

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH LIVY GOODMAN

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Tara Liston: This begins an interview with Livy Goodman on May 10, 1996 at Rutgers University in Van Dyck Hall with Tara J. Liston and ...

Barbara Tomblin: Barbara Tomblin.

TL: We are going to start this interview by talking about your parents and how they met.

Livy Goodman: Okay, how they met?

TL: Or your father or where he grew up ...

LG: He was grew up in Montclair, New Jersey and went to Montclair High School and Wooster College in Ohio, where he was quite something of an athlete. [He was] captain of the basketball team and so on and so forth. After graduation he joined the YMCA. My grandfather, his father, was a career YMCA executive. And my uncle, who was ten years my father's senior was in the YMCA, so it was sort of a natural. And he went through the training period in which they move people around. He was a boy's secretary. And they move you around quite a bit in those early years, and he wound up in Augusta, Maine where my mother--who was born on a little farm outside of Augusta, Maine--her parents, her mother anyway, had come from New Brunswick, Canada. My grandfather on that side was a carpenter, and my mother was a legal secretary in Augusta. And they met in Augusta, they met at a dance. She had a date with someone else. I've heard her tell the story, I think that's what it was and he took a liking, he saw her. I've seen pictures, ... she was one handsome young girl. They both were very good looking in their early years. She still is, she's still alive. They met, I don't know how long the courtship was, but they were married in Augusta, and my grandfather had built a cottage at Lake George near Silver Bay where he was instrumental in forming a YMCA conference center at Silver Bay. And that's where they went for their honeymoon. So they went from Augusta, across, and I always used to hear the story of the paddle-boat on Lake George. They took the paddle-boat from Lake George Village to Silver Bay and that's where they had their honeymoon.

And ... then he was moved around, oh, I think about once a year, a year or a year and a half or so, I know they lived in Worcester, Massachusetts for a while, then they were in Passaic, New Jersey where my sister was born. Went to Cleveland, where I was born, and then came back to, let's see, from Cleveland, when I was about eighteen months old we moved to Verona, New Jersey. Then when I was probably about four years old we moved to Lynchburg, Virginia. These were YMCA jobs, with the boy's secretary work. And I went to pre-school, Virginia didn't have kindergarten in those days, we went to a Miss Sally's Day School for pre-school, and then went to, I guess I began first grade, I probably attended first grade in Lynchburg. Then he got a job in Paterson, New Jersey, we moved up to Wyckoff, New Jersey, where I entered public school in grade three. ... Must have gone to first and second grade in Lynchburg and then the third grade in Wyckoff, where we stayed.

TL: Okay do you and your older sister remember all the moving?

LG: Do I remember my sister?

TL: Do you remember your older sister and yourself moving around?

LG: No, I remember a little bit about Verona, mainly because there was a rock pile out back and my mother was deathly afraid of snakes, and there was a snake in there, and she wouldn't go in the backyard. I remember that. I heard the stories about the snake. Oh, as a matter of fact the other thing I remember about Verona, because I've been told about it, I apparently was not the best -- I was well behaved, but I threw tantrums as a baby. One day my mother was out hanging up the wash and I was in the house alone, and I climbed up on the back of the couch looking out the window, and fell over the back of the couch onto a radiator. And I was crying my head off, but she thought I was having a tantrum so she continued to hang up the wash. So I have third degree burns, and she has never gotten over it. [laughter] Every time she sees my arm, she has a sense of guilt.

BT: I'll bet!

LG: Fortunately, it didn't impede. At first they thought that it was going to affect the use of the thumb, but it didn't. That's Verona. In Lynchburg, before getting into school, I think I was about three years old, and I ran across the street and a car was going slowly and hit me. And I wasn't bothered, in fact, I thought the attention was great, but I've been told the man driving the car was devastated. But it didn't do anything. I remember a little bit about Lynchburg, because 1932 was the election of Herbert Hoover and Al Smith. And in Virginia, they did not tolerate Catholics, and Al Smith being a Catholic, I can remember my parents talking about how terrible both of these northerners, you know they were not rebels, and the terrible things they were saying about Al Smith in Virginia, because he was a Catholic. The Pope was going to run the government, the kind of things they later said about Kennedy, the same sort of thing, except Smith didn't win. So I remember a bit about it, I remember riding on a motorcycle one day and my mother was horrified, a young fellah offered to give me a ride to school on the back of a motorcycle and things of that kind. And I remember the move to Wyckoff, because of the house we lived in, an old Revolutionary era stone house. Wonderful, great place. Great town to grow up in, Wyckoff. It was small.

TL: So you returned there later on in your life?

LG: We lived there for a short while when we were first married, we lived there for about a year before moving to Mahwah, yeah. We rented a house. That's where I got my first job, was in Wyckoff. I was editor of The Wyckoff News.

TL: It was your favorite house and your first job. How was your schooling when you were in New Jersey, did you enjoy it?

LG: Every bit of it.

TL: Did you?

LG: High school was, every bit of it, we keep in touch, we went to a high school that had eight-- it was a receiving school for eight towns in those days. So we met a lot of people from the surrounding towns. We have wonderful [reunions], we were the first class to have reunions at Ramsey High School. And we've had them every five years, and the people come from all over. Would never miss them. We had one, was it last year? '95, yeah, and we had, I don't know, close to 100 people.

TL: Really?

LG: Yeah.

TL: That's great.

LG: And the Wyckoff group is one of the strongest groups, so I keep in touch with [them], even though I'm in North Carolina, I still keep in touch with classmates. And one fella who was in my wedding and I was in his wedding, he lives in Moorehead City, you know we have dinner with them occasionally. And we do think, high school years were great, really great. Athletics and activities, and met my wife when I was a senior and she was a freshman.

TL: How did you meet your wife?

LG: Well I saw her in high school and was taken with her appearance, her looks. We were in the athletic association together. Being a senior, you know, I thought any freshman would love to date a senior. And I found out through a mutual friend that she also thought that I looked okay. In fact, this couple that lives in Moorehead City, his wife was a mutual friend and she arranged our first date, and we had our first date with them. We dated, then I went off to college, and we dated for the first year or two, maybe about a year and a half. And then you know, we were doing other things, I was active in college and she had high school to finish and so forth. So we didn't date as much for a while, but then before going into the service we began to resume our relationship, and resumed it-- we were dating regularly before I went into the service, and stayed that way. I returned home on January 2nd, I got out of the army on January 6th, I believe it was, in '46. And we were married on February 2nd. So, everything was arranged, and I maintained during our whole 46 years of married life, that I was still suffering battle fatigue and she took advantage of that, and you know, I couldn't say, no.

TL: What kind of sports did you play?

LG: Football in high school, and like most of the towns, we all had local teams, and we played very competitive baseball. We had a league, you know, of all the towns from high school. But very few fellahs went out for high school baseball, they instead played locally, and football.

TL: And your wife?

LG: She played some basketball. The athletic association in those days was an athletic support group, raising money and having different kind of sales and so forth. She was very popular, in

high school, and I don't know if she played much in the way of, well there weren't many girls' sports.

TL: Right, that's why I was wondering why she was in sports.

LG: No, the athletic association wasn't that for girls.

BT: Field hockey?

LG: No.

BT: We had field hockey.

LG: No. ... I know we used to see them out on the [field], doing archery. I don't think it was competitive. I don't believe they had any competitive sports. They had that silly basketball with the two dribbles and stop.

BT: I remember that.

LG: [laughter] The funniest looking thing, two dribbles and stop, you can't move.

BT: That's sort of challenging in and of itself, just trying to remember that you couldn't move.

LG: Right. You couldn't do anything right. Wasn't it a rule that some couldn't go over to the other half of the court or something too?

BT: I don't really remember that part, I just remember that they would blow the whistle at you to stop dribbling.

LG: Yeah, right.

BT: And you stopped dribbling.

LG: You know there were other activities, school plays and things of that where we kind of knew each other.

TL: Were you active in the plays?

LG: Yes, in two plays. ...

TL: Which plays?

LG: I can't remember the name of those for the life of me, they were both comedies. Then I was active in the class night, I was master of ceremonies for class night, and then the yearbook and you know all kinds of activities.

TL: At class night did you have bands and everybody came?

LG: ... That's when the senior class reads off the class will and the class prophecy, and sort of like a talent show, and then dancing. It was sort of a tradition the night before graduation.

TL: Would other classes be allowed to go?

LG: Yeah, both students and parents. It was a big, big program, it was held in the auditorium.

TL: What did you do as master of ceremonies?

LG: Oh lord, tried to be funny. I guess I, I don't know. [laughter]

TL: Did you know that you wanted to go over to college after you graduated from high school?

LG: Rutgers? Oh yes.

TL: You knew you wanted to go to college?

LG: Yes, I knew I wanted to go to Rutgers.

TL: Why Rutgers?

LG: Well, a fellow one year ahead of me that I grew up with, we played some sports together and our families were very close, by the name of Ken McDonald. He came to Rutgers, and was a fine freshman athlete, football and lacrosse. In fact, he was All-American Mention at Rutgers. So that was when I first went down to see Ken play a couple of times with his parents, to see freshmen football games. We had a teacher by the name of Les Wilding. Les was probably the class of '38 or something. He'll be here tomorrow. He regularly brought students down here for weekends. He was a member of the Phi Gamma I think. I came down with Les on two weekends, and had tours and so on and so forth. And then I applied for and received a state scholarship, so there was no question. My father, of course, without any pressure, but he would have liked me to go to Wooster, because he had strong feelings about his college. It was a good college, a fine, it's a good school. But the scholarship made the difference. My parents didn't have, YMCA secretaries didn't make a lot of money, and that made a difference. And I worked here and took care of all of that. And I was close enough to home, so Ken and I would drive back and forth. He was dating a girl in the same town, they subsequently married. And then because my father had been a member of the Beta fraternity at Wooster, and Ken was a Beta, that was sort of natural. I immediately, you know, pledged and signed up for the Beta house.

TL: To go backwards, how was the money situation during the Depression era?

