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NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CARL N. SHUSTER, JR.

FOR THE

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INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Carl Shuster: Yes, that's a German name with the C left out. There was an ancestor [who] wanted to be an American, so, he dropped it out and changed his name from Carl to Charles. That's how that happened, but, it means [that] Shuster is a companion name with Schumaker, or Shoemaker. The shoemaker makes the shoes and the shuster repairs them. That's the connection.

Kurt Piehler: This begins an interview with Dr. Carl N. Shuster, Jr., on November 6, 1994, with Kurt Piehler in Arlington, Virginia. I would like to ask you a few questions about your ancestors. How long has your family been in America?

CS: Well, the Shuster family, the branch I'm in, came here in 1819, and throughout the family folklore, he was always known as "the Immigrant," which is kind of peculiar, but, my mother had been the family historian and got me interested in genealogy. So, when I picked it up, it became rather obvious, because all of my Pennsylvania German forebearers were here in colonial times, and so, by reference, someone in 1819 was definitely an immigrant, but, it was saying the fact is that they were all immigrants. I thought that was always an interesting reference to the original Carl Shuster. We have many of his papers, [including] his *wunderbook*. He was a journeyman weaver, which meant that he went from town to town, wherever weaving was needed, and he signed in with the burgermeister. We have his *wunderbook*, which is almost like a passport, and he would enter a town, check in with the guildmaster, or the burgermeister, or the chief of police, and then, sometimes, when he left a town, there would be a sign out with the same agency, and, often, there'd be a little statement saying that, "Carl Shuster has served his profession well while he was with us," [that] type of thing, and so, we have that.

We have, in essence, the ticket declaring how much he had to pay for what kind of food served on what kind of days, and [that] he was being taken from Amsterdam to New York, and things of this sort, and then, letters of recommendation from the church and other places. So, we had four or five documents, original documents, recording his activities in Germany and his arrival in the States, how he got to New York City, because there's no record of his docking, but, since the ship was going to New York City, it's almost obvious that he was left there, and then, he got over to Bucks County. Normally, the procedure was for the Pennsylvania Germans to come into Philadelphia, and then, move northward and westward, so that my ancestors, German ancestors, in Pennsylvania, or in Bucks County, were the branch of the family which only became associated with the Shuster family. Then, [there was] another branch over in Lancaster County, where there was a large branch of predecessors, what I call my "sauerkraut ancestors," [laughter] because all the names are Drauckers, and Pickles, and (Schlemakers?), and names of that type, all typical German names. My mother's family, on the other hand, was all colonial English. We have three or four colonial governors in that list of founders of New Hampshire and some of the early governors of the Massachusetts colony, so that it makes for a rather interesting background, if you want to know how you got to where you are.

I think the more important thing is, though, what was my immediate past? and that is an academic atmosphere. My father was a high school teacher in the Orange High School system and was asked to join the faculty at Trenton Normal School, at the time when the Normal School was blossoming out into a teacher's college, and so, he became head of the mathematics department and stayed there for the rest of his career, as well as teaching at Columbia University

in their summer program. He always taught on Saturdays, also, at Columbia.

KP: Your father published a significant amount of material.

CS: Yes, he did. I have most of his stuff downstairs. He was a contributor to three major textbook series in [the] teaching of mathematics, that is, books at the level of public schools up through high school, and he was the first to introduce the project method into the teaching of mathematics. The books, today, are still [in use], except [that] they're outdated by choice of subject matter. He would, on one page, explain what mathematics would attempt to show, or prove, or do, and, on the next page, would be the problems, and so, he'd write a page of explanation of how you get from here to there. "Now, try it." So, each two pages became units, and he was very adept at writing things in that fashion, and I admire that. His last book series, which came out just before new math, was probably the finest math text series that existed, and, probably, even today, except [that] you can't find it in any libraries, including the National Council on the Teaching of Mathematics, of which Dad was an ex-president. In fact, while he was president, he stopped new math cold, and forever after, he was condemning it as the worst blight [laughter] on education that could have been foisted on the American public.

KP: Why was he so opposed to new math?

CS: New math was originated in the minds of college professors who taught graduate students and were up in the great ether, the realm of mathematics that very few people understand, and then, they thought, "Well, in order to get more people into our area, we'll give them the basics back in the public schools, and, therefore, we will generate bigger, and better, and greater mathematicians." Well, the sorry story of it is that the average American does not only not fathom that sort of mathematics, but, he doesn't need it. In other words, new math was preparing students for the Cadillacs of the world. How many people have Cadillacs, etc., right? What do we drive? Chevrolets and Fords. That's the kind of mathematics we needed, and that's the kind of mathematics that he believed in, and that's the kind of mathematics that he developed.

His last series of books, which he and several people co-authored, though he was the driving force on it, was called *Functional Mathematics*, and the essence was this, that when a carpenter or a plumber goes to do a job, if he's on the ball, he takes a tool chest with him and doesn't have to go back to the office and get more tools as he needs them. He brings whatever is necessary to do the job, that appears to be needed, and that's the way a mathematician, or anyone using mathematics, should approach the subject. So, if you need just simple arithmetic, great, but, if you need a little trigonometry, or a little geometry, or even a little calculus, why, that's what you should bring to the task. Whatever is needed to solve the problem, you use, and too much of mathematics, if you recall, is compartmentalized. You take a year of this, you take a year of that, you take trigonometry divorced mainly from everything else. You took geometry as a subject, and then, you took this, that, or the other thing, and he said, "No, they should all be integrated. There's no reason why high school students can't start learning calculus, because that's a part of mathematics."

KP: In other words, he had a holistic view towards mathematics.

CS: That's exactly right, equip them with the tools to solve a problem, regardless of what kind of mathematics it is. If you take a look at that *Functional Mathematics* series, and I have the whole series downstairs, you'll realize, though it's outdated, because we're now in the jet age, and laser beams, and so forth, the solving of problems and the tasks set out were not modern in the sense of what we see today, but, that same approach could be done. Well, after I retired, back in '84, about simultaneously, there was a full page ad in the Washington paper saying that public school teachers in the area of earth sciences were greatly needed. I sort of smiled to myself, because, as a graduate student at Rutgers, I had taught a course in physical sciences, and, obviously, my background's in biology. When I was in the Air Force, I had meteorology and astronomy, and so, you take just that and, plus, the other thing, I had a course in geology, too, so, I had all the science in it, as a marine biologist, and I had oceanography. So, I had maybe not in-depth training, but, I had all facets covered. So, I applied through our local schools and they said, "No, you can't teach, because you don't have a teacher's certificate." Having grown up in an academic atmosphere, in fact, my father-in-law was vice president of a college, and I have an aunt that was a professor out at Ohio State, and my grandfather had been a teacher at one time.

KP: You have a very academic family.

CS: It's that sort of thing, that if you can teach, you can teach, and all the training in the world isn't going to take someone who doesn't have that capacity to do it [and make them a teacher]. Now, I'm not saying that courses in education and teaching are not useful. Yes, they are. They help guide, but, if you don't have that innate interest, or capability, or willingness, nothing in the world is going to help you, and so, it sort of amused me, that I was not qualified to teach because I didn't have these courses in education, but, they said, "You might be useful as a substitute teacher." So, I did do substitute teaching for a couple of years, and then, I got fed up with the situation, because it became almost increasingly a problem of discipline and glorified baby-sitting, particularly since, after a while, instead of math or science, which were my fields, I also would be called in for home economics, or phys ed, or for art class, or for French, and it soon got to a point, when you get to that level, where the real thrill of doing something went out of the picture.

One of the earlier assignments was when a biology teacher had been recognized as the teacher [of the year]. In Virginia each year, they have a national teacher's recognition. They go to the White House and are feted there and this teacher had specifically asked that I come and substitute in her classes. So, I stayed throughout the day, just with all of her classes, for the week that she was being feted, and that was fun, because, obviously, those kids were well-prepped in the beginning, and she left them with the message that, by golly, when she came back, they had to have their work done, and to help them achieve that, why, that was a stimulus, but, then, after a while, it got bad. In the mathematics classes that I substituted in, it became rather obvious that the books that were now being used were not new books, and it was sort of as though they're trying to feel their way back to the teaching of the so-called old math, but, they were being written by professors who had been trained on new math, and they didn't really know, [or] have the vaguest notion, of what the old math was all about. They were jumbling things up. One of the most common things was numerals and numbers, which would be like someone in English messing up the alphabet with words. I'm one of those scientists that believe in, "You define something, and then, you use that definition to carry forth whatever learning or

message you want to carry," and to mix up numbers and numerals is being the same thing, as I said, like calling certain words alphabets and visa-versa. There are a few letters that obviously are words, like "A" and that type, [laughter] but, [there are] very few of these that serve both purposes. So, that was my short period of substitute teaching or teaching at a public school level.

KP: Your family has a strong academic tradition. Did that help to shape the direction of your career?

CS: No, not really. It did in the sense that the atmosphere was there, but, most of it was stimulated by teachers that I had at the Pennington School. Dr. Harvey Green, who was the headmaster, was a favorite of mine. Actually, I wound up as the most representative boy in the class, so, I guess I must have been a favorite of his, but, he was a great stimulus, a great teacher. Then, at Rutgers, I was fortunate to be assigned to Dr. Thurlow Nelson, who was chairman of the department for many, many years, and he was a very dynamic teacher, particularly at the undergraduate level, and he was the one that saw me through my undergraduate years, and then, when I came back, after the war, I was welcomed back with open arms, as were many of the other veterans. He had been in World War I, a first lieutenant, as I recall, in the old Veterinary Service. He had his doctor's degree by then and he had seen what the problems were for Army people getting back into civilian life and so forth, then. So, all of his former students who were coming back to school were brought in as faculty members, like Dr. Harold Haskin. You may have heard of him. He recently had a laboratory named for him down at Bivalve, New Jersey, the Haskin Shellfish Research Laboratory. Dr. Melbourne Carriker, who's now at the University of Delaware, retired, but, [he] was another one of the professors that came in at a professorial level, having achieved their Ph.D. prior to or just during the war and were military, also.

