RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH MAURICE MEYERS

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES OF WORLD WAR II

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Dr. Maurice Meyers on April 14, 2000, in Watchung, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

Michael Ojeda: Michael Ojeda.

SI: First, we would like to thank you for consenting to this interview, Dr. Meyers.

Maurice Meyers: You're welcome.

SI: We would like to begin by asking you a few questions about your parents. Your father emigrated from Russia, correct?

MM: Yes. He immigrated, … I think, [when] he was about thirteen years old, and he came in the wave of immigrants at the beginning of the 20th Century, or at the end of the 19th Century. I'm not even sure, and I don't know a lot about how many of his family came over at one time or not, but, he was from the old country. Want to know about my mother?

SI: I have one more question about your father. Do you know why he emigrated? Was he motivated by the *pogroms*?

MM: Well, I guess that was it. ... The Jews of Russia and that area got out ... as many as they could over the period of years that these immigrations went on, and I think it was a combination of ... persecution there, but, also, the opportunity that the New World, or United States, offered to these people.

SI: Where was your mother born?

MM: My mother was born in the United States, in Pennsylvania, ... in a small town, and she went to high school, graduated high school, and that's about all the education that she had. My father, on the other hand, I think, when he got here, he went to either [the] third or fifth grade and that was the limit of his education.

SI: How long has your mother's family lived in the United States?

MM: I don't know, but, I think they came roughly in that same era of migration. They came from a different area, I'm not sure if it was Poland or Lithuania. Some of them were actually born in Europe, some of her brothers and sisters, but, I don't know which ones.

SI: Did the majority of her family move to the United States?

MM: Yes, her whole family came over, as far as I know, yes.

SI: What about your father's family?

MM: [My] father's also, yes, but, ... his uncles and aunts were not always here, so, I don't know about all of them.

SI: Where in the United States did your father's family settle down?

MM: They settled [in], I don't know. There were a few different places, including Long Island. I don't know why they went to Long Island, but, apparently, they came to this area of New Jersey because there was an opportunity to buy a business, I think it was a coal business, and I think that's why they moved here. Some of them, ... my father's brothers and sisters, lived in New York State, and the others were in New Jersey. They were all, as far as I can remember, … within this New York-New Jersey area, and [my] mother's family was all in Pennsylvania.

SI: Your father went into the coal business.

MM: Yes, he was in the coal business, and they later, also, were in real estate in the area, and ... they eventually got into the oil business, also. ...

SI: Did they enter the oil business here?

MM: Yes, well, they were in the coal business and people in the coal business, eventually, had to all go into the oil business as well. So, they were in both and that, … along with the real estate, was the essence of their livelihood, you know.

SI: How did your family fare during the Great Depression?

MM: Not well at all, no, no. ... They lost all their real estate and, actually, we were in rather dire straits for a good many years. We had lived in a nice home in the, I guess, early '30s, and then, ... we lost that someplace along the line, had to move into a rental house, where we lived for many years. So, actually, my parents never were terribly well off. We struggled [for] most of our lives, financially, despite that fact that he was always in his own business, but, he still didn't do well.

SI: Did your mother ever work outside of the home?

MM: No, my mother never worked, as far as I can remember. She was ... a housewife and raised the three of us, two brothers and myself.

SI: How did your father and mother meet?

MM: It was through relatives, but, I don't know the details. The families were separated, you know, by maybe one hundred miles, but, some relatives made the [connection], somehow, I don't know how, ... but, they recommended one to the other, and so on, and so forth.

SI: Did your family maintain an orthodox household?

MM: Yes, very orthodox, extremely orthodox, and I never ate out until I went to the Army. We had many restrictions, which we actually didn't mind, because ... so many of our friends were in the same situation. … Like I said, we didn't eat out and the Sabbath was observed very strictly. We didn't turn lights on and off and so on, we didn't listen to the radio, we didn't have television in those days, we had radio, and we didn't listen to that on the Sabbath, and we didn't drive, and so on. Later on, I did some of those things myself, but, not when I was in my parents' home.

SI: Was there a significant Jewish community in Plainfield?

MM: Yes, yes. ... Plainfield had, in fact, at one time, … something like six or eight kosher butchers in one town, which is ... quite something, yes. In those days, everybody was not necessarily orthodox, but, … it was interesting, because they all observed the buying of kosher meat, and chicken, and so on, ... but, of course, that has changed a good deal since then.

SI: How would you describe the teachings of your rabbi and your synagogue?

MM: Well, it was ... all orthodox. We all went to Hebrew school. That was after school. I think it was something like three days a week or something, ... afternoons and Sunday, and [on] Saturday, we went to services and so on, but, ... everybody else was doing the same thing, not everybody, but, a great many people, so, you don't feel [like] you're left out. ... It was part of the community life, and it wasn't terribly unusual, and that was it.

SI: Which section of Plainfield did you live in?

MM: Well, you mean as a child?

SI: Yes.

MM: Well, I was born on Liberty Street, which is a terribly run down street now. It's an awful street. I was born at home and I lived there until I was about five years old. It was right near the downtown of Plainfield. It was in a terrible area, but, in those days, again, areas were not that particularly poor. It was a mixture; we had every kind of person within two, three blocks, everything, and we moved from there into a very beautiful home ... on Sheridan Avenue in Plainfield, which was ... a new area, and we lived there for a number of years, until we were hit by the Depression and we lost the house. … Then, we moved to the West End, where we rented a house for many years, and that was the house that I went to the Army from. ... Of course, when I came home from the Army, from the war, they lived in another new home they had bought, but, [it] was an old house, and I've been in Plainfield, in practice, my medical practice, in the Plainfield area, [for] my whole life. So, even where I live now, Watchung, my whole life has been spent approximately [with]in about five miles … [of] the area [where I was born].

SI: You have watched as the entire area has changed.

MM: Yes, yes, yes. I've seen this area change and I've been here all the time.

SI: You said that you lived in a mixed neighborhood. Can you describe the mix?

MM: Well, in those days, everybody was poor, so, it was no problem, but, I remember, ... on one side of us was an Irish family, Catholics, in back of us was a Catholic family, on the other side was my grandfather, and down the street there were various mixtures. There were Jews, there were black people, there was, I remember, a couple of twins, they were Polish. It was a real mixed area and, within a few blocks around there, it's interesting that, out of my own experience, … about six or eight doctors [came] out of that area, later on. It showed that ... one thing that was very important, ... at least for our family, was education, and it was interesting to see people coming out of the poverty area, which that was, into, you know, professions and so on. Education was important, but, it's also interesting that there was never, ... to my memory, questions of what your religion was or what your color was. It's just [that] people played together and that was it. There was no problems at all. Oh, I don't mean that there was not, occasionally, a fist fight with somebody, but, nothing of … [any] significance. ... In all the years that I lived, until the '60s, I guess, when there were riots, there was never ... any large scale [problem] or ... even anything of note as far as race or religion. It was interesting and it was a very, very good community. The downtown was a very well known shopping area in New Jersey. People came to Plainfield for shopping.

SI: In the 1920s and 1930s, the Ku Klux Klan and other hate groups persecuted Jews and Catholics throughout New Jersey.

MM: Not in this area, no, no, no. There was a loony on [the] radio, I don't remember his dates, it was Father Coughlin, … I think it was in the '30s, I don't remember, but, … I remember listening to him, and most people put him down as a nut, and I, personally, ... never experienced any large scale prejudice that I can think of, except, later on, ... the general prejudice of being denied entry to medical school because of quotas, but, ... there were no problems that I can remember as far as [the] Klan or anything. I don't remember anything.

MO: Did your parents ever discuss politics in your home?

MM: Yes, but, it was usually local … politics, you know, who was running for mayor, and who the judge was, and maybe some councilman. ... It had very little to do with us, actually. Any other politics was, ... as a child, … of no importance that I can remember.

SI: Was Plainfield within the boundaries of Jersey City Mayor Hague's "kingdom?"

MM: Well, yes, it was interesting that ... we were affected, but, rather humorously. I remember, you all know who Mayor Hague was? he was the mayor of Jersey City, … there was a man in Plainfield by the name of Rushmore, and Mr. Rushmore was the, I forgot his first name, … inventor of the self-starter in an automobile. Up until then, you had to crank [the engine], but, he invented the self-starter. So, he was a very well known man and, apparently, very wealthy, and, I remember, ... my parents got in the car one night, and they wanted to go and see what everybody was looking at, and what it was, on Mr. Rushmore's front porch, he had a large front porch, one of these wrap around [porches], he had a funeral set up, with a big coffin, and flowers, and signs

… [that said], "Liberty is dead in New Jersey, thanks to Mayor Hague." … I remember that to this day. I tell the story very often. ... It didn't mean anything to a kid. I don't know how old I was, eight, nine years old, whatever it was, you know. It was sort of just something funny to see. I had no idea, you know, what Mayor Hague was doing, but, I heard about him, that was it, and that was interesting, because this man lived in Plainfield.

SI: How frequently did political events of that nature occur? Were there any torch light parades organized in support of a candidate?

MM: I never saw any, that I can remember, no, no, nothing big that I can remember, nothing. I think the first election, national election, that I remember was Roosevelt versus Landon, and was that either '32 or '36? I don't remember which it was. That's the first election that I can remember anything about.

SI: Do you recall the Al Smith presidential election?

MM: Yes, I do, yes, but, very vaguely, very vaguely, yes. That was what, '28? ... Landon was the first one that I remember that actually I seem to be a person. ... In fact, we would collect his buttons, which showed a, what was it? a yellow flower, I don't remember. Was it a daisy or ... a sunflower? I don't remember, but, it was his picture surrounded by a flower, and we would collect these buttons, and then, friends of mine would take ... the buttons of Roosevelt and put it in the flower, ... for no reason except to be funny, but, that's the first election that I really remember clearly.

SI: Did your family lean towards Roosevelt?

MM: Oh, yes, all Jews voted for Roosevelt. In fact, when Roosevelt died, it was like the Jews lost a father figure. It wasn't until many, many years [later], in fact, until rather recently, that the truth came out that he … had [not] really done everything that the people thought he had done, and he had not been that much of a friend that everybody thought he was. That's it. My parents weren't particularly involved with politics, nor was I, at any time.

SI: Did any of the New Deal programs, such as the CCC, impact Plainfield at all?

MM: Yes, the WPA. Yes, in fact, there was a project; they were putting in sewers, or some kind of storm sewers, right near my house where we were living and ... I remember the day that I saw working on that crew, as a waterboy, so to speak, was a friend's father. … I felt ... so down that this should happen that I went home and cried to my parents and said that, "Herbie So-and-So's father is working ... on the street gang," which means that he admitted his poverty, you see, everybody didn't admit, and that was during the Depression, and it was very terrible. ... They sort of smiled it off. They didn't think it was any different than anybody else, but, I felt a certain amount of indignity that my friend's father should be doing that, but, … there were projects around. I heard about the CCC and things like that. I didn't know much about these things though, but, this one project I knew, because it was right next to my house.

SI: How visible was poverty in Plainfield? Were there many hobos passing through town?

MM: No, you didn't see [it]. See, everybody was poor. I mean, I didn't know ... the difference between rich and poor. I mean, we were all poor. You know, some nights, we barely had [food] to eat, but, I don't know, we had … sort of, as children, a false idea, you know, "Everything's all right," anyway, and it didn't matter. ... There were very few people that I felt were richer than I was. There were a few families who seemed to be doing well, but, it didn't make much difference. ... We didn't not see each other or play with kids because they were, you know, rich, or their fathers had good jobs, or something like that. ... I didn't experience that. I did experience occasional anti-Semitism as a child. One case in point was, I had a friend from school, and he was the grandchild of very, very wealthy people, and they lived in a very large home, not far from where I lived, and I would go over his house and play, and then, I would see a knock on his window from somebody inside, and they would call him in, then, he'd come out and say, "You have to go home." So, I knew, even at an early age, what that meant, and it was something you learn to live with, and I had other friends that it didn't matter to, and so on, but, that's part of growing up, I guess.

SI: You attended elementary school in Plainfield.

MM: Elementary and high school in Plainfield, yes.

SI: How would you rate your education in Plainfield?

MM: I thought it was great. I thought it was wonderful, my four years in high school. Even though I worked very hard, I loved it. I loved studying and I really enjoyed it. ... That was four of the happiest years of my life, … high school, and, of course, though, it was marred by the fact that that was the first all war class, also, 'cause I started in 1939, when the war started, and graduated in 1943, so, our class was the first war class, all war class. Except for that, it was a wonderful four years. I enjoyed them.

SI: Did the war affect your high school experience in any way? Did the school introduce any new programs as a result of the war?

MM: ... Oh, yes. ... They introduced physical fitness and all that stuff. We had to take extra classes, I can't remember the details, but, after school, we had to go and, you know, run, and ... climb, and all this stuff with obstacle courses, even in high school. They wanted the youth of America to be strong and fit. Also, a great deal of the teaching, like in history and things like that, was involved with the war and there was no way of getting around that. That was it.

SI: Before Germany invaded Poland in 1939, had you heard anything about what was going on in Europe?

MM: When you say ... "What was going on," what do you mean?

SI: Did you follow Hitler's rise to power or Germany's expansion in the 1930s?

MM: Not really! We knew about it, and we were uncomfortable with it, but, to my knowledge, ... no one really knew the extent of what was going on. ... This was the unfortunate thing, but, we knew that it wasn't good. ... No one knew the enormity of what was going on in Europe, altogether. I mean, no one on my level, anyway, and I don't remember ... when these things became known. For example, in history, I don't know if it was freshman or sophomore history, each person had to, at the beginning of the year, choose a country and bring in clippings every Monday of all the things that happened [there], you know, important news for the past week. So, of course, most people jumped on Germany and France, England, maybe, and I thought about it and I took Italy, which I knew was important, but, not quite. So, I always had stuff to bring in. Just a little side fact here, ... we read constantly about the battles that were going on and so on. ... I just don't think we knew the enormity of the whole thing, that's for sure. I remember, the newspapers had, ... always, big graphs, and maps, and charts showing the strength of the French Army, and the Dutch Army, and this army, you know, how many tanks each had, and how many of this and that, but, ... it meant nothing, actually. You know, there were millions of men in French ... uniforms and millions in German uniforms and it just didn't hold up. ... The French Army was supposed to be the best in the world and it lasted no time at all.

SI: When presenting these reports, did you or anyone else express any strong opinions, one way or the other?

MM: No, no. This was just news reports, this wasn't opinions. This was news. You know, you'd cut out of the paper some of the important things that happened in Italy and, you know, they could be war, they could be not war, but, most of the things were affected by the war. There was ... no political arguments, if that's what you mean, or discussions that I can remember, and I was in a pretty good class. Most of the people in my class were, quote, "college bound," or at least college type students, not that we got there right away, but, ... they were sort of the better students.

SI: Were you enrolled in a college prep course?

MM: Yes, yes, that's right, yes.

MO: Do you remember where you were when you heard about the attack on Pearl Harbor?

MM: Sure. I was at the Jewish community center in Plainfield. It was a Sunday afternoon, and my friend and I always met our two girlfriends there [on] Sunday, because they came from Somerville, and they swam, and they were both tremendous swimmers, and we'd wait until they got finished swimming, and then, sit and talk for an hour or so, and then, they'd go home. That was our weekly date and it was right there on the radio ... that we heard it, Roosevelt came on. So, I remember [the day] exactly; ... it was a Sunday afternoon.

SI: How did you react to the news? How did the people of Plainfield react? What did you see on the street that night?

