

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH LAURENCE F. HAEMER

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

WORLD WAR II * KOREAN WAR * VIETNAM WAR * COLD WAR

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

SHAUN ILLINGWORTH

and

NICHOLAS FERRONI

NEWTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA

FEBRUARY 7, 2003

TRANSCRIPT BY

DOMINGO DUARTE

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Mr. Laurence F. Haemer on February 7, 2003, in Newtown, Pennsylvania, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

Nicholas Ferroni: ... Nicholas Ferroni. Is it Haemer [pronounced "Hi-mer"] or Haemer [pronounced "Hay-mer"]?

Laurence Haemer: Haemer [pronounced "Hay-mer"].

NF: Since you are not a Rutgers College graduate, could you tell us how you found out about the program?

LH: Yes. I was reading an article in the *Trenton Times* and it covered ... what you were doing and it gave me the website. So, I sent into the website and they sent me the questionnaire, which I filled out, and then, you people called me and we made arrangements. That's it. [laughter]

NF: What did you think about the website?

LH: Well, I have to show you something about the website. Does this picture look familiar?

NF: That is on the front page.

LH: Yes, but this is the original. This has got the captions.

NF: That is the original.

LH: That's the original; a serial number, Moore was the photographer, that was the date, Signal Corps photo, and there it is. [laughter] I have 169 more.

NF: 169 more pictures.

LH: All between the initial landing and the surrender of the Germans, yes.

SI: What we are looking at is a reproduction of the famous photo of General Eisenhower addressing the 101st Airborne on the eve of the Normandy invasion. [Editor's Note: At the time of the interview, this photograph had been part of a collage on the home page of the Rutgers Oral History Archives website.]

NF: We would like to start off with your background, going back as far as your grandfather. You obviously have a very rich military history.

LH: Well, my grandfather was from Stuttgart, Germany, and he was in the army of the *Grossherzog*, a grand duke, of Wurttemberg. Germany, in those days, consisted of a bunch of individual states and Wurttemberg was actually part of something called Hessen, which is where the Hessians, [mercenaries used by the British military during the American Revolution], came from, and he was born in 1828 and he came to this country in 1848. He was ... twenty, I guess. We somewhere have the pay book. ... That's where I know it is, and his wife, my paternal

grandmother, came from Baden-Baden and I think they probably met here. She was a few years older than he was, five, actually, and they were married. He was a saddle maker in the Grand Duke's army, and so, when he came to the United States, he served, for at least sixty days, we don't know how long, in the Union Army, because ... he got his citizenship that way. ... Of course, when he got out of the Army, he became an upholsterer, because, after all, in a saddle, it's just upholstery, only you've got to do it on both sides, you see. So, they lived in New York, in Manhattan, and my father was born in 1856. ... He finished high school and decided to be a lawyer, and so, he sat with a lawyer, read law, did all the dirty work in the office, you know how it is. ... In those days, typewriters were just barely beginning to show up, and so, all documents, deed, wills, particularly, were handwritten and he was good at that. He was an engrosser. He actually did ... regular lithographic prints as a sideline. One of them was a label for a particular brand of cornstarch that he did. ...

NF: He was a graphic artist.

LH: He was a graphic artist in his spare time. He must have been pretty good, I think. So, he became a lawyer, passed the bar exam. ... My grandmother, the other grandmother and grandfather, came from Alsace. ... He was from Mulhouse and she was from ... what she always said was a village ... near Mulhouse, which is called Thann, T-H-A-N-N, and I've been back and it's pretty big for a village. [laughter] It has a church [La Collegiale Saint-Thiebaut] that is older than Strasbourg [Cathedral], very pretty. It was once the seat of a bishop, so, it was, at one time, temporarily at least, [for] a couple of hundred years, a cathedral. So, we've been back. ... In 1990, my wife and I and my sister went back for a week in ... Alsace and a week in the Black Forest area of Germany. So, anyway, she [my mother] was born in 1881, in Brooklyn, and her father was a machinist and they moved up to Connecticut and he was injured in an industrial accident and died of a brain tumor that was caused [by the accident]. So, my grandmother remarried and my [mother] ... grew up, most of the time, with a stepfather, and she has a sister and a brother. ... She went through grammar school, and then, went out to work for various things that they had made. They'd worked at home. He was a printer for one of the New York papers, ... her stepfather, and they worked at home. It must have been a really tough life, from what I've heard, and they made jewelry boxes, you know. So, when he died, he died without leaving a will, and so, it was a question over who got what out of the estate, and that's how she met my father. He was the lawyer on her side and I guess he did a pretty good job. I guess he got ... pretty much all of what was in the estate, and so, they were married. There was, therefore, a big difference in the age. ... He's twenty-five years older than she was, and, in fact, he was the same age as my grandmother. She was born in 1856 and so was he.

NF: That was sort of common at that time.

LH: Oh, yes, it wasn't unusual, particularly, as I say. ... My grandfather, who I never knew, served in the French Army, in the War of 1870, [the Franco-Prussian War], and then, he came over. He had been married. ... My grandmother met him on the way back to Europe. She was going back for a visit, after she'd grown up and she was of marriageable age, and his wife died while he was in Alsace, and so, I guess, after he came back and she came back, they married. ... So, it [my mother's household] was a weird, kind of a weird, household. My father's mother didn't speak English, or wouldn't speak English. She'd lived in the country for many years, you

know, but she never would learn English. My [maternal] grandmother, fortunately, spoke English, French, Alsatian and German. So, they were all living together when my mother married. ...

NF: It must have been an interesting household.

LH: Interesting household, yes. So, my father's mother died before I was born. She lived to be ninety, but she had diabetes, which couldn't be treated in those days. My mother's mother lived to be eighty. She died of a heart attack. So, they were living in Jamaica, Long Island, ... for the first two years after I was born. ... I have two brothers and a sister. The sister still lives in New York. She's going to be ninety-four in May.

NF: You are the youngest of four, correct?

LH: I'm the youngest of four. The rest; there's my sister, [referring to a photograph]. That was taken last year, July. So, she lives alone. She volunteers at a hospital. She lives up on West 76th Street and has a ball. She's made friends, ... younger, because most of her original friends have died off.

NF: She looks wonderful for ninety-four years old.

LH: She does. You should see her. She'll walk you right into the ground.

NF: May I ask you another question about your grandfather?

LH: Sure.

NF: One of the things that stood out is that he served for both the Grand Duke and for the North in the Civil War. Did your grandfather ever mention how they varied, or share his memories of his service there and in the Civil War?

LH: ... No. The only reason we know that ... [he served], I don't think he ever really mentioned much of it, about it, as I say, it's the pay book [that] is the evidence that he was in the Army, and we had a Civil War blanket which was his. Apparently, it was his, and ... it's in a quilt now, somewhere. My sister probably still has it. So, he never said anything. Of course, he was dead long before I was born and, you know, the questions never came up, you know.

NF: Between your father and your grandfather.

LH: ... No.

NF: I was curious about what he was involved with post-war. With his service, I thought he was a military man by trade.

LH: No, he was a saddle maker by trade, but, as I say, as far as I know, the Hessians were drafted, but they were a professional army. Somebody ought to straighten out the website on

them; the Trenton Barracks had a thing on the web ... and they have it all fouled up. They were professional soldiers, the Hessians, [that] they got through, I forget who, was a relative of the King [of England]. ... I think he was the ruler of the Landgrave [of Hesse-Kassel], ... the whole big area of Hesse, which included about everything but Prussia in the north and ... Bavaria, who had their own king, Wurttemberg and Baden in the south, but the whole center of Germany was Hesse. That's why they came from different places. ... To get back, there's no indication as to [what he did in the Army]. ... I know he supposedly served in the Union Army, to get his citizenship. Whether that was the cause of it or whether it was a result, you know, that it was convenience, I don't know. ...

SI: Your mother's father was the one that served in the French Army in 1870.

LH: Yes. Her father and her stepfather both had served in 1870 in the French Army. They were ... tremendously politically French. Culturally, they're German. ... It was unusual. My grandmother, when she was a little girl, she was nine years old when she came here and she'd been to school in Alsace. ... The French, at that time, taught them in French in the morning and in German in the afternoon, and so, that's how she learned, because they spoke [Alsatian]. Alsatian is a dialect of German. ... I've been there and I don't see much difference. They said that my father couldn't understand them, but I don't know. [laughter]

SI: What part of New York did they settle in?

LH: ... My father's family lived up in Manhattan somewhere, and then, they moved to Brooklyn. They lived in East New York. My mother's family lived down around Gates Avenue, near where the Myrtle Avenue crosses the Jamaica El Line, and they ran a delicatessen for awhile. ... My step-grandfather must have been a guy that changed [jobs often], because he had, originally, you know, a full-time job as a printer, originally, and then, he went into these other ... things, and who knows?

NF: Was it a German community that you basically were raised in?

LH: No, I don't think so. No, I don't think either [one was]. Certainly, when they moved to Brooklyn, and, when they were married, moved out to Jamaica, that definitely was not a German community. That was, you know, just people. [laughter]

NF: At that time, ethnicities used to stay close together, especially as they migrated into the country.

LH: Oh, yes. ... See, when I was two, they moved back to East New York and Brooklyn, because my father had a law office in New York, and so, that was a long commute and it was on the Long Island Railroad and expensive. So, his law business kind of went down the drain during ... World War I and things were not really good at home, and so, they moved into Brooklyn, where he could get to New York for a nickel, and was more convenient. ... It got to a point where, and I was about four or five, my mother went out to work. She worked in a mill, a sweater mill, ... joining sweaters. So, it was a little bit of a tough thing, because of the age

difference and the fact that she was supporting a guy that didn't really appreciate that. I mean, he appreciated the result, but he didn't like the idea, you know what I mean.

NF: Your father had a high school diploma, which was probably rare at that time.

LH: Yes.

NF: You mentioned earlier that your grandfather was in the upholstery business. Did your father actually not need to be in the workforce at that time, as most people were?

LH: I guess not. I guess the upholstery business must have been pretty good and I don't know much about his life at all. It wasn't discussed particularly at home and I don't know how he died. ... I could look [it] up. I'm sure that the record will show when he died, but I'm sure the [family] Bible, somewhere, includes that. ... He was so much older than my mother, you know, [that] my father's father was much older, so that it was sort of a complete other generation. ...

SI: What kind of cultural traditions did your family retain? Did they retain any?

LH: Well, in their cooking, see, my mother went to work and my grandma, her mother, did the cooking and brought us up, and it was, more or less, German-type cooking. It was Alsatian, you know. They do have some things that are different, but it's basically [German]. Gradually, of course, it gets Americanized, to a degree, and, of course, ... most of this took place after 1929. It was the Depression and things were tough all over, and so, we never were in want, but, I mean, you know, ... there never was any cushion for it.

NF: Why did your father pursue law?

LH: I don't know. I have no idea why he pursued law. He was, in some ways, a hard man to get along with. We used to play games, particularly checkers, with him and he used to hate to lose, you know, and how a lawyer could ever survive hating to lose, I don't know. He had started out doing both criminal and civil law and, by the time I was a kid, he was only into civil cases.

NF: Was he ever involved in politics at all?

LH: No.

NF: At the time, law and politics usually went hand-in-hand

LH: No. He knew some important people, but he never went into politics. He had problems getting along with people. I mean, he changed churches a couple of times, you know. ... He had strong opinions and he didn't like it if you didn't have the same.

NF: I am German, too, so, I am stubborn by nature, too. [laughter] The fact that your mother was a Republican and your father was a Democrat, did that ever raise any controversy in the household?

LH: My wife was a Democrat and I was a Republican. We cancelled each other out. [laughter]

NF: How did your parents meet?

LH: He was the lawyer for the case. He was the lawyer that took the case when her stepfather died. ... He didn't have a will.

NF: He handled the estate.

LH: He handled the estate. He had one sort of permanent client. He was [on the] committee for a woman who had been committed to an insane asylum, because of what ... in these days would be called schizophrenia. ... In those days, there was no treatment for it and they didn't let them wander around the way they do now, you know, and so, she spent, oh, at least until 1936, when he died, in this hospital. He took care of her. ... She had property. ... The State of New York used to collect a dollar a day, if you had any money at all, and he would go visit her and buy clothes for her and things like that. ... For a long time, she had the idea that she was going to get out, but, finally, he convinced her that she wasn't, and so, then, he sold off the furniture. ... He'd gotten that because he was a lawyer for her uncle, who had been her guardian. She was a dress or hat designer, I don't know which, and she suddenly started acting peculiar, you know.

SI: You were born during the First World War.

LH: Yes.

SI: There was a huge backlash against Germans and anything German in America. Did that affect your family at all?