So, when I came back, why, I came and about the first question he asked me was, did I smoke? and I said, "No." So, he said, "Thank God," and so, I shared his office with him in old New Jersey Hall, and I don't know whether you've ever seen the building, but, it was extremely crowded, and [there] was an exodus of people out of the military and onto campus. Why, everything blossomed [in what] looked like a hundred fold and classes that had just a few dozen in it when I was an undergraduate soon became two hundred, three hundred students, like in freshman biology. So, I was at his elbow practically throughout my undergraduate and graduate career, certainly as far as my Masters [was] concerned, and then, he was on my doctorate committee when I went to NYU to complete my studies. So, by and large, I was very receptive to this sort of thing, because of the academic background, but, it was through the outstanding teachers that I met along the way that this is what really pushed me into [academics], yes.

KP: Your parents probably expected you to go to college.

CS: Oh, yes, yes. Well, historically, you skip back now, because I'd have to go back to my great-grandfather. He never went to school beyond the public school, but, he had four brothers, three of which he saw through the Pennington Seminary, the same place that I went to, which was later called the Pennington School. One of his brothers went to Philadelphia, to a technical school, and became an engineer, and another went to college in Connecticut, at least for two years, and about that time was the Civil War, and he was into photography, and he sort of

disappeared from history. "Old Sam," as he was called affectionately in the family, was probably the brightest of the brothers. Every time they would study something, he would get the book, and when they came home, he would help them with their studies, so that right up to the time [that] he died, in his late eighties, he was still learning different things, like calculus, and he learned shorthand and all of these sorts of things, over and beyond the fact that he just had a simple, I don't know, eighth grade, at best, experience as a kid.

Then, my grandfather, his only son, went to the Normal School and my father went into teaching right from high school. [He] was, I guess, nineteen years old, something like that, but, as a student, he became very adept and knowledgeable in mathematics. It soon became customary, apparently, for the superintendent of schools, as he visited the schools, the teachers would have problems in mathematics, and so, he would say, "Okay, give me a little time, I'll get the answer," and he always came to Dad, and Dad would crank out the answers for him. So, when Dad graduated, I think Dad may have only been seventeen, anyway, he was not old enough to teach, but, the superintendent of the schools in Hunterdon County, [the] area that he was at, said, "Well, I set the rules here. If I want you to teach, well, you teach," and he says, "All you have to do is study up and pass the requirement sometime during your first year." At the same time, there was a young woman who also had to pass, so, the superintendent said, "While you're doing that, why don't you teach her?" and so, Dad went with this teacher down to Lambertville, he showed me the place where they actually went, one of the inns there, it's still standing, and Dad passed all the examinations to teach first [and] second grades, all the way up through high school, including superintendent of schools, when he got old enough, and the woman passed the primary grades certificate, which was what she was aiming for. So, she was very pleased and Dad thought that was quite something.

The most interesting thing in his teaching was, here he is, seventeen or nineteen, I'd have to go back and double check, but, he was just out of high school. All these kids came in [and] some [of the] farm boys [were] bigger than he was. Dad was only about five-foot ten, and all these farm boys would come in, and, characteristic of those days, they had to complete a certain level of training, but, they would miss all fall and all spring, because of farm chores. So, the first day, he's passing out the books and some of these older boys said to him, "Mr. Shuster," he says, "do we have to do those books again? We've been through 'em three or four times," and he says, "Oh, well, no." He was in a little one-room schoolhouse, separate, and he went to a multi-room schoolhouse down in Frenchtown, New Jersey, so, he wasn't equipped for this type of thing. So, he said, "No." He recollected the books and he says, "School's out. Come back tomorrow and I'll tell you what we're going to do," and so, he came home and asked his father, who, by then, was farming rather than teaching, and he asked Grand-pop what to do, and Grand-pop said to him, "Oh, don't worry about it. You'll know what to do when the time comes. I'm not going to tell you." [laughter] So, Dad stewed about it, and, the next day, the boys came in, and he said, "How many of you fellows have ever worked in building your barns? How many of you know how to build a barn? What do you do?" and they look around at each other, blank, and so, that was the project for the fall, how to build a barn. So, they learned how to do blueprint, design blueprints, how to estimate the kind, the quantity, and type of wood they needed, whether they were using wooden pegs, or, by that time, this is about 1910 or so, whether they were using nails or whatever, what kind of tools they would need, augers, and bits, and whatever, and so, he evolved, at that point, the so-called project method.

Years later, when he went to Columbia and was teaching, I think it was Thorndike, Professor [Edward Lee] Thorndike, heard about this fellow that was teaching in the Teacher's College by the project method, and so, he came in and sat in on some of Dad's classes. World War I broke out, and Dad went in the service with the Navy, and, when he came back to Columbia, everybody was talking about this fabulous project method. Dad didn't call it "project method." He called it project, whatever it was. It was a different name, but, everybody's enthralled with this new project method that Thorndike had evolved. Historically, it all had started with Dad's stuff and that's also revealed in the textbooks that he wrote, because there would be a page explaining what nails were, brads and nails, and roofing nails, and all the things, [and on] the next page were problems relating to nails. Another time, the kinds of fences, chicken fences or fences for hogs or for cattle, different needs for different purposes, and [it asked], "How would you know what you're doing, and [in] what order, and the mathematics relating to it?" and all sorts of things of this sort.

KP: Your father's teaching method had a very practical bent to it.

CS: Exactly. Well, he grew up on a farm.

KP: You grew up in an area that was still very agricultural, for New Jersey.

CS: Not really, no. I grew up in Orange, in West Orange, New Jersey.

KP: When did your father leave the Hunterdon School?

CS: Let's see, from that school, after a few years, within a couple years, three years, maybe, then, he went to a school up in Dover, New Jersey.

KP: Is that in Morris County?

CS: I think it is, yes. It's north.

KP: Okay.

CS: About that time, and he taught at Cranford, later, but, somewheres in there, there was an opportunity for him to go to Normal School. So, he went to the Normal School, got his degrees there, and, at that point, it became rather obvious [that] he should go further. So, he went to Columbia, and got all three degrees from Columbia, the baccalaureate, Masters, and his doctorate at Columbia, and increasingly concentrated on mathematics. Dad had a photographic memory and I often thought that, "Boy, if I had a memory like his, I could have really made a mark on things," because, as you can see, I surround myself with reference documents. I've got a tremendous file. I've always had tremendous files in every venture I was into, so that if I forgot something, I [would] at least remember that I had it in a file and could go double check, but, Dad had a photographic memory and [he] used to wow his grandsons when he was visiting. He would recite poetry that he learned in school after having not thought about it for fifty, sixty, or more years and just come back with it. At one point, either at the Normal School or at Columbia,

in a course in history, he got a failing mark on one of his examinations and he just couldn't understand it, because he knew the answers were right. So, he went to the professor and asked him what the matter was and he says, "Well, it's obvious [that] you cheated, because you almost quoted, *verbatim*, the information in the book." So, Dad said to him, "Well, we've studied the first so many chapters of the book. You turn to any page in any one of those chapters [and] read me the first three words." The professor did it and he spouted out the whole damn paragraph. "Well," says the professor, and from then on in, he had no more questions about that sort of thing, but, obviously, a memory like that would stand anyone in good stead, particularly in an academic field

KP: He also met your mother at Columbia

CS: Yes. She and her twin sister were at Columbia. Well, I was born in '19, so, mother became a housewife, but, her sister never married. [She] was first in the Restoration Corps, physical therapy. She was one of the original physical therapists during World War I, was in uniform, although it was not an Army uniform, and only in recent years [was she] recognized as having served in the military. So, she did get military credit for serving, but, she was on the ground floor in physical therapy, and went to Ohio State, where that was her *forte*, and graduated, and, later, became a professor *emeritus* in the program at Ohio State. Mother, from then on in, concentrated on raising a family and I suspect that she probably would have had a similar career as her sister, if she had not married. So, yes, she and the sisters came from an educated family. Both Grandfather Gilman and Gram Gilman had also gone to the Randolph Normal School in Vermont and were both teaching before he went into agriculture, farming, and she became a housewife, so that for several generations, the family has been in public school teaching. So, again, if anything's going to rub off, that's going to rub off.

KP: You come from a very well-educated family.

CS: Yes, and both my brother and sister also went into teaching. My brother left it after a while. He was in vocational agriculture and my sister still is teaching, in home economics, up in the Pennington-Hopewell Township schools in New Jersey.

KP: Your father served in the Navy during World War I.

CS: Yes. He became a chief petty officer in World War I and was stationed at the Brooklyn Navy Yard and he tells some rather interesting stories about that experience. He was out in the hallway one day, sitting, waiting for something to happen, I guess, and some officers went by. They were lamenting the fact that there was no one there to teach a course in navigation, and so, my father, overhearing this, immediately said, "Well, I can teach it," because, by then, you see, he'd had his Masters degree in mathematics, and, as you recognized, this practical bent, he may or may not have had any navigation, but, he was a "quick read," as they say, and so, he had no problems with volunteering. Well, they looked at him and they said, " Well, you're an enlisted man. We can't have you teaching officers," and they worked it out. He would fulfill whatever duties he had as an enlisted man, go home, change into civilian clothes, come back, and teach the officers navigation, go back home, change, and come back for the rest of his enlisted terms for the day. So, he trained a considerable number of officers there. Then, he moved up, rather

quickly, to a chief petty officer and was the chief accountant for the Brooklyn Navy Yards, and he found that there was very sloppy bookkeeping, not only among the Navy at the time, but, also, more particularly, of the shipbuilders, who were double costing and everything else, and he went a long way towards straightening all of that out, and the admiral in charge of the base, apparently, was always very grateful to him for that. I forget the admiral's name at this point, but, he always looked after Father and realized that from what he said.

KP: Your father's side of the family is German.

CS: Yes, primarily.

KP: How did your father feel about World War I?

CS: Well, Dad was always very pronounced in whatever he felt and he felt that we were engineered into fighting against the Germans, that he didn't feel that we should have. He was in New York City at the time when the newspaper ran the ads by the Germans saying that the *Lusitania* was carrying contraband of war and warned people about going on the *Lusitania*. Well, you all know the story of the *Lusitania.* It went across, and was torpedoed, and blew up almost immediately, and that precipitated, among other things, our getting into the war, and he always felt that it was the government's fault for not preventing either the ship from going or, at least, the Americans from being on it, since it was a British ship, as I recall. So, yes, he felt strongly about that, but, he didn't feel strongly enough, 'cause he volunteered.

KP: He volunteered?

