

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES R. HARMON

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

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NEW BRUNSWICK, NEW JERSEY

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Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview with Charles Robert "Bob" Harmon on October 2, 2006 in New Brunswick, New Jersey. To begin the interview we will be calling on Dan Molina, a Rutgers undergraduate, and Shaun Illingworth, and I am Sandra Stewart Holyoak. Please, Mr. Harmon just for the record, accept our thanks for coming all the way from Washington State and please tell us when and where you were born.

CH: Born on April 12, 1925 in Tacoma, Washington.

DM: Tell me about your parents and tell me about your hometown where you grew up.

CH: I grew up in what's called Puget Sound Country, lived in two different small towns there; one was Olympia, the capital of the state. When I was born, my parents were living in a very tiny logging town in western Washington called Shelton, Washington. Both of our families on my side of the family, now in my marriage, are from what we call pioneers in the State of Washington, that is they were there before 1889. This is true of also of my wife's family. This is very strange because Washington is made up of immigrants, all of whom seem to be named Bill Gates.

SH: Can you tell us a little bit about your father's family background and you talked about the pioneering aspect?

CH: Yes, the family is a logging family. They came, originally, from New York in the 1690s and they moved to Maine to the area of Machias and East Machias, Maine. There have been Harmon families on Hadley Lake Road in East Machias since about 1749 and my cousins, from my age, live there now and own the family homes. They logged out the countryside and all the boys on my dad's side left. My grandfather was born in 1854; the logs were gone as far as he was concerned. He did a very typical thing, moved all the way across to California and started logging in Northern California and then came north, and my grandmother was from a family in Indiana, her parents died and she and her sister decided that they would go "all the way to Puget Sound", which was a long way in those days and my grandparents met there.

SH: Tell us about your mother then.

CH: My mother's family is the same way. They were Irish immigrants who came as, very typical pattern, through Canada. The nearest immigration station when they came south, out of Canada, was at Machias, Maine, and they came to Machias, went to Boston, stayed there for a little while, went to Wisconsin. Logged there and then in the 1880s and '90s some very important people were moving from Wisconsin out to either area, in western Montana and northern Idaho, where they were going to log the Puget Sound country. My mother's parents decided that they would come out and log in Puget Sound, but they quickly got out of the logging business and decided that what they wanted to do was to build and operate hotels and camps for loggers, railroad builders, and in the case of Olympia, Washington, they ran a camp for the people who built the water system for the city of Olympia, Washington. So that's what they did and, eventually, after the, or during, no, after the First World War, my mother and father met because their families had gone so far and they ran into each other in these small, little villages which were really typical of Washington State in those days.

DM: Did your parents do any sort of like college study?

CH: My father had been in the University of Washington with ambitions to become a doctor. He went to the Mexican Campaign in 1916, that interrupted that. ...Then he went to the First World War in 1917, that interrupted his studies again and, I think, when he came back he kind of gave that up and he was working construction jobs in the eastern part of the state and he met my mother's brother and my mother's brother kept talking about this lovely sister he had and saying, Don Harmon was my father, he said, "Don, you should meet my sister." I guess, it was literally love at first sight. I think Dad proposed on the second or third date. They got married and in those days that was the end of that, and, tragically, it was also the end of my mother's hopes for a career as a dentist. She would have been not the first, by any means, but a very early candidate for doctor or rather a degree in dentistry. She wanted to do that, but it just wasn't done. Dad would not go back to college. He said, "Married men don't do that," and Mother said, "Put me through school and I'll make so much money as an orthodontist," which was what she wanted to do, "I'll be able to handle our expenses." "No, no, we wouldn't do that." So Dad spent his life as a very successful, I think, businessman, but not doing anything he wanted to do. It was very typical of his generation that he gave up his hopes for a career. He was always very clear in talking to us, however, about "you really have to think about a profession." If you were in Puget Sound country during the Depression, it was easy to see why; jobless men; there's long rows of unemployed loggers.

SH: Talk a little bit about the Depression and how that affected your family particularly?

CH: Actually, the Depression was a problem for my parents, but it was never a threat to us. We were one of those families whom you can hear about once in a while. My dad probably never made less than at least a hundred and twenty-five dollars a month all during the Depression. He was delivering for Standard Oil in this little town of Shelton, where they lived, when I was born, and where, by the way, he was very close friends with the man who became my father-in-law. He moved from Standard Oil because it's one of those small-town businesses. [Tape Paused] Okay, we were discussing the fact that Dad worked for Standard Oil in delivering oil, gas, kerosene, and the kerosene was used to fuel those stills by which people out in the country, in Mason County, Washington, made liquor and so when Dad delivered to a farm and he had only kerosene for the farm, he always carefully delivered right at the gate, you never drove onto the farm. Everybody else, they wanted to see that fifty-five gallon drum docked right in the barn, or something, but if it was kerosene, it was a gate delivery. Dad was always good at dealing with people and I think that the people who ran a very small boat and truck freight operation saw this and they asked him to take over their Olympia office about 1933 or '34, and that's typical again of the changes and certainly in Frank's [Frank Kneller] lifetime and mine. Freight used to come into Seattle, Washington from all over the world by ship and it also came across the country, from here [East Coast] to Seattle via the great railroads, Great Northern particularly. Once it arrived in Seattle, then there was a question of distributing on the very poor road system, which existed. There was a two-lane highway, ran all the way from the Oregon border to Canada up the Western Washington roads, and you can imagine trying to deliver freight off of that. It could be done, but it wasn't easy, so a very bright chap invented what we call the Puget Sound Freight Lines just before World War I and he had a fleet of small boats, less than one hundred and eighty

feet long, I think, and they were kind of built like floating trailers more than anything else. They had some steerage way in them and very powerful engines but, essentially, they were just simply nothing more than a great big, what would be now a container, in Container Corporations, and they had a mechanical lift on them and freight would go up and down on that and it would be taken on and off the boat by Clark jitneys, very efficient system. That would come to our dock in Olympia at four or five or six o'clock in the morning, the night before it would have been in Seattle. We made money because we promised door-to-door delivery, which is pretty important. Dad would consequently have to be there to get the dock going in that hour of the morning, so he put in long hours, and then the freight would be delivered all over town and as far west, about fifty-five miles or so away to a coastal town called Aberdeen and in many places in between. So it was one of those niche businesses and it still works. We no longer deliver freight by boat now, it comes all on truck, of course, but there's still a place for efficient truck service in most places, I guess. You certainly see it around here and in Puget Sound, that's still true. There are a half a dozen very prosperous lines, including Puget Sound Freight Lines, delivering freight.

SH: Did you ride along on the deliveries or go to town and help your father?

CH: Dad was desperate for help as the war went on, so both my brother and I, who had been around that dock since we were little kids, started working. We were still in high school and we made big money. I think we got paid about a dollar thirty an hour. That was a lot of money considering I worked in grocery stores, and I remember being promoted to forty-five cents an hour in the grocery store. Working for Dad was great. Also, something for you young college people to think of, if you wanted to do something for a while that's physical, there's nothing more fun than delivering freight to satisfied customers. You're out of the office, free stops for coffee, everybody likes to see you come, especially, if you know what you're doing. It's good, hard work and you go home at the end of the day and you don't have studies or papers to write. It's a very good thing to think about, for a while, but as my dad always told the drivers, "you want to be out of this by the age of forty. Those refrigerators get heavier and heavier and you shouldn't be doing this." One of his drivers took his advice and became vice president of the company, eventually.

SH: Did your father start this freight line during the Depression?

CH: No, he didn't start it at all. It was started before the First World War by some very bright entrepreneur. No, after the war, dad came out of the First World War and he was in construction for a while, building highways. As a matter-of-fact, he helped pave the highway, the state highway that runs right through our property now, or what used to be our property, going between Olympia and Shelton and he and Mom lived in a tent while they did that job. The place, about fifteen years later, became their home.

SH: Here we hear stories of people selling apples on the street or having to take part in the WPA or the CCC. Were there programs like that in Washington, or were they necessary?

CH: Yes, very much so. They were necessary, because we were really a kind of two or three... trick horse. There was timber, salmon, shingles, stock lumber of one kind or another, that was really about it. There was some mining, but they mined coal. Coal, I think, was pretty well used

right up there in the market. Our money was made, for all the years between around 1855 and 1900 to 1920, was made in those industries and after 1855 for forty years; I bet the biggest industry in the Puget Sound was cutting timber to go to California. San Francisco was the nearest port, and, consequently, they developed an enormous fleet, again, special ships. Schooners, which by definition, will sail along the wind, and the winds blow ashore there. They used to blow the Spanish, off course, from the Philippines to California. Once in a while, some poor Spaniard would see the coast of Oregon and wonder what it was. That same wind was either on your port or starboard-side going up, or down, so there was an elevator so to speak, or an escalator rather running from Seattle down to San Francisco and that's where the money was. But when Depression came along, and when the trees began to get thin on the ground, it meant hard times. So the failure of the banks in the whole United States was a problem, and it meant payrolls went down. It didn't mean that there weren't people who didn't want timber anymore but they just couldn't afford it. So there's a ripple effect. Here we're seeing in your industries here in this area the same thing with us. But it was all fishermen, and all shingle laborers and the shingle mills and salmon people. It was hard. So right across from our dock, it was right at the end of a street, there was a hotel, essentially, for loggers and it was built like some of these lovely homes you see here with the great, big, grand porch that ran all the way down the front and for years that hotel porch was filled in the afternoon by men who had spent the morning looking for work. So you never had to tell my brother and myself to go to college, which was one of the reasons I went in the ASTP, and, I think, probably one of the reasons my good friend Frank Kneller went in the ASTP was, we knew that there were a lot of people out there who could do some kind of simple jobs but you'd better get your hands on a profession. So that was one of the reasons that I joined the army as I did. I thought about volunteering for the marines, never really volunteering, and trying to get into the Merchant Marine because I thought that would be a nice postwar career. I grew up in the freight business, which after the war led me to think, "If I really want to make money, I should probably get in the air-freight business, which is going to be a boomer" and you could see this. The Flying Tigers and all those things were invented then and I remember the very, first university course I ever taught, I was talking to these young men about the chances and the opportunities that exist in their time. Well, they grew up in a kind of post Depression funk, I guess. I'm not sure if their parents filled them with it and they just couldn't see what you could do. So I ran off a string of things and I remember starting with air-freight and there wasn't really much knowledge about that at the time, but I said, "It's going to be big," and you can imagine now, just FedEx alone.

SH: So even during the Depression you knew, as it impacted your family and the area, were there CCC projects?

CH: Oh, yes. "A lot of CCC projects and, interestingly enough, there were many, many people from the East. Mostly, probably farm kids from the Midwest and the whole Mississippi, Missouri Valley but some Easterners came out there. One of the most interesting aspects of CCC is, I'm not sure that I saw any right in Olympia, but a number of young black men were brought into the C's, the triple C's, and they ordinarily were never put together with whites. They were kept as segregated units, if you think about what the South was like, in the Midwest, that's quite possible but that was their first step to the West, to Colorado, Wyoming, Idaho, and there are a lot of good stories for people who were not. And when I entered the military, once we got to our units, permanent units, and, I think, this is probably true of Frank, we met a lot of people who

had been in CCs and they were the only income for their family. Whether they were here or the Midwest, there were no jobs.

SH: Was there any WPA projects?

CH: Yes, everywhere, and they are very distinctive style of architecture and, especially, in building bridges, and little towns that have a WPA bridge are very careful, they try to keep that in repair. It becomes a sort of local little tour site because there would be a little stream there and that sort of thing. They were nicely made, as I said, a distinctive style and very helpful to the economy. They cleared a lot of roads that needed clearing, before; we had never had anything like that. So those projects were there. They were make-work projects but if they were correctly done, they could be very beneficial to society and, I think, that you see a very interesting application there of one of the laws of economics, about people have to have money if they're going to spend money, they've got to get it someplace, and some people figured that out.

SH: How much younger than you is your brother?

CH: Sixteen months. So he tagged along into the service and he, actually, entered the Air Force twice. He had signed up for pilot training in 1944, I think late in '44, then they decided the war is going to be over pretty soon, or they didn't need so many pilots and a lot of young men found this happening to them. They'd signed up for pilot training, went off to the Air Force and then instead of being in the "wild blue yonder," they were sent off to see us, served with us. My brother was just simply told, "We're discharging you," and he said, "Okay, but I'm not going to be home when my brother gets home. I'm signing up for another tour, until end of hostilities." He didn't actually get out till late 1947. Coincidentally, for both of us, we picked up enough GI Bill of Rights time to go all the way through grad school. Mine ended the day that I turned in my thesis, I think, and, I think, my brother's did, too.

SH: Can you tell us what you remember about December 7th, '41, where you were?

CH: Yes, very clearly, no problem at all. We built the house in which we lived. We bought two old houses out in the countryside in a beautiful site on Puget Sound, just absolutely, gorgeous, waterfront land, and I just visited about three or four weeks ago as a matter-of-fact because we know the family who bought it and they're still there, and it had two different cabins on it and we made a mistake, and, again, Frank and I talked about this being a mistake. We moved these together and then worked from there. We'll live in one, work on the other. That's an absolutely silly thing to do and you spend more money saving money than you save, I think. But, anyway, we did that. So we built that from the ground up. We built the foundations, we dug the foundations out of solid rock. The big beams under that house came into our possession about the same time we needed them because there was a big reconstruction job going on, on Dad's dock. Well, cedar beams fifty-feet long, three-feet wide, and three-feet deep, and straight grain, they were just dropped in the bay and nobody wanted them, nobody, and Dad knew this was going to be the case, so we borrowed every outboard motor we could find. We made a big raft and we brought them sixteen miles around from one bay to another, where we were, and then we had a house-moving winch, which I still have. I could pull this house over. I still have that and we dragged them up, out off the beach, and that's the foundations to our home. When Pearl

Harbor occurred, we had the house up and the frame built and we were actually building a very nice brick patio, which still exists, and it's about ten times the size of this room, I would guess, and it was made from old-fashioned paving bricks, which are one quarter again the size of a regular brick, and the City of Tacoma was tearing up its old streets to improve them with the horrible macadam. One of my uncles, who was a very qualified man in many professions but was unemployed except for being the night watchman at a lumber mill which was shut down, the famous Dempsey Lumber Mill in Tacoma, Washington, and there was no one working there except my uncle and he was the night watchman. Well, he knew that at the edge of their property, Tacoma was dumping these bricks, nobody wanted them. So we had access to all the company trucks, we went out to Tacoma on weekends, got the bricks, bring them down to our place, clean the concrete off, and we were building a patio and, as I say, it was, we've been to Mass and we were working on that thing and Mom came out and said, "The radio says Pearl Harbor has been bombed." Neil and I, my brother and I, had no idea where Pearl was except it was in Hawaii. I think, my parents knew. But we knew that this was a strong possibility. Frank can tell you that the newspapers and some popular magazines, such as the old-fashioned *Liberty Magazine*, which is now gone, but perhaps *Collier's*, which is now gone, used to carry articles about this and, of course, we knew about the fighting in Manchuria in 1931. We knew China has been invaded, China proper, in '37. We were a Navy town in many ways, if you will, so we knew about the sinking of the USS *Panay* when they strafed the *Panay* in the Yangtze River. We knew a lot about that. So we expected that, and there was a great and very close association with the Japanese people there. They were all, you might say, our friends and we went to school with them. That's where I began to learn some Japanese for instance. But we also had a very interesting kind of discriminatory sense about them, because the kids who were born there wanted to stay but the older folks, who didn't even want to become citizens, were quite welcome to come and do some sort of labor. Usually, they worked in the fisheries, or, for us in our area, they worked in the oyster beds. They're famous and Olympia has very good oyster beds to this day. At the end of their lives in the United States, many of the older the Japanese wanted to go home again. They would accumulate a bit of furniture and a bit of money, which would make them rich in their villages in Hokkaido, or whatever, and because of Dad's business, that stuff would be stored on the dock on what we called skips, which were big square platforms about three-quarters again the size of this table, which could be picked up by Clark Forklift trucks, and it might be weeks before their *Maru* ship was going to come into Seattle and they would be getting ready to go home. So the little icebox and whatever else that they had would be there and they'd be off in the corner and there might be three or four of the Japanese skips sitting there for a month. There'd be muttering about the fact that these people came and they made their money, now they're going home again. So there was that resentment. Then there was a lot of resentment left over from the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882, the California laws particularly 1906 and 1908 laws, and there was a suspicion of Orientals, and, of course, there were a lot of talk about whether or not they were acting as spies, and that stuff just drifted through, so it was bitter-sweet combination with all these good people. ...When I was in High School and trying to learn to box, the man I boxed most with was a big, sturdy kid named Sho Imori. My wife had the same experience in her little town of Shelton. There were a few Japanese people there, popular people. The Chinese were accepted. That's due, in part to Henry Luce, amongst other things, that if you read about it in *Life Magazine*, very pro-*Time* and *Life*, very pro-Chinese. Everybody who wanted to, knew all about the rape of Nanking for instance. They knew all about the bombing of the *Panay*. So the Chinese restaurant in Olympia, Kay's Restaurant, was the most popular