LH: [laughter] Only a relative that was stupid enough to hang out a German [flag], wash the German flag and hung it out, but, no, by that time, see, both my mother and father had been born in the United States. ... In Brooklyn, they changed Hamburg Street to Wilson. [laughter] Well, during World War II, the French changed the Avenue de Tokyo to the Avenue de New York [in Paris].

NF: Do not forget sauerkraut to "victory cabbage," was it?

SI: Yes.

LH: Victory cabbage. Yes, well, they didn't know how to make sauerkraut. Anyway, I find out the only people that know how to make sauerkraut right are the Alsations. ... My grandmother didn't have the recipe, I guess.

NF: What was your childhood like, basically, growing up in New York?

LH: Well, I was the last of four, see, and there's five years between me and Chester. ... He died last year, right after his ninetieth birthday. He had cancer. ... Robert, my other brother, he served in the Army during World War II and he was also in the Signal Corps, but he was in the

Pacific and he was on a communications ship. So, he went through a lot of problems and he came back and he took care of my mother. He never married. He took care of my mother until he was killed in an automobile accident, and then, she died shortly thereafter.

NF: Did you and your brother, Robert, ever talk about how your experiences varied, you being in Europe and him being in the Pacific?

LH: Not much. I mean, he used to tell stories. He was in Hawaii, up in the camp that's up in the hills there, and he said, every time the recruits would come in, ... they'd bet them that it would rain within an hour. He said, "We never lost." [laughter] So, you could see what Hawaii was like. I can't think of the name of that for you.

NF: Getting into your military history, you were obviously drafted February 26, 1943.

LH: It was an interesting story, if you want to hear it.

NF: We would love to hear it.

LH: I was working for a chemical company in Brooklyn at the time that made textile specialties, and the Army came to them in, ... the year before, sometime the year before that, and wanted them to make napalm, which is an aluminum soap. It was at that time, what they used, and it was ... in the province of what they [the company] were doing, and so, I was interviewed by the FBI and fingerprinted, and then, got security clearance to make the [napalm], you know. ... All they gave us was the specifications of what it was supposed to meet, the composition [and] the specifications of what it was supposed to meet. ...

NF: Did you have any idea of what it was to be used for?

LH: Oh, we knew what it was to be used for, because it was part of the testing, was to mix it up with enough high-test gasoline [laughter] and see if it met the specifications, which were viscosity and so forth. ... So, I mixed up a batch in the lab. It's not a stoichiometric proposition. It's three fatty acids. Well, one's petroleum acid. ... That's where the thing [name] came from; it's naphthenic acid, palmitic acid, from coconut oil, coconut oil, actually. ... So, it was *naphthenic* and *palmitic* that got the napalm. ... It's an aluminum soap, but it's higher in aluminum than what you would normally get, so, you have to add an excess of alkali. Otherwise, you're going to get too low of ... aluminum content. So, I figured all that out, made the batch. The batch met the specifications and, because of this, I get a draft notice. See, I'm married by that time and I'm in 3-A, you know. So, I take it down to the boss and he [was the] owner of the company and he makes an appeal to the draft board, that I'm doing essential work, and so, they said, [Mr. Haemer makes a "Bronx cheer"], "Won't give it to you." So, then, he goes to the head of the Selective Service in New York, who I think was [John J.] (McElligott?), the Fire Commissioner. He says, "We're getting close to ... his draft date and, still, ... he's doing this work." ... We'd passed all the tests but the aging test, which was [a sample] ... sealed in a tube and kept in hot water for a couple of weeks, you know. So, he goes to him and he says, you know, "What can you do for him?" So, he sends a telegram. The head of the Selective Service in New York said he sent a telegram to this bunch, asking for, you know, a review of the thing,

and they turned him down, see, because the draft board had the final word. So, I go off into the Army and, when I get back, I go into the draft board. I am told ... [that] all three of them, the lawyer, the bartender, and I don't know who the other guy was, were in jail, because they'd been selling deferments. [laughter] So, there it is.

NF: What was basic training like for you?

LH: Well, I was in the Air Force and that was the first basic training. I've been through three, all together. First basic training, it was tough. It wasn't bad for the Air Force, because they had rainy day programs. ... Sheppard Field is in a lousy part of Texas. It's ... right across the border from Oklahoma and Oklahoma blows down Monday, Wednesday and Friday and Texas blows back on the other days of the week. So, actually, dust, dirt, would accumulate around the barracks, you know, there'd be a big pile of dirt.

NF: Equivalent to snow here.

LH: Well, yes, equivalent to snow here. ... The drill field was always dusty, so, they put down a lot of calcium chloride, and then, of course, it got to be a little on the muddy side. ... The commandant of Sheppard Field, at that time; what's his name? He was the guy that was in charge of the Air Force base in Pearl Harbor on December the 7th. ... His reward for being stupid is to get to Sheppard Field. [laughter]

SI: Colonel Claggart?

LH: Claggart, yes. You'll find him in the books, and the extended order drill, you know, takes place in an open field. You run and fall down and crawl and all the rest. That [field] was full of burrs and mesquite trees and cactus of various kinds. The forage was so poor down there that the milk in the mess hall looked like skim milk. I mean, it was blue. [laughter] That was whole milk, Texas style. So, in the course of this, I broke a bone in my foot and I didn't know it was a broken bone. It just hurt like mad and I went there and they said, "Oh, you need arch supports." So, they made me arch supports and that didn't help. So, I went back again. ... I went back on sick call about four times and, finally, they said, "Well, maybe we ought to take an X-ray." This takes two weeks from the first [visit], and so, they take an X-ray, say, "Hey, you've got a ... march fracture." ... I guess it's ... like a "green stick" thing; it's not really broken, but it's cracked. So, they put me in a cast and put me in the hospital for a month. It wasn't bad in the hospital, ... except we didn't have enough crutches to go around. I was in the orthopedic ward, you know, all the guys who were getting their elbows fixed up and their shoulders repaired, so that they could fly a plane, be pilots, you see, and the guy that was in charge of the ward, he was really a nice guy. I mean, he was well-liked. ... They were gambling one night, you know, playing crap on one of the beds, and whoever was officer of the day came around and he had them all locked up, and the only place they could lock them up was in the VD ward. [laughter] ... They were afraid to touch anything. So, the guy that comes around the next morning, he says, "You guys are stupid. If you want to play, shoot crap ... or play poker, just don't put any money on the table, you know. This guy," this guy that's on the OD that night, "he's a nut." ... The nurse was the laziest one I ever knew. She had everybody [working]. All the guys that were ambulatory went around taking temperatures and pulses. [laughter] She sat. I don't know what

she did, but she just sat around, but the food was good. In fact, I gained so much weight, I would skip one meal a day, usually breakfast. The only bad problem was that, one day, they come around and they say, "Okay," they cut the cast off and they said, "Back to duty." ... You know, they didn't know what rehab was. So, that was a little tough, but, at that point, basic had finished up, so, I had lost a month of basic, and so, I never did any qualifying with weapons. I had never fired a rifle in that basic thing, and I never fired the machine gun or any of the other stuff. So, I got promoted to corporal and assigned to the Chemical Warfare School for gas non-commissioned officers, so [that] I could transport stuff for the Air Force around, to drop on anybody that you needed. So, this turned out to be basic training all over again, in the Chemical Warfare Service, and so, I went through the whole thing, and, there, we did most of everything.

NF: That was my next question. I was going to ask you about the gas warfare camp.

LH: ... You know *Beetle Bailey*?

SI: Yes.

LH: That's Camp Swampy. [laughter] I'm serious, that's Camp Swampy. [Editor's Note: Mr. Haemer is comparing Camp Siebert in Alabama to the fictional Camp Swampy in the *Beetle Bailey* comic strip.] ... It's a flat swamp. They picked it because the average wind velocity is five miles an hour and it's great for laying down smokescreens, and that's what they mostly trained [in]. ... It was a segregated camp. They had black guys at one end and white guys at the other. ... A lot of the black guys got into smoke generator companies and the smoke generator was something that some college professor thought up, [it] was a very good smoke generator. ... They had just a regular oil burner, ordinary oil burner that you'd have in a house, and they had a drum-like structure which had a coil in it that would stand high temperatures. ... They'd pump water and fuel oil into the coil and they'd heat it up to about 900 F [Fahrenheit]. ... Of course, the water boiled. I don't know what the pressure was, but, as it exited, ... there was a nozzle at the top of this thing and they just kept pumping. ... I don't know what the ratio of water to oil was anymore, but it came out perfectly clear, and then, the oil condensed into very, very tiny droplets and you could lay down a mile-long smokescreen. When they got to North Africa, they discovered they made one mistake; they didn't have any way to hide the smoke generators. So, the Germans would just fly down the smoke column and shoot up whatever was at the end. They lost a lot of guys.

SI: One thing that we always hear about the Army is, if a cook and a truck driver were drafted, they would make the truck driver a cook and the cook a truck driver. They would not match people up at what they were good at, but it seems like this was sort of a perfect match for you, because you had worked with chemicals.

LH: Yes. Well, wait until you hear what happens. So, after about ten weeks or so, whatever it was, of basic training, then, we're going to go to school, which is the same one-week course repeated twice, which is all about how to handle poison gases and so forth. ... At this point, they'd come out and they say, "The Army's looking for engineers," and I had been going to Brooklyn Poly, studying chemical engineering, ... ever since 1934, you understand, at night. I mean, ... working the daytime and going to school at night's a rough proposition. ... For the first

seven years, I worked for a bank in New York. ... So, I said, "Well, if they're looking for engineers, I'm their guy." So, I applied for an outfit that was called the Army Specialized Training Program, and there's a book about the Army Specialized Training Program and you might be interested in looking into it. ... I don't agree with everything he says in there. ...

NF: *Scholars in Foxholes*, by Louis Keefer.

LH: Well, I'll tell you how they got in foxholes in the course of the next few minutes. So, I apply and there were about fifteen or twenty of us in this company. We were in a company. See, the Air Force was nice. They had central mess halls, automatic dishwashers and everything else. Chemical Warfare Service, it was company mess. I remember the day they had stew and there were ten people at a table and there were a whole bunch of tables. There were, what? two hundred men, I guess, in a company, and the end guy was the runner. Whoever sat on the end seat, he went up and got the stuff. He got back with a bowl of stew; it's only got eight pieces of meat in it. He goes back for seconds and there ain't nothing but gravy. So, two guys had bread and gravy that day for lunch. [laughter] The only time I really had a good meal was when I was on KP and they cooked spare ribs, and we started eating spare ribs about eleven o'clock. [laughter]

NF: What was your experience with the accelerated programs in college like?

LH: Well, that's the thing. I was picked, and ... practically all of the guys that had been sent from the Air Force to the Chemical Warfare [Service] for school were picked for this new program. So, I don't know what the Air Force did, but it kept me out of the harbor at Bari, where I probably would have been and where they bombed the convoy of munitions, among which were chemical warfare agents, specifically, lewisite, which is a vesicant, like mustard gas, isn't really much of a problem. [Editor's Note: Mr. Haemer is referring to the accidental release of poison gas during a German bombing raid on the Allied-held port of Bari, Italy, on December 2, 1943.] It's a nuisance, because ... you get blisters all over, but, unless you inhale a lot of it, or a little bit over a long period of time, ... then, of course, the blisters'll form in your lungs, then, you're a dead duck, but, on the other ones, ... it disables people. ... In the course of time there, some smart lieutenant decided the way to contaminate an area; the standard way was to put ... what was supposed to be mustard gas, in most cases, it was just cheap molasses, it was the same color, ... in one-gallon cans and you took primer cord and there was a little set of wires on the back, you took a hunk of primer cord, put it there, on that, and you ran the primer cord to the next one and all the way down, and you did that in a field. Then, somebody'd put a detonator at the end and blew the whole thing up, and this guy, he's going to be smart. He's got real mustard gas now and he's going to do it the easy way. The decontamination method for mustard gas was calcium hypochlorite. You made a slurry, a solution, of calcium hypochlorite and you sprayed it all over, to decompose the mustard gas, and that was it. So, they had these big redwood tanks to make ... the slurry, and this idiot decides he'll put the mustard gas, which is a liquid, of course, into the tank and he'll go out and he'll contaminate the field. When he's finished, he's got some leftover, so, he pumps it into the stream. ... Downstream, there's another company that's in there washing their clothes and bathing. ... So, they had about seventy-five casualties who came down with blisters in one of the most inconvenient places, [laughter] over their ankles, over their rear end or whatever they happened to have in the water at that time. So, they got rid ... of the

stupid, idiot lieutenant. They charged him for the truck, because they had to burn the damn [truck]. ... Lewisite is an arsenic compound and, when they blew up the convoy, it got into the harbor and these Italians, who were the fishermen and so forth, kept coming in with these blisters and the Italians asked the Air Force and I guess they told them it was mustard gas. They didn't tell them it was lewisite and, after about five days, the Italians started dying off. Of course, the guys that were ... on the convoy ship, they died in the explosion, but they were very much afraid of lewisite. ... We never saw any. They had bottles of charcoal with these gases in it and they'd pass them around, so [that] you know what they smelled like, and a lot of them aren't gases. Adamsite isn't a gas. Adamsite's an aerosol of solid aerosol. ... It's another arsenic compound. It's not terribly poisonous, but it'll make you throw up. ... So, the idea was, it was a small particle and it would get through the filter in the normal gas mask, and then, you'd throw up and you'd have to take the gas mask off, and then, they'd have the other [gases], phosgene or something like that, that would kill you, see. ... So, the Army built their gas masks, the US gas masks, with a coating of soot on the outside. Asbestos paper was what they used for a filter, and then, they would coat it with soot, so [that] it'd plug up all the little holes, and then, that would filter out Adamsite, but chemical warfare agents are of more danger to the people that own them than the people ... they're used against, in most cases.

