

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH CHARLES SLOCA

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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FORT LOUDON, PENNSYLVANIA

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Sandra Stewart Holyoak: This begins an interview on March 19, 2008, with Sandra Stewart Holyoak and Mr. Charles Sloca in Fort Loudon, Pennsylvania. First of all, I thank both you and Mrs. Sloca for having me here today. To begin, for the record, could you tell me, Mr. Sloca, where and when you were born?

Charles Sloca: 12/22/21, in Rahway, New Jersey.

SH: Could you start by telling me a little bit about your father and his background, what you remember?

CS: Well, both my parents were immigrants. They came over from a province, really, ... called Ruthenia. [Editor's Note: The name Ruthenia has been applied to many regions in Eastern Europe over the centuries, including areas of the modern nations of Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Slovakia and Poland. Mr. Sloca's ancestors were from Carpathian Ruthenia, a region shared by Ukraine and Slovakia, specifically Ukraine's Zakarpattia Oblast.] So, they're Ruthenians and they came over before [they were married]. They didn't come over together. My mother came over when she was sixteen years old and I guess what she would have been is a nanny, you know, find employment somewhere with people [of] some resources. ... Now, she had some education, up to the fifth grade. My father was an orphan. I didn't know much about him and he had to go to work when he was ten, there, over in the "old country." The "old country" was the Austria-Hungarian Empire there, because it was before World War I. ... He never had any education, and so, when he eventually came here, and I came to know something of their lives, he was a laborer, just a manual laborer. ...

SH: Do you have any idea what year, or within a few years, he came to this country?

CS: No. It would be before World War I, and where they somehow got together and how they were matched up and whatnot, I don't really know.

SH: What do you know of your mother's family background? You talked about her coming from the same area. Did any of her family come to this country?

CS: ... I don't think so. ... Actually, there is what you might call a state capital of the province, that Ruthenia, after World War I, was incorporated into Czechoslovakia. You know, they divided up those different places, and I used to think that I was Czech. I remember going to Rutgers College and we had kids that were first-generation there and some of those were Czech. ... I couldn't understand their language, and I thought I was Czech. But, I learned, in time, where this province was. It was in the eastern part, and, after World War II, you know, they cut [up] places that, Ruthenia was incorporated into the Ukraine and, actually, the language that we spoke was very close to Ukrainian. ... I learned that in an interesting way, when I was a prisoner of war. [Editor's Note: The Ruthenian, or Rusyn, language is closely related to Ukrainian.] That's a long time ago. What I learned [was], what language my folks were speaking at home, they weren't speaking Slovak, [they] weren't speaking Czech; of course, they, those people in that area, were at home with a variety of languages. ... In the last days of the war, we were out of camp and waiting to be overrun by ... the Allied forces and liberated, and we were stationed at a farm, just living out in the open. ... On that farm, they had Russian prisoners that had been

taken all early, and, of course, the Germans used those [prisoners] for people [slaves?] and farming and whatnot, and I got to talking to them in the language that I had. ... Well, they were talking the same language my mother and father used, and I said, "What are we speaking?" you know, basically. I could still speak fairly well in the language, and he says, "Ukrainian." Well, you know, after the war, I then moved in and checked a little bit, the maps, and I can remember, distinctly, my mother, ... the little town she came from was Kalnik. I don't [know if it is on] a map, but the town that was like the state capital was Mukachevo. Now, you can find that town, that city, on a map. ... It got changed, after the First World War, to Munkacs, but, after it got into the Ukraine, it is pretty phonetic, Mukachevo, just the way my mother [said it], and, as she said, "The (*Pidkarpats'ka Rus?*);" it means, "Under the Russian mountains," I forget the ...

SH: Carpathians?

CS: ... The Russian Carpathian Mountains, that's it, that was there, and that was interesting, to learn that information. Now, actually, ... all that wartime experience, that was post my father's passing away. ... As a laborer, he was on [the] Pennsylvania Railroad, working, and, [on] a foggy day, a train came through and four or five of them were killed, and that was 1932.

SH: You were only ten.

CS: So, yes, I was only ten years old, and so, I really didn't have a kind of a relationship, father/son. I was the fourth child. My brother was the oldest, and then, I had two sisters, and they have all three passed away. ... I was the fourth, and then, I have a sister, and I still have a sister there that is still surviving. ... It's an interesting thing, too, because I mentioned my brother, how I got to Rutgers; you might have it [as a question], you know, "How did you ever get to Rutgers?"

