

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH GORDON F. LEWIS

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Dr. Gordon F. Lewis on July 24, 2006, in Essex Junction, Vermont, with Shaun Illingworth. Dr. Lewis, thank you very much for having me here today.

Gordon Lewis: Oh, you're welcome.

SI: To begin, can you tell me where and when you were born?

GL: I was born in Clifton, New Jersey, February 25, 1924.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit about your father, beginning with what his name was?

GL: My father's name was Winfield S. Lewis and he came from Monroe, New York, and, at the time of my birth, I'm not sure whether he's working for the railroad or a trolley car organization. My mother, Emma Peckart Lewis, was born in Paterson, New Jersey, and was a schoolteacher at the time of the marriage.

SI: Can you tell me how your parents met?

GL: My parents met because my dad came from Monroe down to Paterson. He had a friend that lived in Paterson then. My mother and her family, I believe, lived upstairs from this connection of my father's and that's when they first met.

SI: You talked a little about what your father did for a living. Do you know what other jobs he had and what he did for the railroad?

GL: He was a collector on the railroad, and he may have been a collector on the trolley car, I'm not sure about that. At one time, he managed an A&P Store and, another time, he was in charge of the safe deposit boxes in a Paterson bank. My mother never worked. She never did teach school after marriage. They had a son, Burton Lewis, born in 1907, who died at age sixteen, after an incident in which a playmate threw a wet snowball and caught him in the stomach and ruptured his spleen. ... He was getting treated for that for a couple of years, and then, he died from that injury. Of course, today, with the way they handle such things, he would have never died, but, in those days, things were a bit more premature and, two years later, after he died, my older brother, Ronald, was born and that was in 1909, and then, in 1924, my twin Robert and I were born and we were the last of the children in that family.

SI: How did the family settle in Clifton?

GL: Well, I never lived in Clifton. This birth took place at the home of my mother's sister. The family, at that time, was living in Waldwick, New Jersey. They had lived for awhile in Ridgewood, New Jersey, but, then, when I was born and thereafter, we lived in Waldwick all the time. They were still living in Waldwick when I went into the service, after my freshman year at Rutgers, and that was 1943. ... Actually, growing up during the [Great] Depression was difficult, as many people have remarked, and the most difficult part for our family was that we lost our house to the mortgage company in 1938. That was a great hardship on my parents, had a

difficult time, coupled with the fact, of course, that my twin brother Robert required quite a lot of care because he was born with cerebral palsy. ... He lived to a fairly ripe age, though. He died in 1995. I think he was, what? seventy-one at the time, I believe, anyway. ... So, when we lost our house to the mortgage company, we then lived in a rented house and we were still living in Waldwick when I went into the service. When I came out of the service, they had moved to Ramsey, New Jersey, and, in the interim, ... just before I went in the service, I think it was, or maybe it was when I was still in high school, my father had a stroke, from which he recovered quite well, actually, and he worked for the WPA [Works Progress Administration] at the time. He was a timekeeper on some construction projects and he also had a role that he liked very much with the WPA and that was with the historical section, doing research in town libraries in the Bergen County area, city libraries with old records, and so forth, and that was an interesting piece of work. A lot of good things came out of the WPA, like the [Federal] Writers' Project, the theater and arts projects and this history project. [Editor's Note: The Works Progress Administration was a government program to create jobs for American citizens through public and municipal works projects, a part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation. The Federal Writers' Project, part of the WPA's arts programs, produced the WPA travel guides.]

SI: Was that part of the material used in the WPA guides or was it for something else?

GL: Oh, yes, I think it probably was in the WPA guides, which, as you may know, were excellent. In fact, ... lying around somewhere, I have a WPA guide from Tennessee that I picked up at a used book sale.

SI: Yes, they remained remarkably current.

GL: Yes. ... I mean, a lot of it's dated in a way, but, in terms of directions, you might have some road widening and that kind of changes, but I find, in looking at them, that as descriptions of places I have been, they did a good job, still a good way to orient yourself to the state, if you're interested.

SI: How did he wind up working for the WPA? Did he lose his job?

GL: Well, yes, right, he lost his job.

SI: Where had he been working before then?

GL: I think that job, I think that was when he was ... in charge of the safe deposit boxes in the Paterson bank. Then, he lost that job.

SI: Did you have to work outside of the home to bring in income?

GL: ... I had to work to get spending money and clothing money, and I paid for my clothes from age thirteen on. ... Spending money, I earned by doing odd jobs, working summers, working weekends, when I was in high school, ... because my parents couldn't afford it, and I was the first one to go to college in my family. My older brother graduated high school in 1928, didn't go to college. It wasn't that common. He was a prominent semi-pro baseball player in [the]

Bergen County area [of] New Jersey and is in the baseball hall of fame for Bergen County. ... The story was that when he was [in] high school, he was a three-letter athlete in high school, that some St. Louis Cardinals baseball scout was interested in him and wanted him to go to Pennsylvania, or suggested that he could go to Pennsylvania, but my mother did not want him to go far away from home. So, she vetoed that, just as she vetoed us playing football in high school. So, he played baseball, basketball and track, gave up football. She didn't want him in it. Well, I can understand, with the first son having died from physical injury, that she might be a little concerned about his playing football, though he would have been good at that, too.

SI: The leagues around Paterson are pretty famous for having produced a lot of good players.

GL: Right, yes.

SI: They were the industrial leagues. Did he play in the industrial leagues?

GL: No, actually, I don't think he played in a league at the time. He played for the Waldwick AC, he played for the Allendale A's, they were both prominent, heavy semi-pro clubs, and he played for a few others. Different clubs would try to, you know, get him to play for them. So, now and then, if he had a friend, he went with that, and some of those ventures didn't turn out too well, because the clubs didn't survive, but the A's and the AC were prominent and the A's had a long history. So, most of his time he spent playing there, but he played against some well-known people. Larry Doby of the [Cleveland] Indians was playing [in the Paterson area then]. Let's see, I think he might have been playing baseball, and I know Larry Doby who played with the Indians was a basketball player at Eastside High when I was in high school. ... I was on the JV [junior varsity] team in basketball for a year or so in high school and I know he played against Ramsey High. So, I did see him play when he was a high school star in the area, but my brother, when he went in the service in World War II, continued his baseball by playing for the regimental team. He was stationed at Camp Wheeler, Georgia, and he played for them and a number of Major League players were on that team. One, for example, was Joe Dobson, the well-known Boston Red Sox pitcher, Bobby Bragan, who's a catcher for the Dodgers and, later, was a manager, Carl Scheib, I think he was with one of the Philadelphia teams, but I don't know whether he's a pitcher. [I] think he might have been a pitcher, and there were a few other Major League Baseball players playing with my brother at the time and he enjoyed that. ... He got an assignment with the ... regimental recreation office, so [that] he could play baseball for the regimental team, didn't have to devote all this time to the [other duties]. He was a cadre man at Camp Wheeler, and so, they, in effect, got him a cushy job, so [that] he could play baseball, and that happened in the Army.

SI: I was also curious, because some of the other men that we have interviewed from that area of Bergen County remember a lot of labor unrest, strikes and that sort of thing, from when they were kids. Do you remember any of that?

GL: No, to tell you the truth, I don't know. I know about the famous sit-down strike in the automobile industry, with the Reuther brothers, but [perhaps] a strike in, say, Paterson. [Editor's Note: Walter Reuther was a prominent labor leader in the United Automobile Workers, as were his brothers Roy and Victor.] Paterson was prominent for its silk mills, among other things, and

they came upon hard times, too, used to be called the Silk City, but they had those. So, there might have been some labor unrest there, but, no, I don't recall labor unrest *per se* in Bergen County. Of course, Paterson's in Passaic County. [laughter]

SI: Where did you go to school?

GL: Well, I went to Waldwick Grammar School, grades one through eight, and then, I went to Ramsey High School. Now, Ramsey High School, at that time, was a regional high school and there weren't any other high schools in the area, so, Waldwick, Allendale, Mahwah, Wyckoff and Saddle River sent their students to Ramsey High School. I think I've listed all the sending [districts]; Franklin Lakes that's another one, they sent their kids. Now, all of these places have their own high schools now. So, I don't know just when that change happened, but, certainly, post-World War II, I think, yes.

SI: How far did you have to travel?

GL: Well, I traveled on the train; I guess it would have been about six miles from Waldwick to Ramsey on the train. The town paid for the train. They had a commuter card and they punched a trip each time you rode the train, and you could use it anytime, like, after basketball practice, I'd be coming home at, say, five-thirty or so. In the morning, you had to catch the one train that would get you to Ramsey High School on time if you were coming from Waldwick, but we were the only town that sent kids to high school by train. The others all came by school bus. I guess Waldwick figured that it was cheaper to send them by train than to get a fleet of school busses to ferry us back and forth.

SI: You played basketball; for how long?

GL: Well, I played basketball only one year on the JV team; didn't make the cut for higher than that. The coach, the vice principal of the school at the time, was also the basketball coach when my brother was starring for the high school and maybe they gave me a chance to show that I might have some of my brother's talent, which I didn't, but I spent a lot of time doing things like acting, for example, and glee club, so, I was often late after school. I did play intramural basketball, [had] more success in that. [laughter]

SI: Would you act in plays or were you behind the scenes?

GL: Plays, yes, and I would work the basketball games the years I ... [was not] playing, selling candy and things like that. We had an outfit called the AA, the Athletic Association, and they took charge of the sales of candy, peanuts, and so forth, among other things, of course. It was an organization, undergraduate organization, [to] sort of promote and assist athletics in the high school.

SI: How did you become involved with performing, with either the stage or the glee club?

GL: Well, I was interested, just went out, tried out and made it, yes; no, just volunteer stuff, an interest which I carried on later in life. I was a theater arts major at Rutgers, studied under the

late Jane Inge, a fabulous teacher of that era, at what was then called New Jersey College for Women, and I spent four years connected to that theater club at Rutgers, putting on a number of shows, and then, I had occasion to do some acting in puppetry. I'll get to that later on, you'll talk about World War II, but, after I got out of the service, I spent the first summer out of the service ... with a summer theater group in Ridgewood, New Jersey, was in one of their plays, and then, I joined the Antrim Players, up near Suffern, New York, and that's where I met my wife. ... Then, later on, when I started ... my first tenure track job at Rollins College in Florida, I acted in theater productions at Rollins College, and, when I came to Burlington, some years later, I was with the Burlington theater club for a couple of years, acting in their plays. Then, I got too busy and I had to give it up.

SI: That is interesting that you kept it up.

GL: I kept it up for a long time, right, yes.

SI: Do any of either the plays you acted in or the glee performances stand out in your memory from high school?

GL: Well, there was one play that was called *Henry Aldrich*, I think, and this was a popular radio show at the time featuring a teenager named Henry Aldrich. [Editor's Note: Dr. Lewis may be referring to Clifford Goldsmith's *What a Life*, which ran on Broadway from 1938 to 1939 and led to a series of films, radio and television shows based on the Henry Aldrich character.] I was in that show, and then, another play called *The Tin Hero* [by Charles George], and I was the Tin Hero. That was, I think, my junior year in high school. I don't remember much about the play, to tell you the truth, can't give you the plot line, but that's what we did.

SI: Were you focused more on dramas than Broadway-type song-and-dance shows?

GL: The high school didn't do song-and-dance shows, you know. There wasn't really the facility or the time to do a proper Broadway show. They were, oh, just regular plays.

SI: What were your academic interests at that time? What were your favorite subjects?

GL: In high school?

SI: Sure.

GL: Yes. Well, I always enjoyed school and I couldn't understand why some people seemed to take no interest whatsoever in it. Of course, in those days, what happened in our area at least is that when you graduated the eighth grade in grammar school, there were two things you could do, three things you could do. You could just stop going to school and look for a job; you could go to trade school and, in [the] case of the Waldwick graduating classes, several of my classmates went to Paterson, to trade schools; thirdly, you could go on to high school. Now, the percentage graduating from high school was smaller than it was today. I mean, today, if you just have a high school degree, there's nothing to crow about. It was a fairly big deal in those days, because there weren't many people going on to college. So, I guess if I had to specify what

subjects I enjoyed most in high school, history would be at the top of the list, and I made good friends with a young history teacher at the time, [by the] name of Karl Lehr, came from Allentown, Pennsylvania, and, like the vice-principal/basketball coach, Charlie Shantz, came from Muhlenberg, graduated from Muhlenberg College, near Allentown, Pennsylvania. ... That friendship continued through the years and he is still alive and he's in his nineties and he's in a retirement home in Allentown, Pennsylvania. Well, because of my interest in history, despite the family financial situation, which was dismal, I'd always thought that, somehow, I'd manage to go to college and I was encouraged by people like Karl Lehr and the high school teachers who thought it was a no-brainer that I should go to college, and by my older brother and his wife, by my uncles and aunts. My mother was very cool to the idea, because I remember, at one point, she said, "Poor boys can't go to college." Well, I think people more in tune with what the situation was realized that there were ways to get through college, if you had the ability ... and happened to be poor. So, I applied to Rutgers, I applied for a State Scholarship, and I got the State Scholarship and I went to Rutgers. ... As I say, because of the interest in history and the enjoyment of education *per se*, I decided I was going to be a teacher. So, I enrolled in the College of Education, hoping to get a teaching degree, ultimately, and teach history at the high school level, but that didn't happen. I'll explain later on, when we talk about the Rutgers years, what did happen.

SI: You graduated in 1942, after the war had started.

GL: Yes.

SI: How did you make the decision to try to go to college first, and then, were you faced with the decision between the military and college?

GL: Well, the military was out of my control, really, because you were drafted. There was a draft and I was just going to go as long as I could until they drafted me. Now, I suppose if I hadn't been going to college and had gone out and worked after high school, I might have got a deferment on the basis of helping to support my parents, because of their financial problems, but, no, there was not only my own interest in going on to college, but a lot of family support for it, even though, as I said, my mother was lukewarm. So, some of my friends, for example, signed up for the military right out of high school, which was fairly common, but some of them also [pursued college], including a friend that has been my friend since 1938, when I entered high school, Johnny MacGregor, still alive, in Florida, and we see each other at least once a year. We just decided to go to college and, when the draft got us, they got us. Well, they got me in March of my freshman year, yes. ...