Chinese restaurant for miles around, certainly one of the most popular for people like us, high school kids. You could go there and the girl running the floor at night was Jenny Kay, one of my classmates, and still the most popular girl around. We just had a big reunion, this time we swore it's the last, we wouldn't have anymore reunions. We graduated in '43 and Jenny had an interesting experience, which you young people should think about. People came into the Army and they were brought out to Fort Lewis, which is only seventeen miles from us, and they were looking for places to go on weekends. They were on twelve hour pass, whatever it is they would get. They'd come to Olympia and Jenny said more than once, somebody from the Midwest who had never seen an Oriental, walked up to her and made some comment about, you know, "What sort of nationality are you?" But the one that stuck in her mind was somebody just walked up to this gorgeous girl and said, "What are you?" [laughter] Didn't even know what to ask, and she said, "I'm a girl and I work here." [laughter] You know, "What do you want?" She got a lot of that.

SI: Maybe jumping ahead a little bit, but as you got into 1942 and '43, were you aware of any restrictions that were placed on the Japanese Americans?

CH: Oh, yes, immediately, because the posters, and you probably got the originals yourself, and I know we had them about so big, and they were posted everywhere. They were posted along the highway right next to our land and right next to the little berry fields where my brother and I worked in the summertime, and there was all the Japanese, and so on. I had enough sense of history, even then, that I took one of those signs down and I built it into our house, assuming I suppose like little kids do, or young people, that I'll be back there forever. Well, I built it in there and it's still there as far as I know. The people who own the house didn't know it was there and I told them this, ..."If you ever tear up the walls upstairs, look carefully there, because there's something that's pretty valuable," and I told them about this poster that I just put on the wall there. So there was a great deal of disappointment that they [Japanese Americans] had to go away, but there wasn't any questioning. There was simply a thought that, well, first of all, if you were a Democrat, Mr. Roosevelt said, "We ought to do this," so that took care of that. Secondly, this mysterious thing, the Army, said, "You had to do it." Thirdly, everybody thought the Japanese were going to come right into Puget Sound and this was not uncommon. One of my friends, a man who became a Marine, belonged to the very earliest of the kind of Minutemen, if you will, who organized, and they lived in Aberdeen, near the ocean, and they used to go out and they'd be out there for days at a time, armed with their deer rifles, the standard 30/30 Winchester. In the West only strange people had 'knob' guns that open and close like the old Springfield, a real man had a Winchester, like John Wayne's character, maybe. Down there, with their Winchesters and, naturally, no knowledge of tactics, and I learned enough shortly to realize that they'd been slaughtered, but they'd have died to the man. They were serious and they were down there hiding behind the driftwood logs along the beach and the Army built a whole series of little observation posts at various capes and the farthest most part of the United States, lower forty-eight, was Cape Alava, Washington. Right on Cape Alava is one of these little concrete huts. I don't know what one were supposed to do in terms of using it as fortress, but they'd house the two or three guys who were out there, one week on, two weeks off, or something. There is a story, and I have no reason to think this is not true, that one Japanese sub actually did enter Puget Sound and usually the history books tell you that didn't happen. But one of my sons-in-law is a history student and a retired history teacher, he insists that a man who was on that submarine, I

think was one of the officers, actually visited Bremerton, Washington and said, "We came down as far as," they had big safety gates to keep people from going in and torpedoing battleships there, "Bremerton Navy Yard," and he and this Japanese insist they brought their sub that far down, and he was a guest at their dinner table. I don't know if it's true or not, but it's a possibility. I think in wartime you find out anything can happen, no matter how wild the story is.

SH: As a young man in high school in the '30s and also you said that your mother had a very strong Irish background, what were you talking about as far as what was going on in Europe with Hitler in '39?

CH: My American history coach, teacher, was also the track coach and I was running track and he was a neighbor and I enjoyed it, but he was fascinated by the Russians. So there may have been a World War II, but all I can tell you from high school notes what Mr. Miller taught us about the Russians. If you think about it, '42 early '43 last month or first month of '43, was Stalingrad. Well, we followed it unit by unit, and on and on and on; he was just fascinated by this. So, I really, I did a lot of reading on my own. I became fascinated immediately with the quarrel in Europe in 1936. That's the beginning of the Spanish Revolution. I'm an Irish Roman Catholic. There is a very strong split between either you supported the Franco side no matter what they did, but they were supporting the church, or you supported the so-called Republican side, and each side had its own horror stories about the other and each did what they could to destroy each other, that's no problem. But, I was fascinated by this and I was certainly influenced by my Catholic background. I still have a scrapbook of newspaper stories that I began at the age of eleven, I guess that would have been about the Spanish Revolution, and followed that very carefully. So my education in all of this certainly formally began with that scrapbook and then asking my parents, you know, "What does this mean?" and, "Get out the map of Spain," trying to figure out what was a communist, and all that sort of thing. I was also blessed with a very well-educated Irish Catholic priest, who had no problem trying to talk about Marxism. ...I find most people do not know much about Marx, but, this priest did know Marx, and said, to me, "Okay, let's talk about what Marx actually taught." This ignorance of Marx is true, I believe, of most people, then and now. We had some pretty clear notions about that sort of thing, and then, everybody wanted to take a crack at whatever Hitler was doing because you knew that was wrong. There was an odd mixture of information and lack of information. There were some novels that came out about the mistreatment of people in those camps and we knew, at least I think I knew, this may all just be resolved in my war experiences, or post war study, but I think I knew that some people actually were in those camps and then came out and that they didn't talk about it very much. Then Arthur Koestler and others wrote stories about this kind of things, so there were things like that, but there were so much anti-German propaganda left over from the First World War that I know in my own mind I'm confused about what am I trying to remember. One fellow there ran an ice cream and popcorn store, where the high school kids all went, and he had, from the First World War, collected posters about the Germans bayoneting the nuns, bayoneting the babies, burning the library at Louvain, and Belgium, and all that sort of thing, and these were all around his walls. So there wasn't any doubt in our mind that whatever Nazis are, they're very bad people because they obviously related to the Germans from the First World War.

DM: I have a question, like you were saying you lived in the States up until '43 when you went off to the war, and everything, and it seemed you got to see a good deal of the propaganda that was being spread out throughout the country. Did you find that a lot of propaganda, when you actually were deployed, was true or did you find out that some of it was just kind of made up?

CH: Two to three years ago, now, I think Frank may have a copy of this, I gave a talk at Friedrich Schiller University, in English, in Jena, in Germany. Almost sixty-three years to the day before I had run patrol, I did patrols in that town. One of the things I talked about was the terrible things the Germans did, which we began to see in Normandy and I used as an illustration. They shot a man, who was an aid-man. They wore red crosses on each arm and they had red crosses on their helmets, and, Frank may remember, I think they have them on all four sides, and this man was out in an open field working on one of our wounded when he shot by I would say a sniper who picked him out deliberately, he knew what he was hitting. They brought in the body and he was a close friend of mine. So I started my talk by saying who we were and who the Americans were and the fact that we had a multi-lingual population from back here. Not from where I was, there were some people who could speak Swedish, Finnish and so on. German and French, Hungarian and Slavic speakers were really rare in Puget Sound. But there was a surfeit of them in my division, which came from this area, Pennsylvania, and then the Blue Ridge Mountains, so we could talk to anybody. We heard stories and then we saw things like that happen. I talked about my first introduction to hating the Germans was when they shot that aid-man, friend of mine. Then there were other things that they did like that, and then I moved on into some, one story about some American whom I heard, I didn't see, when I was all alone on guard one night in the Moselle Valley...and you could hear a long way in the cold, and I heard some German call out "Kamerad! Kamerad!," which is a signal, of course, they're trying to surrender, and this American voice says, "Comrade, hell," and then, you hear the distinctive crack that the Garand rifle had, American rifle. He fired a couple of times. I'll never know what happened, but this guy, obviously, was not about to accept surrender and one time, I told this story, too. Not far, in a little town not far away from Jena, I was one of two machine gun teams guarding a group of German prisoners in the courtyard of a German farm but in the middle of the town, a small village, and we mounted our machine guns to guard them [German prisoners]. We were isolated there. The town was surrounded and there was a German counterattack going on and there was a thought that, "Well, what do we do if the counterattack overruns the town?" The other machine gun team wanted to kill all these guys, there were about thirty of them, and I remember saying, "No, no, you can't do that, you can't do that." Well, I would hope that that was some of my mother's and father's guidance, but there weren't any sense of kindness. But what I really knew was, "I don't want to kill these guys" and if that counterattack succeeds, we're going to really be in trouble. The Germans won't be happy if they find this. So I told it that way to this German audience and, see, you get both things. Then various acts of kindness of one kind or another, one way or the other, and I have a very fine correspondence with some rather important Germans. Frank should tell his grandson this. You're looking at probably the only man his grandson will ever meet, and maybe the only man you'll ever meet, who actually spoke to two people who knew Hitler quite well. In fact, one of them was the son of Karl Haushofer, the famous geo-politician. I studied General Haushofer's papers at Haushofer's desk after the war; don't ask me why but I was there doing this in 1964 and [196]5. I knew the family for some reason, and the other one was a very famous art dealer, comes from a family that made a lot of money in art, and this guy was very wealthy. He owned a big fast car and he drove Hitler,

around, but he was also a first-class musician and he could play Wagner which Hitler loved, and so he was with Hitler for quite a while and then he began to get some common sense and he fled to the States. His name was Hanfstaengl of the Hanfstaengl art fortune. I was in their Munich store one day and he said, "Oh, Putzi is still alive," and I had not imagined he was. ... "Call him up, he loves talking to Americans." His English is perfect. He's a Harvard grad. So I had a long discussion with Putzi about the latest work on Hitler, which was by John Toland, two volumes, and he said, "John Toland has it right." Told my students that you never quite know, but, I said, somebody who knew Hitler certainly knew Nazi history.

SH: To go back to Dan's question, now looking back in hindsight, what kind of propaganda was being used for American soldiers. I mean, you have a personal reason for disliking the Germans. You talked about the aid-man being killed, but were there images in your boot camps, were there images in your training camps?

CH: I really don't remember.

SH: I mean, you've heard talks that sometimes the form used for bayonet practice would have a picture on it, either of a Japanese or...

CH: I can't even remember what that was. What I do remember about bayonet practice, and Frank and I went through it the same days, that's the first time I ever had sinus trouble and that's not something you want to be doing when you're swinging a rifle around and doing bayonet drill... We've been camped out in what they used to call bivouacs, which is anytime you weren't in a drafty little building we lived in, and I got sinus. I certainly found out one of the effects of it, but, otherwise, I really don't know. I suppose we were told that they were bad. You have to realize that the supply of bad guys really didn't exist in large numbers until after we began to capture prisoners, or after we hit the battlefields, or after the war. Then you got all this stuff. I suppose we were told that they were bad guys, and we had lectures about this sort of thing, but I think for me it was pretty theoretical. It was just something left over from the notion that we were loyal to England. That's family in part. English family after all, even though we've been here three hundred years or something. Churchill is extremely important. Everybody loved him. Give you an idea of the importance of that sort of thing, four kids from our little town, four young men, who knew something about aviation, went up and joined the Royal Canadian Air Force, fought and flew for them.

SH: This is prior to Pearl Harbor?

CH: Prior to Pearl Harbor, yeah. Yeah, after that, they would have joined our service but they went up, they just, that's what you do.

SI: Could you talk a little bit about the mindset of a young man at this time? We have heard how everybody wants to get in the war, was it extreme stories about people who couldn't get into the war, killing themselves out of despair? Could you talk a little bit about that mindset?

CH: First of all, I would never kill myself over something like that, but you would regret it, partly, again, that's because of my father's family and their traditions. The oldest records we

have in the family of military service there are a whole bunch of them who were in both the Army and the Navy, at one time or another. You could, you know, you enlisted for six months or something. We had members who served in the Revolution in both services, but there were Harmon's at Machias when the first attacks were made against the British Navy there, which is May I think of 1775, very early indeed. I've always had a sense of amusement at it because here's all these English families and they were all named something like Harmon, but the leader in this ruckus against the Brits was named O'Brien. [laughter] I don't know how he got there, almost any stick to beat a dog. So they got a bunch of little fishing boats and rowboats and went out and attacked what apparently is the first attack against the Brit Navy. I don't know, they obviously survived it because it's in their service records, but those are in our family records. We knew that you would go. You served. Dad had been to two wars. Two or three of my relatives died in prison camps in the Confederate prison camps in the Civil War, we knew about them. They just served, that's all there was to it. So it's not a question if you go; of course you'd go. Then after Pearl Harbor, everybody was really ticked. There wasn't any question about that, so people fought to get into the service there, and they were quite surprised. Sometimes, people went and they volunteered and folks would say, "Well, we can't take you now." So somebody'll say, "Well, I can't join the Air Force, I'm going to walk next door and join the Marines. I'm going to do that." One of my uncles was in his forties, the one who was the unemployable in some ways, night watchman at the Dempsey Mill, and he had a car. He was working for Dad at the time driving trucks, and some sturdy young chap wanted to join what they called the Seabees, the construction battalion crews, and this chap didn't have a car and he asked my uncle to drive him to Tacoma, where there was a CB recruiting drive going on. Long story short, they didn't take the other guy, but they took my uncle. He thought, "Why don't I volunteer? I know all this stuff they're looking for." So they immediately gave him some stripes, because he had a lot of, literally, seniority in age, but he also was immensely experienced, and a very good manager of people, and all. He spent three years out in the Pacific just because he drove to Tacoma that morning. So there was this enthusiasm. After Pearl Harbor you didn't need to tell anybody "this is a threat." Everybody was scared to death and the Japanese, of course, did shell Santa Barbara. You are up on this more than I. I think they also shelled someplace else on the coast, and we thought that they would and we had those coast watchers out there looking for them. For me, the funniest thing, now, about immediate fear of the Japanese, would entail you to realize that there was a war going on. The main highway around the Olympic Peninsula splits about a mile from where our little country place was, and half of it goes westward to the coast and Aberdeen, the other half continues on north and goes all around the Olympic Peninsula. So the juncture of that highway, tripartite junction, Y-shaped, was a critical point. It had to be defended. Well, later I realized, and if Frank Kneller had been there, he would have realized later, as I did, those people had no idea what they were doing. They'd build a little campfire, and here they're defending a critical road, it's the New Jersey Turnpike of today, sitting around the campfire staring at the fire, trying to keep warm in the constant rain we have up there, and they were an invitation for, "one grenade will kill them all." I've often thought about that because it's important to realize that although some of the equipment that Frank and I carried and worked with was very good. A lot of it was really inadequate, very inadequate. The radios were not what they should be, that kind of thing, but some of the training was absolutely jejune at best, and it was just amateurs leading the amateurs, and everybody hoping that they would come up with something. One of the reasons that we were taught...flanking maneuver, was General Marshall and others at the Infantry School had simply decided you really can't teach these people and the ninety-day wonders who

lead them, very much in a short time, and they will probably do fairly well if they learned how to run up against an obstacle, flank it, and use the old German World War I principle of trying to find the weakest point, and put your strongest point, your "schwerpunkt" at their vulnerable place. But that's not always the way in which infantry works, to say the least, but they were working with ten or eleven million people who had no idea what the military was, and, I think, they did a magnificent job in my division, and, obviously, they did in the 101st, an airborne division. But, boy, were we amateurs. We eventually inherited a West Point colonel on the eighth or ninth of February 1945 and the word went through the whole regiment immediately. This new Colonel, Costello, is a West Pointer, Class of '29, and he had brought with him a lot of information that our people didn't have. We did very well considering the kids we had. We had one very favorite lieutenant who was a high school ROTC grad, never been to college.