CS: He did volunteer, oh, yes, because I think that, if he had been smart enough, he could have easily been an officer, but, he just went in and volunteered as an enlisted man, you see, and he did very well. He got promoted very rapidly to chief petty officer, but, I don't know, I've got some of his insignia stripes. In fact, when the World War I commemorative postage stamp came out, I used to do first day covers, and I did three of them, one from Aunt Esther with a picture on the back, showing her stringing out the leg of an aviator that had been shot down, and his leg had become paralyzed, and she was working on him, physical therapy. She's on one cover, and then, I did Dad on another with either his discharge paper or enlistment paper on the back of it. I can give you copies of those.

KP: Yes.

CS: Not today, cause they're buried away in boxes, but, if you're interested in that sort of thing, and then, the third one I did, Dad was an antique collector, among other things. That was his chief hobby and this house is replete with antiques. I've got about half of his collection.

KP: I saw. I peeked in the other room.

CS: Yes, yes. That corner cupboard is from Bucks County. That's been in the family for my generation, Dad's, my grandfather's, great-grandfather's, great-great-grandfather's, his, so, it's been one, two, three, four, five, six generations in the family and that's full of collections, Dad's

collections, primarily. Yes, we got sidetracked here, somewhere. [laughter]

KP: How did he feel about the war? After World War I, did he ever think that the war was a mistake? Did he ever join the American Legion?

CS: Well, yes, he did feel it was a mistake, but, he did feel that, really, if the armistice, the treaty, had been different, that we may have never seen a Hitler. He felt, from a historical viewpoint, at least, as far as he's concerned, that had Wilson not failed in his health, or whatever the problems were, if Wilson had vigorously prosecuted his original attempts, World War II could have been avoided. So, Dad really was very critical of Wilson, because he felt that he let us down by not following through and making sure that there was a just peace, because Wilson did have some good ideas, but, it never came to the fruition that it should have. The United States never really got into the United Nations or whatever, the League of Nations, and, yes, Dad blamed them for that, and, well, he laid it to the party, too. [laughter] So, you can guess what his political affiliation might be.

KP: Your father was a Republican. What was his concept of an ideal Republican? For example, what did he think of Teddy Roosevelt or Calvin Coolidge?

CS: I don't remember him ever remarking about any favorites, in relation to specific men. He obviously didn't fault any of them. He often felt that Hoover had been maligned and Roosevelt had actually taken some of Hoover's ideas, which Hoover had offered to Roosevelt to implement while Hoover was still in office, and then, Roosevelt said, "Oh, no," and then, just as soon as Roosevelt got in, then, there were the bank closures and all that, and reorganization of the banks occurred, and Hoover had already worked out a lot of that. In seeing a recent TV production on Roosevelt, he obviously had the charm and the ability to give people faith, and, when you looked at, and I think of Hoover, because I was very young at the time, but, I still remember, he was rather dour. It reflects a lot of my Pennsylvania German background. We don't get all that enthusiastic about things, but, Roosevelt, I guess he was Germanic, in a sense, because that was a Dutch heritage, but, he had that charm to him that, I guess, at that time, we really needed. Hoover was, I think, in my father's mind, anyway, a more solid citizen, and the fact that we never got out of the Depression, until we got into the war, I think that my father would have rather hoped that Hoover would've, in time, brought us out, although, he didn't seem to be very persuasive or active during that time, but, yes, Dad never really talked too much about the Republican presidents.

He was usually more vociferous about the Democrats and blaming them, Wilson, primarily, because he did not bring a successful conclusion, that is, a treaty and American participation after the war. At this point, I guess you can say, in part, that it was because of Wilson's health, and he was, I guess, pretty much emotionally spent and just not capable of doing it, but, nevertheless, it still, I guess, goes back to him, even so, and then, Roosevelt, Dad never did like all of the New Deal ideas, "the Welfare State," as he always called it, and, I guess, although, in my career, most of my career, I've never proclaimed what party I belong to, but, I am a little bit astounded by the extreme left welfare state attitude. I don't believe in the extreme right or the extreme left. Actually, I'm more conservative, but, I think Roosevelt can be blamed for a lot of the problems we have today, even the racial problems, in the sense that he created a system

whereby a race that had been formerly slaves could be still enslaved. If you think about it, seriously, the black race, in many instances, particularly those that, over the years, have been on the dole, we've kept them under our thumb, which is a hell of a note. They would have been, themselves, much better off had we had a much different way of nurturing them, rather than just handing them money for no reason at all, except of their poor conditions. We should've put some stipulations on it, but, we didn't, and, as a result, a large proportion of them never really were able to stand on their own two feet, and, yet, immigrants coming into the country, before and after, very quickly have established themselves and moved forward without too much demand upon the welfare state system. So, I think that that approach that Roosevelt used immediately was a bonus and a help to the black race, no doubt about that, but, it was perpetuated for whatever reason, political or otherwise, and, in perpetuating it, I think it did a great disservice to the race, and we might not be in the straits we are today.

Let me comment one step further on that, because, having had the experience in teaching [in] public schools, here in Arlington, the so-called WASP is a minority. We have a large Hispanic group, we have blacks, and Orientals, and even Iraqis, well, the Arabian group, so that you go into a mixture of a classroom, and, having had that experience, and seeing what a cross section is at that level, and then, thinking in terms of what's happening at the national level here, it's true that we have Oktoberfests celebrating Germanic sort of things and we have other kinds of events, but, you look at the Hispanics, and the blacks, particularly, they're African-Americans instead of American-Africans. I mean, the whole emphasis is divisive, rather than an emphasis on being an American, and I think that is the wrong approach. I'm not against people recognizing their heritage, 'cause that's one of the things I'm truly interested in, and I think that's something everybody's got to hold on to and build on, but, I think that if that's your focus, rather than, "I want to be an American," which has all occurred after World War II, not before World War II. World War II was an experience [where we said], "By golly, we're in this together. I'm not an Indian in it, I'm not," the only group that, unfortunately, got left out were the Japanese, but, other than that, everybody [said], "We're all Americans. We're in this thing together." Now, today, you look across the landscape, "I'm an Afro-American," or, "I'm a Hispanic-American. I'm not an American, I'm a Hispanic," and I think that's unfortunate, particularly Hispanics wanting to be nurtured in the sense that Spanish becomes the mother tongue. We should only have one [language] and that's English. I mean, that's how strongly I feel about this.

All right, my ancestor, as I said, came over in 1819. Within six weeks, he was speaking English, and, when he raised his family, no one was allowed to speak in German in the family, and that's unfortunate, because it would have been wonderful if they'd all learned to speak German and passed it down, and I could have learned that. [laughter] It would have been helpful, but, my great-grandfather said he often heard [his] Mother and Dad speaking in German, Pennsylvania German, in the evenings, when all the children were in bed, but, during the day, work-a-day, they all talked English. If you look at other groups, the Orientals and others, they don't expect to be taught in their native language. They immediately try as hard and quick as they can to learn English. So, I think that nurturing these different ethnic groups is great, to the point where they recognize their heritage, but, not great if it means making them separate Americans.

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

CS: People are beginning to recognize that there is a real problem here, and I won't be around to resolve it, but, somebody's going to have to seriously part with it, and our politicians are not. They're walking away from it.

KP: You were born in Vermont.

CS: That's correct.

KP: How did you end up in New Jersey?

CS: Yes, what happened was, you see, this was now during the end of World War I, so, when I was born, in November of 1919, the war was over, but, Mother had gone home to Vermont, where I was born, because she wanted to be with her parents. Her parents, being farm parents, it wasn't convenient for her mother to come to New York City, where they were living, so, she went home. So, that's why I was born in Vermont.

KP: Okay.

CS: So, I do consider myself a Vermonter, although, if you look at my seventy-five years of age and try to block out how many years of that I spent in Vermont, I think about two or three years of it is about all I ever lived in Vermont, and that was in the beginning few months, and then, subsequent summers. I spent several summers in Vermont as a youngster.

KP: You seem to have very fond memories of those summers.

CS: Oh, yes. I love Vermont. One of the things, when I was in school, and it was at the point when I was studying the history of Greece, I looked at that and I said, "Oh, my God, I now understand why you had the separate city-states." They were all separated by mountain ranges, so, one city was on one side of the mountain, the other on the other side, because, in Vermont, in those days, that was it. You got into one river valley and there were very few ways you could get across into the next valley. So, the people that live in that valley were the ones who intermarried, and it was rare that they left, and I said, "Oh, my God, that's just exactly what was going on back in those days," that individualistic view of the world, because of geography, and I think that's interesting. I have read books, more recently, and I forget which ones they were or what they did, but, a lot of history can be tied to geography, and that unless one, I think, probably, from a history viewpoint, really understands the geography of the times, you're missing part of the story.

KP: You also grew up in New Jersey.

CS: Well, but, most of my life was in the Oranges, West Orange, and in the Trenton, New Jersey, area.

KP: What did you think of those two communities? When did you live in those places?

CS: Well, the Oranges were much different than where we lived near Trenton, because the latter

was a rural area. We lived out in the mountains, near the Watchungs, above Morris, New Jersey. In those days, we did not get an automobile until Dad had to get to Trenton. At that point, about 1929 or so, is when he bought his first automobile. Back then, as a farm boy accustomed to walking, he would walk from home to the high school in Orange, and I don't know how many miles it was, at least a mile-and-a-half, two miles, maybe, but, he always did this, and walking up those hills, they were quite steep, actually. I remember going back and seeing how rigorous it was, but, then, every Saturday, he'd go down into the valley. Like almost about halfway between our home and the high school area was the railroad and he would take that into New York every Saturday. So, he did a lot of walking, but, he lived to be ninety-four and was very vigorous all his life, so, I guess that was helpful.

Yes, one of the things he did, when he was young and was going to Columbia, a classmate of his lived up in Easton, Pennsylvania and they got in their head that they were going to go to Philadelphia, from Easton, in one day. So, Dad walked from the Frenchtown, New Jersey, area, from Everittstown, to Easton, and they started out from there, and got to Philadelphia, and I always thought Dad's stories were a little bit half-cocked until I ran across some postcards that were saved not for the messages on them, but for the stamps. One of the things the family had done over the years is collect stamps, and that's partly why I got interested in stamp collecting and cachet making, things of that sort, but, on these postcards, Dad sent postcards of every stop along the way, "We are now at Such-and-So." "The time is Such-and-So," and, "We're stopping here for rest," and, "We're eating here." "We hope to make Philadelphia by nightfall." The whole blessed thing was on three postcards.

KP: You knew that your father was not just exaggerating.

CS: Maybe the story was exaggerated in one sense, but, boy, it was documented.

KP: In terms of the actual trip.