MM: Nothing, nothing. There was no ... big things that I could see, I mean, nothing. We knew there was gonna be a war; we all knew that [would happen], eventually. ... I was sixteen or seventeen, whatever I was, and, you know, it really didn't have any tremendous meaning, you know. It was just another bad thing that happened on the way towards fighting a war, that's all. You know, this had been going on for a number of years, two, three years. That was '41, right? So, you know, we saw that the whole world was in a war, even though we weren't, exactly, but, ... that's the way we felt about it, and, I guess, being safe here, we, especially people in high school, ... didn't feel so involved. We still had all our silly high school things that people did. ... You know, there were a ... few guys that quit high school, joined the Army and things like that, but, by and large, most of us just went about our business. That's it. ...

SI: You were only sixteen at the time. Did you consider the possibility that the war would last so long that you would be called on to fight?

MM: Yes, I didn't give it any real thought. I just lived, that was it, day-to-day, and we didn't think about it. You know, it was two years off for me and two years is a long time when you're a young person, as you know.

SI: Before Pearl Harbor, did you expect that the United States would eventually enter the war?

MM: Oh, yes. I mean, ... I was not that sophisticated to know the politics of war and so on, but, I think we all felt that we were at war, you know. We were shipping stuff to the English and so on, and ships would get sunk. ... In other words, I don't think that I felt that much different the day after Pearl Harbor than I did the day before, but, maybe ... I did and I just don't ... realize it now. ... No, but, just so far as I can go back in my memory, I just don't think that I was terribly [upset or] that badly, you know, excited about it.

SI: Were there any blackouts or air raid scares on the night of December 7th or shortly thereafter?

MM: Well, no. ... They set up air raid wardens, usually old, unemployed people who had nothing to do, and they would run around and tap on your door, "Oh, your window is lit up," or something. It was nothing terribly exciting.

MO: When did your older brother enter the service?

MM: My older brother entered, I would say [that] ... I'm not sure. I can't remember exactly. I would say it was around '40, '41. He joined ... the Air Force. I can't remember the exact year though. I would say, roughly, a couple of years before I was drafted.

SI: Was he in the pre-Pearl Harbor Armed Forces?

MM: No, no, I don't think so. No, I don't think so. You know, that's a good question. I don't remember exactly when he went in. I don't think it was before Pearl Harbor, no.

SI: How did your parents react to his entry into the service?

MM: What, going in? Well, they didn't particularly like it, but, you know, people ... seemed to be rather resigned [to it], as I think about it. It's a good question, because, you know, they didn't like the idea that he was going in, but, ... this is what people did, and there were very few ... families that you knew that didn't end up having, you know, some people in the service, that's for sure. Some fewer than others, but, you know, they weren't happy about it, but, they certainly didn't make any, you know, big fuss. They accepted it.

SI: Do you remember any discussions concerning the issue of isolationism before Pearl Harbor?

MM: Well, when you say discussions, remember, you're talking about a sixteen-year-old kid. I didn't discuss anything. I didn't even know what was going on.

SI: Was the issue ever discussed in your home?

MM: ... No. Well, I don't know. I can't honestly say. I imagine there was some [discussion], but, I wasn't interested. You know, a kid wasn't interested. ... I have to tell you, a funny thing is that people spoke about a local family who was in the scrap iron business, who they said had sold all the stuff to Japan, scrap iron, and, now, they were going to fire it back at us, you know, things like that. I don't know how much truth there was to that, but, they were doing business, there was nothing wrong with that, you know, years before, but, outside of that, I don't know anything about the political aspects. [They] didn't rub off on us.

SI: Did you work during your teenage years?

MM: When, during the war?

SI: Before and after the war.

MM: Yes, well, I always had a Saturday job, usually in shoe stores. I would sell shoes, and that might be like a Thursday night, 'cause Thursday night was a business night in Plainfield, and Saturday, and then, holidays, like, before Christmas, I'd work for maybe two weeks, before Easter, you know, make extra money, things like that. Most of the time, that I can recall, [I] was selling shoes, yes. ... There were a lot of these jobs available for kids like me and it was good money, you know.

SI: What did you do for entertainment? Did you go to the movies? Did you take in any ball games?

MM: Yes, movies. I didn't go to that many ball games. ... I had friends who would go into New York, play hooky from school, [go] to [see] the big bands, Harry James and things like that. I didn't. Some of them would go to ball games. I usually didn't, either. ... I was not the type of person that just would get on the train and go to New York with the other guys. I didn't do it. I played. We did a lot of stuff, like, at the community center. We would hang out there. I played

a lot of table tennis, in fact, before and after the war. ... That was my thing and a friend of mine and I were doubles champs for many years in Plainfield, you know, things like that, but, I studied a lot. I was a real bookworm and I actually enjoyed it.

SI: What was your favorite subject?

MM: Oh, I don't know; I guess, biology. I was good in Latin. I wrote well in English. ... I was a good student, a very good student, and I enjoyed studying.

SI: Before you entered the service, had you seen any movies or read any books on World War I or war in general that may have prepared you for what to expect of the service?

MM: No. We would see, ... you know, in the movies, they had these newsreels every week about, you know, the push in Africa, you know, the war here and the war there. I don't know, they just didn't [affect me]; it wasn't me. ... I guess ... you have this feeling that you're distant and [that] it'll never involve you. I guess I never believed that I would end up actually in a war and fighting in a war. I never really seriously entertained that thought. I think that's the honest answer. I could never see myself doing that.

SI: When you were in high school, what were your plans for the future?

MM: Well, you mean during the war? Well, I don't know, you know, I don't know. I mean, I dreamed of, you know, going to college, that was for me, and, at that time, I was thinking of going to dental school, or medical school, I wasn't sure, but, I knew I wanted to go to college, and that was it. Where I fit in the war, ... I just didn't think of it seriously. I don't know why.

SI: Even at that age, you knew that you wanted to be a doctor.

MM: Yes, sort of, yes, yes, yes, something dental or a doctor. ... I wasn't sure of the difference, even at that time, but, I knew that I wanted, you know, college. I had to go on for more education and that was it.

MO: Did you have a particular college in mind?

MM: Now, don't forget, ... see, when I graduated high school in 1943, there was no longer [the option of] college; we had to go right into the Army. So, I had no time. ... Either as a sophomore or a junior, I didn't give any real thought to college, because I wasn't ready yet to even apply. I didn't apply to any place and I doubt, in those days, whether anybody would even accept you when you were [of] draft age. ... So, actually, before the war, I had nothing to do with college, nothing.

SI: Did your parents expect that you would go on to college?

MM: Oh, yes, sure. That was very important, yes.

SI: Did your parents support your interest in the sciences? Did they have other plans for you?

MM: No, no, ... as long as I went. My father believed in studying and learning. He didn't care what you studied or learned, as long as you learned something, and my mother felt the same way, yes.

SI: This question is out of sequence, but, did your parents support the Zionist movement?

MM: Yes, yes, yes. They were very Zionistic. I belonged to a club ... which was a take off of an early youth movement in Palestine, and, ... you know, we'd go to meetings, and we'd sit around and sing songs of the pioneer days in Palestine and things like that. ... It instilled the spirit of Zionism and that type of thing in us and our parents, of course, that was important to them, too, and we all learned. I learned, especially from a very early age, about giving charity. We always had [what] we called a *pushka*. I don't know if you know what a *pushka* is. It's a little box that has a slot, and you put money in, and, every once in a while, they come around and they collect it. ... There was one for planting trees in Palestine, there was one for Hadassah Hospital, all these things, and we learned, from an early age, to put a few pennies in, or a nickel, or something, and we learned charity that way, too, but, it wasn't, I guess, until after the war that a lot of us really saw the seriousness of Zionism, how important it really was. ... I don't know, before the war, ... I am not sure, it was almost like just ... belonging to a club that your parents thought was a good idea, you know. It sounded good, but, it wasn't ... that real, deep-seeded commitment that ... most of us learned after the war, yes.

SI: Are you talking about the Young Maccabees?

MM: ... No, no. Maccabees, no, that's the athletes. No, I belonged to, it was called *Ha-shomer Ha-tzoyer*, and these were the Watchmen. It was called the Watchmen of, I don't know what the other word meant, and they were in Palestine, and they would guard the little villages and so on. No, there are [other] organizations, Young Maccabees and so on. There were all kinds of organizations. I don't know all of them, but, the general idea of Zionism was much, much stronger. I mean, we knew a lot of people, my parents had friends, who were very, very ardent Zionists, even going back, way back. In fact, I have a picture in the other room of a meeting, must be seventy, eighty years ago [or] more, of Zionists in Plainfield, but, it was after the war that somebody like me got more interested in it.

SI: Before the war, was Zionism widely embraced by Jewish community of Plainfield?

MM: Yes, yes, I would say so, yes.

SI: As your graduation from high school drew near, did representatives from the services address your class as to your options?

MM: I don't remember that, but, it was just automatic, that when you're eighteen, [you go into the service]. I was eighteen in June, graduated in June, you had to register in July, and went to camp in August, and I was gone. It was very quick. Some of the guys who were eighteen earlier

had to go [then]. I know friends of ours who went to the Army like in March and April of that year, ... but, they got their diploma anyway, things like that. ... In our group of people, our age group, they all went. I mean, we were drafted one hundred percent.

SI: Had you considered enlisting in the Navy or another branch of the service?

MM: Well, yes. I wanted to get into the Navy, there was a ... V-12 program. ... I don't remember what the details ... [were], but, I couldn't get in that. I got in the Army one, ASTP, and that was supposed to be the same, but, actually, it wasn't. The V-12 was a very, very good program. The ASTP, ... as I recall, the idea was to train people in, one, languages, two, basic engineer[ing], three, medicine and, four, I think, theology. I think those were the [fields]. So, I had no choice. I was put in basic engineering and, actually, hated it; I mean, even when they sent me to school. ... I had no preparation in some of these courses, ... but, the program only lasted less than a year, and, after basic training, which was ASTP basic training, [which] was infantry, they sent us all to colleges, and I went to Indiana University in Bloomington, and I was there, I guess, for one semester, and then, they closed down the program and put us all into combat units. So, that didn't last.

SI: How much time elapsed between your graduation and your induction into the Army?

MM: I graduated, I guess, in June, May or June, and I was in camp in August.

SI: Did you report to Fort Dix?

MM: Yes, that's where we went, yes. I think it was down here, [at] city hall in Plainfield, and we got [on] busses, and [they] took us to Fort Dix, I don't remember the date, but, it was [in] August. It was only, you know, a couple of months, or a month-and-a-half, after graduation from high school. So, that was the start of it, and then, I was in basic training in Fort Benning until ... into either late November, early December. This is in 1943, and then, they sent me, ... and others, to various [schools]. I went to Indiana and was there [for] about three months, and that would take you [to] around the end of February or March, and then, I was sent to Camp Campbell, it was a camp, now, it's called a fort, Fort Campbell, in Kentucky, and I was put in the 20th Armored Division, which was an armored division, and that's where I was for, I don't know, the next six months or so, and then, from there, I was sent overseas.

SI: Had you traveled much before you entered the military?

MM: No, no. I had not traveled, I had not eaten, I had not slept, anything, you know. I was used to being at home and that, in itself, is one of the strange facts of my life, is that I adjusted to the military probably better [than most others]. ...

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

MM: ... [I adjusted] to it so well, I surprised myself, and I surprised myself to this day, that my friends, who ate out and got around sort of more than I did, ... had a lot of problems. They

couldn't eat the food and this and that. I had never eaten food outside of my home, which was kosher, and I adjusted right away. The first meal, I think I ate everything on the table and I never had any problem, never. ... I guess I resigned myself to the fact that this is the way it's got to be and that's it. ... I'm not cut out to be a soldier, but, that's what I was.

SI: When you were inducted, were you notified that you would be in the ASTP or were you informed about the program after you left Fort Benning?

MM: Oh, no, no, no. It was right from the very beginning. I don't remember whether it was before I was drafted even. I don't remember the details, how I got into the ASTP, but, it was right from the very beginning, because, in Fort Dix, I went with two, three, four of us, friends, we were all inducted together, and they were sent out before I was, and I was sort of by myself in our group. So, it had to do with the ASTP, I guess, the timing and so on, but, I don't remember exactly how, before I went in, it was established.

SI: It sounds like you endured the full basic training course at Fort Benning.

MM: Oh, yes. It was a very, very strenuous basic training. It was real infantry basic training. It was very rough, and, of course, I was as good as anybody else, but, I was not the athletic type. I wasn't used to, you know, running, and jumping, and marching, and sleeping on the ground, and it was very cold at night, very hot during the day, but, I adjusted as well, just about, as anybody else. ... You know, I was sort of, probably, average and that was it. ... I had never fired a rifle in my life. I fired the tops that you could fire. On the range, I was an expert, so, I got an Expert Marksman's Badge. So, you know, things that I had to learn, I learned, but, I wasn't ... very good at climbing and things, but, I did it, you know, as well as anybody else.

SI: Do you remember your drill sergeant?

MM: ... Oh, yes, yes.

SI: What do you remember about him? Was he in the regular Army?

MM: Well, no. I had a drill sergeant, ... by the way, I don't know if you know, I've written a book about all of this. ... No, I have it written, but, I couldn't get it published, but, it's a full length book about all of this, and one of the things that's in it is about this sergeant. I don't know where he was drafted from or how he became a sergeant or anything, but, he was a real misfit. He had three stripes, so, actually, he ranked higher than other people, ... [the] other corporals who were there for drilling, also. The thing is that he was a real misfit and there was ... talk that they had to take him out to the firing range and teach him ... everything before we even got there, because he was completely worthless. The unfortunate part of this is that he was Jewish, which was very unusual, because the rest of them were all Southerners, and he, being Jewish, did not make it better for us, it made it worse, and we had a lot of anti-Semitism from people, our own cadre. Like, we had a corporal who was a Purple Heart [recipient]. He had already been in combat and had the Purple Heart, and he was assigned [to our cadre]. He was under this sergeant, but, he didn't care, and he was ... a terrible anti-Semite, and the sergeant couldn't

protect us really that well. You know what I mean by protecting. So, he was a pain in the neck. The sergeant was a disgrace and he was a misfit. ... We had a lieutenant who was extremely young, very competent, and very fair, and he was tough, but, he was fair. He was a good man. I liked him, but, it was tough. When we had to run, we ran, and when we had to sleep on the ground, we slept, and so on. You just had to learn these things, and, at the end of that, I was in tremendous shape, you know, so, it was good ... for that, but, it was tough, very tough, to go from civilian life to ... infantry basic training in the South. [laughter] That's really something to do, but, I got through it.

SI: Were most of the people in your training unit from the South? Were they from all over the country?

MM: ... You mean in my platoon or [are] your talking [about] the cadre? Don't forget, everybody in my platoon was ASTP, so, these were the better students, you might say, of the country, and they were from all over. I would guess and say, no, I don't; I'm not sure what percentage, but, we were from all over the country. I had no problem with other people in my platoon, never. It was with the cadre. ... This one guy was a corporal and he was mean. He didn't bother me, specifically, but, he did bother some of the other guys, and it was just an annoyance. He just was not ... comfortable, but, that was something else I learned; you had to get along.

SI: Do you think that there was an intellectual bias in addition to the anti-Semitism?

MM: It may ... have been some jealousy, I'm not sure, but, I would say something, and I think this is important for you to understand, that the United States Army, in general, in World War II, was very anti-Semitic, very uncomfortable for Jews. Of course, blacks were another thing. There was almost no place for them, except in trucks and things like that, but, that's another subject. ... In general, it was very difficult for the rest of my time in combat and so on. Being Jewish was ... something to be reckoned with. It was ... there all the time. There was no getting away from it. You couldn't hide.