SI: Before Pearl Harbor, what did you know about what was happening in the world? Did you follow the news from Europe and Asia?

GL: Well, I followed the news very carefully, because I had been reading the paper that came to our house in the morning, called the *Paterson Morning Call*, from cover to cover since I was about eight years old. I was very interested in sports, too, at the time. So, I read about any sport there was, basketball, football, baseball, and had a lot of statistics, but, [to] go back to when my older brother was playing baseball, I would follow that sport carefully in the paper and would tell

him about opponents he was facing and who was a dangerous batter and who was an excellent pitcher, and so forth, and so, [I acted] sort of like a personal statistician, you know. [laughter] Yes, so, as a result of reading the newspaper, plus hearing the news, which my father and mother listened to religiously every night; quarter to, I think it was quarter to seven, Lowell Thomas was on. They always listened to Lowell Thomas, they listened to H. V. Kaltenborn and I guess a few others, so, I'd get information that way, too. Yes, I knew about the Nazis, the invasion of Poland [in September 1939] and the Blitz in Britain [the Fall 1940 to Spring 1941 Nazi aerial bombing campaign], [and] so forth, and the tough time the Brits had in '39. ... Then, Pearl Harbor, my older brother and I were in his field, behind his house, cutting wood that day that Pearl Harbor struck, and my sister-in-law came out, I guess, and said she'd just had the radio on, [that] the Japs had struck Pearl Harbor. ... I knew, at that point, probably, that the draft process would speed up to the point where I'd probably have to go. Now, he [Ronald Lewis] could have been drafted, too, but married men weren't drafted as quick as single men and, also, he had a perfectly legitimate claim that he was a big contributor to my parents' income, because he worked two jobs to help support my parents, an effort which sort of freed me to pursue my education, rather than dropping out to help the family, in that sense. In that sense, I owe him a big debt of gratitude for sacrifices he and his wife made on my account. So, yes, I knew about the war.

SI: Was there any discussion within your family about whether America should get involved or stay out of the war?

GL: I don't recall that, really. My parents were Republican, which, today, I see as a colossal mistake. [laughter] I guess, later on in life, I finally convinced them they ought to vote Democrat, because they were voting against their best interests when they ... had a Republican being elected. One of the memories I had is, in 1936, the [Presidential] Election of 1936, the Republican candidate was Alf Landon, from Kansas, the Sunflower State. My father ... always worked for the Republican Party, either at election time, as a poll watcher or distributing leaflets, trying to talk to people to get them to vote Republican. Landon got sunk, I guess the worst of any candidate in history, got sunk by FDR [Franklin Delano Roosevelt], and we had all these sunflowers on big, long sticks around the house that hadn't been used. I mean, he was handing this stuff out and we had leaflets and I was up to my ears, you know, with Alf Landon. ... At the time, too, there were several neighbors, and so forth, who were staunch Republicans and one in particular was very nice otherwise. I used to baby-sit for his family. He had one son, hated Franklin D. Roosevelt. They just talked about it, but ... I have to say, I wasn't extremely political at the time. I probably felt, despite the Republican bent of my father and my mother and my relatives, that FDR was not an ogre and that he was doing some good things, but I can't say with certitude that that was the case.

SI: It is interesting that your father was Republican, but he was involved in the New Deal, through this WPA job.

GL: Oh, yes, right.

SI: How did he feel about that?

GL: Well, I thought the WPA was a fantastic idea, still do, and I thought the CCC [Civilian Conservation Corps] was a tremendous accomplishment. In fact, a boy around the corner from where we lived joined the CCC. By the way, despite the financial situation, our family's orientation was always strictly middle-class, in terms of behavior, speech, social etiquette, etc. So, there were people in the community who, from all outward appearances, were obviously distressed, whereas, from all outward appearances, we were not so obviously distressed, and keeping a presence that did not indicate obvious distress was an important goal of my mother. For example, the government had surplus food which they gave out and my parents would consider this welfare and, you know, were hesitant to take it, but, I remember, we ate an awful lot of Graham Flour products, because that was one of the things the Feds were giving away. ... In high school, surplus grapefruit juice, in big cans, was all over the place for the students to use, via the dining hall. When I was acting in one of these plays that I mentioned earlier, there was a cache of canned grapefruit juice somewhere in the vicinity of the stage and, I remember, we kids got into it and just would open the can and chugalug grapefruit juice, [laughter] which I like to this day, but you could also get Federal surplus oleo. ... In those days, oleo was just plain white and they had a little yellow product that came in small packets that you would break open, squeeze this yellow stuff, coloring, into the white oleo, which came in big cakes, and you'd stir and stir and stir, and I remember doing that when ... I would have been in seventh or eighth grade, or in high school, stirring it, stirring it, until you got it to look like butter. If you stirred hard enough, distributed the orange coloring, it looked like butter; still tasted like oleo. [Editor's Note: Oleo is a generic term for margarine products distributed by the Federal Government during the Great Depression.] Oleo, by the way, has improved in quality and similarity and is favored by many people over the butter today. So, oleo's come a long, long way. [laughter]

SI: Yes. Did you have any other interaction with the WPA? Did you notice projects around town?

GL: Oh, my father worked for them, of course. Did I see their projects? Oh, yes, their projects were much in evidence, much in evidence. ... Oh, I was going to say, the kid around the corner whose family was in considerable financial distress, and he was not a student, he did not do well in school, he left to join the CCC. ... I recall his coming home on a weekend visit, I guess, and he had the heavy, olive drab clothing that they had for CCC workers at the time, and I didn't spend a lot of time thinking about the CCC, but, subsequently, of course, I became more aware of their role in going down the Skyline Drive in the Blue Ridge Mountains. [Editor's Note: The Skyline Drive, built by the WPA and CCC, runs through Shenandoah National Park in Virginia.] They built that highway. They did fantastic projects all over the place. [If] you go to state parks and things like that, I was out in Bandolier National Monument, not far from Santa Fe, a few weeks ago and, [in] Bandolier, they had CCC workers doing construction and things like that in Bandolier National Monument [in the 1930s]. So, you bump into CCC projects completed all over the country today, if you read the fine print.

SI: Do you remember if there was any German-American *Bund* activity?

GL: Oh, yes. Well, the German-American *Bund* had a place called the (Schwadeshceil?), as I recall, out in, what county? ...

SI: Warren?

GL: Anyway, it wouldn't be too far from Rutgers, Mendham, New Jersey, perhaps that area, anywhere, out there somewhere, Morristown, and the rumor was that ... these were Nazis. ... As far as I know, they weren't interfered with, because they had a constitutional right to have the organization, but, yes, there was talk about this. Also, a lot of people think that the KKK, the Ku Klux Klan, operated only in the South. Not true; in fact, there was some manifestations of them in Waldwick. They burned a cross on top of a [hill] called the (Sandbank?), was the place. It was a little rise, mainly sand and rock, in the town, and I guess it would be the highest elevation in the town and, as I recall, there was a cross burned up there, and, also, one or two other places, and the Klan was very, very active in Indiana, yes.

SI: I have read that they paraded openly in some New Jersey towns in the 1920s.

GL: The Klan?

SI: Yes.

GL: Yes. They would have, yes, and probably people from the *Bund*, also. Of course, the disrepute of the Germans, the Nazis, was certainly heightened by the Hauptmann/Lindbergh [Trial], Bruno Hauptmann, the one charged with kidnapping the Lindbergh baby, and so, he was clearly identified as a German, that didn't help matters, yes. [Editor's Note: Hauptmann/Lindbergh refers to the trial of Bruno Richard Hauptmann for kidnapping Charles A. Lindbergh, Jr., son of famed aviator Charles A. Lindbergh in the mid-1930s.]

SI: Do you remember following the Lindbergh Trial?

GL: Oh, yes, followed that quite carefully, yes.

SI: Do you think the Klan activity was only anti-Catholic? Was there an African-American community in Waldwick?

GL: No. There was one black person in [Waldwick]. Actually, I should say there was one black family, consisting of two elderly women and a young man, who was a good athlete, by the way, and my older brother was friends with him, because they were contemporaries, and they belonged to our church. We belonged to the Methodist church in Waldwick. Building's still there. There's a Methodist Episcopal church and, when I would tell people later on, when they asked, "What church did you belong to?" I'd say, "Methodist Episcopal." They'd say, "Methodist Episcopal? Never heard of that; what's that?" I'd say, "Well, it does seem like a sort of strange affiliation between the Episcopalians, who were essentially Church of England types, and the Methodists, that were rather of a different position, both denomination wise and, I think, class level." So, was it anti-Catholic? Was it anti-black? Well, I'm sure that blacks were not welcome, but, since it was only one family and they were kind of, you know, a token, you couldn't help but like the people. So, they didn't have any trouble, that I'm aware of. Anti-Catholic, yes, ... this was not an era where Catholics were popular. I mean, look at the 1928 Al Smith run for the Presidency and the problem they had because of his being a Catholic, cost them

the election, I would guess, but Waldwick had a significant Catholic population. ... The biggest ethnic group in Waldwick were Italians and they were brought there to work on the Erie Railroad and they lived in a certain section of town. One of the streets was Zazzetti Street, as I recall, and every class I was in, going through grammar school, had a significant number of Italian kids in it. ... They went to one of the Catholic churches. Hostility? I would say not overt, at least not significantly overt, so, it'd be hard to say to what extent that affected people's underlying hostility toward Catholics. [I] don't know. By the way, talking about ethnic groups and Catholicism, Poles were another ethnic group that were common, but Poles were in Mahwah, New Jersey, up the road a few miles, where my sister-in-law came from, my older brother's wife, but they were brought over to work for American Brake Shoe and Foundry Company, as I understand it, not for the railroad. The Italians had the railroad; the Poles had the American Brake Shoe and Foundry Company. ... Of course, some of them would be in other laboring jobs and some of them were in middle-class occupations. The one I remember was a lawyer, a contemporary of my brother's. ...

SI: You recall the groups; did all these different ethnic groups mingle? Did they get along? Was there strife?

GL: Well, the Italians in Waldwick, most of them were laborers. A few, however, ran shops. We had what today would be called a corner grocery within walking distance, run by and owned by an Italian gentleman, run by him. The English they spoke was not too good. ... His name was Mr. Rocci, he was respected, I think, and people found him pleasant. Another Italian man owned a shoe store. There were two Italian-run barbershops. ... I can't think offhand of any others. Actually, there were two shoe stores, which just seems a bit odd, given the small size of the community in those days. So, they were accepted, but the Italian families, the mother often spoke no English at all and the mother stayed at home, dressed mainly in black garb, stayed at home, raised the family, did housework, [and] so on, and the men went out into the community to work, as a result of which, the men knew, however poorly they might speak, some English. ... Then, there was another segment of the Italian population, small, but there, of people who spoke better English and had more money and went into things that represented, I would say, middle-class status, or lower middle-class status, in any case.

SI: You told me earlier where you were when Pearl Harbor was attacked, but how did your town react over the next few days and weeks? You were still in high school at that time, December of 1941.

DL: ... I was a senior, right, graduated the following June.

SI: Was there panic?

DL: I wouldn't say there was panic, but there was certainly concern or worry and, as I recall, a very positive feeling about, "We will beat them. We'll go lick them," and I guess one could say there was more optimism about our being able to beat them and more enthusiasm for getting at the job right away and getting it done than a reality check on the status of, say, the military size of the Army, equipment, etc., warranted, because World War II caught us quite unprepared. ... The story of how we turned that around is a fabulous story, and our productivity and the way we

all pulled together. Unlike the present widespread antipathy to our involvement in Iraq [following the 2003 War in Iraq], the country, in general, ... was solidly behind this war effort and people were willing to jump in and make sacrifices. Now, that's not to say that everybody was in favor of America getting involved in world wars, like, ... there was a strong "America First," right-wing movement to stay out of European entanglements. ... Roosevelt had a hard time with aid to England, which the English very much were pressuring for and the Americans were not cooperating [with], because, despite FDR's willingness to do this and thought it was essential, there was a lot of hostility to this. So, he had to be very cagy in doing this, and then, the lend-lease thing, idea, took hold and that helped matters, [the Lend-Lease Act of 1941, which provided massive aid to the Allies], and, of course, once we were attacked by Japan, the people who had argued that we should not have gotten involved in the European War were silenced to a great degree. So, there was considerable concern. On the other hand, daily life went on. I don't remember our sitting around, wringing our hands, in high school about, one, the war and, two, having to face the draft and volunteering, and so on. There was a very positive feeling like this and people who said, "Well, I'm going to sign up," like my close buddy of mine who joined immediately upon graduation. He, unlike myself, though, was not enthusiastic about school. It wasn't that he was stupid or anything, he just was more interested in motoring and cars and worked in a garage, had no money, but one of the classmates ... was the son of J. Parnell Thomas, who was on the House of Representatives; what was the organization that's on the tip of my tongue, anyway, patriotism, the Joe McCarthy types?

SI: House Un-American Activities Committee. [Editor's Note: J. Parnell Thomas served as US Representative for the New Jersey Seventh Congressional District from 1937 to 1950 and became chairman of the House Committee on Un-American Activities in 1947.]

GL: Un-American Activities Committee, exactly, J. Parnell Thomas, from Allendale, New Jersey, was chairman of that committee at one point and his son, Stiles Thomas, a classmate of mine, a friend of mine, joined the service immediately. ... He went in the paratroops, which, he was a big cutup and this was not a surprise to anybody; if Stiles joined the service, he'd do something that involved heroic activity, if at all possible, [laughter] and survived, too, he did. I don't know whether it was the 101st or, what is it, 81st [82nd]? one of the airborne divisions.

SI: Do you remember things like blackouts and rationing in that period?