SH: Talk about that first day when you went to enlist, right out of high school, young boy from Olympia.

CH: It really wasn't much of a chore, because Dad had prepared us for it in a way and you were going to some place you visited. Fort Lewis is only a few miles from Olympiac. I knew that I was going to go some special program, that I would be going to Fort Benning, probably, but it wasn't sure. But I was going to be trained.

SH: How did you know what branch you were going to join?

CH: I knew that all the people who were going to ASTP had taken these examinations, which predicated that you would go engineering school. You go into infantry training first, but then, you'd be assigned to engineering school for two or three years. We were counting on a long war, six, seven, eight, nine years. When I left home, the same thing happened with my brother, both of us had kind of nice high school romances going and both of us had calm discussions with the girls saying, "We don't know when we will see you and all this will blow over."

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

SH: Side two, tape one.

SI: Okay, I just want to ask one final question about the home front before we get to your military career. You talked about how the draft affected your father's business with people leaving, and so forth, but how did rationing affect both his business and your personal life?

CH: Rationing affected some particular businesses. I'll give you a simple example, gasoline became quite scarce and it was ameliorated in a sense for my brother and myself because we had an outboard boat, an outboard engine on a little boat that we had. For some reason or other, they decided that if you had an outboard engine in the Puget Sound country you must be using it to fish or something productive, so you got an extra five gallons of gas a month. That was our dating gas, because we lived six miles outside of town, and I don't know what else it was used for. Another bizarre thing was that sugar was rationed in both the First and Second World Wars. There was a suspicion on the part of a lot of people that sugar was rationed just simply as something to do, that it wasn't necessary. I don't know if it was or not, but in effect that way for

us. It didn't affect the amount of sugar that floated over the dock I think and it certainly didn't affect our supply of it, because somewhere in the sixty miles between Seattle and Olympia, some tragic accident would occur to a sugar sack once in a while and my dad and all of his drivers and anybody on the boat who wanted it, would find the sugar, which would, of course, otherwise go to waste. So what could you do, except take it? So there was never a shortage of sugar ... for jam for instance. Something else we had to be careful of was, the State of Washington distributed liquor, hard liquor, through a State Liquor Store program, and they still do. It was a monopoly which they thoroughly enjoyed. We had the very valuable contract to bring that liquor down to the City of Olympia and five or six small Western Washington cities which we served, and so every once in a while, mysteriously, a bottle would have to be taken out of the case because it had been broken in shipment and I think that, my family didn't drink, Dad and Mom didn't drink, but I'm sure that none of the drivers who worked for Dad ever went thirsty for a glass of bourbon at night, if they wanted it, because there were these tragic accidents. Otherwise things were the same. There is one thing that you might think about, one hears all these stories about how the war was an international collusion, that wicked people all ran out to Swiss banks or something. I have a German ration card for clothing and the German word for a sweater for instance is a very mysterious word, 'pullover,' and if it's a long sleeved pullover, it's a *pullover mit armen*. If you think about it, it either means poor or arms in German. So *pullover mit armen*. That German ration card is exactly the same size as the meat, butter and sugar ration cards that Americans distributed. So if you were one of these suspicious people about international Jewry, for instance, running the war in behalf of the House of Rothschild, here was the absolute evidence. Anyway, stuff was rationed. Sure, the fact that rubber tires went off right away, they quit making white dress shirts for instance. It took a while after the war to acquire some clothes again that weren't GI. I know my brother and I traveled in Europe together in '48, in youth hostels. We traveled in GI clothes, which was not at all uncommon. After we bought a couple of those Scots bonnets, I used to wear them before I wore a Basque beret, people thought we were British service men. We got all kinds of service. [laughter] Anyway, clothing was hard to get. While cars, of course you couldn't get a new car for a long time after the war, and people began to realize that, "Gee, you can't get replacement parts for your bike," or whatever. It was difficult. Again, people expected it and we got by, especially, because we had several privileges of one kind or another, whether it was the five gallon gas for the boat or endless supply of sugar when other people didn't have it. I think candy was rationed, but I'm not sure, because when we went overseas I think there was some effort to give us candy that you couldn't get at home. Maybe it wasn't rationed, maybe it was just scarce, I don't know. There was a shortage of gas in Europe, too, once in a while, and partly that was because people, like Frank Kneller and myself, make campfires in a little can not much bigger than the coffee cup I'm holding, pour sand into it, pour in a cup or so, I guess, of gasoline, set fire to that, and made a nice little stove to heat up rations, and, so, the engineers are desperately trying to get gas from the English Channel to General Patton. We're making coffee with it. [laughs]

SH: What about for your mother or for your family, did you have a victory garden?

CH: Well, because we lived in the country and my father thought one of the reasons to live in the country was to teach the boys what hard work is all about. We had gardens everywhere and I was telling one of these gentlemen, my brother and I were considered rich in Olympia high school because we made about fifty dollars apiece off the strawberries we grew by selling them

to local cannery. But, we raised everything else. Dad even raised concord grapes to make wine. We raised strawberries; we raised all the food crops, the four food groups, gasoline and chocolates.

SI: So you think that kind of rugged background of your childhood, growing up that way helped you when you first went in the military?

CG: Oh, yes. Again, with my good friend Frank Kneller sitting here, I don't think Frank necessarily had that background. I know that he tells me that he had not even been rifle firing before. He certainly worked hard...and all that, and he's big and stronger than I was and I was one of the bigger kids. But he fired better on the rifle ranges than I did and I grew up with a rifle from the time I was six years old. My dad had been an instructor in Camp Perry, high class shooting. Dad was that good that he was there for a while. So he taught us to shoot off-hand when we were tiny, and I still have that .22 rifle he gave me when I was about ten years old. But here's Frank, who, never held a rifle, I think, out shoots me.

Frank Kneller: That was because of the teaching. The teaching was good.

CH: Yes, you're right, it was superb. "Breath, squeeze." That's something, by the way, that in Luxemburg one time I was lecturing at a very tony scientific high school and to a history class, about World War II and one of the girls in the class, who turned out to be by the way, a daughter of a German father and a Luxemburger girl, Luxemburger woman, asked me how I felt about shooting people, and I said, "You should realize that these were targets. That you didn't have time to be really angry at them." In the back of my mind, I could still see that Red Cross on that aid-man besides that moment, there's blood on him. But they're targets and if you do anything except target shoot when you in combat, you get a good chance of getting shot. The military now is very interesting with the comment, "smooth is fast," and, as Frank says, we were taught well. Pick your target, don't hurry it, don't be too slow, but be careful, don't throw around the weight. And by the way, all the stories you hear about shooting people at long distance is, I think...just weird, and I don't mind saying so. If you don't see why, well, just take a target rifle out sometime. Center it on, say, the doorway of some building two hundred or three hundred yards away and see if you could put a person in there, it's not easy to do. Most of the people I shot, I'll bet I shot within one hundred yards. Frank, maybe the same? They disappear after that, or it's chancy, but if you're that close with that rifle properly zeroed, that Garand rifle we had is very good.

SH: Had you been athletic in high school? Were you in good shape?

CH: I was in tremendous shape. Partly because I was a runner and, of course, the Army loves you to run and they loved me, in a way, because I never fell out, never fell down and could run all day. I knew this was going to happen and at the end of the work days when I'm working for Dad, or if I wasn't working for him, it would have come...high school, I left my books with my folks at our dock and I ran home, seven miles. So when I went in the service I was already doing that. I was never particularly fast but I lettered in sprints and the hurdles and the high jump in both high school and college. So like a lot of things, better than most and not as good as anybody who is any good. I was the fastest runner in my company, my regiment, when I went

overseas. They had one of those contests that the Army likes to have. I was easily the fastest in that. But I wasn't a good sprinter. Any kid in Texas could run faster than I could. But I lettered in the Northwest through a town where everybody played football.

SH: Had you been a member of the Boy Scouts?

CH: Yes, I've been a Cub Scout, but you didn't need that if you grew up where we did. Deer came out of the woods to graze on our strawberries. I grew up shooting scrap birds off the strawberries. I regret that now, by the way, and am more sensitive than I was then. Robins or sparrows looked like they were going to inhibit my income in those strawberries, I'd smack them with that .22, with off-hand shooting. That's pretty good. We just lived in the country and everybody else did, too. You didn't have to go any place; you could walk to the nearest cattle farm from the high school.

SH: You graduated in 1943.

CH: '43, right. But, Olympia was a small town in 1943; there were only sixteen-thousand people there and the only ones who were really steady worked for the government.

SH: In your senior year had you already began to decide what branch of the military you were going to go to?

CH: Yeah, we had to. I talked Dad into going up to Seattle, which was a long trip away, to talk to the Marines and talk to the Merchant Marine Academy people. There's one over here but there was one down in Los Angeles, too, and I could see a post-war career in the Merchant Marines. Having grown up in the freight business that looked pretty good to me. "See the world" and all that sort of thing. I knew enough by moving...freight, by that time, to realize you don't want to do that even as an able-bodied seaman. That's nice, but it's a hell of lot easier if you went into navigation and learn more, and so on, so, I thought I'd be a deck officer. I also looked at the Marine Corps and then this opportunity to apply for this, the mysterious ASTP, came along and all of us, including Frank Kneller, took that exam during the school year, long before you graduated. Then you were notified, and I think I knew in April, I think, '43 that that's what I was going to do. Ninety percent of the kids, I'll bet ninety-five percent of the kids from my, men from my class, went in the military by August and I'll bet ninety percent of those went to the Navy. You grew up in Puget Sound; everybody you knew was in the Navy, that sort of thing. It wasn't the Army, we heard enough stories about the dirt in Guadalcanal by that time. Everybody thought, "this has got to be better." One of my farm-going cousins, from the interior, definitely ended a naval Petty Officer, the reason for the fact there wasn't any jobs. He got out of high school in '41, served on the *Enterprise* and all the campaigns. I think he had, this sounds crazy, but Frank and I had three or four campaign medals, I think he had eighteen campaigns as a Petty Officer on the *Enterprise* because she was everywhere. She was in Pearl, she made it through the war, and it sounds like an awful lot of little stars to put on your service record but I think that's what he had. It was mostly a Navy county. Yeah, we knew exactly what we're going to do once we joined the Army for that ASTP and that sounds like a good idea. It satisfied the notion that you're going to have a career, professional career. I didn't know at the time that I would end up as a history professor, but I knew I wanted to do something that would be

professional and I knew I did not want to work in the shingle mill. If you worked in the shingle mill you'll...lose either the first finger or the...thumb because sooner or later you followed that...shingle into the saws. You could tell, in the town, who worked in the mill.

SH: Did you try for the academy, for the Merchant Marine Academy?

CH: No, I interviewed for them. I shouldn't say I tried, but I interviewed with them, and I don't know if they were interested in me at all. If they realized how stupid I was in math, they would not be interested because they don't need that guy for a navigator.

SH: But you were going to go into the engineering program.

CH: No, the engineering program, I didn't realize how much math you needed to know, and frankly in the end when they started combing out, because they realized after North Africa and Sicily that what they needed was riflemen, I don't think they cared. The brightest mathematician in my little school in Arkansas State College, the brightest mathematician was so good that he could do all those calculus problems in his head and people, the instructor, would turn him once in a while and say, "Mr. Gwinn, JS Gwinn," is that correct?" and he would say "Yes," or "No," because he'd been following. No, never got...to trap him one way or the other. So Gwinn instructed all of us who wanted to try to pass math and I cannot imagine that I was passing calculus under him and I actually went out on, I flunked out on chemistry as I recall, but he went in the same draft, to the 80th Division. I think they just figured, you know, this has been a luxury, we can see that the war might be over. Other people and myself would discuss the idea that there were a lot of people who are guessing the war would shortly end in Europe, in September of 1944, because of the crushing of the German army in Normandy and there were some high-powered people talked about that apparently. I wrote to my mother about it that, "There's a rumor around that the thing would be collapsing." We thought it would be a long war and the army has got to get all these engineers to go to school for three years and the Navy guys did go. One of my friends entered in the program Mr. Kneller mentioned, the Navy program, graduated from that, got his commission as an ensign, and wanted to be the next John Kennedy, and he graduated about the day the Japanese war ended and they said, "You are now a minesweep officer." He didn't know anything about that. Fortunately, when they gave him a minesweeper, they gave him the classic highly-skilled, very personable Chief Petty Officer and so he taught this young lieutenant, this young ensign how to sweep mines.

SH: Where did you do your basic training?

CH: Fort Benning, Georgia, fourteen weeks down there. We all got together, I entered the Army on the third of August, we met probably ten days later at the most. Began a cycle of training at Fort Benning, which carried us through Thanksgiving and then they began to break us up after that and sent us off to the various universities, like Mr. Kneller went to St. Johns. I was sent to wherever Jonesboro, Arkansas was. It turned out to be nice duty station, very nice people and very nice little college.

SH: Do you think that your basic training prepared you well for what you would have been eventually?

CH: Considering what we did, we were given special training, I think, special attention, just because of who we were, the ASTP kids, one thousand fairly bright kids by definition.

SH: So you were separated from the others going through basic training?

CH: Yes, right. We had a whole maneuver area to ourselves, I think, at Fort Benning. Anyway, we had very good noncoms, almost without exception, and, I think, the officers we had were very good and some of them had some vague idea about what they were doing, I think. Based on what I saw later on, a very practical experience for somebody who served from Normandy to Austria, I began to find out what officers really had to know, what a rifleman had to know. I think based on that I think that we were well trained. We were not well trained in comparison to the kids they have in the military now. They're far more professionals than we were, but we would wind up in Normandy and that meant you had to survive the first five minutes, and the first five days, the first five weeks. If you did that, you might survive. There is no guarantee in infantry fighting. It's probably one of the things Mr. Kneller will talk about this afternoon. You can be as skilled as you want, luck counts.

SH: When you came out of the ASTP program, you would then have been an officer?

CH: Oh yeah, you were supposed to be an engineering lieutenant. "Wow, great, you had a career and a commission, no more dishes."

SH: When they disbanded the ASTP program, did you then try to go to OCS?