SI: Did the anti-Semitism take the form of verbal assaults, bad assignments or some other form of discrimination?

MM: For me, it was, yes, verbal and that type of thing, yes. ... It never was anything more, but, it was very uncomfortable sometimes, extremely uncomfortable. I mean, ... later on, this was ... not in basic training, this is when I was in the 20th Armored Division, there was a driver of one of the armored vehicles, a big, husky guy, he was Italian, and he went to ... the chaplain, ... and I heard him talking about it. He went to the chaplain because Jews were getting off for Passover and he couldn't get home for Easter. ... I don't remember the details, why this one could do it and this one couldn't, but, ... he made this point to his chaplain, you know, and this type of thing happened very often, but, you got used to it and learned to live with it.

SI: Were you given any leaves during basic training?

MM: During basic training, I think I got one weekend [off]; ... no, I don't think there were any leaves in basic training, no. ... I don't remember when I got home the first time, I don't remember. I think it was after I got to Indiana, or before we left Indiana, or something like that, I had leave, yes.

SI: Did you have any opportunities to see the area around Fort Benning?

MM: No. Oh, I went into town once or twice, but, I had no interest, because I didn't drink and I wasn't chasing women. This is the only things that you did. ... I happened to have a friend who I met in basic training, he was from Virginia, and this is another whole story, but, we went to Indiana together, and we became closer and closer, and then, we went to the 20th Armored Division together, although we were in two different companies, but, the companies were maybe fifty yards apart. So, we became very, very close and he was basically a Southern version of me, you know. ... He was not Jewish. ... He was a pretty good student and he had all the same values, basically the same. ... We would go to the PX and drink orange soda and laugh at everybody drinking beer. ... That's the way we were, and so, ... I think I went into town once or twice the whole time. We had no desire for anything else, and we were very close, and that was that.

MO: After completing basic training, you went directly to Indiana.

MM: Yes, Indiana University in Bloomington, and I was there for about three months, taking basic engineering, and it was very hard, very difficult, and people were flunking out everyday, and the ones that flunked out were sent to units to be infantry replacements, so, that was an impetus for us to study like crazy, but, then, what happened, when the program folded after our one term, we all got sent anyway. So, you know, whether it was good or bad, I don't know, in the long run, but, that's what happened, and it was fun for three months. It was beautiful there, and we had 1500 WACS and I don't know how many WAVES, and there were lovely women and everything, and ... there was just a handful of us soldiers, ... a beautiful campus. I've never been back, and so, it was nice, but, I worked like a dog, and, ... oh, we had bad experiences there, too. It's interesting, all this comes back now. We had a course in geology, because this is basic engineering, and there were some of the guys in my class who were very smart allecky, you know. They were very bright, very smart, and they would show it, and one of them happened to be Jewish, and we were in this geology course, and ... this professor, Galbraith, ... he was lecturing one day, and everybody kept needling him, because this was such a stupid subject, rocks and all this stuff, which no one really had any interest in, and he said something, and this guy said, "Well, Professor, it's this way," blah, blah, whatever he said. Well, Professor Galbraith actually turned purple, he was so enraged, and he said, "Out, get out of my class, immediately, ... that I have to take this from somebody with a name like Levin." So, right away, whether you know it or not, that's an anti-Semitic thing. Well, we all got up, and marched out of the class, and reported it to our lieutenant, and we don't know what happened, but, this guy was put in his place. So, you see, ... it was there again, in those terms.

[Tape Paused]

SI: We were talking about the professor who made an anti-Semitic remark.

MM: Yes, that never happened again, but, that gives you ... some example of things that do happen, and this is ... the world we lived in. I don't know if it's changed much. ... There was one incident that happened, and I don't know if it was anti-Semitic, I don't know, because, with this group of people, ... you know, they were all supposed to be college material, and so on, and so forth, but, I was a very hard worker, studier. You know, I really studied, ... and a lot of these guys didn't want to study. They would run out [on] Saturday night and so on. Well, one night, it was a Saturday night, I assume, and I was studying in the library or something, and I came back to my room, there were ... three or four in a room, I think, and my bed, my mattress, was gone. It was in the shower and it was all wet. So, obviously, it was my roommates that did it and the reason they did it was that they didn't want me to study when they weren't studying. Now, whether that was anti-Semitic, I don't know. I don't think I thought of it at that time. They were just jealous, but, that happened, and, again, I lived with it. That's that.

SI: Were your instructors at Indiana University professors or Army instructors?

MM: No, no. ... They were the ... professors and so on, yes.

SI: Would you say that the quality of the instructors was good?

MM: As far as I remember, it was, but, I was lost completely, 'cause I had no prior chemistry, no prior physics; math, I wasn't good at it. I really had a terrible time. ... I got through, but, it wasn't easy. ... I don't remember the instruction, 'cause it didn't help me one bit. It was just tough, it was very tough, 'cause it was all subjects that I had no training for. ... Previously, all I had was biology, I had no chemistry, no physics, no higher math, nothing, and, you know, [I was] thrown into basic engineering, so, that was that.

MO: How did you feel when you were transferred from the ASTP to the 20th Armored Division?

MM: I didn't like it. ... I felt almost that we had been deceived, you know, because we were in [the] ASTP right from the beginning, and I worked, and I passed, and the guys that didn't work and didn't pass ended up the same as I did, or I ended up the same as they, so, there was no advantage. I felt that we were taken advantage of, but, what are you gonna do? That was it.

MO: Were you given additional training at Camp Campbell?

MM: Yes. Well, that was ... a regular unit and, you know, we were always training. Army units are always training, you know. You run around, you know, in fake battles, and then, you sleep on the ground for a day or so, you know. It was always, always exercises; that's what they were, yes.

MO: What do you remember about your officers and the men in your unit?

MM: ... It was pretty much ... a typical Army unit in those days, a lot of Southerners, and a lot of racism, and a lot of anti-Semitism, and, you know, I don't like to use the term, but, a lower class of person than I had been used to in college, you know. We were in the ASTP, because those people were all, potentially, college students, where[as] the ones that were in [the] armored unit there, they were, I don't know, basic America, especially Southerners, and a lot of them were uneducated, very crude, and took some getting used to. There were some nice guys [that] I met, you know, a lot of nice ones, ... and it was a typical Army unit, as far as I could recall. It was no different than any other real Army unit. That's what it was.

MO: Do you remember anything about your officers?

MM: Yes! ... There's a special ... officer who I'll never forget. I was in this outfit for a number of months. Meanwhile, every week, or two, or three, I don't remember, they would read off a list of guys who were sent overseas as infantry replacements. Every week or two, whatever, we'd all sigh a breath of relief if you weren't [on the list]. One day, I was on the list. Meanwhile, I have to go back. When I first came into this company, I got a call from the company clerk and [he] said ... that one of the lieutenants wanted to see me. I had no idea what he wanted. I went into his office, and, in those days, my eyes were better, and I could see that on his desk was a chart with my name on it, my Army record. He asked me, "You're from Plainfield, New Jersey?" I said, "Yes." He says, "Do you know ... Bill Ellis?" I said, "Yes, he and I went to high school together. We graduated together." He said, "Do you know his sister?" I said, "No." He says, "Well, we're sort of friendly." So, that was, I told you, at the very beginning, and that was the end of it, and he said, "If you ever need anything, just come to look for me." So, he was one of the lieutenants in the outfit and that was the end of it. I never said another word. The day that my name was on the list, ... we were in formation, he came up to me and said, "I understand [that] your name's on the list." I said, "Yes, sir." He said, "Do you want to go?" I said, "Well, what is gonna happen to this unit?" He said, "Well, we're gonna eventually have to go overseas, but, I don't know when." I said, "Well, if I'm gonna have to go, I'll go now." So, he would have gotten me off if I wanted to. So, I said, "I might as well go now." He says, "Okay," and that was the last I ever saw [of] him. It just so happened that the unit did go over, a day or a day-and-a-half before the end of the war, and one of the sergeants, ... he was regular Army, who was one of my sergeants, and a fairly decent guy, although he was a regular Army Southerner, got killed. How? He was on the side of a half-track, and he had a grenade on his belt, and it fell off, and went off, and killed him. This was the guy who was like ... eighteen years in the regular Army, blows himself up with his own grenade. So, that was the extent of their damages, but, that was the story about this one lieutenant. So, I never forgot him. ... About ten years ago or so, we had a reunion from high school and I met Bill. I told him the story and he says, "Oh, yes, ... we still get Christmas cards from him." He lives out West someplace. ... I didn't go into it, exactly what the relationship was, but, he said that, yes, he was a family friend. So, I never forgot this man. It was very nice. That's the extent. The other officers, I don't even remember.

SI: Were they veterans who had returned to train green troops?

MM: Some, some, but, no, most of these ... were not. ... This was their first [combat assignment], but, they may have been in the Army for many years. ... The 20th Armored

Division was a fighting division, in that it was being prepared for fighting, and it was just like any other division. It was a regular division with, you know, whomever got put in it. Some of them ... were veterans, not of fighting, but, of being regular Army for many years, like this one sergeant.

SI: What exactly were you trained to do in this unit?

MM: Beats me. ... We would run around ... in half-tracks, and then, get out and fight the enemy, and then, we had tanks, and, you know, it was mock fighting and so on. Oh, someplace along the line, I don't remember, it's interesting that ... it's almost completely blank, I was assigned to the motor pool for a while to learn about jeeps, and I learned to take a jeep completely apart and put it together again. To this day, I don't have the slightest idea [what I did]; this is completely blacked out. I don't know when it was and I have no memory of it, but, I know it happened and that was that.

MO: How long were you with the 20th Armored Division?

MM: I would say, four, five months, six months, something like that. I could figure it out, March, April, May, June, July, August, September, yes, about six months, roughly. ...

SI: After leaving the 20th Armored Division, where did you report as a replacement?

MM: I was sent to Fort Meade in Maryland, and I was there for a number of weeks, and I was off just about every weekend, and I had cousins living in Baltimore, so, I would visit them. Also, then, after that, I was sent to Kilmer, Camp Kilmer, and prepared for overseas, and I don't know how long I was there. I don't think I was there too long, and then, [I] was sent overseas from ... Camp Kilmer.

SI: Did you get to visit your parents before you were sent overseas?

MM: Oh, yes. ... From Kilmer, every night, I would sneak through the fence and go home, 'cause it was only, I don't know, three miles, something like that, ... and then, finally, the one night that I didn't come home, they knew I was gone, and that was that. Interesting experience at Kilmer in the summer before I went into the Army, so, that would be the Summer of '42, I got a job for the summer at Camp Kilmer, driving a truck as a civilian. I was a, you know, sixteen, seventeen-year-old, and I would drive a truck around and deliver food to the PXs and all, you know, that kind of thing, and, at a big warehouse, there was a detachment of soldiers that spent their day loading the trucks and, in between times, they had set up a beautiful horseshoe court, and they spent their time pitching horseshoes. Well, when I came there two years later, they were still pitching horseshoes, but, meanwhile, you know, I was gonna be sent overseas, and they're still there pitching horseshoes, so, I thought that was kind of ironic.

SI: Do you remember the name of the ship that you sailed on?

MM: Yes, [the] *Queen Mary*. [The] *Queen Mary* had been converted into a troop carrier. It held 35,000 people, when we went over, and it had been stripped down. I was in an A-cabin, which I'm sure was worth a fortune, you know, in peacetime. It was small; it had three sets of three bunks, a door, and so, there were nine men sleeping in that room, plus eighteen men's baggage in that one little room. We took turns. Nine of us would sleep [there] one night; meanwhile, the other nine would sleep on deck. We would put [down] blankets and just sleep on one of the promenade decks. ... After a while, I enjoyed sleeping on the deck better than the hot [room], so, that's what I did. It was an interesting ship, because it was huge and there were thousands of every kind of uniform in the world. There'd be Belgian Marines, there'd be USO celebrities going over, everything. ... They had five seatings, twice a day, for food, for eating, and, ... one day, red would be first, and then, yellow, and green, and so on, and so forth, and ... the next meal would be the other way around, but, there was like a black market ... in colored passes. So, I ended up with all the colors. I made a decision when I wanted to eat, and that's when I used that meal, but, they would finish ... breakfast [at], like, three, four in the afternoon, and then, start dinner. So, you ate two meals, but, it was all day long that they were available, and that was it. It was an interesting trip, because it was very fast, and they went alone, without a convoy, I don't know if you knew about convoys. We would go on this jagged path, and you could stand there and look at ... the water in back of us, what do you call it, [the wake], ... and see ... that they can outrun any submarine, you see. ... They would have anti-submarine drills where they'd fire a couple of cans of depth charges over and things like that and it was interesting. It was an English ship, run by the English, and, ... you know, if it wasn't for where we were going, it would have been sort of fun. ... That was that and it was something new, you know, for somebody who hadn't done much traveling. Here I am, you know, crossing the Atlantic on one of the greatest ships in the world. That was about it. I can't remember anything else. Oh, by the way, also, one of the things that I did, I did it before, as a kid, I always wrote poetry, ... every once in a while, I'd write a poem. I wrote some on the ship, and I wrote some during the war, and so on. ... Also, guys would get together on the *Queen Mary* and just sit there and all these instruments would be produced, you know, a banjo, a guitar, penny whistles, and all kinds of things. We'd sit around playing stuff, but, outside of that, you know, ... nothing exciting happened.

MO: Do you remember where you disembarked?

MM: Yes. We arrived in North Scotland, ... a little village called Gourock. It's way up [there], and ... that area of Scotland must be similar to the *fjords* of Norway, because ... my memory is [of] these huge cliffs, and we came in, and ... I don't remember how we got off, whether small boats or something, and then, we had to go up, I don't remember if we marched or what up, or climbed or what, and there was a Red Cross unit serving doughnuts and coffee, and we got to the top. Then, we were taken by train into England from there. It was a gorgeous area, I'll never forget it, Gourock, Scotland, and that was it. ... I don't know how many days it took, and I don't even know, to this day, where we ended up, but, we went to ... England, and it was raining, and I stayed in a place, it was a military camp, tents, and it was pouring the whole time. I think it was someplace around Chester in England, but, I have no way of knowing, and, after four or five days, they loaded us on trains and took us to Southampton, and then, ... we got on a ship to go over to France, you know, cross the English Channel. ... During that time, I remember nothing

except [the] black and the rain at this English camp. There were no passes or anything like that. In fact, when ... the train moved, all the shades were drawn, so we didn't even know where we were half the time. So, I can't remember much about that, that business of being in England, but, I remember we got to the coast, and then, went over.

SI: Was this in late 1944?

MM: ... Well, I left ... the United States [on] October 12th, it was Columbus Day, and I got ... there, I guess, ... [at] the end of October, and then, I landed in France, I don't remember exactly when, and it was approximately four months after the D-Day invasion, and, still, a lot of the junk was still there.

SI: Did you come in over the Normandy beaches?

MM: Yes, that's exactly where I landed, and, you know, ... we had to climb up this cliff with all the baggage that we had, but, of course, it was quiet; there was no fighting. ... The most awesome thing, of course, was, as soon as you get to the top of this cliff, and this was only four months after the invasion, the first thing that you saw was the cemetery, and it was all completed, as I recall it, all green grass, and the crosses, and so on, as far as you could see, and that was pretty awesome. Then, you're sort of starting to get the hint ... that this is serious business, and, of course, a lot of junk was still on the beach. There were no bodies, of course, but, you know, a lot of the tanks, and barbed wire, and all that stuff, and ships, half sunk, and ... that was it. ... From the top there, we got on trucks, and we went across France, about four, five hundred miles, to a replacement depot, they call it a "repple depple," replacement depots, where they bring replacements, and then, assign them out. You know, it's almost like a wholesale distribution point. It was a long trip to Epinal, which is in southeastern France, and that's where I went to the replacement depot. Meanwhile, of course, you know, in all these different things, you meet some people, the same ones, and, some, you're meeting new faces, and there were a few that, you know, I would see continuously. That was it.