CS: In actually going there, and they went from Easton to the home of one of our distant cousins in Philadelphia.

KP: You grew up in the Oranges, which was quite urban at the time.

CS: That's right.

KP: Then, you moved to the Trenton area, which was much more rural. How rural was it? Was it mainly farmland?

CS: It was farmlands all around us. On our property, we had about six acres of land, a large apple orchard on the place, about four hundred feet of footage on the highway, and a farm adjacent to the back of us, and then, a quarter of a mile down the road, a large dairy farm, and then, scattered houses along the road, and another big farm up the road another half mile, so that there were three large farms within walking distance. As I said, one was actually adjacent to our property and, on two sides, the access lane was on the south side and the western bound lane was bounded by one of the fields of the farms. So, we were tight in and because of that and the fact

that, on the property that Dad bought, there were a couple of chicken coops, one was reconverted into a garage and utility type shed and the other was for chickens. I got into poultry raising. As a high school student, I became a junior leader for a 4-H Club poultry group, and so, the farm kids and others in the area, we were all in this poultry club and participated in 4-H Club activities at county fairs and whatnot.

KP: Why did your father take the job in the Trenton area? Was it because it was close to the Trenton Normal School?

CS: No, no. He took the job because it was a promotion, in a sense. He was head of the math department in the Orange High School, but, this was to organize and set up the mathematics department at the Normal School.

KP: At Trenton?

CS: At Trenton, at the time when the college campus was being built in Hillwood Lakes. In other words, it already was in the making, in the foreseeable future, because the campus was already being built, when it was going to move from being a Normal School to a teacher's college, and that was the rationale for his move, I'm sure.

KP: What year was that? When did you move from the Oranges?

CS: About 1931.

KP: You moved in the midst of the Depression.

CS: Yes, yes.

KP: How did your father do during the Great Depression? It sounds like he was employed for the entire time.

CS: Well, he was hired the whole time, and we always seemed to be fairly well off, but, then, you got to remember, my Dad was very energetic, and he had more teaching jobs than anyone else, like a juggler, because, every Saturday, he was in to Columbia, teaching there, and every summer school, he taught at Columbia. If he wasn't at Columbia, he taught out at Bowling Green, Ohio, or elsewhere, so that there were very few times when he wasn't working.

KP: He was also working more than one job.

CS: Oh, yes, yes. He was working at two jobs at once and writing books, so, he had income coming in from three different sources, in a sense, so that we were holding our head above water, that's for sure, and there was never any problem. We never had any money. As a kid, I don't remember having an excess of toys, like you find nowadays, and things of that sort, but, we were well-fed, well-garmented, and well-housed, and so, the basic nourishments were all there. We knew things were tight and it was just that sort of thing. I know, when they were widening the highway, one of the major jobs was to put an area for sidewalks along, and, as I said, we had

about four hundred, maybe even five hundred, feet of frontage on the highway, and WPA teams dug into our bank and made a path for a sidewalk, which has still not been built, but, it's still there. So, the whole front was changed and I don't know how many weeks that they were doing that. Our house is sort of higher than the fields to the south of us, which was an old asparagus patch, and Dad got them to take most of the dirt from the property and move it up on to our property, to level it off below the house, and I think he even paid some of the fellows to help the WPA workers, to do that. I have a vivid picture of them at lunch time, out under our shade trees, and eating cherries off our cherry trees, and things like that. I used to go out and talk with them and it is true that there weren't enough shovels to go around, and there was a lot a standing on shovels and whatnot, leaning on shovels, but, by and large, the impression that I got from it was that it was a worthwhile thing, to get people up and feeling that they were, at least somewhat, earning their keep on these WPA projects.

KP: Was the widening of that road a good project?

CS: Well, they didn't do enough of it. [laughter] It is a death trap, nowadays. In fact, a nephew of mine was killed in that area, a rather tragic death, two or three years ago, now. What has happened was, with the advent of Interstate 95 and some of these other areas, the trucks, now, are bypassing some of these places, tolls, and they are using this country road, in essence, from Trenton to Flemington, and so, these big tractor-trailers are rolling by on a two-lane highway at a pretty rapid pace. So, they didn't really do the job that they should have. When we moved there, there was a trolley that ran from Trenton to Hopewell, I guess, and, shortly after, they stopped at what they called Cornell Switch, which was about, over a half a mile below our home, and they took out the trolley tracks and put in buses, but, they didn't do anything in widening the road immediately, and then, they did put in for this sidewalk area, all along, but, they never widened the road, and the road has been improved slightly since then, but, it's still basically a two-lane highway.

KP: The lane that the WPA left?

CS: Yes. Well, the WPA didn't have anything to do with that. Their major job was to provide sidewalk area and that whole area still doesn't have sidewalks.

KP: In the Oranges, who were most of your friends? Where did their fathers work? Did they work in the factories?

CS: In the Oranges, the next door neighbors were about the only ones that I really knew much about and the children of fellow high school teachers. Dad's closest friend at the high school was Al Ensminger, whose young son, Alfred, was in one of my laboratory sections when I was a lab instructor at Rutgers after the war. So, up until that point, we had connections with that family, and, after Al graduated, we sort of lost contact with the family, but, the Ensmingers lived over one whole section of roads. There were these roads coming up the sides of the mountain, almost straight up, straight up in terms of left and right, not straight up in terms of altitude, but, they're still very steep. So, they lived in the next section over, as well as the (Hoffsteds?). (Hoffsted?) was in the English department, Ensminger was in science, general science, and Dad was in math, as I told you. To the right of our house, (McCue?) had his own company. He made a laxative,

and I forget the name of it now, but, it was a chocolate laxative that he made his money on. His older son was much older than I am, Junior McCue, and I can remember his making a radio with a crystal, a crystal set, and I lost track of that family, but, I think he went on to Harvard, got his Ph.D. in physics, and, obviously, did quite well. Donald McCue, that I used to pal around with, was a little bit younger than myself, and Marjorie. Since we left there in '31, I was in sixth grade. Across the street from us were the (Swensons?), and they had a couple beautiful little girls, and I remember them, and then, next door to us, which was part of our original property, Dad sold off a quarter of it, a lawyer and his family moved in. His wife was Norwegian, and I can remember days when, her mother came over from Norway, particularly in the wintertime, she would take us up onto the hills, on the golf course above us, which was hilly, we were on the side of the mountain, and she actually taught us how to ski. That's quite an experience. Mr. Barry, the lawyer, was famous at that time for having prosecuted a case of radium poisoning at a watch factory and the radium girls painted the dials. Well, he was the lawyer that won the case for them and he lived next door.

KP: Did you know him at all?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

KP: Did he ever talk about the case?

CS: Dad talked about it a lot, but, no, I didn't talk to Mr. Barry about it much. His oldest daughter was a year or two younger than myself. Then, about three houses down, [there] was another family, and I forget their name completely, but, they had older boys, but, they were very much into building the scooter. You take roller skates, the old fashioned roller skates, and put 'em on a board, and then, put an orange crate with handles on it, and they were always doing things like that. In fact, they had like a nursery there. I guess their father might've been in the florist business or something similar to that, because I remember that the back of their property had a lot of dahlia bushes and things of that sort. So, I think that that may have been his business, but, I remember the boys, playing with them, and that was the sort of thing I did. In this school, in about fifth grade, we got together a football team. Bob Hoffsted, one of the sons of Joel Hoffsted, Bob was in my class, later went to Syracuse, he and I, and I don't know the names of the other boys now, but, we had this football team, and I remember that was a great thing, when Mom ordered the helmet, and shoulder pads, and the pants from Sears for me. So, that's how we got equipped. We were the most motley looking crew in the world, but, we did play a few pick-up games among the neighborhoods. That was big fun, but, that was almost the limit of my experiences there.

KP: In the Oranges?

CS: In the Oranges. Oh, yes, there were other kids in school. I was the largest in my class, and whenever someone else moved into the territory, there's always this pecking order sort of thing, so, invariably, a new boy, particularly if he was trying to establish his position, would pick a fight with me. Some I won and some I lost, [laughter] but, that was sort of the thing that occurred on the school grounds. Sometimes, we got in a little fracas and I can remember one in particular where it was quite a bloody affair. We both got banged up quite a bit, but, it was sort

of taken as an every day occurrence, because I don't remember me going to the principal or being reported for it, just one of those things that happened. Once it was over and, I guess, we established a pecking order, everything settled down to normal, but, the only other thing that occurred, much, much earlier, was, in the school in Orange, it may have been a West Orange school, but, it was right on the border, kindergarten, I went to, because, when we moved up on the hill, I went into first grade, but, at the kindergarten level, and most of this was reinforced with what my parents had commented on, was that we were studying circus animals. I got started drawing them on the blackboard, and, apparently, I just drew the entire circus along the whole level of the blackboard, all the way around the room, the two walls of the room, and they were left up for parents' night, and that's how my parents got to see these drawings that I did. Over the years, the early years, my parents did keep the drawings that I did, and so, I have a collection of them downstairs, of some of the drawings I did. I've never had any instruction, other than in high school art classes, and not many of them, but, I do all of my own illustrating for my work, today. In fact, I'm right now a managing editor of a family newspaper, the Rittenhouse Family newspaper, newsletter, and I do all of the design and things of that sort, and the yearbook that I gave you, I designed that, and the artwork in it is mine, and things of that sort. So, you can see that for a biologist, I'm a pretty good draftsman. As an artist, I'm lousy, but, that doesn't make any difference. [laughter]

KP: When you moved to Hopewell, was it a farming community?

CS: Hopewell Township, it was about two or three miles north of the campus at Inwood Lakes, where Trenton State Teacher's College was, and, as I said

KP: You were surrounded by farms.

CS: By farms and isolated houses in the area. Right where we were, there were about four houses on the other side of the road. On our side of the road, there was about a like number. So, there was a cluster of about eight, ten houses in the immediate area which was surrounded completely by these farms.

KP: You went to Central High School in Hopewell Township.

CS: That's right.

KP: However, you also went to the Pennington School.

CS: Right. I was born in November, and, when I graduated from high school, when the Dickens would that have been? '37, yes, '37, that would have been June, so, I still was seventeen or so, but, Dad

KP: Thought that you should not go to college right away.

CS: That's right, and it's always been traditional in the family that Shusters age late in life. With that in mind, he decided [that] I should stay back, and so, I went to Pennington School for a year, and, as I said, that brought me into contact with Dr. Green, the headmaster, and that was a good

thing for me, in terms of maturity and otherwise. I still was certainly an average age or young for going into college at that point, but, yes, that was a good decision, I feel.