NF: When you were in training, when you were actually preparing for gas warfare, were there any incidents at the camp?

LH: Everybody had small blisters. You couldn't go through Camp Siebert without getting into something, but, yes, it was a nuisance. It was a blister and it went away after awhile. ... When they had the seventy-five, they divided them in half and, half of them, they punctured the blisters and did this and that and the other, and, the other half, they did nothing, and they all came out the same. [laughter] They all survived, ... but some of them were [very injured], you know.

NF: Was there a reason why the project was terminated in 1944?

LH: Oh, the ASTP project. Yes, well, let me get through a little bit further on that. We were all accepted and we were sent down to University of Alabama, where they were going to sort us out into what grade we belonged and everything else. So, I had a pretty good background. So, first thing was, the only thing they wanted at that point in time was electrical engineers. So, I said, "It's better than the infantry." So, I signed up for electrical engineering and I had enough courses to get into the top class, but the top class they had was term five and never got higher than five. The other guys wound up in terms one, two, three and four, and I got sent to ... University of Oklahoma in Norman. ... We did a semester's work in three months, and so, it looked like I was going to have almost a year in one place, you see. So, my wife put the furniture in storage and came down, gave up the apartment we were living in in Brooklyn and came down to stay with me in Norman. We rented a room in a house and she got a job with a company in Oklahoma City and the trolley line runs up, it's one of these dinky trolleys, runs all the way up to Oklahoma City. It's about thirty miles, I guess, and, after awhile, she got tired of that. There's a naval base, at that time, a flight school, the "North Naval Base," which still exists as an airport, [Norman Naval Air Station, now the University of Oklahoma Max Westheimer Airport] and the "South Naval Base," [Norman Naval Air Technical Training Center], which was an aircraft mechanic school and a Marine training base. ... When I got shipped to the University of Oklahoma, they

didn't have any space for us yet. These things get fouled up. So, I spent a week or so out at the naval base, living with the Navy, and then, they finally got the girls out of the girls' dorm and they moved us into the girls' dorm and, eventually, they built a barracks just for us, a nice brick [building], two men to a room and a real nice thing. ... That happened in the second term, and then, that's when it all got wiped out. First semester ended around Christmas and they gave us a week's pass. My wife's grandmother and aunt, her father's mother and sister, lived in Milwaukee. We took the train up to Milwaukee and spent the week with them, which was wonderful, because Milwaukee was a great town, as good as New York, which was also a very great town. So, anyway, when we came back, everything went on. I went on to term six, went through term six. ... I don't know if you're familiar with the Army General Classification Test scoring; well, these guys were all over 130. They were all easy to get along with. You got together, we had five guys on a thing, ran the experiment, went over to the union, wrote up the report, all together, you know. ... Then, you'd play billiards or do whatever you want, see, and the only tables they had were snooker tables and snooker is a pain in the neck. It's got extra balls and little pockets and it'll drive you crazy, but that's all right. [laughter] Anyway, so, everything was going fine, got through term six, [they] said, "You can have a three-day pass." So, where can you go in three days, Denver, there's no sense going back to Milwaukee, or Dallas? So, Dallas was a pretty decent town. We went down to Dallas, stayed in a hotel in Dallas.

NF: You and your wife?

LH: Me and my wife, and I borrowed forty bucks from one of the guys, fifty bucks, whatever it was. ... Fortunately, I gave him a check for the money and we get back, we're all alone. Everybody's gone. They're all down in the infantry, "the Jap trap." They're down in Texas, every single one of them, except the fifteen of us that wound up in Kansas State College and the other fifteen of the term five who wound up someplace else. I don't know where they went. At the end of the term seven, which we had at Kansas State, which is really a great place; it looks like a prison on a rainy day, which is when we got into [it], because the stadium looks like a jail. I don't know if you've ever seen the place, but Manhattan, [Kansas], wasn't a bad town and we got a room there and stayed there. ... By that time, my wife was pregnant with our first daughter, but she worked, still. She worked for ... a cavalry post in Norman. I'll think of the name of it eventually. She worked for [the] armored cavalry, it was in a camp that had been set up there, as a bookkeeper. ... That's what she was. She'd worked for the Navy as a bookkeeper. She'd worked in the ship's service as a bookkeeper. So, then, at the end of that semester, they wiped out the program and the only people that ever finished the program were the veterinarians, because they needed them for meat inspection, but the rest of us, we were sent to the Signal Corps.

NF: What was your training like when you first went into the Signal Corps?

LH: Well, by that time, I had about a little more than half of my chemical engineering degree training and ... the equivalent of seven semesters of electrical engineering, and so, they said, "Well, you've got all this electrical engineering ...

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

NF: I will repeat the question. What were your initial thoughts on being assigned to the Signal Corps?

LH: Well, because I had the electrical engineering background, they sent me to [the] Signal Corps and it was going to be two weeks of basic training, and then, they were going to send us to a school. ... So, without thinking too well, I put in for fixed station radio repair, because I'm afraid of heights and I never realized [that] I would be up climbing poles, see, but I didn't think of it at the time. So, the good Lord took care of me. They ... called me down one day and gave me a test on photography, because I had put down photography as a hobby. I had been a photographer, and so, I took the test and it was a real snap. I mean, you know, if you knew anything at all about photography and chemistry, you would [have] no problem with this thing. So, I had a two-week furlough, and then, I'm coming back to go to school. ... I go home to New York and it was [the] Fourth of July, I remember that, because we got in early, and I can't imagine ... getting [in] on the "Pennsy" [Pennsylvania] Railroad early. But, Signal Corps is in Neosho, [Missouri], Camp Crowder, ... which is full of blackberries and rocks, but I get back and they say, "Oh, you're not going to radio school. You're going to the photo lab technician's school in Astoria," and I'm thinking, "Oh, yes, Astoria ... is in Oregon," you know. "Oh," he said, "no, Astoria, Long Island." I'm going home. [laughter] My wife is living with her sister out in Queens Village, and so, we get to New York and the school is on 34th Street and 35th Avenue in Long Island City. It was what had been the old ... Paramount indoor soundstage. At that time, it was the largest indoor soundstage in the United States, anyway. ... They'd put three barracks in the backlot and they had converted part of the rooms into a darkroom and a negative developing area, you know, ... for printing photographs, and so, we had beds in a hotel called Hotel America, over on West 43rd Street, Manhattan. So, you had to take the subway back and forth. Well, I never slept in that bed. The only time I ever slept in the hotel was one night when I was charge of quarters. Whereas the Chemical Warfare Service ignored the fact that I was a corporal and I wound up with all kinds of lousy duty, the Signal Corps is "rank happy" and a corporal can only take charge of a squad. ... We rented some space from Con Ed [Consolidated Edison, the New York City area power utility]. We had to go up and clean it up. I took the guys up and told them how to clean, you see, [laughter] much improved. So, I always thanked the Air Force for making me a corporal. ... They gave us each a thirty-five-millimeter camera, Kodak, which was a monstrosity. If you were lucky, you got a Contax or a Leica, but, most of the time, you got the Kodak, which was a pain in the neck, [you get a] roll of film, go out and take pictures. So, this afternoon, you develop pictures and print pictures, you see. You have to have something to do. So, it was a good course, very good course, ... and there were a couple of WACs in the course and mostly men, and I don't remember how many there were in a class. ... The odd thing was, you came in in the morning and you walk into this soundstage and, there, on the first day, I walk in and there's a jungle, nine feet tall, you see, and there's ropes from there up to the third floor. They had a small theater, because they had used it for showing rushes [dailies, rough cuts of film], you know, and they had another studio in the basement and they had a small area walled off for their optical stuff, you know, where you've got models instead of full battleships. You've got models in a tank of water, that sort of stuff. I never got into there. They wouldn't let you in there, and they had a mess hall and, as I say, I was a corporal, so, ... I didn't have to be in the mess hall. ... They'd gotten a lot of people from Hollywood. ... One of the directors, who had just been drafted not very much earlier, his last picture was opening on Broadway and he's on KP that night, and the officer came in and said, "Oh, that was a wonderful

picture." He saw it. [laughter] It was odd. The director and [the others] were all Army people, whoever was directing the photography [unit]. They were making training films, mostly, and they were editing all of the combat photography and the movie photography. It was all silent. The Navy had a Hollywood camera on one of their ... aircraft carriers, but, what they did with it, I don't know. A Mitchell [motion picture camera] is about the slowest thing for taking combat photography you ever saw. It's a big thing and, in order to focus it, you have to rack the thing over and look through the ground glass, and you finally get it all set up; then, you rack the camera back, and then, you take your pictures. You know, this is great for Hollywood, but this ain't going to work out in the [field]. They also got most of the Kodachrome. The Army got nothing. So, all of the combat photography that was taken, either in the Pacific or the ETO, by the Signal Corps was all done with handheld Eyemo cameras, spring-wound, [that] take a hundred-foot roll, and then, that was all dubbed with the required noises, spliced, dubbed, and put together and worked into [a film]. ... You walked down the corridors in that mezzanine and it sounded like you were really in the middle of the war.

SI: Was it just the technical people from Hollywood who were there?

LH: No. ... All of the grips, all of the technical people that you'd have, you know, to arrange the scenery and all the rest, to paint the scenery, to make the scenery, all of that was civilians. So, you had a liaison guy, who the Army guy would tell what to have his civilian guys do, and he would tell the civilian guys what to do. How they ever got a movie made, I don't know, but it was very discouraging, as far as ever seeing movies again, because it's so phony. I can remember where they had an interior, well, the whole thing, of a railroad car, windows all made out of plywood, with the rivets, with little, you know, rounded pieces of dowel stuck where the rivets are, everything else. ... They had it up on a thing, so [that] they could rock it, like it was moving, and then, they had ... several sheets of plywood made into a circle, with windows cut in them and a flood lamp in the middle, a big thousand-watt light in the middle, and they rotated that, so that it would look like the train was moving, [laughter] and they rocked it, you know. ... They'd paint right up to the edge. ... From here on, it was plywood, you know; from there, it looked like a railroad car. [laughter] A couple of the guys got into one of the movies they filmed there. I don't know what they were filming. They were playing marbles out-of-doors and these guys got to play marbles and get their pictures taken, but it was a nice area. As I say, every morning, you went out for a couple of hours and went around taking pictures of anything you saw, and then, you'd come back and print them up. ... At that time, my wife was getting ready to deliver the baby and we were looking for an apartment and we found out that ... [there] was a housing project in Brooklyn that was open to GIs. It's right down near the [Brooklyn] Navy Yard, and one whole end of it was always taken over by the Navy, for their people, but there were several buildings that the Army had. So, whoever was in charge of it, and I don't know what his name was, I went in to him and he says, "Well," he says, "it's supposed to be only for cadre, but," he says, "I'll put you down," because I was a student. I was going out, and so, he knew it and he put me down. Well, we got the apartment in there, which really made it very nice, because she was living with some friends of hers. ... I mean, they could be really nice to you when they ... felt like it. I think the infantry might have been a little different. [laughter]

NF: What were your thoughts when you first found out you were assigned to the 3908th Signal Service Battalion in Paris? You must have missed your wife and your daughter, who was about four months when you actually left. What was that experience like?