CH: You could if you wanted to, but I had begun to realize that by that time that I was no leader of men, that it would be simply unreasonable for me to apply for OCS. I never had any administrative experience. So I got a lot of it at the age of twenty-nine. They just handed me the night school at Seattle University with a thousand students and several degree programs and said, "Do it," And the priest, who did that, knew me well and I think he figured out, "This guy isn't too stupid, he'll go around, ask people how to do this," and I did, and the first thing I asked, I talked to the comptroller. I wondered how the money was distributed.

DM: Quick question, when you came out of the ASTP program and you became a rifleman, you were sent to the 3rd Army.

CH: It was still in the state of being born, then, I was sent to the desert. The 3rd Army would be formed. There was a rumor, in the desert in Arizona, because Mr. Patton had designed their Arizona training grounds, that we would go to that, Patton's army, but, on the other hand, Patton was doing his best, constantly, to destroy his own career, so you never knew.

DM: I was going to ask, you heard all of these things back home about Patton, rolling through Sicily and taking that, and, all of a sudden, it's like you've become part of the 3rd Army. What was that like for you, when you knew that you're potentially going to be following his army? Was there anything, was it exciting?

CH: Not at first. There was an educational program. Everybody knew who he was. He'd been, and you've seen this I'm sure, in *Life Magazine* in his funny, little jacket and his funny, little uniform that he himself designed, so everyone knew who he was. On top of that, one of my uncles had served with him so we had that inside and knew what General Patton was like. When we went into Normandy, the worst fighting we could imagine was on D-Day taking place sixty days before, in June. We went in the sixth of August. We knew that there was, certainly had been a disturbance in the neighborhood, and that sort of thing. But, ... after some preliminary fighting, we're there for the "Break Out" at a famous little town called Avranches, which is right at the junction between the Breton and the Norman peninsulas. ... Avranches is just north of the River Selune and a little village called Ducey. We knew enough geography and history to realize that the Romans fortified that little village. Strategic location. Once we broke out of Avranches, and turned east, there was some terrible fighting, but, my Regiment just sort of edged into that." Simply because I was in a lucky regiment and a very good division. The two sister regiments took the brunt of the hard fighting there. So we went across France, saw all these towns we vaguely knew about, and had studied something about. I hadn't any idea what Le Mans and Angers were when we went through there, but, everybody knew what Orleans was and there were Catholic kids who knew Joan of Arc had been... Same for Orleans. When we happened across Chalons, I think we knew that it was where the Huns were defeated [in 451 A.D.] Otherwise, we're pretty ignorant to say the least. We edged into battle, and that's a very good question, into the difficulties and the dangers but under very favorable circumstances and in part because we chased the Germans across France, sort of like cowboys. So we got pretty cocky, but we also got a chance to get shot at and missed, which is, as Churchill said, "is a really great experience". That was invaluable, very invaluable because we eased into this, we eased into the dangers and I didn't serve for a long time as a rifleman. I served in an anti-tank unit and those .57 millimeter guns might be right in the frontline, but they never made any night patrols, they never went out in front of a tank. Later on, when I was working at regimental headquarters they figured out the guns were no good anyway, "Why don't we just use these guys and attach them to battalions, so we got a lot of that stuff that Frank did. Later on, we always found a convenient place for the gun, and oddly enough it was usually being near some farmhouse, where you could cook food.

SH: Talk about the training in Arizona if you would.

CH: Oh, that was a riot. If you've been in Arizona in the springtime, it's gorgeous. It's cold at night because there's nothing to hold the heat at night, but it's gorgeous, lovely weather, about eighty. Sunny like this most of the time, and you were told, of course, "It's not sunny like this all the time. Never sleep in the washes, in the canyons, because if the water comes down people would die, they would drown." Otherwise, not worrying about the snakes, it was great. It was a glorified camp-out and the riflemen, of course, didn't see that at all because they walked everywhere they went. The lovely thing about an anti-tank gun was that it had to be towed by a three-quarter-ton truck, which carried us, twelve men and all our gear, and different kinds of equipment than the rifleman had. For instance, to dig that truck in, we always had a regular shovel and a regular pick, never a privilege to be enjoyed by the usual infantry and certainly never by the jumpers in the 101st and the 82nd. They didn't carry shovels around like that. We all had all your personal gear. I know one of my sergeants told me, "Don't ever, no matter what you do, tease one of the rifleman, no matter what they say to you when you drive past because

you're riding and they're walking," and I had to pick that up right away, very sage advice.
[laughs]

SH: What were you trained to do?

CH: I was one of the assistant gunners, which meant that they didn't trust me to fire the gun but I handed the ammunition to the guy who handled the ammunition to put it in the gun. They had a .50 caliber machine gun on the truck. I was trained as a machine gunner, so I became the machine gunner if you ever needed one. Thank God, they didn't, because it was an unarmed truck. They needed to be 'tied' or wired into the platoon headquarters and ... the other guns and that platoon, in turn, would be wired to the company, the company-with battalion and regiment. I was the wire guy and that meant that all you had to really do was to know what a sound power telephone looked like, which wasn't much bigger than this mike, and that you knew that they had two terminals in it. With any luck at all you attach the wire to your terminals and somebody else would attach the wire to his terminal and then the big luck was when no truck, tank, or artillery fire cut the wire. If the wires were cut, especially at night and usually it was raining, I think they waited for that, then you crawled out, put this wire in your hand, and, let, Frank Kneller tell you. You crawl out with the wire in your hand and crawled along on your elbows, or you crept along, depending where you were, hoping you didn't lose the wire by accident because then you had to pat around with your eyes closed and in the dark trying to find the tiny piece of wire. Then, once you got where your wire ended, you know that somewhere with any luck at all, within reach might be the other end of the wire. Not necessarily. And you stay out there until you found it, then you got them together and this thing was so simple, not simplistic but simple and sturdily made. All you had to do was scrape the little casing off the wires, and it didn't matter which two pair you put together, it will work anyway. Then you take that, put it together, and then you crawl back to where you were in and say, "It's me, I'm coming in." Then the guy who was trying the thing, if you whistled into phone, you didn't really whistle sharply in that situation, you breathed rather harshly actually into the phone, and they could hear in the other end, the sound power. ... So I did that, and my chief job, and the most important contribution I made in World War II, was I could cook. So when we get that gun near someplace where there was a stove everybody would say, "Okay, Harmon, go find something that we can eat besides our rations," and so you can steal stuff out of the field, cabbages, carrots, spuds, or onions. There were a lot of onions and ... leeks. ... With any luck at all, you could trade cigarettes for sausage, or he might have chicken or something, and I would make stews. I learned to make coffee by taking a handful of coffee and dumping it in a five-gallon can, and that's the only way I can make coffee today, and my wife doesn't trust me to make coffee. [laughs] But we did that and so when I was doing that, the other guys were digging my foxhole. I dug in with the truck driver usually, a crazy man from Pennsylvania, still around Scranton, PA. ... He and I would dig a two- man hole, which was pretty much what we did, and it would be near the gun. But not right on the gun, because you didn't want one shell to kill the whole crew. There would be two or three foxholes right on the gun with the immediate loader and the corporal gunner and the sergeant, who was trying to give the instructions, and you had to dig the gun as well, and the trails of these – when spread - were almost two-third as wide as this room, and I forgot how long it was, but it could have been eight feet long, so you dug quite a hole. So it's a lot easier to go and cook up a meal for these guys. It also meant that on that truck which we had I could carry our pots and pans. Again, Frank Kneller in the 101st Airborne probably never jumped into action with the five-

gallon can; that we carried along with us. It was a man's privilege to be on that anti-tank unit. But when the Brass found out how weak those guns were, they sent three of the guns to regimental headquarters. We began to bless it. I've been lucky all my life and I was lucky in that. I'm lucky all through the war, I never got scratched. I was one of the thirty or forty men, at the most, that went up with that gun crew, to the regiment. We pulled guard around the regiment. We actually pulled rifle guard at the regiment, too, and, then, they decided that these guys may as well be formed into bazooka teams and scout teams. The army used to have something called the I & R platoon, which was the researcher, running around inspecting or rating things, whatever, and reconnaissance platoon, everybody had one. So we became a kind of adjunct to the I & R and we didn't work with them, they just assigned us missions. So we go out two, three, four at a time, maybe, went through the German line and play around there while we were finding whatever we were supposed to do, but we also spent a lot time being told, "Your gun is useless. Anyway, we just saw a patrol, somebody had seen a patrol out...yonder, and you go out and find those guys, and see what's going on and see if it's a combat patrol." So I got involved in a lot of stuff with that. That was interesting, and that was the background of some of the university talks that I gave in Germany then, 2003, especially at the Historisches Institut of the Friedrich Schiller Universitaet (where I spoke in company with Helen Patton-Plusczyk, Grand-daughter of General George Patton, under whom I had served). At Glochau we took the local phone exchange and it was still talking to the outside world, to the rest of the Germans, I don't know, but we chased all the girls who were in there out of the switchboard and left. One morning, two mornings, on those patrols we recovered Allied prisoners of war, including one young fellow from our division who said, "I knew the 80th would come and save us." He was so pleased.

DM: When you were overseas did your perception of the Allied position in the war change at all?

CH: No. That's a very good question, I think by the way. The most amazing change, I think it should be noted, and you can see why there would be direct application of this in today's light infantry, anti-guerilla, anti-terrorist forces. We eventually got to the point where we did not trust the French Resistance and there was never any reason why we shouldn't do that. But more than once they would come in, they had little armbands, and so on, and they were always very friendly and they probably want to be friendly because we had cigarettes, I don't know. They did magnificent things and deadly things that I certainly would be afraid to even think about in the war, but we just didn't trust them after a while because too often they'd come in, disappear, and then you get artillery fire on your position and, finally, our very shrewd little sergeant, Mitchell said, "We can't have them around the gun anymore." He said, "None of us really speak French," except one guy named Rudy, who grew up speaking French in Boston, in Massachusetts where all those French came out of Canada and they settled there and they grew up in little family enclaves speaking French. So if Rudy wasn't around, we didn't know what they were saying, and so, he just said, "No more FFI, or whatever they are, no more armband guys, we just can't have them." I remember the decision, of being on observation specifically in the woods, where we had dug in and they had just disappeared and that's when Mitchell made up his mind. He said, "I don't know why they came, why they disappear, but that's the last time we talk to them." Unless you're trying to find out something. You learn a lot of basic phrases, and there's a long crazy word for machine gun, 'mitrailleuse.' ...Frank is still saying that, I...pronounce them badly

because otherwise except for buying eggs and chasing girls, not much French connection. That's the most startling thing, I think, because I came to really admire the Resistance and I know quite a bit about it, as a matter-of-fact.

SH: When you were in Arizona and you knew that you were going to be sent to Europe.

CH: We thought we knew, we weren't quite sure. But you're fully familiar with the term "latrine rumors" and they never knew.

SH: When did you know where you going, ... maybe that's the question, and how did you get there?

CH: When they broke up the division in basic training, excuse me, desert training, they said, "Everybody is going home, this is your pre-overseas leave and you're going to go home." They said, "We're going to give you," I don't know how much time. Frank Kneller may recall, I don't, but I would think two weeks. Anyway, and that included your travel time, I think, but it might not have been, they might have gotten expansive. They said, "We're sending you to Dix. You're to turn in all of your equipment here in the desert except your basic personal stuff," because it's just not going to go to Dix. Any anti-guns, they're not going to go overseas with you. When you get to France, or England, you have new guns. So we came to Dix and we spent, I don't know, three, four weeks there at least, which is very nice, and then I went into New York and I did all the classic stuff with the free show, what was it?

SH: The USO?

CH: The USO. They were marvelous, they were, absolutely true, they were great. I saw Paul Robeson, Jose Ferrer, I saw ... the 'Cyrano.' I saw Robeson in concert and Robeson played the Moor in *Merchant of Venice*. Oh, not *Merchant of Venice*.

SH: *Othello*.

CH: *Othello*, he played Othello. Paul in there, front seats. So anyway, we knew that when we were sent to Dix, we knew that we were going overseas. So, then the last departure point when we returned home for me was Camp Kilmer. We knew that this university [Rutgers] was here and a really suave fellow that actually knew where New Brunswick was, most of us didn't. I had a funny story about going home. When we went home, about the last thing the Army always does and what you're doing practically, is they'll give you a physical and inspect all your equipment, which we were turning in. So we're out in the Arizona desert, it was springtime when we started, and then the wind started blowing. Everybody had what is called a shelter half, which is half of a pup tent. We laid the shelter half out, then you laid all your equipment on it, including your military weapon, and so on, and as I recall my rifle and I think every other rifle in the regiment was stripped down far enough so that they could really kind of look at it. Anyway, the obvious thing happened, the minute it was laid out, a sandstorm began, and that was the neat part about that inspection. [laughs] But the other one was, I knew that I was going to go home and I knew that my father, who was an expert rifleman, would love to see the new little carbine that was around. I think it was, Frank may have remembered, an eight-shot carbine, I'm not quite

sure. But it had a clip and I knew Dad would like to see this semi-automatic weapon. There was no point in taking him a Garand rifle because to the end of his life, probably, the only rifle was the Springfield .03, which he had shot. So I took this home and we'd been on the range so I scraped up a whole bunch of ammunition, just stole it, and I told the supply sergeant what I was going to do and I said, "I want to take that rifle home and I'll turn it in when we get to Dix." So I just put it in my duffle bag, brought it home and Dad loved shooting it, and we played with that a lot, and then when I got to Dix I turned it in, but before I left my mother knew I had done this and she was very worried about being proper and I wouldn't make general. [laughs] Finally, I said, "Mother, ... I'm going overseas in an infantry unit. What else can they do to me?" And that's a very good question for you to think about. We began to realize that this was a very dangerous occupation, very dangerous, and it was probably a harsh thing to say to Mom. I always regretted it afterward, but it was the clearest explanation I could think of at the moment, "Give me six months in the brig or something in Normandy?"

SH: This is in the spring, had Normandy already taken place in June?

CH: Oh, yeah, in June, because we didn't...

SH: You were still in Arizona

CH: I was still in Arizona. No, I was in New York on D-Day. I was already at Dix. So I imagine they probably broke us up just before May Day, maybe just after May Day. I could look at the records because they all exist, of course. We broke up in Arizona with orders to, as Lincoln said to his company in the Black Hawk War, "Assemble on the other side of the fence." Well, we assembled on the other side of the country.

SH: Had your brother already entered the military?

CH: No, he was too young. He was sixteen months behind me. So I don't think he entered the Air Force until 1945, he entered, again, maybe in January '46, and his war was a good war. He ended as supply sergeant of the 10th Rescue Squadron in Elmendorf Field in Alaska and he spent eighteen months paying to learn how to live outdoors. Ski, you name it, hunt, and this was all called training. He came home saying, "Bob, you've got to learn to ski, it's great!" [laughs]

SH: What about Dix, I mean, you're only here to get reassembled?

CH: We went to, Frank Kneller can tell you about this, shock. Again, we went through the famous crawl through the mud under live machine gun fire, and the rumors are that machine guns aren't all that stable, so keep your head down, and we did that. That's one of the chief memories on Dix. Another one was the very fine reception that we got from people around here and the marvelous reception in New York. There are a lot of other crazy stories that come out of that sort of thing, but it was fabulous, it really was, and, of course, for people who had come from here and then assigned to the division, it was neat for them because they were close to home.

SH: Did you know of any men that were in the division that were from New Jersey?

