I went in early that evening, or it was the next morning he came and he said, "Tell me, why did you start to type all these reports?" I said, "Well, to be honest with you, there were so many copies it was so hard to press through and make them legible so you could see it through the carbons, that I found an old typewriter in the ... storage building here. ... I fooled around with it, I ... got it working, and I bought a tape for it and so I typed up the reports." He said, "I tell you, you want a job with Sheffields when you graduate from Rutgers, you have a job." I said, "Well, thank you, I'll keep that in mind."

But when I did graduate, of course, they had a number of interviews you know, different corporations would send someone on a campus interview. And I was so busy working I was not going to take the one with Armstrong, and at that time, ... Soup Campbell was heading up the employment office there. And he said, "Do you have an appointment with Armstrong Cork Company?" I said, "No, I don't." He said, "Well, I want you to sit down, just give me five minutes. Sit down, look at this and I want you to schedule an appointment." So ... I just briefly looked over the brochure. I said, "Well, if [you] can arrange it late, because I have to take the food ... to the infirmary from the cafeteria. If it's okay after that, fine." So I was the last one interviewed that day, and I can remember the gentleman by the name of ... Mr. Evans. I was amazed to learn that they had so many different divisions. I was thinking, ... Armstrong Cork Company, well, I thought it was flooring, because it seemed to be known. He was telling me about the building materials division, and the packaging materials division, and the industrial and all these divisions. And I guess I was just naturally enthused, or interested to hear what he was saying. ... I was invited--this was in February, 1940--I was invited to Lancaster for further interview. And I went ... there, and they had a sales training course which at that time was six months. I thought, well, yes, I have my degree, but I feel that--or will have my degree, in June--but I feel that I could use additional training or education connected to sales. So I did accept the job when ... offered, I accepted it with Armstrong. And some of my classmates used to say, "See that guy over there walking on the other side of the street? ... That guy's name is Dilatush. He has about eight jobs offered." I had the job with Sheffield offered, ... the one with Armstrong

Cork Company, ... Public Service, ... IBM, I had one of the ... shoe factories ... in New York near Binghamton, and a dairy ... in Philadelphia, I think, and General Electric. Anyhow, the one that I wanted was Armstrong, and I took the job with them.

KP: It sounds like you were very fortunate compared to many of your classmates.

CD: I was very fortunate, because so many of them did not have jobs at that time. So I was hired by Armstrong and they paid us $125 a month. We all lived together in what they called, the Manor, in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Salesmen from the floor division, ... building material, you name it, all the divisions, we all lived together. This was so we had the opportunity to get the feeling between the different divisions of products, and also build associations and so on. And ... we would be assigned to go out to the factories, like packaging, we would go to the glass plants. There were ... only four of us in packaging, being ... hired that year. They sent us to a glass plant ... in Millville, New Jersey, and one in Dunkirk, Indiana. We spent time at the closure plant in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where we learned how to make crowns for beer and beverage bottles, injection molded closures, compression molded closures, metal ... caps for both narrow mouth and wide mouth glass. We went to the glass factory to learn how they made glass, flint, the clear, and amber: narrow mouth and wide mouth. The cork factory, they sent us to Pittsburgh. ... We generally spent about ... six weeks at each factory. ... September we were at the glass plant in Millville, New Jersey, and we had to go and register for the draft.

I remember my number came out, 152. ... I was the third group to go in the service. So I received a card in December, that I was 1A. I then made a trip to Trenton and got them to change it to volunteer for one year. I said, "I'll go today." It was one of the smarter things that I did, because it showed on the record that I volunteered for one year. ... I went on January 16th of 1941. ... I was appointed train commander; I had 600 recruits ... and all the records. The only thing I had to do was carry the records and get on the train. We all went ... to Fort Dix on the train. I was there for ... about two years. I went in ... as a private, at ... $21 a month, they took out for the old soldier's home and laundry. ...

I was assigned to the Station Veterinarian, because of my major in dairy manufacturing. I enjoyed this, because we spent the majority of our time at the commissary inspecting the meat, butter, candling the eggs, ... as those deliveries were made to the cold storage warehouse. I can recall the railroad big box cars would come in with quarters of beef and they'd weigh a couple of hundred pounds. ... They'd have a hook in the ... top hanging in the rail cars. You had to get under them and lift them off the hook, and carry them inside into the ... refrigerated warehouse. Someone there would take the top and guide it on another hook, ... and so we had to unload ... these cars ... . One time on a Saturday I can recall a truckload of smoked hams came in from Philadelphia. Of course, we wore our white coats and all that, you know. I was checking these hams, and they seemed to be ... loaded with water. You'd take the ham, and run your hands down the shank and you would see the juice squirt out. So I rejected them. I went in and told the colonel, ... "I won't approve this load of ham. ... I feel it's loaded down with water, too much." So he went out and he inspected it, and he agreed, and we sent it back. I know many times we used to have a load of cheese come in, they were longhorns. We used to have a cheese

trier, and we'd take sample plugs of cheese. ... You'd break the end off and push it back in the hole. We used to laugh about how the mess sergeants would probably think when they got these longhorns that they were Swiss cheese, because of all the ... tasting we did. There was a bakery right near by and we used to go over there occasionally and ... get some nice fresh bread. The bologna would come in and we'd cut out big sections of bologna. Had to test it! So we'd have a sandwich.

KP: So part of your Fort Dix experience was a lot of fun in many ways.

CD: ... It was a lot of fun and I was able to use my major--we candled the eggs, also. We had to take our tour of one day a week out at the stables. Now at that time they mechanized ... the field artillery. All the horses--all the leather mouths, ... which ... were at the Indian Town Gap were sent to Fort Dix. By that time, I was a corporal. We had to go out there and break ... those horses in, so they could be ridden by the doctors and the nurses on the post. We used to get on these horses, they wouldn't let us use a curved bit or anything. We used to run them around and around in a huge fenced-in field. They couldn't get away, they couldn't get out. You'd just hang on for your dear life, and tire them out. Then you'd start to train them. We did, we trained all of them.

I think it might be interesting if I tell you how I received my promotion to corporal. The colonel ... had been stationed at Schofield Barracks in Hawaii, before Fort Dix, when the bombs were dropped on Pearl Harbor. He would tell me all about that post. He had come from Schofield Barracks to Fort Dix as a station veterinarian. We had to take care of ... all the stray dogs on the post, as they were the responsibility of the station veterinarian.

KP: In fact, you mentioned this at the class meeting. I remember.

CD: So, one day a week we would go out to the stables and pull our duty, whatever it might be. Because ... there were so many ... dogs, some ... after thirty days had to be destroyed. I'm ahead of my story. There's a big corn crib ... at the old stables ... . He said, "Dilatush, ... I'd like to move this ... over to the post ... alongside of our dispensary to ... provide dog cages ... for the stray dogs." "Fine, sir. I'll move it." He said, "How are you ... going to move it?" I said, "Well, what I would do, ... first I would cut it in half. Any objections?" "No, it's okay, we'll cut it in half." Then I'd dig a trench on one side of the corn crib, and I would take the old hay rig over there, and I'd use a couple of those mules. ... First I would dig a trench on one side and put ... the wheels down in the trench so it's sloped. Then I'd get a couple of soldiers to help me ... pull it over on its side. The end of the trench would be inclined so you could pull the wagon out of the trench.

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

KP: Sorry for the interruption.

CD: So we transported a half of the corn crib at a time, over on the post by the dispensary. That

was a couple of miles from where the stables were. After we delivered a half, we'd set it up properly on blocks and so on. We moved the other half over also. ... Then I built a horizontal platform in the middle of it and cut doors through the side to make cages, which were individual cages to put the dogs in. We had so many dogs; we tried to find homes for them, but there were many dogs that we had to get rid of. We had to destroy many of them, ... after 30 days, at the end of the month. Someone had to hold the dogs as they ... were destroyed. There was a ... veterinary lieutenant, and I was the only one--I don't know whether, because the others didn't ... want to do it, or didn't have the nerve. ... In the dead of winter I used to have to go on this detail and we would put away many of these big dogs. And first you'd place ... gauze around their mouth and underneath their jaws tied and then back up over their ears, ... so they couldn't bite you. Then I'd have to take their front legs in my right hand and their hind legs in my left hand, and put them up on the table on their side. The vet would count back between the fourth and the fifth rib, where he would inject Epsom salts solution right into the heart. I had to hold the big dogs and ... pressed down with my right arm on their head to hold them on the table. ... The German shepherd dogs were difficult, I'll tell you. In the mid of winter I used to come out of there after a day of detail and I would really be exhausted and soaking wet from perspiration. As you would destroy a dog, the last thing-- they'd relieve their bowels and their bladders. ... It was not a pleasant job. Plus the fact that I love animals and ... I didn't like it, but I had to do it.

Another detail we had ... was the responsibility of looking after ... the polo mounts ... at Princeton University. The station veterinarian at Fort Dix was responsible for looking after those mounts. We used to have to go ... there every six months. One time it'd be for Eastern encephalomyelitis ... and next it would be for the Western encephalomyelitis. You know, that's the sleeping sickness of horses and they had to be vaccinated for both each year. ... One ... of our staff would shave the area on the shoulder, and I had to hold the twitch, ... which meant you had, to place a rope loop, ... on a little short stick, ... over [the] horse's lower lip. You'd tighten it up ... and hold it. ... This was for those horses you knew were scary. Then the vet would come along, and one time Eastern on one side, and next time, six months later, western on the other side. ... The vet would vaccinate or inject into the horse's shoulder. I can remember one horse ... I had a hold of the halter shank and didn't use a twitch. I had a hold of the halter shank and his ears went back and he started to come toward me with front hooves raised. ... You can tell when a horse is really, really mad. There was a five foot fence in back of me, and I don't know how I ever got over it, but I did. ... The horse took off. ... Later, we had to cut him out of the herd and vaccinate him. That was an interesting experience, too, and also scary.

KP: You had been in the army before Pearl Harbor. What do you remember best about the peacetime army, especially compared to how dramatically the army would change after Pearl Harbor?

CD: ... We first ... reported to Fort Dix in January of 1941. It was mud city! We lived in tents, ... four of us in a tent. They had wooden platforms and the tent was erected on a platform. ... There was a potbelly stove in the center of the tent. We took our turn in the morning, you had to get up and start a ... fire to have a some heat--this would be early, ... five o'clock in the morning, before you had a fall-out in formation for roll call. I can remember on one occasion somebody

sparked the chimney, and ... right over my bunk, the tent was smoldering. It was starting to burn, and I jumped up on my bunk and ran my hand around the hole, which was about the size ... of an orange. ... Afterwards, I used to be able to go to sleep at night and ... see the stars, in the winter. [laughter] It was really some experience. ... We used to have to drill, even though we were in a station compliment. We had to go through all ... training, and so on.

KP: Did you ever do basic training, or did your basic training take place at Fort Dix?

CD: Basic training, yes, it took place at Fort Dix.

KP: At Fort Dix.

CD: I had two years of ROTC here at Rutgers. I could not take the last two years, because I had a conflict with ... my dairy manufacturing labs ... in the afternoon, when they had advanced ROTC. So I went in ... as a private. I became a corporal after I moved the corn crib, and converted them into cages for stray dogs. I took the army extension courses--ten series for Quartermaster Corp. I started ... in February of 1941, and ... finished the ten series by May of '41. I was called before a regular army board of officers in June, and I went through about a two hour verbal examination. I was recommended for commission as second lieutenant QMC. They sent my papers then to Corps Area, Governor's Island, ... and they sat on my papers until September. In the meantime, I was ... promoted buck sergeant, and then I became a staff sergeant. ... The papers came back from Corps Area stating that, "Subject, non-commissioned officer, must attend ... officer's candidate school," Camp Lee, Virginia, ... "to obtain commission, in accordance with War Department Circular so and so, dated, September 1941." In other words, they sat on my papers and held them until they put out this War Department circular, so I was denied getting commission from the ten series. ... I couldn't get a detail to OCS ... Fort Lee, because the units which were being processed through Fort Dix, for overseas, ... were given the assignments to the OCS. ... We just ... served on the station complement there, and we were unable to get a detail to OCS.