LH: Yes. ... I was in charge of the movement out to [Fort] Indiantown Gap, [Pennsylvania]. This is the Army. So, we all had a furlough, I don't know how long it was, and so, they all assembled at ... Penn Station at the right time and we had lunch, I guess it was, at the; that's a real nice restaurant. ... It was a branch of the one downtown, opposite where I worked in the bank, can't think of the name of it anymore. It was a very nice restaurant, and we got on the train to go out to Indiantown Gap and we get to Indiantown Gap and that's another week or two, getting all your equipment together, and so forth, and so on. ... Then, we were shipped from there up to Camp Shanks, which is on the Hudson River, just north of New Jersey, and, there, there were a whole bunch of Italian POWs that were doing all the work. ... The Italian POWs had given their parole officer a promise not to escape and they were allowed to go down to New York on passes, and so, they were having a ball. [laughter] I mean, they were being really taken care of by their relatives and what-have-you, you know. ... We were there for a couple of days, and then, they took us down and brought us to New York and they put us on the *Queen Mary*, and I don't know if you know how things were then. Up until 1943, the *Queen Mary* was running convoy and it was a waste of time, really, because ... she couldn't go any faster than the rest of the convoy. One day, there's an alert. There's a German submarine, supposedly, out on the flank of the convoy and there's a cruiser on her portside and the cruiser cuts across in front of the bow. ... Somebody got their signals mixed and she cut the cruiser right in half and they lost, oh, I guess everybody on the cruiser, and so, after that, they ran her alone, without a convoy. ... She could hold fifteen thousand without doubling up. She could hold a few more if they'd double up, and I think the real limit was how much food they had to get her across. They put us onboard and they kept fueling her and everything else, and then, at noon, they took her out into the middle of the ... Hudson River and they left her there for a few minutes, like fifteen or twenty minutes. Then, they brought her back into the thing and finished loading, and then, that night, we were not allowed on deck at night, and they slipped out of New York Harbor that night. ... We were in the aft tourist lounge and I got there first and I got the middle bunk. There were five bunks. The bottom one was bad, because all you could smell was feet. The top one was bad, because, if you forgot and sat up, you'd hit your head on the deck above you, and so, they were just metal frames with canvas strung across them and you had to place stuff between them, ... everybody had their equipment, and two meals a day and one of the guys got assigned to the bridge. The others, we'd clean up, spent about fifteen minutes every day cleaning the latrine. The only reason it was clean was because we were cleaning it. If we'd left it to the British, forget it. Two meals a day, and you never knew what you were going to get. So, we knew where we were going and we're sailing south, but we're never sailing, ... I don't know, never more than a minute, at least, in a straight line. We're zigzagging all over the place, at thirty-five knots, and he [the man assigned to the bridge?] says, "We're headed for Bermuda." So, that day, at noon, a PBY [Catalina flying boat] comes out and they exchanged messages by blinker. There's total radio silence. They don't give, send, messages, they don't receive messages, total radio silence. You get to the Bahamas, you don't know. They're all low-lying islands, you don't see anything, and we're going across and there was a six-inch gun on the back deck and there was antiaircraft guns on the top deck and we were not allowed in either place, but the aft lounge was here and the gun was right out there on the fantail. ... That day, they throw a

smoke bomb over and they make a big semi-circle and they start shooting at the smoke bomb, and, boy, they're putting them splashes pretty close. [laughter] They were pretty good shots. So, pretty soon, we wind up, you can see the Azores, when you come off the Azores; they're big, high mountains, you know. ... At that point, they turned northeast and go across the Bay of Biscayne, and, at that point, we hit the worst storm I ever want to see. We, as I say, had a lot of freedom of the deck and we went up on the top, what probably was the sun deck, not the very top, ... and it's way above. It's like four or five decks above the well deck, ... which is, you know, almost water level, and, every time a big wave would come and hit the front of it, it would splash up over us and ... land behind us, up at the top deck. Those waves must have been eighty feet high from trough to crest. ... She didn't pitch, because she's long enough, she's a thousand feet long, and the ... wavelength is closer than that. So, there's always two or some more waves supporting her, but she rolled so badly that you couldn't stand on deck without holding on or walking downhill. You could walk downhill all morning and never have to walk up.

NF: Were there any incidents where someone got pushed off?

LH: No, after they told you that, "A., we're not turning around and, B., it's March and you ain't going to live but twenty minutes. ... Don't fall overboard." [laughter] Every day, sometime in the morning, they would gather all of the trash and garbage and everything together and they would dump it all overboard at once, so that if a submarine came across the debris, they wouldn't be able to track her. ... The only way they could ever have gotten to her [was], if they'd have been lying up ahead of her, they might possibly have caught her. ... That was the reason for the zigzagging, because, ... if they laid across and fired a torpedo, they didn't know where she was going to be when the torpedo was going to get there, and, as far as I know, there were never any incidents on this particular trip. So, it's rolling like this. It's not raining, it's just windy, you know, and the port propeller would break water, or cavitate at least. ... She has four propellers, of course, and they're turbine driven and, of course, it'd shake like the whole boat was falling apart before the guy got the throttle back down again, and it was really a bad day. I didn't get seasick on that one, because you were up on deck, but that was the morning they served the greasy sausages. That didn't help any. [laughter] That was the morning you got up and they said, "Helmets will be carried." The helmet is what you puked into. [laughter] Helmets were very useful things.

NF: Upon arriving in Scotland, in Greenock, what did you first see?

LH: ... Oh, you get into Greenock and you're down the river from Glasgow, and I don't know if we ever really get to see Glasgow. We got off on the, you know, usual [way]. There's a gangplank, regular, and they put us on a train and we're creeping through the yards. ... We're way up on the embankment and there's a little, redheaded, Scottish kid down there and one of the guys with us is an Italian. He's hollering up, you know, [asking if] he's a *dago*. The kid hollers back at him, "Are you really a *dago*?" and the guy says, "Yes," and so, he swears at him in Italian. [laughter] The guy almost fell off the train. Having grown up in the fringe of an Italian neighborhood, I know what the kid said. [laughter]

NF: How long was your journey to Paris?

LH: Well, we go from Greenock to Southampton. Every time we stopped for coffee, it's a little worse. [laughter] British coffee, even though the Red Cross makes it, is terrible. So, we get into a lovely rust bucket called the *Empire Rapier*, [a C-1-S-AY1 type transport], British, and there's no facilities whatsoever. We go down the companionway and there's an empty place on the deck. So, you put your stuff down, you get out your sleeping bag and you're just getting organized and, all of a sudden, there's the most tremendous noise you ... ever heard, and so, I'm halfway up the companionway when I finally figure out, "That's the chain locker. They've dropped the anchor. [laughter] Put your bag down." Comes mess time, we go into the mess hall and you pick up the tray and it slips out of your fingers. It's greasy, at which point you say, "I'm not eating here today," and you go down to the ship's service and get a couple of candy bars and a bottle of ginger beer, and that's what you have for lunch. [laughter] ...

NF: It was safer than the mess hall food, obviously.

LH: Oh, that was the greasiest thing I ever saw. So, we creep across the Channel that night. We cross the Channel to Le Havre that night and I slept like a baby, ... steel deck or no steel deck. They said there were E-boats [small, fast attack vessels] dropping depth charges, but I never heard one of them. We get into Le Havre Harbor and the docks are all broken down and there's a pillbox that's knocked crooked. ... Somebody hit it with a shell, and so, you've got to climb down a cargo net, because the tide in Le Havre is like twelve feet. It's not quite the Bay of Fundy, but it's pretty close. All those northern harbors are that way and, of course, they had had, originally, floating docks that went up and down, but they were shot. So, you ... climbed down a cargo net into a little LST or LCI, I guess, and they drop you off on the beach, which is pebbles. So, we walked through Le Havre and there's one area that obviously was the result of a naval bombardment. There's nothing but neatly piled rubble, block after block after block. Everything has been shot, broken, blown up, every house, every building, and that's typical of a naval bombardment. They're sitting off there with five-inch or ten-inch, whatever the size, guns and the guys are just going down there and going, "Boom, boom, boom," checkerboard pattern, you know, take out everything. So, we get out into a forest, a woods and everything, and we have a lovely thing, it was an abandoned German ammunition dump, and we have a tent. So, somebody managed to go down to the officers' end of the camp and steal some coke briquettes and we had a nice, warm fire that night. The only trouble is, some idiot hung his gas mask up above, over the [fire, which] fell down in the middle of the night and really smoked us out. ... So, it was all right, except that you have people that had no idea what ammunition was like, you know, and there's a bunch of twenty-millimeter antiaircraft shells and these guys are trying to take them apart. I mean, at this point, you take off, because, ... in the first place, there were nice, big areas, like thirty-by-twenty-feet-by-six-to-eight-feet deep, as if you had dug it with a bulldozer, you know. ... It was nice and square and all over the woods were lumps of clay about like this. ... They looked like cow flop. That's what was in that thing. Somebody bombed it and blew it up and, I mean, everything goes up at once, you know. [laughter] So, you stay away from this. That was where they had the machine gun ammunition with the wooden bullets, because ... the troops that they had put at that end of the Channel were in training, and so, they were using these. They were short of everything, the Germans. By the end of the war, the Germans were short of everything, and so, they couldn't afford lead, or certainly not metal-covered bullets, for practice. ... They weren't good for target practice. ... Even if they cut the load down, they had to have enough of a load on it to make the machine gun operate, and so, they actually were there.

... Some of them were supposedly used in combat and people [were] shot with them, but I don't believe it, because, if they had enough of a load to get them out of the barrel, they were going to break up. I mean, you know, the spin is terrific on this. So, it was a couple of days there, and at least we got a shower. The showers on the *Queen Mary* were saltwater and, even with the so-called saltwater soap, you wouldn't take more than one shower on that thing. [laughter] I mean, five days was enough. So, you got a shower, and then, they took us down. See, we knew we were going to the 3908th, but ... the 3908th had two divisions, one in London, where they started, and then, when Paris was liberated, they sent ... a group of them over to Paris. In fact, they were there and accompanied the Army into Paris on Liberation Day, and so, all the guys that were with it then all had *fourrageres* of the Legion of Honor [*Legion d'Honneur*] on, around their left arm. Us poor slobbs that got there later got nothing. ... So, we're headed for Paris. We go through Paris. This is nuts, and finally wind up, ... we got in on a little place called (Etampes?), which is down south of the Bois de Vincennes, the southeast corner of Paris, I don't know how far out, and we were in a field, in tents. ... The water to wash and do the mess kit [with], and so forth, comes out of a canal and you didn't want to look too close at the canal, as to the human sewage floating by, but the Army boiled it all. [laughter] We stayed there for a couple of days. Then, we went up to Verviers in Belgium, in a textile mill, for a couple of days, and then, we went to a place outside of Liege, which was a Signal Corps depot. They'd taken it over from the Germans and it had been a German delousing unit, had big steam ovens and hot showers. It was across the street from an electrical generating plant and they ran the steam over and, instead of using it to heat water with, or at least putting a sparger, a tube with holes in the side to let the steam out slowly, in there, they ran the steam down one side, this is the Germans [that] did this, don't look at me, and water down the other side. ... You turned them both on to see whether you could get warm water out of it, you know, and either you would have freezing water or you got scalding water, ... but it was a shower. It was clean. So, we stayed there for a couple of weeks, by which time the guys were going crazy, and they finally got in touch with somebody in Paris and we wound up [in the right area], finally, but, during that time, they said, "We've got jobs for you. Anybody want to learn how to splice cable?" I said, "Splicing cable's a sit-down job. I'll go take that." So, I take the splicing the cable job and they had German telephone cable ... that they had captured and they ... wanted to, you know, check it out, to [see] whether it could be used and, if it could be used or couldn't, to make the splices. ... They have a thing for vulcanizing the splice, so that it wouldn't [corrode]. You know, you could use it for field wire. You wouldn't have to worry about getting rain in it. So, this turned out to be a good idea, because the others guy wound up unloading carloads of all kinds of crap that had come in from the front. [laughter] So, finally, ... we were right next-door to a ... Quartermaster Corps depot, where they had German POWs working. ... Food, they could load. You could make them load food. They had a bunch of black guys guarding them and, man, you should see those Germans work. [laughter]

NF: I want to ask you about someone who obviously made a lasting impression on you, your commanding general, John C. H. Lee?

LH: Well, J. C. H. Lee, commonly known to his enemies as "Jesus Christ Himself," was head of COMZ, [Communications Zone, SHAEF]. Now, the COMZ patch is really interesting. It's a chain with lightning striking it, see, and we always said, "That proves that we're the weak link in the chain." [laughter] He was a kook. I mean, the first time he came in to inspect in Paris, one

of the guys in the orderly room had a shortwave radio in his room and he went in. Lee was a [radio] nut, I would think. So, he talked to him. The guy later became my roommate, when we got up to Wiesbaden, but he talked to the guy most of the morning, so, the guy [General Lee] didn't do any inspecting, see. So, it was really great. We didn't have any trouble with him. ... The day the war ended, the order came out that all your combat boots had to be shined. Now, combat boots are made with the leather with the flesh side outside and the skin side inside, so, they couldn't shine. Some smart guy discovered that if you poured lighter fluid on them and lit it, it would burn all that fuzz off and, if you did it once or twice, then, you could shine the combat boots. So, we outwitted Mr. Lee. When he came up to investigate us in Wiesbaden, they took his picture when he came in the door and we all arranged that we would make him a dry print before he left. That was our idea. We would wow, cow him into not bothering us anymore. So, I had fixed up a rapid developer. We developed it. We had enough ammonium thiosulfates, so, we had a quick, fast clearing thing. We washed it for about two seconds and ... squeegeed it, which we squeegeed all the negatives, to get them dry, not to dry, but ... to get the spots off of them, put it in the carrier wet, made the print, rushed the print through the thing and handed him, twenty minutes later, a full, glossy, eight-by-ten of himself, and that did impress him, because there weren't any full Polaroids in those days, you know. [laughter]

NF: You said his enemies named him, "Jesus Christ Himself." Why?