KP: Were most of the students in Hopewell High School the sons and daughters of farmers?

CS: Well, they lived in either Hopewell itself, in Pennington, New Jersey, or Titusville, Washington's Crossing, all of those small, rural towns. Pennington only had a population of two, three thousand, Hopewell, about the same, but, yes, at least a third, a good third, of the kids were from farms or very rural areas and the rest came from the villages, like Pennington, and Hopewell, and the others I mentioned.

KP: Did most of your classmates go on to college or did most of them stay in the local area?

CS: A large percentage went off to college, yes. I missed my fiftieth anniversary for the class, and, thinking back on it, I should have rearranged it, but, I was scheduled to participate in an international conference on horseshoe crabs in New Jersey. I could have gone to the reunion, maybe not for the dinner, but, at least enough to have met my former classmates, and then, come back to the conference in time, but, the whole thing was set up, primarily, because Tom Meckleson, from Denmark, for one, wanted to meet me, and so, I was, in essence, the key attraction to the thing. What had happened was, the arrangement was made between Jim Finn, who was a producer of lysate, a medical product made from horseshoe crab blood, and Tom (Meckleson?), and so, I agreed to that. So, there were three of us. Then, Jim said, "Well, why don't we invite So-and-So," and I said, "Okay," and then, one thing led to another, so, we wound up with about thirty people coming from various places. One was Elias Cohen, who was a graduate student at Rutgers at the same time I was, and he was doing work on the blood of horseshoe crabs, so, he came down. There was one chap from Wood's Hole that had been working on parasites and diseases of horseshoe crabs. So, it turned out to be a rather nice, substantial conference, but, I still should've just said, "Well, I can only be here in the afternoon," because I could have seen at least Meckleson that weekend, and I have seen him in subsequent years anyway, but, yes, the majority of them went to college. In fact, my best friend in high school went on to the University of Maine, became a forester, and the last I saw him was when I was in graduate school at Rutgers. He happened to stop by and he was working for a paper company, down in, I think, Louisiana. Wayne Knights, Shelby, oh, gosh, a whole host of 'em, they all went to college.

KP: In fact, many people from the farms and small villages did go to college.

CS: Yes, yes. That's right.

KP: The Pennington School played a crucial role in your development. Do you think that it encouraged you to go into zoology? Was that the decisive point?

CS: Not particularly, not at that point. It was obviously natural, because, living out in the country, you get exposed to different things. My grandfathers, on both sides, were farmers, and although my Grandfather Gilman in Vermont was dead, his oldest son was running the homestead, and we visited Vermont, where I would spend time on the farm. So, I was used to

being around the farm animals, and hiking up in the mountains, and, in New Jersey, frequenting myself with the environment there. One of the things on our farm in Everittstown was, there was a creek that ran along the edge of it, and in the days when farmers used to take in summer boarders who escaped from Philadelphia and New York City to get out of the heat in the city, this was back in the '10s and '20s, one of the early parts of the century, one of the boarders remarked, "Why, it's just like a silver ribbon," and he coined the name "Silver Edge," so that Silver Edge Farm was the name of our grandfather's farm. Down at the lower end, when my great-grandfather was a boy, there had been an oil mill. Subsequent to that, a former chemist at Rutgers, his wife was also a doctorate [and] got a better position than he had, so, he followed her to her new position, and established a printing press type company, and has been writing about oil mills and associated things ever since, but, he contacted me and said that he understood, from natives in Everittstown, that I knew something about my grandfather's farm and, maybe, about an old oil mill. I said, "Oh, yes. I haven't been there for years." So, we met, and we went down, and, sure enough, we found what he needed, somewheres downstairs, I've got that information, and he built in a regular story about Hunterdon County. In fact, I have a whole series of what I called "Grandfather Tales" about that section of Hunterdon County.

KP: Hunterdon County had an oil mill?

CS: For linseed, pressing of linseed oil, and my great-grandfather, as a boy, used to take the seed there to get it pressed, and he wrote a poem about it, so that I gave this poem to, oh, gosh, it's embarrassing not to remember his name, 'cause this ties into a Rutgers story. I can get the name for you and furnish it later, when we do the other interview, but, you should pick that up, too, because he's doing a history of oil mills, linseed oil mills, in New Jersey. I forget the number he has, but, we established the mill race. The place where the mill had been is no longer there, but, there's a drop, so, you have the tail race several feet below and stones more or less in place. In my grandfather's poem, he had remarked about how the old mill had been torn down and the stones used to make new buildings and that's a rather poetic nicety. We found the dam, part of the dam, still existent, and the stream had moved, eroded away the banks, so, the dam is no longer near the stream, but, it's pretty obvious, from that arrangement, that's what that was. So, I got into the history of Hunterdon County and that's one of the things that I'm working on, sideways, now. In fact, I've given several talks up there, too. Twice, I talked to the Alexandria Historical Society, that's the township in which all of this occurred, and I've given talks there about old homesteads, and the old mill, well, old buildings, and farming in the area, and whatnot.

KP: Why did you choose to come to Rutgers?

CS: Well, I suppose Trenton State was out, because my Dad was there, and he was extremely prominent on campus, and it would not have, I think, set well with either he or myself, and the family didn't have enough money to send me too far away.

KP: Did you try to get into any other colleges, such as Princeton or Columbia?

CS: No, no, no, wouldn't have thought it. I only applied to Rutgers, didn't apply to anywhere else. It was just sort of assumed, I guess. No, that's the reason I wound up at Rutgers. It was the state university, and it was right there, and, in fact, I could get home on weekends by train. It

was easy to get to it. There was no question about where I was going to school, and my brother and sister followed, and I had a cousin that went there, so, there are quite a few of us represented, in the '40s and '50s, there.

KP: Did you want to major in zoology when you entered Rutgers?

CS: No, no. I might have majored in mathematics. In fact, the head of the department there, I took a course with him the first semester, and I did quite well, often getting marks in the nineties, but, I think, in those days, we had numerical grades. In any case, he gave me what's equivalent to a B, and I asked him, "How come?" and he says, "Well, you didn't try hard enough." So, anyway, the next semester, I took another course, and I forget what it was exactly, but, it was in mathematics. Well, at the Pennington School, I'd had a very good mathematics teacher there, and I had had a lot of what was being taught, and so, this poor fellow would lecture and give his methodology, and, when test time came, I would work it according to what I had been taught, rather than what he was teaching, and he didn't take very kindly to that. So, I actually wound up failing that course, because, in fact, after a while, I got so disenchanted with the thing that I would skip classes and, sometimes, come in late, until, one time, I remember, since I had a seat up near the front, he didn't look directly at me, but, he made remarks about those people that come late to class and think that they can pass without following directions, meaning his instructions, were going to be in for a big shock, and, indeed, that's what happened.

I don't know whether I had actually earned it or whether that's the way it turned out, but, it was sort of embarrassing to me, because the subject was not that difficult. In fact, I had already gotten an A in it at Pennington Seminary and everything, but, this guy gave me that mark. I won't tell you who he was. I remember, now, who he was, but, that was one of the lessons that I learned, really, that no matter how clever you think you are, the professor's always right. Follow the guidelines and what he's trying to tell you, and keep in mind that these will serve as guideposts, and, if you want to do something different after you leave the course, okay, but, try and find out how much he knows about something. That's your goal and not to demonstrate how much you know, which is what I was trying to do in this other class, and I find that's still the problem for students today. In fact, I have always had to caution some of my sons, "So, you don't believe in what the teacher's teaching you or you've had previous experience that says it's wrong or not the best answer, so what? Conform to what he wants, and then, move on." It's all part of your learning process, and it's hard to do sometimes, but, it's what is easiest, in some sense, and you certainly learn something.

KP: You were very active on campus. You also joined a fraternity.

CS: Well, the reason for joining the fraternity was almost mandatory, in this sense. We had gone to Washington to visit relatives and Dad came down with pneumonia at my aunt's place in Haverhill, Massachusetts. So, Dad was very sick, in fact, he almost died of pneumonia, and we were up there the last part of August. So, the time to go to school rolled around, and he's still sick in bed, and I stayed until the crisis was over, then, came down home and picked up some stuff, and one of the neighbors took me to school. Well, the president of the college at Trenton, his son was a fraternity brother at Chi Psi, Rutgers. I had visited there during so-called "Pledge Week" and all and I don't know whether I had pledged then or it was just an opportunity. In any

case, I wound up there immediately and that was a big help, because, then, the brothers at school had already started, so, they ran me through the paces of getting enrolled, and the registration procedure, and assignment for courses, and all of that, to catch up, so that if it had not been for that, I would have been stranded more than I was, but, that immediately enabled me to catch up.

KP: Your fraternity brothers were very helpful to you.

CS: At that point, yes. Well, throughout.

KP: However, that was the decisive moment.

CS: That was the big thing. I've almost always been a loner in many of the things I've done, but, certainly, at that point, I was dependent upon them. Afterwards, I was always into activities and among the forefront of what was happening at the fraternity, anyway, and was what we call "Number Two" at the place, which is the vice-president of the fraternity, and one of the jocks of the place, and into all sorts of things. I was in the Queen's Players as the art director-manager for that. I did a lot of scene painting and stage arrangements, and I was into the yearbook from the beginning, and, as I said, I wound up, actually, as editor-in-chief of that, and a lot of this is due to fraternity connections, obviously, it's the way the system worked, and, in sports, the same thing. I wound up as the senior manager of lacrosse, in which I earned my numerals as a player, as a freshmen, and got my letter as a manager, and, also, the freshmen coach, in my junior year or senior year, was sick. He had trained the kids that fall, but, in the springtime, he was out for the entire spring, and so, the coach, Head Coach Fitch, what the heck was [his name?], Fred Fitch, yes, assigned me, and I was the head coach of the freshmen lacrosse team, coached them to their first, and I guess only, unbeaten season.

KP: That is quite an achievement.