When the papers came back from Corps Area, the colonel called me in, and said, "Dilatush, you received a shaft." He said, "I'm going to do something which is entirely unusual. I'm going to give you a letter of recommendation, and I'm going to suggest to you, that you make an appointment with the Navy ... in Philadelphia and you apply for a V-7. For a V-7, you can be discharged from the Army at the convenience of the government to accept a commission as an ensign in the Navy. V-7 was supply. So I did that, ... I made an appointment. ... I spent a whole day in Philadelphia, at the Naval District. They examined me all day long, physical, and so on. The form I had to fill out was about four pages, and I had to ... include everything I had done: two years of ROTC at Rutgers, they saw that I was a staff sergeant then at the veterinary detachment ... at Dix. [I] mentioned ... about the army extension series and so on. So I think what happened, somebody on this side of the room in the army walked over--or somebody in the navy--walked over to the army side and said, "Hey, look, this chap should be commissioned. He should be commissioned in the Army. Now if you don't take him, we're going to take him." I received a letter from the Navy stating that ... "all vacancies for V-7 had been currently filled,

however we are keeping your application on file." Three days later I had army orders ... right through from Corps Area--not through the post commander, ... to proceed immediately to Camp Lee, Virginia ... Quartermaster, OCS. So it was a ten week course ... class number seven. We graduated in August of that year. There were several other students, my classmates, from Rutgers there.

KP: Who else was with you?

CD: There was Charlie Ficken. ... Art Ritchings was already there, he was working at the post. ... I think T.K. Robinson also might have been in that class. We graduated in August, and I was ... assigned as Quartermaster, second lieutenant to Headquarters, First Air Force. I was ordered to proceed immediately to Newark Air Base. ... I reported to Newark ... and phone called to Headquarters First Air Force, ... at Mitchell Field, New York and ... was told to proceed immediately to Dow Field, Bangor, Maine to pursue a three months course in Quartermaster activities as they pertain to an air base.

... There were fourteen of us at Dow Field. ... It was in August, and it was getting ... cool. ... I loved it and had nothing to do, but work. I was the only one in the group ... married, out of the fourteen. The rest of them were out chasing around all the time, and I was working. The major, who was the Base Quartermaster, a graduate of West Point, ... said, "Dilatush, ... I'm going to recommend you be assigned here as my Quartermaster, Commissary Officer." I said, "Well, fine sir. I'd be flattered."

So, as I learned later, the papers were sent in to Mitchell Field. ... Chief Quartermaster, a bird colonel, there was just building his section. There was only a bird colonel, and a lieutenant colonel, as executive officer, and I was the first one acquired for this section as a second lieutenant. He said, "Dilatush, ... you're going to be Subsistence Officer, Headquarters, First Air Force." It was funny, every assignment I had in the service called for a lieutenant colonel and I was only a second lieutenant. He said, "I want ... in six weeks ... to see what you've done." So I knew ... I had to have an index to be able to find ... all ... the different regulations, War Department circulars and bulletins, and so on. So what I did, I ... set up an index. After six weeks he called me in, I'd cross referenced everything. ... He ... looked at the book, and checked field ration here, found cross reference, k-ration or whatever. I even included salvage. ... So he said, "Good job, good." So the next thing I knew I was given an assignment, ... in addition, as assistant in personnel. I handled the allotment of the war dogs at Front Royal, Virginia. I used to send ... from the different air bases ... under the First Air Force, security guards to Front Royal for dog training school. They were trained with a sentry dog and taken ... back then for sentry, you know, guard dogs. Then I was assigned into the supply section. I grew with their operation.

I was given an assistant, and on one occasion, the old man, he said, "We're going to have to do something here, ... we're getting ... these complaints from these signal air warning units, ... on the mountains on the coast, not getting enough to eat." I would endorse letters back to the unit that the Quartermaster General and the Surgeon General determined that one ration, three meals a

day, was adequate sustenance for one person for 24 hours. ... So ... the bird colonel and I, ... in January, went up to Mount Cadillac, which is in Maine, near Bar Harbor, ... also Mount Washington--we ... visited all the signal units. We went up to the very top of the mountain to visit the signal unit. I remember it was during a blizzard. ... We found out that what they would do, during the day they would say, "Come on now, Kurt, it's time to get up, and shake you, it's time to eat-- ... to get ... your lunch at 12:00 o'clock." Well, you're sleeping during the day, because you worked at night. So ... we straightened that out, and we gave them an extra allowance for extra coffee. ... They'd have their meals at night, and they'd wake up the others, you see. They were eating, not three meals, they were eating probably four or more, whatever, at least four, let's say. So we straightened that out. It was a wonderful experience, working, and the colonel had said, "I will never send an officer to Command and General Staff School until he's first graduated from his basic advanced branch school." Which meant that we'd have to go back to Fort Lee, as it is now, and go through the advanced Quartermaster course.

So after about a year, ... I was first lieutenant by that time, he called me in his office. He said, "Dilatush, how is your assistant coming along?" I said, "Fine, sir." He said, "Can he handle the job?" I said, "Yes, sir, he can handle the job." He said, "Well, you're going to school." I said, "Camp Lee?" "No, you're going to ... Fort Leavenworth." I said, "Well, sir, I understood ..." He said, "Yes, I know what I may have said." But he said, "You're a guinea pig. What they're doing now, they're going to take ten first lieutenants and you're one of them. I'm sending you ... , because it was captain and a higher rank before, to see if ... first lieutenants ... can ... handle the courses and graduate." So ... I said to him, ... "... I'll do my best, sir." He said, "I know, you realize ... that if you don't succeed, I have to explain my endorsement, why I chose you." I said, "I understand, sir, ... I'll do my best." Well, I was ... there for the ten weeks. It was ten months training condensed into ten weeks. I figured four hours a day studying, if I don't have it after four hours a day, then forget it, because you had to be alert in class. Classes started at 8:00 in the morning. We had classes on ... Saturday morning, as well. There were quite a few in the class, I think there were ... 826 of us in ... class 14. I was in class 7 at Camp Lee, and this was a year later. ... Sunday I'd get up and go to chapel, then come back, study two hours, ... go over to the pool and swim, relax. Then ... come back and study another two hours, or if I was finished with my studying, ... I would go to a movie. What they used to do, they'd lecture to us in this great big study hall. You had a number assigned and identified only by number, no rank. Because you as a colonel, might be given preference over me as a first lieutenant in the grading, if they saw I was a first lieutenant. ... My number was 192. ... They graded the papers, and if for the record, they would put them in your box. They graded all the papers, but the only ones that they put down for record, ... in your progress through the ten weeks ... they'd be put back in your box with a mark--"US," unsatisfactory, "S," or "A." ... I was fortunate. ... The papers I got back had a couple of As and no unsatisfactory. It was a wonderful experience, really. Some of the officers, ... wouldn't go to school on Saturday morning, as they had taken off for Kansas City. They'd come back on Sunday night and they'd brag about having ... had ... three or four different women. ... I was studying, and ... I graduated, and all ten of us graduated. Six were promoted to Captain. They had a freeze on ... in Headquarters, First Air Force. So I didn't get my promotion until after I came back. But I'll tell you, it was a wonderful experience. ... It was tougher than college.

KP: What made it tougher than college? It was an accelerated program--you were doing ten months in ten weeks--but what else made it more difficult?

CD: What made it tougher was the fact that, they'd be lecturing to you there, then all of a sudden, they'd say "Okay, clerks, pass out ... the paper." They'd close the screen, large doors ... in the front where they were displaying whatever it might be, and then they would give you a test. They'd test you on what they had said in that previous hour or hour and a half, or whatever. ... When the bell rang, you didn't dare write, even finish a sentence, finish a word even, you would pass your paper on over to the end and it was collected, ... and graded. What made it tougher? I would say because being compressed ten months into ten weeks. Sure, we worked hard here at Rutgers, in college, but you didn't have it compressed ... into such a short period of time as we did at command general staff school. ... The colonel said to me ... when I came back, he said, "Congratulations." I said, "Well, thank you, sir, I'm very happy that I graduated." He said, "Well, I had an officer out there, ... keeping an eye on you. ... I want to congratulate you on being in the top ten of your class." I said, "Oh, thank you, sir, I don't believe that." He said, "Well, that's what he wrote and told me." I said, "I might have been in the top ten percent, but I don't think ... the top ten." Of the 826, I think there were ... 720 that graduated; the rest of them didn't make it. Why? Because they were going out to Kansas City. They weren't really concentrating on the purpose they were there [for]. I didn't go off the post for the ten weeks. I had nothing to do, ... but study as I was married.

KP: When did you get married?

CD: I was married after ... my papers came back in that September of 1941 advising that I would have to go to OCS for commissioning as second lieutenant--I was a staff sergeant and we decided we would get married then. We wanted to wait until I was a lieutenant. We decided we would be married then, as I would get quarters and allowance, because I was a staff sergeant. We were married in the Episcopal Church on a ... Friday night, 8:00 in Mount Holly, New Jersey. My wife was from Mount Holly. Her dad was chief of Burlington County detectives. His name was Clifford Cain. He ... relieved Ellis Parker, when Ellis Parker became involved with Wilentz in the Lindbergh case. Cain moved up then, as chief of Burlington County detectives. ... Shirley and I were married on Friday night, September 26, 1941, and we went to New York. We spent two days in New York, came back on Sunday afternoon. ... We were living ... with her parents and her grandmother. I would drive her to the railroad station in Mount Holly. She would go to Philadelphia, by train, where she had a job as a secretary. I went over to Fort Dix and worked there with the Station Veterinarian. I'd pick her up in the evening, take her home. And that's the way it worked out until I was finally ordered to OCS ... at Fort Lee. I reported there in June, ... and we graduated in August. It was a ten weeks course. She came in June to Fort Lee, Virginia when I graduated. ... I was living away, ... when I attended OCS ... at Dow Field, Bangor, Maine and Mitchell Field, New York. So I would see her on weekends when I could while at Mitchell Field, New York.

KP: But then you were living apart.

CD: That's right, we were living apart, yes.

KP: If it hadn't been for the war, do you think you would have gotten married so soon?

CD: Oh, yes, we had planned to be married one year out of Rutgers.

KP: Really?

CD: Yes, ... when I finished my sales training with Armstrong Cork Company, ... and was assigned to a territory, that would require one year, with an increase of $25 a month. ... We were hired at $125 a month ... and all of us lived in The Manor, Lancaster, Pennsylvania.

KP: Yes.

CD: So what they did, they charged us, we had to pay back to them, $70 a month from our $125 to live in The Manor.

KP: And you had no choice.

CD: Had no choice. I had a car, ... which I had previously purchased. My car payment was $35 a month. [laughter] So it was ... pretty difficult. Then when I was called ... into the army, I only received $21 per month. ... I couldn't handle the payments on my car. So, Shirley's father said, "Well, I'll loan you the money." I said, "No." We were engaged then. ... I said, "Only if you put the car in Shirley's name, and ... take title to the car." ... So that's what we did. We were expecting our first child, Tom, my older son. ... He was born ... February the 8th of 1944. ... He was six weeks old, ... when I was leaving to go overseas, and he looked up at me ... to say, "Well, you're my dad." [laughs] So I went ... to Miami, Florida and I was there for two weeks. ... I was ordered ... to be a courier officer, as a captain. They were loading all these cartons. I said, ... "What do you have here? ... What am I going to be signing for?" They said, "Oh, this is currency. This is American money printed up in Chinese currency, for General Chennault, for the 14th Air Force ... in Kunming." They had a huge airplane engine in the center, on a dolly, and I would ask them, "What type of engine is this?" And they ... wouldn't answer me, but I found out as we ... landed at Karachi Airport. I saw the ... B-50s were there, and it was an engine for one of the B-50s. I was ordered off the plane as courier officer. The only time I got into a bed was Ascencion Island. We took off from Miami, went to ... British Gold Coast, ... to Benin, Natal, ... Aden, Karachi. We landed on Ascension Island and after four PM, we had wide awake birds on the runway. ... If you didn't take off before four o'clock in the afternoon, you weren't going to get out of there, because these big birds, they were the size of chickens, [laughter] ... they were the size of leghorn chickens. So we had to radio in for a guard, because courier cargo aboard, and so on. So they posted a guard, and it's the only time I got into a bunk. I had five different crews going over to Karachi, India ... and I was ordered off of the plane to proceed immediately ... to New Delhi.