GL: Oh, yes, people collecting tin foil off Hershey Bars or any other place they could save tin foil, scrap drives, where you contributed any scrap iron you had around the house. Yes, you pulled down your blackout shades. Yes, I remember that.

SI: Did you participate in any Civil Defense activities, like air raid wardens or airplane spotters?

GL: No. I think there was; I don't know how much activity there was, and that was more important along the coastal states, in the West in particular.

SI: That September, you went to Rutgers, in 1942.

GL: I did, yes, on the State Scholarship.

SI: What were your first impressions of Rutgers? What were your first days like?

GL: Well, I thought it was a lovely campus and I was very enthusiastic about going there and the size was just about right. Now, my cousin, my older cousin, he was three years older than I, had gone to Lehigh University. He graduated in 1942 and he was a chemical engineer. That was his degree. He was also in ROTC and he was a Chi Psi and, because of his interest in my education and my support; ... we'd been friends as kids and spent time together, and he was a great sort of older brother, too, along with my still older brother, Ron. [My cousin] said that he'd like to see me at Chi Psi. So, that cost money, though, and he actually helped out ... with some of the early expenses and I worked at Rutgers. So, I did become a Chi Psi and thought the lodge was great. Of course, in those days, you didn't come in and join the fraternity right away. You would get in [in] the second semester, not the first. So, I remember going through the pledge procedures, the, what do they call it, the recruitment phase?

SI: Rushing?

GL: Rushing, yes, through the rushing, you know. ...

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

SI: Please, continue. You were talking about the fraternity.

GL: Yes, yes, during the rushing phase, and so, I did end up joining Chi Psi, but I had to work. I worked in ... Winants' dining hall as a busboy and, for that effort, I got my meals free, and so, I had to negotiate with the fraternity. [Editor's Note: At the time, Winants Hall was used as, among other things, a dining hall and a dormitory.] ... I don't remember the details, somewhere, maybe it was after World War II even, when I was in the fraternity for just a year. I mean, I ... never gave up my membership, but I became inactive, because I got married and that was not the way to go. So, to go back to my cousin that wanted me to join, he was pleased and he then went off to war. He visited me in New Brunswick on his way overseas. He was going to a camp, and then, going overseas with an ordnance company. He was in bomb disposal, a very, very dangerous thing, and he was assigned to Aberdeen Proving Ground. The first night, he went rather quickly overseas. He served in the African Theater, and then, after Sicily; he didn't serve in Sicily, but another of my Rutgers friends, we'll get around to talking about Frank Johnson, [Dr. Franklyn A. Johnson, Rutgers College Class of 1947]. My cousin's name was Frank E. Smith, Jr.; he went in on the invasion in Naples and he was killed in November of '43, ... yes, I think it was November of '43, in Naples, while trying to deactivate a five-hundred-pound British dud, which he was doing himself, but, ordinarily, that's not the way you do it, I understand. They usually have an enlisted man do this, ... but he told his sergeant who was with him, and I don't know whether there was another one, but, anyway, that, no, he was going to do this one, because we had correspondence with the sergeant on the scene of this. Well, that was really a blow, because he was an only child and the first one to go to war, and so, that was really a hard hit for the family, and particularly his parents were devastated by this. Yes, Frank was a great guy, a great guy. Well, we'll come around to when I got in, later on. ... I'll tell you about my war experiences. So, where do you [want to] go now?

SI: I want to talk a little bit more about Rutgers at that time.

GL: Okay.

SI: Could you see how the war was affecting Rutgers?

GL: Well, yes, because guys were leaving right and left. Now, that year, I lived in a house on College Avenue, opposite, not opposite, but on the other side of the street, from where Chi Psi is, where the lodge is, up the street a ways, and this was a nice house. I don't know who it had belonged to, but, anyway, somehow, Rutgers got possession of this house, was just an ordinary, but rather attractive, dwelling, converted it into a dorm. So, I was in there on the second floor with three other people, Bob Van Goor, Dick Rhone and Brian King. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

GL: It was Brian King, Dick Rhone, Bob Van Goor, and myself, all ended up in the service. Brian King, who was very quiet, was an infantryman, I think Rhone went into the Marines and Bob Van Goor, I think, might have been Air Force. Except for Bob Van Goor, we didn't really have any contact after the war, that I can recall.

SI: Do you know if they all made it through?

GL: No, I don't, yes. I know King made it through. In fact, ... I think he got a Bronze Star, or maybe a Silver Star Medal. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

GL: Quartered in that house.

SI: You were trying to remember who made it through.

GL: ... Yes. Now, the student residence hall director, or whatever you want to call him, which they would have in any house, or floor, if it were a dorm, was Emil Potzer, [Jr.]. Emil Potzer was an infantryman, ROTC person, heck of a nice guy, came from somewhere in Pennsylvania, big fellow, played tackle, I think, on the football team, very good. Emil was killed on [the] D-Day landing. [Editor's Note: Emil Potzer, Jr., was killed-in-action during the Normandy Campaign, on June 15, 1944, on D-Plus-Nine.] I don't know if you've come across his name.

SI: I have seen the name.

GL: Yes. Another person who was very prominent on the campus, and I knew him only to say hello to, was Franklyn Arthur Johnson, Jr., who was a Beta; no, a Zeta Psi, Frank was a Zeta Psi. Beta, Livy Goodman was a Beta, Ken MacDonald, both Ramsey High boys, Ken was an All-American football player, they were Betas. ... One of my few cousins' husbands, Ray Hartung, was a Beta. He was in the Navy, married my cousin, Florence Peckart. Well, we lived in this

dorm. A couple of funny incidents; I had a top bunk and, on one occasion, I fell out of the top bunk, [lucky I] didn't crack my skull or something. [laughter] ... After that, my brother, Ron, suggested that he had a solution and he gave me a big horse belt, about three inches wide, and he says, "Now, you will wrap this around the bunk and across your chest, and so forth, and you'll be strapped in." I guess it was an early version of the seat belt, [laughter] and it's called a bed belt, "And that'll stop it." Well, so, I did use that, but ... the dining halls weren't open on Sunday nights. You were on your own, and Brian King and Bob Van Goor, one or the other or both, along with myself, would walk to a sort of corner grocery store, and semi-deli, anyway, a few blocks away, I don't know what direction it would be, west, maybe south, and buy stuff for a sandwich, get some cold cut slices and a loaf of bread and we'd do that. All of us were on rather tight budgets, anyway.

SI: Were you able to do anything extracurricular at that point?

GL: Oh, yes. I worked for the *Targum* for awhile [now *The Daily Targum*, Rutgers' school newspaper]. ... I had something to do with the debating club, manager or whatnot. ... No, at that point, I didn't have time; I didn't make any contact with the theater group at all. Gee, was there anything else? no, and, of course, during the first semester, as I pointed out, there was no fraternity membership. Second half, for a short while, I was in the fraternity and I was living there. I think I lived there after the first semester, until I went into the service in March. So, I guess that's it.

SI: Had you gone through the full pledge process, or were you in the middle of it when you left?

GL: No, it was all over, yes, it was all over, and I can't remember whether Cousin Frank came down for it from Lehigh or not, no, but, to go back, I see these names that I was familiar with pop up in the Rutgers quarterly, [*Rutgers Magazine*]. Bart Klion was one. Well, to talk about Franklyn Johnson, ... now, Frank and I didn't know each other during my freshman year, he was a junior, other than to say hello, hi, and knew the name and whatnot. Subsequently, years and years later, after I got my first tenure-track job, I'd gone through graduate school at the University of Kentucky, I got my master's, ... I had finished everything on my PhD except my dissertation, which was underway, I took a job at Rollins College, Florida, and who appeared to greet me but Frank Johnson, who was assistant professor of government there. He had a ... Harvard PhD in government. He'd worked for the CIA awhile, in London, and so forth, and so, he was at Rollins, and there were some other young ... academics, anyway. So, we were very good friends. Frank was married. He had come back after the war and ... he was very active, too. He had been drum major, I guess, for the band. He had everything; I mean, he's got a list of this stuff and he was a decorated war hero who had been seriously wounded, D-Plus-Six, [June 12, 1944] I think it was, Frank had, and had survived. ... He and I talk to each other regularly and see each other regularly. I can't recall whether you've been after him and whether he's given any testimony or not.

SI: We interviewed him in 2001.

GL: You did, okay, and where did you interview him?

SI: Down in Florida, in Orlando.

GL: In Orlando?

SI: Yes, he drove up.

GL: He drove up from, yes, Bonita Beach, right. Yes, well, that's good, because ... [he] really doesn't have much to do with Rutgers, for some reason. Anyway, so, there he was again and we became friends, and we've been friends ever since and we do see each other regularly. We've taken vacations together. We went to Italy together, the four of us, a few years back, and so on. So, that was very nice, to run into Frank at Rollins. Of all the other people that were in our little clique of young faculty, he's the only one I have kept up contact with. ... Well, that's not fair; I shouldn't say that. There was another sociologist, who actually hired me, just died a year-and-a-half ago. He was there, of course, and we kept up contact again over [the] years. I left Rollins to come back north in '60 and we've had careful contact right up to his death and, thirdly, there was another fellow who replaced (Bob Greenfield?), this one I've just been talking about, ... (Dudley Degroot's?) his name. He became mayor of Maitland. He didn't have anything to do with Rutgers, though, but he was a friend. I don't think there's anybody there, ... on the whole faculty, that had any connection to Rutgers, except Frank and myself, yes, so, okay.

SI: Since you brought up Franklyn Johnson, it reminded me of the ROTC. Were you involved in the ROTC?

GL: No, actually; well, I mean, yes, it was mandatory, but not for Advanced ROTC. So, yes, I was in ROTC my freshman year, and then, [when] I came back after the war, I didn't have to take ROTC [laughter] and, of course, I didn't. I was on Inactive Reserve. I had been a first sergeant of a company on Okinawa, and Frank, however, and another group of people like my cousin Frank, had been in Advanced ROTC and Frank was a [cadet] colonel, or, I don't know, some of the higher ranks in ROTC, yes.

SI: What do you remember about the ROTC at Rutgers?

GL: Well, I remember Elmer Klinsman, who was Captain Klinsman. I remember his manner and whatnot and I remember polishing brass and cleaning leather and keeping your gear in good order and getting all dressed up for a parade. I don't know how many days a week we did this, but, anyway, spit-and-polish, big emphasis on that, yes. So, I would guess that, when I got inducted in the Army and went through basic training, some of this stuff I'd had in my short experience with ROTC ... was helpful, in close-order drill and the (periodine?). ... Well, go on.

SI: Had Rutgers switched from the semester system to the quarter system by that point?

GL: No.

SI: Okay. You were still in semesters.

GL: Yes.

SI: What do you remember about your classes? Was it difficult to make the jump from high school to college?

GL: No, I didn't find it particularly so; I thought it was kind of interesting that you didn't have as many classes. They didn't meet every day. No, I didn't have any trouble with the transition.

SI: Do any of the classes or professors stand out in your mind?

GL: In my freshman year? Well, sometimes, it's hard to remember which was freshman year and which was sophomore year, after I came out of the war. Let's see; oh, Houston Peterson, but that may have been after the war. I can't remember whether [it was] before or after. Houston Peterson was a philosopher, as you probably know, a rather colorful character, had a program on the radio in New York City and I enjoyed that. I had no overwhelming fondness for philosophy *per se*, but he made it quite interesting and, let's see, freshman year, I can't remember whether I had an economics course my freshman year or not. No, I don't think they stand out. I remember, there was a psychologist named Carroll Pratt that I had at one time or another. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

GL: Again, this may have been after, on Russian society, with; it would have been somebody from the Political Science Department. Seems to me he went to Indiana University later, but I'm not sure. He was good, he was a young fellow, and I would guess he went through the History Department, yes. You got any idea?

SI: A Russian specialist?

GL: Yes.

SI: Not that I know of. Most of the history professors I am familiar with are Peter Charanis, Richard P. McCormick.

GL: I remember him, Peter Charanis, yes. What did he teach?

SI: I think mostly ancient history. Yes, I cannot think of anybody that would be a Russian specialist.

GL: No. [Editor's Note: Dr. Robert Francis Byrnes was the professor.]

SI: What I hear a lot about in the interviews are Rutgers traditions that were kind of wiped away by the war. Were there any Rutgers traditions still kept up while you were there?

GL: Well, I participated in one, I think this must have been after I came back, can't say for sure, the re-running of the Rutgers/Princeton football game. This was in *Life* Magazine or something, and we put on stuff, I think I had a funny cap with a long tail on it, and, you know, we did the scrimmages, and so forth, and so on. I wouldn't call that a tradition. One of the traditions, I

suppose, was chapel and to hear "Whistling Willie" Demarest [The Reverend Dr. William Henry Steele Demarest, Eleventh President of Rutgers University, then President of the New Brunswick Theological Seminary] talk. You've heard about him?

SI: Yes.

GL: [laughter] Yes. He did whistle a little when he talked, yes. You had to go to chapel. After the war, you didn't have to go to chapel, I remember that. I wasn't aware, even ... after the war, when I returned, that so-called Rutgers traditions had just disappeared. After all, it wasn't all that big, compared to now, and it had not yet become, even when; I was originally Class of '46, but, when I was given the choice, in coming back, of being Class of '46 or Class of '49, I decided to go with '49, with some of the younger people who hadn't been in the war or got in late. It became, as you know, a State University in 1951, was it, right around there?

SI: I think it was designated in 1945, but, then, there was another designation in 1956, I think.

GL: Was it that late?

SI: It also was renamed the State University.

GL: Yes, because its impact certainly wasn't, to me anyway, noticed ... after World War II. No, I didn't think there was a mammoth change. The biggest change was the fact there were a lot of older people around, all people who, ... old freshmen, had been in the war, came in later and a lot of vets who'd been in my class and even earlier, like Cousin Frank's class or even Frank Johnson's class, which was a year earlier. The size now just amazes me. I keep reading about the various campuses and programs, and the football field, when I was there, the complex up on the hill there was just opened. I guess that was after World War II, after we returned. [Editor's Note: Rutgers Stadium was completed in 1938.]

