RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH SIDNEY GOFF

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY
JULY 15, 1994

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Kurt Piehler: This is an interview with Sidney Goff, July 15, 1994, with Kurt Piehler. I would like to begin with your parents and ask you, why did your parents come to the United States?

Sidney Goff: Why? They wanted to get away from the oppression in Latvia, which is Eastern Europe. It was pretty rough there.

KP: Had they been subject to any persecution? Any pogroms?

SG: My father I believe went through one. At one time he was in training for the rabbinate. He became so horribly disillusioned when some very holy people could not be protected and wound up having their brains blown out. He ... remained affiliated and religious, but did not go into the clergy.

KP: And he made that decision before he came to the United States?

SG: Yes.

KP: Your parents came over separately?

SG: Separately, yes.

KP: And they met in the United States?

SG: Yes.

KP: Where did they meet?

SG: ... I guess it was partially arranged. But-- one day, prior to their formal introduction by members of their families, pop (he took to American sports) was playing baseball in a vacant lot in Bayonne, New Jersey. He went out to catch a long fly ball--might have been a home run--but the ball was way beyond him. My mother was passing by, and the ball hit her. Pop went over to her and said, "May I please have the ball?" No apologies, no nothing! After that they started talking, and nature took its course.

KP: Your mother worked in the garment industry before she got married?

SG: Yes.

KP: Where did she work, in New York?

SG: In New York City. ... She was a sewing machine operator, and it was one of the installations I imagine that was similar to what went up in the triangle fire. How those people did it, I don't know. They worked for two or three dollars a week, and put money aside to bring over a brother or an uncle or an aunt.

KP: So your parents had done the same thing?

SG: Oh yes, that's how they were brought here, and they continued the process.

KP: How much of your family was in fact brought over?

SG: My paternal grandparents were brought over along with all the children. ... I had two aunts that were older than my father. My father was the oldest boy, and he had three younger brothers. They all came over.

KP: How did your parents come to Newark? How did they settle in Newark?

SG: They were in Bayonne for a period of time, after they were married in 1909. The first baby was born in 1910, naturally, and then the second one in 1912. During the pre-World War I days, my father thought he might become a businessman. He bought a little hand-laundry in Harrison. They decided to live someplace in Newark. He operated the laundry for a few years, and then sold it. He didn't care for the business. That's how they wound up in Newark.

KP: You mentioned in your survey that he was originally an apprentice as a tinsmith?

SG: That's right, over in the old country.

KP: And then he became a house painter and hardwood finisher. Did he first try the laundry business and that didn't work?

SG: I guess so. ... Those days are dim. This is prior to my birth. I was born in 1920. He had been in the house painting business working for a contractor through the early teens. Then he thought he would take a crack at going into business. After the laundry didn't work out, he came back to house painting.

KP: So when you were growing up he was a house painter?

SG: That's right.

KP: And he worked for someone else. He also was a hardwood finisher?

SG: Yes, he worked for companies that made furniture...in the twenties, and then going into the thirties he would do some work for cabinet makers. Not only cabinets, but also bowling alleys where you would have to get the wood just right. Smooth and well finished etc. Oh! He loved that, he loved to do furniture refinishing.

KP: That was probably his favorite task?

SG: That's right.

KP: Which probably his tin smithing experience?

SG: That could be because of the manipulations there.

KP: What was your father's attitude toward the First World War?

SG: I don't know.

KP: Because your family, a large number of your family ...

SG: ... One of his brother's served in the war and a couple of his cousins did. One was an ensign in the Navy and another one was an officer in, I think, in the infantry or he was an attorney. He probably got into the legal end of things. His brother was a seaman and went trough several of the battles. Which ones I don't know. I'll have to talk to my cousin about that.

KP: Did any of your family members who had served talk about the war at all?

SG: Very little. VERY little.

KP: How did the Great Depression impact your family?

SG: Both barrels. It was difficult. Pop lost his job, and we made do. We had a little savings, not too much. There were some family problems that came up. The money that we had accumulated just went, and he would get a job periodically.

KP: So his work became very irregular?

SG: Quite irregular. I remember at one point he thought he would try business again. He bought a little candy store-luncheonette near Robert Treat School in Newark. We were there for about a year, and we found it was costing us money rather than making us money. He sold that and then after a bout of illness, he was able to land a job with the city. This was magnificent as far as he was concerned.

KP: In the painting?

SG: In the painting, yes

KP: Did he ever work on one of the W.P.A. projects?

SG: Never.

KP: You lived in Newark growing up?

SG: Yes, growing up I lived in Newark.

KP: What was your neighborhood like?

SG: Neighborhoods, we seemed to move around a lot.

KP: You didn't stay in one?

SG: We didn't stay in one. I was one of those born at home, not in a hospital. My mother didn't believe in going to the hospital unless you needed surgery.

KP: Did she have a midwife present?

SG: No, we had a physician. Back in those days physicians came to the house, and he delivered me. My brothers were delivered at home also back in Bayonne. ...We lived in the northwest part of the city (Newark) at the time, and then we moved down toward the central area. Then we moved back to the west end, and then to the Weequahic section for a while. That's when the depression hit. We moved back to the central area and lived in there most of the time. I started commuting to college in 1938. The war came along, and I started traveling.

KP: What was your favorite neighborhood in Newark? Which one did you regret leaving?

SG: The one I liked the most was on the west side. Right near West Side Park, which was delightful back in those days.

KP: Now you had attended and graduated from West Side High School?

SG: Yes, that's right.

KP: Now did you go through the high school all four years?

SG: Well I went through Junior High. I went to Robert Treat School where I graduated grammar school (elementary school). I then went to Cleveland Junior High which attended through the ninth grade. Then I spent three years at the West Side High School.

KP: What was the make up of West Side? Of the students there, for example, how many were first generation Americans?

SG: At West Side I think you ... probably had over half. No, no, no, West Side had over half that were native born.

KP: Native Born.

SG: That's right. Maybe forty percent of the parents had migrated to the U.S. They were here in the U.S.A. because they wanted to be!

KP: How many people from your high school went on to college?

SG: Oh, roughly I'd say about sixty maybe seventy percent. Closer to sixty ... sixty percent I would say.

KP: It was a strong expectation then?

SG: It was a good expectation, it wasn't strong.

KP: Yeah.

SG: If you went to Weequahic or South Side High, I think the expectations were stronger there.

KP: That you would go to college?

SG: That you would go to college.

KP: What led to your decision to come to Rutgers?

SG: Well, ... through my brother, one of my brother's. He was a chemist, and became a teacher. He taught chemistry and biology etcetera. Through him I became interested in the sciences. I got interested in the agricultural sciences actually at that time. He encouraged me. He was my mentor. When I applied to school, I applied here, and I applied I think N.Y.U. Why N.Y.U. I don't know, except maybe to follow in my brother's footsteps as a chemist, but ...

KP: Did your brother go on to get a Ph.D?