MO: Did you have any preconceived notions of what Europe would look like or what the war had done to France before you arrived in the European Theater?

MM: No, not really, no. All that I remember is that France, ... to this day, and I go back, I'm going to France next month, ... was damp, and gray, and cold. Damp, gray and cold, that was France, and, ... you know, it was the bad time of the year. I guess I was being unkind to it, but, it was the end of October, into November, and it was damp all the time. Our feet were wet all the time. It was just constant. ... I remember, the first night, that ... we stopped a couple times, I don't know if it was one night or two nights, on these trucks, and just slept on the ground, or a couple of us got into a barn once, the first night, and I remember laying there on the straw and hearing artillery for the first time. It was far away, but, you could hear it, and that was sort of a greeting, that, you know, ... "the jokes are over" sort of thing, but, we all joked all the time, because it was like whistling in a cemetery, you know. You'd do anything to keep your spirits up, ... but, I slept, I'll never forget, ... and found out, when things get real bad, if you possibly can, go to sleep, because, then, ... you can't suffer, and that's the way it was. So, this trip across

France was a very, you know, [arduous journey]. ... Most of the time, ... at night, they'd have to drive without lights, and it was bumpy and jerky, and, on these big trucks, you know, the only two guys on the end would be able to breathe; the rest of us were, you know, inside the truck, but, that was just another hardship of war.

SI: Were you subjected to any air raids in the field?

MM: I don't think so. ... No, I don't think so. We didn't have any. We were warned about it constantly, like, if you lit a cigarette at night, you should be very careful, things like that. Yes, but, ... I don't think we had any, 'cause we were back pretty far, until we got up to the replacement depot.

MO: You were assigned to the Third Division from the replacement depot, correct?

MM: Right. Right from there is where you got assigned to the division, and then, [from the] division, you got assigned to the regiment, and [from the] regiment, you got assigned to the company, and that's the way it worked. So, you went to these various places and slept in a hole for a day or so, until they put you in the ... next batch, and so on, and then, you finally ended up with a company, yes.

MO: What was your opinion of the company that you joined?

MM: [laughter] It was overwhelming, because these guys had just come in; they were in a rest area when I joined, you know, out of combat, but, they had just been through some terrible fighting. So, you hear all these stories, and … you try to insulate yourself from all this stuff, but, it's not always easy, because you're hearing these stories. … You know, this sergeant is telling the other sergeant, and you're in the tent, and you're listening to all this stuff going on, "Oh, you remember this, you remember that," and, you know, you try to distance yourself, but, you know you can't, and it was interesting, because this was winter and there was snow on the ground at that time. This was into November, and the only way you could heat yourself in most of these cases was with gasoline, and you lit … open cans of gasoline, and you light them, and they burn, and the soot is awful, so, everybody comes out every morning completely covered with soot, but, it made a little bit of light and a little bit of heat, and you learned to live with that. ... When I got to the company, someplace on my record was the fact that, when I was at Fort Dix, I had learned Army radio protocol. Now, [the] Army radio protocol that I learned at Fort Dix was simply, "Able, Baker, Charlie," you know, and so, that, somehow, made me eligible, for whatever word you want to use, and so, they sent me to battalion headquarters ... for a few days, which was not far, and, remember, everybody was off, ... out of combat, to learn real combat radio, and I would be a radioman. … So, I learned how to ... talk on what we called a 300-radio. That was a large [radio]. It was about this big, and you carried it on your back, and it had an antenna, and you had a phone, and ... it was all battery, it was very heavy, and each company commander would have a radioman. ... There were four radiomen in our company, and we'd rotate, and one had to be with the Captain all the time, to talk to regiment, talk to artillery, etc. ... So, I learned that, and then, I came back to the company, and we got ready to go into an attack, and the sergeant who was in charge of all the radios and runners and telephone, the communication part of the company, ...

our sergeant, told me that the Lieutenant said that I was to be a bazooka man. So, I said, "How can I be a bazooka man? I was just trained as a radioman." So, he went to the Lieutenant and the Lieutenant said, "No, we need a bazooka man, 'cause all of them were killed." So, my sergeant took it up with battalion headquarters and said, "The Lieutenant wants to make Meyers a bazooka man." They said, "No, he's a radioman." Well, that actually saved my life. The first day of combat, the bazooka team got wiped out again. So, I became a radioman, ... not that it was a bowl of roses, but, for whatever it was worth, I survived, and, on November 20th, I went into combat for the first time, and we crossed this little river called the Meurthe River, and it was a very bad period, after that, of combat for a long time. There were many casualties and our company was down to maybe a third of its strength, or a little over a third, [for] most of the time. We couldn't get enough replacements. As fast as they'd come up, we'd lose people. People would come up at night, by morning, they were gone, they were dead or injured. ... It was pretty rough. It was pretty rough. ... I got friendly with another radioman, he was a new radioman along with me, and he was from New Jersey, and he and I were rather buddy-buddy [for] the rest of the war. By the way, I just spoke to him a couple of weeks ago. ... We got back in touch with each other. Then, that's it. Now, anything else?

SI: Since you were a replacement, how long did it take you to assimilate into your unit? What was that process like?

MM: Well, [laughter] in a couple of weeks, I was a veteran, you see, because it was the people that either lived or died, and once you are around for a while, … for the rest of the war, I was with the outfit, and so, at the end of the war, … you know, I was a veteran. I was one of the old timers in the company and there were a few that had been with the company for several years. They were in Africa with my company, you know, and so on. They were real veterans and some of us were, you know, [there for] less time, but, we were veterans.

SI: Did the older veterans, in a sense, look out for you, help you along?

MM: Oh, yes. ... By and large, I mean, people would look out for each other, somewhat, but, by and large, you were on your own; I mean you know, people wouldn't baby you. I mean, if you were wet, or cold, or hungry, or something, you know, you didn't have somebody to come and hold you by the hand and say, "Let me take you," … do this [or] that. It didn't work that way. You had to stand on your own feet, but, basically, we would ... help each other as much as we could.

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

SI: This continues an interview with Dr. Maurice Meyers in Watchung, New Jersey, on April 14, 2000, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

MO: Michael Ojeda.

SI: Did the more experienced veterans in your unit teach you some of the techniques that they had picked up in the field? Did they show you things that your training could not have prepared you for?

MM: Well, yes, this is what happens. I mean, even simple things; for example, you have to understand that when you're in the infantry, you carry everything that you own, you carry [it] with you, and a simple thing, in the winter, for example, I'm sure most people won't think of it, is, a towel, use it as a scarf. So, it's two things that you need. The few chances that you washed your face and hands, you need a towel, or at least try, and, the rest of the time, use it as a scarf. You learned what to carry. I would carry, for example, sugar cubes and hard candy, because you never knew when you were gonna get food, and you would carry everything concentrated that you could. You had to take care of your rifle. ... We had to take care of the radio, things like that, and you had to make sure they were in good shape. A good example of learning the hard way was, the very first night that I was in combat, … we were in the woods, after fighting all day, … and they said, "Dig in." Well, "dig in" means you dig yourself a foxhole, which is not unusual in the infantry. The point was, I didn't have any idea which direction the Germans were [facing]. So, I didn't know how or where [to dig], so, I sort of asked, you know, people, "Which way?" and then, I figured, "I'm gonna be smarter than anybody else," and I dug my foxhole into a hill, so that I had not only a foxhole, but, I had a roof. I was much smarter than anybody in the unit, until it rained, and the whole thing fell in on me, and I slept with mud up to my shoulders all night, because I shouldn't have dug a hole that way, but, that's the way you learn. The other thing that we learned is, you know, how to carry a blanket [and] a raincoat. A raincoat was valuable. Why was a [raincoat] valuable? not only for rain, but, it was the best thing to put under a blanket when you had to lie on the ground, because cold came from underneath, not the top. You needed more under you than over you, and a raincoat, … not that it's the greatest, but, it's certainly better than nothing. So, these are tricks that you learned from guys. ... The other thing is, you just learn [to have] a second sense of when to do this, when to do that. ... I guess, after a while, you sort of operate on an instinct ... that no one else can help you with. You just ... have to do it on your own and you don't take chances. Another thing, on the first day of combat, we were running along a road, and we were being shelled, and I came across a dead German officer, and I stopped, I don't know why I stopped, because, in the first place, there were two things that intrigued me. Number one, he had only half a face, the other half was blown away, and I don't know why, you know, I had to look at it, and the other thing is, he had on his belt a Luger. … A Luger, I don't even know, maybe to this day, is one of the finest sidearms in the world, and they were really something to have, but, I remembered, … in training, they were telling us, "A dead body may be booby trapped." So, I didn't touch it, but, a friend of mine came running along and he was a gung-ho Southerner. He stopped, took the Luger, and got away with it, but, I was afraid, you see. So, you don't take chances if you don't have to, things like that.

SI: When you entered combat, was your unit pressing forward?

MM: Oh, yes. ... No, we were in the attack. In fact, we were almost always in the attack throughout the entire war, going forward, yes.

SI: In November, what was your unit's initial target?

MM: Well, the initial target in November, … the long range target, was the Rhine River, and, … at about the same time that the world talked about the Bulge, we were in a battle in the southern part of France which was just as important, except we were on the offensive against four German divisions that were holding out on the west side of the Rhine as a last stronghold before they had to ... escape across the Rhine River, and it was called the Colmar Pocket, because it was at the City of Colmar, which is on the east bank of the Rhine, and that was a tremendous battle which took place all the way, I guess, up to Christmastime, around that time, and we were engaged in that. … Around Christmas, we had broken most of the resistance, and, with … French help, we had taken Strasbourg, which is the largest city ... in France on the Rhine River. It's the capital of Alsace. ... So, that was sort of a stage that was the first stage that I was in, and it was called the Colmar Pocket.

SI: Was the Colmar Pocket battle largely an infantry fight? Was the offensive supported by artillery and air power?

MM: Well, we had everything. We always had support artillery with us. We even had some air support, occasionally. Most of ... what I could see would be artillery support, which I would direct very often with my radio, so, that's why I was more familiar with it, and then, you know, … every infantry company has a ... heavy weapons platoon, which is mortars and machine guns, so, that would back [us] up, and then, … there's artillery units that would be, you know, dispersed in back of us at various locations, and you would call them in ... to attack, you know, [concentrate the] artillery on various targets that we were moving into or something like that. That was about it for that. It was quite an experience. We lived most of the time in the snow, on the ground. Occasionally, [if] we were lucky, we would get into a house at night in a little village, if we took a village or something like that, but, it was very cold and it was tough. It was very tough and it was something to see people getting killed; … not even getting to know people by name and they'd be dead. You know, "Remember that guy that came in last night? He was from Kentucky or somewhere. Well, he was killed," you know, something like that. ... It amazes me, and, of course, throughout my entire story, this amazes me, is that our Army, made up of people like me, who were far from military people, far from training of that type, we were actually better soldiers than the soldiers we fought, who were, you know, highly trained German soldiers. We could out soldier them. ... It was interesting, because … there's a certain trait of an American soldier, which is an independence, which the others did not have, and we would attack at night, and the Germans would be in bed, and they'd say, "Don't you people ever sleep?" you know, things like that. They actually said it to us, "Don't you sleep?" and we didn't. Now, they were trained, much more, you know, hardened than we were, supposedly. … We were little kids from high school, and, yet, that's the way the war was won. The American soldier is ... pretty good, when it comes down to things like that. ... You know, we would eat off the land, if we could. If we'd catch a chicken, we'd kill it and eat it. ... Sometimes, in the cellar of somebody's house, you'd find a few bottles of wine. So, I didn't drink, but, some of the guys thought that was great, you know. Yes, we'd loot; we'd loot [the] houses that we were in. We'd look in all the drawers and take all kinds of junk, and then, throw it away, because we couldn't carry it anyway. So, you know, it's a crazy life, but, ... it was something.

SI: Did you fight mostly in the field or were you engaged in house-to-house, street-to-street fighting in the cities?

MM: Both, both. ... Mostly, this Colmar Pocket was going from village-to-village, small villages, and we'd attack into the next village, … you know, and then, sometimes, they'd be on the run, so, we'd get into trucks and they would move us a little farther, you know, ten miles after them, and then, we'd push, like that, but, we were in the attack most of the time. … It was very hard, because we were undermanned most of the time, too. ... An infantry company has about 180 people in it, and we would fight, usually, with seventy or eighty, ... but, we did it, and that means the other companies, you know, were the same; we weren't just the only ones. There were a lot of bad, you know, things that happened to other companies and other battalions, you know. We'd hear about a company being almost wiped out and so on. ... We did all right. The other thing is, it's interesting that people at my level knew very little about what's really going on. We only had the few miles in front of our noses to think about. You know, the lieutenant or captain, whoever. I had many company commanders, because they were either wounded, killed, or transferred, or something. I had, I think, a total of six or seven throughout the war. You know, he would say, "All right, we're gonna go into an attack on a village over here." You know, ... we wouldn't really understand the importance of it, ... how it related to the rest of the front, you know, in other companies, in other regiments, in other divisions. We wouldn't see this picture at all, until maybe later on, when everything was sort of in order. Then, we would say, "Oh, we're here. We accomplished all of this." We weren't alone, other companies were there, too, ... but, in an infantry company, you're sort of ... in battle, and it's a local thing, it's not any grand operation, even though you may be a part of a grand operation, you know what I mean, a big, big thing going on.

SI: Would you say that you were well-supplied at the front?

MM: Well, what's the supply? [Do] you mean food?

SI: Food, ammunition, and so forth.

MM: Ammunition, ... I guess it was all right. Food, you got when you got. ... You see, food is a behind the line type of thing. If you're in a position in a town or out in the field, it didn't matter, where it was relatively quiet, they would actually come up and set up a kitchen, and you would eat in a mess, you know, and they'd set up the food and cook it there. That would be sometimes. Other times, they would set up a mile or so back, where it was safer, and just bring us up some food, you see. Other times, they would just bring us up rations and pass them out, which means we had to carry them and eat whenever we got a chance, which was the usual case. We usually were carrying our own, a can of beans, or a box of chocolate, or something like that. So, most of us carried something, usually. ... You know, "All right, the war's gonna stop now; we're gonna have breakfast." You ate, you know, walking, you ate before you slept, you ate in the middle of the night, you ate, I mean, just whenever you [could]. … [For] most of that, you were on your own. You ate when you had a chance. Occasionally, you know, we'd get into a little village, and we'd get into a nice house, ... and we'd build a fire, and then, we'd go and find a chicken or something like that, you know, potatoes and chicken, and we'd fry everything and have a great

meal, you know, take the feathers off the chicken, most of the time, you know. So, things like that. Whatever you could find, you would eat.

SI: What did you think of the Germans as the enemy?