CH: Oh, yeah, you knew who they were. They all told you, you know, "I'm from Perth Amboy," or something, wherever that was. So those of us who weren't, usually teamed together. One of my high school classmates ended up in a sister regiment here and he and I ended up on the same tiny boat, which isn't any bigger than Frank's car, crossing the English Channel. Different regiment, I shouldn't have seen him the rest of the war. We crossed on the same boat. I've never known why, and it was a Canadian Pacific packet boat, and I'd seen them all my life and all they did was take these Canadian sailors and say, "You're now in the Royal Canadian Navy," changed their hats and, again, a great story. The crew didn't really change their habits very much. The guy who welcomed me aboard must have been the purser in peace time, because he handed me a little piece of paper, which I still have, and it said, "Your stateroom is," and you turn it over, it says, "cargo hold number 3," and everybody else made some rude comment, threw that in the bay, not me, I sent that home to mama and I've still got it. I thought, "There will always be an Empire." It was wonderful. [laughs]

SH: When you were sent from Dix to Kilmer then, how much time were you at Kilmer before you actually left?

CH: I really don't know. I suppose I could look it up but I do remember that I was in New York on D-Day and I do remember that we stayed around afterwards, because we were given a pass which would let you go, maybe down as far as Vineland, N.J., or something, I don't know. Of course, we all, who wanted to, we all went to Washington, DC, and you were illegal down there, but, again, "What can you do? I'm in a rifle outfit of a company going overseas," you know, "I don't care," and also life and times had changed. I walked all over the Mall, think about this, in the middle of the night, just sightseeing, looking at things, looking at whatever. I wouldn't do that now in the company of a squad of police. Life has really changed and I slept in Union Station once or twice, just lay down on a bench and slept, couldn't get a room. It was safe.

SH: It seems you were around the East Coast for quite a while before you were sent overseas.

CH: Yeah, that was quite a little bit, about six weeks. By the time I got to Dix and we got through training, we didn't do anything at Dix except sharpen things. Went through endless inspections and other interesting things, in terms of the younger generation particularly. Two of the men in the company, who may or may not have been homosexuals, went to our captain, who was even more naïve than I was and he was a professional lawyer, but, boy, he didn't know about the world and they told him they were homosexuals. Now they may not have been, for all I know they were Trappist monks, I have no idea. They may not have been homosexuals but as soon as he found out, they were gone just like that. Now, where they went? I have no idea.

SH: They didn't say this until they were at Dix and they trained with you?

CH: I don't know if they got the idea at Dix. They, as far as I know, may have been coming from a family with six kids behind them. I have no idea. But the mere rumor that they were homosexuals got them out of the anti-tank company of the 319th Infantry of the 80th Division in the spring of 1944.

FK: I know guys who would have thought that out, too.

CH: And did they carry it out?

FK: I don't know, no.

CH: I know it's not that, but that would be just a terrible risk to take. A, your mom would find out. And B, that you didn't want that appellation.

FK: Mom wouldn't get any more excited with Kevin going overseas.

CH: My mom would have, I think, liked that. Yeah, our moms didn't want us to go overseas. A lot of guys, who didn't want to go overseas, go on liberty to look for jobs so they didn't have to. I wanted to go; I had far more confidence in what the infantry could do than was justified. I served in a very good unit, well led, in a privileged position with those anti-tank guns. I'm one of seventeen men out of the company that didn't get hurt, killed, or injured, and I had an easy job. Everybody else got hurt. The statistics in Kneller's 101st Airborne were dreadful, absolutely dreadful, and they were bad enough for us.

SI: I think we may have skipped over this, but when you were first reassigned from ASTP, the end of that unit, how did you make that adjustment? Were you bitter, were you bored?

CH: No, it was no problem. I had changed enough...by that time. I've been sent to an engineering school. By that time, I had finally gone through the maturing process of being told "you're not going to stay in engineering school." I had traveled widely. I've been by train all the way to Fort Benning. I was a grown-up kid, eighteen-and-a-half, nineteen, when I went to the East Coast. I went to a new unit, in Arizona, on a nice day, and I got a brilliant reception for the duration, and to my company, and this is very rare. I got there after, on a Sunday, after all the chow lines had closed down. The last thing they want to do is feed you. I walk in and probably the duty sergeant, called Charge of Quarters, welcomed me to the company. He said, "You're from Puget Sound. There's a guy, one of the young lieutenants here is from Aberdeen, Washington. He'd want to talk you." So I went to talk to him for a while. Finally, the lieutenant says, "Did you eat yet?" I said, "No, not this afternoon, chow is done." "Oh, no. We go to the camp shack, wherever it was, because it was a big camp, I'm not sure, and the cook, the chief cook, the sergeant, the mess sergeant, oh, I can't recall his name [Sgt. Shepherd], I should, and he insisted on being a good mess sergeant, and I ended up with probably something sweet to eat, with a big sandwich. He said, "Oh, no, y'all got to eat." He didn't care it was Sunday. Sergeant Shepherd, that was his name. My welcome to the 80th Division. So I felt, "Well, gee, here I'm in this place, which, someday, will be famous as a retirement home, and getting fed, at least with a good meal and I'm making well over twenty dollars a month. What could be better?"

SH: So there was no bitterness about the breakup of the ASTP program? Or were you?

CH: There was a certain bewilderment and worry on behalf of an awful lot of people. A man whom to this day I'd be tempted to hit in the mouth, ...wrote a book about his experience and he bemoaned the fact that he, ...a very bright young man, had to go do this terrible thing, the

infantry. It just was beneath him. I have made a great point, that reminds me, I've got something I should have brought today. I brought this to give to you. I think Frank could give it to you, to Rutgers. There were about a couple of dozen pages of advice to my own University, Seattle University, saying, "I know that you guys haven't been paying much attention to the fact that there's an increased call for the draft. You should have a position on the draft and whether or not you will report, whether or not people are passing, or fading in their classes. Which will mean, if there's an exemption for college, that they really be exempt from the military, or not," and, essentially, I said, "I have no sympathy at all with the position of exempting for college, none at all." There might be an exception for some kid who wants to become a priest or a nun maybe. There must be an exception for some kid who wants to go into pre-med. But, I said, "They shouldn't exempt them." I feel that very strongly. We should serve. I don't care who you are, but the notion of reviving the draft, almost ten million people will have to go through it, and, what are you going to do with combat outfits? You're going to put women in a rifle company? Not with me, no way. One of the girls I graduated and taught military history, runs a helicopter company. Fine, if she wants to do that, that's great. I just don't want her in a rifle company. So, anyway, I wrote these pages and if you think you want them, I'll make sure that these are dropped in the mail, or Frank can bring them home the next time he comes. It's just a group of very blunt letters and they're public knowledge now. They were all addressed to the, ... the provost, I guess, of the university.

SH: Back again to debarkation from Kilmer. How much time did you know, approximately before when you're going to go? In three days or was this something that

CH: I really don't know, that's an excellent question. I don't know, probably two or three days. We knew that we were going out through New York. We didn't know what ship. We found out it was the H.M.S. *Queen Mary* and the *Queen Mary* was close enough so you could look over and see the *Normandy*....

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

DM: This continues the interview with Charles Robert Harmon on October 2, 2006.

SH: We were talking about your first seeing the *Queen Mary* and...

CH: Oh, we went over on the *Mary* and, of course, everyone knew who she was and we knew that she held the transatlantic crossing record. By the way, I came home on the USS *Champlain*, which broke that record, she was a US carrier, but not on my trip home, but earlier. We'd never seen anything like the *Mary*, because she literally was a floating village. I forget what the passenger list was normally, twenty-five hundred or something. There were twenty thousand people on the *Mary*, plus the British crew. So our whole division would have about sixteen thousand, five or something like that, and the most notable collection of people aboard, the most carefully observed, was about four hundred nurses. That was officer territory, though. They didn't have bunks for us, of course, for only half of us. So you slept one night in the bunk... You slept the next night in the open deck someplace, and, frankly, it was a nice trip over in July and the ocean was perfectly flat and it was preferable to me to stay on deck and I may have done so once or twice. Those who were going to get seasick got violently seasick, of course, because for

some people there's no way to avoid that. But the rest of us had a very nice voyage and no seasickness at all. She crossed the Atlantic in, I don't know how many days, but she zigzagged over, so it took a little longer than she would ordinarily. No German subs, but constant rumors, and we had several lifeboat drills, which were always kind of fun because everybody talked and shoved. We were supposed to get at least two meals a day from the British, which were never any fun because the British notion of cooking in those days was absolutely absurd, and, of course, you're down in the bowels of the ship and they're trying to serve you some fried fish or something. I went down the food line two or three times, I suppose, but I don't think I made many trips to eat, that chow wasn't worth it. But going on the *Mary* was fun, otherwise. She went into Greenock, Scotland, West Coast, easy passage. Got off the ship, went to the Midlands of England, spent just about a month I suppose there, some nice training, got to see a few English girls. I don't think I went to London. Some people did. Went to some local bars, they called them pubs, met some girls, who went to the dances, and that kind of thing. It rained a lot. It rained when we broke up, out of the regular camp. We went to Southampton and, I think, we put up pup tents. Of course, it rained then so you could be sopping wet when you went across the Channel. Yeah, going in the *Mary* was a good trip and it was fun and I often thought I should go down to Los Angeles, to the harbor down there, San Pedro I think it is, go aboard again. I've never done it. Anyway, it was a good trip over, safe boat. I knew enough about ships to be really fascinated by the *Mary*, and, of course, she got a lot of publicity as a Cunarder and for us, my Dad in Puget Sound Freight Line, you really follow the boats quite closely. Hamburg American Line gave him a painting about one-fifth the size that wall you got there, and that hung in the office, and he also had a series of invitations, so, "if you want to go to Germany on the Hamburg Line, all you have to do is get on the boat," you know, "we're looking after you and you get the free passage over," and we never did it. I've often regretted that Dad didn't because he had a real sense of romance and he would have gotten nice treatment. So we knew boats, so I knew what the *Mary* was.

SH: How was your welcome in England?

CH: It was marvelous. The first thing we did was get the same sort of instructions that Frank got, and that is a little booklet, which told you these are things you don't do, or say, and you don't laugh about the little railroad cars, for instance. They're quite adequate for them. They are cute and they are tiny compared to what you saw on the Pennsylvania Railway, but don't say anything about that. Don't imitate their language, don't try to talk English, whatever it is, unless you can really do it. Don't tell everybody how wealthy we are, and how poor they are. Don't complain about the cooking, or the food, or the warm beer, you name it. ...We're here to help them as much as we can, they've been at war a long time. We've got all the grief we need, we don't need to fight with the locals. That worked fine, then. Going home, it did not work. In '46, I was in London on New Year's night, 1946. You didn't go around alone if you were an American in uniform. I traveled with a bunch of, one Canadian who got so drunk we put him to bed, and the rest of them were Australians, and nobody will bother an Australian. Nobody who had any common sense. I was with five or six of them and they spoke pure Australian, you knew exactly what they were. So it was just like having professional bodyguards. We ran all over London that night.

SH: Why couldn't you be alone?

CH: The Brit...servicemen would come around in gangs and beat up on you. Probably not front-line troops. Probably kids who never saw service or any military violence at all. Just envious of us. ...You know, "The yanks, over-sexed, over-fed, and over here!" was certainly very common. There was a matter of prudential. You certainly didn't run around alone late in 1945 in London. In 1948, I went to...England with my brother, Neil, an ex-Air Force Sergeant who had been chasing polar bears in Alaska, and I told him, "We won't be in England long because they don't like us." Well, I couldn't have been more wrong. We got a marvelous reception everywhere we went. Stayed with a British family, visited very choicey British schools, that kind of stuff. They went out of their way to be kind to us and we went to youth hostels all over England and Ireland. But I had told him that our primary purpose in go to England was we're just going to establish a base, because we want to see the Olympics, the track events in the Olympics, which we did. The first post-World War II Olympics were held in London, in 1948. Bob Mathias, who won the decathlon that year, was there. We went with the head of the National Association, Athletic Association of England, he happened to be a friend of a mutual friend. So we had a marvelous welcome. My brother kept saying, "Where are all these nasty people you talked about?" [laughs] Well, we got out of uniform, they forgave us.

SH: In Southampton, how long were you there before you?

CH: I have no idea. No idea, none whatsoever. I remember, in '48, I remember coming into Bristol. I couldn't tell you how long we were there, but I know we were there long enough to join the youth hostel. ...

SH: You talked about going over on a Canadian packet...

CH: Packet, yeah, the thirty mile trip. No, that's a hundred and thirty mile trip from where we cast off.

SH: Where did you go into?

CH: Utah Beach, and we went ashore on the beach, so we climbed down the cargo net and jumped into the little...landing craft, all that sort of stuff, just like the movies. But, everybody was in such good physical shape. I had to worry about...some clown above me on the net stepping on my fingers, and, you could misjudge the drop into the landing craft. There was a big storm on the eighteenth and nineteenth of June, which wrecked a lot of the Normandy Beach landing areas. It was gone by the time we got there and I don't know if there was even a surf running.

SH: Was there any evidence of D-Day?

CH: Oh, everywhere. Everywhere, all these ships that were washed ashore in the storm, ships that were wrecked on D-Day, shell craters and bomb craters everywhere. You knew immediately, and the first thing, of course, they told us was, "Look, we really haven't swept this place for mines very carefully." So every time somebody wants to make a bathroom call, you know, they would get about six inches off the path. I was very much aware of that. Your whole

career could come to an end there if you stepped on one of those shoe mines. [CH notes: German: *Schuh*. So called because they were designed to blow off a foot.]

SH: Do you remember how long it took you to get off of the packet boat and get over the cliffs?

CH: Well, we went ashore as you would, went up on the beach, so we didn't go over any cliffs. You walked up this sandy beach, just like you were down here in the New Jersey Shore. We walked up on the sandy beach, and the guns came ashore, and we probably took up some position. There wasn't a soul within twenty miles of it that we needed to worry about. Your first taste of war was probably searchlights and antiaircraft fire at night, and I remember that very clearly.

SH: But you were still on the beach?

CH: I think so.

SH: Where everything is different?

CH: We probably got off the beach sooner or later, but it's like around here, you know, where does it transition from the beach to the Jersey Pineland? Somewhere in there, and if you're a stranger, you don't know.

SH: How quickly did the 80th move across France then?

CH: Well, we went ashore on the sixth, we were at St. Mihiel where the division fought in the First World War, on...the second of September, that fast, because we made the breakout. Once the breakout began the whole German army down there collapsed. So then it was just a race across France, and we guarded what would be the southern or right-hand, if you're looking for the German flank for the American Army, and our regiment had a total of about twenty-thousand people associated with us. So there were thirty-three hundred of us in the regiment, but our colonel effectively controlled another sixteen to seventeen-thousand men, scouts and anti-tank people and tanks, and God knows what else. It was just up to him to make sure that no sneaky German showed up from somewhere in the south, and we were headed to meet with the people from 7th Army coming up from Marseilles, ... St. Tropez, Toulon, and that whole area into there. None of us knew enough geography to really know all about that but we knew that was out there. It's interesting, and our colonel was quite proud of this. I wrote to him for a while after the war. I have his letters to me and he talks about that quite a bit...he had at one time, twenty-thousand people under him, and that's what we're doing. If you read the records of the OSS, you'd think that they were all alone out there protecting our flank. It annoys me. There are two or three books have come out recently by people whose fathers were doing this, and surely they did magnificent work, but they didn't do the major share of that. The 19th Tactical Air Force and the 319th Infantry did that.

SH: You talked about when you realized that you were in the war as the searchlights and the...

CH: Yeah, you knew and you hear the noise.

SH: What was the first time that you really thought your life might be in danger?

CH: When I transgressed some First Sergeant. I'm sure in Georgia, that would be it, and when I met Frank's friends from the East Coast. [laughs]

SH: I should say in Europe.