But they needed graduates from ... Command General Staff School. I was a captain, in the Quartermasters section--services of supply. So immediately, I got on a plane and went ... to New Delhi. They kept looking for me ... at the ... Replacement Depot. I didn't ... go through the Replacement Depot. I ... reported in and the colonel said, "Dilatush, I want you to study this operation here for six weeks. After six weeks I want you to ... return with an organizational and a functional chart. ... So I studied all the operation. After six weeks I did take this to him. He drew two boxes between him and the executive officer, one to the right, one to the left. And he said, "This is Chief of Field Inspection Division, that's your job, ... the other one is going to be Chief of Planning Division. You report directly to me, not through the executive officer." So for ... six months, after these first six weeks, ... I traveled all around the theater, first the base section, Karachi and Calcutta. The code names were Bent and Daub. I would visit the depots and see what was in short supply. Then I would go to all the Quartermaster units in the base section and inspect them. I would make corrective action where I could, then go to the intermediate section, and then visit ... the advance section in Assam where General Pick was building a road over to China. Returning after a my trip, if there was a need for a directive, it had to be ready to go out either over the Quartermaster's signature or by direction of the Theater Commander. Here I'm doing all the talking ...

KP: No, no, no. Please keep going.

CD: But, I'll tell you, that was some experience, because the first time I boarded a plane over there in India, not knowing where I was going. I flew into Karachi, first, and, of course, in the daytime many times I saw the Taj Mahal, because it was ... in Agra, right at the air base. I remember one time we were landing and there were two Indians. They had this goat and they were stroking its neck and, all of a sudden, I saw ... one take a big bolo and severed its head. That's the way they were slaughtered, by cutting its head right off. They were, ... I guess, preparing it for the dinner that evening. I went on down to Karachi, which was then part of India, now it's Pakistan, and got a jeep, and started out from there, and felt my way through the first trip, all through the CBI Theater. Then it got to the point where they would call me from the ... units in the field and I would ... have to transfer to the proper individual in our office. It could be ... in connection with salvage or laundry or storage and distribution, or you name it. I would have to ... say, "Kurt--if you're director of storage and distribution--here's someone that wants to talk to you about problems." They kept calling me for various problems because I knew the units in the field.

So, the next thing I knew, the ... colonel called us all together, and he said, "Now you know the executive officer is due for ... rotation. He's been here so long as lieutenant colonel." In the meantime, I was promoted to major. He said, "He's due for rotation. Now I know you're going to find this entirely unusual, but I expect you to take orders from him the same as if they're coming from me. Major Dilatush is going to be the Executive Officer." Now we had a bird colonel in our section, in addition to the chief, who was a bird colonel. He was not a brigadier general as he didn't come up through the academy, in my opinion. He should have been a brigadier general. So there was a full colonel and ... two other lieutenant colonels and me as a major. A couple of other majors, and we had captains, lieutenants and so on. It was a ... big

section, it was ... services of supply section of the Quartermaster. ... Major General Covell was the commander of services of supply and Lieutenant General Stilwell was the Commander of the Theater. He was relieved, ... returned to Washington to be commander of Army Ground Forces. ... Lieutenant General Dan I. Sultan ... was the one who replaced him. But really, it was a wonderful experience. After I was made executive officer, the ... colonel came back from having been over at G-4. They were trying to get me ... assigned ... to G-4 section. He told me this, he said, "I think you have the right to make your decision." I said, "I'll stay here. As much as I'm flattered that there would be this opportunity, ... there are many things to be done here."

So, anyhow, a couple of weeks later he came back from ... G-4 section, and he said, "We have a project ... assigned by G-4. It's a drum plant which must be constructed, we have to find a location for it. A drum plant to manufacture 55 gallon, 18 gauge reinforced chime band drums." ... He gave the project to me and I looked at all the blueprints, about three inches thick, and I realized studying these blueprints, at night, that we had to immediately order the steel, because it would take a complete Liberty Ship just for the steel for six months. So we ... placed the requisition. The unit was in California being staged, ... this can manufacturing company, and the troop strength in the Theater would not permit the entire company to be brought into China-India-Burma Theater. So I had to figure out from MOS which ones to bring to India. ... I did know that we were going to have three civilian experts in ... electrical engineering, because all the equipment was electrical. But by cutting back ... on the number of men from that unit, I had to then offset them with employees for ... labor. So I went to GHQI, General Headquarters in India, and I said, ... "We need three coys." They called companies, coys--need three coys, which is a battalion. We had chosen 110 miles northeast of Calcutta, Tezcon Kermatola, off the Ganges River. So we got the three coys, and moved them ... to the location. McCumber building was being shipped from Cairo to India. It came into Calcutta, and ... moved to Tezcon Kermatola, and [was] erected. Equipment, when it came, came in on the various vessels. I said to the colonel, "We must assign an officer at Calcutta and Karachi, wherever this comes in, to have it guarded. Because ... we will not have it very long." So that's what we did. To make a long story short, ... we had to plan the operation, and in three months we exceeded rated capacity of production of 55 gallon drums.

Before, they ... were using 55-gallon drums produced from lighter weight metal and they were springing leaks all the time. They had to jettison them over the Himalaya Mountains, and this is before we had the drum plant constructed. The ... colonel sent me to investigate the problem. I went ... to Calcutta and I investigated the whole system. We had a rail system with broad gauge, intermediate gauge, and narrow gauge. In the beginning, you had a cobblestone platform, broad gauge. The terminus of the broad gauge was intermediate, cobblestone platform. We had these fifteen-ton, they call them wagons, we call them rail cars, but they were wagons. They rolled these drums across the platform and put them ... on the intermediate and the narrow gauge, the same thing. So by the time they'd loaded them on the planes and going over the Himalayas, that pressure, that altitude, they had drums springing leaks, and they had to jettison them immediately or ... lose the whole plane and the crew. So there ... was a very definite need for this drum plant being constructed there. We put a canning plant right next to it, and we filled the drums with aviation ... fuel and loaded them on the planes. Then they took off from the airport right over the

hump ... to support the 14th Air Force in the China theater. Because in the meantime, they'd split off the China theater from China-India-Burma theater. So we were, then, just the India-Burma theater. Our mission changed. Our job then, was to support the China theater. It was a wonderful experience.

KP: You served in some ways, in a very understudied theater, the China/Burma/India theater. The other theaters, Pacific, European and Mediterranean, usually get the lion's share of attention by historians. You worked, in many ways, in a very difficult theater for a Quartermaster--that's just my sense of it.

CD: Yes, ... you're right. Because, priority was going to Europe, and until the war was settled with Germany, we didn't really got much attention. Oh, we got the ... basic needs, but ... a lot of food and subsistence was from local indigenous sources. ... And I, jokingly, believe at times we might have even had monkey meat, I don't know. But they'd say lamb ... and it seemed to be goat meat, from Australia. After the war ended with Germany, then we started to get supplies in. We had ice plant equipment sent over. The water over in India was horrible, but we had purification and we made ice, and then you could ... enjoy drinking a beverage, iced tea or you name it, with ice. I remember before--because you couldn't get any, you could buy milk, but ... I would not drink the milk. ... The water buffaloes would be milked outside of the city, and they had these Indians ride on bicycles with five gallons cans with a handle on the top, one on each side of the handlebars. Burlap around the cans, dip it in the streams, to wet the burlap, so as it cooled--or as it dried, it would ... produce some refrigeration. But what they did, as they approached the city, they'd stop outside the city and they'd sell the heavy cream off the top. They'd go to the brooks where water buffalo were wallowing around and fill up the can with that water. Well, having been a dairy major, having looked through a microscope many times and seen those bugs, I didn't want any part of it. So we didn't ... drink ... any of the milk from India. We used to take dry milk, and we had an ice plant, we would make milk shakes with the dry milk and some chocolate and it wasn't too bad. But I'll tell you one thing that was very interesting too, was the fact that the sacred cows in India, after twenty years, they were no longer sacred. So, my colonel I worked for, went over to G.H.Q.I. and he arranged with a brigadier general, Benoit was his name, that we would be permitted to construct a slaughter plant and buy the ... sacred cows after they were twenty years of age. Now ... this slaughter plant we built was two big slabs of concrete, sloped towards the center slightly, with a trench in the center of the concrete. And we used to have these Sikhs with the beards and the others ... one would be chanting a prayer and holding ... the cow, and the other would take a big bolo knife and slice the jugular vein, and take the horns and twist them down so they'd be down on the concrete. And, of course, there was water, I mean you could wash the blood away, but that's the way they were slaughtered. ... The meat, as you could imagine, ... was only used for hamburgers, ... and you could get a piece of the sinew, which was tough. ... It was something different!

KP: It sounds like being quartermaster of supply in India, you did a lot of juggling.

CD: We did. Improvising, yes. Improvising and so on, yes. ... We used to have the U.S.-sponsored Chinese divisions that were in India, and we used to have the most difficult time

keeping them equipped. Because at night they were out there bartering with the enemy ... you know, giving their helmets [away]. ... And so we had a difficult time keeping them supplied. Also, we had Merrill's Marauders and Gallahad forces, ... but I can't tell you too much about their operation, ... which was very secret.

KP: But you were responsible for supplies.

CD: Yes, yes, yes, we were. And I know that many times in the beginning when I was over there that theater commander, Lieutenant General Stilwell, would get behind the Japanese lines with his jeep. Somehow he'd get it behind the Japanese lines and they'd have to go and get ... him out. I think maybe that's one of the reasons why he was finally relieved as commander and brought home to Washington to be Commander of Army Ground Forces. It was quite an experience. I wouldn't want to swap it for a million dollars.

Oh, I'll tell you there was another interesting story, too. One time the colonel, Chief Quartermaster of Service and Supply, ... said, "Dilatush, we're going to take a trip. We're going ... to Calcutta, I want to go through the depot. We'll stop at Karachi, ... on the way to Calcutta. I want to go on to the forward area." So we did, and, of course, as I would do, we observed what was in short supply, or not available in the depots. ... So we went ... to Assam and ... visited a bakery company. The sergeant met us, and the captain, at the door. The ... colonel had a ... riding crop and on the way over to the bakery, stopped a soldier and asked, "Soldier, how's the bread here?" "Oh, very, very good." "Any raisin bread?" "No, no, they don't have any raisin bread." He asked a couple of men. So when we went in for the inspection he was looking [around], and he said, "Sergeant, roll that barrel out from under that table there." He rolled the barrel out and opened it, raisins were being fermented into booze. [laughter] So then ... after we finished this trip, ... they split off the China theater from the China-India-Burma theater. We had to assign the officers for China. So all the eight balls, all those that were problems--and this captain was one--were assigned over to China. But they no more than arrived there and they were promoted. So I guess we did them all a favor. ... That story, I'll never forget, ... when that sergeant rolled out that barrel, you ... should have seen the expression on the captain's face. ...

KP: Before you got to India, what did you know of India?

CD: I didn't know anything of India, except that it was a poor country and very hot. ...

KP: What surprised you the most about your tour in India?