MM: Well, it's so hard, because, you know, ... there were all different types of Germans as the enemy. We found some who … only wanted to talk about their families, you know. ... They'd bring out pictures right away, to show us their family. Others were very proud and not very friendly, and they just exuded superiority, you know, that type of thing. So, you had all kinds, and, as far as fighting, I don't know, you know. They fought the same as, I guess, we did. It's hard to say. It's hard to say. Their equipment was not the greatest, you know, near the end of the war, either. They were short a lot of stuff, tanks and things. Their food supply, I don't think, was as good as ours. They ate a lot of black bread. ... We liked it, by the way. If we'd ever catch them, we would take the bread, and, to them, it was the basic food, you know, just eating bread, but, we got a kick out of it, because it tasted different. I don't know. ... On our level, they were the same. For example, the second and third day I was in combat, we were in a position, we were sort of hanging out in the sun, it was very nice, it was quiet, and, you know, war isn't constant, twenty-four hours a day. You're in the war twenty-four hours a day, and you're in combat, but, it's not constant shooting twenty-four hours a day, where everybody's constantly shooting. ... There would [be] lulls, and we were hanging out, sort of lying around [in] the sun, and a couple of us, I don't know, three or four of us, [said], "Let's take a little walk," I don't know why, and we'd go walking around. We walk up this hill, and on the top of the hill was a woods, and we walked up this hill, and, just as we get to the top of the hill, a squad of Germans comes toward us at the top of the hill. So, we faced each other, they turned around, we turned around, then, we just ran. No one fired a shot, and we went flying down the hill, and they went thataway. ... So, you know, they were humans, too, I guess, in that sense. They weren't looking for a fight any more than we were. You know, they caught us. I mean, we were all caught, so surprised that none of us fired a shot.

SI: Were you ever concerned about being taken prisoner?

MM: Once or twice, I thought about it. I wasn't terribly worried, I know what you mean, and I was, you know, prepared to lose my ... dog tag, yes, but, I never did. ...

SI: I know that your dog tags list your religious affiliation.

MM: Yes, there's a religion emblem.

SI: Did the Army offer you the option of changing or removing that emblem?

MM: Oh, no. I never heard of that. No, because they had to know, if you got killed, what your religion was, so they knew how to bury you, I guess. No. I never heard [of] the option. I never heard that.

MO: How long did your first period of combat last?

MM: ... Well, I was in combat from then on, to the end of the war; I mean, not on a day-to-day basis. ... For example, see, they would then take us ... from where we were, by truck, and take us someplace else, and we ended up, around Christmas, in Strasbourg, as I told you, and we were there a few days, and we had some fighting, and then, you know, it was quiet, and the Germans had retreated across the Rhine River, so, they were now on the other side of the river, and then, we were taken from there, I don't remember exactly which day, but, we ended up, oh, on Christmas, we were in a little village in Alsace. ... It was not on the Rhine River, it was back again, because this bulge, this Colmar Pocket, existed, which was a pocket that we didn't get rid of until I don't know when, and so, we were in little villages and fighting off and on, and, finally, I think it was in January or so, we were taken to the Vosges Mountains in France, and we were in a defensive position for a few weeks on top of the mountain, in snow, and we lived in holes, actually, for a few weeks, and it was a defensive position, in that the Germans were opposite us on another mountain. ... Again, this is one of those points, I didn't know what the grand maneuvering was, you know, at that point. This was our job, and we were there, and that was the end of it. ... Then, I forgot what else followed that. I think, by that time, the Colmar Pocket had been wiped out pretty well. I'd say the dates are a little rusty, but, anyhow, around that time, … they took our regiment out of combat completely and sent us back into France, about one hundred miles or so back, to rest and to train for river crossing, because we knew that the Rhine River was gonna have to be crossed. So, I ended up in a ... little village called (Belleville?), and, there, a very interesting thing happened, and this is one of the stories in my book. While I was there, I became friendly with an old woman, one day, the first day, who was washing her clothes in the fountain in the middle of this little village. ... I spoke German, she spoke German and French, but, I didn't speak French, and we got [to] talking, and she told me that she lives right over here and that she and her husband have five foster children that lived with her, some of them are orphans, and the government pays her a certain amount to take care of ... [them], and that I ought to come over and see these kids. I don't know, you know, there was no reason not to, so, I went over, and there were five little kids, and one of them, I don't know what happened, he was a seven-year-old orphan, his name was Daniel, and I fell in love with this kid, and he fell in love with me. I mean, when I use the term, it's real love, and he, every morning, would come to my house where I was living, which was a block or so over there, this was a small village, and he would stand in front, and the guys would say, "Hey, Meyers, that little boy is waiting for you." ... I would take him, and we'd go through the chow line, which was in the schoolyard, and they would give me extra, and we would sit in the corner of the schoolyard, and we would eat out of my mess kit, and he would eat with me, and we couldn't speak, but, we would giggle, and laugh, and point, and so on. ... He would eat two or three meals a day and, every night, I'd go over the house and play with him, and talk, and so on. ... To this day, I don't remember much about the other four children, but, this little Daniel, there was something, there was a bond, something going on. One day, ... we're eating and they gave us some cake. So, I said to him, "Cake," and he says, "*Gateau*." So, he taught me one word of French, I taught him one word of English, and I also had a fatigue jacket that I wore. ... In Strasbourg, we had come upon a German uniform factory, and I had found a wonderful, like, a lamb's wool vest, and I sewed it inside my jacket. You see, these things are not official Army things, but, things that you do and that you get by [with] in combat. No one bothers you, but, you know, ... guys carrying Lugers and things like that, this is not in the peacetime Army. You don't do things like [that] and you don't go sewing

German stuff into your uniform, you know. ... So, I took it off one day and gave it to Daniel, because it was cold, and it was way too big for him, but, it was significant. Well, we were there [for] about three weeks, and we trained on the Moselle River for river crossing and things like that, and, after the time, we left, and I went to the house the night before we left, and I told the old woman to tell him that I wouldn't be seeing him anymore and that he's just got to be a good boy, and grow up, and blah, blah, and so on, and ... that was it. The next morning, we got on trucks, and we drove out of the town, and he's standing there with a few people from the town, and he looks at me. He doesn't wave and I don't wave. We just look. End of story, except, it wasn't the end of the story. [Do] you want to hear the rest of the story now?

SI: Yes.

MM: I went home after the war, never saw him again, we'll say, built my life, went to medical school, got a family, and so on, and so forth, and, all the time, I would tell my wife, my children, all my friends, about this little boy named Daniel Joly that I had met during the war. He was seven, I was nineteen, and that, you know, I'd always remembered him. Well, ... all my friends, everybody, knew the name. In 1992, I finally said to my wife, "You know, I'd love to go back." I'd never been back after the war. I said, "I'd love to go back to see some of those foxholes that I dug, and I'd like to go to see the Rhine River that I crossed, and I'd like to go to some of those towns that I was in. I'd just love to check on some of these things." "And look for Daniel Joly, too?" I said, "Yes, sure, we'll look for Daniel Joly." Well, we went back in 1992; I had planned it, and ... I got all my military books out and maps, and we laid out a route. It was not chronological, as far as the war, but, it was chronological at least for us to do it in a couple of weeks. About two weeks before we left on this trip, one morning, my wife came down and said, "You know what? I had a peculiar dream last night." I said, "Yes, what?" She says, "You're not going to believe it." I said, "What?" She said, "You know, I dreamt that we went to France, and we found this little boy of yours, this Daniel Joly, but, he was not a little boy, he was a grown man, a very sweet, very nice man, and he had a family and a nice home, and I see [that] we're opening champagne and all kinds of stuff." I said, "That sounds great. That's wonderful." So, off we go to France, and we went to Normandy, you know, where I'd been the last time, forty-eight years ago, and we drove toward Belleville, and we finally drive in, and there's the sign, "Belleville," and a few feet past it is the schoolyard. ... I stopped the car and I got out. I said to my wife, "This is it. This is the schoolyard, but, it's so small," and I said, "You know, right over there is where that little boy and I used to sit and eat, and right around here is where he lived." So, we walked over there, and I saw two men, it was a Sunday morning, by the way, and it happened to be the French equivalent of Mother's Day. Now, that's very important to the story, because, if it was any other day and any other time, I don't know if the following ... story would be complete. I saw two men, and they're talking Sunday morning talk, and it's drizzling a little bit, and I went over to them, and I made them understand that I was an American soldier here forty-seven years ago, ... and they're jabbering in French to me, and so on, and so forth. It's very detailed, but, I'll cut it somewhat, and they said, ... they're speaking French, [that] I ought to go the corner, where there's a restaurant, and the woman in there speaks English. But, I sort of kept on, and then, they said that the lady who lives in that house, I finally identified the house, is in church, and she should be coming home any minute. Then, almost like a screenplay, around the corner comes this beautiful, redhead French woman, and I guess she was, like, [in her] late

forties. ... They call her over, and we're standing, like, in front of her house, but, across the street, across an alley, actually, and ... these men explained to her that I was here forty-seven years ago, an American soldier, blah, blah, blah. So, she doesn't speak English either and she says we should go to the corner and see the English lady. I couldn't wait. I stood there and I said to her, "Old lady." I don't know what other words I used, old, antique lady, this and that. She says, "*Qui, qui, Madam Thevenot*." Now, I didn't know the old lady's name, but, obviously, it was Madam Thevenot, and I said to my wife, ... "Oh, my God, is that exciting? This is really great." Then, I said, "Five infants, five little ... children, five orphans," five whatever. She says, "*Qui, qui, qui*." So, I said to my wife, "Oh, my God, I'm shaking." My knees were shaking. Finally, I looked at her and said, "Why don't we go to the corner and see the English lady." I couldn't wait anymore. I looked right at her and said, "Daniel Joly?" Her face lit up, and she jabbers, and we both, together, my wife and I, understood what she said. "He's married. He lives in Nancy, which is fifteen miles from here. His older daughter is getting married next month and he, Daniel, used to push me in the baby carriage when I was a little girl." By that time, I was shaking, and ... she waves us [over], and we go into the house, and I said to my wife, "This is it; this is the house." She goes to the phone book, and she looks up a number, and then, she says, "We're gonna go to the corner." We go to the corner, it's a little restaurant, and there's an English woman and her husband, who's a French chef, [they] owned this restaurant, and we all go in, and everybody, the men, ... are following us. We go into the restaurant and she talks; the French woman explains to the English woman what's going on, that I was a soldier, blah, blah. So, they decide, between the two of them, that the English woman would make the phone call. She goes to the phone, and she dials the number, and, in a few seconds, she's talking to, obviously, Daniel, and she stops, and she turns to me, and she said, "He has a question." I said, "What is his question?" "He wants to know how old you are." Now, I was sixty-seven, sixty-eight, ... whatever it was, and she tells him, and [she says], "He wants to see you." Well, she hangs up and I said, "Okay." Well, everybody goes into chaos, and they're jabbering, everybody there, and they're making arrangements. We have nothing to say about [it], my wife and I. They're telling us what we're gonna have to do, that we have to have somebody guide us, or we'll never find [it]. So, it's decided that the redhead's husband and his friend are going to take us, they're gonna drive, and we're gonna drive in back of them. So, they go out and get in the car, and we get in our car, and we're ready to take off, and the English woman comes flying out of the restaurant with a little boy, a thirteen-year-old boy, opens our car, and throws him in the back seat, and says, "Take Philip with you. He speaks English." So, off we go. We go around the corner and into ... a driveway. ... "The trip is over?" I says. "No." ... The French woman comes over, "Look, I have to have my car, because I'm having twelve people for Mother's Day dinner in two hours. So, Herve, that's my husband, and his friend will take you in his friend's car." So, they changed cars and off we go. Well, we finally go through all kinds of different areas, industrial, lousy, run down areas, nice areas, expensive areas. We don't know where we're going; we're following. Finally, we're coming through a nice, little area, and we're slowing down, and we stopped, and I looked, and there's a man standing by his little gate. I walked over and I didn't know what else to say. I says, "Daniel Joly, Daniel Joly, Daniel Joly," and he says something, and, again, I didn't know what he was talking about, but, it was him. We shook hands, and his wife came out, and everybody is jabbering. Before I know it, we're in the house. Herve and his friend said, "Good-bye." They get in their car and they left. They left us with Philip, the interpreter, a thirteen-year-old boy, and he's trying to interpret all of these things that

are going on at one time, and it's really funny. We're in the house, and they're opening champagne, just like the dream, and everybody's crying, and talking, and drinking, and ... poor Phillip is trying to keep up with this. Finally, I tried to make some order out of it and I said, "Philip, ask Daniel, does he remember me?" Daniel did not remember me, but, he remembered going through a food line with an American soldier. ... Subsequently, years later, which I haven't gotten to yet, his two daughters said, when they were growing up, he would tell them stories about an American soldier who taught him the word "cake" and, also, gave him a jacket. So, this was good enough, you know. Well, we're sitting there and everybody's crying. Rosemary, his wife, is crying, and my wife turns to her, with the interpreter, and says, "Rosemary, aren't you happy? Why are you crying so much?" and Rosemary says, "My husband's always been sad and very alone, because he has no past. ... When that phone call came, now, he has somebody who knew him in the past, and it's just so overwhelming," and Daniel turns to my wife and, through the interpreter, says, "Don't ever let him forget me again," and my wife turns to him and says, "Do you think that that man, who has loved you for forty-seven years, would ever forget you?" Well, a torrent of crying, and so on, and so forth, and they invited us to stay for dinner, but, we couldn't, ... only on an emotional level. We couldn't handle anymore. It was just too much, and we used the excuse to take Philip back to the village to not stay for lunch, and that's what we did, and, since then, we have a family in France. We have them and we're gonna see them in a couple of weeks. They've been here, we've been there, and this thing goes on. It's a bond that ... none of us can explain, but, it's a love affair between two men. ... We can't even speak together very well, but, don't you think that, about a month ago, one of the biggest thrills of my life was, I got an e-mail from him. His kids finally got him a computer, and he's not ... a terribly educated guy, not that he is a dunce, but, he doesn't like to write letters and so on, and so, what he does is, he writes me in French, and then, I use a program that translates [it] into English, and I write a letter in English and translate in French, and it's sent to him. So, we have been corresponding on the e-mail. We were corresponding over the years past through one daughter who speaks English. There's so much more to this story, but, in 1995, we gave a dinner. My wife and I sponsored a dinner in the restaurant for ... all his family and all the people who were in on finding him in 1992. So, we gave that dinner for them and so much has come out of this story that it's unbelievable. ... We have pictures. That's a plaque up there that the village gave me in 1995. I presented a wreath at their war memorial, even though I had never fought there, but, they said [that] I was the first American soldier in fifty years to come back, ... and that's it. That's his wedding picture over there. See the one with the white gown? That's the daughter who got married, and they sent us a picture, and we're in close touch, constantly, with somebody in the family all the time. ... Two daughters and Daniel were here a year-and-a-half ago. His wife couldn't come, she's working. We have a French family now. Isn't that a wonderful story? yes. So, that's in my book, too. So, this goes on. This is the story that is going on, I hope, forever. Now, there is a grandchild. We're gonna bring gifts. We always send a birthday present every year for the grandchild, and we send cards every birthday to everybody, you know, and we try to keep together as a family. Isn't that something? It was forty-seven years later [that] I found him. I can tell you another story. One night, we went into an attack, this was in the Colmar Pocket, and we were in a little village, and we had to take back a chateau, there were a lot of French chateaus, and the Germans had taken it. ... We had to get rid of those Germans and take back that chateau. Well, it was a horrendous night. I was with the Captain, I was carrying the radio, and we went into the attack across a wide open field, which was snow covered, and the Germans