SG: Well he completed all of his courses for the doctorate, but by that time he was married and had a growing family. He wound up with the credits but without the degree. He never completed his thesis. He has two masters, one of them in education and the other in chemistry.

KP: And he was teaching at the time?

SG: He was teaching.

KP: Where was he teaching at?

SG: He taught in the Newark school system. He taught at Arts High and Cleveland Junior High, where I went, but not while I was there. He taught at West Side. He taught at Weequahic and Central for may years. He was appointed first Vice Principal, and then Principal of East Side High. My other brother was an attorney. He had his practice in the city.

KP: How crucial was the state scholarship in terms of going to Rutgers?

SG: Well, if I did not win the state scholarship, I probably would have accepted the spot with N.Y.U. and wound up going to school at night and working in the daytime, like my brother did.

KP: So that's how your brother got through college?

SG: That's right.

KP: You commuted all four years?

SG: All four years.

KP: So you used to take the train from Penn Station?

SG: Penn Station Newark into Penn Station New Brunswick. Then in order to conserve funds, I used to walk out to the Ag. campus from downtown New Brunswick.

KP: So most of you courses were out in what we now call Cook campus?

SG: Many of the courses were out there. Some of them were at the chemistry building ... on campus in New Brunswick. Some were at New Jersey Hall, etcetera.

KP: How much money did you save by walking?

SG: Each way was a nickel.

KP: So you saved a dime. ...

SG: We have no consideration for a nickel these days. A nickel today won't buy what a penny bought back then. May not even buy what a buy what a dime or a quarter bought.

KP: So you went into Ag. research?

SG: Right.

KP: You decided that that's what you wanted to go into?

SG: And I stuck with it!

KP: Where did you envision going, in terms of your career? What was your idea?

SG: At first it was USDA. ... We didn't have counselors at that time. We didn't have sessions with our professors or with the administration to help and guide us. So you sort of made up your own mind. At least the commuters did. What I considered was the USDA or the State Department of Agriculture or something of that type. It wasn't until I actually got out that I realized there were industries that would employ people [with] ag research training. Or I might even set up my own business. Which I didn't do.

KP: But at the time when you first started you ...?

SG: All I could think of was--don't forget there is a depression background here--a steady job was money in the bank. This was it. If you had a steady job, then you had it made. At that time something like sixty to eighty dollars a week was considered a fine salary. You could raise a family on that.

KP: And it was only later after you finished your degree that you realized all the ...?

SG: Well, actually, what happened [was] the war entered the picture. ... During the period of time between the end of hostilities and discharge, ... [I rose to] the magnificent height of private first class. I was on KP so damn much because my training as a radar gunner ... stopped. So instead of being a cadet type, I was just a private on KP. ... One day I walked in to the station hospital, and I said can you use a chemist. The doctor in charge barred the door and wouldn't let me out until he had me assigned to his unit.

KP: What do you think you missed by being a commuter in terms of college?

SG: Well, social life. I met a very fine young lady ... who was also a commuter, and eventually I married her.

KP: So you met on the train?

SG: Yeah. We met at the station in Newark.

KP: And then you would take the train down together?

SG: We would take the train down together, that's right.

KP: And she was at Douglass?

SG: She was at Douglass. She was a home economics major.

KP: After graduation she worked as a meat inspector?

SG: As a food inspector. During the early days of the war. She was stationed in Maryland, and later on she was moved to Florida.

KP: Is that something she had envisioned when she started college?

SG: Not really, no. She was originally going into nutrition and dietetics.

KP: In a sense this opportunity opened up because ...?

SG: Well, there was a war on. ... There was a need for it, and you went and did your duty. She did. Well that would be the first thing anyway.

KP: The yearbook reported that you worked as a salesman during your college years.

SG: I was a lousy salesman. During my undergraduate years, I needed some sort of an income. My mother and father couldn't supply it because things were rough at home. I was able to get a job selling shoes, in Bonds clothing store in Newark. I worked vacations. I worked weekends and Wednesday nights. ... I also filled in during the summertime with a full time job as a counter man at Nedick's and Bambergers.

KP: Nedick's was?

SG: A quick food restaraunt specializing in orange drink, hamburgers and hot dogs. Let's not talk about it. I was low man on the totem pole with the promise of becoming an assistant manager so I could do the dish washing, after I had enough experience! That was just a fill in job to provide commuting money.

KP: How much was the train?

SG: I know it exactly. Nine dollars and forty five cents a month on the train.

KP: I don't even think you could do one way now.

SG: Probably not.

KP: Yeah.

SG: But that was a special rate for students.

KP: Yeah, you had the student rate.

SG: We had the student ticket. Many months there were not enough trips on the ticket. So we would surreptitiously catch the little piece that they punched out and stick it back in again. They knew it of course, but they never made us suffer.

KP: They knew you were students.

SG: Yeah, probably. We had a blue ticket and everybody else had a white ticket.

KP: Did you attend chapel at Rutgers when you went?

SG: As a freshman and sophomore, yes.

KP: What did you think of attending chapel?

SG: I loved it. I thought it was ... I happen to be religiously inclined. I believe in God. While my approach to God happens to be different than others people's, we are still praying to the same God.

KP: So you didn't object coming from a Jewish background.

SG: I did not.

KP: Yeah.

SG: I know some people do, but I didn't.

KP: In fact, was this an experience that sort of gave you a new perspective?

SG: Yeah, it did.

KP: What did you think of Dean Metzger?

SG: Dean Metzger was, to me, a cold individual. He was not warm. I didn't dislike him, but I had no great liking for him. He was alright. When my grades were a little bit low my sophomore year, he called me in and gave me a warning that I could lose my scholarship. Boy, I straightened out fast.

KP: You had mentioned that William Reiman was your favorite teacher?

SG: ... He was such a capable teacher and such a fine man. If you had any problems, he seemed to take the attitude of ... well it's not your fault for not being able to understand it, let's try it a different way. He was good. He had the warmth that the other fellow didn't have.

KP: You are referring to Dean Metzger?

SG: Yeah.

KP: And was he a good lecturer?

SG: Yeah, I enjoyed his lectures. He was tops as far as I'm concerned.

KP: In your first and second year you debated. What issue did you debate?

SG: I don't know. I honestly can't recall. There may have been one on the League of Nations which was one of the big topics of the day. But I don't recall what they were.

KP: You were also in the German Club.

SG: Yeah.

KP: How did that membership come about? Did you take German?

SG: Oh I took German, yeah, I took German. I took, I think it was two years of German. I enjoyed it, and I actually won the ... They had a contest at the end of my senior year. An elocution contest. I memorized one of [Heinrich] Heine's poems and delivered it. I got first prize. My diction was fine, my metering was fine, my expression, my grouping, everything was just super. So I liked it.

KP: What did you think about the political events going on in Germany at the time?