CH: I have no idea, because you got artillery fire, of course. The first thing I could tell you with absolute clarity, would have to be, again, at St. Mihiel from our own Air Force. We were stalled as an attack was developing in the town. We were right opposite on a long, what the Brits call metalled road, paved road, right opposite the American graveyard. So from where we were you could look over and see, what's the American graveyard from the First World War? Nineteenth Tactical Air Force had a bunch of P-47s, amongst other things, which were a big, good machinegun platform. They started strafing us even though we had panels, which were, I don't know, four feet wide and six feet long, somebody will know, and they were bright pink and when you turned those over and put them on the bonnet of your truck, or whatever, then, supposedly, they're visible but if you're flying one of those airplanes at two hundred and something miles an hour or three hundred miles an hour, and scared to death yourself, I can imagine you could make mistakes. So I've been machine gunned at least twice by our own Air Force and bombed at least once. None of the bombs went off, fortunately. The fields they squished into were so wet maybe that maybe the fuses didn't get time to really get fired up, because they ran off little propellers. Maybe they just smooshed into the mud there and they didn't go off, but, boy, the machine guns went on. I and my gun were right over a culvert. Well, pretty soon we were all in the culvert, and you hear the planes coming, if you have gotten out of the culvert, you zip back in it. See, two or three feet of dirt and that paving over you. It's pretty safe. But it certainly wasn't comfortable. That was my first thought that, you know, something could go wrong with this and you can get killed. Another vigorous memory is, I don't know when this happened, not too long after that. We were in a field when German rockets started landing. I don't know if the Germans made the rockets or if they were just some of those that they captured in Russia, and so on. Anyway these things made a hell of a noise. I was so tired, I slept through the impact of a rocket not from here to the sidewalk, where the cars are parked, didn't know it, I slept through it. But those would kill you, of course, but nobody got hurt when that happened, so that was a very dangerous thing, and then the gun was set up next to a little building and inside the building was half of a German soldier. I don't know what the hell half it was. To this day, I don't know, but I realize he got cut in two by something, which could happen to you, and then everybody said, "Geez, Harmon, you slept through the rocket attack." But I couldn't tell you when that was. I can tell you exactly the first time the classic movie bullet pinged off the stone window sill from which I was shooting. It was during the Battle of the Bulge. Battle's closing down, so it would have been after the sixth of January, in '45, and we were at an outpost. We were as far north as the 3rd Army was and the long ridge of land that runs right through the middle of Luxemburg and runs all to where Frank was, at Bastogne. Little town called Heiderscheid then there's a little tiny town called Goesdorf and that's as far as anybody had gone, and we were the outpost and we were told, "Hold that farm hilltop, period, hold it." So every morning, the Germans would attack just before dawn. They would come up the hill and we'd get ready for the attack because we know who's going to come and it was snowy, so you could hear them coming from miles and

you could see them against the snow, and the poor guys would get up to the crest of hill, where we could really see them, and they'd all die out there. The ones who didn't run away. Pretty soon some German officer, I suppose, would say that, "We have done enough for this morning." They would retreat. Then there would be scattered guys on the snow because we'd put up mortar shells with little umbrellas on them and they hang up there with a flare on them, and I forget how long it flew, thirty seconds maybe. Frank, do you remember? Mortar flares didn't last forever but you could see them on that snow, you didn't need the flare, it was just added to make it scarier for them. We had three tanks with us and they'd open up with their machine guns and unlimited amounts of ammunition, you know, this machine gun fire everywhere. These guys would still come on. I shot one guy there at about seventy-five yards, that's how close he got, and he had a burp gun. Somewhere in that encounter was the first time I ever had a bullet just strike right alongside of me, and instead of ricocheting into the barn where I was, it popped out, went the other way, I suppose. We all had a window, everybody...has been through this, some sergeant would say, "Okay, you take that and if anything comes in your field of fire, you're responsible. If it's something you can't handle let me know." So I had my little window. Pretty soon, I put my head out again, I almost shot an American there that same night. He was from one of the tank crews when the attack began and he'd been in the barn where we were. He's going out on his elbows and his toes to get under the tank. There's a little entry way under that, and I didn't realize that he hadn't reported in for duty, so I thought maybe this is some German. I actually drew down on him and I said, "It can't be a German that close to us," and he's headed for the tank rather than just try and get close to a hole and hide," so I didn't fire, thank God, because he wasn't any farther from here to the ground from us. That was scary.

SH: When do you remember your first American casualty?

CH: That aid-man, I told you was a close friend of mine, who was shot by some Nazi sniper.

SH: And that took place in France?

CH: In Normandy, yeah, I remember when they brought him in and I didn't see him shot. Again, it's an easy entrée to war, into the complexities of war, but I saw his body, of course, that's when I took his brassard, still have it.

SH: That you talked about how when you were in Arizona you discussed how the trench would work? Is that the same when you got into Europe or did you change your tactics?

CH: Yeah, right. No, things were pretty much the same. Mostly, I suppose, because we didn't have enough imagination or training for a long time to know what we were really doing, so we just followed the book... You're dealing with a whole bunch of miners and people who had been hunters all their lives, and people like me who wasn't a killer hunter. I never shot a deer in my life, but I spent a lot of time in the woods with a rifle, on my own, wandering around in the hills. My folks knew I'd get home sooner or later. Keep walking down to the water, sure way to get home, they never worried. A lot of us had spent our lives doing this kind of stuff, so you didn't change that very much. Probably some people sharpened up their shooting a little more than they might have, working on real targets. We didn't change very much, I guess. That's a very good question, but we did realize sooner or later...that we could place it with some discretion.

The lieutenant will tell you, "I want a gun to cover this road junction," or that whatever it is. Sort of the "hold the junction," look busy like you were really useful, instead of just holding a .57 gun, which was a useless gun. The .57 was great for shooting up those stone buildings in Europe. You hit it; we had a solid slug, which is eight or nine inches long, maybe big around as an orange, hell a lot of inertia behind that. When that hit one of the stone houses, the stones would fly everywhere, so I think it was probably better than the explosive shells we fired. So we'd shoot up the stone towns, and then the Germans, with real artillery, knew where we were, so we'd fire a few of those rounds and then, ordinarily, get the hell out of there. So you'd hook up the gun... The sides of the Moselle valley can be very steep. One time, we were further down a slope than we should have been, given that we were facing the Germans and the roadway opened out to them... They knew where we were. We fired a few rounds and Sergeant Mitchell finally said, "We've probably stretched our luck," so he said, ..."Hook her up and let's get out of here," so we started out, and one of the fatter, slower kids in the company, Yogi Myers, missed the truck, as we pulled, and he didn't even get a chance to just hang onto the gun, ...getting dragged. So he's running along and his pace was about fifteen seconds for a hundred yards, I suppose, and we're all cheering him on and at the same time, this is very deadly because the shells are falling...one round behind us instead of aiming way ahead of us. They were dropping them short. Of course, if it dropped behind us, ...we could all get killed, and everybody is laughing, and Yogi is laughing and screaming with anger at the same time, because he realizes how ridiculous he looked running up that hill and he can't run fast enough to catch us, and our driver, Frank Marzak, wouldn't slow the truck down, because he is scared as the rest of us and, I suppose, our sergeant finally did something and we got Yogi aboard, I remember that. That was, again, an introduction to fire and doing that, so that would be September '44. But the real serious introduction to warfare was in November '45. We had run into patrols at night in August, excuse me, ...September and October.

SH: You talked with admiration about the officers that you had.

CH: Most of them, yeah.

SH: Was that almost to a man, or were there those who really shouldn't have been...

CH: Only, the captain was the only one I knew who shouldn't have been. Well, there were two who shouldn't have been and, again, that's because this is privileged information. At this stage, I'd almost be tempted to say his name but there's no reason to, but we had a lieutenant whom I've always insisted and I quote "dreamed of being a Field Marshal by the time he got to Berlin," and he did a lot of crazy, useless things and, make a long story short, he was never decorated for anything. They finally got rid of him, but his sergeant driver got the Silver Star saving him from some of the stupid things he was doing. That lieutenant was terrible. ...

CH: ... He wasn't mean, he wasn't vindictive, he's just stupid and he, I'll give you a perfect clue. When you wear a revolver, all out of the movies, there's a reason to wear them as they do. You either wear it tight on your waist, or you wear it way down on your thigh, but there is no reason to wear a .45 automatic pistol on your thigh. It's just absolutely inefficient. This lieutenant wore his a la John Wayne. He practically hung down to his knees and you could just see, and he'd swagger, of course, when he walks and I must admit, I'll bet this has occurred to Frank, the first

time you wear a .45, you swagger. [laughter] There's all there is to it. The first time you wear a .45 down on your hip, you swagger a little bit, you know, "here I am," in the movies, so to speak.

FK: It was on the wrong side anyhow. I guess he was left-handed. [laughter]

CH: That's right. Anyway, he swaggered and he did all the dumb things you could think of and they finally got rid of him. So he was a candidate for (?) and when they replaced the captain, they replaced him with a tough kid from New Jersey, who loved to fight, and he eventually ended up running a rifle company and the men from that rifle company speak of him...with admiration to this day. One of the things he did in the Battle of the Bulge was after the fright sort of died down. There was an abandoned German tank out in front of the lines of his company and he would crawl out there at night with a rifle, wait till daylight when he could see the Germans and then he'd shoot at them from this tank because he knew that unless they put artillery in, they couldn't hurt him in that tank, and they weren't going to send a patrol out because he was killing people from that thing. He did that once or twice. That was typical of him. He came home, became, I don't know what you call your State Forest Rangers here, but he became the guard, the superintendent of one of your parks someplace. That's a perfect outdoor life for him.

SH: What was his name?

CH: Lieutenant Kirschbaum, a great man who just died three or four years ago. But everybody knew him, he had a big square jaw, boy, he looks just like he looks and he fights that same way. ... There's a whole bunch of people, like myself, who were adequate to the task in terms of philosophy and did it fairly well, but we weren't really killers. We killed people mostly to keep them from hurting us, but Kirschbaum like to get out there and fight and I don't know if he was trying to kill anybody, but he just really enjoyed the fight. As I said, a lot of stories about him.

SH: You used the term Battle of the Bulge, what was it known as when you were a soldier on the front?

CH: That, yeah.

SH: Was it called the Battle of the Bulge?

CH: First of all, no one knew what the Ardennes was. I now know enough to know that it's divided into several little, funny Luxemburger names. There was the north, south, central and so on. We just didn't know, ... and nobody knew where Luxemburg was, hadn't any idea. You knew that was somewhere north of where we were, the 3rd Army, in the Moselle, and it wasn't Belgium and you probably remember a bit from 4th grade geography, or something, but that was it. You didn't know how big it was. It's easy to remember the size by the way it's exactly nine-hundred ninety-nine square miles, that sort of thing. But I've learned more now than I knew then.

SH: So as a regular infantryman, rifleman, you knew it was called a Bulge at that point?

CH: Call it the Bulge, yes, because it was very clear. All the maps showed very clearly, say, Frank's position with 101st...near Bastogne and we knew it was a big V and that it extended toward the River Meuse and that our job was to squeeze that V shut and the decision had to be made whether to try to do that slowly enough so that you could eventually close it in a pocket around a lot of the Germans, or just be satisfied, without being greedy, and just squeeze the V and get them out of there. So we ended up squeezing the V and we didn't really try to stop a lot of them from going.

SH: So you had access to the maps that, in fact, showed you the Bulge?

CH: I think the maps we saw were probably printed in Stars and Stripes. I don't know, hard to say. If you had a situation map, that was really a military map, the biggest thing somebody on my level would likely see would be what was called an overlay and you know what that would be, a fairly clear piece of waxed paper, which would fit over a regular map. Now they were drawing it with the classic red and blue lines, the blues are us and the red guys were the bad guys.

FK: I can give you that, in a moment, in an emergency, you don't have maps.

CH: Yes, that's true.

FK: It has to be no emergency to have the map. [laughter] So our maps were just lines some of them written out to identify where we were. It was a serious absence of maps, yes.

SH: Because we wonder what the average soldier actually knew of where he was and what he was doing?

CH: You didn't. You had no idea. If you were lucky, you knew enough French, or enough geography, to know that you were in the valley, the Moselle and so on. No one knew exactly where Luxemburg was. We had a vague idea where the Maginot Line was. I had a much less vague idea when we went through it, but I didn't know where I was in terms of any place else. I just knew that you could look around and see these forts, which you'd seen in *Life Magazine*. We didn't know where we were.

SH: Did you know how serious it was at that point for people who were further north?

CH: Oh, right away.

FK: We had the word. What's the word when they don't care if you live or not? '

CH: Yeah, yeah.

FK: Expendable, yeah. [Laughs] I can't say it, I can't remember, one is expendable. They don't care.

CH: Yeah, very expendable.

FK: Tomorrow I will say the word. As soon I learned the meaning, I said, "Christ, we have a problem."

CH: Yeah, well, particularly, when Frank Kneller and the 101st Airborne went there. And, of course, they had very little ammunition or equipment...

SH: Just to continue, we were talking about the maps, or the lack of maps and where the term "the Bulge," when that term became known to you. What about the famous Malmedy Massacre. When did you hear about that?

CH: Right away, and the details were fuzzy. We weren't quite sure but we knew that there had been approximately a company, which could be anywhere from a hundred-eighty to a hundred-sixty and, I guess, it was eighty-eight, or something like, I'm not quite sure of it. Anyway, we were told and all that did was simply confirm what I had begun to suspect in Normandy, that the Germans could be vicious killers, when they shot that medic that I mentioned. So, we weren't surprised, but it meant that you thought even more carefully about what you did, and you certainly rerun the problem of, "if we are surrounded, will we ever surrender, and, at what point would you surrender if they [the Germans] are going to do this sort of thing?" And, of course, nobody wanted that. Everybody would sooner go down rather than have that happen, may as well. So we were pretty bitter about that, but it also led to increased bitterness of all the Allied soldiers toward the Germans and I presume it led to some more shootings of prisoners.

SH: In your unit did you take any German prisoners, up to that point? Had you had anyone...

CH: Yeah, the first one is a good story because it's a German prisoner who was old enough, maybe in his early thirties, to realize that the war was lost and he walked through a double artillery barrage, ours and the Germans. We had our guns right in the frontlines where an infantry company was attacking, out into an open field, and you could see it for miles. French farms and he was out far enough on some sort of duty so that he took a chance and escaped and if they had seen that, he was headed off for our lines, somebody would have shot him. So he was very convinced that the war was over and he was convinced he had a shot at it, and came through both those lines of shells and he hit a squad that had a German-speaking sergeant. So we could talk to him immediately and the sergeant had a beautiful voice, very soft-spoken man anyway, Sergeant Albert Knorr, of Saint Francis Kansas, wheat country, German speaking till he went to school. So he was perfect and immediately somebody had enough sense to give him something to eat and stuck a cigarette at him and he was a wonderful source of information. He just bled information, because he was so pleased, and he told us that he had decided the war was over and he wanted to see his family and, by gad, that looked like his chance and he made it. So that was the first one I can really recall. We took others at one time or another. The biggest group of Germans in a way I was one of the men really responsible for was we took about twelve out of one of those Siegfried Line forts, west wall, the German's gone. It was the last fort in the line behind a place called Wallendorf on the German Luxemburg border and after that I think that was the end of the line. We spent, two of us, spent an entire afternoon running back and forth from the top of the fort. We'd circled around behind it somehow and we dug little foxholes and the rest of our squad came in behind us and watched us do this. The two of us had minimal

German, but the message was very clear. The message was "the war is lost; you've got a chance to save your lives; why don't you surrender?" and it took, I don't know how long, but I had the impression we spent a good part of an afternoon up there. We finally talked them out of there and out they came. They had had an officer with them, which is why they wouldn't surrender, and he, of course, would have shot anybody, but maybe he finally even got the point. The way I saw it, the soldier and I probably thought we were pretty bright but we found out later on that there were still some self-propelled one hundred fifty-five millimeter cannon, rifles rather, operating there and one of those shells weighs a hundred pounds and it will kill everybody inside one of those forts in a fraction of a second, that's how we cleared a lot of those. The Germans probably figured out, "If we don't surrender to these guys with these rifles, somewhere there might be one of those roving sharks of 155 self-propelled rifles." Those were so accurate that they targeted the forts in our place at eight hundred yards with .50 caliber machine guns, one the .50 coaxial mounted to the barrel. When the .50 caliber machine gun hit the little aperture in the forts, then the Germans had to close the steel doors to keep those bullets from buzzing around inside like bees. Well, that was even more fatal than when they did that, because the .50 caliber would stop, and then the 155 would fire and at that range that's point blank, so they rarely missed on the first shot. Once in a while they had to fire two but they just cleared the whole field. We'd been there for days and I think there were eight forts to the hectare or something like that.