had ... lit a barn so that it cast a light across this whole thing, and we were sitting ducks. We got halfway across, and they let loose on us, and I ... hit the ground, into the snow, everybody [did], and then, the Captain said, "Let's go," and he went ahead, and it was chaos. Before I knew it, I heard shots, and I was all alone, and I laid there all night. In front of me, there was a German tank, obviously, and I couldn't see the tank, and I stayed there the whole night, didn't know which way to go. Finally, when it started getting light in the morning, I got up and ran back, tracing my steps, because I was afraid of mines. Apparently, the Germans had left. I got back, and I found out [that] the Captain was killed, his orderly was badly wounded. They must have just gone around this bush or something, and I didn't know which way to go, so, I stayed there. Well, ... on our trip in 1992, we went back to the chateau, and we found the baron of the chateau, and we told him this story, and he told us about [the] Germans, and the Americans, and this and that. ... My wife said, "Do you know where my husband was that night? Right out there in the snow." The baron was only four years old that night and was not at the chateau. He was back in France, where it was safer, but, that was funny, to go back and have a toast in ... the chateau with the baron. So, what else has happened? One night, ... we took a little village ... in Germany, and the Captain called [on] me, 'cause I spoke some German, and another guy, who was real good with a rifle, and said, "Why don't you two go out and see if you can find some food?" So, it was a very dark street, it was only one street in this village, ... and it was dirt, and we walked down the street. ... Everything was black. ... Finally, I saw a sign and it said something like, "(*Metzgerie*?)," which is like a grocery store or something, and it was all dark, oh, I had two guys with me, ... and we pounded on the door, pounded on the door, pounded on the door. Finally, it opened and standing there was, I still fantasize, ... the tallest man in the world. I have never seen any[one as tall], but, I don't know if it was the light or what it was, and we pushed our way in, and we saw [that] he had some bread, so, we told him to cut a big piece of bread, and there was a big crock full of strawberry jam, and we filled up a jar with that, and then, he had a big hunk of meat, and I told him to cut it off, and this man is asking us if we had ration stamps, [laughter] and I'm laughing at him. ... He not only wants ration stamps, but, he's also weighing the meat. He weighs this, and then, he puts it in a bag, and he's marking prices and everything on this stuff, and I said ... to the two guys, ... "You two be ready with your rifles." So, he asked me for so much money, I'm laughing, and he's asking me for ration stamps, and, ... you know, I let him know that, you know, "You must be kidding." So, of course, we kept rifles on him, ... and backed out, and went back to our place ... where our guys were, and we had a wonderful meal. Well, in 1992, when we went back on our trip, I told my wife [that] I had to find that grocery store, the butcher. Well, we get back to the town, it's a thriving, busy town, tourists, ... and, oh, beautiful shops, and I can't find the shop. I didn't know which shop it was. So, we're walking around, I'm asking different people, "Is this the main street?" Yes, we were on the main street, but, it ... wasn't familiar at all. Finally, I saw a man, there were some older folks sitting, like, at a bench, you know, in the middle of town, and I walked over to him, and I start speaking to him in German. I asked him how long he's been in this town. He has one arm, by the way. That's why [I spoke to him]; I figured a guy with one arm has to be a veteran. So, I walked over to him and I asked him how long he's been there. He says [that] he's been there since 1946. Now, I was there in 1945, so, I explained to him, "I want a butcher shop with a very [tall man]." ...

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

MM: ... How many times, including losing his arm, and, after the war, he thought this was a nice town, so, he came [here] and lives here, and he finally takes me, and we stop in front of a gorgeous, modern looking deli, you know, with the stuff hanging in the windows, and, boy, it just smelled good, and so on. He says, "This is it." So, I said to my wife, "What in the world am I doing here? Am I crazy?" What am I gonna do? go in and say, "Where's the old butcher that I robbed?" So, my wife got in back of me, and pushes me, and said, "Go ahead, dear," and she stood there, and I walked up the steps with the one armed guy, and he takes me in, and the place is busy. ... There's the owner over there, and he's talking to him, and he says to me, "That's the son of the butcher that you're talking about." So, I said to myself, "What am I supposed to tell this man?" ... So, I said, "I knew your father in 1945," something like that. So, he motions to me, and I go with him, and he goes through a door in the back of the counter, and we go to an area, like a storage area, large, in the back, and then, we go over to an elevator, and he opens the door, and we both go in, and it is so tight, and I am starting to get peculiar feelings. I mean, what if this guy has been waiting for me all these years, you know. ... I'm in a tight elevator with a guy and we're going up. I don't know where he's taking me. He takes me up, and we get out, and there's ... just like a combination storage [room]/office, with pictures on the wall, and it was a large, large room. So, he takes me over to the pictures, and he shows me a picture of his father in a Nazi uniform at a Christmas party that they had, and I don't remember the year, and I really get a little shook up at that point, and he says, "You remember him?" I says, "I'm not quite sure." So, he says, "Too bad, because he died two years ago. He was eighty-eight years old," or something. "He died two years ago. So, I'm sorry you can't see your friend," and I'm sorry. So, it was a relief for me; I didn't have to do any explaining. He thought I was his friend and that was the end of it. I left, but, that was another ... funny story that happened. One of the biggest battles, and, of course, ... one of the most important ones in my life, was the crossing of the Rhine River. ... It was planned way in advance and we were told that we were going to have tremendous artillery coverage and everything. Well, ... we got to some buildings not far from the river, and then, late at night, we moved down to the river, where boats were all ready, and the engineers were there, Navy engineers, or something, to drive these boats. Well, when we started going down this hill to the river itself, all hell broke loose. Our artillery was shelling them, but, they really were plastering us, and what happened was, a great many of our people panicked, and, instead of going down to the boats, they took off, went back up the hill, including our company commander. Well, I was almost all by myself, with a few other guys, and I hear somebody call my name, and it was our executive officer, he was the second-in-command, and he was standing by a boat, ... [and he] waved me on. So, I went, and I got in the boat with him, but, very few people did. They were all taking off. They were running away. ... Then, I saw our colonel, who was the regimental commander, standing there by one of the boats and holding a pistol in his hand on the engineer to drive that boat, because everybody was scared. I jumped in the boat with our executive officer, and we took off across the river, and some of the boats got sunk, some of them got hit, and ... our boat got rocked. ... The lieutenant who was the executive officer got banged against [the boat]. He hurt his leg. We landed on the other side, and he could hardly walk, and there were very few of us, and we moved from the river, and we had about a mile to go into the town, but, right there, there were some buildings, and I captured eleven Germans and gave them to somebody else to take back, whatever it is. Well, ... we got into the town, and there were very few of us, and, throughout the night, more and more of our people came across as the engineers put in a bridge and everything, but, I felt very, very bad about it, that they had not ...

participated, and I directed artillery on some German tanks in the town that were holding up one of our platoons. Well, anyhow, I received, later on, after the war, the Silver Star, "For gallantry in action," as they say, and I was very proud of the fact that I didn't chicken out, and I could have, because my best friend went, and everybody, the sergeants, went; everybody took off. ... There were very few of us across the river until many hours later. The one other outstanding, or different, type of battle that I was in was, later on, near the end of the war, we had to breach the Siegfried Line. I don't know if you've heard [that] the French, after World War I, had built the Maginot Line and the Germans had built the Siegfried Line. They were opposite each other. The Germans, to get to France, just went around it, so, the Maginot Line was completely worthless, but, we had to go through the Siegfried Line, and it was very, very rough, and two of my friends and I were pinned down as we got in the middle of this line, you know. It was pill boxes and all kinds of artillery, and we got pinned down, and we dug a hole, the three us, just in a matter of minutes, and saved ourselves, crawled into this one hole, three of us, and a German machine gun was [in] the back of us, shooting at us, and we got in the hole just in time. ... As I lay there, ... it was only a hole, maybe, eighteen inches deep for the three of us, ... this German was firing at us, ... the bullets would come right across my nose and hit in the dirt. I couldn't get any lower, you see, and I was on my back with my head against the earth and right across my eye would come bullets from the machine gun. He couldn't get any lower, you understand; he couldn't get me, because I was just below his range of the dirt. So, we were there, we were pinned down for two days and two nights, and then, [on] the second night, we finally made a run for it in the dark. There were bodies all over and it was interesting, because, some of the things that I think of, the three of us in that hole were very close friends in combat, you might say, but, such a varied group. You had myself, an orthodox, northeastern Jew, the other one was an Italian from a large, wealthy Italian family from southern New Jersey, and the third one was a redneck from Georgia, and I think that's very interesting, because the three of us thought we're all going to die together, and we had given up. There was no way we could get out. ... One of the most monumental statements ... I have ever heard in my entire life was said in that hole by this [redneck], and he was close, he was my friend, but, he was a redneck and violently a racist, there was no question, but, we had done a lot of things together throughout the war, and we were close, and we're in the middle of the Siegfried Line, and he says, "I wonder what Jew built this fucking Siegfried Line," and I looked at him and laughed, and I said, "You're really something," because this is what his interpretation of everything was, that only a Jew could have built the Siegfried Line, and [he did] not realize, ... you know, what was going on with Jews, you know, in Germany, but, he was my friend, he was my buddy, and that is strange. Strange things happen in war. He was the one that got the Luger, by the way. I told you, he was a crazy guy. I've heard stories [about him] since. In fact, I just heard them a couple of months ago, and I don't know how true it is, ... that after the war, he was in prison for some swindle or something, but, I don't know for sure. I've looked for him and I can't find him. What else? These are some of the things.

MO: Besides at the crossing of the Rhine, did you ever see your commanding officer or other high level officers?

MM: Occasionally, they would be going through, and then, stop and say, "Hello," to the Captain or something. Yes, but, not on an everyday [basis], no way. ... I would very frequently see our battalion commander. See, there were four companies in a battalion, three battalions in a

regiment, you see, and then, so many regiments in the division. So, I mean, our general, I saw [him] at a couple of parades during the war and after the war, ... when awards were given out. ... When I went there from the replacement depot, all the replacements were lined up and the General came and gave us a blood-and-guts speech. He was glad to have so much new blood in his division, you know, and I was smirking about new blood, and, as I said, the regimental commander, we would see occasionally. The battalion commander, I would see fairly frequently, because ... he would be with one of the companies or at a meeting with the Lieutenant or our company commander, you know, right over there, by a car or something like that, but, ... not usually.

SI: What was your opinion of their leadership abilities?

MM: Oh, it's hard, you know, because we bellyached about everything. Everything was wrong, you know. I mean, here we were, fighting, "Why don't we get some rest, why? Everybody else is resting. We're not getting any rest. Why don't we this? Why don't we that? Why don't we have blankets? Why don't we have new shoes? Why am I hungry? Why is it snowing?" you know. ... We knocked everything; everything, we knock[ed]. "Why doesn't somebody else have to lead across the Rhine River?" We led it; we led the entire division. My company led the entire division across, ... and more than half took off, ... and then, the Siegfried Line, we were in the first wave going through there. ... Our division and regiment were a very battle weary group. ... They fought from the very beginning of the war. So, we were always bellyaching, no matter what, you know. If it's raining, "Oh, why do we have to go and fight? Why can't we wait?" You know, crazy things. No matter what it was, we bellyached. ... We didn't have any idea. I mean, for example, one night, I'll never ... forget, we were in a little village. Okay, the orders come through; we've got to move. So, we had to walk five miles to another village. Meanwhile, another outfit is coming past us, this way. We walked five miles to get on trucks, they walked five miles this way to get on trucks here. We could never figure out what the strategy was, you understand, unless the strategy was to confuse the Germans. We didn't know, but, it was so stupid. "Why do I have to walk five miles to get on a truck? Let the truck come over here," but, we didn't get answers. ... So, it's that type of thing. You know, why did we eat Spam? We ate Spam, I guess, you know, almost every day throughout the war, because we were told [that the] ships, all they could do was bring Spam across, you know. I don't know. I don't know if it's true or not, you know. Who knows?

MO: Do you remember where you were when you were wounded?

MM: Yes, I was in a town. ... We were going into an attack ... into a little town, it wasn't a small village, not small, it was a little larger, and we were moving across open fields, going toward the town, like, and our artillery was covering us by firing ahead. … You know, as you move, the artillery's supposed to move also, but, what happened is, our artillery dropped in low and got me and I had a concussion. I was knocked into a hole, and, fortunately, I wasn't, you know, badly wounded, and ... so, our artillery got me. … So, I sort of stayed with the company that night, I was really out of it, and, the next morning, they sent me to a rest camp for three days, but, I didn't stay for three days. I stayed two days, and then, came back to my company. Rest camp was a very interesting thing. They had them throughout the whole war. This was my only

experience. ... You know, you'd go and … it'd almost be like, I don't know, a spa, you know. You'd have a clean bed, and you'd eat meals, and I guess they had alcohol, and they had houses of prostitution all over the place, and so on, and so forth, ... but, I was not interested in any of that. … On the second day that I was there, I got word that my sergeant had been killed. He was in one of those houses ... in that village, upstairs, and a tank shell came right through the wall and killed him. … He and I had gotten to like each other and we had a very good understanding. He was a very interesting guy, and so, because he got killed, I went back to the company. I was very depressed about it. I can also tell you one other story that had to do with him. When we were in Strasbourg, on the Rhine River, we had gotten into, probably, what had been a German barracks or a uniform factory combine, I don't remember. We had cots and we had great sleeping bags. ... For a couple of days, it was really like going away to camp. It was really nice. I came into my room, ... the first day or second day, and I saw a ... yarmulke on my bed; right in the center of my bed, somebody had put a yarmulke. So, I said, "Who did this?" and they were all there, my whole bunch of guys, no one. I knew it was him, ... because this was a very clever maneuver for a guy who wants to show some anti-Semitism, but, in a very clever way, you know; [he] puts a yarmulke in the middle of my cot. So, I stood there, ... these were all my closest people, and I said, "Who was it?" and I said, "If one of you steps forward, I'm gonna kick the hell out of you." None of them did. No one ever told me who did it, but, I knew it was him, because ... he was clever. Well, we became very good friends, and I felt bad when he was killed, but, you see, this anti-Semitism is very interesting, because most of these people were anti-Semitic, but, under war conditions, you ... are beyond that, although some people didn't have it so easily. … There was one guy that I had met, I think in the States, here, before I went overseas, and he kept popping up wherever. Remember, I told you, different people would pop up at different times, on boats or trucks, and some of the same people, but, not always, and this one guy was always there. … In fact, I was in a replacement depot with him, and we went to the same regiment together and same battalion, but, to different companies, and I saw him after, I don't know, the first couple of weeks [in] combat, and I saw him. He was Jewish. ... We happened to see each other, I don't know where, and he came over to me and says, "Boy, do I have trouble." I says, "What's the matter?" He says, "Well, ... [in] the company, the first day, … they put me in the third squad," or whatever it was, "and it's … a Polish guy, a sergeant, and he comes over to me and he says, 'Listen, I want you to know something, Jew. I'm gonna be pissing on your grave.'" ... He says, "I am terrified. I don't know what to do. There's nothing I can do. ... I can't leave the company; I can't do anything." I didn't see him for, I don't know, a few months and [I] ran into him again. He was happy, happy, happy. He says, "You know, that sergeant got killed," and he was so happy, because he was terrified, terrified the whole time, that he was gonna get shot in the back. It's bad enough to worry about being [killed], and there was no reason for this, except this man's hatred. So, that was another little incident. I don't know what else to tell you. ...

SI: As your unit advanced into Germany, since you spoke German and sometimes served as an interpreter, did you ever negotiate the surrender of the towns that you advanced on?

MM: Not necessarily. You don't negotiate a surrender, but, I was handy, very handy. I told you [how] they sent me out for food. [laughter] ... I would, you know, interview prisoners and so on. ... It was a useful thing, but, I mean, I was not on a big level, though. I was not [with the] regiment [headquarters], where the intelligence officers would be dealing with me or something.

... You know, I was on a company level, so, you know, [I handled] things like talking to local people and the prisoners and so on. I would be useful for that. That's about it.