CD: What surprised me was the two extremes--those extremely poor and those that were well off. They had a ... club ... in old New Delhi. I got on the waiting list, and finally, I was able to become a member. Where you could go ... and swim in the pool, ... and get exercise and so on. These Indians and the well-to-do wore beautiful saris, and you'd ... see the couples, man/wife, the saris the women were wearing were very beautiful. They'd be ... there enjoying ... a Saturday night affair. You'd go down the street ... in New Delhi, and see they were constructing a new building. They'd have a ramp up the outside of the building and the women would carry the hod

with the cement ... on one shoulder, ... and on the other hip she would have a baby. Here she's working with a baby on her hip, up and down ... the ramp. When it was time to feed the baby, ... she would stop, sit on the ground and nurse the baby. ... The two extremes: wealth, and the filth, with all the diseases ... were something else.

KP: Your subsistence must have caused you all kinds of problems.

CD: Yes, yes.

KP: You mentioned the milk, but what other problems?

CD: ... With raising vegetables, ... they used human ... fecal matter for fertilizer. We had to wash all the lettuce and everything in chlorine water. ... If you didn't you would have what we called ... "Delhi belly" or the "Karachi crud." It was both the same, but they were the names. ... For two or three days, once you got those bugs in your system, until you got rid of them, it was something else. So we were very careful that any of the vegetables that were used had to be washed in chlorine water. ... We used powdered milk. ... Fruits were pretty good. You had to be careful, though. I remember, well, they had many good fruits. ... I remember going north into Assam area where General Pick was building the road over to China. I went ... to inspect the leakers with the drums and the railroad handling. These were broad, ... intermediate and narrow gauge railroads, ... to Assam. The Japs, they said, were still snipers in the area, ... I don't think they shot at me. ... I was fortunate, and General Pick was building the road ... over to China. A couple of times, I was scheduled to go over there and I was called back, because I was executive officer to the Chief Quartermaster. Then after we split off the China theater, ... I was made executive officer to the Theater Quartermaster, and I had to find a home for ... the officer who was working ... in the Theater Quartermaster's office. I did him a favor, I sent him home. The war with Japan--they hadn't dropped the bombs yet, but ... he was happy to go home. ... We were ready at the time that the bombs were dropped on Japan. The colonel in the theater ... was trying to promote me to a lieutenant colonel, because that's what the table of organization ... called for. Even though they had a full colonel ... in charge of storage and distribution, my papers were in Washington, as they were trying to promote me short of time. They sent them back ...

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

KP: This continues an interview with Mr. Carleton C. Dilatush on May 17, 1995 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. You mentioned that you almost made it to lieutenant colonel, but the papers came back from Washington, that you were moving up too fast.

CD: No, not too fast, but any promotion short of normal time was referred to Washington, War Department, for approval. ... After the two bombs were dropped, ... they kept me the maximum of 60 days. ... My colonel wanted me to go ... visit the theater headquarters with him, as the commanding general wanted to see me. ... Lieutenant General Dan I. Sultan was Commander of the Theater. I've forgotten now who was the major general heading up service and supply. I can't think of his name at the moment. But they tried to talk me into signing up for six months,

to close out the theater. We had already prepared the plan ... to move the troops back to the States. This was all finished. Because before that we had to work day and night, ... to finish this job. I had a wonderful staff, enlisted men and officers. It was on a nickname basis, and if the old man came around, you know, they could call you by major, whatever. During the night, [I] used to send them out to ... get some of those hamburgers made out of ... the sacred cows and get a case of beer. ... We worked through the night. We had the plan all set on the troops ... being released to go back to the States. So the general said, "We'd like you to sign up for six months to close out the theater." He said, "You know we tried to promote you short of time to lieutenant colonel." I said, "I know, I appreciate that, General." He said, "Well, they sent your papers back as the war with Japan was finished and ... you'd have to spend time in grade. ... Five weeks from now, you'll be eligible. You'll have your time and grade, five weeks from now to become a lieutenant colonel. I assure you we'll promote you to lieutenant colonel." I said, "Thank you General, I appreciate it, I'm not a career officer. I have a son at home, a little boy. He was six weeks old when I left and almost two years old now. I'm anxious to get home." I said, "No, ... I'm not a career officer." So then he called in a major of equal rank, and ... then he had this major read a general order. One of the biggest surprises I ever had was when I was awarded the Legion of Merit as a major. There weren't many given out to majors. ... Later, when I was home after I'd been released from the service, the colonel ... I was serving, was at Governor's Island. He called me ... and asked, "How about ... having dinner with me ... at the officer's club?" So I did. He said to me, "You know, I could never figure out why, you received the Legion of Merit and I only received a Bronze Star." I couldn't tell him that because he was off, always off on a trip to ... Ceylon, or ... to Kashmir or China ... he was always going somewhere. ... As executive officer, I was running the show so to speak. I just couldn't tell him. I said, "Well, I don't know." I said, "I was very flattered to receive it." But ... he was a regular army officer.

KP: You went from private to lieutenant colonel. It was partly the war-time, but that is still a very rapid advance.

CD: Yes, I had responsibilities, Kurt, ... you would never ever expect to have at 25 years of age.

KP: Yes, the experience that you got is over a career for many regular army people.

CD: Yes, and when the director of storage and distribution, who was a bird colonel came down with malaria, the old man appointed me to be acting director of storage and distribution in addition to being executive officer. So I was in there for about two and a half months, running that operation. The requisitions we sent back every ... month were about three inches thick for food and clothing and so on. Millions of dollars, millions of dollars. Imagine, you would never have this responsibility at that age in a civilian job, however, I was able to handle each assignment. It was a wonderful experience, I wouldn't want to swap it for a million dollars. But I wouldn't want to go through it again for a million, either.

KP: Were you tempted at all to stay in the military? You were lieutenant colonel and it is a high rank?

CD: Well, when I came back, remember I came back as a major, ... I was separated at Fort Dix as a major. ... That fall, what I did, I heard they were going to have a National Guard Division-New Jersey, so ... I signed up for it. And we didn't know until October when we were federally recognized, what kind of a unit it was going to be. It was the ... 50th Armored Division. So I was inducted into the unit, ... when we were federally recognized. The first summer, 1947, we went ... to Fort Dix for summer training, two weeks and I was the quartermaster. Then they asked me if I would consider being G-4. ... I accepted it. I was promoted then to lieutenant colonel and served as ... G-4 from '48 until '53. ... The company expected I would be called in the Korean War. We were almost in, because the general had been told that if three divisions were taken, one was going to be armored, two would be infantry. But they changed their mind at the last and had three infantry divisions. My wife and I were looking at trailers. We were going to take the two boys ... to ... the Carolinas or someplace where we would stage. ... So they changed their decision, three infantry was smart, because the territory over there would not have supported armor. So we didn't go, thank God. But my company, they'd written me letters about, "We're going to miss you," ... and all this. So after that happened, they said, "Do we have you, or do we not have you? Do you want to advance in this corporation?" And they were not very proud later when I was ... asked ... the question, "Why did you get out?" "Well, because you wanted me to get out, that's why I resigned." When I went to the general, I said, "Business incompatibility, General, I'm going to have to resign as the G-4, the 50th Armored Division." He said, "Dilatush, do you realize what you are throwing away?" I only had four years and a few months to go for my twenty years, because having served as I did, five years, three months, sixteen days altogether, much of which was, well, at the end, 90-some days I think terminal leave, because I never got on a terminal leave, never had an R&R. I worked for nineteen and a half months over in India without a day off. ... He said, "Well, ... you know I have two bird colonels. One who is division artillery commander. And the other one is commander of division trains." He said, "If you can stay, I assure you that I will give you the division trains commander assignment, and you will be promoted to a bird colonel." I said, "General, I'm flattered. I would like to very much. I would like to stay and finish, get my twenty years in, but I can't." So I did have to get out and I was sorry.

But right after the war, when I came back, before I was in the 50th Armored Division, I had a call from another colonel I served with in India. ... After his wife died, he was relieved and came back to Garden City, New York. He called me, wanted me to come over and ... have dinner with him. ... He said, "Dilatush, did you ever think about staying ... in the military?" I said, "No, I really haven't. I'm not a career officer." I said, "You should have been a general. You were not of the establishment, you didn't graduate from West Point, but you were denied--you should have been a brigadier." I said, "No, ... but I appreciate it." He said, "... I'd make you A-4," which is ... A-4 of the ... First Air Force, Mitchell Field, NY. I said, "Well, thank you, Sir, I appreciate it, but no." So I turned that down.

But in the 50th Armored Division, what we used to do, the general and general staff officers every spring, we would get on the train on a Friday night in Newark, and go out to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. We would arrive in St. Louis ... on Saturday ... late afternoon. We'd stay there in a hotel, then Sunday get on the Missouri River Eagle and go ... to Fort Leavenworth.

The staff of each of the National Guard units throughout the entire United States would meet there, all together, and they'd have map maneuvers. We were continually functioning as a unit, as a division. I remember the other armored division, there were only two in the entire United States, the 49th in Texas, and we're the 50th in New Jersey. And they used to create all kinds of situations that we would have to respond to, in our staff capacities. And I thoroughly enjoyed it. That took a week of vacation, or took a week of time off without pay, because at that time the company was not paying for military training.

KP: Vacation?

CD: No, they were not. So anyhow, we would get back home on a Monday morning, we'd finish up at Leavenworth on a Saturday, get on the train, we'd be back in Newark about five o'clock Monday morning. I would hurry home, change my clothes and go into the office in New York where I was ... then assistant district manager, later district manager of the packaging materials division in New York. So, it was a wonderful experience. But I had all this time built up, from each spring ... a week, and then ... we had a drill each week. Then when they had the ... Korean situation develop, ... we had two drills, ... Wednesday night ... and a full day on Saturday. So we had two days each week. So you see, I had a lot of time built up. And I didn't have too much time to go, four years and a few months, and I would have liked to have finished and obtained ... the twenty years retirement ... half of a lieutenant colonel's or a bird colonel's pay. I would have liked to had that at the age of 60, but ... that never occurred, couldn't do it.

KP: I guess I would like to go back and ask some questions on a range of subjects. So I am actually going to go all the way back to Rutgers.

CD: Sure, okay.

KP: The reason I am so aware of this speech from 1939 is--when President Clothier in September of 1939 addressed the freshmen class, he noted that he did not see a reason why the United States would fight another war in Europe. He made it very clear, he was very aware of what was going on, but he did not think this was America's business. What did you think back in 1938 and 1939 about what was going on in Europe?

CD: Well, we were hoping that we would not be called into the war and not become involved in it. And I can remember those who had taken four years of ROTC, ... I remember a couple of them, one is since deceased, he called me Dilly, "Won't be long. We'll be in. We'll be in the service." That was the nickname ... when I was on campus, "Dilly." This chap ... became a major ... in the service. ... But at that time, we'd sit around the fraternity house and we'd talk about, "I hope we don't have to go," but it looked pretty obvious that we were going to be going in, much to our regret.

KP: Well, President Clothier in the following year would in fact reverse himself in support of all out aid to England.

CD: Yes.

KP: How did you and your other classmates feel about that, the efforts to aid the Allies in 1940?

CD: Well, I figured, ... whatever they decide we must do to protect our country, our freedom and so on, I'm available, I'll go. As I say, I did volunteer for the one year in January 1941, and then the war with Japan occurred ... with that bombing of Pearl Harbor.

KP: Where were you when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

CD: I can remember, ... as I said, I was stationed at Fort Dix, and at that time ... I was a buck sergeant. And I was over in Mount Holly, ... visiting my fiancee ... on a Sunday afternoon, seems to me it was around five, five-thirty in the afternoon. I heard Roosevelt come on the radio and heard that famous speech. And I knew then that ... we were in it. But it was a shock, I mean to learn that we were bombed at Pearl Harbor and they had destroyed practically everything we had there.

KP: When you first enlisted in 1941, did you expect to see fighting while you were still in the army?