SH: Where was this?

CH: On the Luxemburg German border, over the river called the Our, the Our River invariably pronounced by us "our" and it flows into the Sauer and it goes south, and...off to wherever that goes down into Moselle, that's the border, and that was where the major part of that Siegfried Line fighting that I was in took place, and it was all very dangerous. But those 155s made all the difference and then they had brought in some 4.2 mortars, as well as our own eighty-one millimeter mortar crews and they were firing shots, trying to drop them as close as possible to the exits at the back of each individual fort that was being attacked, so that if the Germans in the fort decided to try to get out of there, the mortars would kill them.

SH: Did your duty change at all as the war and you moved across Europe?

CH: When they broke up the anti-tank company in December of '44 and they kept three guns to go to regiment, that was a major change in responsibilities and a major change in safety conditions, because if you're not on the line, if you're not making patrols everyday, you've got some sort of chance of getting through that. I told you that we had lost a lot of men except for a few of us in the company. Seven or eight of us in my squad went through without getting hurt.

SH: And that's because you were pulled back?

CH: I think so, yes, it's when you're doing this stuff everyday, such as Frank did everyday out in the hole, every patrol you're eligible for, every counterattack, that stuff will get you. The odds should kill you sooner or later, or wound you. Then they're slightly better if you're doing what I did.

SH: In January '44 then, what were your duties and what was an everyday occurrence?

CH: In '45, January '45, the Battle of the Bulge was in full flight. I think we knew by Christmastime and the Germans knew by Christmastime that they had lost already. They certainly knew it by New Year's Day that they had lost. The weather cleared in our sector about the 23rd of December 1944.

SH: So that secured before Christmas?

CH: Yes. I think a day or so before, so they'd see these bombers up there and, of course, more importantly, it wasn't in some ways, would be the fighter aircraft could come in and they were deadly with the Germans, because we did have air superiority, and then for instance, on the 6th of January, the rest of what we were doing, we moved from a ridge top city or village called Heiderscheid, which dominated the road from eastern Luxemburg to...Bastogne. We moved beyond that because we didn't need it anymore and we moved to a town, which is still visible, usually visible from there, but it's about six kilometers away. Go down there, really deep hole in the ground, which is the only such battlefield shown in the Army's picture book about the Battle of the Bulge. It's called the Heiderscheid Grund and it's the fields beyond the Heiderscheid hilltop and then you went up another steep hillside. We went up that on the 6th of January and took a small town called Goesdorf, which was the outpost then for a long time, of where the Americans had gone north on that sector. I am by the way an honorary citizen of Goesdorf for something I did there. We stayed there and they fought everyday for several days and finally the Battle of the Bulge is over and we went on back to some place and refitted. We resupplied, got some more men.

SH: So you actually went off the line and went back then?

CG: Yeah, we were off the lines for a few days and then they brought us back up.

SH: Was that where you got your first shower and hot meal, and things like that?

CH: I don't remember, that's a very good story. I probably got cleaned up because I got a pass into Luxemburg City and I was in there for a whole afternoon and I spent the whole afternoon in some USO, was it, eating doughnuts and drinking coffee and writing to my parents. I may have walked around the town but just so pleased to be, I suppose, clean, but certainly well fed and warm. Again, I had an easy war compared to rifle guys.

SH: What was the weather like for you? I mean, we know how severe...

CH: It was terribly cold, but it was cold, but we were in barns, or we were actually in a house because the houses also attached to the barns in those days and there were thirty-four or thirty-five Luxemburgers in the cellar including the village priest, the commune priest of this little farmhouse. The cellar was nowhere near the size of this room in terms of sheer cubic feet, because it was only about six feet high and it was an arched structure. It was the kartoffel [potato] cellar and so they were all jammed down there and they couldn't come out because they'd get in the way of us and, you know, ...because they had to get a latrine break but also they had to be fed. Well, the lady of the house and her sister, she had sisters and two brothers, had

stayed in the house. The lady of the house cooked on a tiny little stove and they had a tiny little stone sort of shelf for water in the kitchen sink and I was doing the cooking for my squad, as usual, so Mom and I chatted back and forth in bad French and German on my part and bad English on hers. They were there during all of that time. The point is we were inside. When we had the anti-tank gun, when we brought that in there, we mounted it in the right place, which would be...a nice field of fire. Covered it with snow, covered the snow with white sheets from mom's house, covered that with more snow, and the Germans discovered it after a while, fourth or fifth day we were there and destroyed the gun with very accurate artillery fire, two long, ...two short and the fifth one right on it. And as chance goes, fifty years later at a division reunion, I met a sergeant from a mortar squad who had paused near us for a moment, because there was some shelling going on, he saw that gun destroyed. We got to telling stories, "We must have known each other." He said, "Yeah, were you in such and such place? Was that your gun?" "Yeah." I got him to write that down for just this sort of thing, i.e. the Rutgers Oral History Archives.

SH: Please continue.

CH: So we're in that farmhouse and I got a chance to chat with the mother who was doing the cooking for her family and for all of the rest of the thirty or thirty-five Luxemburgers who were down in the cellar, down below us, and usually they stayed down there. They were very patient about that, partly because of where we were and it was on a crossroads, in addition to being an outpost. There was a lot of artillery fire so it didn't take much persuading to keep them in the cellar. It must have been highly painful for them, hour after hour, day after day. I think we were in that house about ten days and one of the things that we did was get a room away from wherever the German artillery was set and several of us would either play hearts or some other card game and the mother said to me one time, when she and I were cooking together, "All the other men are fighting, how come you're playing cards?"

SH: You talked about the gun that you tried to camouflage being taken out by precision artillery. How often did you have to replace your gun?

CH: Only that once, and I never heard of anybody else who survived. Usually if a gun was hit, the crew was there and so a lot of people were killed and then several would be wounded. You see that description over and over, some heroic use of one of those .57s but it's always swallowed in the next sentence, the next paragraph, by counter battery fire killed the gun sergeant, and unfortunately, half the crew, that' sort of thing. ... We were lucky. That was the only time we lost a gun and they replaced it right away.

SH: Did they?

CH: Yes, I couldn't tell you when, but, I don't know, within a week or so, I imagine. We might not have had a gun till we pulled out so that we could get ready for the attack on the Siegfried.

SH: So that's where you went next?

CH: Yes, and that was very well planned in some ways but very poorly led in others. It wasn't until after I had time to think of this in peacetime and, particularly, as I was doing my own professional studies that I realized what should have been done. I did make one tiny contribution, which didn't work very well, but, at least, it was the right thing to do. When we picked up, in the dark, in a place we'd never seen before, the assault boats, ...were nested one inside the other. They're made out of heavy veneer so naturally when the engineers dropped those then they all jammed together. So we probably had at least one or two broken fingers, a lot of broken thumbnails, fingernails, trying to get those out of there. As we started down toward the river, which we're going to cross, and I realized what we were going to do, I started telling the men around me, "Take your rifles and your bandoleers off of your shoulders when we get in that boat. If it goes over you'll drown." The water wasn't six feet deep, but it was moving so fast, and in full flood that would kill you, and we did get shelled and did get turned over and no one drowned, as far as I know. The other squad, I can't remember. But that was just from growing up with canoes and rowboats on Puget Sound. I did another dumb thing there; my favorite friend was a little Italian from Johnstown, Pennsylvania. I knew he was having trouble pulling his weight when it comes to strength, tricks like, such as carrying that boat, and I said, "Joe, give me your rifle, I'll carry it for both of us." So I had Joe's rifle, well, naturally, sooner or later, on a path down I think, shells came in, we all got separated. Most of us got back together, but Joe couldn't find me and I had his rifle, so Joe is running around, fortunately, on the American side of the river, until he acquired another rifle sometime the next day. But he had no weapon for a while. That was very instructive, again, when we thought back on it. It was a dumb thing for me to do. I was trying to be helpful. Instead of that, he gave away a rifle and had no replacement when he couldn't find me. It was very silly. Anyway, you had another question?

SI: When the boat turned over after it was shelled, you had to come ashore without equipment, did you lose anybody?

CH: No, everybody had their equipment, because everybody had followed my advice, and you just hook your arms to those bandoleers and you had a rifle on your shoulder and you're trying to paddle, too, because you had to do your own paddling. I think there may have been one engineer in each boat trying to help us out, but I'm not sure that there was. I think we were just told, "Get in the boat," and most of these people had never practiced riding in a boat together and they had never rowed together, paddled, which is not easy. They hadn't done this at night and it's on a very, strongly, rushing stream. A stream that you could send your four-years-old across, I think, in mid-summer but not in the mid-winter. The snow on the Bulge began to melt, too, so the Our River was really running at crest, really at crest. Again, I just think that whole thing was bungled from a managerial point of view, but that's all hindsight. I didn't know at the time just how bad it was. I think every man there should have seen...that river before we went into it. They could have been done. We could have brought people up, "So, look now, that's where you were going to go, that's about where the boats are going to be, this is what you're going to do. Let's go back and find one scrap boat someplace and everybody practice rowing or paddling." None of that was done and if you figured that probably half of the men making that attack, that night, in the 2nd Battalion of the 319th were replacements, you can imagine how disorganized this whole thing was, Chinese fire drill. Anyway, most of the time, I think we did pretty well in organization but not that night.

SH: Was that your first crossing of a major river?

CH: No, the 319th crossed the Moselle River eleven times, because it goes like this and that was a multi-crossing. That's the first time that I had done that in the boat, because with the fifty-seven millimeter you patiently waited till the riflemen did all the dying and the engineers built the bridge while they died and we drove across. So that was the first night for that.

SH: What was going through your mind as you were carrying the boat and heading out? Were you more worried about the incoming fire or just the act of crossing?

CH: Probably both of those things. There wasn't any counter machine gun fire coming in when we started and we didn't know why...

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

SI: You were saying why there was not counter machine gun fire.

CH: The hills were too steep and if the Germans could see in the daytime, they would have been able to lay machine guns on you, but they didn't know exactly where we were. They just knew that we were down in that valley and I suppose there was some fire from them because they just fired blindly into the dark down below them. They would not have an idea of what they were doing, what they were shooting at. But the artillery and the mortars fell in there because they had pre-registered this thing in, all about it. They had, by the way, come across the river just south of us, no more than three or four hundred yards, during the early hours of the Battle of the Bulge and they did a classically bad thing. They came across a wide-open field that ran up into Luxemburg on the river and they tried to force their way across that field without putting enough scouts into it. Well, the Americans, either by luck or something else, they figured out what was going to happen and we not only had machine guns up there, they were the water-cooled so-called heavy machine guns from the weapons platoon, and many Germans died up there for two days. As the German officers in charge, some colonel I suppose, tried to make it evident that they could force their way to the American lines there and he killed a lot of his own men by sending them into those machine guns. I've often thought of the First World War in the so-called 'Slaughter of the Children, the Kindermord ... where German officers sent waves of young infantry forward. In the December, 1944, German attack across the Our and into Luxembourg, a commander did just that. Over an open field, swept by American machineguns. I've visited that field, several times, as a matter-of-fact. You just have to feel sympathetic, because it's about the extent of three or four football fields in size, I suppose, and to think of those kids out in that snow, running into that machine gun fire and the machine gunners, of course, had a field day. Dreadful, very bad indeed.

SH: Can you now then take us from the crossing of the boats, and talk about where you went next and what you experienced?

CH: Oh, we fooled around in there for two or three days before things calmed down again and crossed the river again. Then after that it was a question of getting up the other side. We ended up at a little town called Wallendorf down below us and the town was so clear that they could

bring trucks through there. There was artillery firing around but we could bring trucks through there. So I remember climbing up this very, walking up this very steep hill, and this truck going by and, of course, you just knew it was going to slip and roll over on you, but, it didn't. It was pretty tricky driving for whoever was driving this thing up and there were a bunch of these supply people and they were going on up. We went out that night and we went to a ruined building and I was told, I think, that it was a hospital, I'm not quite sure, but it had been shelled by both sides. We were told go into it and we're going to stay there for a while and pieces of concrete were just letting loose once a while and falling. Of course, we didn't sleep. You know, you keep looking up to the ceiling. You couldn't see the ceiling, but, every once in a while, you heard this terrible thunk as several hundred pounds of concrete fell down. It was not comforting. I remember that very clearly. I couldn't find it and I told you I helped take a fort that, one of the last forts, talking them into surrendering. I couldn't find that, I tried several times. I have no idea where it was. I can still see it very clearly in my mind.

SH: Ever run in to anyone who was also there to kind of help you remember?

CH: No. No. You do run into, when you're there, are very enthused Germans, about the age of you young folks, who memorialize all of this, like the people in Luxemburg do. They tried to preserve the last of the concrete forts which was there and to keep the government from tearing them down because it becomes a tourist attraction and there they need every bit of tourist attraction they could get. So they have a real business. They show you around and when I've been there, I've been there with Luxemburgers and so it's not a service they charge for, they're happy to show you around, talk to you all day long about it, take you to their house afterwards so that it's become a local industry for some of them and they know everything about that. One of the things they did was these forts had been there so long that stalactites and stalagmites had begun to form and I have a piece of limestone which formed out of the concrete in one of those things and they gave it to me. I use it as paper weight. I have that and I have a piece of salt from the salt mine at Alt Aussee where the Germans stored a whole bunch of stolen art. We were guarding that and I just chipped off this big rock of salt and I keep thinking I should have this encased in plastic because sooner or later it would disintegrate. Those are my hard-earned souvenirs.

SI: Did you share the story about the fort on tape yet?

CH: Oh, I think so, yes, I think so. Yes, Shaun, we talked about this. There were two of us, and we had some German. But we took the German from what we knew were perfect German, that is, the surrender leaflets, which were dropped from the aircraft, and, the message was a brilliant piece of propaganda. It was very clear that there's a little bit of text in between but at the top, in bold, and at the bottom, in bold-face, German-language, there were two lines and one of them says in German, "the war is lost," der krieg ist verloren, and, at the bottom, it says, "You have a life to win," ein leben gewonnen. That's as good as you can get and that's about what we kept saying, and pretty soon, it wasn't all that long, I think an afternoon, out they came.

SI: So it wasn't like a trick, where you're surrounded by the army?

CH: Well, they never knew. They didn't know what we were going to do because they're looking at some, they knew we were savages, and that was the propaganda. They painted that on all the bridges, all the overheads, so that whenever Germans went any place and, of course, we followed and we saw this. They know the Amis [Editors note: German slang for Americans] will hit you if you don't watch out kind of thing and we must fight to the end because the Amis are so bad. So they were very clear about that and they didn't know, too, what we would do.

SH: What did you do to soldiers who surrender?