SG: I had been upset with what was going on in Germany even when I was just a kid. In '36 I could see what was happening. I predicted '39 but nobody listened to me. As usual!

KP: So you would tell some people, and people, classmates of yours?

SG: Yeah, I thought that this Hitler guy was going to make a grab for everything. Especially in '38 when he just started going grabbing one thing after another. ... It was obvious, but oh no, no. And dear old, Neville Chamberlain with his paper, with "peace in our time." I didn't believe it either.

KP: Did you?

SG: I was not an activist. That's right, I was not an activist. I did not belong to any political group on campus nor did I belong to any religious group on campus. I kept busy working and studying and getting on.

KP: No that seems to be ... I don't know where you could have found time to be an activist.

SG: I couldn't, no. Not very well, no.

KP: You decided not to stay in R.O.T.C.?

SG: I didn't decide not stay. I applied for the advanced training.

KP: Oh, okay.

SG: But I was turned down.

KP: Oh, so you did try to stay in R.O.T.C.?

SG: Oh, yes I did.

KP: Do you know why you were turned down?

SG: I just don't know.

KP: Yeah.

SG: I didn't have the background for it maybe. Also, I guess, my grades in military science were just twos. Everybody got a two.

KP: So, in other words to stay in the R.O.T.C. could be a very difficult thing?

SG: Well, I would have liked it.

KP: Yeah.

SG: I wanted it. My parents were not against it. I applied for it. I went through the physical, and they just said no thanks. Thanks for applying.

KP: So in trying to apply to stay in R.O.T.C. did you envision that we would be going to war?

SG: I knew that, yeah. I felt it was coming. I told you, especially in 1940.

KP: Yeah, you knew there was no question then?

SG: Already we were in. It was just a matter... In my opinion, it was just a matter of when would we join.

KP: Where were you when Pearl Harbor occurred? Were you at home?

SG: I was at home studying, listening to the radio. There was a football game on. I think at that time the National League. It was just one league that went into all these divisions, etcetera. It was the championship game. All of a sudden they broke in and Pearl Harbor has been bombed by the Japanese. ... Where the hell is Pearl Harbor? So I grabbed an atlas. We always had references in the house. I grabbed an atlas. Oh my god we're at war!

KP: And you had expected war against Japan?

SG: No, I didn't expect it against Japan. I knew that at that time, what was his name, [Saburo] Kurusu and the others were, they were negotiating. I figured well that would probably smooth itself out. It was the Atlantic that I was looking at, and here the Japanese did it instead. I knew it was coming.

KP: Did you choose the Air Force?

SG: Well, that's a long story in itself. I applied for cadet training while I was still a student. I was turned down because my eyes were not perfect, or whatever. I got a little bit put out, should

we say, at that because I would have loved that. Then they had this cadet training for ground crew. The ground crew for communications. So I applied for that, and I found out that they had closed it up just before I sent my application in. Someone said "You know, they are looking for instructors at Scott Field Illinois, the War Department. Why don't you apply there. If they ever open it up or if you get into service it will be cool. You will know all the equipment. You will know the whole deal". So I applied there, and I got the job. I was very surprised. I went out to Scott Field, Illinois, after graduating, and I worked there for a year. During that year, I went from student to senior instructor in the phase.

KP: Now the year you went out there were you still a civilian?

SG: Yeah.

KP: So you worked as a civilian?

SG: I worked as a civilian.

KP: But you were instructing the military?

SG: I was instructing the military. Actually I was instructing men who would become radio operator gunners on B-17's, B-24's, B-26's, and B-25's.

KP: Had you always wanted to go into the Air Force?

SG: Yeah. That would have been my choice.

KP: And you would have ideally liked to have been a pilot?

SG: I would have loved to have been a pilot, yeah. One of my friends did it, and he didn't come back, but ...

KP: Had you been interested in aviation before the war?

SG: Yeah, ... I used to make model planes. I used to read all the old pulp magazines about the war aces in World War I, etcetera.

KP: Did you go out to Newark airport a lot?

SG: Yes I did! Whoa, you pegged me. I didn't even mention that, but I remember going down to Newark with my brother. He took me down to Newark airport in '28, right after it opened up. I was absolutely thrilled with the ... What would you call them?

KP: Huge planes?

SG: No, the little planes. They would go up like a rocket, stop come around and land. I always wanted to get on one of those.

KP: When was the first time you flew?

SG: The first time I flew was in the Army.

KP: You never flew when you were growing up?

SG: No.

KP: But that's something ...?

SG: I knew all about planes. I knew how to make a propeller. I knew how to put together a flying model. They didn't fly to well, but I put them together.

KP: Had you tried to get into the civilian air program here?

SG: No. I didn't even know it existed.

KP: Yeah. Because I know Tom Kindre learned how to fly.

SG: Oh, he did?

KP: Yeah, he was part of the civilian air program.

SG: I had never even heard of it before.

KP: Yeah, no, it cost him ...

SG: Tom was also a commuter wasn't he?

KP: Yes, from Rahway.

SG: Yeah.

KP: What did you think of Billy Mitchell? Had you followed his career; had you followed his saga?

SG: Oh yeah. I knew of Billy Mitchell. I had read about Billy Mitchell. I felt he was getting the short end of the stick every which way. There was a place for the surfaces vessels, and there was a place for the airplane. I just hope that we use them properly, that's all.

KP: And Lindbergh must have been another. What did you think of Lindbergh?

SG: Up until he started getting into politics, I thought he was great. I used to admire Amelia Earhart. I thought she was a fabulous woman.

KP: So aviators were very much your heroes growing up?

SG: Well they were at one time.

KP: Yes, growing up.

SG: Growing up. I used to read about the war aces. ... What's the name of the guy with twenty-six victories in World War I? God. He was the one that was lost in the Pacific for ..., what was it, a couple of weeks, several weeks? I guess I'm getting older and the memory doesn't stretch back enough.

KP: What led to your enlistment? Did you enlist hoping to get into a cadet program?

SG: No, I didn't. I didn't enlist. I was drafted.

KP: Oh, okay, and you were drafted into the Army?

SG: I was drafted and the next thing I knew I was back in Scott Field. I went through basic training. I wound up in the Air Force basic training down in Greensboro, North Carolina. When they cut my orders, I was sent back to Scott Field. Here I am the guy who used to run the course and wrote several of the ... syllabi, coming in as a buck private.

KP: So you had to start from scratch?

SG: I was ... the low man on the totem pole.

KP: Did you go through you own training?

SG: Oh no. After that they just ... "Glad to have you back Goff" and put me right into teaching.

KP: You went through basic training?

SG: Basic training in Greensboro.

KP: Air Force or Army?

SG: Air Force.

KP: And ...

SG: It was infantry type training, but I don't think it was quite as rigid as regular infantry training?

KP: So, what was it like? In general, what did you remember best about it?