LG: Terrible. It was bad, we all heard people say. We didn't know we were poor, because my father always had a job, and we always had clothes and food. But looking back and knowing

what they went through, it was very difficult. Particularly, because I wanted to go to college. And my mother subsequently has told me that they just didn't know what they were going to do about that if I hadn't gotten a scholarship.

BT: Did she work at that point?

LG: She didn't and she should have. She's always maintained, and I knew it, we knew it growing up, she was a good legal secretary. She still is a very, you know, wiry lady from Maine. It would have done her a world of good if she had worked some after we got out of school or while we were in high school and so on. Funny enough, she worked during the war on the assembly line and loved it.

BT: That's what I saw.

LG: Oh she loved it, she just loved it. That's when she knew that she should have. It was always something, she never talked about it, but I know that it stuck in her craw, and it probably still does that she should have worked those years, because Y secretaries are not well paid. They were about in the league that back then with ministers, they were in that same sort of profession. But that was the career and that's what he stayed with until he retired in Virginia. So I don't remember the Depression. I took it for granted, as most of our kids did. My mother made a great deal of our clothes, all the kids I grew up with, the same thing. We were all about at the same economic situation, you know, some parents were farm[ers], had some farms in town. One was the son of a local minister. But we didn't know, well we knew a couple of families that had some money in Wyckoff, and they were, you know, in a different, you know, a whole different league. Yeah, it just didn't occur to us, we knew it was the Depression, and we knew that we heard about people, and we would see that. I guess the main thing I remember is that these men would come to the door, the back door and get some food. And my mother and my grandmother always gave them something.

BT: Really, I heard so many stories about that.

LG: It was just taken for granted. And we heard stories about, you know, of men in New York selling apples and things of that kind, but it didn't affect us. Our activities weren't curtailed, because we never did anything that needed money, except a quarter on Saturday for the movies, you know, or bubble gum or something, but we didn't think of buying cd's and boom boxes and gas. Of course, during the war gasoline was a problem, but that was the rationing, that wasn't the money.

TL: Did you have a car in the 1930s?

LG: No, I couldn't have a car until, let's see 23 and 17, 1940 is when I was 17, and in New Jersey you had to be 17 to get your license in those days. But one of our friends, when we were in high school, a close friend's father owned a local garage. And so this boy had a car, and the garage was situated on a dirt street that went behind the garage, it was not town property. And so he would ride that car down that dirt street and back into the woods and around the lakes and so on

every afternoon. So then when he got his license, he was the only one that had a car, so we all double dated and triple dated with him.

BT: Popular guy.

LG: Or if we could borrow our mother's or father's car depending.

TL: Did your parents have one too?

LG: Pardon?

TL: Your parents had a car?

LG: Yeah, we had a black Dodge, I remember that black Dodge, it had that funny front on it, a '36 or '37, I think it was. That's the first car I remember driving, you know. He drove Dodges, always, my father, wouldn't buy anything but a Dodge, ever. Yep. But those high school years were wonderful, they really were fond memories. It's amazing how we keep together. Before I went to North Carolina, we would see on the weekends and so on, when you're around shopping or doing things, a number of classmates. We kept good friends, after we all came back and got married, we continued to party together, raise our children together, and do things together as couples.

TL: That's excellent. We never hear that anymore.

BT: It's not quite the same now. People say they will but they don't stay in touch.

LG: No, not at all. Our kids scattered, but any number of my classmates are still living right where they've always lived, right in those towns.

TL: And then you went right from that to Rutgers which was basically the same thing when you started.

LG: Yeah, ... but, of course, you're thrown in with all new people. I didn't have any classmates who came to Rutgers. I take that back, one classmate, named John Guatelli. He came to Rutgers, but I wasn't aware of it at the time. I guess I was just caught in my own activities. Later that year I guess, I realized John was here. He was a student from high school, he was not one who participated with us in the things we did. I knew him, but he was known as a bookworm, he studied and got great marks.

TL: How were your marks in high school?

LG: We had a class of 125 or so. I finished seventh in the class.

TL: Excellent. So you were able to ...

LG: I wanted to be the highest boy. Those days you had college preparatory courses, business or commercial. And college prep was always considered to be the toughest, because you had to take Latin and languages and so forth. Well this guy took the commercial, so he had typing and bookkeeping. In fact, my future wife was his tutor in algebra, and he finished tops among the boys in the class. Technically he cheated, ... my wife helped ... [him] get the mark. We still do that, we tell him that he should not have gotten that high on the honor roll.

TL: You will never let him forget it.

LG: No, no. Because he brags about it.

TL: Oh does he?

LG: He was the smartest boy in the class. [laughter]

BT: When did you come to Rutgers?

LG: 1940.

TL: And where did you live your first year?

LG: Right here, which is no longer here. There was "holy hill," there was an old dormitory which has since been replaced, sat right up on the top of the hill. Very old, a lot of [it] wooden. I've been trying to remember the name of that dorm, and for the life of me I can't remember. We always called it "holy hill." ... What was my roommate's name? Dick, he was from Hoboken. He went to high school with, or knew Frank Sinatra.

TL: Really?

LG: Yeah. We parted after the first year. Anyway, [I] lived there my first year, and then I was pledged to Beta, and then the rest of the time, I lived at the Beta house.

TL: Is that the same Beta house that's up now?

LG: Yes. It's the same location, but it's not the same house. It was a nice. That place, they should close that down, and tear it down. Ed Bloustein and I used to go round and round on this. They should close down the fraternities, they're a disgrace. If I were a parent and brought my kids down here and they walked up there and ... I would never let my child attend this school. It's awful! It's terrible. And the Beta alumni have tried to get them to close it down, because they're behind on their mortgage payments. They keep borrowing money to fix it. We get these reports about what wonderful improvements they're doing. I went in there last year and I was disgusted, I mean, it was just awful. We had a good house, and we had house mothers. ...

TL: You did have house mothers. Were you curfewed?

LG: The girls were curfewed, we weren't. No, we weren't curfewed, until I think the first incident, the shutdown was during the war. I think it was the Phi Gammas, the house over on, what's the road, the name of the street over here, along the river?

TL: College Avenue

BT: George Street.

LG: I guess George Street. There was a house at the corner, this corner as a matter of fact, and two girls were killed, at least one was, no two were. They were on the roof, ... it was a fire or a party, I know it was a party. I remember reading about it and they put the clamps on fraternities. When we came back after the war there were a lot of restrictions that weren't there before.

BT: That's interesting.

TL: Yes, we had an interview with one of the guys who was a brother over there. He had just gone to the war right before it, and so when he came back he found out that there were two girls that were over at Douglass, and their curfew moms or whatever brought them home, then they snuck out and went back to the fraternity and then that's when it went up in flames.

LG: Is that right, is that the one?

TL: Yes.

LG: I remember reading about it and then knowing the thing shut down, because when we came back it was a lot different. The Betas were a very good fraternity, and we were under a lot of controls from the district and the national. We didn't drink in the house. We didn't have beer. If we wanted to drink beer we went over to Delta Phi. The big house with the columns on Union. They had a barn out back and they always had beer out there. We were not a drinking fraternity, not at all. We were active, and we had class presidents, and athletes, it in many ways I think was probably, one of the leading fraternities on campus. Ken McDonald was ... fraternity president one time and he won the Carson award. Pete Cartmell was Phi Beta Kappa. We had just a whole bunch of [great guys]. We had All-American lacrosse players, and you were expected to be active when you were in the Beta house. You were expected to take part in college activities and athletics. It was a good fraternity.

TL: Is it true that the Betas always had the football management, those guys would always come from your house?

LG: Management?

TL: Yeah I remember somebody saying that.

LG: I don't know about that.

TL: Yes, there was a controversy over that.

LG: We had players.

TL: Yes I knew that, I knew you had the players, but you guys had all the managers too.

LG: No.

TL: Something like that, I knew you guys were the big sports group.

LG: ... We had football, not much basketball, we had our own, we had a Beta basketball team that toured. I was manager of that. We went on tour and played in high schools. And we had lacrosse players, and we had a big crew house. A couple baseball players, not too many. Hal Conners was in our class, he went on to play in the minor leagues. We had a few, but the three sports were lacrosse, football, and crew.

TL: What was going on during the football games, especially the pre-Princeton game?

LG: ... Oh yeah, there were some things, I guess the cannon got stolen a couple of times and things of that kind.

TL: Did you do anything over at Princeton?

LG: No.

TL: No?

LG: No. Never went down to Princeton.

TL: Did that incite rage when the cannon was missing?

LG: Absolutely. We had a good rivalry with Princeton in all sports. Princeton was the rival. Very good lacrosse game at Princeton.

TL: Which sport did you play, we don't have it down here.

LG: 150 pound football. I was small, so I played three years of 150 pound football and four years of lacrosse. I was a good lacrosse player. Still today people ask me if I play lacrosse.

TL: What position did you play?

LG: I played inside attack in my freshman year, and we were undefeated, which was quite an accomplishment for a freshman team. Have you ever heard the name of Tom Kenneally, by any chance?

TL: No, I haven't, sorry.

LG: Well, you know that in Reader's Digest they used to have a section called "Unforgettable Characters That I've Known"?

BT: I remember that.

LG: Well he qualifies. He was the 150 pound football coach. He played under Knute Rockne, at Notre Dame, he was a backup quarterback at Notre Dame. So he came out of Notre Dame with a Notre Dame fix. He was a wonderful man and a wonderful coach. He also coached freshman lacrosse. Nobody had ever seen a lacrosse stick, let alone what the sport was when they came to Rutgers. There was no high school lacrosse anyway. So he taught us the fundamentals, and for a bunch of guys who didn't ever play the game to go undefeated. You got numerals as a freshman, instead of a letter, on a white sweater. You don't think that was something! We put those letters on a white sweater and wore them morning, noon, and night. [laughter] So I played those two sports. In fact, I played my final year of lacrosse when I came back from the service and was married, in the spring of '46.

BT: Was it common that people would come back, and in a sense resume?

LG: No, Fred Fitz was the varsity coach. We were going to play CCNY, for instance in New York, and I said, "Okay Fred, I'm going home and I'll meet you at the game." Well that was unheard of, you know, a married player going home and being with his wife and then come play lacrosse. And there were a couple things like that, but I played that season. We weren't great, but we were okay.