LH: What happened to poor Mr. Lee, in the first place, somebody tried to frag [kill] him in London, or so the report went. One of the lieutenants, ... he expected him on an inspection; I've never been in the London [barracks]. I have no idea what it was like, but somebody had wired a grenade fuse to a gate and, when a lieutenant went through, the grenade fuse went off. Somebody was planning to wait for somebody else to go through, and then, there was going to be a grenade on there. They hushed it up. ... Nothing ever was said or done about it, but Robert Ruark was writing for *Stars and Stripes* and he didn't like Mr. Lee and he would find every stupid thing that Mr. Lee did and write it up. ... Of course, he had to be careful, because they wouldn't let him write everything up, and he hassled him ... until, finally, Ruark gets out and he becomes a correspondent for one of the papers. Now, Mr. Lee has moved ... from London to Italy someplace, because the climate was nice down there. He's still running the COMZ thing, you see, and, now, Ruark really bugs him, to the point where he finally resigned. He resigned. Ruark just drove him out of the Army. He went to some religious organization, didn't live too long after that. So, that's how J. C. H. became "Jesus Christ Himself." [laughter]

NF: Appropriately named.

SI: Was he a regular Army officer?

LH: I'm sure he was a regular Army officer. ...

NF: After you were in the 3908th Signal Service, you were assigned to the 3264th Battalion.

LH: Yes. Well, before we get to the 3264th, I've got some stuff about Paris here. ... That is the Champs-Elysees ... on V-E Day. ...

NF: Where did you take this picture from? Is this a picture you took?

LH: That's the picture I took, yes. That's four in the afternoon. ... I wound up with the night shift that day. See, we had one day off a week in the lab. When we got to the lab in Paris, we had part of an apartment house for a headquarters in part of the thing. We had another beautiful home that had been taken over by the Germans. See, when we took over things in Paris, we could only occupy stuff that the Germans had used. So, the Air Force had; oh, the financier, the Jewish financier, I can't think of his name.

SI: Rothschild?

LH: [Baron Henri James de] Rothschild. They had his mansion, called La Murette, which was near where we were. Somewhere, there's a map of Paris here, if you'll wait a minute. ... Sixteenth *arrondissement* [of Paris], where we were, was right over here, near the Bois de Boulogne. In fact, the lab was right on the Bois de Boulogne. ... This is the Boulevard Suchet, at that point, and the lab was right over in here and this was the nearest subway station and we were right over in here. ...

SI: While you were in Paris, were the Germans still able to launch V-2 rockets into the city?

LH: No. We missed a Battle Star because the last of the V-1s and V-2s were [launched before we arrived]. A V-1 and a V-2 were launched against Liege, Belgium, during the war, and, of course, Liege was a battle zone during the Bulge, you understand. I mean, they were right close to the [front]. ... It was so bad that they had to send the troops that they were sending south [to] behind Liege. ... They were headed for Liege, of course, the Germans. That's what they wanted to capture, because all these depots were set up there. So, we got there one day too late. [laughter] The last one had been fired, and then, they'd overtaken it. ... Anyway, it's in the sixteenth *arrondissement*, right close to the Bois de Boulogne. Prince Rainier [III of Monaco] has a pink marble shack over in that area, too. It's almost on the way, too. The house that we had was, I guess, three or four, it must have been four stories, because I think we were on the third floor. No, maybe it was only three, because we were on the third floor in what had been a big room of some sort and they had just double-deck wooden bunks, you know, that somebody'd clobbered together with lumber, and the guy that had the bunk underneath me was a movie cameraman. He was their sound cameraman. ... He had his soundman, who slept in the other room across the hall. The other room had been a billiard room. You could still see the racks for the billiard cues on the wall, but the Germans had taken it over from the French and they had made a whorehouse out of it for their officers. ... The first time I walk in and go into the bathroom, there are three bidets and two stools, and somebody's washing laundry in the first bidet. [laughter] ... It still had "WC" on the one, ... which is German for *wasser closet*, and it's British, really, because ... that's what they called their first flush toilets, water closets, so, it stuck in German, and the girls, of course, had gone ... with the Germans when they left, in a hurry. Across the street, they had an enlisted man's club. The one nice thing about Europe was, you always had plenty to drink [laughter] and a photo outfit was a great place, because you had clout. You were the only people that could develop pictures within three thousand miles. Now, anybody that had pictures that wanted them developed, they would be very nice to you, and I didn't realize that in Paris. ... So, when I get to Paris, they had just captured a whole bunch of

German photographic materials. The link-up with the Russians had taken place at Torgau on the Elbe. This side of Torgau and north a little bit is a town called Wolfen and Wolfen had an IG Farben factory that made photographic materials, and ... we managed to get to Wolfen before we got to Torgau, somehow, and we confiscated a lot of things, a million dollars worth of silver nitrate, which I saw some of, in Kodak-Pathe in Paris, supposedly, five million dollars worth of silver bars, which I never saw, and a whole trainload of chemicals and equipment to develop and print Agfa color negatives and print film. ... I got the job of figuring out how to do this, because, A., I had some chemical background, B., I could speak German and read German, and French, to some degree, and, see, this was all in German. ... So, finding a German-English dictionary in Paris in 1945, in May of 1945, was a difficult proposition, you understand. [laughter] The secretary in the lab was an Alsatian woman, middle-aged, I don't know, probably in her thirties, and she had an English-French dictionary and a German-French dictionary, and so, she translated it from German to French and French to English, and, sometimes, it came out very humorously. The back layer of the film came out to be the back couch and the light filter turned out to a light pilot, but that was easy. [laughter] ... So, here it is, after we finally got the thing working; I have some pictures of it.

NF: Is this the Alsatian woman?

LH: No. That is a picture of the Lieutenant's girlfriend. The Lieutenant was married, but that didn't bother him. [laughter] Here she is, in the flesh. Handle carefully; that picture's fifty some years old and, if I leave it out in the light, it won't be there very long. That was the one drawback. She was said to be sixteen, and I don't think they rode bicycles all afternoon, somehow. ... Of course, this was all in color. This is just photocopies of everything, and so, there it is, and here's Lieutenant (Avery?) and a T-3, [a technician, third grade], who never did anything for us, and there's me and the other guy. ... I wrote the whole thing, but you have to get everybody in it, you know. [laughter]

NF: This is the instruction manual.

LH: This is the instruction manual for the [developer]. We didn't have all the chemicals. They managed to miss a few and, if you guys want to make a copy, you're welcome to make a copy. You can't have the original. [laughter] Somewhere in the Signal Corps, there should be copies, in color. See, they had an enlarger that would make twenty-five prints at a time and you'll get to the prints in a minute. That was it, and that's probably the filters. That's it, that's the enlarger, and, eventually, ... there are the pictures that it printed, you see. ... You took a negative, put it in there, put a piece of color paper in the back and exposed it, and there were the filters. So, you could put a different filter in front of each lens, so [that] you could get the right color balance.

NF: This is a very thorough handbook.

LH: You ain't just kidding. [laughter]

NF: How long did it take you to write this?

LH: Well, it's dated July and I got there before May the 8th, so, we did it in about two months.

SI: Did you ever have to work on any captured enemy film?

LH: No, no. We never got any film. All we got was this, all the chemicals and all the instructions, and then, as I say, we had to make some substitutions, because some of the stuff was missing.

NF: Very impressive.

LH: My lifework. So, these are pictures I took of Paris. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

LH: These are what Paris looks like to the soldier.

SI: Living in Paris for those months, what was your interaction like with the French civilians?

LH: We didn't get much interaction with French civilians. In the first place, everything, food was rationed in Paris, and you couldn't get into a restaurant without a ration card. So, that's that. You could buy things. We would go down to the bakery and buy a loaf of bread, if we were hungry, and that sort of thing, but the food was good in Paris. They had French help in the kitchen. We had fresh vegetables. I don't know how they got the fresh vegetables. The mess sergeant was a grade-A scrounger. ... Let me put it this way; he was running more than one card. You had to have a card to buy at the PX [post exchange]. You're allowed a bar of soap a week, a carton of cigarettes a week, and so forth, and so on. Now, a carton of cigarettes cost you fifty cents. A carton of cigarettes would sell for at least ten dollars on the black market, in those days, anyway. Ten dollars was a ridiculous price for cigarettes. [laughter] So, I didn't smoke anyway, and so, I sold mine. The best place for black marketing was a little bar across the street from the *Mairie* [town hall], which is where the ... police, hang out, and, therefore, it was a very safe place to do trading, you know. ... They had delicious martinis, but the bottles were unlabelled, so, I never asked them what they made them out of. ...

NF: You did not want to know, I am sure.

LH: You didn't want to know, and there was a nice place. I had a wristwatch that I dropped and broke and managed to buy a new one there, for a reasonable price, and, when I got home, it went bad and I took it to a jeweler to have it fixed and he says, "I can't fix this. This is all homemade parts." [laughter] ... The French were not exactly comfortable. Paris was a leave center, and so, you didn't have to salute officers. They hated it as much as we did, because, in other places, frequently, ten guys would get together and station themselves down the block and, when the Lieutenant came by with his girlfriend, they would salute him and he would be going like this, every time. [laughter] I mean, you know, it was one of those things. So, anyway, ... you weren't allowed any arms in Paris at all. ... If you had guns, they had to be [unloaded], you know, no ammo, and you had to keep them in your luggage. I bought the camera that those pictures were taken with. That's a six-by-nine, or two-and-a-quarter, three-and-a-quarter, film pack and/or cut film camera. It's still around. It's still down in the cellar, as a matter-of-fact, and I bought it

from one of the photographers who photographed the landings on D-Day. ... He had a Silver Star and a Bronze Star. ...

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

SI: This continues an interview with Mr. Laurence Haemer on February 7, 2003, in Newtown, Pennsylvania, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

NF: Nick Ferroni.

SI: Please, continue.

LH: Okay. Now, where were we? ...

NF: I would like to ask you about when you were assigned to the 3264th Signal Service Battalion in Germany. How did that vary from your previous experience?

LH: Oh, what happened here was that the French wanted their buildings back. So, the proposition came up, "Did we want to move to Versailles?" and I don't know why; there was something in Versailles. So, the Lieutenant didn't want to move. So, he said, "They want to know how much water we use." ... I said, "That's cubic meters. That's easy. I can convert that for you anytime." I say, "You really don't want to go?" He says, "No." I said, "Well, ... open all the faucets; take a reading. Open all the faucets in the building, let them run, and, the next day, we'll take a reading again and we'll tell them that's how much water we use." Well, it turned out it was fifty thousand gallons [laughter] and the tanks, the reservoir, at Versailles didn't hold much more than that. So, we didn't have to go to Versailles, and this was, like, end of July, you know. This was fine. All of a sudden, they say, "Uh-uh, we've got to get out of here. The Third Army has a lab set up in Wiesbaden, Germany. You go up and straighten it out and tell us, and then, we'll ship all the equipment up to you." "Uh-huh." So, they put sixteen of us on a couple of trucks, (Nick?), my roommate, he was working in the orderly room then, and a bunch of other guys. We get up there, and, oh, it took all day. We started in the morning and we didn't get there until it was after suppertime, because we'd stopped along the road. ... I know we wound up finally having hamburgers at, the Army had a couple of depots of hamburger joints along the road, and it was all two-lane, Belgian block roads, with fruit trees planted on both sides. All of France was like that at the time. They were narrow roads. They were made with these stones, you know, granite blocks, and some of them were laid in fancy designs, curved designs, and very narrow, and we finally got to Mainz and there's a bridge across the Rhine at Mainz. I have, somewhere, a picture of that. It was built by the engineers. It's a wooden bridge, to replace the one that was blown up, and we got to Wiesbaden. ... I think they had about five or six houses there, the mess hall, and then, they had one for the officers, then, they had a headquarters, they had another one for the officers and they had this one. There were five houses on that side and they had two more on the other side of the street and it was all [fenced off], got concertina wire all over the place. ... They had ... Polish DPs, [displaced persons], who had been ... liberated and they gave them truncheons and they patrolled the place. ... So, we get there and the one house looks really ... pretty decent. It had been a residence that had been converted into more or less of a rooming house. There was only, I think, one kitchen, but there were a whole bunch of