CS: But, it derived from two things. One, I had played the sport. In fact, in my freshman year, I wore two sets of numerals, one for being manager, because you had to get in on the ground floor, but, also, as a player. I was a mediocre player, but, the coach, later on, where the varsity used to play, I'd be out there with my long trousers on, my varsity sweater, or whatever, and, sometimes, toward the end of the game, we were leading badly, we're way ahead, the coach would say, "Hey, manager, how about you going in?" and so, he would stick me in the midfield position, which I could play adequately enough to get by with, at that stage of the game. So, I often had a few minutes in a varsity game, but, I wound up, in my senior year, being responsible for all of our away trips. We had a big game coming up with Princeton. Princeton was looming pretty high on the totem pole in those days, and they had an unknown weapon, and Fitch couldn't get away to one of their prime games. So, he gave me his car and it was one of those new things, I don't know, stick shift or something different from the old, I forget what it was. It was at the time I graduated, so that it was Spring of '42, actually, and so, I went down and scouted it out. Their secret weapon was a guy who was I think about six foot-six or six foot-eight who played in the crease. That's right in front of the goal. He was very facile with the stick, with the cross, and, of course, he could get the ball up high, higher than most people could get it, and then, he had a reverse twist, and he could just wham it right back over his head, into the goal, at which he was extremely effective, and he doomed Rutgers. [laughter] We knew what he was doing.

Rutgers, in those days, relied heavily on football players for defense and part of the defense was, "Smear the other guy." You know how rough lacrosse can be. So, body checking and stick checking was the main way that we were able to stay in some of the games, because Syracuse, and Princeton, other teams of that type were more masterful with the stick, because a lot of their players had played in prep school, whereas I don't think any of our players ever played before they came to Rutgers. So, we relied on brawn as well as what we learned, and it wasn't dirty lacrosse, but, it was rugged lacrosse that Rutgers played in those days, and so, anyhow, that's how that worked out. So, I was a player, a manager, a scout, and a coach in lacrosse, which was quite an experience, because Coach Fitch was a tremendous man, and I learned a lot from him, too.

KP: You also played soccer and boxed.

CS: Played soccer and that was the other part of this. Having played soccer, you play on the same kind of field and the same positions in soccer as you play in lacrosse, and so, I translated soccer maneuvers into a microcosm of lacrosse, which is a little bit different than the normal way of playing lacrosse, but, obviously, it worked, but, it was the only thing I knew better than I knew lacrosse, was how we played soccer. That was, I think, one of the things that helped us a lot, and, unfortunately, that was the last group before the war, and several of those young fellows that I coached lost their lives in the war, and that was kind of sad, having been that close to that group.

KP: Who did you know that died?

CS: Oh, I can't cite them to you now, but, I would have to look them up.

KP: However, you knew them fairly well.

CS: Yes, yes, yes. Well, one of them was not on the freshmen squad, but, the fellow was the yearbook editor for the next year following me. He was killed during the war, and I can't remember his name off hand, but, there's several playing lacrosse, particularly, that lost their lives during the war.

KP: Did you ever have a job while you were at Rutgers?

CS: No, I did not, no, no, with all I was doing and barely keeping my head above water, academically. I started off well, but, each year, I kept going down, and down, and down, and my senior year was a disaster, in some respects. Even before Pearl Harbor, Dean Metzger had called me in and advised me that, because, in previous years, the yearbook had arrived on campus after the students had left, that my getting a diploma would be dependent upon the yearbook being on campus and distributed before the students left. Then, all of a sudden, we have Pearl Harbor and the announcement that we're going to graduate a month early, and, as a result, I hardly ever went to class, and then, fortunately for me, they called off final exams, and most of the professors were very kindly and understood what I was doing, and I did fairly well. So, I picked up a bunch of Cs and Ds and whatnot, but, my file of excuses in the dean's office they had a drawer, I had more cards in there than the combined student body, I think. You had to file class by class. It

wasn't for the day. You had to file which classes you were not attending, and, over a year of time, plus the fact that this was cumulative over the four years, I had almost a drawer to myself, well, a half of a drawer. I was amazed when I saw it myself. [laughter]

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

KP: This continues an interview with Dr. Carl N. Shuster, Jr., in Arlington, Virginia, on November 6, 1994, with Kurt Piehler. You were very busy with your extracurricular activities. You also stayed in the ROTC. Why did you decide to stay in the ROTC? Did you think that we were going to go to war?

CS: Certainly, that was part of the rationale, but, I think a lot of it had to do with the fact that the fraternities were heavily into ROTC. Our fraternity had a large numbers of members in it. My roommate was in ROTC. Well, there was Bob Dorsch, and Bill Evans Smith, and myself, in my Class of '42, (Bernie Touavich?) stayed in, and, above us, Bobby Sutphin went into the Marine Corps and was killed. He was an officer and in the upperclass. So, there was always a role model there.

KP: It was the fraternity that led you to stay in.

CS: In part, yes, maybe more so than anything else, but, I think almost everyone realized that there was a potential for war, and I think that, at a collegiate level, particularly if you were active in sports, and extracurricular activities, and these things, that you realized that, if there is a war, you'd rather be an officer, and, when you look back on it, that's sort of an altruistic and selfish viewpoint, but, also, that did supply a lot of well-qualified people to the corps. Without getting away from Rutgers entirely, one of my brother-in-laws, he died a few years ago, he was a history major, went straight from the University of Purdue into the Army, and wound up in the Fourth Division, and was in D-Day all the way through to the end of the war with the Fourth Division as an artillery officer, despite the fact that he was a historian and an outstanding officer, German-born, Gerhard Kellner, the name was Kellner, and he had two brothers, both of them served in the military. His father'd been in the Prussian Army, and he'd come to the United States after World War I, but, he was typical of the type of young man that was available to the ROTC, and, as I said, having a military background, I guess, kind of decided that, even then. It must have been about 1940. The war wasn't that imminent, certainly, by then, or '39. I think he may have graduated in '39. I'd have to look it up, but, there were lots of young men at that time already sort of calculating. I know that we had classmates, maybe this was after Pearl Harbor, who left Rutgers to take Air Force training. In fact, some of them, even before Pearl Harbor, had gotten into a public program over at one of the airfields near Rutgers and were training as pilots. I think that may even be recorded in the yearbook.

KP: I know that Tom Kindre trained in the Civil Aviation Program.

CS: Right, and that took place before the war. So, I think that was certainly one of the things that motivated us, but, as I say, again, it was the fraternity and it was also a thing to do.

KP: The Military Ball was a very prominent social event each year.

CS: Yes. Now, that would not have motivated me, but, the participation, yes, in that sort of thing.

KP: Looking back, it appears as if Pearl Harbor and America's entry into the war was a shock to many, but, many students also expected to at least get involved in the war in Europe.

CS: Yes, but, let me tell you something, the sideline on this. The summer school that Dad taught, that he was active in, had many students from overseas, also visiting professors, and there was a Dr. Wulf, W-U-L-F, not Wolf, but, Wulf, who was a mathematician, and he was able to come to America, but, he could not bring his family with him. This was, oh, '38, '39, and, in fact, he came down to our home in Trenton. I vividly remember him, and, after the war, I remember him writing to my father, wanting money or something to help him survive, and I don't think that Dad sent him any money. I think he sort of said that, "You, the Germans, defaulted," anyway, but, yes, Wulf would tell Dad, "What's the matter with your president? Why doesn't he do something?" He says, "This Hitler's going to go on a rampage," and this is back in '37, '38, '39, way early. So, yes, our family knew. I knew something was likely to happen and not as a big, red letter thing I had posted on the wall or anything.

KP: However, it was less of a surprise for you.

CS: Pearl Harbor was a surprise, in the sense that I remember the day that this happened. We were downstairs in the fraternity house, sort of lounging around in one room, the boys were playing cards, and the announcement came on the radio that the Japanese had just bombed Pearl Harbor. Everybody's looking around, "Where the heck is Pearl Harbor? What's this all about?" and, really, bombing Pearl Harbor, it didn't ring a bell. I mean, as far as we were concerned, we had nothing to do with it at that point, until somebody said, "Oh, my gosh, Pearl Harbor is on Honolulu." Then, all of a sudden, "Boom." Then, everybody was on top of the radio and we had atlases out and everything else, but, at first, it was out of the blue and we didn't connect Pearl Harbor directly to us. You might as well have just said the Japanese had eliminated Shanghai, or Singapore, or something else, because Pearl Harbor, at that point, didn't have name recognition, but, once you said, "Hawaii," then, that was it, you see. So, that came out of the blue, but, I'm sure that for many of us, as things were escalating, it was almost positive that things were going to happen.

KP: In your opinion, what made Rutgers a good school? What are your most positive memories of Rutgers?

CS: Well, Rutgers was a good school, for me, anyway, because, at that time, a lot of the students were coming in from circumstances similar to mine, maybe not an academic background, but, they were coming in from the Oranges, where a lot of our fraternity brothers lived, South Orange, West Orange, and Orange. They were coming in from Hunterdon County, from Trenton, New Jersey, and they were at the same, more or less, social level, so that there wasn't any disparity between us. You were immediately bonded in a fellowship and that would be true for the non-fraternity people, too. I mean, the whole cross section of the students coming to Rutgers at that time all had suffered through the Depression, but, all were at a level of academic

attainment, from the high school level, that they could qualify and were pretty much in the same social strata. There weren't many from the very poor or the very rich.

KP: There was a common bond.

CS: There was a common bond almost immediately there, which I don't think you find on campus today.

KP: It is a much larger school.

CS: No, it's not only that, and that's the other thing, too, and maybe that's another reason for going. Thinking back now, that possibly was another reason Dad suggested going to Rutgers, was because of the size of the school, the classes. Later, having experienced that when I was director of the marine programs at the University of Delaware, almost immediately, it struck me that the students that were applying for graduate school work in marine biology were all coming from small schools, particularly out of Pennsylvania, Lebanon, Franklin and Marshall, schools like this. I think that is true, that if you look at the pattern, students from small high schools tend to go to small colleges, and, if you're going to graduate school from a small college, you tend to go to a university that has a relatively small student body. I think that, intuitively, there's something to it. You visit a campus, and you look around, and if you're from a small, rural high school, where there was, what? seventy kids in the class, and you go to a place even like Princeton, and there's people just running all over the damn place, you get claustrophobia or something from that. I think there is something to this sort of thing. So, yes, the size of the school, student body was important in those days, besides compatibility and things of that sort.

KP: Dr. Nelson was a decisive factor in your academic career. Were there any other professors that were crucial to your career at Rutgers?