TL: Were you playing with the younger boys, mostly freshman, by that time?

LG: No, they were varsity. There were some that had come back in '45, and some were younger and had not gone to the service. So we had some pretty good [players]. In fact, that year we had two or three players who had played high school lacrosse on Long Island where the sport was fairly large. It was very [big] in high schools. [There was a] young fella by the name of Dick Kramer who played football as well as lacrosse was outstanding as a lacrosse player. He played out on Long Island somewhere. So we had a few that knew the game. Lacrosse does not attract very many people, it's almost cult if you played the game. It's like crew. You know it's different than football or baseball or basketball. And the fact that we learned it from scratch made a big difference. I mean, you could play the game, and play competitively, having never played it before you came to Rutgers. We had a good time. Very strong bond among lacrosse players.

TL: Do you still see them as well?

LG: Some.

TL: Do you keep in touch? Are they coming this weekend?

LG: Some of them will be here and some of the class of '43. In '43 we had a good team, a very good team. One little story. See we were, as you know from your records, we were the advanced, the junior advanced ROTC, the Black 50.

LG: As a land grant school, the national program that gave money to universities like Rutgers, said that you had to have two years of ROTC, mandatory. And then you could option to go into the advanced ROTC. None of us ever thought about military careers. Advanced ROTC was another activity. We had a drill team called the Scabbard and Blade, excellent drill team. We had good army cadre here, and they taught us, and that was a competitive thing to do. Plus they had nice uniforms, and they had a military ball. And you did some training. I don't remember the training really, but it was more something to do. So we all signed up.

There were 50 of us that were juniors when the war broke out. We weren't really thinking of military careers. And this was infantry. Anyway, the army didn't know what to do with these fellows all over the country. The normal course was you graduate from college, and if you chose to, you went for officer training or you went to your local reserves. You didn't have to go to officer training. But the seniors now were required. The order came down, seniors in ROTC will finish their current year, this is in '43, and go to their officer training. Rutgers was infantry so they went to Fort Benning. Juniors will stay and get inducted, and then finish their junior year, period. They didn't say what you would do after that. So we all went down to Fort Dix, and were inducted in March of '43. We came back, and we were now in the army and in uniform, finishing our junior year. And then they decided at the end of the junior year we would go for basic training. That's the time I was playing lacrosse. Three quarters of the team was in uniform. The senior members as well as the junior members who were in ROTC were in uniform.

So we played the University of Maryland, and after the game we were coming home, we were standing on the train platform in Baltimore with our duffel bags and our lacrosse sticks sticking out of the duffel bags. And these two little ladies were standing over here and they kept looking at us and looking at us, because we're all GIs. ... Finally one lady says, "I just can't help asking you, what are those?" Well the co-captain of the team was an All-American defenseman by the name of Bill Newman. Without batting an eye and without any expression, he said, "Ma'am, can you keep a secret?" He said, "That's a new weapon that the military has just developed, it's called a grenade catcher. When the enemy throws the grenades we throw them back." [laughter]

BT: That makes sense.

LG: We were all standing around, none of us, we tried our best not to laugh, but ...

TL: Did she buy it?

LG: She bought it, yeah she went back and told her friend, and I'll bet any number of people in her circle of friends ... heard about this.

TL: So you did not even have an option to finish out your year because you were in the advanced ROTC, you were going in.

LG: ... I don't know that anybody asked to get out of it, some transferred to some other branches they didn't stay in infantry, some were in the signal corps, and in other branches, a couple went in the air corps. But we were a group, we were together, we had done a lot of things together in school, and we had gone in the ROTC together. So we were Scabbard and Blade and all that kind of stuff together. So we stayed, and then in, I guess it's probably June of '43, we were shipped down as a group to Fort McClellan in Alabama to do our basic training, and it was an old Pennsylvania Railroad troop train and it was dusty and hot. We took about three days I think to get down there, but we were pretty crummy when we got off the train. They assembled special training cadre in all the locations, to be sure that we got [training]. Now we had redneck regular army sergeants for a bunch of hot shot college boys. They were going to show us what the army was all about, and they did, they really did. Probably the best training you ever had in your life, because they put us through the mill, and then it got to be a challenge, whether we could outdo them. We got off that train, and this one little sergeant called us the dirtiest blackest bunch of men he'd ever seen, that's the origin of the name the Black 50.

BT: Because you see that and you automatically think it means something else.

LG: Right. He called us the dirtiest, blackest bunch of guys he'd ever seen, and it stuck. And subsequently when we finished our basic training, the army still wasn't ready for us 'cause there weren't openings at OCS, they had all these other guys, you know the seniors, still training. No openings. We sat at McClellan for a week or two, they didn't know what to do. One of our guys' father was a general, he was at Valley Forge Military Academy. He got in touch with his father, his father went through the channels, and found out that they really didn't know what to do with us. I mean, they just had all these guys. So they decided, in their wisdom, the best thing to do was to put us through basic training again. So that's what we did.

TL: You went through twice?

LG: Twice at McClellan in the summertime.

BT: I was about to say, it's summertime in Alabama. The only worse place you could have been was probably Arizona.

LG: Or Louisiana or Mississippi. We had chiggers and heat rash and oh, Lord! The second group, were not the same non-coms as the first group. These were a little older and out of shape, and we were in great shape. I mean we did everything in double time, and we ran, and sometimes on the forced marches they had to send jeeps out to take them back, because we would run them into the ground. We thought that was, you know, that's how we were getting our kicks here. So we finally came back to Rutgers. Rutgers in the meantime had been turned over to the ... [ASTP], the whole army had taken over Rutgers. And we came back here in the fall of '43, and this was a science school. And most of us were liberal arts, the bulk of us were liberal arts students. [We] had never seen a physics book or a chemistry book or anything. They said,

"These grades don't count, you just have to go to class. I mean you have to make believe." So we marched to class and went to class and sat in the back of the room and the professor said keep quiet and so we did, waiting for something to happen. Three of us had applied before basic training was over, we had applied for the paratroopers. And we didn't hear anything. We got back up here, and we checked we found that things were moving along, we thought we were gonna be accepted. We always thought that the ROTC officers here would not, did not want us to transfer out. They trained us, and we were infantry and all that sort of thing. ... I don't know if that's true or not. But, because of that we were transferred, we all transferred out. In my own case, I had no desire at all, ever, to be an officer. I wanted to be a non-com, I don't know why, but I had no desire. But, then, of course we began hearing reports about infantry officers in Europe they weren't lasting too long anyway. I wanted to go into the paratroopers. Anyway, I got transferred out and went as a replacement into the 84th Division, at Camp Claiborne, Louisiana. Bob Prentiss, one of the others, went into the 1st Division, in Europe. And the third one, Tom Ward, went down to Maryland in a replacement depot, was sent to England, where he was put in a paratroop division, the 17th Airborne. I met him in England, he was a paratrooper. [laughter] So we all split, and some other fellahs went in the signal corps, and the armored corps and others before going to OCS. Most of the 50 went to Fort Benning and became infantry officers.

TL: So your education went to a screeching halt, and you were forced to go?

LG: ... Our education really stopped, when we went to McClellan, I mean that was the end of our junior year. We got a full three years in, we had one year to go.

TL: Did they cut the length of the classes you had to be there for?

LG: Well when I came back, things had changed. I was a journalism major from the very beginning, and I didn't need much to get my degree. In fact, I got a job and got married on February 2, a Saturday, the second term was starting the following Monday. So I had to come down here and talk to Dean Metzger, to be allowed to get a week off for our honeymoon.

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

TL: Okay, what did you think about Dean Metzger?

LG: I guess if you had a picture of what a college lead person should be, he was it. He was half-minister, half-provost, half-dean, half-everything, he was strict, but he was straight. Two of our classmates lived in his house, and took care of his furnace, and did his chores. Charlie Gantner, if you've ever heard these names, Charlie Gantner, who held collegiate world records in the butterfly. My father had helped coach him at the Garfield YMCA. So I knew about this kid before he ever came to school. Charlie lives just outside of town now. And Ralph Buratti, who was a collegiate champion diver. And they lived with Metzger. Metzger liked some of us, because we knew them and so on and so forth. He was strict, but after the war he was even stricter, I needed that week off, which he really didn't grant me but I said, "Well I'm going to take a honeymoon." I don't care. So we did.

TL: Where did you go on your honeymoon?

LG: The Skytop Inn in Pennsylvania, up in the Poconos. A lovely place, still is, a very lovely place. Nice in the winter, snow and ice and so on. Let's see, that was in February, and so I finished that term here. I would go home weekends, come down Monday mornings, and go home Friday evening. I'd take the train; my wife was working in New York, down near the Battery, and I'd take the train to New York, and knock around for a couple of hours, then meet her and then we'd come home. We were living with her parents. And then I'd take the train back on Monday morning. For the balance of that term.

Then when school ended, I only needed for my degree one class, that's all. Dr. Merwin was head of the journalism school, and he said, "We can work this out however you want, you just need that one class." So I began job hunting, and found a job. The town I'd grown up in. I had done some things for that newspaper when I was in grammar school, writing some little things and they accepted all through high school, I was their sports reporter, free, but you know, I had a press card, that's all I needed, a press card. And I wrote up all of the softball games and all that kind of stuff. So I knew the owners and [we were] good friends, my parents were good friends with them. So I began job hunting in New York, thinking that's where I would probably have to go. Everyone went to New York, you know, as a journalism major, began looking at the advertising agencies. Because someone had told me that newspaper jobs were hard to come by in those days. I stopped in the local paper, to say hello to these folks, 'cause I was now back home, and the owner and publisher was named Roy Compton. And he said, "What are you doing?" and I said, "I'm job hunting." He said, "You want a job?" I said, "Well that's what I'm ..." He said, "Well how would you like to work here?" Now I knew the editor, a girl by the name of Ruth Van Ness, who I assumed and everybody in town assumed she was a lifelong spinster. And she was, I would say, she was probably, in those days, I thought everybody was old, she was probably in her forties. And she had just told them that she was going to get married and move to Colorado. And he said, "Ruth is leaving, do you want her job?" So, my first job, I was hired as an editor. I never worked as a reporter. But it was a small weekly paper, it was a one man, you know, one editorial staff. So you wrote the stories, you helped set them in type, and you did the headlines in type, and helped all the proofs, and sold the job printing, and did advertising, and it was probably the best basic training for a newspaper business there is. So now I had a job, I worked during the summer, and then came down and talked to Dr. Merwin. The paper came out on Thursday morning, we worked Wednesday night, all weeklies came out Thursdays in those days. And he worked it out so that my one class was on Friday, so I would come to Rutgers every Friday, and not unlike most journalism faculty I guess, few of the men teaching us had ever worked for a newspaper. So most every Fridays I told the class what I did this week, about the business, you know, setting type, and so on and so [forth]. I went through the motions to get my [degree].