separate apartments. ... So, we found one on the second floor that had a nice balcony and it had all the windows pretty much intact, and I said to Nick, "If they're going to have hot water to run a laboratory, they're going to have hot water for baths and they're going to have hot water to run the heat in this place. We're going to use this as a billet." So, the Lieutenant says, "How about that room on the first floor?" I said, "It's yours. You want the room on the first floor? It's yours." So, he said, "Fine." ... Anyway, they've got one rickety enlarger, a wash tank (for washing prints to remove the chemicals) thing made out of oilcloth. ... You probably don't know what oilcloth was, but it was tightly woven canvas that had been coated with linseed oil and [had] designs printed on it. It was like the printed linoleum, ... and it was, more or less, waterproof, but, I mean, it wasn't. So, we said, "We're going to have to build a lab." So, the Lieutenant says, "I don't know anything about it." ... I think he was from the 101st Airborne. He was from one of the airborne divisions. [He] said, "I don't know anything about photography." He says, "You run the place and I'll get you everything you need," and so, he did. We hired an architect, we hired a guy to ... do the building and he hired the workmen and we laid out [the plan]. We would have the newsroom on the first floor, which had been a big room, and we'd use the kitchen and one of the bathrooms for negative developing. We have a darkroom. We'd put the enlarging room down in the basement. The German says, "That floor's too cold." I said, "Don't worry about it." "We'll build you a wood floor." I said, "It'll squeak." ... He said, "We'll build you a wood floor; it won't move." They came in with a whole bunch of shingles and they came in, built themselves a wood floor and they used those to shim that thing until it was absolutely level and it didn't squeak and it didn't do anything. So, we're getting along pretty well with this thing. ... [In] one of the rooms in the basement, they're going to build me a sink for mixing chemicals in. I said, "I want it to drain, because the sink in Paris was a mess." So, he said, "Okay." He builds a sink out of bricks and mortar and, when he pulls the plug out, every drop runs down the drain. The sink in Paris; ... when I first got there, in addition to this report, they were going to set up to do Ansco Color transparencies, [for] which you need one darkroom and one room [so that] it can be in daylight. So, we had a sink, I guess, that was big enough for the darkroom. You only have two tanks in that. We were using three-and-a-half-gallon developer tanks, four-by-five film, metal holders for it, and so on. So, they built us a big, long sink, ... because there were about seven of them, six or seven, ... three-and-a-half-gallon tanks and you've got to keep them at a constant temperature, so, you fill the sink with water. So, he builds the sink and he puts the plug in and we turn the water on and what happens? It runs over the center of the sink. We've got to cut another inch off the plug that holds the water in. I mean, oh, that was; I didn't want another one like that, but the Germans built one for me. So, then, we've got a problem with electricity. At nine AM, it's about sixty volts and, at noon, it's probably down around fifty and, finally, at midnight, it's back to 110. Now, that's unusual, because Paris was four-wire, 220. You could get 110 off of a 220. Wiesbaden power was a three-wire delta 110. I've never seen it anyplace. So, they had a variable transformer, which you could do some adjustments on, but it had only, what? one or two enlargers and it was going to pieces anyway. So, they finally went out and they got themselves, I said, "Get a three-phase, 110-volt generator." They come back with a single-phase 220, with a ground. Okay, so, we can use two of the phases now. That's all right. So, they wire up that part of the house, ... the lab part. They had to put all new wiring in for us. So, they wired that up so [that] it would only use the two phases and we didn't ever bother to connect it to the current, because it went up and down so bad. We just used our own generator. Eventually, they ... got two diesels and put them

in ... the place across the street, but they still didn't get the right [one]. So, anyway, we had to build that whole lab.

NF: How long of a process was it to build the lab?

LH: About a month, I think, it took us to build the lab, and the architect was, I think, probably the only anti-Nazi we had amongst us. We had a lot of German help before we finished. The kitchen help at the mess hall was German, and he was always saying, "Why do you hire these Nazis? He used to be an SA [the *Sturmabteilung* or "brown shirts"] leader." I said, "You find me one that, A., can do the work ..."

[TAPE PAUSED]

LH: So, you know, then, he'd say, "Well, we don't have one." See, the electrician, he called him "Mr. Television," because he had to hold everything right up in front of his face. [laughter] ... There was a German working in the orderly room that had spoke very good English and he had been a salesman in Italy, for dental supplies or something. ... He had been drafted by the Army as an interpreter, because they had Italian troops on the Russian front, and he had somehow managed to retreat fast enough so [that] he could get captured by the Americans. He was a real sharpie, but he, supposedly, was not a Nazi. Of course, a lot of the other ones, the guy that had been in the Air Force and been shot down over Holland, he was an anti-Nazi, I'll tell you. [laughter]

NF: How comfortable were you staying there, knowing that there were Germans around who had actually served in the military?

LH: Oh, well, item one, you never went out alone at night; two, you never went out without somebody being armed in the party at night. Gradually, the DPs went home and we never replaced them with any guards and, gradually, holes began to appear in the concertina wire. ... I think, some nights, we had as many females as males in the billet, but ... I never counted them, [laughter] but the Lieutenant was good for his word. He would get us whatever we needed. Every morning, we'd get a jeep and go down to the Red Cross for coffee. The Red Cross was ... what had been the gambling casino, the Kurhaus, and the colonnade had been totally destroyed. Oh, incidentally, Wiesbaden had been bombed by the British in, I think, February of '45, by mistake. They were supposed to be bombing Frankfurt. ... The British didn't have enough navigators to put a navigator in every plane. In the United States, we had a navigator in every plane and the British didn't have that. So, they put the navigators in the front, first wave, and they went over and, when they found the place, they dropped flares. Well, somebody started shooting at them. At Wiesbaden, there was an anti-aircraft battery. When we were there, there was one gun left, may never have been more than that. Anyway, they started shooting at them and they said, "This must be Frankfurt." Now, Frankfurt's on a river. There's twenty kilometers, at least, between the edge of Wiesbaden, Wiesbaden's surrounded by hills, Frankfurt's on a river, the Main; I mean, even on a dark night, you ought to be able to see that, but they dropped bombs. They knew what they were doing, because they dropped the high explosives in the center of town and it destroyed all the water mains and it damaged a couple of places. It ruined the Catholic girls' school, that was destroyed, and there were a couple, some chunks, taken off the

opera house and the glass was broken in the rotunda of the Kurhaus, and the colonnade was completely destroyed, almost completely destroyed. ... The incendiary bombs burned for three days. The houses burned for three days and they destroyed one quarter of a city of three hundred thousand people. So, you know, they weren't exactly too friendly, but they needed work and, unlike some of the other countries, we would put them to work and try to rebuild their economy. They were always out gathering wood out of their forests. The forests were picked clean, except for the one that had been, originally, the Kaiser's, but [Hermann] Goring had taken it over. It was a place for hunting wild boar and, there, they let the forest grow up. All this undergrowth grows all over the forest. These bushes grow and the boars have to pass through them. ... We were supposed to go out hunting boar one day, but that fell through. We never got around to it, and we were supposed to out hunting deer. They finally stopped them from using the M-1s on the deer. [laughter] You had to get a Springfield to go out after the deer. ... We had arranged with the [forest managers], they were going to put us up in a tree stand and they would drive some deer for us, and then, the first sergeant, who was a pretty heavy drinker, he got involved in it, at which point, Nick and I said, "Forget it, I don't mind." So, one of the guys went out alone, several times, and he came back twice with deer. The first one, ... he must have done it right, you know, cleaned it correctly, because that one tasted delicious. ... They made sauerbraten out of it, you know, cooked it, but the second one, you couldn't eat it. [laughter] Oh, man, I'm telling you. He took the hides up to, oh, a town east of [Wiesbaden], where they did leatherwork, and had the hide things fixed up. The *mark* was worth ten cents, because we said so. I've got some. When we're finished here, I'll get the money and show you what [it looked like]. I had two hundred *marks* left over. After the guys in Berlin sent home more money in one month than they could possibly have been paid, they said, "We're going to have to have currency booklets." So, they started making up [books]. You had a book; how much money you've got on you, you counted it out, they wrote that in the book, then, they entered your pay every month. ... Of course, I was sending most of mine home anyway, and then, they started clamping down on sending money orders home. Originally, you could send money orders home, and then, you had to have a currency book to show that you had that much money, because, I mean, I was selling cigarettes like mad and I was sending home, periodically, a hundred dollars to my wife. So, when it said, "Oh, you can make it out to yourself, but you can't make it out to anybody else," I said, "Oh, great." So, I made it out to myself and endorsed it and sent it home to my wife. [laughter] The Army always made rules with a little hole somewhere in it, you see. The rules were for stupid people. [laughter] That was very interesting, and, eventually, we did get most of the equipment. The stuff that was in that report never made it. I don't know whether the Signal Corps got it or somebody took it home. I'll never forget, the Lieutenant comes to me one day and he says, "I need a carton of cigarettes." I said, "Well, okay, what you got?" and he says, "Well, I got this tripod," and it's a Cine-Kodak tripod, and the only trouble [was], it says, "Property of Signal Corps." I said, "Okay. ... I'll get the old carpenter to make a box, and you'll sign for it?" He said, "Sure." So, we take the Signal Corps plate off and I find a little plate on some piece of German equipment, put that on, [laughter] just to protect his behind, put it in the box, sent it home. I still have the tripod. For ten bucks, ... well, for fifty cents, it was worth it, but there was a lot of drinking in Europe. In Paris, the Eight Ball Club had a membership list. You had to pay dues, but they gave us one month free, when we first got there. It was across the street from the billet and it was all right. They could get Armagnac, [a type of brandy]; they couldn't get much good cognac. We'd get Armagnac, and you could get any kind of cordials you want. I think I've had Coke with every kind of cordial that exists, but, at the end of the month,

there was always somebody getting into fights. ... One night, I wake up in the middle of the night and some woman is screaming in French that I can't understand. So, the next day, I talked to one of the guys that speaks French, "So, what was the matter with her?" He says, "She was hollering, 'Get the snakes off of me.'" She had the DTs, [delirium tremens, alcohol-induced tremors]. [laughter] So, when we got up to Wiesbaden, we set up an enlisted man's club and it was much [better], no fights, no problems, champagne was sixty cents a bottle, red wine or white wine was forty cents a bottle. Nick and I always had a case of champagne, ... put it out in the cold to chill it. ... After six months, it began to taste pretty good. When we took over, ... when the Third Army took over these houses, they said to the people, "You've got fifteen minutes to take whatever you can carry and go." So, the bed that I had, it was a regular bed with a folded double mattress in it and Nick's had a bed, his, and we had a nice desk in the middle of the room. [Editor's Note: Mr. Haemer begins looking through more photographs.] ... That's Christmas. Where is that desk, darn it? Here's how you get across the Rhine when there ain't any bridge. Oh, here's the desk. That's my wife's picture in the background. A similar copy is on the television in the living room. I took that ... just before we were married. That was our room. They wanted to do a publicity thing on the lab, so, this is me ... in the lab. The guy wanted something to take a picture of. Now, if you mix ethylene glycol, or glycerin, with potassium permanganate, it will catch fire spontaneously, see. So, he gets up there, with his four-by-five Graflex, with this thing on it, and he says, "Tell me when to take the picture," and I say, "Not yet, not yet," and, of course, when it burst into flame, I didn't have to tell him. [laughter] He snapped it automatically. That's nice, purple smoke, you understand, ... purple flame, rather. It's not purple smoke, purple flame; it's really great.

NF: It says, "Fine grain developer."

LH: Oh, this? I forget what we were using. I think we were using D-76. ... Everything that went through the lab, ... most everything, had the stamp on the back.

NF: Saying it cannot be published.

LH: ... That was just routine. That was my own print. I made the prints and you just put them in the water thing to wash them and put them through the dryer and they would stamp them automatically. When they came out, they would stamp [the] Army thing on them. No, none of these were officially Army [photos]. This is Christmas. That is "Mitch," which ain't his right name, and that is "Dick," which ain't his right name, and that's me. Why it isn't their right name will appear shortly. There's Dick and I drinking champagne, good, sixty-cents-a-bottle champagne.

NF: Where was this picture taken?

LH: That's taken in ... Wiesbaden. That's my room, our room in Wiesbaden, yes. ...

NF: What picture do you have hanging on your wall, if you do not mind me asking?

LH: I haven't got the faintest idea. That was what the people left.

NF: That was what they left.

LH: They left us those goblets there, six crystal goblets. They left us six of those. I left them for Nick. I don't know if he ever took them home or not. This was taken at the Stuttgart Airport on the way home. That's what's left of the *Luftwaffe*.

NF: There is not much left.

LH: I have a friend who's a fighter pilot in the Air Force. He's a brigadier general, retired, now and I took this in one day and I said to him, "That's you and your second instructor, after a training flight."