CD: Really didn't know, didn't know at that time, because as I said, some of my friends did get out in December. Let's see, the first group from the draft, I think they went in September or October. Some of them had been released, and were out for three or four weeks, and they were called back in. I thank God that I wasn't released. I was there, I stayed right in. But those that were separated and had to come back in again, I guess was a double shock for them. But I was there at Dix, I know some lawyer friends of mine that were called in, drafted, lawyers, they were happy to get out and go back to work. Then I think ... later they changed the age and a couple of those lawyers ... I don't think they came back in, I'm not sure. ...

KP: Before you joined the army had you travelled much? Did you have the chance to travel much?

CD: Well, the only traveling I had done was with Armstrong Cork Company, having gone to the plants for training, visited Dunkirk, Indiana, Pittsburgh plant, Millville, New Jersey, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. We went to Buffalo, New York to Dupont, because we had a sales arrangement with Dupont, and we sold ... their bands. Remember on the whiskey bottles they had these double seal bands and so on, the shrink bands, we used to sell those for them. But ... that's about the extent of my travels, except when I was here, as manager of debating. I remember, as I said, my sophomore year I went on a trip, a debating trip, with ... all seniors, and we went ... to Cincinnati. ... It was a week's trip, ... no, I hadn't travelled too much.

KP: So, in other words, for the army, you were sent in that two years, to Maine, Virginia and Kansas. What did you think of these different parts of the country?

CD: ... Well, I thought that Maine was wonderful, I really did. To go out to see the Midwest, I had read so much about it, the farmland, ... the corn country and all that. No, ... it was very interesting to me. I was very much impressed. Getting back to Dow Field, Bangor, Maine, I can remember one Saturday morning when I was going through training, ... I went out to ... the runway line and this B-19 was taxing down there. ... The captain said, "Come on, come on aboard." So I get on the plane, I just thought he was going up and circling around, I said, "Where are you going?" He said, "Oh, we're going down to New York, we're going to Mitchell Field." I said, "Oh, no." See, I hadn't signed out. I was A-W-O-L. I mean, as it worked out, this was a Saturday morning, so we flew ... to Mitchell Field, New York. I got to a phone, and I said to my wife, I said, "I'm at Mitchell Field, I'm going to get on the subway and get to the train, I'll be at Trenton." I figured I'd be at the Trenton railroad station at X hour. She said, "Well, Dad and I will come pick you up." I went ... to Mount Holly, and I was so ... concerned as the captain on the plane said, "You know, the weather's questionable tomorrow. If it's foggy, we won't take off." So. I thought, well, ... I can't take a chance, they didn't know I was gone. ... I arranged to go by train, so I had to be taken back up to Trenton on Sunday morning to catch a train, and we got into Bangor, Maine ... around 5:30 or 6:00 on Monday morning. I went ... over to the base, and nobody missed me. [laughter] Nobody missed me, so I was very fortunate that I had a chance to see my wife and her family.

KP: You had seen the army from the perspective of a buck private to a fairly high rank, a major. What do you remember most about your first initiation in the army, specifically your drill sergeants and instructors and other NCOs, before you in fact became one?

CD: I recall when I was here, two years in ROTC we did have some drilling and so on. When I went to ... Camp Lee, Virginia, in OCS, we had to ... take our turn of drilling the company. I didn't have any problem with it. I think the two years we had here ... was a good experience. But at Fort Dix when I was assigned ... with the station veterinarian, we had basic training, but it wasn't like where you were sent out, ... with ten weeks ... at Camp Lee. This was ten weeks of just training all the time, not only in books, but drilling and bivouac. A nightmare, we used to go ... to Fort Drum as it's known now, Camp Drum. Used to go there in July, we'd go out into bivouac, be out there for three nights, and you had to sleep under three or four blankets, because you're ... not far from Canada, and it was very cold there in the summer, very cold. But to get back to your question, I think the two years I had here in ROTC ... did help with the drilling that we had later on in the service.

KP: You mentioned you did not stay partly because you were in conflict with your academic loads, but before the interview you alluded that you had a conflict with one of the ROTC officers. There was a tension there.

CD: ROTC? No, I don't think so, Kurt.

KP: It was more a conflict over schedule than a conflict with an individual.

CD: Yeah, we had a schedule problem as ... my major labs fell in the afternoon ... of ROTC drill day. The decision was made, my major, that's why I was here, to get my major, to get my B.S. degree in dairy manufacturing ... and my minor was in educational psychology. As it worked out, I couldn't have chosen ... better courses here at Rutgers. ... Because when you're going into packaging, if you understood the processing of dairy products, in packaging, when you went into a food packer and so on, you understood better his process. The same was true with the breweries, the distilleries, and all those pharmaceutical concerns, all those you call on. I couldn't have chosen a better background.

KP: Which you did not know when you first started out.

CD: I didn't know. No, I did not know. ... They don't call it dairy manufacturing. It's food science now ... at Cook College.

KP: But it is basically what you had taken.

CD: Yes, I couldn't have done a better job. And then minoring in educational psychology, ... I was just ... very fortunate. Then in my free hours, I took as many hours as I could, in speech and the electives that I thought would help me.

KP: You mentioned that you had all these job offers, you had job offers from companies that did quite well and are still here: IBM and others. Did you ever think back if you had taken a job with another company besides Armstrong Cork?

CD: No, ... I never second guessed myself. I always felt so impressed with Armstrong Cork Company, now it's Armstrong World Industries. Top flight, top drawer corporation, because when they spun us off, April 1, 1969, at that time I was president of the National Cork Company, a fully-owned subsidiary of theirs. And I was called into Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and I gotta tell you, when they announced that our packaging operation was being spun off to Kerr Glass Manufacturing Corporation, which was the old home canning ... jar manufacturer ... in Oklahoma ... where they had their first plant. I thought ... I would not have chosen a career with Kerr Glass, but I had already ... spent almost 30 years with Armstrong. They spun us off, even though the corporation was founded from Thomas Armstrong and Brother in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1860, fabricating ... cork stoppers by hand. From that the Armstrong Cork Company, Armstrong World Industries as it's known today, was started. It was corks that started it. In 1928 they built the headquarters in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, the operation started in Pittsburgh at a big factory ... on the river, and it was right after the Depression they opened up the headquarters in Lancaster. ... I always was so impressed with Armstrong. ... Top drawer was Armstrong, and at that time, Henning Webb Prentice was Chairman of the Board for Armstrong, and he was always saying, "Your most precious commodity is your personnel." ... That policy in corporations existed from 1940 when I joined them, I would say up until, oh maybe '55, fifteen, eighteen years. Then it seemed to change. It seemed to change the loyalty. I always had loyalty for my employer, but the loyalty didn't continue to exist by those being employed. The corporations didn't continue to treat employees as their most precious commodity. Just what caused that, I don't know. ...

KP: But you noticed this change, even in the 1950s.

CD: Yes. ... I noticed this change. I would say that ... after Prentice died, I saw this change taking place. It was not just with Armstrong, it was everywhere. ... Because I understand that Armstrong used to ... go to all the campuses around, and ... their objective was to get the top one of the class. That's what I was told. I didn't look at myself as being the top one of the class, but they'd go and recruit. You had to be six foot tall to be a sales representative of the floor division. I didn't qualify for the floor division, because I was only 5'8" and a half. Now 5'8." [laughter] But it was a good corporation, and they've done well. If I had it to do over again, ... and I would have liked to [have] stayed with them. ... We had no choice in the matter. ... Two others, and they told me their names, we were being watched very carefully for future opportunities in ... the executive office and the board of trustees and so on, and I was flattered. ...

KP: When were you spun off to Kerr?

CD: April 1, 1969. But I had moved over, my district office in New York became unwieldy. ... When I was assigned to New York, after the war, ... in February of 1946. I had gone to Lancaster for about three-four weeks refresher course in packaging, to bring us up to date on pricing. ... Then I was assigned to New York, and I was a salesman on the road. ... October 1950 I was made assistant district manager of New York. They created a new position, they wanted to try to use some of the younger men in ... management, so I was made assistant district manager. I worked until they appointed a few others in other large district offices. And then in 1955, ... I was made district manager, and I was district manager up until ... January of '66. The district became unwieldy, I had nineteen salesman and seventeen girls. We had all the state of Connecticut, ... the five boroughs of New York, ... seven counties going up into New York State and northern New Jersey down to Mercer County. It was just unwieldy. There were fourteen district offices at that time, and I had New York, which was the largest one. I recommended they reduce it in size. ... I stated that if you create a new North Jersey district office, reduce the size of New York, you're going to save travel time, expense, and everything else. So that's what they did. Then I was assigned the responsibility to split the two, get them started, find a place over in North Jersey. ...

They called me to Lancaster, and asked if I would consider being president of National Cork, ... a fully-owned subsidiary. I said, "Well, where are they located?" They said, "Closter, New Jersey." I said, "Where the hell is Closter, New Jersey?" They said, "Up by the George Washington bridge." I said, "Oh, do you own facilities there, or are you leasing?" "No, we're leasing it." I said, "Well, when does the lease expire?" And they said, "In March." This was in January. And I said, "Before I answer you, give you a decision on this, would you consider building offices at the Keyport, New Jersey plant, and we could pay rent there, and we could operate at arm's length?" They said, "Excellent idea." I said, "Well then, what about the sales representation?" I know from my own experience in New York where our salesmen were handling not only corks, corks in various forms, but glass, plastic vials, plastic bottles and the whole bit. They were spending the time on the big dollars, neglecting the corks and the other. I

said, "I don't want to be paying for this assessment for a certain percentage of the time, of salesmen throughout the United States, when I know we're not getting our money's worth." I could tell you from New York, I know that's true. ... He said, "It's up to you, it's your decision. You run this company like it's your own. We'll judge you based on the bottom line." I said, "All right, let me think about this, I'll call you, I want to talk to my wife and so on." I knew what I was going to do. It was a real challenge, Kurt. So I called the next day, I said, "... I'll take the job, and ... we're going to do all the selling out of Keyport. I don't want any of the salesmen in the field. ... We'll sell ... directly out of Keyport throughout the whole country. They said, "Good, good." So they built the offices, and we moved into the office at the end of March.

In the meantime we were operating in an old ... gatehouse at the factory [laughter] in this little operation. So I had as my vice-president, I had this gentleman who, he had headed up the cork commodity over the years, and I would talk to him about, "what is your feeling about this or that." He would say, "Well, I don't think you should get rid of the sales organization. I think you should keep them." I said, "Well, I'll have to think about that." So when I made a decision that I didn't want any of the sales representation, he said, "I don't know why you talk to me about these things, get my recommendation, and you don't follow it." I said, "I have to make the decision, because I'm the one that's going to be held responsible and accountable for this operation. And I said, "As long as I have a good inside group, I'll take care of the ... selling on the outside. And it's not going to be shotgun selling." I said, "It's going to be target selling. And we'll go after the big ones." And that's what we did. To make a long story short, we were successful in developing accounts. ... I would visit small accounts if they had a problem. ... I had good people, inside people. ... And I worried about the selling. I did the procuring, the selling, and sometimes I had to do the collecting.

KP: How big was your division? What was your best year when you were head of it?

CD: The National Cork Company?

KP: Yes, National Cork.

CD: The National Cork Company, when I took it over in the beginning, you know, it was just a bone, just a bone, was about $700,000 annual sales.

KP: Again this was in 196--?.

CD: That was 1966. I had it up to about $4 million. During the period of time from when I moved in to head up National Cork until when I retired, which was April 30, 1984, I had a running record of the total sales, it was about $34 million during that span of time. And the return on $34 million was about $3.5 million. ... I built up the champagne cork operation--champagne corks in this country, I think ... they did, 200,000 units until 1966 to where we were ... selling 21 million units per year. It was a piece of change. That was for this Spanish company which was owned by Armstrong. They've since divested of all that. ... I used to do the selling, then I'd go do the procuring, I would travel to Spain and Portugal three times a year. I'd go into

the champagne district of France every four to five years. I ... would visit Epernay and all ... the cellars through ... [the] region. I'd come back and it would open doors, because they would learn I just came back from France. "Come on in, I must talk to you." Then they wanted to find out what were the changes that are taking place and so on. So by making all those trips over there, I was able to go for, let's say a doctor's degree so to speak, in the cork business. And I had more knowledge, than my competitors. ... My customers would tell me later, ... "You had more knowledge about ... champagne manufacturing than anybody else in the United States." So that's why I was able to ... build the business. But they wouldn't sell it to me. ... I predicted they were going to drive the business into the ground after my retirement.