SG: What I remember best about it is that I went AWOL one time. My wife came into town, and I was out at the rifle range which was twenty miles out. ... I was instructed by some of the permanent party there as to how to go about it. As luck would have it ... you go down this incline and across this little river and up that side and go through the forest for about two miles, and in the middle of nowhere. You're going by the stars really.

KP: So you did this at night?

SG: It was at night, of course. And got out onto the road, and I hitched a ride. Who gives me a ride? The officer-of-the-day. What are you guys doing out here?

KP: What did you say?

SG: Company punishment.

KP: So did you ...?

SG: Oh, I fessed up. I wasn't going to ...

KP: And you ended up doing what duty as compensation?

SG: Oh, digging a ditch and ...

KP: Filling it back?

SG: No, we were digging a ditch. Another fellow and I were digging a new foundation for a new PX, ...

KP: So you contributed?

SG: We contributed our little section of it.

KP: You mentioned you went into infantry training. What did you learn in basic training?

SG: Well, it was basic training where we ... for a while we were living in pup tents. We learned how to use a pick and maddock. We dug foxholes. [We] learned how to run and hit the ground and roll.

KP: All the basics.

SG: All the basics. As I said, I don't believe it was as rough as infantry training. We had our obstacle courses. We had to climb the wall. We had to shimmy over the pole and shimmy up a rope and all of that jazz.

KP: Was there anything directly related to aviation in the basics?

SG: Not in the basics, no.

KP: You had to wait till the Army sent you to a specialized school?

SG: That's right. The only thing that was there was instead of using a regular M-16 rifle, we used a Carbine. That's all. We had to go out to the firing range and shoot at the target. Maggie's draws went flying here and there. It was good, actually I appreciated the training. I wouldn't say I enjoyed it, I appreciated it. Because ... it prepared me for a lot of possibilities which I never had to do.

KP: So you thought it was good to know in case I get ...?

SG: Oh, absolutely, absolutely.

KP: You ended up serving the war in Illinois. I guess the first question I want to go back to was before the war, ... how far had you traveled? How far west had you gone?

SG: I went as far as Saint Louis in order to take up my duties with the War Department as an instructor in the communication school.

KP: So before the war began you hadn't really traveled?

SG: No, that's as far as I went. As far as Newark to let's say New Haven, Connecticut or something like that.

KP: That's the farthest you had been?

SG: That was about it, yeah.

KP: What struck you because of the war, both when you were a civilian instructor then when you joined the military? What struck you about the different regions of the country you saw, for example North Carolina.

SG: [In] North Carolina I found the people were very friendly, profiteering but friendly.

KP: When you say profiteering?

SG: Well, ... the G.I. was a source of income. We bought things, and we went to the movies. We went to restaurants, and we took our family out, or our family took us out, depending upon

your rank. But they were nice. They were nice because they had people in service too remember. It wasn't a matter of this hoard descending upon them, and they all made it. The same thing with Illinois. The one thing I liked about the folks in Illinois was that you walked down the street and everybody would say good morning or good evening.

KP: Oh, that really struck you?

SG: Yeah, that was so different than what it was in the metropolitan area. The people were friendly and helpful. Of course, they also ... made a buck on the event. I remember when I was a civilian employee there. Everybody was renting out rooms. It was getting to be a little on the steep side. Today you would think it was nothing but it was ...

KP: In other words, getting a room ... getting a place to live when you were in Illinois was tough?

SG: It was, yeah. It was not easy.

KP: How big was the community near the fort?

SG: The fort was sort of isolated. Scott Field was an airfield and a military airfield. But Bellville itself was a fairly good sized city. I'd say, I don't know how many, thirty or forty thousand people.

KP: Where about in Illinois is it located?

SG: It's located approximately forty miles east of Saint Louis.

KP: So it's in the southern part of the state?

SG: Just starting to hit the southern part.

KP: What struck you about America at war in southern Illinois? Was there anything different?

SG: What ...

KP: For example, you mentioned that it was hard to get a place to live.

SG: Well, I believe that wasn't the only place where it was difficult to find a ... place to live. What struck me was that everybody was pitching in and doing something for the war effort.

KP: So you got that sense wherever you traveled.

SG: That's right, either in the Bellville area or in Rantoul, Illinois or in Greensboro, North Carolina. It was ... People were doing things for the war. Everything seemed to be for the war. My brothers were both exempt from service because they were married and had children. One of

them dropped his law practice and was appointed as an official of the War Production Administration. Not the WP, it was one of the agencies serving ... This was a dollar a year position. In other words no compensation for it. The other one was a teacher, I think he did some teaching, night courses for the war effort. Training in electronics, etc.

KP: And your family tensed up this need to participate in the war?

SG: Oh, definitely.

KP: Who did you think was the bigger enemy, Japan or Germany?

SG: I thought Germany was the bigger enemy. That was initially. ... After ... Corregidor I realized that Japan was a powerful enemy. A big enemy. It was not just an incidental thing.

KP: But before that point you thought it was ...?

SG: I thought it was, ... there were strictly small fry, but they weren't.

KP: You taught for a year at Scott Airfield.

SG: I taught for more than a year.

KP: More than a year, yes.

SG: Yeah.

KP: What were your men like? The men you taught. How would you characterize them in terms of background?

SG: They came from all over the country. You had people in there that had their master's and doctorate, as enlisted personnel, and people who had just barley finished eighth grade.

KP: And they were all in the same class?

SG: That's right, and that always amazed me that they would do that because you had to find your lowest common denominator in order to be able to ...

KP: Reach everyone.

SG: Reach everyone. To put them through the course. They all knew why they were there, but there was no fighting. They were away from the front. This was a training period, so they would try to goof off every chance they got. Not everybody but some did. Some of them apparently thought they were back at college in a fraternity having a great time, just wonderful. Others were quite serious about it. They knew that what they were learning might save their lives or someone else's life.

KP: Being in a flight crew in World War II was incredibly dangerous. Did you get the sense that they realized ...?

SG: Yes they did, they did. By the time they got finished they did. We didn't give them the flight training. We just gave them the communications equipment training. They learned how to take code. They learned how to use the equipment. We taught them how to make minor repairs in flight. Sometimes the best repair was to stand back and kick it. You would be surprised how often that worked. If there was a loose connection somewhere.

KP: And just kicking it.

SG: Kick it. We also impressed on them one of the things I learned myself, very important throughout life. If you come up with a problem ... Frequently the problem is what we used to call "cockpit trouble." The pilot would come in one wing low, meaning that he had no radio communications. They would all come in "check out that lousy radio equipment" you know, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. I used to work on the flight line too as a radio mechanic. It wasn't just a matter of teaching only. I would get in the jeep and run out to the plane and take a look see. His headset is there alright, but it's not plugged in, or if it was plugged into a command switch that has five positions, and it was in the wrong position, so he couldn't hear anything. Therefore, it was not in the communication equipment but ... cockpit trouble. Sometimes the equipment had not been plugged in by the mechanic of the prior field. The first rule is that we check the simple things. That's one of the things I still do today. I always look for my own cockpit trouble and/or somebody else's cockpit trouble.