SI: Did you get to go to sporting events, that sort of thing, in your freshman year?

GL: You know, I don't think I saw any sporting events. I don't remember seeing anything. If I saw anything, it might have been a football game, but I'm not sure, as a freshman, that I even saw a football game. Now, the Chi Psis were known for their crew. They had Barney Unsworth and Ray, can't think of his last name.

SI: Was it Finley?

GL: Finley, yes, Ray Finley, and one of my classmates, Eddie Dunlap, a little, short guy, was a coxswain, this was after the war, but I don't remember seeing the crew perform. I mean, I've seen them practice out on the river, but in a race or anything, no. I think I was too busy to go to athletic events, like, on a Saturday afternoon. I was working and I was too busy at night.

SI: Where were you working and what were you doing at night?

GL: Well, like I say, my freshman year, I worked in the dining hall, and then, I picked up, through the employment agency, some odd jobs and, when I came back after the war, I had all sorts of odd jobs. I sold copper baby shoeing, you know, you take your baby's boots and booties and get them coppered? door to door. I read to a professor who lost his eyesight. I worked for a person that owned a sporting goods store downtown, both at the store and out of town a ways, on his home, did ground work, and so forth, anything to make a buck. I worked ... over on the Farm, in the hothouses for awhile, because of washing glasses or something; so, whatever it was.

SI: Can you tell me about the process of going from being a student at Rutgers, and then, being inducted into the military?

GL: Yes, well, it was kind of hard to leave in the middle of the semester. They gave us credit for the courses, except for one; the Physics Department didn't give me credit. I had to take physics over, but the rest of them, ... if we were passing, you know, they gave you credit. I had worked, incidentally, I forgot to mention this job, I'd worked at Raritan Arsenal, but, basically, I was just a laborer at Raritan Arsenal. That would be on the weekends, too.

SI: Would you be moving boxes of ammunition?

GL: ... Unloading and loading freight cars, mainly loading, I think. I remember a funny incident there. You had so much work you were supposed to accomplish. So, the guy would come and tell you, say, "Load these into this freight car." Well, what do you do when you get done? So, we'd load them, and then, I would sneak down into between the stacks somewhere and [I] had a book in my pocket all the time and I'd sit and read a book. Well, I got caught doing this and the guy says, "You know, you've got to work." I said, "The job's done. You asked us to do this, and so, it's done. What am I supposed to do now?" He said, "Well, you work too fast," he said, "you've got to slow it down then." He says, "Look busy. I don't care, but you've got to look busy. You can't lie around reading. You've got to look busy." [laughter] So, well, other than that, and, of course, my parents were nervous about my being drafted, it was my feeling, "You do it," ... nothing strange about it. I mean, there's always a little tension, "What's going to happen? Where are they going to send you?" that sort of thing. So, you want to tell me where they sent me or what?

SI: Yes, tell me where you went for your physical, where you were inducted.

GL: Well, I went for my physical in Newark, New Jersey, because I got my induction notice through our Waldwick [draft board]. My residence was Waldwick. So, I went down and took the physical exam, got sent to Fort Dix, spent maybe two days [at] most at Fort Dix, got on a troop train, didn't know where we were going, except we were going South, and I guess, shortly before we got there, they told us where we were going. It was Columbia, South Carolina, to Fort Jackson, at Columbia, and we were to join the 106th Infantry Division, which was just being formed there, and so, I was inducted into the 106th Infantry Division. I did my basic training, and then, I did advanced training. ... After basic training, I was ... in a heavy weapons company, I forget which regiment it was. I think it was the First Regiment, D Company, heavy weapons. The first three, A, B, C, were rifle companies. We had mortars and thirty-caliber machine guns. My platoon was all eighty-one-millimeter mortars and I was head of a squad, or

section, of eighty-one-millimeter mortars. I forget just whatever I had down there, and that was kind of, well, hot as hell, chiggers, mosquitoes, the usual stuff you find in hot climates, wet, dirty, smelly, tough, and so forth. So, now, we got through basic and advanced training, and then, the blow came. Of course, we'd all expected to go overseas with the division as a unit. We [had] trained together now. They yanked out all but the cadre; all the non-coms [non-commissioned officers], myself included, stayed. They'd sent all the troops out and I don't know where they sent them, except, generally, they were to go as replacements for people from units overseas, fit in as a replacement wherever they were needed. Well, this was a disaster, because, you know, you need buddies in the service and this business about, "You're dying for [your] country, God and apple pie," and so forth, you're [really] dying and putting yourself on the line for your buddies that you trained with. This is your first loyalty and here we were, and they were then going to replace these colleagues of ours with new draftees, and then, they were going to send us overseas, which they did, ultimately, some months later. Well, I was able to get out, and the company commander approved my request, when the request came from [the] Ordnance Department, to shift me to [there], because I'd worked at Raritan Arsenal, a very tenuous connection, of course, viewing what I did there, but the military doesn't follow that in detail. So, yes, they agreed that if the Ordnance Department wanted me, they'd let me go. So, I went, and you know the story of the 106th, I hope.

SI: Yes. [Editor's Note: The 106th Infantry Division suffered heavy losses in the Battle of the Bulge.]

GL: Yes. ... Talking about high school buddies, there's one other high school buddy of mine I still ... have contact with, emails, etc., and visits now and then. He lives in Florida. He was with the unit. He didn't train at Fort Jackson, I believe; I don't think he was there when I was there, but, somehow, he ended up in the headquarters company, which was artillery. He got wounded, as I recall, but he didn't get killed, but, anyway, that was a lucky, lucky escape, but there's a funny story about subsequent military service that I can get into. This dealt with the training. You want me to tell you about this? Okay, I went to the Ordnance Department, I went in to [see] the personnel officer and he said, "What would you like to study?" and I thought they already knew where they were going to stick me, but, here he was, totally out of the blue, to me, asking me what I wanted to study. ... Then, they had ordnance at Aberdeen, all sorts of specialties, riggers and wreckers, auto mechanics, bakers' school, you name it, carpentry, transport, etc., plumbing, electrician. Well, I could have had an opportunity to learn something useful after I got out. One of the options, though, was ammunition. I pick ammunition. Why did I pick ammunition? Lord knows; I don't. I suspect, at the time, what was in my head is, my cousin, my special, close cousin, had gone into bomb disposal and they weren't offering me bomb disposal, or at least the family wouldn't have stood still if I'd said, "I want to go into bomb disposal," probably. So, I avoided that, if it were offered to me, and I can't recall that it was, but ammunition was something else. Now, ammunition, I took this training and what it does is, it prepares you to set up field depots for ammo and move it as necessary. ... It's like running a store, only the product is ammunition, at this point, but, now, I've got a new MOS, military occupation specialty, to go with the other MOS-es. I had a couple; one was drill sergeant and one, of course, had been infantryman, and I may have had one or two others. So, I go through the school, and then, ... they're not doing anything with me. I'm in a casual company, waiting to go, and I think the casual company made me do drill sergeant work. So, I'm in this company

cooling my heels, expecting sometime to go overseas and join an ammunition company, when an opportunity came. I think it was an announcement posted by a colonel, a psychiatrist, who was starting a psychiatric unit to deal with, we called them "Section 8 cases," candidates, possibly, from the ETO, guys with battle fatigue that were sent back and, hopefully, would be rehabilitated and (dealt with anywhere?). So, I thought this [was interesting]. They needed some college [as a prerequisite]. So, he was interested. So, you could sign up for an interview. So, I signed up, seemed more fun than standing around, drilling troops. So, I got the job, and myself and two others there, Jerry Oberwager, who was from New York City, and the guy, incidentally, I remember him saying he was friends with Zero Mostel, and I guess Ira, another guy, said, you know, "What's he like?" He says, "You've seen him do his act?" "Yes." "He's like that all the time. He doesn't put anything on. That's just Zero. That's the way he behaves all the time," [laughter] and so, there were three of us, anyway, Ray, I don't know, "Lucky" Don Teeters, Ray somebody or other, and myself, who volunteered in this unit to create puppets. The Colonel had the idea; now, we're dealing with troops that might be a little low on the intellectual side, not sophisticated people. To try to lecture them to what had happened to them, you know, it's going to go in one ear and out the other, probably, for many of them. A lot of them don't have a lot of education. This kind of intellectual approach, where you get up and lecture people, said, "You guys are here because [of] this kind of problem you have and we want to help you," etc., that, [instead], we would use puppets to get the message across. Now, Jerry Oberwager was a puppeteer. He created puppets. We used papier-mâché, and so forth. So, we sit down and we create these puppets. Then, we think about various scripts that would get the point across, and so, the puppets all had names. It was "Rufus Resentment," "Freddie Fear," "Albie Anger," etc., and they were in battlefield conditions. We had foxholes and we had explosive charges going off, and so forth, and we were behind down the stage, doing the puppet manipulations; these were hand puppets, but doing all the puppeteering, and so, that was a lot of fun and we did it. ... For some reason, I guess, the Surgeon General wanted to see it. So, we packed up, we went down to Washington, we put on a demonstration for the Surgeon General. Then, we were invited; the Colonel is giving a paper at the American Psychiatric Association in Philadelphia. So, we trot up there and he does that, and then, somebody got the idea that, "Look, it's expensive and time consuming to move these guys around, here, there and everywhere, so, why don't we make a film of it?" So, they carry us off to Astoria, Long Island, the old Paramount Studios in Astoria, and we're going to make a movie now. ... We do our show, but it's on film, and so, we were on detached service for, I don't know, several weeks in New York City, going out to Astoria, to the Paramount Studios, where a bunch of Hollywood people were running the filming show. For example, ... the cameraman was Stanley Cortez, the younger brother of an old film star, Ricardo Cortez, and the director, as I recall, was Frank somebody or other, but I don't remember his last name, but, anyway, there were a number of Hollywood types there doing [that]. So, I learned something about moviemaking, one of which is, it's a lot like the Army, "hurry up and wait," but that was quite a lot of fun. ... Being on detached service in New York City was fun, because you get off, you go to the Stage Door Canteen and other places and you get all these free tickets, to restaurants, theaters. So, we had a lot of fun in off hours, doing that sort of stuff. So, then, ... our duty was done, we go back to casual company status, and, now, I got this MOS; maybe I'm going to be able to use it. Meanwhile, I'd picked up another MOS, psychiatric rehabilitation aide, or whatever it was. So, now, I'm waiting. Again, the word comes down, "Lewis, you're going to ammunition inspector/renovator school, Savanna Ordnance Depot, Savanna, Illinois." So, off they ship me to this, for six weeks or so, and the training there

involved trying to reuse ammo that had some damage to it, for example, a malfunctioning fuse. So, you learned all about fuses and how to take them apart, put them back together, inspect them and see if they operate; dangerous work. So, I get that training. Then, I get sent back to Aberdeen and I walk in this orderly room and the sergeant is there. ... He's looking at my sheet and he says, "What the hell is a 949 Ammunition Inspector/Renovator?" and I said something to the effect that, "Well, man, you're the personnel person, you ought to know this." He said, "[I] never heard of it before." So, obviously, my point is that it was kind of an unusual, uncommon MOS. So, wouldn't you assume that the military would make use of this, now that they'd spent this money training you? So, my military career was an example of screwed up assignments, I think. So, finally, I'm going overseas, presumably to do ammunition/inspector renovating. I get to Hawaii, and what do they do? I get called into the orderly room and this Captain says, "I see from your records, Corporal, that you have an experience as a drill sergeant," and I said, "Yes, sir." So, he says, "Well, I need you. I need you to join my 'repple-depple' company," replacement depot. "We're in Okinawa." So, off we go to Okinawa, in a convoy, it took thirty days, and land on Okinawa. The island had been secured and we set up this replacement depot, which is like a huge, you might call it a huge hotel, where troops come in and are reassigned to specific units, [or] troops come from specific units to the replacement depot and are reassigned, usually to go home there. ... Well, I ended up in that company as the first sergeant for the last part of my service overseas. I didn't get the first sergeant [stripe], the extra stripe; I had a tech sergeant's stripe, because I hadn't been in the rank long enough. So, come time, you know, they had a point system that got you out, so much for each year of service, so much for overseas, a few other criteria. So, the company commander, who was a very nice person and had pretty much let me run the show myself, he didn't spend an awful lot of time around, he tried to talk me into reenlisting when I [was up for discharge], and he said, "Then, you'll get your other stripe," and I said, "No, thank you. [laughter] I'm going home. If I can get home, I'm going home." So, I came back and went back to Rutgers, but it was an interesting experience, the whole show, and I was very, very lucky. The island had been secured, but I went through two severe hurricanes. Also, V-J Day [Victory Over Japan Day, August 14, 1945, in the United States, August 15th in the Western Pacific], was it the night or shortly thereafter? Japanese renegades, who weren't captured, in some cases, had gone and hidden in caves, were in there, and some of them were still being discovered in caves, and so, we think this must have been what happened. Somebody threw hand grenades into our area. We were sleeping in tents. Fortunately, nobody was killed or wounded, but it was a bit unsettling. The war was over and, here, you get attacked in your tent, and the policy had been, ... after V-J Day, they didn't disarm us, but they might as well have disarmed us, because they confiscated all the ammunition. You weren't supposed to have guns with ammunition, which, in light of this attack, showed that maybe that wasn't the best policy. Oh, I had some ammunition. I'd stashed away some ammunition. So, I rolled out of my bunk when the blast went off, onto the ground, and got my ammunition, filled my carbine with it, and then, waited to see what was going to happen. Well, the CO [commanding officer] put us on peripheral perimeter duty, you know, around the whole area, looking out for further attacks, but none came. So, I escaped again.

SI: I like it when interviewees give me an overview of their military career. Now, I would like to go back and ask questions about each section.

GL: Sure.

SI: When you first joined the military, was it a big change for you to go from civilian life to military life?