KP: Did they in fact do that?

CD: Eighteen months.

KP: What did they do wrong?

CD: ... They had this chap who was with them in packaging on the West Coast. They appointed him to replace me. You can't be on the West Coast and run an operation here on the East Coast. I tried to train him and they asked me when I was retiring, "Can ... your replacement handle the job?" I said, "You'll have to ask him." I didn't think he had his heart into it. So within a year, somehow he got out from under that assignment, how he did it, I don't know. Because ... once you take a job, ... either you live or die with it. But he somehow was able to get out of that job. In December of ... 1985, ... they put out a notice that they were discontinuing the ... cork operation. Just closed it down.

KP: Which must have been disappointing to you, this operation you had nurtured.

CD: ... Yes, it was very disappointing. I arranged to do some work for Expanco Cork Company, West Chester, Pennsylvania.

KP: So you still work?

CD: Yes, I still do. But the cork business is ... polarizing. There are a couple of factions in Portugal that have been buying up the little factories and so on. The do-it-yourself person [at] their home where they used to cut corks by hand, and the old hand method and so on, they're gone. They used to make wine corks, you see, and they'd sell them to the factories, they put them through, sort them and so on. I used to say when I placed orders, "I don't want these corks. I want you to manufacture them here, I want them all one lot, I want them all to look alike." I said, "I want my brand on ... the wine corks, I want NCC--National Cork Company on there. Because I was sick and tired from my experience in New York, as a district manager of packaging, taking blame for other's failures. If we fail, I want my brand on there. I want to know that we've failed and determine why. ... So then I started something, because then everybody else was forced to do that, all the suppliers. ... You then could prove that it wasn't yours. ...

KP: How would you compare--especially running National Cork--with what you did in India? Because it sounds like you had, in a sense it took you a number of years to reach that position at National Cork, versus, your very rapid rise through the ranks in the army?

CD: Well, I would say that going back to the Command General Staff School, what they taught us there, I found subconsciously, many times I was solving problems whether it be in the military, whether it be at business, similar to how you learned through Command General Staff School. ... I would say there were many times you just had to use, ... common sense. I mean, ... no one told me how to move a corn crib. [laughter] Here I was, just a young 22 year-old, or 23 year-old young man. But, no, I think that subconsciously you would be using what you learned ... in the military to apply to problems.

KP: Had you been tempted at all, you had a son, to get an MBA on the G.I. Bill? Had you ever thought of that?

CD: No, I did not. I had credits I knew, but when I came back, Kurt, you see, ... I had Tom, our older son who was almost two. I had a wife ... and had to provide for them. ... So I was assigned to New York, and I looked for a home. I found a place in Fanwood, New Jersey ... and bought it. My wife ... and Tom were living in Lawrenceville, with my mother, and I'd get on the train at Princeton Junction and commute to New York and home, until I got a company car. We moved into Fanwood, June 15, 1946. The house was finished then--it was a house under construction when I found it. And I can remember when I came back from the service after having been away essentially five years and a couple of weeks, but my total time, I told you, five years, three months, sixteen days, I had a letter, when I came home from China-India-Burma theater from Armstrong, telling me they were assigning me to New York, that my salary would be $300 a month. I was over in India receiving $580 a month as a major. ... I said to my wife, ... "I'm not going to accept this." She said, "Well, why don't you go down there and talk to them? Go to Lancaster." I went ... in my uniform ... and I said, "I want a couple of weeks. I've been away from my family. I want to take my wife down to New Orleans." ... "Okay." I said, "I don't feel that the salary offer is proper." "Why?" "Well, your minimal increase is $25 a year. Five years." ... I said, "I was ready to be assigned to a territory ... when I went in the service. My ... salary would have been $150 a month and your offer, $300?" I said, "What I have demonstrated from my army experience ... would have justified more than your minimum of $25 a month increase per year." But I didn't get anywhere. I was looking for, like you know, $50, I was looking for a little more, but I didn't get anywhere. Shirley said, "Well, why don't you try it?" So, I went back and put in my energy and determination into the job, and God was good, and ... I don't fault my decision, but I did their's, at the time, at what they were going to pay. Because ... many of my friends, ... finagled and didn't have to go into the service. I came back, and they were making double that. I mean, they were working ... at some job, ... like Armstrong made, making ammunition, making big shells at that time, making some wing tips or different parts of ... airplanes, and those who ... were exempt to stay ... in industry, they came out much ahead of us who had been in the service.

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

KP: You built a factory in India which must have been a difficult thing. It must have been a nightmare.

CD: It was.

KP: What were the biggest problems? You mentioned the problem with getting steel right away and how you had to order it so far in advance. The work force, how dependable was Indian labor?

CD: Well, ... because of the troops strength and only being able to bring over a certain portion of that unit, and I guess maybe ... as far as choice of MOS numbers in the business worked out okay. But we had ... to figure on three Indians to replace each soldier we couldn't bring into India. My big concern was hooking up all the electrical equipment. I mean to reinforce chime bands, you know, the welding and all that bit and so on. We had to--with the labor end of it-- ... figure three to one. I mean, it would take three Indians to do what one of our men could do. So based on the fact that we couldn't bring in the whole unit, I figured out how many we couldn't bring in-- times three. So I figured we needed ... three of their companies, coys as they called them. One battalion of labor. We put them up down there in Tezcon Kurmatolia area, ... in tents, and ... it worked out okay. ... I was amazed that within three months we had the ... plant up to ... maximum capacity. It was unbelievable that we were able to do that.

KP: It was quite an accomplishment.

CD: It was a wonderful experience, Kurt. I can only say that the experience I gained through the military really put me in good stead, for business, pursuing my career with Armstrong and later with National Cork. ...

KP: Did you have much contact with British officers or the British army? What was your interaction?

CD: Our interaction there was ... with my colonel, his name was Colonel Ralph Richards, ... the Chief Quartermaster of Service and Supply in New Delhi. His counterpart in New Delhi was a Brigadier Benoit, ... a brigadier, one star. Brigadier Benoit, from England, GHQI, General Headquarters of India, and he was our counterpart. Many times I would have the opportunity with Colonel Richards to go on a Sunday afternoon, ... around two o'clock, to the Bickiner Estate, ... which was taken over, it was a beautiful big ... home taken over ... by the British for their ... officers' quarters. Quite frequently, ... Brigadier Benoit would have us over for a couple drinks, a couple gimlets. ... Wonderful curry, prawn curry, which means shrimp but you'd call it prawn over there, curry, and lamb curry. ... They were very wonderful experiences for me, and to listen to them talk about different things, in connection with the ... military. ... But the quarters where they lived were something else. ... Bickiner Estate ... was a beautiful big home, and they had, if you can picture this, ... a great big hall, ... three stories high inside, ... maybe 50, 60 feet

wide, and maybe 200 feet long. All around the walls were tigers skins, with the heads hanging, mounted all around the room, fifteen of them at least, ... all the way around the room. Up above, on the upper part there, you'd see the lattice, the grillwork where the women used to look through, ... they had--I don't know how many wives or what have you, this was the Bickiner estate, with all this grillwork around the upper part of the room. The story was the women used to come behind and look down at the men as they would be eating their ... meals in this big hall. ... The food was good. I love curry.

KP: So you did sample some of the Indian cuisine.

CD: Yes, I did. ... We had ... contract mess ... for our officers, where ... we lived. I can remember we didn't eat until late, because it didn't get dark until late. So maybe it might be 8:30, 9:00, and you'd have a couple of drinks ... at the bar. Have gibsons or gimlets or something, it was gin. ... We used to call the gin made in Calcutta ... by Crews Limited, ... Crews Booze. I know why, now, in this country we had frosted glass containers for gin. Because you'd have the flaking out or the leaching of the limestone ... from the surface of the glass, and you'd see all these flakes. Wouldn't hurt you or anything. But over there you'd see all these flakes in the clear glass bottle. But I learned, after I ... arrived in India, why it was necessary in this country for marketing. You go to all the trouble to have clear distilled liquor or gins, or vodka, ... but over there it didn't matter and it didn't hurt you. We used to drink this Crews gin in various forms. But I remember one night, we had finished eating and there was a group of officers came in late. I don't know where they'd been, ... but they wanted something to eat. Well, the caterer, ... had run out of food, so they went in the back to one of these family huts, and they got somebody's local curry, brought it in for them. ... I understand it was pretty highly seasoned. [laughter] I don't know that I would particularly want it, but that was funny when I heard that story.

KP: How would you compare the supply efforts of your British counterparts? How successful were they in supplying the British and Indian armies versus your supply effort? Did you ever sense that the Americans--even though you were not getting all the supplies you wanted--were better supplied? Or were the British and Indian armies better supplied?

CD: I think perhaps they might have been doing a better job. I never really ... thought about it, but I would say, ... they were doing a better job. ... We tried to buy indigenous, and, of course, they were there. I mean they had the English people ... there, of course, India was under ... their rule. I know we had, we used to have meat come in before the war--Europe was finished. Meat would come in from Australia, supposed to be lamb, but I think some of it was goat. ... We did all right. I'm sure they must have done better.

KP: The quartermaster, of course, is often very unappreciated by those on the line. That is always one of their areas complaints. Did you feel appreciated by those on the line?

CD: Yes, ... I would say, yes. They appreciated the fact that they were able to get a supply of food, clothing, gasoline, you name it, equipment. I think we were appreciated.

KP: I read a press release that you outfitted one unit with 99% of quartermaster supplies. They came over with practically nothing, which sounds like it must have been a huge undertaking.

CD: Yes, ... it was. But I think that we were truly appreciated, and I would say that's also true of other services. Of course, ... we handled the food, and the petrol, the oil, the gasoline, but I know they were appreciative of the engineers, the ordinance, the signal corps. With the engineers ... having to go out ... and build ... landing strips and be shot at, you know, I'm not saying just in India, I'm talking wherever it was. They were put up there, really, the engineers, on the front line, and I think that all the services were appreciated.

KP: Were you glad you were assigned to the Indian-CBI theater?

CD: Yes, I was. In the beginning ... I felt I wanted to go to Europe, but I was happy when I did go to CBI. In the beginning, I was disappointed because I felt I wanted to go to Europe ... as all the priority of supply and everything else was going to Europe. We had a ... more difficult time, but as time went on, I was happy that I was assigned to the China-India-Burma theater, really. Entirely different culture, my God, the two extremes, those that were wealthy, very few, and those, the majority, so poor. The diseases, the illness, those poor, I think, at the time those poor youngsters, those children, didn't live to be even six or eight years of age. I mean those very young children had a high ... attrition rate.

KP: You were also in India, which shortly after the war would receive independence. How much of a sense did you know what was going on at the time in India in terms of Gandhi and the Congress party movement?

CD: Well, when I was there, I did see Gandhi across the street. I saw him, I didn't have too much close [contact]-- ... they naturally wouldn't let you get near him anyhow. I saw ... Montbatten, was Governor General, over on his estate you'd see him walking all around ... there. I used to read and try to picture what was occurring over there when they had the problems. ... Well, first, in the beginning with Pakistan being broken off, because it was all India. Karachi was India when I was over there. Then the problem they had with the Sikhs, the different groups. The troubles they had not too many years ago when ... Hindus or the Sikhs ... with the temple. I can't remember, but I used to think and picture those people there. There were so many that were so poor and to see them during the day, ... it was really tragic. And they chewed ... beetlenut, which was red, sort of reddish tobacco, or I guess ... a root. They'd spit it out all over the place, and you'd see them walking ... and some of them not clothed very well. Those that were perhaps not all there mentally, I don't know, they were exposed and they were naked, you know. I don't know if it was because they didn't have the money or what, but there was so much poverty and so much disease.