NF: What are the soldiers doing now? Are they confiscating anything left?

LH: They're just snooping around. The Stuttgart Airport was a way station on the way home. The Stuttgart Airport had been burned out and we came down from Wiesbaden into Frankfurt, then, down to Stuttgart and we assembled there, and then, they took us from Stuttgart to Antwerp, which took three days, in boxcars, eating ten-in-ones, [rations]. ... Every time you get off the train to relieve yourself, they'd start, blow the whistle and start up again. I mean, it was quite a trip. We did get off in Nancy or Metz, I forget, Metz, I guess, and had a hot meal, but we had a little stove and a stove pipe, and the first tunnel we went through knocked the end off the stove pipe, and there were only about six of us in a car. ... They were called, during the First World War, a forty-and-eight, because that's what the French wrote on them, "*Quarante Hommes ou Huit Chevaux*," not "*et*," [laughter] and they were four-wheeled cars. ... The railroad system, in 1945, was a hundred years behind the times, as far as we're concerned. They had no automatic couplers. They had no decent-sized freight cars. All of their signals were operated by, and a lot of the gates were operated by, cables, ... steel cables from a central thing. They didn't put locks on their switches. I mean, you know, in the United States, ... we've been locking switches for a long time, so [that] people don't fool around with them, but, in Europe, they didn't.

NF: In your assessment, were they still using animal-pulled wagons, for their ammunition and traveling?

LH: I guess for a lot. Well, the Germans, ... oh, yes, we used to scare the hell out of them. A six-by-six will do sixty miles an hour. I mean, down the *Autobahn*, they were afraid of us. The "Red Ball Express," [the stream of trucks that kept the US Army supplied in Europe], was, of course, regular ... tractor semi-trailers and they would go whooping down those narrow roads at whatever speed they felt like, but the Germans had nothing like that. ... The one problem in Germany was that you had to put a wire breaker on the front of all the jeeps, because, you know, a jeep has a folding windshield and it's a very weak windshield, and the Germans would string wire across the road, to try to cut your head off. So, they took a piece of angle iron and welded it to the bumper and the top of the jeep, and then, put, like, a hook on the top, just like you would have it on an "otter," [a type of paravane], that goes out for minesweeping, you know, cuts the cable, and that's what this would [do], just break the cable or pull the supports down or whatever.

...

NF: I have never heard of that. They used to put wires on the roads.

LH: ... Oh, yes, they'd put wire on the road. Every so often, they would cut one of the communications cables. The orderly room was right on the *Wilhelmstrasse* and I don't know where the motor pool was, because I didn't have a driver's license in those days, and Nick was our designated driver. ... If we wanted to go anywhere, Nick would go down, get a jeep. ... I had to go down to Heidelberg to get approval of any requisitions or supplies. That was where the Third Army had their headquarters. That's where Patton was still living, and so, the depot was in Mannheim. So, you'd get a four-by-four, ... usually, because we didn't have, usually, that much stuff, and, sometimes, a six-by-six, and Nick would drive down; I'd go down along with him, just for the ride, you know. So, you go down to Heidelberg and ... there was a German barracks, it had been used as cavalry barracks, that they had taken over and get the thing signed. Then, we'd stop at Mannheim and pick up the supplies. It was a day's journey, you know, but Patton was killed while we were in Wiesbaden and one of the photographers was assigned to photograph the funeral and the internment. ... He says, "I'll see you all in New York," and, three days later, he's back. ... I said, "What happened?" He says, "They buried the SOB in Hamm," which was in Belgium. [Editor's Note: General George S. Patton is buried in the Luxembourg American Cemetery and Memorial in Hamm, Luxembourg. Mr. Haemer may have been thinking of Hamme, Belgium.] I say, "Well, why didn't you go there?" and he says, "What for?" [laughter] So, the last picture he took was the picture of the funeral cortege on a train with half-track howitzers firing the salute. Anything else, somebody else must have taken them, because he wasn't going all the way up to Hamm, ... when he figured he was going to be winding up ... at Arlington National Cemetery. [laughter] So, poor Patton got everybody, even when he died. ... [Dick] had a really interesting, I shouldn't say his name, ... summer. I was still ... in Paris. There was a request for a lab man and two photographers to join a coast defense battalion that was going up and inspecting all of the German things in Norway, and I was going to go, except for that report. I had to work on the report. So, they took Dick, the sergeant, up with them. Mitch and Dick and this other photographer went to Norway and they pick up three Swedish gals on the way across. Because you couldn't get directly to Norway, you went across from Copenhagen to whatever, that town in Sweden. They pick up three Swedish babes there, and so, then, they get to Norway and they stop in all the places. Wherever the Germans had gun emplacements, they stopped; they photograph them and they stay for a day or two or three, and they are the first Allied troops in Norway. ... A lot of the Norwegian men had gone, ... fled to either Sweden or were living in the woods or joined up, gone to England and joined up with the force. ... So, there was a terrible shortage of eligible men, because they wouldn't have anything to do with the Germans. [laughter] So, the only trouble was, the Norwegian women liked to drink and, the first day, first night, the guys tried to keep up with them. ... They hadn't read Shakespeare, because, if they'd read Shakespeare, they'd know that, in *Macbeth*, he says, "Drink is a whore's son, which increases the desire and reduces the performance," and they found they were somewhat reduced. [laughter] So, after that, they let the women drink and they didn't try to keep up with them, but, every time they moved on, they had a new bunch of [them]. So, that's why you don't know what their right names are. (Selbee?) wasn't married, I don't know, I guess Dick wasn't married, either, but Mitch was married. I don't want to cause him any trouble. So, what happens, really funny, is that the coast defense guys go home and leave these guys in England. So, they've got orders. They don't have any problem. They find an outfit somewhere that's got a nice mess and they just join up with them. ... Then, they go down [to] the airport and

they try to get flights between London and Paris, on the Army planes, because they take the British pounds and they bring them over to Paris and sell them on the black market, and then, they take the French *francs* back and trade them in at the right price. [laughter] ... So, all of a sudden, ... by that time, we're up at Wiesbaden and we're looking for these guys. So, they finally get a hold of the Norwegian consulate and he says, "They went back to England, three weeks ago." [laughter] So, then, they rounded them up. ... So, that's how they're having Christmas with me. It wasn't all work. [laughter]

NF: Throughout your service in Belgium, France and Germany, obviously, you encountered former German soldiers, but did you ever encounter any resistance at that time?

LH: Oh, no, there was no organized [resistance]. The day the surrender happened, that was the end of the German Army. It was broken up. ... Any of them that could get home went home. We gradually repatriated them from the United States. In January of 1946, we get a request that we have fifteen thousand prisoners of war that we [want to] take over from the French, and we're trading them fifteen thousand Afrika Korps guys that we had held in the United States. ... The reason we took them over from the French was, they were starving. ... So, we weren't going to get blamed for this, so, they photographed every one in triplicate, so that we could have proof [for] the Red Cross, "This is what they were when we got them." Fifteen thousand people, three prints of each one, is a lot of prints. So, we set up three enlargers on the night shift and we proceeded. It was on ... movie film. First, I said to the Lieutenant, "See if we can get any perforated paper that would go through a movie printer. We'll send it out to the (bloomin'?) thing in Paris and we'll get them done in twenty minutes." No, nobody had any perforated paper. So, we cut up eight-by-tens into narrow strips and they're sitting there, one evening, counting them, and I said, "What the heck are you doing?" "Well, we've got to keep ... track of what we're doing." I said, "Give me a hundred ... or a whole bunch of the dry ones," and I put them on the scale and I count them and I said to them, I give them the figure, I said, "Come in, use the scale, multiply by this number. Don't sit there and count." [laughter] ... Finally, in, I guess it was late March, sometime, I got the orders to go home. ... Oh, I've got to tell you that story, too. Sometime around November, we were beginning to run short of people, because, ... you see, you had one point for every month in the Army, another point for every month overseas, so many points for a wife, so many points for a child, so many points for every Battle Star, and they added that up and the guys with the highest numbers went home first, at least in theory. So, sometime around November, we hear stories, that they are letting guys in the United States, who were drafted ... in the last few months, out and we were going to be the "unending" Army of Occupation, and so, we had a little protest in front of [the] IG Farben Building, in which was the headquarters for SHAEF, Supreme Army Headquarters. They'd moved it there. ... Oh, I guess we had at least a thousand people there. It was a cold night and, fortunately, nobody'd been drinking beforehand, because at least ten percent of those guys were armed, and the Major comes out and he says, "The General isn't here. He can't talk to you." He's got three guys, recruits that have filled in for the guys from the 101st Airborne, [laughter] and they don't know nothing about crowd control. They've got bayonets on their M-1s and I'm standing, from one of them, about as far as I am from you, and, I mean, if anything had gone wrong, he would have been disarmed before he knew what hit him. You don't let crowds get that close, no way, fellow. So, it all broke up, finally, and the guys ... had sent a cable to one of the columnists, I think it was (Alsop?) or one of those guys, about this terrible thing that they were going to do to us, and it

was very rapidly changed. If Eisenhower had still been in Europe, it never would have happened, because he never would have allowed it. I mean, he was the guy that said, "You've got to split the liquor ration, one bottle for the troops and one bottle for the officers." You know, if you've got a hundred bottles, fifty of them go to the troops, fifty of them go to the officers, and that wasn't as bad a thing as it sounds, because there weren't a hell of a lot of officers. ... They might have gotten three times as much as we did. ... So, that was the sort of stuff that really was miserable. So, finally, they went back to letting us go, because, I mean, we were over there three years, my God, in Europe, when these other guys, who hadn't done any service at all, were going to go home? There had been meetings and the one in Manila got into a sort of a riot. I don't know how bad it was, but that one, actually, ... there was physical damage done. ... I ran across a guy who had been in the Army in Hawaii at that time and he was an enlisted man and they wanted him to snoop around and find who the Communists were that were starting these [meetings]. [laughter] I nearly died laughing when I heard that, because, it was many, many years later, but I thought, "My God." ... They knew what the problem was; they were changing the rules in the middle of the stream. So, it all worked out in the end. I got to go home and, as I say, it was a long trip and we spent a couple of, oh, maybe five or six days, in Antwerp, waiting for a ship, and then, there were only a couple of hundred of us onboard the ship. I don't know how many. I don't remember what the facilities were anymore. I think we had, probably, ... cots, I don't know, or maybe we had litters, you know, because ... I know, in the one place in Belgium, we had litters to sleep in. You know, they're close to the floor, but, other than that, they are as comfortable as any cot, and I don't know what they were, but we got into a storm there. I was on KP one day and we were peeling onions and, the next thing you know, we were all down in that corner. We got back and, zoom, down there again. The third time, I went up, threw up and said, "The heck with this. I don't care about eating." I went down and laid down on my bunk. When we got up, finally, it had quieted down a little bit, I went up to get dinner, at night, and there was the first sergeant in the chow line, dishing out food. [laughter]

NF: What were your emotions like when you knew you were on your way back here?

LH: Oh, very happy, very happy to come home.

NF: When you first saw the coastline ...

LH: Well, you come in, [in] those days, Ambrose Light was still in place. Ambrose is going out, all the other stuff; there's no Ambrose Light anymore. So, you see Ambrose first, and then, you come up the bay and we landed in Staten Island. Of course, my wife knew that we were coming home, because, you know, I had sent [word], saying it was going to be about ten days. We didn't know exactly when, but she knew what ship I was on. It was the [US Army Transport] *St. Alban's Victory* and I never thought, with a little kid, what? by that time, was fourteen, fifteen months old, that she was going to come all the way over from Brooklyn to Staten Island just to see me. So, I didn't even look for her. When I got home, finally, two days later, she wanted to know why I wasn't waving to her. I said, "I didn't even think you'd come meet me." [laughter] We had a little hassle over cleaning up the ship, but they persuaded the Major that maybe it wasn't a good idea, if he didn't want to swim to New York, that maybe he ought to call off the fancy cleanup. ... Six guys would go through and clean up the residue when we got to port. So, it was a ten-day journey and the trouble with Victory ships was, they're turbine driven and,

instead of rolling and pitching, the turbine acts as a giant gyroscope in there and they go like this. ... The bow makes a circle and the tail end goes up and down like an elevator. They just go like this and [it is] the worst thing in the world. If you could stay on deck, they're not too bad, but, if you get down in the hold, then, ... you no longer know where the horizon is, and your stomach don't know where the horizon is either. ... It's the only time I've ever been seasick.

NF: Out of all of your experiences in Europe, what was your most memorable memory?