CS: Not crucial, but, certainly, instructive, good professors, but, really, as I already mentioned, the head of the mathematics department was not strong enough, in its center, for me to major in mathematics, particularly after that fiasco. The interesting thing is that one way I made up credits afterward, because I had flunked a couple of courses, was to take math courses and only show up to take the tests, because, when I would take the elementary thing, I'd get a D or a C, but, I would make up my credits, so that I'd have enough credits to graduate. That's what I used mathematics for, and, if you look at my record, you'll find more mathematics classes in there than one would normally expect, and you may ask, "Why is this guy doing this and practically flunking everyone of them?" Well, because it was a sure credit.

KP: You knew that you could do fairly well.

CS: Yes, and I could devote my time doing other subjects, or other things, because I definitely, unfortunately, did not benefit to the extent that I could have, or should have, as an undergraduate. This was the first time I had an opportunity to do all these great things and I really did 'em. There was nobody to sit on me. Dad sort of let me do whatever I wanted. I guess he figured, "That's part of growing up," and he never said, "Hey." Well, he must have talked to me about my grades. I know he did that, but, he never put his foot down and said, "No more sports, no

more this, no more that."

KP: He liked the fact that you were a man about campus.

CS: Yes, and that's a learning process. A lot of the things that I did there probably were just as important as the academic work. Certainly, the yearbook was a great experience, because Earl Schenck Miers, at that time, who was, I guess, director of the University Press, was a member of the yearbook board, or advisory committee, and he said that, "There's more to this yearbook business than just slapping together some pictures and stuff." [He] says, "This really is an art and, if you're publishing a book, these are the things you have to do," and he insisted that the editors went through this process, and several of the yearbooks at that period reflect what a book should look like, not what a yearbook should look like.

KP: I was going to comment on that, because I was really impressed with the Class of 1942 yearbook.

CS: There are two other yearbooks like that. All the rest go back to what we called, "the Madison Avenue advertising approach," but, ours was conservative and, I'd hope, informative.

KP: I noticed the distinctive style of those books.

CS: So, part of the training was, I had to go to a lithographer and see how half tones and line cuts were made, and what the difference was, and why the type of photography, or the type of drawing, that you submitted was important to the way it was copied, in terms of printing. So, I learned, first hand, then, the engraving process, and the artwork, and so forth, you laid into it. Once we selected the press, then, I went and spent a whole day going through the whole printing process, looking at the presses and finding that out. I worked with the people there. So, that was a learning experience and that was a Rutgers experience, through Earl Schenck Miers, and he, obviously, deserves much credit, not only for what he did for the University Press, but, what he did in training, at that period of time, some of the yearbook editors, some of which ignored him, but, those that did, I think, learned a great deal from that process. Subsequent to that, I have been responsible for putting out newsletters, or journals, or things of that sort, so that that experience has been invaluable to me, just from learning the mechanics of layout and things of that sort.

KP: You were in the ROTC for four years. How effective was your ROTC training?

CS: How effective?

KP: Looking back on it.

CS: Looking back on it, I don't think [that] we were as serious about it as we should have been.

KP: You are not the first person to say that.

CS: Knowing what did happen, all I can think of are some hilarious stories.

KP: I have heard of Mortar Malone.

CS: You did hear about Mortar Malone? [laughter] That was surely something, but, one of the things was, the PMS&T [Professor of Military Science and Training], I think, was Colonel Koehler, and his son was in a fraternity down the street from us, DU, I guess, and because of the yearbook, I was back on campus during Christmas vacation that year, particularly since Pearl Harbor had caused a one month's shortening of the fixed schedule in publishing. Of course, that threw everything out of kilter at the printer's office, but, they came through and we did have everything. So, the bet's whether I was going to graduate because of my grades or I'm not going to graduate because of the yearbook. Neither one of 'em won, or whichever, [laughter] but, that was always a standing joke at the fraternity and elsewhere. Now, I've lost my train of thought.

KP: You were saying how you did not take ROTC very seriously.

CS: No, we didn't, but, this chap, Koehler, a young fellow, who was, I think, maybe a couple of years behind me, I think he might have been a junior or sophomore, was on campus at the same time. Well, because his father was PMS&T, he lived near campus, and we ran into each other, and I got rather chummy with him during that period of time, and only during that period of time, but, he and I went to put on our ROTC uniforms and went into New York City for New Year's Eve in '41. For the last time, the lights were on in Times Square, and that was sort of a ball, and, of course, we went to one of the bars near by, and everybody's buying us ROTC students drinks, like poor soldiers going to war and this type of thing, [laughter] but, that was something interesting. He was a great kid, and he, unfortunately, was killed in Italy, but, yes, there're little tidbits of experiences like that. As I said, a lot of your experiences just go to small things and may not be extensive, like, I knew him on campus not only because of his father, but, he was a very smart cadet. I think he had been to a military school, anyway, beforehand, but, he was one of our officers in ROTC, so, he had to have been a junior, I guess, and so, I knew him, but, not really. We had a "bending the elbow" level friendship and that was only for a short period of time, when neither one of us were committed to anything else, and then, afterwards, I did very little socializing, because of these other commitments.

KP: Where in the Army did you hope to go to? Did you expect to go into the infantry?

CS: Yes. There was no doubt about that, because, if you were going into another branch, you'd already been tapped, like those that went into the Marine Corps already knew, because their orders were cut almost immediately. So, there wasn't a doubt. We were trained for infantry, and that's where we were going, and a large number of the Rutgers students were sent down to Camp Croft, and Bill Evans Smith, a fraternity brother, and I were on the same orders, and he had a car at that time, so, we went down together. Once we were there, there were, oh, Tom Adams, I don't know whether Kindre was there or not, but, anyway, I know I've got the orders, all my orders, in these two books.

KP: You reported very quickly after graduation.

CS: No, no. We graduated a month early and sat around for a month, waiting for orders, so that

we could've gone the full term, and we could've had final exams, and then, maybe, I might not have graduated. Who knows? [laughter] Anyway, yes, we did sit around, and it wasn't until about mid-June, well after we would have graduated, that we finally got orders, or the orders came earlier, but, that was the date of reporting.

KP: You had gone to Plattsburg during the summers for ROTC.

CS: Yes.

KP: However, when you initially reported to Camp Croft, other people have told me that you were sent to basic again, as a refresher course.

CS: We never had a refresher course.

KP: You did not have a refresher?

CS: We went in, and it was assumed we knew what we were doing, and my first assignment, and the others, too, were to different positions in the training. Camp Croft was a recruitment center, where all the recruits got their thirteen weeks of basic, thirteen weeks, whatever it was. Off the top of my head, that seems like that's the right number, and I was assigned a platoon, and it was my responsibility to get those fellows in order, and I can remember, rather fondly, that group of people. In fact, when I was detailed to go to Fort Benning for motor officer training, they presented me with a pen and pencil set. Well, it's *vorbodden* for enlisted people to give gifts to officers, and so, I spoke to the sergeant, and he said, "Accept it." He said, "You realize, you're never going to see these fellows again. The reason for that is because it looks like they're buying you off or something, so that you can affect their future assignments or whatever. It's strictly an obviously good rule, but, it doesn't pertain in this case."

KP: Do you think that they really appreciated your leadership?

CS: So, yes, I did. Well, among the things that these fellows had to do was physical fitness.

KP: You had been a coach.

CS: I had been a coach and, obviously, I was a three-letter man at school, right out of college. I was physically fit, as fit as I could be, I guess, and, having been through obstacle courses before, I knew how to tackle 'em, and I spent time with each individual, showing them how to go across 'em and why it was important to do certain things the way they did, and I can remember, thoroughly, when we were first doing some of this. Bob Friedman, who was captain of the Rutgers basketball team, he was the only one that could beat me on the obstacle course, and he could beat me because he pole vaulted over that big board with ropes on it, and what he would do is grab the rope, and twist his body, and, in essence, roll over the thing, whereas most people have to climb all the way over it, and then, tumble over. He would get it, and throw his body to the side, then, roll over, and very few people could do that. I certainly couldn't, but, it was obviously the way to do it, because you kept a low profile, which is important. So, I didn't lead 'em in any murderous, lengthy calisthenics or that type of stuff, but, practical instruction in how

to do this sort of thing.

When I think back on it, and, also, my later experience, watching my children being raised, and thinking in terms of athletics in general, I have a feeling that the German emphasis on gymnastics, the *gymnasium* approach, is correct. I often think, "What would happen if, throughout all of our grade school, maybe up to junior high school, there were no sports. The emphasis is all on how to control your body, maybe even taking toe dancing or ballerina type things, but, more importantly, how to land on the ground without breaking yourself up into pieces, how to tumble, how to throw yourself around," and, if you learned that early on, I just think that, as in sports, so much of it would then come naturally. There'd be less injuries, and you'd be more facile, and if you didn't think about what you were doing, it would just come to you, and, anyway, that was the sort of thing that you derived from several experiences. I don't think I realized that when I was working with these people on the obstacle course, but, certainly, by the time my sons came along and were active in sports, I realized that they would have benefited more from gymnastics, and, of course, I had no training in it, so, I was no help, but, I often thought that. I have a lot of peculiar ideas like that, when it comes to education. I got another one from Japan this summer, but, we can pick that up later.

KP: Where were the members of your first platoon from?

CS: A lot were Southerners, a lot of mountain type boys, but, some were civilians out of cities. So, there was a mixture there.

KP: Did all of them know how to read?

CS: That, I can't tell you. I don't really know. I wasn't there with that group that long, really. Come to think of it, it may have been the group that was there when I came back from motor training that I finished up with, but, I was doing things with both, so that the first group, I may have joined them just as they were beginning and would have left them in two or three weeks. They hadn't finished and they may not have had obstacle course at that time, but, one of those groups I was with, either before I went to Benning or afterwards, these events occurred with 'em, so, it doesn't make that much difference which it was, but, it did occur there, with one of those training groups.

KP: As platoon leader, you had a sergeant under you.

CS: That's right.

KP: Was he a career Army sergeant?

CS: Yes, he was, tough, tough. He used to get me aside and set me straight on things, that's for sure. I know, on one of the marches we took, I was astounded that he would set up my tent for me, my pup tent and all.

KP: You did not think that he was supposed to do that.

CS: I'd been in Boy Scouts. I knew how to take care of myself. No, the sergeant had to do it. It was my job to look around and make sure, as was his, too, that we were bivouacked in a proper area and that everybody was doing things right, but, I was supposed to pay more attention to it, although, I'm sure, he was more qualified at that point.

KP: In other words, your sergeant would advise you on what order would be a good order to give.

CS: Not so much that as critiquing.

KP: He would give you a critique of how well you were doing.