I was fortunate as far as malaria. I took my atabrine tablets. I took my eight or ten salt tablets every day because it was 119 in the shade, 152 in the sun. This is why they couldn't work on the aircraft, or the trucks, or what have you, during the day, if they're in the sun. Because it's true that you ... could break a couple of eggs on the turret of a truck or airplane immediately they'd

fry, because it was so hot. The monsoon was something else! I mean, the humidity that you had. ... I used to put on three uniforms a day. ... One in the morning, shorts, ... a pith helmet, and so on, ... bush shirt they call it, with high socks. Noon, coming into the office you rode a motorcycle. I had a motorcycle for a while. We had a bicycle. You could ride a bicycle. You'd see all this smoke in the air. This was from ... the kitchens. They were burning the cow dung that they would fight over in the street. You'd see a couple of women out there, I don't know what they called them, there was a name they had for them. They had a brush, a bucket, and so on, and they'd be fighting over cow dung. Put it a bucket, then they would ... make paddy cakes and put them on the side of buildings. After it dried, they'd chip them off ... for fuel chips. You know, it was for their fire, that was their fuel. You'd see the smoke all around and ... there would be some odor. ... There was a particular type of odor.

I can remember going out on Sunday afternoon ... at two o'clock I'd be finished and we'd get a jeep, go over to special services and get a rifle, and we'd go out hunting black buck. We'd take along with us a three-quarter-ton weapons carrier. We would go out and single out the leader. There would be herds of, maybe, 75 or 100. We'd pick out the leader and go after him. The windshield down in the jeep, gunner up in the front, other guy along... there was only one [who] handled the weapon. Then we got to a point where they ruled we could no longer use rifles, because some of the sacred cows were being hit. So then we could draw shotguns. We'd shoot with the shotguns. We'd take a weapons carrier along with us and we'd get these black buck, which had the spiral horns, and we'd take them back and give them to the enlisted man's mess. We'd have them cut some steaks out, you know, for us. But it was something going across those deserts, the desert outside of New Delhi. Bushes were about so high, and they'd have these gopher holes, ... you had to be careful you didn't hit one, because you'd be driving 55-60 miles an hour, you know, ... and there was scrub brush around. They pick out the leader--I remember one night there I was wondering if they forgot me. ... But I know they didn't forget me, [or] if they lost me or what. It was getting dark, I had my 45 and I fired twice up in the air, then they came. I thought, ... to be out here all night, you know. ... There was one that I'd jumped off, to make sure with the deer that we had hit, ... to cut his jugular vein to let it bleed. ... They came back and they found me.

KP: You have never been back to India?

CD: No.

KP: Did you ever think about it?

CD: I would like to, yes. I would like to and I wanted to go up into Tibet, Nepal. I went over many times. I went up there flying, you could see over Mt. Everest in the distance, the mountains, Himalayan Mountains and so on, and Tibet. I would like to go sometime, but ... I have not been able to do it.

KP: But it sounds like you have followed India in the news over the years.

CD: Oh, yes. ... It was a wonderful experience, but I wouldn't want to go through it again for a million dollars.

KP: Your headquarters staff, how big was it? How many officers and enlisted men did you have under you as executive officer?

CD: Well, the Quartermasters Section of Services and Supply, when it was the China-India-Burma theater, ... we had laundry section, ... a bakery section, ... salvage, ... storage and distribution, rations, ... fuel, and so on. I would say that we ... had about ... 30 officers and about a hundred sergeants, ... enlisted men other civilian staff. It was pretty big operation. You figure you're supporting ... China and the China-India-Burma theater.

KP: When you broke off, did your section shrink at all?

CD: Yes, after we split off the ... China theater, ... we then became ... one quartermaster section. At that time, ... they did not have a Theater Quartermaster, so the officer that I was reporting to became the Theater Quartermaster. He said, "Dilatush, ... you're my executive officer. This other major ... I assigned to administration for a week or so. I said, "Let's send him home." He agreed, so we sent him on home. It wasn't too ... long after the bombs had been dropped ... on Japan.

KP: How many in your section were regular army, of the officers and enlisted men? How many were in for the duration of the war? Any sense of that?

CD: In my section ... the Theater Quartermaster and another colonel, who headed up storage and distribution, were regular army. I would say that just the two. The rest were ... brought into the military.

KP: They were very similar to your experiences.

CD: Right. That's correct. ... How many went on ... for a career? ... I would guess, maybe, five, if that. I don't know. Not many. ... that's only a guess, I don't really know.

KP: You mentioned earlier in the interview that you had very good relations in your particular section, that you often would have nicknames for each other.

CD: Yes, they called me Dil, I called them by their first names. When the colonel came around, it was Major Dilatush or formal. ... They worked, I'll tell you. ... Never had any problems with rank. I mean, as executive officer, as major and ... with another full colonel, chief storage and distribution, and lieutenant colonel, chief of planning, many other majors, etc., we got along very well! ... There was no problem. I was extremely careful to not be trying to boss. We worked as a team, and that's the way it was and we cooperated very, very well, no problem.

KP: How did this compare with other sections of headquarters?

CD: Well, the other sections, of course, I wasn't in them. I would make maybe a periodic visit here and there to do something, with ordinance or engineers or what have you, but ... ours was the largest. I think, ours was the largest, which would stand to reason. I don't know how the others got ... along, but ... I never heard any problems. But I was very happy ... when ... I received the Legion of Merit. You see, that would also be a result of working well ... with other services. ... Construction of the drum plant ... gave me experience working with the engineers, the barge company ... in Calcutta, the air force, and the signal corps, and the various services involved. ... In the drum company, ... there was close work with the engineers and ordinance; yes, and the air force. Because we had to use one of their big trailers for ... airplane wrecks, to transport the big bales of steel, 18 gauge, they weighed about 2,400 pounds ... a pallet. They had to be lifted off the barge onto this ... trailer for airplane wrecks and ... off loaded up ... at the plant. It was a wonderful experience, arranging all this, coordinating it. The way so many records were established in handling cargo in the Calcutta port was because when the ships were moving they would start ... to unload the decks of the ships ... before they even berthed, coming up, coming into the port. They were right alongside of them, unloading/offloading stuff already, you see. You get them, the ships, unloaded and get them out of there. That was a wonderful experience.

KP: Did you have a big problem with shrinkage? How much of the supplies once it landed in port would actually reach where it was intended to?

CD: Well, if it was under guard, I think the majority of it would reach its destination. But I knew that, with that drum plant as an example, ... I needed to assign one officer at each depot, both Calcutta and Karachi, to be responsible for the equipment coming in for the drum plant, to put it under lock and key. To be responsible for it, because it would not have been around by the time you got everything in, and needed it. That worked out very well. I would say that the depots, I don't think, there was too much loss. ... But if you had stuff around ... that wasn't guarded, the Indians would walk off with it. ... I suppose they'd get some money out of it, if they could.

KP: You are in many ways a joiner, if I can make that characterization.

CD: Yes.

KP: But it does not sound like, according to your survey, you never joined a lot of veteran's organizations. Or did you, in fact, join the American Legion or any of the other group?

CD: No, ... I never joined the American Legion. ... I pay dues to the Military Order of World Wars. ...

KP: I was just struck by that, because you are very active at Rutgers and had a whole range of other groups but veteran's organizations never seemed to appealed to you.

CD: ... No. I mean, to get out there and just parade around ... I can understand that some ... may like that, fine, to each their own, but ... Military Order of World Wars was the only ... organization ... I joined.

KP: You've been very loyal to Rutgers over the years.

CD: Well, Kurt, I'll tell you, with my background, having had to start work at a young age, picking strawberries before I was ten, ... I picked potatoes, ... pitched hay, and worked in the rubber factory, mowed lawns, and painted houses. One time they were slow at the rubber factory, and I told my boss, "There's a house I can paint." He said, "Go ahead, take off, you go ahead." I mean, he was appreciative of the fact, that I was, because they were slow there ... I've done all kinds of work and ... it was a wonderful experience. I'm so grateful to God that I was able to work my way through. My grandfather, Dilatush, helped me some, here. That's why I have two areas of deep interest, the church and Rutgers. Because it was here I got my degree, and, Kurt, if I had not received my degree, I would not have been hired by Armstrong Cork Company, I would not have had the opportunity to move along and I don't think I would have, I may have. But, at least, put it this way, I feel deeply indebted to Rutgers and to my church. ... I served as senior warden at our Episcopal Church for 30 years, I served three priests, and I'm ... senior warden emeritus. I'm very fortunate that Rutgers made me a trustee emeritus, so I can continue to serve and attend the meetings. You can't vote and you can't chair a committee, but I had my share of that. You can still talk, and I thoroughly enjoy it. ... I'm so grateful to have this opportunity, and I want to continue to do all I can for Rutgers, my class, and for my church.

KP: Ralph Schmidt was very complimentary about you and your class. He said, I am paraphrasing: that you ran a remarkable ship ...

CD: That's nice

KP: ... with the class of 1940, I interviewed someone in your class earlier, and your class has even incorporated, which is unusual.

CD: Yes, and at the time they said, "You can't do it Dilatush, you can't do it." I said, "Why not?" At that time, they had the ... Rutgers Fund, ... before the Foundation. "You can't do that, you can't, because you'd be taking it away." I said, "No, we're not going to take it away, it's going to be in addition." But, then later, they found out that was true and they recommended it to others. In the beginning, we wanted to have a class of '40 accumulating fund, after the Foundation was founded. In the beginning, they frowned on it. They didn't want that. Now, they suggest it to others. I was asked, by Vince Kramer when he was director of RAA, to go ... talk to the ... Rutgers Alumni Association. I served four terms on that body. I was asked to address them at the time they were considering having dues. Our dues are $30 a year, half of which goes into the escrow account, so to speak, to take care of half. $75 towards your reunion, the big five year reunion weekend, the other $75 goes towards your class gift. We only have about 90, I guess less than that now that some deaths have occurred, that contribute or pay dues.

But the Rutgers Alumni Association, they have a lot of money now. Before, they were on an allocation, they got what the University would give them, which was very little. So they established dues, and the ... other one that had incorporated, ... even before my class, was Douglass. So Douglass and Rutgers Alumni Association, and ours, and nobody could touch it. ... We would invest our money, the Rutgers '40 Fund Incorporated, we would invest our money, and have it work for us. We had a couple of CDs that we just closed out before our 55th reunion. ... In 1990, our 50th reunion, we established a merit scholarship fund, endowed $101,500 scholarship, each year given in the amount of $1500. If you maintained your marks, you would carry it through the four years. At our 55th, I was happy to announce that merit scholarship fund is $250,000. Now at the end of 1997, or in seven years, it is up to $338,000. The scholarships have been increased from $1500 to $2500 each. So it's supposed to rotate, to be like, one for Engineering, one for Cook College, and two for Rutgers College, because Rutgers College is twice the size ... of ... Engineering and Cook College. But anyway, I thoroughly enjoy working with our class, I've been president since 1960. The responsibility when I was elected president, was to take on ... the normal task of the 25 year gift, which was a big one. We paid cash for the screen ... at Bishop Campus. Mike Hill, our classmate, designed it. He was an AIA graduate from Yale, to get his architecture degree. Don Hembling, classmate, was the one who was the general contractor, installed, set it up. Of course, since then, two or three years ago we've had to have new columns put in, new brick columns because the other brick they used in 1960, although it was supposed to be, at that time, about the best you could get, ... bricks are much better today. So now those columns are going to stay there. They're going to be there a long, long time. But it is beautiful. I think in time that gateway, the screen they call it, to Bishop Campus will be equally as important as Old Queens' gates.

KP: Most students go through those gates all the time ...

CD: Sure, sure.

KP: ... Who live on this campus ...

CD: That's right. You see the provost, the Bishop House back there, it's a beautiful campus.