KP: Look for the simple things.

SG: That's it, look for the simple things.

KP: You mentioned that you were on the flight line.

SG: Yeah, I was on the flight line at Scott Field.

KP: Meaning, what were your responsibilities?

SG: I was the radio mechanic. ... While on the line I wasn't in charge, but I would be one of those on the flight line. I was getting practical experience handling the equipment in use instead of in a laboratory on a table. It was interesting. As a matter of fact, I applied several times for field duty and they wouldn't budge me.

KP: Why wouldn't they move you, do you think?

SG: I don't know.

KP: Because you were good at the job or ...?

SG: Yeah, well I was good. I have to admit it. I was very good at the job. As a matter of fact, I was called on by one of the top engineers who was an administrator at the Radio-Electronics school at Scott Field. The course work was not getting across to the students. We reviewed the course syllabus and I re-wrote it. He got the credit for it!

Then when I came back as a G.I., one of the lieutenants that I used to pal around with came down to my office. "Sid", he said, "I will relieve you of all duties for as long as necessary because these guys are washing out on the course like crazy. With your experience and knowing what we have to teach and who we have to teach it to, you can help. Take time off to study it and come up with a recommendation". So I took off for about a month. I had permission to sit in on any class any place in the school. It became very apparent what the problem was. In the first two weeks of training they were not getting their points across. They were not getting the basics. If necessary spend a month on the basics, but get them to understand that so they can know what an ohm is, know what resistance is, know what a coil is and how to use it, etcetera. "That's wonderful" he says, "Write it up. I'll sign it with you, and we'll submit it to the Colonel." So I wrote a draft. "How marvelous," he said, "you know I've been thinking about this. I think it would carry more weight if you signed it alone." Holy cow, he wants me as a private to send it up to the Colonel going over his head

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

SG: ... I was not about to do that so I just destroyed the report. The funny part about it was that he never came to me for it after that.

KP: So you wrote this report about the training ... Did any of your suggestions ever get incorporated? Did the training change at all?

SG: Not to my knowledge.

KP: And what was the wash out rate?

SG: The wash out rate, in that course at that time as I recall, was over forty percent. It shouldn't have been anymore than ten percent, maximum.

KP: You concluded partly that they weren't acquiring the basics?

SG: That's right. They were not being taught the basics. They weren't retaining the basics. Now if an instructor just goes over it and by rote he tells you this is the relationship between ohms and volts and so forth, that doesn't mean anything. You've got to make sure that the student has absorbed it, has assimilated it and knows what it is and how to use it. They just weren't doing that. ...

KP: Do you think the wash out rate was also the nature of the material? ... You had people with Ph.D's and then you had people with an eighth grade education. Would that ...?

SG: No. An auto mechanic does not have to have a doctorate, or a M.S., or even a B.S. in order to be an auto mechanic.

KP: In fact, did you find that sometimes the guys with the eighth grade education who were tinkerers might be better than those with college degrees?

SG: Yeah, they might be because they were mechanically inclined. They could work well with their hands. They would do a beautiful job.

KP: Your wife joined you at Scott Airfield?

SG: Yes, she did.

KP: Did she get a job?

SG: She became ... at first she was a cook at the officer's club. She had dietetics and nutrition training. Then she became the diet planner for the officer's mess, the officer's club. Then, when I was transferred, why she went along with me to Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois. There, she took a job as commisary clerk. We needed the money badly. I was private first class remember. I was in training at that point for the radar gunnery on the P-61. Then I ... completed training there and went down to Boca Raton where we were supposed to start the actual in flight training. Boca Raton was the big center for radar training. And by that time the war was over. She got a job again in the commissary there. I got a job in the KP line.

KP: Did you feel frustrated by the fact that you couldn't become an officer?

SG: Very much. Very much. It was ... it's the luck of the draw.

KP: Were you particularly frustrated in part because you were an instructor at ...?

SG: No. Not that alone. I could have done more. I could have done something at the front. I applied at one point. They were giving direct line commissions to men with training in chemistry and biology as sanitation officers. This was a direct line to the Pacific if you got the appointment. ... I hadn't worked at all in the field. I had the background. I got my B.S. in the field. They said "Did you ever do any research?" I said yes. I did a year, year and a half study in my senior year, junior year and senior year. They said "get a verification because it is not on your transcript." So I wrote to the department. I won't mention any names, but there was a lady in the department, who was the only one left there during the war and I wrote to her. I never got a reply. When I came back, after the war was over, I went back to Rutgers for my graduate work. I went in to see her. Did you ever get that letter? "Oh, I meant to answer you, but I never did." I could have strangled her ... but I didn't!

KP: Because this might have gotten you ...?

SG: This was a direct commission.

KP: And you wanted to get into the front lines?

SG: I wanted to do something. I applied as a ... I passed all the tests for a communication cadet which they reopened. I applied for it. Some miserable second lieutenant said "You need six more months of seasoning". I went back again in six months, passed all the tests, came out number one on the tests ... They closed it up and my shipping orders was cancelled.

KP: So do you account this simply as people having it in for you, or just the way the Air Force worked?

SG: No. It's just the way things worked out. I didn't have any enemies there or people that disliked me. In fact they liked me so much they kept me where I was, doing what I was doing. I saw fault in their judgment but that's about it ... I did not feel that I was being discriminated against.

KP: Now you were in fact trained though. You did eventually get trained as a radar gunner?

SG: I had the radar equipment training. The actual gunnery training was supposed to take place at Boca Raton. And the war was over then.

KP: So you never ...?

SG: I never even got into a P-61.

KP: Where were you when the atomic bomb was dropped?

SG: I was at Chanute Field completing the radar training.

KP: And Chanute Field is located where?

SG: In Illinois.

KP: In Illinois, so you didn't even ...?

SG: It's half way between Saint Louis and Chicago.

KP: And what did you notice as the differences? This was your second major base. Did you see any differences between the two bases?

SG: ... I think security was tighter at Chanute Field. They were dealing with radar so therefore it was more confidential, more secret. But that's about it, I didn't have any problems there.

KP: Had you thought of making the Air Force a career?

SG: Not as a private. No way.

KP: From your survey and from what we talked about just a little bit earlier, the Air Force had an important impact on your career?

SG: I hated the military after a while. As I said it was judgement. Some of the things that we did, I couldn't see, but I figured that somebody must have a reason for it.

KP: What were some of the things that you couldn't quite figure out what the reason was?

SG: One was keeping me where I was at Scott Field for all those years. Another ... they said something about ranks or ratings are frozen. It seems to me that merit would overrule that, but it didn't seem to work out. You're going back over forty some odd years, or fifty years, of why did they do this or why did they do that. It's difficult to say.

KP: But you did, after the war ended, you did an inordinate amount of KP duty?