SI: What did you learn from the local people?

MM: You had every kind. I mean, some of them ... you would just see. ... You know, we'd take a village and go into the house, and you'd hear some[thing], and you'd see the families down in the basement, hiding or something like that. We wouldn't bother these people and nothing like that, and, you know, wherever you met civilians, they were always, quote, "pro-American." They were always "anti-Nazi," no matter where they were, which was a lot of hogwash, but, you know, a lot of universal things, you know. People would show you pictures of the kids and asked you where you're from. "Oh, I got a sister that lives in Philadelphia," you know, things like that, and so on. I once went into, … I forgot where it was, a little village, and there, sitting on the mantle above the fireplace is a postcard, and I look at it, it's a very, very familiar picture, because it is a picture of the Markel Bank in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, in the area that my mother grew up and I have relatives. … Whenever we used to go there, as we came across the mountain, the first thing we would see is this, it was a big sign on top of the bank, and it was one of those, like, a fluorescent [sign] or something, and, at night, it would be lit up, and, in the daytime, you could just see it, and that was the picture on this postcard. So, I spoke to the family, she had a sister or something who lived in Hazleton, you know, and it meant something to me, because I spent a great deal of time [there] over the years, 'cause my relatives were up there, my mother's family. I'd say that, you know, we would always grab whatever we could. I once found a camera and a bunch of film and, for the rest of the war, I was taking pictures like absolutely crazy, wonderful pictures, battle pictures, ... I mean, priceless pictures, and then, after the war, we ended up in Salzburg, Austria, and I took the pictures in, and I found out that the camera was defective; not one picture came out. I had taken ten rolls of battle pictures of all kinds, and even [of] Daniel, the little orphan. Not one picture ever came out. ...

MO: Did you ever get in contact with your brother while you were overseas?

MM: Oh, yes. That's an interesting story. I'm glad you mentioned it. … Remember, I told you we were in the Vosges Mountains in the middle of winter, it was bitter cold, and we were living in holes, and I had a hole all by myself, but, then, the Captain, we had a captain at that time, he was the one, by the way, who eventually got killed at the chateau, and he was one of my favorites. He was a very nice person. He had a hole which was larger, and they, you know, put logs over it and stuff, so that it was more comfortable, and he had this heater ... unit, and, in his hole, we also had the telephone switchboard, which went out to all our platoons, you see, and, also, went to battalion, and regiment, and so on. So, we had to take turns manning that switchboard, and the Captain would be sleeping right here, I mean, it's a small hole, and the company sergeant would also sleep there sometimes, too, so that the two of them were sleeping there one night, and I was in the hole, taking care of the switchboard, and we were talking, and it's so dark and cold. The Captain had been an art teacher, it's interesting, and here he was, a captain in an infantry unit. So, we're talking, and then, they finally dozed off, and I'm sitting by this switchboard, it must have been around midnight. The phone rings and I answer it the usual way, which is, "Charlie Company, Meyers speaking," and I hear from ... the other end,

"Meyers?" I say, "Yes, Meyers speaking," you know. "Hello, Kid." I says, "Hello, Kid? Who is this?" He says, "Don't you know your brother?" This was on the Army switchboard. I says, "Where in the world are you?" He says, "I'm at the bottom of the mountain, in the town of Ribeauville," which was at the bottom of the mountain. I said, "What in the world are you doing there?" He says, "I came to visit you." He came across Europe, I forgot where he was, someplace in Paris or something, and he traced me across Europe. ... He got a pass, and he came looking for me, and he got that far. I said, "Well, you stay there. Don't you come here." He says, "Well, how about in the morning?" I says, "Jeez, I don't want you to come up." I says, "All right, come up with the jeep tomorrow morning. There's a food supply jeep [that] comes up." … We were in a defensive position, which means we walked around and so on. Every once in awhile, a shell would come over and, every once in a while, a shell would go the other way, nothing, but, occasionally, people would get hit or killed, but, it wasn't a lot, and, at night, there'd be patrol action. They would try to sneak through our lines, we would try to sneak through theirs, but, it was … just intermittent, and, actually, you know, [if] it was a beautiful, sunny day, we would sit around there, eat, and smoke, and talk. So, the next morning, he comes up and he's really spit-and-polish. He's a lieutenant in the Air Corps, you know, and so, I walk him up the mountain with me, and I was very uncomfortable the whole time he was there, because I'm an infantry man, I'm sort of used to this kind of living, he's not, and I took him around, showed him [the front]. I says, "The Germans are about fifty yards over there." He says, "Why are you standing there?" ... [laughter] So, he had a wonderful sleeping bag, so, he slept the night with me in my hole, and then, I got rid of him the next morning. So, he stayed one night. It was interesting, because *Stars and Stripes*, which ... was the Army newspaper, got wind of that, and they wrote it in the *Stars and Stripes*, all over the world, and ... they told the story about it. The *Courier News*, which I don't know if you know, is a local paper, they got the story all crazy and the story was as follows: that my brother, in the Air Corps, was flying over, and he parachuted out, and he landed in my hole, [laughter] and he stayed there for ten days. Of course, this was not the true story, but, it was wonderful. It got a lot of publicity and people ... all over town were calling my mother and saying, "My God, what a miracle, that he should jump out of a plane and land right in with Maurice." That was the story. ... We had a first cousin who was very close to us and he was in one of my sister divisions; he was in the 45th Division, which was a sister of [the] Third. There was the 45th, the Third, and the 36th, and they were sister outfits. They always fought together. My brother looked up my cousin in Italy once. You know, he would do that. He would wander around finding people. [laughter] ... That was it.

SI: As a radioman, how often did you have to fire your weapon?

MM: ... Very rarely, if ever. I was not supposed to be firing a weapon. The weapon was more or less for defense, you know, if I needed it, because I didn't have time for that. I had to take care of what I had to do, which was take care of the radio.

SI: Did you follow an officer around for most of the time?

MM: Yes, I had to be with him most of the time, yes, and he'd be over here and he'd be over there, and … wherever he went, you had to go, unless ... it was the other guy's turn. There were four of us, so, you know, sometimes I'd be carrying the radio. Other times, ... you were just sort

of hanging around, you know, with the radio guy, the other three guys. ... We were in the communication platoon, they called it.

SI: Which presented the greatest threat to your unit, direct enemy attacks, shelling or mines?

MM: Yes.

SI: Which one was the worst?

MM: Well, artillery was always a very bad threat. Mines, when it happened, … in fact, the very first day, I didn't tell you about my very first day of combat. I told you about how it ended, that I dug a foxhole and it caved in on me. It started [at] about four, five o'clock in the morning, and we crossed this little river, called the Meurthe River, and ... we got across this thing, and I said to my buddy, I says, "Boy, war isn't bad at all. There's nothing. ... I haven't even heard a shot," and, you know, I was sort of lulling myself into a dream, it was like a dream, anyway, "What am I doing here?" you know, and we go across this little area, and then, we find ourselves in a wide open, like a pool table, area, and a signal comes back, "Okay, everybody lie down," you know, and so, we were laying there on this field, and I don't know what's going on, you know, I'm new at this, this is my [first day]. So, I'm laying down, and a few guys I see are digging holes, but, I didn't dig any [hole]. There's no fighting, why should I be digging a hole? All of a sudden, in comes a rain of mortar shells on us, and all hell breaks loose, and these mortar shells are coming in, and they're moving up and down, right across, there's one guy over to my right, I didn't know who it was, and I'm calling over to him. Oh, a shell comes in right on top of the two of us, and he's over maybe where that chair is, and I call over and say, "Hey, are you all right?" ... and I saw he was dead. So, I turned the other way, more shells are coming in. There's a guy over here who I knew, his name was Lowell, and I said, "Lowell, how you doing?" He says, "I'm hit." He starts laughing hysterically. He couldn't stop laughing. He was hit by a shell, and I don't know whatever happened, he lived, but, I never saw him again, and I'm in-between these [guys], and they're [the Germans are] bracketing, and I am terrified. I'm digging with my nose into the earth and it was just the most horrifying experience. I can't even tell you how horrifying it was, and I didn't know what to do, how to do it, I was just terrified. These shells are coming in, ... you know, just like that, and, after a while, it let up a little, and then, I heard a sergeant, or a lieutenant, or something, [say], "Okay, men, let's go, let's go," and people are jumping up and moving forward, and … I don't know what the hell I'm doing, so, I'm going that way, too. By that time, it had gotten light enough, and I saw ... [that] some of my buddies were already across this field, and they were at like a bank that goes up to a road, you know, coming across the field, and they were standing there, and people were standing there, there were bodies all over the place, and they're hollering at me and hollering. Finally, I understood what they're saying. They're hollering, "There's mines," and I was in the middle of a mine field. ... I just kept walking and people were getting blown [up] and killed all over the field. I walked right through this mine field. I came up to them and they said, "Boy, are you lucky," ... and I says, "Who's got a cigarette?" I don't even know if I smoked, and I took a cigarette, and, as I lit it, I hear a swoosh, and I looked down, and right between my feet is a mortal shell, and it didn't go off, right between my two feet. This is like seven o'clock in the morning and ... I says, "What more can happen?" The day has just started, you know, ... and I says, "This is ridiculous." You know, it

was almost humorous, seven o'clock in the morning and [I've] almost been killed like six times already, and then, for the rest of the day, we were schlepping around, fighting here, fighting there. We didn't know what the hell we were doing. ... No one explains things to you, you know, that they're gonna be shooting at you from here. I mean, you just go, and our planes are coming over, strafing the Germans, and we're being rained on. Did you ever think of what happens to the shells, I mean, the cartridges, when planes are firing, what happens to the cartridges? They drop. Well, it was like raining down on us. ... "Oh, that's what they do," and these cartridges were falling on our helmets, fortunately, ... and then, I told you how the day ended, and that was some horrendous twenty-four hours. ... That was the first day, right.

SI: Would you say that this was the extreme of combat?

MM: Well, that was, yes. ... As a full day, it was ... really a full day. You know, a typical day is so hard to say, because, you see, through my eyes, and, in fact, when I wrote my book, it's written from a personal view, ... I'm not talking about divisions moving and, you know, the Russian Front and all this stuff. I'm talking about one little guy in one little company, you know, on a day-to-day, night-to-night basis, and it's a different view than what the newspapers show or, you know, what the movies show. ... It's on a personal level, you see. Each night, I had to sleep someplace. Each day, I had to eat something, you know. It was sugar cubes or chicken. So, things happen to a person in a war that the view is a lot different than the grand plan, you know, and I think that's interesting. That's, I guess, what you're trying to do.

SI: As you moved through Germany, your unit probably encountered large numbers of prisoners.

MM: Yes, yes.

SI: Did your unit handle any large scale surrenders?

MM: No, no. ... We just would shuttle the prisoners to the rear, to other people. I can tell you an interesting story that happened one night. We were moving on a dark road, we were going someplace to attack something, and, all of a sudden, somebody found this one German wandering around and captured him, and they brought me up to talk to him, and I did, and I asked him if there was other, you know, soldiers around, if there were tanks around, and so on, and so forth, and we're talking, and he takes out pictures of his kids and, you know, all this stuff, which, you know, I didn't want to get involved with. The point that I wanted to make was, you see, we, as a fighting company, didn't have room for prisoners. ... Prisoners had to be shuttled to the rear and, therefore, the Captain had to send one of our guys with him to take him back. So, the Captain called this one fellow, who was a veteran of quite a while, he was a little guy, a young fellow, but, he was a veteran, and he told him to take him back, and he says, "Oh, Captain, you're gonna send me all alone?" The Captain answered, "Yes, you [have] got to take him back." Well, he took him back as far as we know, we don't know what happened, but, I know that he was back with us a lot sooner than I had figured that he would be. So, the assumption that you would make might be that he got rid of that prisoner on the way, which is a good assumption, although I have no proof, and I think it happened, probably, very frequently, but, I have no proof for it, but, it's something that I remembered, because he just … moved too fast.

He couldn't have made two miles, going and coming, in the time that he was back. So, whatever that means, it means.

SI: Did you encounter any slave labor or concentration camps?

MM: No, no, no.

SI: Did you see any displaced persons wandering around?

MM: We saw a lot of people wandering around, right, but, I didn't know who these people were. I personally had no knowledge, for example, of the concentration camps, death camps, and what the Jews were going through. I had no knowledge of this, I don't think, until after the war, and then, I heard about it right away. I was devastated, but, during the war, I didn't hear the word[s] "concentration camp," or "Holocaust," or, you know, anything happening to Jews. I didn't see any, but, we saw a lot of people, whether some of them were liberated Jews, or Poles, or whatever they were, wandering. Europe was just covered with people wandering around, from late in the war right on ... to the end of the war. People were wandering around, going from place to place. Some of these were obviously, you know, soldiers who were trying to escape and so on, but, you know, I was not in that position ... to be involved with that type of thing. There were authorities who were … sorting out some of these people, you know, to catch spies and so on, but, ... not at my level.

SI: As the war drew to a close, were you part of the final push into Austria?

MM: ... Well, yes. I was in the hospital, though. ... I don't know when it was, but, I guess it was in April or something, I must have torn my ... Achilles tendon on my left foot and I kept walking and walking. Finally, I ... couldn't walk anymore, the whole foot was swollen, and I couldn't stand up, so, they sent me to a hospital, and I was off my feet for about a week-and-a-half, and, finally, it got better just with rest. ... Then, the problem was, I was supposed to go back to my company, but, because the war, at that point, was going so well and so fast, they couldn't give us any trucks to take people like me back, so, ... I went to a replacement depot and stayed there. … A lot of guys were going AWOL from the replacement depot to go back to their companies, so that they wouldn't miss out [on] the end of the war. I had no idea where my outfit was, so, I stayed there, and we were in tents, and, of course, it was peaceful, and then, ... the war ended on a certain day, and everybody started running around, firing their weapons, and I crawled under my bunk and let all these lunatics fire. I didn't want to get killed that day. ... So, finally, eventually, they sent trucks, and I caught up to my outfit in Salzburg, Austria, and I was in the occupation. That was it. My outfit took, I wasn't with them, … Berchtesgaden and Nuremberg, Munich, and that was it.

SI: You were then assigned to the Army of Occupation.

MM: Yes, then, from there, ... well, a lot of people were discharged at that point and some were sent ... to the Orient, I'm not sure, to fight Japan, 'cause the war was still going on there, and our division was sent up into Germany, and we were divided into little towns, just in the occupation,

and that's where I finished [my service], until about, I don't know, September, October of '45, and I had enough points, so, I was sent to Stuttgart to join another outfit, which was coming home, and ... that was the end of it.

SI: After V-E Day, were you concerned that you might be sent to the Pacific Theater for the invasion of Japan?

MM: Yes. There was ... always that, yes. I didn't give much thought to it, to be very honest, ... you know. We were so happy to have the war over that I wasn't worried about new problems and whatever would be, would be. ... I guess, we had a feeling that the war wouldn't last in the Orient. I don't know, I don't know, actually. .... That was a fear, or not a fear, but, it was a worry, but, you know, ... I wasn't hysterical about it and it never came close, by the way, you know.

SI: What was the name of the town that you helped occupy?

MM: I was in a little village called Herringen, ... which is in Kreis Hersfeld, which is like a province of Hersfeld, and it was right along the border with the Russian Zone, so, we had a lot of displaced people.

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

MM: … Coming from the Russian Zone into the American Zone to get away from the Russians, and, also, some of them were spies, some of them were infiltrators, all kinds of people, and we were right on the border there, and that was, I guess, ... the main job of our company. At that particular point, I was ... a mail clerk, they made me a mail clerk, so, ... I was okay. I didn't have to pull guard duty or things like that.