That was in the fall, and the graduation was in the wintertime sometime. I don't know when the term ended, December, January or something. So the graduation was on the day that we put the paper out. I had no interest in, the graduation ceremony. I just wanted those points to get my degree. I mean I really was finished with school. And I came down to talk to the Dean and told

him I couldn't be here for graduation. Well this was unheard of. You attend your graduation. I said, "I can't, I'm working, and I have to get the paper out." I said, "Mail me my degree." Well, he told my they had never done this. Metzger said, "We don't do that." I said, "I don't want to make a trip down just to get my degree, can't you sent it to me?" Well he gave me all this business about it getting bent and so on and so forth, and he finally agreed, and don't you know when it arrived it was bent!

BT: They put it in a tube.

TL: You're kidding!

LG: It was in a tube! I never told him.

TL: Oh, so you're the first graduate who didn't graduate.

LG: When we came back in '46, there were a lot of married couples; this was new for Rutgers. It was all different, it was completely different. And one or two of my class members who had stayed had told these young Betas that wait till the guys come back from the service, wait till they come back, we'll show you what parties are, we'll show you how it used to be, right. So that's what they told us, they wanted to have some good parties like we used to have. Now, we were all married, and they've got the curfew. The girls are sleeping in the fraternity house, well in the dorm. House mother, she wasn't very friendly, and she didn't accept this married business very much. We were all staying down at the Roger Smith Hotel. Everybody stayed down there, and we partied, and we had a house party. One in the group, I think there were about four or five couples, one had a date, the rest of us were all married. And his date went back to get her lipstick or do something, and once you've go to the fraternity, in the house, you can't go out again.

TL: Oh you're kidding.

LG: And that was the rule, we knew that. But I mean, the girl wanted to go in anyway, so run in and run out again. So we're standing out in the street waiting for her to come out. That house mother would not let her out. So we began singing, and carrying on in the street, and laughing our heads off, and the poor girl is up in dorm looking down at us out the window and she couldn't get out, because the house mother wouldn't allow. Monday morning the notice came to the Beta house for the five of us to come down to Dean Meztger's office, and he read us off what we had done, and the house was put on social probation, and now none of the other brothers would speak to us. [laughter] That's what you wanted, you wanted us to have a party! [laughter] And they couldn't have a party for the rest of the year! [laughter] That was embarrassing. They were mad as heck at us. So we finished up and that was that. But you want to know about the war stories.

TL: Yes. I love learning about old Rutgers. I just have one more question that I have to ask about Rutgers before the war. Could you please tell something about what it was like to go to a Rutgers that was so small? That's a big thing.

LG: We had the feeling, it's probably very true, that there was a distinct difference between the students who lived on campus and the commuters, that you knew most everybody on campus. You certainly knew all the ones who were active, you know sports, Targum, whatever. And a lot of interplay between the fraternities, and some of my closest friends were in other fraternities, some of them through the Targum and through sports. But you had the feeling that you really knew people here. When I came back, of course, when we came back, the war had changed our attitude a lot, and it changed things here. We had come back in service for the ASTP, so we knew Rutgers was different. I mean, when you come back after your basic training and it's a military school, it's not the same. And we came back with the married students, it wasn't the same. And it just began to grow like leaps and bounds. I mean after the war years it just began to grow. Of course, I lost contact for a while. I always stayed very active as an alumnus, and we regrouped our class which helped a great deal. You know, we were scattered as a class. We all entered in '40, when we came back we had '45, '46, '47, '48. So we sent a mailing out. We knew we weren't going to do much fundraising, so Al Sidar and myself and a few others got together and we came down and talked to them and said, "Let's send a mailing to everybody that you've got listed from the class of 1940, who entered. And ask them please to sign up with their original class." We got a good response. That's why we have a very good alumni class. And the only ones really that didn't were the fellahs who were active in their new classes. One of them was president of the class, and things of that kind so, but most did. And they were happy to. Because we were sort of floundering, you know. I had no relationship with the class of '47, and some of '46 so we regrouped and came up with a good a very strong class. The fiftieth reunion was excellent. ... That fiftieth reunion was unbelievable, what we did in fifty years, the money we raised for scholarships. Well you know about that.

TL: Oh yes, you guys are fantastic.

LG: Knocked me over, ... I got to present the check!

TL: Oh really.

LG: I'm president, I'm president of the class so ...

TL: Oh you're the president of the class, I didn't know that.

LG: Yeah, the proudest moment of my life, to present a check for about a million bucks to this school. It was really something. It was amazing. Amazing. The change of attitude was really something. So, it was quite different, quite different. It became very impersonal. Of course, we did too. I mean the war and being married and so on. We lost that senior year. I got married and working, except for lacrosse, that was my only activity after the war.

TL: Had to stay with your cult.

LG: Yep.

TL: I got the idea that everybody tried to forget about the war and jump back into life in the USA, and at Rutgers and going to dances and football games and things like that.

LG: Well, I think it was a lot about that, but we didn't talk about it much. I hadn't thought about that, that is true. We just came back and wanted to finish up. All we really wanted to do. There was a lot of talk about just finishing as fast as we could and getting a degree and getting out because we knew that times were very competitive for jobs, because this was happening all over the country. And we knew that everybody wanted to get out as fast as they could, to get going. I mean, we'd done our thing and our college life had been disrupted. Whoever thought that juniors in college would go off to fight a war. We were kids really, and we grew up fast, but when you think about it, we weren't prepared to do a lot. It's amazing we were able to, I guess, and that 50 went and 50 came back. I still find that to be exceptional. The list of the fifty does not include two who were killed, for some reason. But the one fellah, was a member of the Black Fifty, came back from Europe and then was sent to Korea, and on the third day in Korea he was killed. And we were resentful of that, I'll tell you. He had two or three children; he really shouldn't have been called.

TL: And he got called back and was killed?

LG: He was killed, his third day, the third day in action in Korea, Ben Ford. Close friend.

BT: That's interesting because we didn't arrive in Korea 'til October first. Three days after arriving at Korea.

LG: Got the Silver Star.

BT: I was going to say that if they had been in Japan and then moved him right in.

LG: ... Some of the fellahs knew him at the time and said that he should have never been called. They were calling others, but they were in the reserves, they stayed in the reserves. Yeah, a lot of fellahs went to Korea. Until our history came out I hadn't realized how many.

BT: How many, approximately were in the class when you started at Rutgers?

LG: Oh, I don't know.

BT: 100, 200, 500? I have no idea.

LG: It seems to me that Crandon Clark and Doug McCabe came down to the university to get a list. They tried to get the entire class of 1940, and then begin to do the military [history]. They had some 500 names. Now that sounds high to me. I don't think that we had that many, but ...

TL: I was thinking it's about 400.

BT: This book contains 130 members of the class, and they just did the book, so I would think there were a lot more in the class originally.

LG: ... I think it was 300 something. In that neighborhood somewhere. I always use the figure of 1800, in the college at the time.

BT: Rutgers College?

TL: Rutgers College. I think it's 8500 in Rutgers College.

BT: The university is much bigger now than Rutgers College.

LG: Is the university still one of the third or fourth largest in the country?

TL: Oh yeah.

BT: Is it? Someone just asked me that the other day and I said that I'm sure it's smaller than Ohio State.

TL: We're smaller than Ohio, but we're one of the largest.

LG: President Lawrence told us that it was the third largest.

TL: Yeah we have 46,000, I think Ohio has 52,000.

LG: I tell people that anyway. It's a lot larger than people expect.

TL: If you're a student you realize how large it is. World War II though is what did it, the GI Bill blew the whole place up.

LG: And then Livingston College where they tried to help the inner city kids which I thought was a disaster at the time. I went through that with my son and I couldn't believe what they were doing there. But so be it.

TL: We will put that in the future, let's go back to your training. Okay, can you describe your second training, your first training.

LG: Basic training?

TL: Yes.

BT: Both of them, did you feel more prepared, because you went through two trainings?

LG: Absolutely. I always maintain, and I've said this to a lot of the classmates, we were probably in as good physical shape of any group you'd ever find. Partially because of the second

training, and partially because of the company commander that we had, a Captain Vopat. He was from Colorado, he had a scar down here where a mule had kicked him. His face was something like Ernest Borgnine, he was a tough, you know, you could tell this man was hard. Soft voice, but he was a disciple of the fact that you had to be, if you were going to survive the war, you were going to be in the best physical shape you'd ever been in. And we became known as Vopat's Runners, no Vopat's Raiders. We ran every night, every evening; other guys would be sitting around and cleaning their rifles. We ran with rifles and full field pack. Seven miles every evening. I've always maintained at the reunions, if you look at our class, you don't see much in the way of pot bellies, you really don't. We're in good shape. And I've maintained that if you are in good shape at that age, you probably will stay in good shape. There's something about it that makes you feel that you want to stay physically fit. Of course, being in the infantry, and the fact that we were a group, made a difference. It was tough in Alabama, in the summertime. It was tough training, because they were going to see to it that we were trained very well, because they knew we were supposed to go to OCS. It was a sort of us against them all the time, and that helped. We knew we were being put upon, and we talked to people at the PX and found out that we were doing things that they weren't doing, you know, the other trainees. But it was good, it was very good, and we enjoyed it, we were competitive. We got caught up in it. Now as you got out you found out what you had been through was special; it was good training.

TL: Did you meet people from all over the country?