SG: ... Yeah, when the war was over I was in Boca Raton. My squadron, all these fella's who were all supposed to be going through the same training would all be looking at each other over a KP line, or through a KP pot; large ones.

KP: Were you frustrated that you hadn't been discharged?

SG: No. That didn't come up. I knew I was going to be discharged, and I had a certain number of points, etcetera, etcetera... But I just didn't care for the type of work I was being given. That's why I ... it occurred to me maybe they can use me at the hospital laboratory.

KP: With the laboratory in fact they did ...?

SG: Oh, yeah. They wouldn't let me out. The wouldn't let me out once they heard what my background was.

KP: Had he been having a hard time getting someone?

SG: He had been losing people.

KP: People were being rotated out and discharged?

SG: That's right.

KP: What was the lab work you ended up doing?

SG: It was clinical laboratory work for a hospital. I learned how to do blood counts. I learned how to do blood chemistries, bacteriological work, microbiological work.

KP: Had this area ever interested you before?

SG: I guess. I had never applied to medical school or anything like that, but I had been interested in bacteriology. I had been interested in physiology. Also this was a great opportunity to get out of KP.

KP: Let's say you were given flight training or you had been radar, or the training had continued. Would you have probably thought of applying for this type of position?

SG: Probably not.

KP: So in a sense you were looking around for something better to do with your time.

SG: That's right.

KP: Then peel potatoes and ...

SG: I didn't peel potatoes.

KP: What was KP duty for you?

SG: We would be on the serving line which wasn't bad, or we would be cleaning pots and pans which was one of the worst. The worst was garbage detail.

KP: What did you do for garbage?

SG: Slop, everywhere. Gather it all together and haul it out.

KP: Which seems to have left an impression the fact that you remember.

SG: Yes, very much so.

KP: How did you like Boca Raton?

SG: Boca Raton did not exist as we know it today. I've been down to Boca Raton. I try to find the spot where I ... my wife and I rented a little house. It's gone, everything is gone.

KP: In other words, you don't even recognize ...?

SG: I can't even recognize it. One night we were evacuated from our homes. The Army took us ... G.I.'s were living there, to the Boca Raton club, which was the only big hotel there at the time, because of a hurricane. We packed up and went off there. Today, I don't think I could recognize the Boca Raton club. First of all it's probably been expanded. What was there originally may

now be the servant's quarter's or something. It was a little quiet community. There was a general store, a post office, a huge banyan tree, and a few homes. That was it, that was Boca Raton.

KP: Did you envision Boca Raton, did you envision people going to Florida in the masses that they did?

SG: No I didn't.

KP: You were discharged in 1946?

SG: '46.

KP: ... From reading your survey it seemed liked the clinical work you did really influenced your career choice.

SG: Oh sure. It was because of that that I selected biochemistry. I was originally trained in the field of plant pathology.

KP: With the notion that you would work for the Department of Agriculture?

SG: That or by the time I got out of school, out of the Army, I realized that I could have gone to some place. You know, a food company, or even a chemical manufacturer, or a pharmaceutical house or something like that. Going into biochemistry, the road was paved by my military experience.

KP: How did you get your first position?

SG: After I came out of service?

KP: Yeah, after you ...

SG: Wait a second. Are you talking about after I completed my studies or the six months between?

KP: You mentioned your first job actually in terms of that survey ... Your first one was an analytical chemist coding, paint formulating.

SG: Yeah, I worked for Devoe-Reynolds. ... I don't know if they exist anymore. It was a big paint company at the time.

KP: So that was before you even started you doctoral program?

SG: This was simply to provide money. My wife was pregnant by that time, and we needed an income so I went to work.

KP: How crucial was the G.I. bill in terms of going back?

SG: It was very important. It provided a significant part of my income while I was a student.

KP: So do you think you might not have gone back ...?

SG: Oh, I would have gone back to school.

KP: Yeah, you were determined ...

SG: But it would have been under different circumstances without the G.I. bill.

KP: And you came back to Rutgers?

SG: Yeah, I came back to see that professor who didn't answer my letter. While I was here I went into to see the people in the biochemistry department. They said "If you're interested, we have fellowships available." So I said will I be studying such and such, "Oh yeah. You will be covering that type of ground. No question about it. Would you like to do work on the project on sub-acute deficiencies of farm animals". Sounds good. "Alright, here's the forms. Submit them and will let you know". In about two weeks I found out that I had been given the award, and I had a fellowship for three calendar years.

KP: So you got a fellowship and the G.I. bill? What did it feel like to be going back to Rutgers?

SG: Great.

KP: Had you appreciated the campus more after leaving?

SG: Oh, I appreciated the campus before. I also saw the difference ... all the students coming in, the G.I.'s. We were meeting in what were essentially old barracks, tin roof, etc. I remember one lecture was going on and it started to rain. It poured, and we couldn't hear a word because the noise level was so high. But we were able to learn. We went through everything.

KP: How do you think the experience of all these G.I.'s coming back changed the campus? What differences did you notice as an undergraduate and then ...?

SG: Numbers. When I graduated in '42. Now I may be off a bit on the numbers, but if I remember correctly the University, New Brunswick, not accounting Newark. There was a Newark campus, or may have been, I don't know if Newark University was part of Rutgers then or not. But the New Brunswick campus had a total of I think was fourteen hundred. Today, fourteen thousand doesn't touch it. When we came back we knew the fourteen hundred was a thing of the past. No longer a quite little school. If ... It was under the heading of progress, but it was good to know that the fella's who were coming back out of service had something to do, some place to go to prepare them for a more productive life. I thought that was very good [for them].

KP: You were settled being among all these G.I.'s?

SG: Oh, I was one of them.

KP: Yeah, but if you didn't think ... How did it change in terms of the customs at Rutgers College from when you had gone to college? Did anything change in terms like these new G.I.'s start getting ...? For example, one of the things that someone was telling me, Sam, Sam Blum was saying that freshman hazing went out the window with the G.I.s. They were not going to take the dinks?

SG: That's true. I never thought of that. We didn't have things, we didn't have a little handbook that told us how to behave and how we were supposed to smile, etcetera.

KP: That these G.I.'s were not going to ...

SG: Well, this is similar to a situation I ran into in service after I was teaching when I was a G.I. We had a number of classes come through, men, for a refresher course; quote. These are fella's who had completed a tour or two of duty at the front.

KP: And had gone the number of requisite flights.

SG: That's right. They got their twenty or twenty-four flights or whatever it was, and they were back now. And before being reassigned they were to be given a review course. And they picked those of us who knew the whole thing, all the way through, from basics on up as the instructors. And I was one of them. And they isolated them by putting them in class from eleven at night to seven in the morning. The midnight shift.

KP: Was there a reason for this?

SG: They didn't want them to "contaminate the uninitiated." ...You had to treat things lightly with them because if you started to get academically serious, they would pick you up and put you through a window.

KP: Did they resent being in that ...?