KP: Rutgers changed a great deal ... since you graduated. From your sense, what has remained the same and what is changed the most? What elements do you see as staying the same, the Rutgers that you knew and what has changed so much that you do not recognize it?

CD: Well, the Rutgers that I knew ... has remained, I guess you could say, the buildings, Old Queens, Kirkpatrick Chapel, Van Nest, Geology, New Jersey Hall, and Seminary over here, and the old College of Agriculture, the old buildings that were originally there, the same with Douglass. The changes that have taken place, ... it's hard not to go into any area, today, of this university, whether it's over Busch, Livingston, Douglass, Cook, and not feel ten feet tall when you walk ... out of there. I mean, the new buildings they've added [and] the fact that we were voted into that elite group of universities and colleges. You can thank Ed Bloustein. And the university as a whole, yes, I would say you can thank Ed Bloustein for that, the units that we

have since then, the Bloustein School of Planning and Policy. The big donors that you've had like Janice Levin, the Levin Building ... across from the RAC for the Graduate School of Business and Labor. I think that as far as striving for excellence, ... this has always been, even in the past, way back. I think although maybe with less than 1600 in the student body when we graduated in 1940. You knew everybody by the time you graduated, because ... we were so small, you had a chance with the freshmen coming in that fall that you knew most of them by name. We always said "hello." I mean, you'd call them by name. Now that has gone, because we're just so big. The beautiful campus at Newark and the one at Camden, what has been done in both areas, they're beautiful little units, since they put dormitories at Camden and Newark.

KP: I have taught at the Newark campus ...

CD: Well, you know. ... I think that we are very, very fortunate. And they're rated high, both, and Rutgers here in New Brunswick.

KP: So, you do not feel that nostalgic? Because I have interviewed some alumni from the 1930s and the 1940s and they feel the Rutgers of their day has very few links to the Rutgers of today, at times.

CD: Well, I can see probably understand what they're trying to say. But, I guess maybe, because I've been so active, and ... president of our class since 1960, been back here so much, so often, I live here, practically, to see it grow, to see the expansion, yes, it was nice when we were here, but you have to live with progress. It's true, I guess, just about everywhere that the universities and colleges have grown. You can't stand still. I think that Rutgers has done a fabulous job, really. Recognized nationwide, worldwide. I think that we do an exceptionally fine job here. I really do believe it.

KP: Your son, Thomas ...

CD: Class of '66 ...

KP: Yes, in some ways followed your career paths, well, at least in part that he went to Rutgers.

CD: Bicentennial, and he hated it. He hated it, only because in the sixties, they had all the difficulties and that didn't set very well with him. He graduated in '66 and went on to Springfield to obtain his master's in personnel, human relations. My younger son, who went to Springfield and then he, also, got his master's at Springfield, ... I wouldn't have been able to get my son in here, Scott, my younger one. We did send him to Peddie Prep School. The school ... there, at that point in time Kurt, in Point Pleasant Beach was not up to the level you would find. It's better, much better today, but coming from there into college, any college, from there, was a big step. I know ... Tom, my older son, had a terrible time his first semester here. He made the grade and he graduated with, I think, he had an average of about 87 or 86 or something like that. Scott, up at Springfield, did the same. ... But I know in his ... first semester, Tom had trouble here. I had trouble, because I was out for seven weeks ... when I injured my leg. I played

lightweight football, and I hate to see that go. That's another thing, you have to face the facts, if you don't have the money, something has to go, and I accepted that. But so many people you talk to now on the staff around here don't remember we had 150 pound football team. They don't know. But that was a great, great league. ...

KP: I remember when I first came to Rutgers, as a graduate student, it was still active. Your son, Tom, also served in the Vietnam War.

CD: He went over, yes, in the Vietnam War. ... He used to work with a barge company or something, ... and used have to go on the bad run down to the depot through, ... where they were knocking them off. I mean, we used to worry all the time. ... He wore a flak vest and so on.

KP: How did you feel about it?

CD: Well, I tell you, when I was over in India, I felt I hoped to get home, I truly hoped to get home, but I didn't worry about it. I felt, well, I hope that I do. And it worked out, I did. I didn't worry about it, and I think Tom had that attitude, too, but ... he was worried. Then there was an opportunity for a vacancy, they were looking for an aide, for a general, and he applied for it, and he got the job. He was an aide. He flew around on this helicopter with ... the general ... he even had his hat on one day, because he was ... in a meeting, he put on his hat with the stars on it. I can't think of his name now, Kurt.

KP: General McCaffrey? Lieutenant General M-C-C-A-F-F-R-E-Y? You have it listed on your survey.

CD: ... Brigadier General Richardson, first logistic command, promoted to first ... [lieutenant] and assigned as aide to Lieutenant General, yeah, McCaffrey, yes, you're right, Commander, I'd forgotten about McCaffrey, of all U.S. forces in Vietnam. Yeah, wore the bronze star, yeah. ... But he, as far as love for Rutgers, he just, he doesn't come back here. He doesn't come back for reunions. Not too long ago, they had a 25th, he didn't come back. My grandson graduates in another week ... from Lehigh, engineering. My granddaughter's there, just finished her first year as a freshman at Lehigh. As far as an education, they could, both of them, have had equally as good an education right here and not at three times the cost. But you know, that's why they have chocolate and vanilla. You get your choice. I was disappointed, naturally. And Kate, ... she's my granddaughter, is quite an athlete, she's a good soccer player, she's a fast runner, she's good all around. She played on the soccer team there as a freshman at Lehigh, scored some goals. She was top in grades in the freshman group, she was fifth on the whole soccer squad, academically, fifth, I mean, that's taking all classes. So she's a pretty capable girl, yes.

KP: Your son, had he enlisted in Vietnam or was he drafted?

CD: He was up at, at that time, he was up at Springfield. He was going to be drafted. So what he ... tried to do was ... to get a commission, you see, before, so he ended up ... he wasn't drafted. ... He applied ... in Boston. I know ... he had to go through Dix basic training, then he was sent

... to Fort Belvoir. He got his ... his rank, second lieutenant commission, in the engineering corps. He didn't know how to operate a slide rule, he had a tough time, but he made it. Then from there, he went into the barge company. He went over ... to Vietnam. We were very grateful that he got back okay. He was over there 50 weeks, two weeks short of a year.

KP: Would you have preferred that he did not go? Or did you think it was something important?

CD: ... Yes, I felt that it was a matter of the freedom of this country, and so on, you're called on, you should, you don't question it. Sure, I didn't like the idea that he was going to have the risk. ... But World War II, there were a lot of risks and a lot of lives lost. It's unfortunate that as we find out, now, in Vietnam, I said at the time that we should never become involved. The French had said, "You can't win here." ... We should have learned by their lesson. I think there was one bullet hole in one of our ships, which escalated with Johnson, because I remember seeing a picture ... in **Life** magazine or one of them, there's a bullet hole about the size of your little finger, one bullet hole. ...

KP: ... Since we are on it, what did you think of McNamara's assertions?

CD: Well, at the time, I thought he was a very capable person. I mean, then when this book came out, my God. ... that's why you're on a staff. I would never want to be surrounded by "yes men." They don't do you any favor, you have a staff, you want to know what is their honest opinion. I say that those people whether they're in corporations or wherever they may be, to surround themselves with "yes men," it's a big mistake. ... When he came out with that statement, the book, I thought, "My heavens, that's terrible. That's terrible." To be charged with that responsibility, and if, what he says, he felt that at that time, he should have spoken up then. Absolutely, absolutely. I don't know how he would have succeeded, I don't know whether he would have been overruled or what, but I think it was a big mistake that we ever became involved over there and the lives we lost, terrible.

KP: Was there anything else, that I forgot to ask?

CD: Kurt, I don't know of anything else, that I can think of. I can only say this: My two years here of ROTC, my enlisted service, going in as a private at $21 a month and working up to staff sergeant, and then to OCS, getting a commission, and quartermaster, and then being assigned to the air force and having the opportunity to serve with the air force, I guess you could say that altogether I served with all the branches--air force, army ground forces, services and supply, over in India, then I come back and I'm in the 50th Armored Division, ... so I guess you could say that I served in ... practically all branches of the service, the air force, the army--of course, at that time it wasn't a separate air force. But, no, I do and I'm very grateful that I had the opportunity to go to command general staff school. I was trying to be assigned to [the] ... War College when I was over in India.

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

KP: This continues an interview with Mr. Carleton C. Dilatush on May 17, 1995 at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey. You mentioned that you tried to get into the Army War College.

CD: Yes, well, I was ... in the CBI. I had applied. I wanted to go to the war college because knowing that after the war was settled that the responsibility would be for someone to go into these cities and these areas to take over, I guess, all areas of administration and restoration and, so on. I just thought it'd be wonderful to get a detail to the Army War College. But the war with Japan ended and I did not get the detail. But I was very grateful to have had the time I did in the China-India-Burma theater.

KP: The dropping the atomic bombs, how much of a surprise were they to you?

CD: Well, ... I don't think we had any idea that it was going to occur. Suddenly we heard what happened and everybody then started to speculate, well, that's going to save a lot of lives and hasten the end of the war. And, of course you know, it was a couple of days later that Japan surrendered.

KP: Back in '45, how long did you think the war would go? Did you ever give it any thought?

CD: Kurt, I wanted to get home, was looking forward to getting home. I thought, "Well, someday I hope I get home." I didn't know when it might be, I didn't know how long it would be, I honestly did not know how long it would be. And as it ended up, I had five years, three months, sixteen days of service when you add in the internal leave. But I never was on an R&R. I never had a week away to R&R, never. Over in India, I hoped that I might get to Kashmir, you know, a ... couple of days even. I never. I worked for nineteen and half months without a day off. Sundays we got off at two o'clock, ... so I had Sunday afternoons. But there wasn't anything else to do, really. I mean you were there for a job and to work, and time went faster when you were working.

KP: Your son, you left him when he was very, very small. What had changed when you got home? Where was he at?

CD: Well, he was ... almost two, and I think the most difficult thing was ... the bonding. Because he was only six weeks old when I left.

KP: He was a total stranger.

CD: Right. And I can remember when Shirley and her dad picked me up at Trenton and with Tom. And he sat on my knee and he looked around, he looked at me as if to say, "You're my father, you know. But ... it did affect the closeness. It took a long time, I don't know, I guess by today I would say that. But in the beginning, I mean, when he was a little fellow, even, I'd say, going through school, grade school. The other, my son Scott, he was born in Overlook Hospital,

we lived in Fanwood then. And, of course, I was with him from the time he was born, so the bonding was no problem. But with Tom, ... it was really truly difficult, because he lived with his mother and his grandfather, and ... great-grandmother, that's who he lived with when I was over in India. So I can remember as though ... it was yesterday when he sat on my knee, going home from Trenton railroad station to Mount Holly, looking at me as if to say, "Oh, so you're my old man?" [laughter]

KP: You and your wife, it also must have taken some kind of readjustment when you came back.

CD: It did.

KP: You had been away for a very long time.

CD: I had, yes. I'd been away for about, I guess 22 months, yes. ... We went to New Orleans. It took about two weeks ... before I went back with the company, back with Armstrong, and went through the retread course. ... It took a while adjusting again, yes.

KP: Did you or your wife save any of the letters you wrote back and forth during the war?

CD: ... I don't know. ... There might be a couple of ... those little letters.

KP: V-mail?

CD: V-mail. She packed a box of ... mementos of mine. Shirley's been gone eight years now, and I must go through that carton, take a look and see what's in there. I do have letters that I had written to Shirley when ... I was traveling over to Portugal and Spain ... that was only since '66, '67, ... 30 years, 29 years. ... Well, I don't know of anything else, Kurt, that I can add to your story here. I think it's going to be great when you get it finished.

KP: I thank you very much.

CD: My pleasure. I just hope that I haven't jumped around too much to confuse you and your young lady who's going to do the transcript.

KP: No, you have not. Again, thank you.

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

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