CH: We got rid of them as quickly as possible and the simple thing to do was, if you could, make sure they got back to regiment. Regiment always had an interrogation officer; a sergeant and they always had a little POW camp set up. So if you did that, then you know that they would be relatively safe, nobody was going to kill them back there, which I know I and many of my friends did not want. The next best thing about that when, the two of us got those prisoners out of that Siegfried fort, we captured them, we took them because we knew the two of us would get a hot meal at Regiment. And, if you were really lucky, somebody would say, "It's so late you better not go back up tonight," and I don't know if we got that treatment but I remember the meal. So that was a very utilitarian reason to take them prisoner. Then I did, you know the German word, the word for cherries and cherry trees sounds like a lot, like a word for church. Well, we got these nervous Germans faced by a couple of very dirty, obviously, unprofessional Americans and I'm pointing down the hill and I'm telling them "to march toward the cherry tree" and I'm thinking I'm telling them to "march toward the church." I'm sure that they were not comforted by that at all. In guarding these troops they're not interested in trying to march toward some cherry tree. I realized that couldn't possibly be at all what I meant and finally it occurred to me, "Oh yeah! There!"

SH: Did you have any experiences with interaction between the German civilians as you marched through Europe? I know you were part of the occupation forces, so perhaps you might wait to talk about that, but as you're moving through, were there any civilians who were...

CH: No, they were very highly resentful, very much afraid. Again, they had all this propaganda and, of course, they even knew somebody, or they actually had been involved in the fact that we blew the center out of every town, fifty big towns, near the shopping malls. You know, out of every large town in Germany, of over so many thousand people, we just deliberately took the center out and there was nothing more for those bombers to do, strategic bombing, to do by mid-April of '45. [CH Notes: It was USAAF bombing policy to devastate every German city of over fifty-thousand population. This was accomplished by April of 1945.] It was very thorough. We took the town of, a famous town under Mr. Reagan's administration, Bitburg where there is a cemetery, German cemetery, and he made a speech there and there happened to be some SS buried there, probably, but the anti-Reagan forces immediately, "Oh, this son-of-a-gun has made the speech in this SS graveyard. A typical idiot thing for Mr. Reagan to do," knowing, maybe that there weren't many people there had been SSers, it was just a graveyard. When we took that town, and, when we give you a notion where it is, it's right near Trier, right just north of Trier. It had a big, famous brewery. They didn't surrender in the afternoon. The evening we blew in there and we didn't attack it. We just called up the 19th Tactical Air Force and the next morning the middle was gone. So, most of the damage that occurred in Trier, or rather Bitburg, happened,

when we went into town. There had been some before. I remember being in the city hall and just looking around. It's pretty badly hit and most of that was 19th Tactical Air Force, at our request. They just didn't have anything to do in those big towns and, boy, they wrecked some of them.

SH: At any point, do you remember a slow down in your advance east across Europe?

CH: No, we kept hurrying and hurrying. The only slowdown would have been the Rhine and we got some breaks on jumping the Rhine, but, also, they, were prepared for it. The Navy came with some pretty large-sized boats, not ships, but boats and much of my division crossed on the Navy's boats and I remember the astonishment of seeing officers in navy blues, not blue dress, but they were navy uniforms with their little white caps that they wear. That's, definitely all of the sailors were American sailors. Yeah, we did that. There was some opposition crossing the Rhine. We actually crossed the juncture of the Rhineland line and, right after that, we were there for two or three days, with the division, sort of gathered up to go up, eventually toward Frankfurt. First, we went to Heidelberg then up to Frankfurt and then, on to Kassel. The next time I saw a Navy uniform was when my Platoon was guarding the Steinberg salt mine at Alt Aussee in Austria. One of the famous art museums in the United States is at the Presidio, in San Francisco. Well, a young Navy officer appeared who had been one of the directors of the museum. Somehow, the military took him out of his Navy responsibilities when they found out about him and he joined several dozens and dozens of art experts who were in uniform and had been assigned – or, reassigned – to identifying art stolen by the Nazis from all over Europe. He showed up at our mine, which was right near a ski and climbing resort named Alt Aussee. In those days, at the end of a typical mountain road, sort of a one-lane gravel road, bumpy. Here comes this jeep being driven by a German Sergeant who in civilian life was an art photographer. He had been combed out of a prison (POW) cage and he's got a Navy officer with him, and they came up and they were the identification and dispatch team. They figure out what was going to go out from the mine first, down to an assembly and sorting point in Munich. And trying to find a large, dry, relatively undamaged building in Munich was not so easy. The history of this has been extensively written down and these fellows went crazy trying to find someplace that didn't have cracks in the roof, because we had all those valuable paintings and other things in there. My squad really had nothing to do when the war was over; didn't need anti-tank guards anymore. So, we were doing all sorts of things. Someone decided they should send The Rangers up to the mind. "Rangers," that was what our Colonel called us. WHAT A STUPID TERM! We caught a lot of grief about it! So that's where we were when this Navy officer showed up, and, now, he's famous in the art history preservation business, and it's a pleasure for me to go through his museum now. He's long gone, you know. I always think about him and my first vision of him. He and his German Sergeant, in their jeep, at the mine. The first thing we did, of course, was get the sergeant to take portraits and he was glad to do it. Whatever we wanted.

SH: Now you talked about moving through then from Frankfurt to Kassel and that's where the war ends for you?

CH: No, the war ended in Austria, I was at Linz, Austria a the very famous place because that was to be the new capital of Europe and one of the reasons that the art was being stolen by the Germans was to decorate that. The other reason they were stealing art was to simply give it to

one another. The way to bribe Hitler was to give him a painting, the way to bribe Goering was to give him twenty paintings. Himmler was very good at this. I don't know if Himmler could tell a Rembrandt from a Picasso and he didn't care, he was a chicken farmer, but he knew enough to steal art. There were, I think, six or seven official teams who did nothing except...run around occupied Europe, and either beg, borrow, or steal, or take by threat. Especially from some poor Jewish family, art, famous art. But we also had a lot of other little things. We had the entire natural history display from the Viennese Museum that has all the chubby little ladies, two and a half inches high that you see in your history, the *Willendorf Goddesses*. They were there in their little trays. You could still go see that at the natural history museum in Vienna, and, there they are. Well, they were in our mine. They found out I could type so I was doing a manifest of the stuff to ship out and I couldn't tell a *Willendorf Goddess* from a *Venus De Milo* and probably didn't care at that time. I certainly do now. But it was interesting that we had all those and we had the famous library. From especially poor Jewish guys who get tossed in the concentration camps and killed simply for the crime of being Jewish. All their property was confiscated. We had one particularly very famous library from Vienna. They were all private and worth millions and the most funny thing, weird thing, ... I typed into the manifest...was a handful of Australian silver coins, I can still remember that. I kept a copy of that one, I've got that at home. I don't know what else, ... do you know what Operation Bernhard was? The Germans decided, and this was made into a movie, the Germans decided to duplicate British five-pound notes and flood the world market with forged five-pound notes and they took a bunch of Jews, who were skilled engravers, out of the concentration camps, and they told them what they wanted and they said, "We'll keep you alive at least as long as you're making these things." So the guys jumped at the job and they duplicated, pretty well, five-pound notes and the whole idea was to undercut the British pound to where nobody would accept...fivers. They took all of the plates, all the engravers, a whole bunch of original good British notes, and cased them all up and came quite away across Germany. I forget where they were functioning but I have a hunch it was up toward the Berlin, I'm not sure, and they came to the lake behind our mine. This is shown in the books and the TV show about this if you saw that. They dumped all that into this very, deep mine, or very, deep lake up there, alpine lake, and even then we knew that there were people sort of sneaking around over in that area, so I imagined some GI fired a shot at some shadow at night. People were hoping that somehow, or other, the treasure...had washed ashore right down there, from seven hundred feet down. But I think some of those have been recovered and recovering was a tricky job because that's like a lot of cold lakes that have a layer, literally, of logs down a certain amount of depth, which is dictated by physics and to go under that. ...For the scuba diver, I think dangerous. I think people died up there but we hear shots out there at this lake. I've been back, to visit, with my family. I never found a five pound note.

SH: How did you find Kassel? ...

CH: ... It was the crossroads for a lot of things. It was the direct route from Frankfurt, it was not in Montgomery's territory. You could just factor all those things together. It was almost a straight shot and, at that time, there was a thought we might go to Berlin as you recall. Nobody quite knew. Although, I think, that the pull-back lines had been set long before, if I understand it correctly, and Martin Gilbert says the same thing. But there was an uncertain agreement, as you would well know, that would allow some sort of occupation from both sides. But I think there was a thought we ought to take Berlin and, of course, they alerted Jim Gavin in the 82nd

Airborne to drop in there. That would have killed those guys, I think. But, anyway, they didn't do it, and we did know there was supposed to be a hideout down in Austria, and when you see the mountains and you see the potential, and if you've done any mountain fighting, you could say, "Yeah, that could have worked for a while." But the Germans were, it's important to know absolutely defeated, and you just tie that to the werewolves question, a lot of talk about "we're going to be werewolves?" Well, there were no werewolves. Or, if there were, they'd all fit in this room. Everybody just realized that they had been badly defeated, badly.

SH: After Kassel, where were you?

CH: We took the town of Troistedt, in Thuringia, for instance. I am an honorary citizen of Troistedt, for action there on the eleventh and twelfth of April, 1945. The mayor of Troistedt rode a bicycle into Weimar and said, "The American colonel, who is going to take this town doesn't want to damage it any further." They had been bombed in February, and we knew what Weimar means to German history, and, "The war is over anyway, why don't you just quit?" The mayor could see the sense of this, but he was afraid of what the German Army would do, and, eventually, he talked the German garrison into leaving the City. They disappear, out of town. ... A small group of us, led by Colonel Costello, went into Weimar and accepted the surrender. There was a story about us in the *New York Times* for April 12, 1945. Colonel Costello, of the 319th, and a few men in jeeps. We are now famous as "Der letzte Lebende aus den Costello-Jeeps." I may be the last man living "aus den Costello jeeps." So far as the 80th Division knows, they're all dead, now, except for me. And, I'm feted whenever I get there. ...

SH: Where were you when it is official that the war was over in Europe, V-E Day?

CH: Probably near Linz because for sake of the argument is that the 7th or 8th in the hills behind Austria someplace and we had already passed their concentration camps of Mauthausen. It may have been closer, I'd have to look at the records and see if I can determine, probably no.

SH: Was there a reaction that you remembered?

CH: It was delight, sheer delight, and the Germans and the Austrians were glad, too. Out there in those hills. And it didn't bother to really take them prisoners if they were trying to surrender. Nobody had time for them. We took mine-tape, about this wide, ran it around the orchards in a couple of places, and told the soldiers – Austrians and Hungarians, most of them, "Go down the road 'til you find the mine-tape on the tree. Sit down, throw away your rifles. Somebody will come and feed you. If somebody is sick, our medics will take care of you and you're prisoners of war and stay out of our way. Just don't bother anybody and no one will bother you," and that was true. I have pictures of a field with several thousand people sitting there. They were so delighted that the war was over.

SI: Really?

CH: Oh, yeah. We were all scared then that some idiot would shoot you on the last day, or we would step on a mine. The guy who invented the Rangers, I think, was killed on the last day of the war. In fact, it was by a bomb in Italy.

SI: Darby.

CH: Darby, I think Darby was killed, am I right?

SI: Yes, yes.

CH: Yeah, I think he stepped outside to see what's happening.

SI: Yeah, it was a very freak accident.

CH: Anyway, I hope this has been of some use to the students and to you.

SH: It has. We actually have one other question, a Berlin question.

DM: Oh, yeah. How close did you actually get to Berlin?

CH: Yeah, the City of Kassel. If you look at a map, I think it's about seventy miles. So I never saw Berlin 'til I was invited there to a formal set of meetings by the German Socialist Party to discuss the surrender, not the surrender of Berlin, but the end of an American Zone in Berlin, that "zone" was coming to an end in the spring of 1994, and, it's one of those things where they didn't know me, but, they knew a guy from the west coast who was German-born, Berlin-born. He was a friend of mine, and was organizing some of the 'American' part of this, and he said to me, "Hey, I'll get you in on this thing. ... You can say whatever you want, in English, and all you're going to do is talk to the people at a big meeting about pulling out of the American Zone, and that sort of thing, and we'll pay all of your expenses." And I had a place to stay. They gave us a hotel for a while. But, he – my friend – had a daughter living in Berlin and she and her husband were about to go on vacation. He said, "You can have our apartment out there, stay as long as you want." So I did.

SI: You mentioned that on your way to Austria you, as you put it, passed through Mauthausen.

CH: Yeah,

SI: Were you part of the liberation force or were you there after?

CH: We were part of the liberation force, but, not the first Americans there. This was true of Buchenwald, also, as the people there. The prisoners at Buchenwald will tell you, "We disarmed the guards. Certainly, the reason we could do that was that the guards knew you were coming and they just want to get out of there." The inmates killed as many of the guards as they could get their hands on, by the way. But they later freed themselves. So you hear stories, and I have spent some time fighting against this. You hear stories about some guys charging heroically – a la John Wayne - the gates of Buchenwald, not so. Not so. The 'camp' at Ebensee was liberated by an Armored Cav group, all from some kind of reserve group up around Detroit. ... I was there, recently, with some of the men from the Cav ('Cavalry') group. They all wore the same sort of jacket, and it was yellow in color, Cavalry yellow. They wore yellow jackets, and they

had their unit patches, and they'd laugh and sing all the time. So, the 'liberation' of Ebensee was all done by them and we [the 319th of the 80th Division] came in about two seconds later. One of the men whom we liberated was a Dutch Jew from Amsterdam. He'd been in two of three camps. He shouldn't have survived any of them. He survived them all – including an appendectomy run by some German doctor did the operation without anesthetic, just like the Nazi doctor – whatever his name was – who did the experimental surgery.

SI: Mengele?

CH: Yes, but Mengele didn't do his job. The surgeon just wanted to know what would happen if we operate on this guy without anesthesia, and he survived it. He joined our Division. He joined the 2nd Battalion of my regiment as a volunteer and then after a while he thought, "What the hell," and he got to somebody to sponsor him to the States, came over here, joined the American Army, became a citizen, became an architect...in San Francisco. Jewish guy, lucky to survive anything. He worked with us because he could speak English. What he really knew was, "Do you have any cigarettes?" and about six more phrases, but he was a quick learner. ...

SI: What was it like at these camps, were people just milling around or coming up to you?

CH: Like the movies. No, very few people would approach you, at first. They were scared to death of any kind of authority. First ones we saw were guys near Kaiserslautern. They came to us. We had a hot-chow line going, which was pretty rare, and, of course, they were stunned to see food, a lot of...hot food. They saw us eating it and they just stood there. They didn't dare approach us. They wanted to be fed, and we ignored them. We knew, vaguely, that there were camps and so on. We didn't quite know who they were, and we were hungry and tired and asleep on our feet. I've always been ashamed that we didn't feed them. We fed them after that, but, we didn't feed them then. Pretty hard to say, but, that's what we did. They were all wearing stripes, like this, little pjs. They all looked as if they weighted about ninety pounds each. Some fell down dead from excitement – heart attack, blood pressure, whatever, I guess. Same at Ebensee. But, at Ebensee, ... they were rescued by this armored car troop.

SH: I regret to say that we must end this interview so that Professor Harmon can speak to a seminar class downstairs and so thank you again.

CH: You're more than welcome. It's been my privilege and I congratulate you on the service that you're doing, not only for this generation but to every generation from now. This is very valuable and probably most of the stuff you can hear you can believe I think. Most of us have given up telling, made up most of it quite a while ago. It's fun to sit here with Frank because he in fact, of course, saw a great deal of action, very dangerous. Thank you, I appreciate it.

SH: Well, thank you.

SI: Thank you.

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