SG: They resented, they resented everything. You had to learn how to get along with them.

KP: Yeah. What did they tell you about their experiences?

SG: Some of them were fantastic. One of them had, I remember very vividly, been on the Ploesti Oilfield raid. Timing was off at one point, if I remember correctly, and the flight behind came to close to the flight ahead. This was low level bombing. They were hit by the blast and torn apart. You saw your buddies just go up in flames. Although the timing was off, it was a well planned raid, and they accomplished a heck of a lot. And there were those who had been in

the south Pacific. I think he completed three tours of duty and finally agreed to go home. Once he got home, they found a medical reason for discharging him. He was killed within a month, in an automobile accident. He got to be pretty friendly with us, and he used to write. You go through all that hell in the Pacific and then to be killed by an automobile accident in Idaho or something. Anyway the campus changed, numbers, the number of buildings that went up, encouraging. I like to see the university grow. I got a little bit disturbed when they started going off campus, when they started building in Piscataway.

KP: Busch Campus. In other words you ...

SG: I don't know one campus from the other. All I knew ...

KP: But going across the river, you ...

SG: That bothered me. Why I don't know but it did. It was still part of the same university, but it made it so that I wasn't familiar with it. I didn't know how to get around there.

KP: Did you own a car at the time?

SG: Perish forbids. I was a walker. I walked all over the place. I used to walk from back of the gymnasium, the old gymnasium on College Avenue all the way up to what is now Cook Campus and the various buildings there.

KP: Where did you live at the time?

SG: As a graduate student?

KP: Yes.

SG: I was living in Hillside. My wife and I fixed up a attic in my mother-in-law/father-in-law's home. And we had a bedroom and bath up there and eventually we had two kids there. Then ... we took meals with the family and everybody had to keep quiet while I was studying. It was hard to do.

KP: How old were your children at the time when you were going to school?

SG: Oh, my daughter was born in '46, and my son was born in '50. I was already working by the time he was born. You know with one, I used to wait, wait until she fell asleep. Then I used to go up and study.

KP: How did you get from Hillside to Rutgers?

SG: I used to walk down to Elizabeth Avenue and get the bus into the railroad station at the center of Elizabeth. It was the same old job.

KP: You had your same commute?

SG: Same commute, that's right.

KP: Then you would just reverse it at night?

SG: That's right.

KP: So in some ways you experience was just sort of picking up where you left off?

SG: Correct.

KP: Now you had a wife and children.

SG: That's right. Now I had responsibilities, and I was looking forward to getting a job and so forth.

KP: Did you think you would go into academics? Did you think you would be a teacher?

SG: For a while I did but ... then I liked the freedom of industry and the progressiveness of industry. ... So I thought I would try it. I did and I liked it.

KP: When you said the freedom and progressiveness of industry, what things did you have in mind concerning academia?

SG: At the time, you had a lot of, I think you had a lot of social pressure in academia. You were at one level and you caroused with one group. At another level you caroused with another group. Socially they were stratified. I found out later in industry it's the same way. I liked the work. I liked the work I was doing. In one place I got into it.

KP: What about the salary?

SG: Well at the time when I first went to work in industry, I think I was making a bit more than my colleagues who had gone academic were making. But they caught up with me. They passed me too!

KP: So money wasn't really the central reason?

SG: No, it was the work. One thing my wife said, "If you're not happy at what you're doing, then you may as well do something else." I wound up quite happy. Not rich but happy.

KP: You enjoyed, ... when you say the freedom of ...

SG: I could do more in the way of research that I wanted to do.

KP: Because your research was more practically oriented?

SG: Well, that's right. It was along practical lines. I stayed in the agricultural area throughout, which most of my fellow classmates who were in agriculture did not do. I don't think I did what everybody found interesting and rewarding.

KP: Did that surprise you that you stayed in agriculture?

SG: Yes, it did. I was a city boy you know. Born and raised in Newark, no farms in Newark. It was a challenge. The one problem I ever ran into in the university was there were some in the administration who resented city boys going into agriculture.

KP: Really, why?

SG: Because they figured at the time that it was a cheap way to get an education. The Ag. school used to be something like three hundred dollars a year whereas at the College of Arts and Sciences it was something like five hundred. It was a big difference. I wouldn't doubt the fact that some of them did go into it for that reason. You could get the same training if all the courses were the same etcetera, but since you were an aggie, you were subsidized. And I didn't have to worry about it. I had a state scholarship. I could have taken any course I wanted. That didn't figure in with it, so there was resentment. There is somebody taking up a space that might be occupied by a farm boy ...

KP: Where there many of the other city people who took ... who were in Ag. school?

SG: A fair amount. A fair number.

KP: So you were not alone?

SG: No, I was not alone. I would not say that I was in the majority. But I was interested, and I stayed with it. I don't regret it. But this was not the war.

KP: No, this is the post. At what point did you become active in veterans organizations?

SG: Oh, when I first when out I joined the ... not the American Legion, there was another one. Not the Am Vet's.

KP: Jewish War Veterans?

SG: No, I didn't join that until lately.

KP: Was it the legion?

SG: I belong to both the Legion and the Jewish War Veterans now because I feel if even I am not an active member, they should have the support. I buy all the raffles and do all of that.

There's another one, it was similar to the Am Vets ... maybe it was the Am vets. I belonged to that for a few years. Then I just got so busy with studies and then when I got the job, I was hard at work there. I'd work evenings and stuff like that. I just couldn't devote the time to it and with raising a family I just drifted away from it. Then after I retired, got down to Lakehurst why the first thing I did was join the American Legion. And then I joined the Jewish War Veterans. So my neighbors were members too, so they talked me into it. Now I belong to both. I think Jewish War Veterans is the oldest veterans organization in the country.

KP: Well, probably the Society of Cincinnati considers itself the oldest?

SG: Well that's different. There you have to be the descendant of one of Washington's officers. I found out about that from one of my colleagues when I was working at White Laboratories. A Washington attorney and at one time we were on a situation with the Food and Drug Administration. I spent a couple of days with him and found out about the Cincinnati.

KP: Before sort of leaving the war and the war years, you had a chance to experience rationing. How did you cope? How did you and your wife cope with rationing? How did you do when things were very tight?

SG: We ... had the stamps and you had the little tokens. I don't have any stamps. Some place in the house I still have some tokens. You had to use them in order to get certain foods. ... We didn't have any influence with the people in town. You couldn't go to the butcher and say slip me a steak.

KP: Did you know people who had done that?

SG: Yes. It bothered me that they were able to.

KP: Did you and your wife ever have a victory garden in any of the places that you lived?

SG: No. We were too busy. I didn't have the time. She was working all the time to.

KP: Is there anything else about your wartime experiences that I forgot to ask?

SG: Oh, my wartime experiences were not really wartime experiences. They were experiences during the war. While I was in service, I was almost a bystander.

KP: Did you feel that at the time?