GL: Well, yes, it was, because there was nothing in civilian life like this at all. About the only thing, and I suspect many people might say this, that helps you is if you led a rather disciplined life before. You could adjust easier to the discipline than if you'd not led a disciplined life, and by disciplined life, I mean, "Did you study rigorously? Did you have certain goals you pursued? If you were an athlete, did you spend a lot of [time] training to be a varsity athlete?" So, it involves training, involves everything from diet to being able to meet deadlines to appear for practice, take care of your body. These experiences were, I think, transferable into the military. If you'd been allowed an awful lot of freedom by your family, instead of having fixed rules about everything from [the] time you'd come home, whether or not you could drive the car, did you keep your room neat, and so forth, people who grew up in a family where those things were not emphasized would have trouble. They'd have disciplinary trouble in the Army, because [they were probably taken aback] the first time anybody said, "You will do this and, if you don't do it, I'll have your ass," you know, and we had people like that. On Okinawa, again, I had this company, I had a thousand troops in my company and, on one occasion; the rules were clear, you were not to gamble. You were not to be playing craps, and so forth. ... A guy came running up one night and said, "Come to tent so-and-so, there's big trouble there," and it was a crap game and somebody had pulled the dice, and so forth. ... Fortunately, by the time I got there, nobody had been hurt, but they were [about to fight], you know, a lot of tension, and so forth, and I just told them to stop in their tracks, and so forth, and pointed to the guy that had the knife and said, you know, "See me at the orderly room, nine AM tomorrow," and a little, funny story with that. The company commander and I had a jeep. The jeep had been lent to me by one Lieutenant David. Well, anyway, he was a person who was very clever at getting equipment that he could use, although ...

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

SI: This continues an interview with Gordon F. Lewis on July 24, 2006, in Essex Junction, Vermont, with Shaun Illingworth. Please, continue.

GL: Yes, so, he had this jeep. Subsequently, it turned out that the jeep was not registered with the motor pool. ... With the help of friends, he had fished stuff out of the sea that had been lost in the landing; I think this jeep was. It seems to me he told me one time that he had a refrigerator that he'd "rescued" that way and I think this jeep had been "rescued" this way. Well, anyway, [he] had it and, when he was going on some kind of mission to Tokyo, he and I used to shoot baskets on the basketball court, and so forth. We got along well. He was not at all stuffy; well, he couldn't have been more than a few years older than myself, maybe three or four [years]. So, he left the jeep with me and [said], "Use it anytime you need it." So, this morning, ... after this crap game scene, when I told this guy to report to the orderly room, he reported, he was sitting on the railing, on ... [the] little deck on the orderly room, which was a Quonset hut, and the Captain, company CO, and I had been somewhere in the jeep. I forget what it was, we'd run an errand, and so, we come up into this area, headed toward the orderly room to park the car, and I put my foot on the brake and there was no response. The brakes had failed and I'm going right

toward this guy who, obviously, at this point, I guess, was really scared. So, he jumped, we hit the porch, stopped the vehicle and whatnot. This guy was really scared and he probably thought, maybe, retribution was going to be a bit heavy; you tried to run him over with a jeep. So, after that incident, obviously, we would have been in big, big trouble, the CO included. He said, "Lewis," he says, "get rid of this thing, will you?" I said, "How, sir?" He says, "You figure it out, any way. I don't want to hear about it, see it and I don't want to have it." So, I got a couple of other NCOs, the three of us, as I recall, and we got in the jeep and we drove it a few miles down the road, got out and shoved it over, [there are] a lot of ravines on Okinawa, shoved it over, down a deep ravine, down, nobody's going to be rescuing that for a long time, and walked back to the company. Well, let's see, where were we now? about discipline, I guess. [laughter]

SI: Yes. We were just talking about your reaction to joining the military and if it was a culture shock for you, in a sense.

GL: Well, yes, I suppose anything of that magnitude is kind of a culture shock, since I'd not had any civilian experience with paramilitary organizations. If I'd been a cop, for example, it would have been a little different. Of course, the emphasis on physical training is very heavy, you've got to do this, and the emphasis on knowing your equipment and how to use it was big. ... I guess the biggest culture shock might be, for some, maybe that's too strong a term to use, anyway, is being thrust into positions of leadership, where, suddenly, you have this power, backed up, providing it's all militarily legit, backed up by an organization that you wouldn't have in civilian life, either because you hadn't had any leadership positions; you know, ... at the time I was in the company on Okinawa, what was I, twenty-one years old? ... I mean, I had guys who were thirty, thirty-five, some older, and so forth, a sprinkling of these people, and some had been schoolteachers. One of my NCOs was a schoolteacher, former schoolteacher, ran the gamut, and, you know, you suddenly think, you know, "What's a twenty-one-year-old doing, telling all these people how to behave?" ... but you got the organization behind you, so, you can do it, including telling people what severe punishment awaits them if they don't straighten up and fly right, you know. [laughter] So, that might take a little getting used to. Of course, you know, people like Johnson and others, who were in Advanced ROTC, had leadership positions in ROTC, so, that transition would have been easier, but, if you're just a buck private, so-to-speak, and you get in and end up with some rank, with men under you, that's a little more adjustment, I think. ... You know, if you've been spoiled in any way, you're going to have problems in the military. If you haven't been spoiled, you're going to find it a lot easier, and it even comes down to "eat and clean your plate" there. There was a lot of griping, always, about Army food. Now, what struck me as anomalous is the fact that people I knew the background, for example, of several people in the units, Appalachia, I knew Eastern Appalachia, the mountains and whatnot, and I knew how much poverty there was and I knew where these people came from [and] whatnot. I could not understand how anybody who existed on a meager diet, not enough food, and so forth, could complain about Army food, which certainly, in base, was plentiful and varied. ... I thought this was fine, you know, better than I'd eaten at home many times, and how can you gripe about that? but ... you've got to gripe about something or else you don't feel normal, I suppose. So, they pick on the food a lot, [laughter] moan and groan, a lot of it, which I was not a moaner and groaner. So, I tended to do what I had to and try to do it well enough to keep out of trouble.

SI: You encountered a lot of people from different backgrounds.

GL: Oh, yes.

SI: How did everyone get along and what did you think of these different people?

GL: Well, actually, I got along, I would think, quite well. Funny little things happened; one case, you know, you're reading a lot of rosters, like, you've got a troopship that's coming in, disgorged hundreds of people, and then, you've got, like, a manifest, a list. ... So, I had to go down a list of people and [there were] a lot of foreign names, some Polish, and so on, and so, ... one guy came up to me once and he says, "Sergeant," he said, "you're the first person in the military that pronounced my name correctly. How did you do it?" [laughter] ... Sometimes, I didn't have an answer for him, sometimes, I knew, like, a Polish [name], I might know the endings and a few other things from when I was growing up, in high school, and Italians, you know, again, I grew up with Italian kids around and some of it was just almost common sense, in a way. ... I don't think I ever got sideways with anybody. [I] got real PO-ed [pissed off] at the company commander of this unit on Okinawa, because I thought he was playing favorites with some of the guys that had been in the unit, whereas I was a late addition to the unit. People were getting promoted when I was not getting promoted. I was a corporal at the time, for example, and they were making sergeant and I wasn't. ... I had more time in the service, I had more experience, I had more MOS-es, and so forth, and so, I confronted the captain of the company one time and asked, "Sir, you know, what do I have to do to make sergeant? Is there something I'm not doing?" Well, he was kind of flustered and I think I pointed out, I said, "Other people are making it and they have less time in the service than I and less experience, and so, I just wondered, you know, maybe I'm doing something wrong or I have to do something else better." Well, he was quite flustered and he couldn't think of anything to say [that] I was doing wrong, I guess. Well, within two weeks, I think, I'd been put in for sergeant, and then, I moved to staff sergeant and tech sergeant fairly rapidly, minimum amount of time, and so, that was an encounter. I had one bad encounter in the company. One time, when ... I was assigning incoming troops to tents, and I think it was a situation ... where there were to be ten people to a tent, ten or twelve, and this soldier comes up to me, after the assignment and I got done reading the list and they'd gone to the tents, put their gear down, he comes and seeks me out after awhile. ... He says, "Sergeant, I think there's been a mistake." I said, "What?" He says, "I got a nigger in the tent with me." I said, "You have what?" He says, "I got a nigger in my tent," he said, and this guy was from Alabama or some place like that, and I said, "You mean you have a black soldier colleague in your tent; so what?" "Well, just it ain't done." I said, "You'll go back to that tent, you'll get along with this soldier. He's just another American soldier fighting the same war you're fighting and the color of the skin is irrelevant," and I said, "You will treat him properly and, if I have any trouble from you, I'll have your ass in a sling," and I didn't hear anything more from him, but he went in the tent and he stayed there. First time in his life, probably, he'd shared a living space with a black person, and, of course, there was prejudice. The blacks were not treated well in World War II. They were disproportionately put into the Quartermaster Corps. You've heard about the Tuskegee Airmen, probably; a lot of very nasty stuff.

SI: How was it that they were housed together?

GL: Because I put him there. I mean, I was not going to establish a tent for black GIs. They were going to be mixed in with the regular troops. No, it was my decision; well, I mean, the company commander could have come and told me to do it differently, but the company commander would have backed me up, I think, in any way. Anyway, it would have taken the company commander to order me to do it for me to do it, but ... he never got involved.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit more about your own basic training? What do you remember about it? What did you find most difficult about it?

GL: Well, the most difficult thing was the heat of Fort Jackson, South Carolina, and the sweat and the chiggers, other kinds of bugs, mosquitoes. If you went [out on] night duty, you'd sometimes be going through swamp-like areas, your clothes would get all sweaty and smelly. You'd be sleeping on the ground. I remember cutting branches off of pine trees and trying to make a little cushion, bed, of these, put it in the foxhole. I mean, it's just uncomfortable physically. You get rashes sometimes. You didn't go on maneuvers with an extra pair of clothes with you, ... overnight thing. You wore the same sweaty clothes the next morning, of course. ... So, that was a problem. It was strenuous. You start out with aching bones, making your body do things you didn't think it could do. I was, I guess, unique, certainly uncommon, because, when I went into the service, I weighed 140 pounds and, when I got out of basic training, I weighed 165 pounds. Usually, it was the reverse. ... A lot of people lost weight, but I gained weight and had never been fitter after basic training. ... Well, that's about it.

SI: Was there anybody in your unit who could not take it?

GL: ... Yes. Well, for example, on one, we had, was it thirty miles or twenty miles? it was at least twenty miles, maybe we'll call it a twenty-mile then, take the [lesser], twenty-mile hike, with full pack. That means you had a very heavy pack with a maximum load in horribly hot summer weather in South Carolina, and they had, always, of course, an ambulance [that] would follow the troops. The Sergeant, Captain, officer, leading, you know, would be going down the line, seeing to it that people bucked up and that they didn't sneak drinks of water, which, in those days, they did not want you drinking a lot of water, and they gave you salt tablets, too. I hated salt tablets. I never passed out because of the heat, but I never took the salt tablets, either. If the Sergeant was looking right at you when they gave the tablets, you know, you put it in your mouth and you'd stick it to the side and make a gulping thing [sound], like you swallowed them. ... They would make me sick. So, I never took salt tablets, but, to go back to this twenty-mile hike, some people just finally did drop and they'd move them over to the side. In a couple of instances, you know, I'd be stepping over a prostrate body, ... there prostrate on the ground and not moving, you know, and passed out, but somebody would come along and clear them off and, in the worst case, put them in the ambulance and take them home, but I got through the hike all right. I didn't fall down and I guess I was lucky to have [had] that experience. So, yes, training was tough, but it wasn't Army Ranger training, at all.

SI: Why do you think you wound up as a drill instructor? Was it just the luck of the draw or was it something in your own experience that contributed to that?

GL: You know, I can't recall why this was. I suppose somebody noticed that I could execute the drill well and that maybe if I could execute it, I could teach it to some other people. I suspect that's the way it occurred. I mean, mind you, this occurred in situations where we were not in an active unit. There was time to do this sort of thing and they had no better use for me at the moment, I guess. [laughter] I remember taking basic training at Aberdeen, which I'd been through a course in the infantry, until it came out of my ears, and most of the GIs here were not terribly adept at doing this. We're on exercises and one of the exercises had to do with crawling on your stomach with your rifle and simulated going under wire, which you did in basic, but not ... in Aberdeen. They didn't have wire, that I recall, and various kinds of maneuvers, and the Lieutenant who was running this particular session stopped at one point and said, you know, "Half of you are not doing it right. Look at the man from the infantry," he always referred to me as "the man from the infantry." [laughter] He says, "He knows how to do this. Now, watch him and you'll get it right." Okay, so, I thought, "Who, me?" [laughter]

SI: As a drill instructor, you were focusing on the ...

GL: Close-order drill, yes, close-order drill. You know what close-order drill is?

SI: Yes, the manual of arms.

GL: Yes, and all that stuff, yes.

SI: "About face."

GL: ... Right, yes.

SI: Was there any of this ...

GL: I had a loud voice, too. [laughter]

SI: I have heard from other people who were involved in instruction that, not only did they have to teach whatever they were teaching, but they would also be told, in some way, to indoctrinate troops. If they were doing bayonet drill, they would teach them to really hate the enemy. Did you ever do that?

GL: Oh, yes, we had that, too. Yes, maybe you ... yelled as you jabbed the bayonet into the stuffed straw dummy, that sort of [thing]. Oh, yes, I mean, you were told you were facing a clever but strong enemy and they would show you no mercy and you were [to] get them before they got you, yes.

SI: You are talking about being on the receiving end, but did you have to teach anybody that sort of thing?

GL: No, no. That didn't come under the heading of close-order drill, yes, and I didn't have any other instructional jobs ever.

SI: You were teaching close-order drill, but you were a part of D Company.

GL: No, this wasn't in D Company. No, I was out of D Company now. I was out of D Company.

SI: Were you in D Company in basic training?

GL: Yes.

SI: Right. You were in D Company for basic training, then ...

GL: I was D Company for advanced training.

SI: For advanced training, all right.

GL: Yes.

SI: What do you remember about advanced training? Did it focus primarily on the heavy weapons or was it more general?