LG: Well we had, as I remember it, at McClellan in our group, we had CCNY, University of Pennsylvania, and University of Mississippi. And I remember distinctly because University of Mississippi, we had a number of young fellows there that came from some wealthier families, and this was, you know, this was something they shouldn't be put through. You had a barracks. I forget how many were in it, but you got judged on inspections, ... not on just whether your bed was made, but everybody's bed was made. And we had one or two young fellows that just never did anything, we always had to make their bed and sweep their floor. They were lazy.

BT: They would not do it.

LG: No. I can remember, I thought this is what you're like if you live in Mississippi. They were on a different level and they were college boys, and sort of didn't like the idea that they were in the army anyway.

TL: Did they make it do you know?

LG: I don't know. We mixed with them, some, but not a lot, because we had our group, and we had formed some good friendships in those days, because of our activities together, one thing or another, double- dating, social activities as well as athletics and so on. But we were with them and went through the training with them. The first training anyway. The second training, I don't recall that we had a lot of them, I think we were split up after that, and we did a whole different kind of training route too. We had older officers and older non-coms. That was sort of a misfit thing, but they had to do something with us. But by that time we were in good shape, so we trained ourselves to a certain degree. Because we were going to maintain this running. We were

sort of marking time, but we weren't going to ease up. It was good, it was really excellent training.

BT: Did they have obstacle courses, did they use live ammunition?

LG: ... Yes.

BT: You are really into 1943, you're past the World War I equipment by the 1940's stage, did any of the people that were in the training process come back from an active theater, or were they all just stateside?

LG: I don't think so.

BT: You never heard any horror stories, or I learned this, or I learned that when I was overseas, stories?

LG: ... No. The closest we got, I think, at Fort Dix when we were inducted, we walked by a group of German war prisoners from North Africa. And they were physical specimens, these were Aryan, blonde, stripped to the waist, you know behind the wire, and we were out clipping grass and they were laughing at us. They were very outspoken and laughing, saying, ... "We're the supermen, and look what you guys have to do." They were tan and fit and good-looking, they all looked alike. I wouldn't tangle with any of them. We were told they were captured in North Africa. ...

TL: They were still boasting although they were captured and over here?

LG: Oh yeah, because ... they didn't have to do anything and they were eating well, and sure they were out of the fighting.

BT: Nurses have told me that in caring for German POWs on hospital ships in World War II remember how these prisoners often were convinced that Hitler was going to win the war. One nurse remembers them saying, "When Hitler wins the war, ha, ha, ha, you know, you'll see." They absolutely didn't give up, they were just going to mark time in the U.S. until Hitler got there. And this is after they surrendered! I heard this consistently how arrogant they were.

LG: ... Yes. They were, and subsequently, we saw them at different places. We saw some down at McClellan, there were quite a number at Dix. They had a large company, I guess that's where they first brought them in or something. I was very surprised they didn't have them doing anything.

TL: Was that against the law?

BT: I don't know.

TL: I know the Germans made their prisoners work.

LG: Oh yeah, sure they did.

BT: But I guess we didn't, I know we had some all over, had them out West over in Idaho and the midwest, and they didn't seem to have much to do. There were some, the prisoners in Italy worked in the hospitals a lot, the Italian prisoners especially. But once they were back in the United States they didn't do that much of anything.

LG: I don't recall ever seeing them working.

BT: Now when you went to OCS,

LG: I didn't go to OCS.

BT: Okay, so you didn't go to OCS.

LG: I went to Camp Claiborne, in Louisiana.

TL: When did you receive word that you were going over to the European theater?

LG: Well, we knew. When I joined the 84th, the way the infantry divisions were working, they knew what theater they were going to, because of the training. They knew they were going to the Pacific or Europe, either one. The 84th was going to go to Europe. And the division had just come off big maneuvers, mock warfare, division against division. The division had been in Texas, and they'd come through these maneuvers up into Louisiana, had been out in the field for three months, I think, and then moved into Camp Claiborne. I joined them just after they came off maneuvers. So now they're maneuver tested and I'm a young college kid, you know. And there were a few of us that came in as replacements, and we developed a close friendship. In fact, one of them now is in Norfolk, Virginia, and I see him quite frequently. He was a prisoner of war. So, we trained with the 84th, from, let's see, I guess I joined the 84th in about October of '43. Went through that winter, and then different serious training for Europe began early in '44. And at one stage, the army decided that they wanted to turn some infantry divisions into airborne divisions, not paratroop, glider troops. Somebody thought this up. Those who were supposed to receive the training didn't think much of it, but we trained for several weeks. They brought down these huge gliders, great big round things, that could hold jeeps, not tanks, but jeeps. And we trained getting in and out of these gliders, quickly in and out, and the idea was, they were going to tow them. This was a way to get the troops into the field, you know, quicker. They were going to tow these things and then let them loose and glide down. Well, we never did think much of this idea sitting up there in a glider with no engine, you know. But we did it day and night, we were in and out of those gliders.

... Well all of a sudden it just stopped, the whole idea just ended. I don't think that they ever tested it outside of Louisiana. Maybe they were doing it all over the country. So we went through that testing, for the early part of '44, and then got word that we were going to move and we moved up to Camp Kilmer. It must of been July, June or July of '44. It was after D-Day,

because when we were in Kilmer, in those great wooden barracks, we had a hurricane. ... We didn't mind Kilmer, because we were just getting re-outfitted and all that sort of stuff and then we went to New York. And I could see my girl, practically every weekend. We went into New York every weekend. We kept hearing that it was going to be this week, it was going to be this week, it was going to be this week, it was going to be this week, it was going to be this week.

Anyway, we went into New York about every night. At the bottom of Times Square, was a place called the Crossroads Cafe, and that was our meeting place. The four of us would meet there and then walk down to Penn Station to get the train back to Kilmer. So I was sitting at the Crossroads Cafe this evening, and there was a civilian sitting next to me, and he looked over and said, "Oh, 84th division eh?" And he said, "And 334th infantry, huh?" I said, "Yeah." He said, "Well, we're taking you guys over tomorrow." And I said, "What?" And he said, "Yeah, you're shipping out tomorrow, did you know it?" I said, "No, I didn't, but we'd been hearing" He said, "You're regiment is on my ship." And he said, "Let me give you a little tip," he said, "I'm a quartermaster." "They'll come around tomorrow morning early, and ask for volunteers for different things." He said, "When they ask for volunteers in the butcher shop, you volunteer." I said, "How many do you need?" He said, "Three or four." He said, "I'm not kidding you. If you want to have a good voyage, eat well, volunteer for the butcher shop." So when the other guys arrived I told them and introduced them. This guy looked straight, I mean he was a nice talking friendly man. And it turned out to be right. The butcher shop was where we cut up all the steaks, all the chickens, cleaned all the oysters and things, for the officers, mainly. Not for the troops. We ate at the table with the officers and the crew, we had three good meals a day, we could order anything we wanted, if we wanted three eggs for breakfast. It was wonder[ful], it really was. What he meant was you keep busy, otherwise you sit down in the hole. And I didn't ever feel any seasickness or anything. It was fine, and we cleaned chickens and so forth, and the chow line went past the door to the butcher shop. And as they came by we would clean chickens, or open oysters, and one day, one fellah in the chow line just couldn't handle it, he was so seasick. He came through the butcher shop heading for the port hole, but the port hole was closed. He hit that window, fell right down in the sink.

... The ship that we were on was the sister ship of the Morro Castle. The Morro Castle burned, you know in Asbury Park. Thomas E. Barry was the name. We got into England in the very end of August or the first week in September. We went into South Hampton. And then we, we were stationed in Winchester. And we were lodged in the buildings of this very old boys school in Winchester. They had moved the boys out into the country. Old stone, you could see daylight through the [cracks]. ... We were able to get into London once or twice. Amazing that the cab drivers in London could drive around with no headlights, and never had accidents. I could never get over that. They had little peeholes for lights.

BT: Weren't they being hit by the V-1s?

LG: No, no, that was later.

BT: That was later.

LG: I know about those.

BT: Yeah!

LG: There were occasional air raids, but not much at that time. Air raids were nothing that bothered us in London. We just went in to see the city. Winchester is a nice town, and there were at least three divisions around Winchester, and we'd come in at night and meet. We were among the first infantry division people to arrive in England in new combat boots, instead of the leggings, you know? We had the boots that had the top on them. And the paratroopers took great offense at this, because they thought that we were copying their boots.

TL: They thought that you were copying their boots?

LG: Yeah, that we were trying to look like paratroopers, because our pants were being tucked in just like paratroopers.

BT: That was a big deal.

LG: Absolutely! And one of the outfits outside of Winchester was the Seventeenth Airborne. And that's where I said this friend, Tom Ward, who went into service with me, was stationed. And we met one night in the middle of a fight.

TL: In the middle of a fight?

LG: In the street, outside of a pub. He's the only one I ever came across.

TL: That's so funny. Could you describe this fight that you got into?

LG: You'd be around the pubs or out in the street or whatever, and usually the things would start in the pub, and it was paratroopers that took offense that the 84th infantry was wearing these boots. You know one word led to another, and there was probably some beer involved, and, of course, there's pushing and shoving, and there's just sort of a mass pushing and shoving, about who was toughest and, paratroopers were terrible that way. They thought they were, you know. They were tough, they had tough training. But it was the boots that bothered them. It's not our fault, the army gave us those boots. [laughter] But they didn't like that at all. They subsequently got used to it, because everybody [had them], but see we were new, and the boots were new, and they thought that they shouldn't have done that, to make them look like paratrooper's. So we're pushing and shoving and, even though the blackout was on, I recognized him.

TL: Did you both just leave the fight?

LG: Absolutely. [laughter] We went over and I found out that he'd gone to Maryland and gotten into a replacement depot.

TL: That's great.