CS: He would let me go ahead and make mistakes, if I was going to make 'em, and I think that, as I recall, I didn't make too many mistakes, because we did have good training at Rutgers and at Plattsburg. It was just that we didn't take it that seriously, that we weren't in-depth as much as we could be, but, as a broad training, we had the ingredients, yes. That was not the problem. The problem was that some of the subtleties and the finesse of some of the things were not quite there, but, in general, I don't think many of our fellows could have made too many mistakes, glaring mistakes, yes. Even so, you still need polish on these things and the sergeant never said anything in front of the troops, which was another cardinal principle, no matter who you are. When you're talking down to troops, you sort of do it in a man-to-man type of thing, unless you're dressing down a whole body. "What a lousy bunch of guys you are," or, "What a lousy job you did," but, when it came to a personal thing, that's the way he conducted it, anyway, and that was good instruction, for example.

KP: You said that, at one point, you had two platoons.

CS: Yes. Well, soon after we reported to Croft, all the people that came in on that cadre assignment were given a battery of tests, Signal Corps, and, maybe, chemical, and motor school, and then, we were arbitrarily assigned, we didn't have a choice, on the basis of the scores. They decided where they would send you, and then, you were sent there. Those who didn't score well stayed in the infantry. Well, we all were in the infantry, but, not specialized, and so, at motor school, we had the motor course there, nine, ten weeks, whatever it was, and we were in more limited numbers there, the numbers that were there. Tom Adams was there, Friedman was there, and I don't know, I'd have to go back and double check who else was there, but, there were a fair number of Rutgers men at that school, also. A lot of them I caught up with in the 100th Infantry Division, Tom Adams, particularly.

KP: You did not stay in motor maintenance.

CS: No, I did not. One of the things that happened was that, particularly Bob Friedman, and myself, and I forget who else, there were a couple others, we'd watch the paratroopers training and we got very much interested in that. Then, we went over and talked to some of the people over there and one sergeant, who was, more or less, not really a recruiting sergeant, but, of that type, and we were wondering whether or not this was something to transfer to. I remember this fellow, a crusty sergeant, looking at me. I was about six foot-four, and I must have weighed 170

pounds at the time, and he looked me up and down, and he says, "Lieutenant," he says, "we'd break you up into tiny pieces," [laughter] and looking at the training that they had, I agreed with him. Then, Friedman and I said, "Well, look, here, we've got this infantry training. Here are these paratroopers. They need to get to where they're going via the Air Force," and the Air Force was kind of an attractive part of the service. It was more glamorous than the infantry. So, we said, "Well, let's look into the Air Force," and so, about three or four of us petitioned, applied, for Air Force training, and that was way back in the Summer of '43, and we got assigned to different things, and I'd forgotten about it. Well, all out of the blue came this assignment, in March or April of '44, to report to Nashville, I think, Nashville, Tennessee, for a recruitment center for the Air Force and that's when that happened.

Meanwhile, I had, actually, probably, the best job a motor officer could have, because I was assigned to headquarters company, and the company was the outfit that provided vehicle transport for the, as it said, headquarters of the division, so that my motor pool was responsible for the vehicles and drivers of the commanding general and his staff. So, if you're looking for a motor officer position, that was it. I lucked into that one, because, when I reported to Fort Jackson, I was late, because I didn't have my own travel, and I had to go by bus, and so, many people had already come and gotten the top job, the regimental motor officer, and then, there were smaller units below that. So, I met some of the fellows and they said, "Oh, I'm this. I'm that," and all the top jobs seemed to be taken.

Well, Colonel Miller, who later became a brigadier general and was the second in command of the division, was the interviewing officer, and it was in the little chapel that was associated with this area, and off to the side, sitting next to one of the steps. We went into this sort of alcove and he was interviewing people. So, when it came my turn, I just went in and gave him the old highball and said, "Lieutenant Shuster reporting as ordered," and etc., etc., that sort of thing, and he asked me a few questions and told me, "Well, sit over there. I want you to meet Major So-and-So," and he said, at that time, something about headquarters company or something, regiment company. That didn't sound very great at all, but Major Cherry came in and interviewed me, and that's how I wound up as headquarters company, and I often wondered why they left the top position open for so long, and I guess the Colonel didn't find someone that pleased him. I noticed, afterwards, that he was hip on tall officers. A lot of the officers there were tall, and I was tall, and I did cut a fair figure in my uniform, if I must say so, [laughter] and I have a hunch that it's just sheer luck the fact that I had a snappy highball and good presence. Right away, automatically, "You're it," if the Major wants you type of thing. Now, whether others had also interviewed with the Major and he told the Colonel, "No dice," I don't know. So, that's how that turned out.

KP: You were at Fort Jackson with the 100th Infantry Division.

CS: On cadre to the 100th Infantry, that's right. I was there in the formation.

KP: The division was building itself up at this point, correct?

CS: That's right. That's right.

KP: You spent a lot of time at Fort Jackson, if I remember correctly.

CS: Several months, yes. I'd have to check the record again, something like October, it was in the fall, and I served 'til the next spring, anyway, so, maybe six months or so.

KP: Where was Fort Jackson located?

CS: Columbia, South Carolina.

KP: You spent a lot of time in the South during the war. What did you think of the South? Had you ever been to the South before?

CS: Had not, no. I hadn't been south of the Mason-Dixon Line. Maybe I should encapsulate it by saying that I was never assigned anywheres on the continent or overseas that I didn't find some good in. I know that there were a lot of people that used to bitch about this assignment, that assignment, too hot, too cold, too this, too that, and, I don't know, my innate interest was in nature and not necessarily people. I was more interested in

KP: Folklore and fauna.

CS: Yes, and the surroundings and the history type of background. In high school and in college, I used to love to read history, not that I got all that much out of it, but, that was one of the sort of sideline things I was interested in, and so, in the South, I found a lot of interest, and I dwelt more on that aspect than on what are obviously sort of the drawbacks for at least a Northerner, but, I thoroughly enjoyed every place I was sent. I went from Nashville to Maxwell Field, Spartanburg, back to that area, Orangeburg and so forth, so that, yes, it did give me quite an insight into the South and some interesting experiences.

KP: What kind of interesting experiences do you remember?

CS: Well, I remember some social things, among others, which were also instructive in the military sense, too. The area that we were in, because we were headquarters company, we had individual huts, like, two of us shared a hut, but, the fellow I was with was married. So, he lived in town and only came in on those days that he drew service. What the Dickens did we call it? Anyway, when he was officer of the day, he had to be there. He didn't sleep in the thing, so, I had the hut to myself, but, it was right next to the mess hall and right next to the recreation center for the division. So, one of the first nights that they had sort of a dance or a reception, a division reception, I went there, and I don't have two left feet, but, I'm a lousy dancer. Well, the problem comes from the fact that I have a poor ear for music and just don't get into the swing of things, so that I never did much dancing. So, I was a wallflower, standing on the sideline, and I'm standing there, watching the other fellows having fun, jitterbugging. I never could jitterbug. I never could get in the swing of that, but, I was standing there, and this tall girl comes over, introduces herself, and asks me to dance. So, I dance, and then, she said, "I want you to meet my mother." So, she takes me off into this corner and I'm looking at the corner, here's our major general and all his staff. [laughter] So, she introduces me to her mother. Her mother introduces me to all the staff that I'm serving under, great.

So, anyway, it seems that her father is also a general, and he's off somewheres else with another thing, so, she sort of adopted our general, and, at one time during the correspondence, she turns to him and says, "Pinky." Well, he was aging, and his hair was turning white, so, he was more gray than pink. He must have been a redhead, but, his hair was sort of reddish, and she turns to him and says, "Pinky," and here I am, a fresh recruit with shaved hair, [laughter] and this lady's talking to my commanding general as, "Pinky." Oh, my God, well, there was that sort of introduction to the thing and I did date this girl for a while.

KP: This was the one that introduced you to "Pinky?"

CS: Right. So, I did date her and some of her friends. One of her friends, I also dated. Her father was a colonel on General Simpson's staff, maybe chief of staff to General Simpson. Simpson later became an Army commander in Europe, and so, I met all the top people in that immediate area, and some, like Simpson, who were key players in our invasion of Europe.

KP: You were a lieutenant.

CS: Just a plain lieutenant.

KP: You were not even a graduate of West Point.

CS: Not at all. I can well remember the day when we were on parade, in the sense, review, but, not a parade as you think of it. All of our vehicles were lined up with all of our tools, and I know we had to spend the day before polishing all our skid chains and all this other stuff, and I can remember General Simpson coming down the line, and stopping, and looking me in the eye. He knew damn well who I was and he says, "Lieutenant," he says, "do you think your unit's ready for war?" and I said, "No, sir." [laughter] I said, "We are just beginning our training," and I says, "I think we're doing well, but, we're not ready." He says, "Thank you," and marched on. I don't know what the hell was going on. I was almost afraid, but, I couldn't tell him that we were ready and things. I guess he was pleased with that, because, later on, he held a big meeting at one of the big auditoriums and he just leveled one blast after another at us. This was shortly after our troops had invaded Africa, and we were doing poorly in North Africa, and part of it was because of poor training, poor morale, poor everything, and he was citing instances of sergeants manning machine guns, tying strings to the trigger, slouched down behind the sandbags, and not aiming the thing, just having it out there, and pulling the trigger, and things like that. Now, whether that was just to get us excited and whatnot, I don't know, but, that was one example he gave, I remember that, of how our troops were not behaving at the level of how Americans were supposed to behave. "This is ridiculous," and so, he was hammering into us, "Take your training seriously. If we're going to do the job over there, someone's going to get killed, but, we're more apt to get killed by shenanigans like this than we are if we know our job." That was his whole pitch. It was not only a morale builder, but, told us, "This is serious business."

Even at that level, I don't think we were really that serious. I guess we were, in a way, but, we didn't devote twenty-four hours to this. We didn't eat, sleep, and drink military preparedness. We went off to town, occasionally, and things of that sort. Well, I was not one much for

partying, either, so, I didn't do too much of that, but, on the other hand, I did go to the post movies, and I went to the officers' club, and things like this, so that there were times when I probably should have had my nose in the infantry manual and other things. I've been reading a lot about Patton recently and I have to think that if more of us had had his attitude, and, particularly, his knowledge of battle and the history of battle, that we would have been much better off. In fact, he's my hero.

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

Reviewed by Bojan Stefanovic 3/19/00
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 7/26/00
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 8/15/00
Reviewed by George W. Shuster 11/16/2022