GL: [To] tell you the truth, I don't remember much at all. I can't be sure. I think it was probably [that] it was in advanced training that you were doing practical field exercises. I remember only one incident. I was in the eighty-one-millimeter mortar section and you'd been taught how to do this, and so forth, [until] you got it down pat, and you had a little squad. You had somebody to carry the base plate, somebody to carry the tripod and somebody to carry the barrel and ... several who carried ammunition, and all I carried was a range finder that had just come out and, of course, you carried your weapon. ... We were on a hillside, on the downside, where you put your mortars. Somebody was up front, sighting the target and relaying information, and I was an expert on the eighty-one-millimeter mortar, in terms of, you know, hitting the target, and so forth, and we were doing this and the General came by. ... This was a General (Allen?), who was head of the division at first, and he stopped and he came up and he just quizzed me, asked a couple of questions, and so forth, and said something, got back in his thing and drove away, but it just had to do with ... practical problems in deployment, setting up your weapon, usual stuff.

SI: You were pretty adamant earlier about how devastating you thought it was that they pulled out the guys that you were trained with.

GL: Yes, yes.

SI: Can you tell me a little about that bond that was built up, in your particular case?

GL: Yes, well, you had to work together. For example, in, say, the mortar company, you were ... taught to race against time. You had to do certain things in, like this, [Dr. Lewis snaps his fingers] and in order. Everybody had to do his part. If you've got the guy that's got the barrels up there waiting, the guy that's got the base plate isn't there, because you can't put the barrel in until you get the base plate and the tripod. So, you worked together in coordination, in a lot of

cases. The other thing, suppose you're doing a house-to-house, you see this on the nightly news, somebody covers you while you move, and then, you overlap, and somebody covers you, and so forth. You just work together, [through] all the suffering, the sweat, the food, the exercises and whatnot. You've got people by you that you're going to have to count on later, and this was always emphasized, you know. You've got to be able to count on your buddy to help you. ... Of course, the Marines have the credo that ... no matter if you're just wounded or if you're dead and you're out there, they never leave without the body. They're going to put themselves at risk to make sure that one of their group gets proper attention, and that the enemy doesn't get him. So, all the studies that I know of indicate that the major reason people do things are not ideological, they have to do with bonds between individuals, at the group level, and the people who write about, "Oh, they fight for God and country and apple pie and Mom," and so forth, you know, [are] a little bit Hairy Fairy on that. At the basic [root] of it all, I mean, very well, people are raised to think that it's good to live in a democracy, etc., but you don't get people running around sloganeering in the military, at least in my experience, about this. I mean, if somebody sat you down and quizzed you, and so forth, "Do you think the Nazis are bad people?" you know, they're going to tell you, "Well, yes." "Would you like to see them win?" "Of course not; you stupid?" Except for that, I don't know, but I don't remember anybody ever discussing higher causes in this, no.

SI: From there, you were pulled away for the psychiatric rehabilitation assignment?

GL: No, I was transferred to ordnance, ... then, to ammunition school, and then, it was advanced ammunition school. Then, there was time in the casual company, and then, there was [my assignment] out of the casual company into the psychiatric rehabilitation for awhile, volunteer, mind you, and then, there was back in the casual company. Then, I was pulled out of the casual company again and sent to ammunition inspector/renovator school in Savanna Ordnance Depot, Savanna, Illinois, and then, there was back to the casual company again at Aberdeen and, this time, sent overseas. So, going overseas with the expectation you're being sent as an ammunition inspector/renovator assignment and you find out, no, you're yanked out of that and sent as, essentially, just a drill sergeant in ... a replacement depot. I think it was the ... 25th Replacement Depot. ... My experience in the military was an example of how bureaucracies sometimes work in terms of inefficiency, mis-assignments, screw-ups. I think no organization which was completely rational would take somebody with specialized training, who was sent overseas to do that assignment, [and have them] yanked out and given a responsibility, a job, which many, many other people could do easily. ... So, in a certain sense, both the initial training as an ammunition person and the advanced ammunition training was a waste of time and money, and I'm sure there were many other similar examples of misplacement.

SI: How long were you at the quartermaster school?

GL: I never went to quartermaster school.

SI: When you went into the Quartermasters, you were right with the casual company.

GL: No, I was with the Ordnance.

SI: Ordnance, I am sorry.

GL: No Quartermaster.

SI: Yes, Ordnance school.

GL: Yes.

SI: What do you remember about that?

GL: I was on loan there. I went there in, I think it was October 1943, and I left there in, must have been March of 1945, quite awhile, stationed all the time, except for going off to Savanna, Illinois, all the time in Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland, yes.

SI: How long was that initial training phase before you were in the casual company?

GL: Oh, well, ... which training [are] we talking about?

SI: You said you were in school, then, you were in the casual company, and then, you volunteered for the ...

GL: Psychiatric. What do you want to know?

SI: How long was that first training assignment? What did you learn there?

GL: You mean in ammunition school? See, when I first went from training in infantry at Fort Jackson to Aberdeen, I went to the ammunition school quite in a hurry. How long was that?

SI: Yes. Is that when they taught you how to set up the ammunition field depots like a store?

GL: Yes, yes. That particular program must have been, oh, I don't know, twelve weeks, six weeks, I forget, but it wasn't terribly exciting.

SI: It seems that it was a rehash of stuff you had already learned from basic training.

GL: No, no, not in the ammunition end of it. There was something analogous maybe early on when I went to Aberdeen, though, basic training, where you had X amount of hours spent on this. I'm not sure quite of the details. It may have been appended to the training as an ammunition person, figuring that, you know, even if you're trained as an ammunition person, you might have to do some shooting now and then, yes. [laughter] ...

SI: All right, that was a little confusing. Then, you went into the more technical training of how to set up a field depot.

GL: Yes.

SI: Okay. What do you remember about that period?

GL: Nothing practically, boring.

SI: All right. It was all in Aberdeen Proving Grounds.

GL: Yes.

SI: Were you being introduced to any new methods? Were they filtering in any information that they had picked up from earlier campaigns, what was a good idea, a bad idea, what works?

GL: Not that I was aware of, you know. They probably wouldn't tell you that anyway. They might ... tell you that, probably, if you were in an infantry outfit when they were preparing to send you to New Guinea or someplace, where they'd say, "We've learned this from our experience with the Japs, that they will do thus and such. [As] you're going through the jungle, you've got to be wary of this. We found out that they do this sort of stuff," you know, but, no, I mean, there's not much room for imaginative action with an ammunition dump. [laughter]

SI: When you volunteered for the psychiatric rehabilitation assignment, they already had the information that they wanted to distribute ready; you had to come up with a way to express it.

GL: Well, yes, the Colonel had his ideas about what he wanted to get across. So, he would tell the three of us, "This is the point I want to get across here," and we, with his collaboration, wrote the scripts for this, and then, ... we created the puppets, made them under Jerry Oberwager's careful direction, and then, we plugged it all together, the actors, the scripts, the lights, whatever, sound effects and all. Then, we put it on the road, in a way, yes.

SI: How were these cases viewed by the Army at that point? Were they viewed sympathetically or just as any other medical case? I know, earlier, they had been seen as immoral.

GL: Yes. Well, one of the focuses was on pills, medicines, to quiet them. Now, we were housed, the unit, in a wooden barracks heated by a coal stove at one, or two ends of the thing. ... A good many of the people there, some were from the 34th Infantry Division, some are from other divisions, some were products of horrible experiences in Italy, some, I remember one particular paratrooper, had had big problems with either Sicily or Africa, I think it was probably Sicily, and they were on these drugs to keep them quiet and manage this. There was nothing intellectual about it and they were too numerous ... to have individual therapy. So, it was not like a psychiatrist running office hours, where he dealt with them, and I don't recall, offhand, that the Colonel did any of that. He may have done some; I just don't remember. Managing these men included giving the drug doses, or seeing that they went to where they were supposed to to get their drug doses. A number them wanted more than they were getting because they found out, like being a drug addict, they wanted this one drug I think they referred to as "Blue Heavens." ... Some of them were rowdy and threatening, some were just kind of placid. So, I remember this one soldier, I think he was a buck sergeant, I think he'd been in the 34th Division, he was from Texas, a very sad-looking man, hardly said anything, just looked terribly sad and depressed all the time. Then, the opposite expression, there was this paratrooper, [who] was big

and bulky and heavy, very loud Polish fellow, from Pennsylvania, as I recall. He got quite nasty and he came after me with a raised coal scuttle shovel at one point. I just had to get out there.

...

SI: Why did he come after you?

GL: He wanted some drugs, yes. Well, I imagine, ... if you told them to fall out, for inspection or something, they might not want to do it; they might give you a bad time. ... Of course, the military's whole emphasis at this point would have been, "Rehabilitate these people so [that] we can get them back into service." It was not, "Get them home," and I think, in some instances, maybe they should have sent them home, but that would have just dumped the problem on the local communities, too, because, ... unfortunately, I don't know what happened to a lot of these men that had this problem. Any war turns out people severely wounded mentally by what they've gone through, if not physically, and, if both happened together, [it] increases the problem, yes.

SI: Did you get the sense that the military treated these mental wounds as serious medical problems or that they saw it as a moral failing, something like that?

GL: Hard to say. I'm sure there were some people who may have thought; well, go back to General Patton, in that infamous incident in Sicily. You know, he walked in, just said, "You're a coward," and swatted the guy, and so, obviously, he thought this was a case of malingering, this was a case of mental attitude, wrong attitude, not an illness as such, and, of course, there's nothing new about this mis-assessment, because society as a whole has always had a certain segment of people who look at people who are in therapy, or seeking therapy or being directed to therapy, [as], "Well, pull up your socks and get on with [it]. This is a lot of baloney," you know, don't understand that, "It's all in your head," and, to Patton, "You're a coward, that's all." On the other hand, I'm sure that those kinds of attitudes would not have come out of the mouth of Omar Bradley, General Bradley, and many others. [Editor's Note: In August 1943, during the Sicily Campaign, General George S. Patton struck a soldier in a field hospital who claimed his nerves were the reason for his being there.]

SI: Do you remember some of the content of the puppet show, what you were getting across to them?

GL: Well, no, I can't say that I do, although, you remember, I told you the characters were named "Freddie Fear," "Rufus Resentment," "Arnie Anger," or something. They would express this. Well, the one GI [puppet] would be yelling about how mad he was, and so forth, and this, that and the other thing. The other one would be cowering in his slit trench, wailing, crying. Maybe the other one would be saying things like, you know, "Why am I here and why are all those lazy 4-F-ers back home?" you know, and so forth, "It ain't fair," and so on. ... I'd have to have the scripts with me, though, to see just how we dealt with all this business. How do we tie it together, for example? We certainly would emphasize the fact that these feelings were normal, given the situation. There was nothing unusual about them, except the magnitude of the distress, disabuse them from thinking that they were cowards or disabuse them from the notion that there was no reason to get angry, but that's a long time ago we're talking about, yes.

SI: Once you were done with that assignment, you went back to the casual unit.

GL: Yes, right, and then, to Savanna, to ammunition and inspector/renovator school, yes. So, there were several opportunities that the military missed in plugging me into the right hole.

SI: What do you remember about that second training assignment, the inspector/renovator school?

GL: Well, yes, a lot of classroom work, a lot of reading of diagrams of fuses, explaining the explosives, explaining the problems involved in taking out a fuse, especially if you weren't sure whether it was workable or not. That was about it.

SI: By that time, you had heard about your first cousin's death.

GL: Yes.

SI: Had your attitude towards that kind of work changed once you heard that?

GL: Well, no, I think it did reaffirm the notion that it was dangerous business, but it was, in fact, the nearest thing one could get to bomb disposal, if that were it. So, I suppose, on some psychological level, I might have been trying to duplicate the experience of my cousin in terms of a dangerous assignment and, yet, hoping, in this case, that I could handle it and wouldn't get blown up. I don't know whether that's what went on in my head at that time or not. ... I would say it was not a terribly rational decision, given the opportunity to go any school that they had at Aberdeen, to have picked one that was close to what, closer to what, and maybe the closest one could get to what my cousin had gone through with his bomb disposal training. ... I guess he was selected for that, maybe, because of his degree in chemical engineering. I don't know how. It's something I never got to discuss with him, that I can recall, no.

SI: How large was that school? Was it a few people or was it fairly large?

GL: You mean the ammunition inspector/renovators school? I don't know what the class was. I would guess that I would think we didn't have more than thirty people, maybe, in the program for a certain time. Certainly, like, it's a class, you know. They start you and send you through the program, and then, you leave and another one comes in, I guess. I don't know how many they did, because I don't know how many inspector/renovators they wanted. First, you inspect, and then, if possible, you renovate, save on equipment, save the cost, not waste things. Of course, it was [that] the whole experience was a vast waste of time. I think that some people have agreed that we won the war because we inundated them with equipment. We just had fantastic productivity and kind of overwhelmed [the Axis Powers], made up for some of the other weaknesses, probably, ... massive amounts of equipment and getting that equipment, for example, even on D-Day, off the LSTs [landing ships, tank] and onto the beach, not an easy job, but some of it just was lost in the surf, you know.

SI: You visited numerous areas of the country in training and in these various assignments. What were your impressions of places like South Carolina, Illinois and Maryland?

GL: Yes. Well, South Carolina was my first foray into the South at all. I subsequently came, I would guess starting mainly when I went to the University of Kentucky, to enjoy the South, to like the South, to become, in a certain sense, a student of the South. I did teach a course once called "The Sociology of the South," here at the University [of Vermont]. I think the contrast between the North and the South was greater then than it is now, because there's been such an infusion of not only Northern technology, but Northern ways of looking at things, Northern habits, into the South. ... Especially in the last thirty years, things have changed considerably, but Columbia, South Carolina, was not a terribly exciting place; certainly bigger and more exciting than Waldwick, New Jersey, though. Most of our time was spent on the base, anyway, not out in the city. Actually, I didn't see too much of the terrain there, [just] the piney woods, didn't see any mountains. So, I suppose that I found the people, by and large, in their daily interaction, if you were, say, in Columbia, to be acceptable, accepting, welcoming. I felt there, from some sources, it was felt that the Northern soldiers, maybe soldiers in general, but particularly the Northerners, were Yankees invading the South and bothering their women again. [laughter] So, if they were going to be resentful, I think they'd be more resentful if they knew you came from New Jersey than if you came from Georgia, in Fort Jackson of that era, but, no, personally, I don't remember feeling put upon or rejected.