LG: These other three friends, ... that I had become close friends with in the 84th, one was from Virginia Tech. One was from the outside of Pittsburgh, but he went to a small school out there, he lived in Ligonier, Pennsylvania. And Fred Tedi had gone to school in New York City, I think CCNY, he was from Passaic. And the four of us went around together all the time, so we were in the same company, in the 334th, Company F. I got called down to the company commander's office one Sunday morning, and told that I was being transferred into a new unit. No, ifs ands or buts. There were three or four of us from the battalion. They had found that the Germans were extensively using mines in Europe. Any ground that they gave up were mined, roads, fields, apple orchards, all kinds of things. ... And there hadn't been a lot of experience with mines. And both the British army and the American army were trying to figure out ways to detonate these mines. The British had developed a tank, and they had attached two long arms to the tank, and out at the end of the arms they put a big roller with chains, and they sent the tank out with those chains to detonate. And that would work, but sometimes they'd miss one or two and then the tank would hit the mine and be stuck, it would break a tread. So it wasn't too [efficient] so they were developing anti-mine platoons to serve the regiment, or the division, to be on to have areas cleared. And we were sent to school for, I don't know, two, three, four weeks, I forget really the exact length of time, to learn about how mines were made, and how to detonate them, how to locate them. It was a small unit. We had one lieutenant and a sergeant. We were on call for anybody that needed us. So that's what I did for the rest of the war. It was [to] locate and de-arm mines.

TL: Were you happy about this sudden transfer?

LG: Well, I'll tell you, you didn't have [a choice]. I don't remember being happy or unhappy. I was unhappy about leaving Company F, it was a good company, we had good officers, and we had a good group. I was unhappy about that, and happy to meet up with new people. I guess in those days, you're just so young, and, you know, it was exciting and we were learning how to [disarm mines]. The idea of learning about these things, it was fascinating, and we had men who had been in North Africa, and in Europe. British, the British military people are wonderful. That's a profession, it's not just volunteers like we were. And they assured us that any mine if you detected it, and knew what you were doing, you could disarm it without any problem. This was before the Germans developed the wooden mines which changed the whole thing, because detectors would not pick up the wooden mines. But we found in our training, going out in the fields that if we could locate them, we never had an explosion in the training, in any of the training, nothing ever happened. So we got pretty confident about: find[ing] them and disarming them, and we did. So we went into Eur[ope] in October. And then just went on a forced march across Northern France and into Holland, and we were at the edge of the Siegfried Line ... where the division replaced the 102nd. They'd been on the line for quite a while. I'll never forget that. All I remember is hedgerows and mud. Lots of mud and those hedgerows, and how in the world we ever got through that stuff. ... We didn't spend any time on the beach. You saw some junk, but, you know, we were too excited, about finally getting in there. Fighting sons of freedom, let's go, you know, let's go! Let's do this! [laughter]

TL: I'm going to stop here, so I can change to tape.

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

TL: This continues an interview with Livy Goodman with Tara J. Liston, Barbara Tomblin, and now joined by Kurt Piehler on May 10, 1996.

LG: We were the northern flank of the Ninth Army. To our immediate left was the British Army. It's dark and, we're walking down this little narrow street, in this little village, single file, heading for an area where we were gonna go into the foxholes [that] the 102nd been in. And these guys are coming back, and you couldn't see very much at all, but they're, you know, how they're giving it to you, about "Wait 'til you see. You guys haven't seen nothing." All of a sudden, we heard this whistle. Of course, we didn't know what the whistle was, but all of a sudden there's nobody there. All we heard was running, gosh, they're not so tough. There was some mortar fire, not too far away, but we were so dumb, we didn't know what it was. Our unit, the mine platoon was called out that night, to clear. The division was going to jump off in the morning. I read subsequently in the division history, there was just a small piece of land, a small objective they were to take, and we were to clear an apple orchard. We were a three man squad. You had to put tape down, white tape, and you used bayonets to probe, you would probe between the tapes. The detector went out first, and then the probing, and we found a few in this apple orchard. It was dark. There was absolutely no moon. First night, we were happy on the way up there, we had to cross a little creek bed, and we were up ahead and all of a sudden we heard a gun go off, back there. One of our guys had stumbled, and he was holding his rifle, and we found out subsequently, the bullet had gone up between his helmet liner and his helmet, went up this way and right out.

BT: Are you kidding?

LG: No, I saw the helmet. That was my first recollection of the war, the fighting war. We get up to this apple orchard, and we're clearing it, and I'm out front, and I hit something. It's over there and it's over here and I don't know what in the world is in this apple orchard. I kept feeling, I could not figure it out. It was a dead cow. [laughter] Now in all of the training they'd never told us what to do when you reach a dead cow. Your strict instructions are you only work between those tapes because troops the next morning are going to go through the tapes, because you're assuring them that that's cleared. Dead cow. [laughter] We finally went over the dead cow. We didn't know what to do, we didn't want to change the tape. That cow had been dead a little while.

They jumped off the next morning. They were only in action for a day or so, and somebody misread some maps, or something, and at night they went into an area that they should not have been in and subsequently, they were resting and they heard something, they hit some metal. They had walked right into a German area, and the company, it had some action, but the company was captured almost intact. Of my three closest friends, one was killed the first day in action, the other two were captured. That's the last I heard of them 'til, we were on occupation duty processing displaced persons, and German war prisoners, and American prisoners came through, and one of them came through. He had been in a prisoner of war camp way up in northeastern

Germany, working on a farm, and spent the time working on roads, spent the war eating well, in good physical shape, and when they heard the Russians were coming, the Germans all fled, and they just headed west on their own, you know, and nobody stopped them 'til they got to the American line.

BT: So you would have been captured if you had stayed with them.

LG: Right. So we stayed in the anti-mine platoon for the [rest of the war]. We stayed in Northern Germany. We went out about every other night. We also were used for other duty. We did some stretcher duty and things of that kind. We were attached to the anti-tank company, but we were on call for the division. We would work with any one of the three regiments.

On December the sixteenth we thought we were getting in trucks to go back to clean up. We kept driving, and driving, and driving. You know, they had these truck companies, the drivers were all black. They were the only black soldiers we ever saw. And we drove and drove, and drove and drove. ... And finally the truck stopped, and we didn't know where we were, and neither did they, and all of a sudden there was a lot of shooting and firing, and those trucks were gone. We were in Marche, Belgium. ... As it turned out, the Germans had decided they needed the road intersections in order to get to Antwerp. And they decided to concentrate on the road intersection at Bastogne, and ignore the road intersection in Marche, so they went on past. We were in Marche, and they didn't know it.

BT: So you were really on the northern shoulder of Belgium?

LG: It was in the middle. If you look at maps, in the Stars and Stripes, the German line was beyond where we [were]. I think it was the Orth River they were heading for, but our division stopped them from reaching the river. The major counterattack came on Christmas Eve. They came into Marche with full force and we held it and then from then on. In fact, it was a patrol from the 334th that hooked up to close the Bulge. Patton took the credit, but, naturally he had all the writers with him. [laughter] ... The Bulge was an unforgettable experience, with the weather conditions, the fog and the wetness and the snow and the cold.

BT: Now were you actually involved in clearing any mines?

LG: We were clearing mines almost all the time. They used us extensively. In fact, in the Bulge was the first time we came across the wooden mines. They looked like, you know the wooden cheese boxes.

BT: Yes.

LG: They looked like they took a cheese box and cut it off square, and they planted it just below the surface of dirt, and the idea was just to blow a foot off, just to put someone out of action, a toe or a foot. And you couldn't detect them. There was no metal in them.

TL: So what did you do?

LG: You just had to hope and look. We had a fellow we called Pop, and he had a family at home, and he had it. And he was determined he was going to go home, and he went out one morning stuck his foot [on one], that blew off a couple of his toes. Fortunately, they didn't have many of the[m], they didn't use them extensively. It was in the Bulge that I first became aware of the V-Bombs. I got a cold, flu, or something intestinal. So I went back, and it was a big open tent with beds, and not far away were a lot of tankers that had been burned, and it was just awful. They were moaning and groaning, and then in the midst of this, these things, this sound was coming over, and when the sound stopped, you knew something was happening. Well they hadn't perfected those things, they weren't reaching anything, except where we were. And they were landing not far away, and I stayed there one night and half a day, and I said, "I may be sick, but ... I'm not going to die." You know, you can't sleep with these guys, and those V-Bombs coming too close, so I went back.

Kurt Piehler: Did you ever see them, you only heard them, you never saw them?

LG: No, I saw where they hit. I had seen some places where they hit. They were supposed to be shooting those things a lot farther than Belgium. Then we finished the Bulge and went back up almost to where we'd been.

We went back up north, and settled in and then began training for river crossing. So we had to train for a couple of weeks with the rubber boats, because we going to cross the Ruhr, and the problem then was the Germans had control of the dams up north, and they could flood the Roehr River at any time, and if they flooded it we couldn't cross it. We knew that, so they kept us just going back and forth when we were going to do this. And finally it was, Easter and then we heard Roosevelt had died. The night we went up to cross the Roehr, we were on the chow line and we were going to have our last hot meal, for who knows how long, and it was dark, and we went down the mess line, and we got down and started eating. Our last hot meal was three kinds of beans, string beans, lima beans and baked beans. I said, Jesus, what in the world, what's he doing to us? [laughter] ... Because in the Bulge all you had was C rations.

So we crossed the Roehr, and that really was scary because they were pretty well entrenched on the other side, so the fire was pretty heavy over there. We went in with the first units to cross. We got across all right. Well, not all right. We started here and we wound up down there, but we didn't upset until we got to the shore. Then it was tough for the next few days, until things began to clear out on the other side, and we were heading toward the Rhine and the question then I guess, as you probably heard is can anybody get to the Rhine and find some bridges. And we'd heard about Remagen and we'd miss a couple on the northern end that they'd gotten to. And we finally went across the Rhine and from then on it just seemed like how far you could travel.

We occupied Hanover. It was the only big city that we hit that was fairly well intact. When we got into Hanover the telephones were still working, we went into apartment houses and sat in the desks and smoked cigars and called up people. It was great. We found wine and some of the people were still there. And, none of them were Nazis, nobody. I made this owner take me down, they had cubicles in the basement, and he took us down to this cubicle where they had stored their furniture and some of their possessions, you know, in case the place was going to be

bombed. And I searched that place and couldn't find anything, and reached underneath the cushion of an easy chair, and found a luger, unused. A World War I luger that I still have. The grease was on it, and he swore, he didn't know how that luger got there. And we got a camera, and a watch and a few things, but the luger was my prized possession.