SI: Did your unit ever have any encounters with the Russians?

MM: Yes, they did. There were some meetings and stuff, you know, that type of thing. I had one personal thing, a personal experience. No, it wasn't then though. ... When I was transferred and on my way home, you might say, to Stuttgart, it came up that I had an Army driver's license. Remember, I told you about this jeep business, which is completely blank. … I drove a truck before I went into the Army, an Army truck, so, I had an Army driver's license, which was very unique. So, when I was in Stuttgart, they made me a jeep driver, and I had a lot of fun doing that, because I got around, you know, I had wheels. So, ... one day, they asked for volunteers to take a train full of Russian displaced people back to the border of the Russian Zone, and they were going to go right to the village, right where I had been. So, I had a girlfriend there, so that was a great opportunity. So, a lieutenant and I, and a couple of other GIs, went down to load up this train with Russian displaced people. They were a rowdy bunch. I don't know where they came from, I don't know what the make up was, but, … we put my jeep on a flat car, which was right in back of the engine, and the Lieutenant had a car inside some place, and the rest of the train were these boxcars full of Russians. So, I slept in my jeep, right in back of this coal burning thing, so, you can imagine how much fun that was, in the middle of winter, [to] be sitting in an

open jeep in back of a ... sooty train. Before we started, the Russians are all teasing me, ... the women are, and they're drinking vodka like crazy, and they're firing guns, they're going home, you know, and they were inviting me to come into the boxcars and drink with them, and I wouldn't do it, you know. So, they were calling me, "Baby," and things like that, but, I didn't want to get involved with this. We took them there and turned them over to the Russian authorities. That was the one trip I had to go to that zone, again. From then on, I had nothing else. So, there were meetings with the Russians, there was always incidents, but, ... not on my level. I had nothing to do with it.

SI: Were there any fears, since we are now moving into the early Cold War period, that we might have to fight the Russians?

MM: Not fears, but, there was annoyances. ... Let's put it this way, I remember that they were actually afraid of some of the Russian agents infiltrating across the zones, you know. That was a concern, even at that point, and then, of course, the idea that some of the Nazis were escaping, too, you know, as civilians, but, ... these were, again, not on my level. ...

SI: When did you return to the United States?

MM: I came back in January 1946. I left Europe on ... New Year's Eve of 1945. In other words, ... New Year's Eve, we left Marseilles by Victory ship and came home in January.

SI: Did you receive any special welcome home? Did fireboats greet your ship?

MM: Nothing. ... It was like, who was it? T.S. Elliot, "That's the way the world ends, not with a bang, but, with a whimper," or something. That's the way the war ended for most of us. It was nothing, nothing at all, very quiet, very nothing. I had one last incident, which I might as well [tell you about], on the Victory ship coming home. I came home ... with an outfit that I did not fight with, but, I was just assigned to, and it was a regimental company from the 100th Division. I resented a lot of these guys all the time, because they were very gung-ho, but, they had done little, if any, real fighting. I got along all right with them when we were in Stuttgart, and there was no problem. Some of them were, you know, friendlier than others. There was one particular sergeant who, I guess, we got along, he was a tech sergeant, and I just didn't like him altogether, and, I guess, he didn't care for me, but, we had very little to do with each other. We were doing a lot of gambling on this boat coming home. It was almost like a casino on the water and everybody wanted to get off the boat a millionaire, because everybody got paid before we got on the boat. So, there was a lot of money on every boat and we all had fantasies, "If I'd be the only one to clean out everybody on this boat, I'd be rich." So, everybody was gambling, night and day. ... I'm shooting craps one day and that sergeant came and said, "Meyers, you have to stand guard now." I says, "Stand guard, for what?" He says, "You got to stand on Deck B at the bottom of the stairs." I says, "Are you crazy? For what?" He says, "Because I said so." So, I said, "What are we standing guard for? ... I'm in the middle of a crap game," and he says, "You better do what I said, you Jew bastard," and, with that, I went for him, and all I could remember is, they got me off of him just when I had him half-strangled. I would have killed him, and he never said another word to me again, and I don't know whatever happened to him. I had no

interest in him, but, that was, I guess, … the last memento of that type of thing in the war. He was a big guy, too, but, I had no fear in those days. That was it.

MO: Did you go straight home once you were discharged?

MM: Yes, yes, yes.

MO: Did you plan on going back to school?

MM: No. You know, it's interesting, because you're asking for fanfare and this and that. It was so ridiculous how all of this story ends, is, I'm at Fort Monmouth, and you go through a bunch of different desks, and you fill [out] these papers, and you fill out those papers, and then, you sign this, you sign that, and he says, "Okay, you can go now," and you walk out, and you look for a bus, you know. You go to the train station and you get a train that's heading toward where you live, and I found out that you have to change, which I knew, and I ended up on a commuter train coming from New York to Plainfield, where people that I knew and grew up with were on that train, commuting, you know, and here I am, on the biggest day of my life, you know, and it was just a regular day, you see. ... You get on the train, and you look around, and there's no one playing instruments, there's no one flying flags, and you're here, and that was it. It was just nothing, if you know what I mean. It was just, "Whissst." It's a strange feeling, very strange, because I even said to myself, "God, there's something so weird about [the fact that] I'm leaving a world that I don't even believe I was in, you know, the war, and, here, I'm looking around, it's just a regular day. You know, it's a sunny, shining [day]. People are on a train." I went home, period. That was it, end of story, except, my French family keeps me going.

SI: Did you experience any difficulties readjusting to civilian life?

MM: The biggest adjustment that I had was the fact that I felt a tremendous loss of those years, … since I had finally made up my mind, I wanted to go to college. Remember, I had no college. I had only the three months at Indiana, so, I went to NYU, and I went through and got my degree in about eighteen months or so. … I would take two courses at a time, which was not legal, and cut from class-to-class, you know, ... and I got through, … but, the point was, I couldn't get into medical school, and I've always been very angry about that. … There was a GI Bill of Rights, I don't know if you know that, and that [said that] everybody was entitled to thirty-six months, which means four years of schooling. … Knowing that medical school was far more expensive than college, [I] paid my own way in college, and then, couldn't get into medical school. … By the time I did get into medical school, the statute of limitation had passed, and I got nothing, and, I remember, senators tried to help me, different people, and no one could help, because the statute was gone. So, I had to pay for medical school, too. So, I lost out on thirty-six months of schooling, which was worth a lot of money. I never got that. So, I felt bad and I felt very bitter about it. Here I was, decorated, and, … you know, [I] got shafted in the long run, you know, but, that's life, and then, an uncle of mine came out one day, ... he was a very wealthy man, and he says, "Remember one thing, all those medals that you got and a nickel will get you on the subway in New York." He was telling me something of the real world and that's exactly what it was; end of story. ...

SI: What was your major at NYU?

MM: Biology.

SI: Were most of the students at NYU veterans or non-veterans?

MM: You mean at NYU at that time?

SI: Yes.

MM: Well, yes, there were a lot of veterans. It's a large school, and it's very impersonal, and you sink or swim. It's a very cold blooded place to be. I took courses at Rutgers, too, in Newark, yes, yes, but, NYU is a place, I imagine it still is, I don't know, that is a wonderful place for somebody who does not need hand-holding, you know, with counselors and teachers after school and helping us. ... I got nothing there except an education of, you know, the courses I was taking. I've never been happy with that. I've never considered myself, you know, anything belonging there, and they gave me no help when it came to medical school, to get into medical school, none at all.

SI: You mentioned that you did not get into medical school because of the quota system.

MM: I think it was two things. Number one, there was a quota, because New Jersey had ... no medical school. All these western and Mid-Western colleges were sort of sick and tired of taking New Jersey people and they would, in essence, tell you to go to your own medical school. There was none. So, we would count on New York medical schools, and they had tremendous quotas, and so, you put all these things [together], and, plus, the fact that there was a tremendous number of applicants, … and it's not a very good picture. So, the only way I got into medical school was when New Jersey opened the first medical school, Seton Hall College of Medicine. ... I was in the charter class, and that's the only way I went, but, otherwise, I couldn't. I tried for eight years. I couldn't get in.

SI: What did you do in the interim?

MM: I had various jobs and I was in businesses and various things like that.

MO: Which courses did you take at Rutgers?

MM: Qualitative analysis, yes. I can't remember his name, he was a very nice guy, in Newark. You wouldn't know him anyway. That's about it. ...

SI: What was your opinion of Seton Hall Medical School?

MM: It was quite an experience, again, for the same reason, no, for a different reason. It was a brand new school. All the professors were on the job. ... We didn't have a bunch of fellows

doing the work and the professors sitting, you know, writing the papers. They, themselves, were on a day-to-day basis with us, which was very good, and we got tremendous clinical training, because we were in a big city hospital in Jersey City, and because of [the fact that] … you knew everybody. The staff, you knew one name, and then, he'd have one or two people, but, they were small departments, where you have, now, twenty, thirty, fifty people, but, we knew everybody, and everybody knew each of us, and it was a good experience, but, it was very, very hard work, because we didn't have a lot of things, like all the laboratory equipment we would need and things. So, we would be borrowing from this lab, from that lab, and, you know, when we were finally seeing clinical patients in the hospital, we would go on different floors to steal from the other floors, the stuff that we needed, you know, to do blood counts, etc. We didn't have any, so, we'd go to another floor, steal theirs, and then, they'd have to go someplace and steal theirs. Things like that happened because we weren't set up completely, but, I think, basically, it was a wonderful education, very nice, very good, no complaints.

MO: Which field of medicine did you choose to specialize in?

MM: Internal medicine. ... That's adult medicine.

MO: You set up a practice in Plainfield.

MM: Plainfield and North Plainfield, yes.

SI: Was it difficult to set up an office there?

MM: No, no, it wasn't at all, because I was living there, you know, and it was sort of all I had ever thought of doing. I couldn't see … picking up and leaving. You know, I had a family. I had a family when I graduated, when I went to medical school, and children, and so, I couldn't pick up and leave, and it was just assumed [that] I would practice in Plainfield. I always assumed that.

SI: Was it difficult to enter medical school after being out of school for eight years?

MM: Oh, yes, it was, but, I was a pretty good student, and, in retrospect, when I got to know some of the professors at the medical school, years later, we spoke about it, and, you know, ... they had taken me for only one reason, because they wanted to experiment on an older student. They wanted to see what somebody like me could do. I was the oldest one in the school. I may still be the oldest graduate, I don't know, but, he said they watched me very carefully to see if I would make it, and I did. ... So, our class was a very mixed class, anyway. ... We had women, which was, you know, not that it was so unusual, but, we had women, we had blacks, we had Jews, we had Hispanics. We had such a mixed class, it was unbelievable, and a guy like me, which was unusual. So, it was sort of an experimental class. We lost about ... eight or ten people, but, I think it was a good education. I really thought so.

SI: Did you have to work after school to support your family?

MM: Well, no. My parents, my father and my father-in-law, both helped us. I think I worked ... in a shoe store, occasionally, on a Saturday or something, but, I didn't support ... myself, that's for sure. They had to help me, but, that was agreed to before I went. There was no point. I couldn't support a family.

MO: Did you meet your wife after the war?

MM: Yes. ... We got married in '49, 1949. No, I met her on a blind date, more or less. She was an old Rutgers gal. ... She used to hang around all the fraternities. ... She lived in New Brunswick, and then, ... Metuchen, when I married her. So, what else?

SI: Were you aware of the controversy between the Seton Hall Medical School and the Rutgers Medical School?

MM: Controversy?

SI: There was a conflict over state funding.

MM: ... I have no idea. I have no feelings. As far as I'm concerned, they're two branches of the same school, but, I don't know, politically, how they're set up. I really don't. I know that Seton Hall was first, though, this was way before, and then, much later, New Brunswick opened. So, I don't know the structure.

SI: When you went to school, it was still controlled by Seton Hall, correct?

MM: Yes, and then, I don't remember what year, whether it was after I graduated, or shortly after I graduated, or before, I don't recall, maybe you know the year that Seton Hall sold it or gave it to the state, I don't remember what year, and then, we became, in fact, my diploma, I think, says, "New Jersey College of Medicine and Dentistry," something like that. ... No, I know very little about the politics of it.

SI: What was it like for you to raise a family at this time?

MM: Well, it was very difficult. ... It was very hard. When I started medical school, I had two children; when I finished, I had three, and it was not easy. ... In fact, it's been, I don't know, a resentment of mine, or whatever it is, but, it was very tough on my family, extremely tough, and I don't think we ever outgrew it, and, as a result, we lost one child, and we have two, and ... they've suffered a great deal by the fact that I was absent very much. You know, I built a study in the basement [when] we lived in Plainfield, and I spent all my time there, but, it was hard. It was very hard for the family, extremely hard, and it's one of my, what's the word? ... regrets, but, I don't know any other way I could have done it. It was either give up, not go to medical school, or have to put the family through this, and it was very, very tough. I don't advise it for everybody. I don't advise it now, in retrospect, for myself, but, it's history and that's it. You give up an awful lot to do what I did, a tremendous amount.

SI: Did you ever join any veterans' associations?

MM: Yes, I'm not active in any. ... I don't remember if I used to belong to the VFW or not, and then, ... off and on. I belong now to the Jewish War Veterans. I don't remember, you know, over these years, I may have, I don't remember. I'm not active, though.

MO: Did your son ever serve in the military?

MM: No, no, no. He's a school teacher. He teaches in Elizabeth and, no, he never [did], thank goodness. … He was draftable during the Vietnam War, but, he wasn't called up. You know, they had numbers. He was never called up. My daughter ... lives in New York, and she's married to a jazz saxophonist, and they live a very interesting life. She's a psychiatric social worker, and they have one adopted child, and that's my only grandchild, and my son and daughter-in-law do not have children. That's about it.

SI: Unlike most men that we have interviewed, you have also completed your memoirs. When did you begin to "revisit" the war? Was it difficult to talk about some of your memories?

MM: ... No, no, no. I don't know, I guess there was no opportunity, for many years, to talk about it, and then, ... I went back and started writing the book and all this type of thing. … I don't know, you know, it's funny, the war is over fifty years ago and it's funny how things are coming out now. It's almost like fifty years, or thereabout, is a period of time that things need to sort of clarify. Why, twenty years ago, didn't we hear about a lot of this stuff? We never heard about it. Now, fifty years later, we're hearing about a lot of this stuff with the Swiss banks, and art work, and various things of the Holocaust, and various things in Switzerland, various things in Bulgaria, and various [things] all over the world. There's things now that you hear that, for fifty years, you didn't hear about. Why? I don't know. So, it's the same thing, you know. I do more talking about the war now than I did twenty, thirty years ago. It may have to do with the fact that I wrote the book, I don't know, and that people like you, all of a sudden, are interested. Why … weren't [they] interested twenty, thirty years ago? They didn't do this. Why not? It's interesting. It's a different generation, and you don't know most of it, so, you want to find out, I think. Is that right?

SI: Yes.

MM: And yet, why, twenty, thirty years ago, it was closer and no one wanted to do it. Why not?

SI: Is there anything that we forgot to ask?

MM: ... I don't know if I can think of any[thing]. I didn't miss much, I don't think. Well, I enjoyed this. It was a good way to put stuff on record. I'd like to get my book published. That's what I'd like to do.

SI: Thank you. This interview might make a good oral supplement to your book.

MM: Yes.

SI: This concludes an interview with Dr. Maurice Meyers on April 14, 2000, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

MO: Michael Ojeda.

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

Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 5/9/01
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 5/20/01
Reviewed by Maurice Meyers 6/01