SI: Can you tell me how you actually went overseas, the ship ride over, that sort of thing?

GL: Well, ... in the first place, we had to go all the way across the country, and I had been on furlough back in New Jersey and I went South, this was under my own steam, to see my brother who now was in the service, at Camp Wheeler, Georgia, which was near, I think, Macon, and spent a little while with him, then, hooked up with troop units in New Orleans, went to New Orleans and, now, was put on a troop train. The troop train was hot, dusty, antiquated, there were a lot of troop cars, and this was not just in places like New Orleans, but even in the Northeast. Some of the trains I rode on between Aberdeen and, say, Philadelphia, they were not all Pennsylvania luxury liners. Some of them were really old railroad cars that had been put into service, antiquated cars. Some of them had the baggage rack up there, was about this wide, and what we would do [was], we'd climb up there and go to sleep, too, but the troop trains out to, well, it turns out we were headed for Vancouver Barracks on the Columbia River, between Oregon and Washington, was an antiquated troop car and it was dusty, creaky, hot. It was not a pleasant journey at all. It was a long ways, too. I thought we'd never get out of Texas, [laughter] huge, but ... it was not pleasant. So, we get up to Vancouver Barracks, we get unloaded, and then, we get on a troopship. We go down the Columbia River a ways.

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

SI: Please, continue.

GL: Okay? So, we headed to Hawaii and we didn't have much time there, but I remember I hooked up with somebody from this replacement depot outfit and we did [explore the island]. We hiked through a cane field at one point and down a steep bank into a secluded and

unpopulated bit of beach, which was very beautiful. The water was beautiful, the white sand, and there was nobody around. We just kind of discovered this place by ourselves, but ... we were not in Oahu for very long, that's where we were, before we got on the troop transport. So, we got on the troop transport. I don't know how many ships were in the convoy, but it was a fair number, and we were headed to Okinawa and we had some Navy escort, destroyer escorts, I recall, were very small Navy craft, ... escorts the destroyers, and they went along. They would practice; a couple times, they were dropping depth charges, that I heard, but, you know, you never heard anything about why they dropped the depth charge. You might assume that they detected a submarine, but I really don't know, because it was so late in the war, too. The chances of running into trouble were pretty slim, but it did take us thirty days to get there, and that was thirty days, actually, quite smooth sailing, but very hot and on a very crowded ship and was not much to do. So, occasionally, you'd have to do KP [kitchen patrol or mess hall duty]. The only thing I remember in detail is about how crowded it was, how hot it was, and about reading the books. They had a library and I read books there. I read one on Sanskrit, I didn't read the whole thing, by Max Muller, I believe. I read a book by, big, six-volume [work], by Lin Yutang called *The Wisdom of China and India*. I read a book by, I forget his name, on jazz, which is a hobby of mine, and a few other things. So, you'd try to find yourself a spot on deck in the shade, always on top, you didn't want to be down in the sleeping area, and you'd sit there and you read. ... That was it, and you'd try to while away thirty days.

SI: What was going through your mind as you were heading towards the islands? Did you expect to run into any trouble?

GL: Didn't know, didn't know. I didn't know what ... Okinawa would be like. I don't even recall, I'm sure we knew, by now, that the conquest of Okinawa had succeeded and, except for these hideouts, so-to-speak, the island was safe. So, I don't think we felt that, ... as we landed, we were going to be facing the enemy who were trying to attack and our troops would be there ahead of us. ... Unfortunately, somebody lost a leg the first night there. We were in a bivouac area and ... they had a lot of duckboards weaving its way from one point to another, because the rest of the ground was unsafe. There might be mines there, so, people were to stay on the duckboards when they're going from point A to point B. ... As is common, there's always somebody who will violate the orders, and this guy stepped off the duckboards. They were all looking for souvenirs at this point. Everybody wanted to find a sword or some kind of souvenir and I don't know whether this guy spotted one or spotted something he thought might be one, but he stepped off the duckboard, walked a few yards and, "Boom," goes the mine and he lost the leg, as I recall.

SI: Did that kind of reinforce in your mind that, even though active combat was over, there was still danger?

GL: Oh, yes, yes, exactly, right.

SI: How long after the invasion did you arrive?

GL: You know, I can't remember; a couple of months, anyway, yes.

SI: Was there any fighting still going on or was the entire island secure?

GL: The entire island, as far as I know and understood, was secure, except for these renegades that might still be in the caves. Of course, there was a lot of searching of caves before they declared the island secure, but [there were] too many caves and too many opportunities to hide to prevent this and the caves were dangerous places still. You never knew, even if there were no soldiers in there hiding out, that they might have rigged it with explosives somehow, mined it, so-to-speak.

SI: Can you describe how you were set up on Okinawa, your facilities, that sort of thing?

GL: When we first got there, ... we lived in tents. I forget how many we had per tent at that point, and I don't know whether there was a mess hall when we landed. I don't think there was, so, we would have been eating, I guess, C rations at best, maybe K rations, probably C, but, later on, at least later on, I remember this was in the fall, anyway, we got there in June, there was a mess hall. It was concrete block with a tin roof and there was an orderly room that; I don't remember. I know it had a roof on [it] and everything. Later on, there were Quonset huts. That company I was headed [for] was [in a] Quonset hut. We had a typhoon in the fall, we had two, very, very heavy winds. I do remember that the first typhoon did tremendous damage. It blew some ships from down by Naha. The water level went out on a ledge quite a ways, so, the ships could not come in and anchor at Naha itself, [only] right near it. They had to be transported, the stuff, in other open channels. Well, some of these ships that are out there were blown by the wind up onto the ledge, in just a few feet of water. In our camp area, the wind took the roof off the mess hall, knocked [the] hell out of everything else that was standing, and so forth. We'd tried to tie down stuff under canvas and take the tent down, peg it in around tightly, put some stuff on top of it that we could to weigh it down, and I recall staying toward the end, the company clerk and myself. Everybody had vacated. Most of them ran for the caves, nearby caves, to hide out in the caves where the storm wouldn't get them. I waited too long to do that. I couldn't get there. The best I could do was to lie down in a drainage ditch. It was fairly near a Sherman tank. There were tanks scattered here and there, from the combat days, and I laid down in this drainage ditch, which must have been a foot deep, and water soon started [pouring in]. So, I laid in the water for quite a few hours, wet and miserable, while the storm raged over. It would have been dangerous to get out of it because flying objects, like strips of roofing metal, came through. They'd cut your head off, you know, if they hit you. So, you had to really be in some place that was safe and the drainage ditch was safe, but uncomfortable, but it was the best I had. To climb into the tank, you could, but, again, you would have to worry about rats, and I think, even in one case, the wind was strong enough that it moved one of the tanks, but my memory may be faulty on some of these details.

SI: Was anybody killed during these typhoons, that you knew?

GL: ... Nobody that I knew, but Yontan Airfield and one of the others, Kadena, I think it was, planes were tied down, and so forth, but they were torn loose, upended, and ruined in some instances. It really did a tremendous amount of damage and, of course, the native population, too, suffered from this. Then, there was a second one, later on. The first one, I think, must have been in September and I guess, within a month, there was another one that came through, did a

lot of damage. [Editor's Note: Typhoon Louise caused severe damage to Allied ships and facilities on and around Okinawa in October 1945.]

SI: Did you have to participate in rebuilding after these typhoons?

GL: No, no, that wouldn't have been our job.

SI: Did you have any interaction with the natives?

GL: Minimally, not a lot. There didn't seem to be many natives around. We were near the infamous Chocolate Drop Hill battlefield. I went somewhere; I remember some natives wandering through our area, or part of our area, but, no, I didn't.

SI: Did you ever tour around the island and see the native crypts, for example, or anything like that?

GL: Went into Naha once and I went up to one of the airstrips once; I forget what it was. ... My sister-in-law's brother was a cook in some unit and I think that might have been near ... one of the airfields. So, he was the only person from home that I ran into anywhere.

SI: Can you tell me what a typical day would be like? What would you do in an average day?

GL: I don't remember much; line up for food, a couple of times. Now, some of the people in my unit, especially the first stages, before we moved to the former SeaBee [US Navy Construction Battalion, known colloquially as CBs or SeaBees] location, further to the west, where ... things were different, in the first instance, some of the troops, the NCOs, went out foraging each day with their rifles, trying to find Japs or plunder of some sort. They'd come back with some souvenirs or say that they saw some Japs and, ideally, shot them, as they saw it. So, they could do that. They could wander around. They could also get in trouble. My attitude by this point was, "Look, the war is over. I'm not going to stick my neck into some spot that's dangerous," that there might be a mine that's not detected that gets blown up, or you might even occasionally run into a cave where somebody's quicker than you are and you're shot there. As I recall, I don't think they got into any great trouble, but it was, in a certain sense, a kind of foolhardy thing to do, I thought, anyway. I felt it was sort of like playing as soldiers, [when] they were out there doing this. ...

SI: Were you ever ordered out on patrols, to sweep for holdouts?

GL: No, no, but ... it was a scene of carnage and it got very muddy when it rained at times and there was this stench of a battlefield, decaying flesh. Occasionally, ... in the mud, a skull of a Japanese soldier, or other parts of the body, would turn up, had just been kind of buried in the mud and, when the rains came and the mud thickened, you know, or washed some of it away, ... there were body parts. So, in the whole area, that [was] not uncommon to find that, including in the caves. ...

SI: How would you rate your living conditions in terms of food, access to laundry, facilities to shower at? Did you have many creature comforts?

GL: ... In Okinawa?

SI: Yes.

GL: Well, we soon had showers, consisting of steel drums on a platform of sorts, with some holes in the bottom and a rope chain to pull that would move the disc around to open the drains, and that was your outdoor shower. We had that and we had mess halls, usually, were built fairly soon, [if] they could get a mess hall where you got proper meals and the cooks could work without being rained on or just bothered otherwise. So, you went to eat in the mess hall. Creature comforts; well, you moved into cots, compared with just having to sleep on the ground there, in tents. Your clothes? I don't remember much about laundry at all. We may have had to wash our stuff, but, yes, you'd have water available anyway, but I don't recall about laundry service, [at] any time. [laughter] Yes, it's funny, never thought about that, interesting question.

SI: Did you have natives come in and do any chores or anything like that?

GL: I don't believe so, I don't believe so, but, yes, the flyers, they had no complaints about the food. The food was pretty good. I remember, in the second installment, when we were further to the west, ... took over the former SeaBee area, that the food was good. We had ice cream and the mess sergeant used to sneak me some ice cream out of a hole in the back of the kitchen at night, if I wanted ice cream. ... I loved ice cream, so, I'd take the ice cream up to my tent and share it with the other guy or two that I shared a tent with. We also had beer, periodically, and, in one instance, a shipment of beer came in and I had the responsibility of distributing the beer. ... Suppose there was, like I said, a thousand men and we had fifteen hundred bottles of beer? We've got a little problem here. Every man gets one beer, but we've got five hundred left over. What are you going to do with [the] five hundred left over, distribute [them] among the officers? yes, probably; keep it, some, for myself, yes. So, I often had, in a situation like this, I'd have a case or two of beer under my cot that came from this residual amount of beer, and I can remember going and getting ice cream, and nobody would do this, they thought this was crazy. I'd be eating ice cream and drinking beer at the same time. The beer, of course, was warm, yes, but, I did. ... Speaking of beer, one of the things they did at the airfields ... was beer. They would put beer in a gallon drum of high-octane gasoline for the airplanes, and then, they would evaporate ... the gasoline and that would cool the beer in a hurry and they'd just wipe off the bottle, ... [with a] towel, wipe it off and drink the beer, cold. Waste of gasoline? you bet your life. [laughter]

SI: Did you have much interaction with other services, like the Navy, the Air Force or the Marines?

GL: No, no, we didn't. The only interaction with [other] services was individual representatives of the services came through the company, you know, on the way home or the way in.

SI: Was there much agitation or resentment among the troops, after the war was over, about getting home?

GL: Yes, yes, there was. The Pacific Theater was slow, compared to the ETO [European Theater of Operations], in getting troops back home and we got upset when we heard that some of the ETO troops that had been sent back home early on were subsequently reassigned to the Pacific. ... They came over griping and they would arrive and they had fewer points than many of our guys sitting around. ... I remember, for example, we had some people coming through with eighty points, some of them. They'd been in the Pacific for four or five years and the guys from the ETO had been over there for eighteen months or two years, were coming home, a lot of resentment, and, of course, the military said, "Well, you know, we'll get you out as fast as we can. We don't have the ships," and the retort was, "Well, you had the ships to get us here, didn't you? Where are they now? Let's get us out of here and back home," and they resented the fact that some people, with a lot fewer points, where they heard, were back home, readjusting, or, "My dear, being put upon by having to come to Okinawa to serve another year, or eight months or so, to get enough points to be sent home permanently." So, you had gripes on both sides, ones that came from Europe through the US, was at home, and then, they shipped out again to the West, Pacific, and ones that were already over here, had been here since Guadalcanal days, on island after island, a very tough situation, and with no creature comforts to talk about once they'd taken some of these places. I mean, you know, if you took a town in Europe somewhere, you had some hopes of finding a few things that were interesting, but, in a lot of the islands in the Pacific, nothing, nothing, yes.

SI: When did you return home?