Then we just moved on, and we arrived at the Elbe, I think we were the northern flank of the Elbe, in April, and we sat. I was looking in a bookstore the other day and I picked up a copy of the New York Times front pages from 1922. And they had a front page of that period, and one of the stories talked about a division, the Second Armored, that crossed the Elbe. And I didn't know that any American units had crossed, they were supposed to be 50 miles from Berlin when they crossed. We weren't allowed to cross. We went and stopped, and no one could figure out what happened. We didn't know what had happened. I guess it was at Potsdam where they made the agreement that they wouldn't take Berlin. And we sat on the Elbe and just had a good time. It was in April. There was not much going on on the other side. And all of a sudden one morning there were people over there, all kinds, all sorts of things going on. It was German civilians coming to the Americans, because the Russians were behind them, and they didn't want to be taken by the Russians. And then subsequently we had a joint parade, and they were crazy. ... We went over and socialized with the Russians. There was a tank outfit there. And out of this tank came this handsome woman, God she was dressed in leather from head to foot, and she was good looking. And she was the tank commander ... and they had never seen American weapons, and they took our automatic weapons and began firing them. You know, they probably had had a little vodka.

When VE-Day came we went on prisoner of war duty. We were in charge of rounding up and we had a large camp of POWs and displaced persons. And we came into one small prison camp, I forget the name of it. Where they had the ovens. We saw just one in that area, wasn't one of the big ones. We freed a lot of farm workers, and one huge farm we came across was all Mongolian farm workers. Big, good looking. Of course, you couldn't understand a thing they were saying. They were just so happy they put on a feast for us, they roasted a pig, had a big party for us. One guy had a violin, and [they played] music. They had been working that farm for a long time. And the regiment moved down outside of Heidelberg. We were down the river from Heidelberg, a little town called Ebersbach. And that was June or July of '45. And, a few of us began to play softball and we were members of the regimental softball team.

They sent us to school to learn how to play football, and we won a tournament in that whole sector for our softball team. The little town had a nice large swimming pool, and because we were the athletes we were not required to do duty, so ... we kept the swimming pool. And that's all we did all day. The guys would go out on marches and we kept the swimming pool. And played softball, and went into Heidelberg when we could. They had shows. I have some snapshots of Jack Benny and Ingrid Bergman. We went to Heidelberg one night for that show, and there was a quiet guy in the unit. Blonde, very quiet, he didn't socialize much. We're sitting there watching the show, and he said, "I know Ingrid Bergman, we grew up together. We grew up in the same town." Well, after the show, we went back, he knocked on the door and it was this great big reunion. [laughter] ... Most beautiful woman I had ever seen, no make-up, a trench

coat, oh God was she good looking. And they're talking in Norwegian you know, or Swedish or whatever, about family and ...

TL: Are you kidding?

LG: No, no I'm not.

TL: That's amazing.

LG: It is amazing. We didn't believe him. He said, "I know her. We come from the same town." And by God, he proved it. That summer, as you know there was a question of how many points you have until you come home. I was a Buck Sergeant by this time. And there were, oh I don't know, a half a dozen of us I guess, all non-coms that were together, that played ball together and so on, and we were moved back to Nancy, France. And put in charge of a postal unit in Nancy. It was just a boondoggle. They had French civilians doing the mail, but they were under American supervision. And we lived in a nice dormitory, apartment house-like, and went down to the post office every day, and goofed off. Really all we did was try to save our money to go on furlough to London or Paris. We could get on the mail train any night and go to Paris and spend a day or two or three if you had enough money. And I took a furlough in Switzerland. Some went to the Riviera. Gradually the points came, and I went up to the cigarette camps, I forget which one it was. It was in December of '45. Cold.

KP: Camp Luck Strike?

LG: It could have been. It was cold. You couldn't keep the fire going, and we sat up there. We were going to ship out of Le Havre. And we sat there for a week, and they put us on trains, on boxcars from World War I, you know the 48-8s, the wooden boxcars?

BT: Yes.

LG: Because, the orders had been changed. Instead of shipping out of La Havre, we going to ship out at Marseilles. Here's La Havre, and here's Marseilles.

BT: So you had to go all the way to southern France.

LG: Right. I'm not exaggerating. Before we got there, we had burned part of the floor boards in those boxcars just for fire. By the time we got to Marseilles it was terrible. We got to Marseilles about December the 15th. And this small merchant ship was sitting in the harbor like this. And we talked to a couple of merchant seamen, and they said we're not going out on that, because we just came in and that boat isn't fit to go. Look at it, it's tilting, something's wrong, it's not loaded right or something. Well that's the one we got on. It was a small Liberty Ship. And that winter they had heavy North Atlantic storms. Took us nineteen days to come across the Atlantic, and you know each day, they posted the number of miles to New York, and one day it was more miles than it had been before. [laughter] We blew backwards last night. ... It was awful, the crew gave up, and didn't serve any food, what you had was a galley that was full of water. And

great big pots of chicken noodle soup and saltines that were wet. And that's really about all. Guys were seasick everywhere. Now we were on that thing at Christmas, and the Army Special Services had decided, wherever you are you're going to have Christmas. Well the commander had ordered to put up a Christmas tree. He put up a Christmas tree with lights on deck, and just about as we were assembling the wind took that Christmas tree and blew it. I could see it going across the water, lights. ... [laughter] We got into Norfolk, on New Year's Eve. Now nineteen days on that thing, and we could see that they were having celebrations, you know in the harbor, and we sat. Because the dock workers weren't working for the holidays, right. New Year's Day is a holiday.

BT: You just sat there.

LG: We sat on that ship until January second. Angry! [laughter] Not long after that, at one of these sessions, after you had your new uniform and all that stuff, we were assembled in a classroom, and this guy came in with hash marks all the way up his arm and said, "Now, fellahs, look. I've got to talk to you about re-enlistment." [laughter] He said, "I know, now look, we ... have to spend fifteen minutes together, just sit here." So I came out on January the sixth.

TL: Did anyone re-enlist?

LG: No. I came from Norfolk to Monmouth, I was discharged at Fort Monmouth.

KP: Not at Camp Kilmer?

LG: No. ... We came to Monmouth, and my wife to be and three friends came down to Fort Monmouth, on January sixth and we were married February second.

TL: I'm going to pause it okay, Kurt?

Pause

KP: You have offered us great narrative, but I would like to ask a few specific questions. One is: How much enemy contact did you make during the Bulge? You mention you were sort of in the middle of German lines. What was the nature of your enemy contact?

LG: We weren't part of the fighting units as such, we were clearing for them.

KP: But the lines were very fluid in the Bulge.

LG: Yes, in the Bulge. We didn't see any of the infiltrators or the people who put on, you know, American uniforms and all that stuff. We kept hearing about it, so it was very tight security.

KP: Where you were, your lines were pretty good.

LG: In Marche.

KP: You didn't all of a sudden look up and there was a German unit coming at you?

LG: Not until the counterattack, Christmas Eve. When it started on Christmas Eve, then there was a lot, because everything was very disorganized. No one knew exactly what was happening. We knew there was going to be a counterattack. No one had an idea exactly when. When we got in there, no one knew what was going on, where the Germans were, where the other American units were, whatever. After the counterattack, we had contact or we were then under fire every day, for I guess a week and a half or two weeks before we began to gain some ground and get out of there, get moving. After ... we crossed the Roehr, we were under fire, getting into the towns we were under constant fire. Everybody was for three or four days, before we broke out. Long tree lined roads going into a town, and we were pinned down along that road, hours just to get in.

KP: In a pinch, you were not thrown in as infantry?

LG: No, we were not. Now, in the Bulge that could have happened, because things were so mixed up, but it just didn't. I guess the others didn't know what to do with us, because we worked from a different authority. And quite frankly, our lieutenant, was not much of a military man. He really should not have been in command of a unit that was in action.

KP: Really?

LG: We had a buck sergeant and he was the man who ran things. The lieutenant was not fit, he just really wasn't. And he pretty much admitted it. He let the sergeant take care of things, because he didn't care for command or want to be there or anything.

KP: Was he 90 day wonder?

LG: I don't know. You quickly found out that this was not a man that you respected, and we didn't have much to do with him.

KP: So really the sergeant ran the unit.

LG: Right, and the one thing that I resent to this day, not long after the Bulge, he got the sergeant transferred out, and the sergeant was killed a few days later. We always hated him for that.

KP: Why did he have the sergeant transferred out?

LG: Just couldn't handle it. I guess it was the fact that he knew ... everybody was paying attention to the sergeant all the time. That was the way it was. Sergeant Smiley was the guy that ran our outfit.

KP: And when he was replaced, who became the sergeant?

LG: One of our guys was promoted. I'm a little dim on the timing here, but we went through the Bulge, it was after that. It was not long before the end of the war that he was killed. There was not much action but he was killed. And he'd been through a lot.

KP: You mentioned about food, and your desire to get tanker's food, for example. But what about your other amenities? For example, how many hot showers did you have during your time on the line?

LG: ... We went into the line in late October; the first shower would have been, to the best of my memory, the first shower would be after the Bulge.

TL: Really.

LG: When we were back out to Holland after we were leaving the Bulge. There was nothing in the Bulge. No, we weren't pulled off the line for any showers.

KP: So the few showers were very memorable.

LG: [laughter] Yeah, the fact that St. John wouldn't go to one was even more memorable, because he was the guy I slept with, you know. He was very reluctant to go for showers.

KP: Why do you think?

LG: He was just sort of contrary. He was a funny guy, contrarian. We used to kid about Princeton and Rutgers; he was a football player at Princeton.

LG: One of the guys in our unit was named Soapy Philips. He came from an Italian family, and anytime Soapy got packages from home, they sent pasta, and loaves of French or Italian bread, and I don't know how they did it, but inside of those loaves of bread would be a bottle of whiskey. We never knew if his mother baked the bread around it or what. Soapy was a good cook, and anytime he got a package we knew we had a good hot meal.

KP: And whiskey.