LH: Well, you've got to remember, Mitch photographed Dachau when it was liberated, he and Steinhoff, and the pictures were horrible. I have them around somewhere, but I don't know where they are. The last thing those miserable bastards did; the barracks had no windows, they only had a single door. They had a dirt floor and they were covered with straw, for some reasonable sanitation, and the last thing they did was to set fire to the straw and lock the door, and then, the SS guys left. ... There are pictures of a guy hunched over a tree trunk or something like that, that must have served as a table and all; he's all blackened. There's another guy, they had to take the wall out to get the picture, he is trying to claw his way underneath the last wall. I mean, ... it was absolutely the most miserable people you ever saw, and this [photograph] comes from [the] Nuremburg Trials. ... That's a lampshade, right? That's made out of human skin. The other one had a tattoo on it; there were a pair of them. The commandant of ... the camp's wife liked the tattoo that she saw on this poor inmate, and so, she had him killed and skinned and tanned, and that is the evidence at Nuremburg. So, if you want to know what my opinions were, I think the movie of the engineers blowing up those tremendous eagles and *swastikas* in the Nuremburg Stadium, that was the most satisfying of all. [laughter] It's hard to understand how people could be so terrible. It's hard to understand how the Germans could put up with this guy, and how, even worse, is how he's coming back. Here was a guy who was a born loser. He was a lousy painter. He had never succeeded in anything. His first attempted coup went bad and, all of a sudden, he comes up into power with nothing but thugs behind him, and these people listened to him, because he's got an excuse, "The Jews were responsible for everything." ... Sure, there must have been some Germans; I realized it, you couldn't speak out against him. It would be your life if you said anything against him, so, you held your peace and got along with your conscience as best you could. The architect and his wife were in Austria when the Russians invaded, came into Austria. They didn't invade it, they just walked in, and so, the architect and his family, they got up and skied over the mountains, ... the kid was about twelve, and got back to Germany, because they didn't want any part of being under the Russians. The Russians were ... pretty nearly as guilty as the Germans. ... That end of it was the really bad part. The week I spent in Switzerland, that was fun. ... In January, I got to Switzerland. These pictures are from Switzerland. ... That's Basel, someplace. ... No, I know where it is; that's (Chatsow?).

NF: Did you do any skiing?

LH: I spent three days trying to learn how to ski. ... The first day, I got into the wrong class; that didn't help. [laughter] The second day, I had trouble getting ... the T-bar lift, you know, it was just the beginners' slope. That's the skating rink in Basel, someplace, and this is from between Basel and Zurich. This is from the Hotel Krone in Zurich. I know what this is. This is some apartment houses in Basel, and this is what Germany looked like, only worse in most places. That's probably Mannheim. Two-thirds of Frankfurt had been destroyed.

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

LH: ... Buildings, so that they looked like rubble. They looked like beams sticking up and they didn't try to [hide them].

NF: Mr. Haemer is showing us a picture of post-war Germany, Mannheim, possibly.

LH: I went back in 1972. ... My wife and I went back and we drove down the Rhine. We spent a week in Basel with our daughter, and we drove down the Rhine from Basel to Holland, can't think of the name of the town; Amsterdam. ... We stopped in Wiesbaden and everything had either been restored just the way it had been originally, or it had been destroyed and made something else. The Catholic girls' school was a department store. The house that we had lived in had another house, I don't know how they managed, they stuck it behind it. The street in back of it was here and the street in front was quite a bit of difference, maybe fifty, forty feet or so between, thirty, anyway, between the two. This one ran around the corner and came down here, and they'd managed to squeeze another little house in there, but, otherwise, everything had been repaired. Later, when we went through Wurttemberg, we did see two ruined churches that had never been restored, in somewhere down in the Black Forest. ... They'd left the ruins, but everything else had been cleaned up, made the same. ... You know, you read your ancestors are German and you wonder, you know, "Why do they make such good Americans and such lousy Germans?" [laughter] not my quote, somebody else's.

NF: Do you mind if we ask you about your post-war experience? You decided to attend college right away.

LH: I went back, and then, probably, that was probably a mistake. I probably should have finished off the electrical engineering degree, [laughter] but I finished off the chem engineering degree. ...

NF: You took advantage of the GI Bill. You must have felt that it was beneficial to returning veterans.

LH: Oh, yes. New York State gave a bonus, I don't know how much it was, and then, ... the first house we bought, on Long Island, we got the GI mortgage [part of the GI Bill] for part of it, you know. Part of it was FHA [Federal Housing Administration] and part of it was GI and, you know, for a thousand bucks, you could buy a ten-thousand-dollar house. You can't buy a car for ten thousand dollars anymore. ... They still remember us. Last year, ... on Veterans Day, we had a bunch of school kids; I go to the senior center out at Richboro, ... play pool and various games and stuff, and bocce and all kinds of stuff, and they had a bunch of kids there. ... They made these posters up. They're about [in] the fourth or fifth grade and they gave each one of the veterans a poster. So, I kept it and I thought, [since] you guys were coming, I thought you might be interested in it. It's intriguing, with my album, ... the album was mounted when I got home, you know. I made the pictures up in Europe, but ... the album's falling apart and the pictures are in good shape. [laughter]

NF: You also worked for numerous chemical labs prior to your retirement.

LH: Yes. I worked mostly for flooring companies. I was out selling latex for two years, which was an interesting job, but, one morning, I woke up and I said, "You want to be doing this when you're sixty?" and I said to myself, "No way."

NF: You worked for Merck, too.

LH: I worked for Merck. That was before the war, before.

NF: You worked for Merck before.

LH: Yes, six months. ... My organic chemistry professor got me that job and that was a mess, too, because I was supposed to be a lab technician, ... because the guy [I was replacing] was in the National Guard and was going to get called up. This was in March of '41, before the war has actually started, and so, when I got there, I went through the lab and learned the lab procedures, and then, they said, "Well, he's not going to be drafted anyway; would you work in a plant, as a technician?" So, you know, [I did]. ... Of course, that was a union job, and so, it was a six-month probationary thing, and so, I did various jobs. We were making Vitamin B6, which is a long, complicated process, and Vitamin B6, in those days, was selling for five dollars a gram, so, you had to be a little careful with it; oh, what a place. So, anyway, one thing led to another and they decided that maybe a budding chem engineer in their pilot plant wasn't the best idea in the world. ...

NF: Upon your return, you and your wife, Margaret, had three more children.

LH: Yes.

NF: Both of your sons, Robert and Frederick, also served in the Army, the Reserves.

LH: Frederick served in the Army. ... He was born in 1950, so, he got involved about the time of the Vietnam War and he took the six months [of active service], plus ten years in the Reserve, and he put his time in that way. Bud had no problem. Bud is a chem engineer; so is Fred. They're both chem engineers. I once asked Bud, "Why did you ... choose to be a chem engineer?" because I didn't offer any [advice]. You know, they could be whatever they wanted to, and he says, "Because they get to play with such neat stuff." What had happened is, ... his brother had had one of these things where you could make casts, toy soldiers, out of plastisol, vinyl plastisol, and, of course, [it] was ten years later when Bud got to be the right age for that and [there was] no plastisol floating around. ... They don't keep those things up. So, I'm in the plastisol business. I go out to the plant and [say], "Give me a thing of plastisol," and we had a little extra plasticizer, too, because the floor covering we were working on was made out of plastisol, [a dispersion of polyvinyl chloride (PVC) resin plasticizer liquid; it fuses on heating].

NF: That is an interesting combination, you and your two sons are all chemical engineers.

LH: ... Well, wait a minute, it ain't finished yet. Bud gets out of college. ... By the way, he's got ... 1500 on his SATs, when he graduates from Council Rock [High School] here, and so, he gets a National Merit Scholarship Award, right off the bat, and he's looking to go to Washington University in St. Louis, but he puts in for Penn State, just as a backup, you know. Penn State wants him to come and take an exam. So, when he gets accepted at Washington University in St. Louis, he tells Penn State where they can go with their exam, [laughter] and all the rest of it. ... Fred and Francie [Frances] both went to the University of Wisconsin. We lived in Wisconsin. One of the jobs was in Wisconsin. We lived there for six years and they ... both went to the University of Wisconsin. Wisconsin is a big school.

NF: Madison, Wisconsin?

LH: In Madison, yes. Well, ... it was always Madison, and then, they took the other state teachers' colleges and made them part of the university. Oshkosh and Milwaukee and all of those are now part of Madison. Originally, they were, you know, teaching schools. So, it appears big, but they got individual attention out there. ... You weren't just a number in a hat. Fred was on the wrestling team and Fran was working for one of the instructors, making graphs and stuff. He was doing; oh, yes, I'll think of the words. Sometimes, I have trouble; spectroscopy. He was interested in spectroscopy and she would make up the charts and stuff for him. You know, she got paid for this, and so, they all helped, worked their way through college. ... So, when Bud gets finished, he can't find a decent civilian job and the Navy offers him a very nice thing. They will make him an ensign and they will put him in the nuclear program, and they take him out to San Diego and they seduce him into ... joining the Navy. So, he joins the Navy as an ensign and they send him off to nuclear school, to learn how to run a nuclear reactor. ... There's one that Westinghouse had out in Pittsburgh and he spends I don't know how many months out there, and then, he goes up to one GE [General Electric] has up in New York and he goes to that one, ... and then, he gets in the Navy. He's an ensign. So, he's in what was once [Admiral Hyman G.] Rickover's office, the Office of Naval Reactors, and that is now part of the Department of Energy and some of the employees are civilians. It's run by an admiral, he's the only one that wears a uniform at work, and the rest of them, they're half Navy, half civilians, and they're down in Crystal City, [Virginia]. ... So, he works there for a couple of years, and then, they send him out to Seattle, to a naval base out in Seattle, where he is in charge of seeing that the nuclear navy is ... running their proper tests and [to] make sure that they're not leaking radiation and all the rest of it, see. So, he's writing this and going through and checking what they're doing, and then, he gets a job towing a submarine from Hawaii to Seattle. ... It's going to be cut up and junked, and so, towing a nuclear sub, which hasn't got any place to fasten anything to, ain't an easy job. ... Finally, I guess they welded the proper equipment onto it, and then, they towed it east. He said, "The Navy wished they could sink it somewhere in the deep part of the Pacific instead, but nobody'll let them do that." So, he spent about three or four years out there, and then, he came back to Washington again and, gradually, he got away from the engineering part and into regulatory problems. ... He was always arguing with the Governor of Idaho, that it was a great place to store nuclear waste, because it wasn't good for anything else, you know. [laughter] ... By this time, he's got about fifteen years in the Navy and, because he wasn't an Academy graduate and because he never had any sea duty, he's not getting promoted the way he should be, so, he says, "Well, I'll go to school, law school, at night, get a law degree." So, he goes to Georgetown and gets himself a law degree, and then, the Navy offers to buy him out,

because they're having a reduction in force. They didn't want to lose him, but they have to offer everybody the same thing, and they make him an offer he can't refuse, and so, he takes it. ... He's now working for a big law firm in Washington, DC, at probably a lot more than the Admiral makes. So, you see, they're not absolutely confined to the military. [laughter]

NF: After serving through World War II, how do you feel about the possibility that we are getting closer to "World War III," with Iraq? [Editor's Note: The interviewer is referring to the military and diplomatic events that preceded the start of the War in Iraq in March 2003.]

LH: I think that the people that are running it are the stupidest individuals I have ever run across in my life. I am trying to find out, "Who are the people that like Mr. Bush?" because all of the intelligent people I know, particularly women, think that Mr. Bush, [Mr. Haemer makes a negative, plopping noise], down there. It's a very discouraging thing. ... If you'll turn the microphone off, I'd like to do a little talking.

[TAPE PAUSED]

LH: Sure.

SI: The main question I think we forgot to ask before is, where were you when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

LH: I can tell you exactly. My wife and I had gone out to visit my mother. We were living in Brooklyn and we'd taken a train out to visit my mother and my brother, and we had spent the afternoon talking and one thing and another, and we didn't have a faint inkling. ... My brother went out and got some food for supper, you know, sandwiches and stuff, and we left there not knowing a word about it, got all the way home, turned on the radio, about eight o'clock or nine o'clock that night, found out that we'd been into Pearl Harbor. So, you know, we were married in September, but that was not proof against the draft, you know. [laughter] If we'd had a kid by September, why, we could have stayed out a little longer. ... So, it was a bad day. ... We were on the top floor of a four-story apartment, went out and turned out the light under the skylight, so that we'd be complying with the fast-moving ... wardens that went around to see that all the lights were out. Yes, that was a bad day.

SI: Do you have any other questions?

NF: He answered all my questions, I think.

SI: Do you have anything else you would like to say for the record?

LH: I don't know. I can go on and on for hours, [laughter] but, you know, I think it's interesting that you're doing this and I don't know what it's going to come to in the long run, but, at least now, ... on the pictures, let me show you something.

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 9/23/08
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 10/1/08
Reviewed by Laurence Haemer 11/10/08