GL: March of 1946, almost three years to the day, and I landed in Oakland, up near San Francisco; what's the name of the town? It wasn't Oakland, but it was over in that area, [Pittsburg], anyway, on a troop transport, having experienced a very rough trip home. We took the fast northern route home, way up off Japan, the shortest route, fastest, but the weather was terrible and the ship was pounded. In some cases, people were throwing up all over the place. ... It was just a miserable trip and you wondered whether the ship was going to hold together. So, when we came to Oakland, ... then, we're sent, at least I was sent, down to Fort MacArthur, near Long Beach. Now, what I had asked for, and, fortunately, got, was a chance to be discharged in Long Beach. The reason was, I wanted to hear some jazz in Los Angeles, because I had a buddy from; my hobby, one of my hobbies, is collecting jazz, traditional, Big Band jazz and New Orleans jazz, mainly. I had a guy, a buddy, who played the coronet in Aberdeen and we'd talk jazz all the time and he had gone out there to study under the tutelage of a famous New Orleans trumpeter, "Papa Mutt" Carey. My buddy's name was Aksel Hansen, and I wanted to see Al and hear some jazz, because Lord knows when I'd ever get a chance to go out to the West Coast before [too long]. So, fortunately, I was able to arrange that and, also, a guy I met on the ship, came from El Monte, California, in the LA area, said I could stay with him and his father, [while I] was there, which I did. I spent about two weeks in the LA area, listening to jazz and visiting my friend, and so on, and getting re-acclimated. Then, I thought I was going to have to pay to go home, since they'd discharged me there. Well, when they discharged me there, they also gave me money for a ticket from there to Fort Dix, New Jersey, where I'd be out in no time. So, it really didn't cost me anything to stay there and I had a great time and went through

Chicago on the way home, and, by the way, I'd been in Chicago while I was stationed at that school for ammunition inspector/renovator in Savanna. I spent one weekend in Chicago. Unfortunately, I got trench mouth; I think it probably was from one of the jazz bars that I visited, drinking glasses weren't sterilized properly. So, I had a case of trench mouth. [When] I got back to Savanna, I had to have all my eating implements sterilized and was not allowed to eat with other people. So, that was a terrible thing. You went to the dentist, you know, and he had all this treatment for this mouth condition. That was a pain in the butt, pain in the jaw, I should say, yes. So, that was it.

SI: You were discharged, and then, you made your way East.

GL: Across the country, yes.

SI: What was your next move once you were out of the Army?

GL: Oh, ... when I got east, I just went home, and spent the summer with my parents, met my wife-to-be and went back to Rutgers in September. Meanwhile, I did some odd jobs and I had some government money, for unemployment insurance. See, ... you had to register to get this insurance. So, I went to Ridgewood and I registered in this employment agency, [run by] the Feds, where they tried to find me a job. I was also continuing in the Armed Forces Reserves. I never did go to a Reserve meeting and, after a few years, while I was still at Rutgers, they wrote and suggested, this was at Newark, where I was assigned, that since I wasn't participating, that maybe I should resign, which I did, but, anyway, to go back to [the post-war era]. So, you go to the personnel office and you register, and then, they try to find you a job and, if they can't find you a job, you still get paid, weekly or monthly. So, I drew that kind of money, because they never did find me a job. They were trying to get me some sort of administrative job, since that seemed to be my qualification, but, then, they weren't common. [laughter] So, I did some odd jobs and lived off that and the social insurance, unemployment insurance, until I went back to school.

SI: Did you find it an easy transition back into civilian life?

GL: Yes. No, I didn't have any trauma, fit right in. I had a buddy, [we would] go out often. I had a couple of good friends, did some summer stock theater that summer, contacted, got involved with, the Antrim Players, where I met my wife, a theater group near Suffern, went to midget auto races in Paterson with one friend, went to a Paramus roller-skating rink, went to some of the bars at night in the area and just had an easy, pleasant transition.

SI: How do you think you had been changed by your experience?

GL: How do I think I've been changed? I would say that perhaps the major change was being thrown into positions of some responsibility, with two things, first, physical training and being able to survive a regimen of training and whatnot, coupled with being put in a position where you had some responsibility, as an NCO, for example; a big increase in self-confidence in the larger world, as distinct from feeling self-confident while in high school, or that kind of setting. This dimension just broadened where I felt, "I've been through this, I've been through that," you

know. ... They can't throw at me anything much worse." ... Certainly not the kind of experience that, say, Frank Johnson had, but enough to say, "Well, you've been in different situations and you've been able to handle them and you survived," and you get more self-confidence. So, I guess that would about sum it up.

SI: When you came back to Rutgers, what were the big changes that you noticed? Having seen it before the war, and then, coming back, what were the big changes?

GL: I can't remember any huge changes, except the fact that the student body included a lot of obviously older people of my sort. So, when you're confronted with eighteen-year-olds just coming in, even into the fraternity, like the Chi Psi fraternity had, oh, there must have been seventy-five percent veterans at that point, so, there was quite a gap. ... In some instances, you know, the returning fellows were older. So, that was one thing.

SI: How did the two groups get along?

GL: ... They got along all right, yes, they got along all right.

SI: Did you go right back into the fraternity house?

GL: Yes, I did, but, as far as, you know, size and things like that, I really don't recall too much, because I don't think, at that point, they were all that different. One difference would be, of course, is you had people coming to school now, on the GI Bill, who were of a more diverse social background than you had pre-war, because a lot of people who would not have thought of going to college, wouldn't have that aspiration, now, suddenly, were able to try it, to give it a shot, through the GI Bill, which is one of the great programs of the twentieth century. It did an awful lot of good for an awful lot of people.

SI: How did you notice that diversity playing out, in the classroom or the fraternity? Did it affect things?

GL: Well, I know diversity is a hot topic now, and the concept, and so forth, [is] quite recent, I might add, and with a huge infusion of political correctness surrounding it. People didn't talk about diversity in, say, 1946, that I was aware of. It was not a concern; it certainly was not a focal point in the mission statements of a lot of universities. So, you weren't really sensitive to that. I did not see, on the Rutgers campus, in any case, any significant disparagement of minorities here.

SI: Just the diversity in backgrounds, like you were saying, I guess, people who were from lower income brackets.

GL: Yes, how did that play out? matter-of-fact about it, I think. Remember, a lot of the people doing the looking were aware of the fact that these were people that were in the service, fighting alongside them as they were. So, I think that fact would mean they suddenly weren't going to make a lot of distinctions between people from group A and people from group B, and so forth. In short, there was probably more tolerance, even if it may have been, in some instances, overt

tolerance. There were very few blacks on the campus. One of my friends was a sociology major, came from Plainfield, New Jersey, name was (Spencer Logan?); I don't know if you [have] run across that name?

SI: No, I have not.

GL: Yes. ... There weren't an awful lot, that I knew of, but blue-collar background people, yes, a good sprinkling of them, certainly.

SI: Did your course of studies change after the war?

GL: Yes, it did, ... glad you made that point. I no longer wanted to teach at this point. It wasn't a strong feeling of, "Oh, I couldn't do that;" I think it was more, "Well, I want to try something else." I hadn't gotten very far in the School of Education anyway. Remember, I only spent three-quarters of a year, freshman year, there and some of the courses I had to take were just kind of basic courses which all freshmen would have to take. So, I thought about two things. I thought about business administration and I thought about sociology. Once, I'd taken a course in sociology, introductory. It sounded interesting, I didn't know what it was. I took it and got very interested and gave up the idea of the business administration possibility and majored in sociology and was in the first graduating class of sociology majors, because it had been a new department that had been created there, and we had a nice little cohort of sociology majors and we had some very interesting instructors.

SI: What do you remember about your professors? Since it was such a new department, do you think it was a good quality education?

GL: Yes, it was very good quality. Jack Riley was the chair. Fred Marden had been there quite awhile; he was their minority person. I took a course in minorities with him. There was Anders Lundy. There was, for a short while, Bryce Ryan. I took one or two courses with Bryce. We became close friends, by the way, and we kept up contact over the years. He happened to also be a close friend of my sociology mentor at the University of Kentucky. They'd both been on the faculty together, before the war, at Iowa State, along with the woman who married C. Arnold Anderson, [Jean Bowman Anderson], who later came to Kentucky, but, back at Rutgers, there was Paul Massing and Paul was an émigré scholar from Germany who'd fled the Nazis there, delightful person. It was a small group. We knew the faculty well. We had a lot of interaction; it was a very sociable group and we had a lot of, I would say, learning that was almost one-on-one. ... The research course, for example, met as a seminar, with all the faculty present in the senior year, and, ... out of a small class, I think we sent, well, definitely, I'll say, [of] six majors who graduated, three went off to graduate school. Myself, I had a choice of Kentucky or Wisconsin, I picked Kentucky. I went to Kentucky, Fred Simoons went to Wisconsin and (Eugene Jackel?) went to University of North Carolina. There must have been somebody else, but, anyway, yes, a good rate. It was a pleasant experience. Yes, we were in a building, a wooden building, on College Street [Avenue], I think down toward Winants Hall, I believe, probably tore it down by now.

SI: Probably. They do a lot of renovating.

GL: Yes. [laughter]

SI: Was the Rutgers Sociology faculty then known for any particular school of thought, or was it just a general sociology education?

GL: You're talking about Sociology at Rutgers as a whole?

SI: Within the Sociology Department; was it known for any one thing?

GL: No, it was just general. No, most sociology departments aren't known for just one thing yet. You've got certain basic areas, and so, you usually try to staff them. You're going to have a social theorist; you're going to have a stratification person; you're going to have a minorities person, race and minorities; you're going to have a research person. Now, that doesn't mean that the others who aren't, say, research people have nothing to contribute to research, *per se*, but you have certain courses that are necessary to a basic general education in sociology, so, you've got to have somebody to teach them, yes.

SI: A school of thought, maybe, is a better term.

GL: No, I would say. We didn't. I mean, I know what you're talking about, but, no, we didn't have them, yes. ...

SI: After you moved out of the fraternity house, where did you live?

GL: ... Well, my wife and I got married. Well, anyway, I lived in various off-campus houses, apartments, you know, two rooms, maybe one room. In one instance, it's two rooms, and then, I lived in university housing; I should say "we." My senior year, we were in university housing up there.

SI: Hillside?

GL: What do they call it? It's up on the hill, not far from the first stadium they had then.

SI: The Hillside Campus, Busch?

GL: I don't know.

SI: The trailers, you are talking about.

GL: Well, there were trailers up there, back right after the war. In fact, there was another Chi Psi who was married who lived in them, and my former girlfriend at Rutgers, who is now married to a retired Air Force officer from World War II, she lived up there where they built a new series of houses. ...

SI: Davidson? You can put it in the transcript later. You do not have to go to any trouble.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: It was off of Bevier Road. I know the Silvers Dorms are over there.

GL: Oh, named after Earl [Reed] Silvers, huh? Well, how are we doing?

SI: Pretty good. I just have a couple more questions.

GL: Okay.

[TAPE PAUSED]

GL: ... University Heights, that was the name of it, and Bevier Road, we remember it. Okay, let's see if we can wind this up.

SI: Sure.

GL: The day's getting late.

SI: Just to give me an idea of what you did after leaving Rutgers, can you tell me where you went to school next and where you worked?

GL: Okay. After I got my bachelor's in sociology, arts and sciences, an AB, arts bachelor, rather than a BA, from Rutgers, I went off to the University of Kentucky to get a master's degree in sociology, with the expectation of using that master's degree to get a job, perhaps with the Fair Employment Practices Office in New Jersey, where I was interviewed before I went off to graduate school. They were created to enforce, in the Department of Education in New Jersey, a division against discrimination, and I probably would have taken a job as a field investigator for that department, investigating charges of discrimination. Along the line, I was asked to teach for a year at Kentucky when a vacancy arose. They needed an instructor and some of the faculty suggested they ask me. Somebody was leaving to get married, and so, they asked me. ... I told them about my plans to probably go back to New Jersey and they said, "Well, give it a shot, you know, because you'll always get a job, so, why don't you give it a shot anyway and try it? Doesn't cost you anything, and who knows? You might like it." Well, they were right. I did try it, I enjoyed it, at which point I decided, if I were going to go into the academic world, I'd need a PhD. So, I took what courses I could at Kentucky and gave up my teaching as an instructor, ... except for the evening division. I continued to teach in the evening division for money. I went to Columbia and took three courses one summer, because the Kentucky people wanted me to get some exposure elsewhere, to another faculty. My years at Kentucky were very, very nice. We had two children by then, and I finished all requirements for the degree, having worked as an instructor, having worked as an evening division instructor, having worked as a community analyst for their department of community fieldwork there, and I finished, got all the courses finished, by '54, just had to finish my dissertation, which I'd already started. I took a job with Rollins College in Winter Park, Florida, finished my dissertation while I was there, and got a tenured position there. I left there in '60 to go to Elmira College in Elmira, New York. I spent

one year there, because I was called by the U. of Vermont, the chairman of sociology at Vermont, whom I'd known ... from his days at Yale. He and I were on a panel at the AMSHA Convention together, ... with our spouses; came over to check it out, and so forth, got taken with it and decided to come, told Elmira I was unfortunately leaving and came here in '61 and stayed here and retired in '88, and very happy to have done this and I've enjoyed my sociology career. I've also enjoyed all the collateral things I did in the process. I had been very active in [the] community down in Florida, in the Civil Rights Movement, among other things, and active up here. I was on the Board of School Commissioners in Burlington, active in the theater club. It's probably all down on paper there; ... ran for the State Legislature in 1980, but lost to a long-time resident of the town. I was then living in Shelburne, and that's it.

SI: Okay. Is there anything else you would like to add for the record?

GL: Well, I guess I got down the children's names there, right, grandchildren?

SI: Yes, but if you wanted to say them on the tape.

GL: Yes. ... We had five children, the oldest of whom died in February of 2005, and we have eight grandchildren, and I guess that's about it.

SI: Okay. Thank you very much.

GL: You're welcome, Shaun. Thank you for this project, your contribution to the project, an interesting idea.

SI: It is all thanks to folks like you. Thank you very much; this concludes the interview with Dr. Gordon Lewis on July 23, 2006. Thank you.

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Reviewed by Patrick Lee 1/21/10

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 2/22/10

Reviewed by Gordon Lewis 2/25/10