LG: And whiskey. Occasionally we were down into Germany and we would find some wine, but we didn't get any rations of that sort of thing, and like everyone else has told you I suppose, we would always look for fresh eggs. God that was [it], if we could find fresh eggs. ... About the only German I know is, Haben sie eir? and, of course, nobody had any, and you'd hear chickens flapping, but they didn't have any eggs. Anytime when you could get eggs, we'd cook them up. ... And in the diary you'll see, I write a fair amount about food, and when we had a good meal.

KP: Did you ever see chaplains when you were on the line?

LG: Did I?

KP: Did you ever see chaplains on the line? Did any men in your unit go to services?

LG: When we were training for the Roehr, the only thing that stands out is we had a large service. Easter must have been early that year, because it was sort of a pre-Easter service, I remember going to that. That was about it.

KP: That was it.

LG: I don't recall anything in the way of chaplains or services from the time we went into the line until we finished, except for that. ...

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

KP: You wrote to the Rutgers Alumni Magazine, and here is a quote: "You were living in good German houses, eating fresh eggs and chickens frequently, and getting a big kick out of seeing all of those liberated slave workers having a field day at the expense of their former owners." That must have ...

LG: ... When we crossed the Rhine and started across North Germany, that's what we were doing. We'd ride in trucks, as far as they wanted to go that day. We ran into a little bit of trouble a couple of times, but we'd just drive, get out, occupy some houses, find some good food, a lot of farm lands.

KP: One of the things I'm struck by is that you have obviously looked back at your history very consciously, and looked at divisional history, looked at other histories. Is it a shock to sort of read these divisional histories and then with your own memories? Because sometimes they agree and sometimes you might have looked at them and said, "Did we really do this?" Or "Did this really happen this way?" Because your visions often are very narrow.

LG: ... That's right. ... You just have a small opening of what's going on. I was reading the history of the Bulge, I was very impressed. I didn't know that the division had such a good record in the Bulge. We knew where we were, we knew what was going on, but I had no idea how it stacked up against the others, and it really is quite remarkable for its accomplishments. It accomplished its objectives more than the army had expected in the Bulge, it was really impressive.

KP: Because you were a relatively young unit.

LG: Yeah, right.

KP: And there was one unit that almost all surrendered.

LG: The 106th, ... they just went right past them and took them total. We went in for that purpose. I believe in the division history it says that by going into Marche, which was the objective, but they didn't know where the Germans were going to be, that headquarters thought

the division probably shouldn't go that far. But Bolling, General Bolling said, that's where we're going to go and we're going to hold. And he knew, it was a crossroads, and knew the Germans eventually would have to try to do something, because they couldn't concentrate on Bastogne and let Marche alone if they wanted to hit their objectives past us. And, he said, "We're going to hold them!" We didn't know that, we just knew we were in Marche, and we thought: "The damn fools, they've gone." ... Things were so confused. How come we were behind the German lines, it was a hell of a place to be, let's get out of here. ... The more I've read about the division, the more impressed I am with some of the things we accomplished, because we didn't see it. We knew that we were important, because we were the far left flank. At one point, the division was under British command. We were under Montgomery. And we were eating British rations, and the nightly cups of rum.

KP: So you got the rum when you were on British rations.

LG: Yeah, yeah.

KP: Which was probably a better part of the rations?

LG: No, it was like shellac. We couldn't drink it. We'd exchange it, but we didn't want their cigarettes. We give them the rum, you just couldn't drink it, jeez, it was awful stuff.

KP: What about the rest of their rations?

LG: Not much. ... There were different tins, but it was, you know, just cold meat and tins. I don't remember hot food. See they were professional soldiers, they looked upon us as a bunch of young draftees you know, that didn't know how to fight. They smelled. You could smell a British unit because they had the heavy wool uniforms and they never changed. I swear they hadn't changed the whole time they'd been in the army. And they had a strong odor. And most of them, I mean, if you found someone only with seven years, he was a relative newcomer. Twenty, 21 years. They had been through North Africa, all the way up, you know, these were total soldiers. In the evening, after they drank their rum, for fun they would take their vehicles or their tanks out to a ridge to draw German fire, just for the hell of it. We knew they were crazy, and either drunk or crazy. Because, they just couldn't stand sitting around. This was during that pause after the Bulge, when we were part of Montgomery's outfit.

KP: There is a lot of controversy now, and it was known in the higher up circles at the time that there was tension between Montgomery and Patton and Eisenhower, how much of that were you aware at the time?

LG: We knew a little bit, because we had always been told that Montgomery was a showboat. The word was that Eisenhower was having trouble keeping him under control. Patton, we didn't care for at all. Infantry, being infantry, you know infantry, goes in takes the ground, holds it, and plods along. Here this guy was running all over the place, and we thought, especially after the Bulge that we were going to have to save his tail, because he's going out there beyond his gasoline supplies. We just didn't think much of Patton, we thought he was a showboat. He got

all the attention, and the Ninth Army was not read about, and yet here we were holding that whole area.

KP: So it seems like you had a healthy enlisted man's skepticism of your commanders.

LG: No question, except ... we highly regarded our divisional commander. We would see him, he came to the front, we knew who he was. Just another little part of this, I don't know if it was divisional chief of staff or what position, but it was ... the Colonel at that time, Truman, nephew of the new president. It had been told to us directly, when the war was over in Europe we were coming back, everybody made plans, we were going to spend 30 days in the states, [and then] we were going to Japan. That just was gospel. In fact, I wrote Betty and she was making plans for the wedding while I was home. And the word was, and this could have been scuttlebutt, but it changed just like that and we were put on occupational duty, and the word was that Colonel Truman flew home to see his uncle, and the [plans of the] division were changed. Now, whether its true or not I don't know. ...

KP: But that was a scuttlebutt.

LG: That was the scuttlebutt, and we know it did change, because all of a sudden the orders were changed and we were not going to Japan; we stayed on occupation duty. And I think that, if I'm not mistaken, most of the division was broken up and didn't come back in any large units. There is an association, there's an annual reunion, but I don't think the division as such returned as a unit.

KP: Did you ever go to any reunions?

LG: No, I haven't.

KP: Have you stayed in touch with any one from the unit?

LG: I get the newspaper, I have my membership card and I'm a member, but I read who's there. This close friend of mine in Norfolk, Bob Dorey. We had a sergeant by the name of Erby, and he was no good down in Louisiana, and Bob Dorey, to this day, says he will not go to the reunion, because he reads the paper, and Erby never misses. "If I see him, I'll kill him." Because he got, Fred Tedi killed, he said he almost got me killed, because he ran from a foxhole and he said, "I'm gonna kill him," he said, "I know if I ever see him, I'll kill him." And I read in the paper, Erby goes to every reunion. He was a true redneck, I mean, a real illiterate kind of a guy. But I have no interest in them.

KP: For a long time it seems that you really were not that interested in the war, in a sense you didn't read a lot about it or talk a lot about it.

LG: I didn't talk much about it, my kids know about it. I've kept my mementos. It's a period of my life, I would not, you know, as everybody says, I wouldn't want to miss it, but I wouldn't want to do it again. I guess I accepted it that we were going to go. I had thought at one time about the

air corps and I really didn't want that. As I had told them earlier, the three of us wanted to get into the paratroopers, and they wouldn't let us. So I got transferred out. But I don't know. I read books about World War II, we have a cable system and I watch the program "Combat." My wife gets sick and tired of me watching "Combat," but I find it interesting. I didn't read much about our division until a few years ago. I really, I'd skimmed through it before, but not specifically about the 84th, but it was a heck of a lot better division than I had thought.

KP: By comparison to others?

LG: You know, you'd read about the First Division and the 29th, and the Fighting 69th and so forth, the 84th was supposedly a National Guard Division out of Illinois, and it went to Texas. But its record, once it got in there was very good, very good.

KP: Your image of the Germans, how shocked were you to find the nature of German atrocities?

LG: Very.

KP: Were you surprised at how severe they were?

LG: Oh, absolutely. Oh My Lord, ... we couldn't believe it. Could not believe it. We had seen some of the displaced persons and how poorly they were fed and how they were -- you know, we didn't know how badly they were treated, but they weren't fed well, and there were Polish and some others that we released, but I never would have believed. Never would have believed. In fact, we found this one area, we didn't really know what it was. We really couldn't comprehend what we were into, and we didn't stay there very long. I can't even remember exactly where it was, if I picked up the name someplace on a German map I might [be able to find] in that area. But it was a small area, a small place, but there were furnaces. To this day I can't comprehend. When I see the things about the Holocaust, I just can't believe that people would do that. Then, of course, it's true, we never found anyone who subscribed. Any Germans who subscribed anything going on, never, never. "Who did this?" We had some officers who were very arrogant. We had one, particularly one in this large prison camp that we had, he was a major, and with all the rank and insignia and the black leather coat ... to the ground and so forth, and he had his mistress with him, and she stayed with him, she was a beautiful woman, long hair, they allowed that, and he was in command of the prison camp on the German side. He was arrogant. One of our guys in the anti-tank platoon spoke fluent German, so he was our translator. And he heard him talking to them, he'd hear them talking to the other prisoners. But other than them, we saw a number of younger men, but then after the Bulge, we really saw an awful lot of old men who had no right being in any man's army. Poorly equipped when they were captured, poorly equipped and just should not have been doing anything like that. And they were so happy to give up. Oh yeah, they were just so happy. And then when they came over from the Elbe they were so happy, because they told us stories of the Russians and didn't bother taking prisoners. How true it was, I don't know. But they said, they were just mowed down.

KP: A student of mine did an honors thesis recently on how precarious the food situation was in Europe in 1945, 1946, into 1947 and 1948. Any recollections you have in 1945 on occupation and how the food situation was in Germany?

LG: No. [When] we took over farms, we found food that we hadn't had in so long. For a small unit that was ample. But gasoline and supplies, yes. There were vehicles all over the place abandoned for lack of fuel. And then in the Bulge, tanks, lots and lots of tanks, I mean it was a big armored activity down there. A lot of the tanks just ran out.

KP: I guess in terms of war that might be a good place to stop. Did you think of going back to school as a GI?

LG: Well I came back, I had a year to go, so I finished one year.

TL: We've got all this covered.

KP: Okay. Well thank you very much and I am sorry to miss the first half of the interview.

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

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