SG: Yes, I did.

KP: That the real war was passing you by?

SG: Especially when one of my very best friends was shot down in flames over Paris.

KP: Was he a friend from Rutgers?

SG: I met him at Rutgers, but he and I had come to be quite friendly. I had visited his home, and he had visited my home. And it was quite a shock when I picked up the Rutgers bulletin and found out that he had been killed.

KP: What was his name?

SG: Mike Goldman. He was from Trenton. He was an aggie too, but he was a city boy.

KP: The aggies, did you split between city and farm?

SG: To some degree there was.

KP: You ended up making your career in the pharmaceutical industry. What products were you associated with?

SG: Well, I developed the first oral hormone for poultry. The equivalent of caponizing. Stilbestrol, which has a lousy name these days, had been used by injection. When I went to work for White Laboratories they had this project on the books that someone had started but never finished. They asked me if I thought I could do something with it. I said yes. I'll try it anyway. Give me a few months. And after working on it for a while I decided, yeah, I could do something with it. It took me ... 1950 to 1955, five years to put it through. I was able to gather the data to put it through the Food and Drug Administration. I had a team of one working with me. This was not an easy project. That was one of the big things. Then I worked on a number of other things: antibiotics and ...

KP: All the time in agriculture?

SG: All the time ... for farm animals. I also did a few projects in the human field. That was not primary. I tried to do some cosmetic work too. I wasn't too particularly pleased with that.

KP: You wanted to stay in agriculture?

SG: Yeah, I preferred it because that was the field that I knew. I did a lot of field work. I used to go down to the Delmarva area where there was a big poultry field and then up to New York state and Maine, Massachusetts, all in the poultry area. Then my company was absorbed by Schering and they then acquired a little outfit in Madison, Wisconsin.

KP: A scientific lab.

SG: Oh did I put that down in the ...

KP: No, I saw it in a file.

SG: I went out there and my associate and I were poorly handled. They didn't like working with products that required Food and Drug Administration approval. They wanted to go through the USDA where they worked with vaccines. Pretty soon the vaccines put them out of business. My associate and I both left.

KP: No, that's fine. You ended up going to Squibb.

SG: Yeah, I was given a job by a consulting laboratory with a promise of partnership. The job was there but the partnership never was. At that time I got the word that Squibb was looking for people in my field so I contacted the animal health director. Twenty-four years later I retired.

KP: And what products did you work with at Squibb? Is that where you worked next?

SG: I worked with nutritionals and antibiotics primarily. I was in the international division. I developed lines of products which varied country to country. I sort of specialized in Latin America. Guatemala was one of my stamping grounds at one time, and then I used to go from Mexico to Guatemala, to Columbia, to Argentina, to, Uruguay, Brazil, Venezuela then home. I did a routine. I also worked with our licensee in India. I went there periodically and developed some products with them. I worked with the Philippines. I went to Europe only a couple of times; other people were covering that area.

KP: What had been the major changes that you had seen in the course of your career in the pharmaceutical industry?

SG: Of course, there's the development of the antibiotics. The fact that you...had to go through all of the stringent proofs, which I think is great, and I'm in favor of it. At one time you could put a product out that was questionable.

KP: So you now actually think this has been a real improvement in terms of the care?

SG: Oh yeah, because the products are much more dependable. You know what they are going to do, and you know where you should use them and where you shouldn't use them. It's when people let greed get in the way that you run into problems. When I put through my first new drug application, there must have been a stack of reports, oh about ten inches high, which we thought was fantastic. This was 1954. Man that's great. That's super. This will overwhelm them. Today, you fill up rooms with these things. What I did is nothing compared to what is done today. The automation in the analytical area alone ... I used to specialize in analytical work because we had to test this tissue and that tissue and the other tissue. Today it is done with high tech equipment.

KP: In your lifetime you have really seen the shift?

SG: Oh, the shift has been fantastic.

KP: Did you ever consider going into management?

SG: I did for a while, just before I retired. I was working with the field staffs from all these different countries that I would visit. I would go in and set up programs and then check the programs through correspondence. At first it was correspondence. Then it became tellexes. Now you fax them. You can now get reports, information, etc. delivered almost anywhere in the world within 24 hours. That's been a tremendous change.

KP: You said earlier in the interview that you were in favor of American involvement in the war. You saw it coming.

SG: I saw it coming, sure.

KP: How did the war change your thinking about America's foreign policy?

SG: We are going around on this at home all the time. It is a tough nut. I wish I had the answer. I don't know of anyone who has the answer. When I saw the situation in Bosnia, ... I hate the idea of it, but we've got to do something. Because this ethnic cleansing thing is the same thing that Hitler was into. Everyone is complaining about Hitler. You have to do something here. That way, I'm almost a Bush Republican. And I am not a Republican. But I vote for the man, I don't vote for the party. And I think that in many ways George Bush had the right idea there. I hate it, and I'm sure that he didn't like it either, but no one likes to go to war. At least our people don't like to go to war. You...have principles. You have to stand on them.

KP: What did you think of the Vietnam War? You had some sons that were of military age at the Vietnam War.

SG: One son put himself in the category where if they pick you, you go. If they don't pick you now, you're safe until you get your degree. And I said, "You know what you're doing Hall." He said, "Yes, I know what I'm doing. This uncertainty is more than I really want." ... He was not selected in that particular draft. So he said, "All right, now I can finish my schooling." By the time he finished his schooling, the war was essentially over. The other one was too young for it really. But what used to get me about Vietnam ... I could see that there were reasons for going to war. What used to get me about Vietnam was that it looked like the people we were helping wanted us to help them, but they didn't want to pitch in as strongly as we did. And I sort of resented that.

KP: You saw this was a different war as compared to World War II?

SG: Yeah, it was different. As far as I can see, there was a "cause" in World War II. For Vietnam, I wasn't sure of the cause. I know that they said that it was a fight against communism and all that, but there are ways of fighting against communism. We didn't have to knock them out. I think that that's one place where I agree with Reagan, that if you out equipment them, they're going to bust up. Which they did.

KP: It seems like though you were mainly Democratic, some of the ideas of Reagan and Bush became very attractive?

SG: Well, I could see them. I didn't particularly care for some of the things they did but other things ... Look, they are human beings. Some things they do right; some things they do wrong. Of course, if they were to listen to me they would always do things right you understand!

KP: Is there anything else I have forgotten to ask?

SG: No. No, I'm surprised that this has gone on this long because you spent a good portion of this talking about non-war items. That was one of the things I wanted to talk to you about. My role in this has been so minor. And as I said before, I was standing on sidelines sometimes cheering, sometimes just standing there. I don't know where this would really fit into an oral history of World War II.

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

Edited: April 1995 by G. Kurt Piehler
Reviewed: December 6, 1997 by Sid Goff
Entered: February 1997 by Sandra Holyoak
Reviewed: May 8, 1997 by G. Kurt Piehler