SH: That is one of the questions that we ask. [laughter]

CS: Yes, "How do you get to Rutgers, and [in an] abysmally poor family?" Actually, I grew up in a house without plumbing, without water, without electricity, for the first ten years of my life. ... We were able, curiously, because [of] the settlement; big court case, [still] (bothers me?). We had lawyers coming in there from Elizabeth, and then, Newark, and then, New York, and, of course, they always said they were going to sue for more, so, the New York lawyers took the case. But, ... the settlement, that was made on the death of my father, enabled us to move into a house with running water, or at least in an apartment with running water and electricity, get a radio, [laughter] ... but, how I got to college, my brother graduated high school and went to work. He had taken a vocational program and was a printer and worked on a local newspaper, weekly.

SH: Which one? Do you remember?

CS: ... Yes, it was the *Rahway News*. There were two papers, [the] *Rahway News* and the *Rahway Record*. I think the *Record* came out twice a week. The *Rahway News* just came out once a week. ... When I graduated, you know, "What are you doing?" but I had a good record. I wasn't valedictorian, but I was up there in the first ten or something, ... but college? ... My

brother had been a good football player and he knew the football coach, a man that had been at Rutgers and whatnot. ... I don't know how they got to talking about scholarships, you see, but he said, ... at that time, Rutgers wasn't a state university, but they had a hundred State Scholarships in the men's college and a hundred in the women's college. ... This football coach that had been a coach of my brother in high school, but he had been a good Rutgers man, he said, "You'll get a State Scholarship. ... If he has a good record, if you can get a letter of recommendation. One letter from a state senator will do it; two, if it's from a representative, two." [laughter] Well, it just so happened that the man that owned the newspaper, and, really, [was] running the paper and whatnot, he knew a state senator. He knew a state senator. So, I got a recommendation from a state senator and got a State Scholarship, which was all [your] tuition and fees and everything, no room and board or anything like that. ... So, I had a full ride for four years, and that was an interesting way to get that, because, as I said, I wouldn't have had a dime to go. In fact, ... there were a lot of commuters, you know, going to New Brunswick. Rahway is just thirteen miles down the road. ... At that time, my brother worked and my sisters were working, so, they would give me enough money to get a commuter's train ticket and I would get lunch money, twenty-five cents a day, over at; what's that old building there?

SH: Was it Theo's?

CS: No.

SH: Thode's?

CS: No, it's the main ...

SH: At Winants.

CS: Yes, that was it, yes, that was it.

SH: Okay, in the cafeteria.

CS: Oh, yes, and you'd get good lunches there for a quarter, and sometimes, sometimes, you could get the lunch for twenty cents and you'd have a nickel leftover for pudding, dessert. [laughter] ...

SH: Before we start talking about Rutgers and your experiences there, what was the age difference between you and your older brother?

CS: Oh, I think, I guess, we were [all] two years apart, so, maybe I was six years younger.

SH: Did your mother work outside of the home?

CS: No, no, I mean, [with] five children.

SH: I am not saying she did not work. [laughter]

CS: No, we ... really were poor. [laughter] I sometimes have joked to my kids, "We were so poor that the blacks gave us things."

SH: That leads me to ask the question ...

CS: But, actually, they didn't give us a lot of things. What happened was, we were Greek Catholic, so, ... Christmas comes later than the time [other Christians celebrate]. ... I distinctly remember a black family that lived down [near us]. They were a nice black family, but, for some reason, that one year, they gave up their Christmas tree. ... They gave it to us, and we had a Christmas tree. [laughter] We had a Christmas tree and that's what I'm reminding [myself] of, the blacks gave us a thing like that. ...

SH: Some people have said that they had no clue that the Depression was happening because nothing changed. Was that your experience?

CS: Oh, no, it was real poor. But, there was a little bit of pride, that you don't go to somewhere [where] they were getting some free stuff, but my folks didn't go for that. I don't know why, I don't know why, but we certainly were poor. Rent was ten dollars a month on that little old house we had.

SH: This was before your father died.

CS: Yes. Three rooms, one room here, and then, we slept in the middle room, and then, the third room, my mother rented out to ... boarders, [would] make a couple of dollars a month. ...

SH: It was three stories.

CS: Yes, three things, three rooms on it. ... I can remember when things were really rough and she said she could only pay seven dollars a month on it and, you know, that landlady, that landlady kept track, and, eventually, ... finally, when we got some money and were about ready to go, we squared that account. We didn't welsh; we squared that account. ...

SH: Did you have a garden?

CS: Oh, yes, yes. We had a plot of land and a garden there. ... You have some things, but, I mean, it's not like these nice, big gardens we have today or whatnot. Did you ever have a garden?

SH: Yes. Being Orthodox Catholic, was there a church in the neighborhood?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes, in Rahway. It still is. There's still a church. There was a Roman Catholic church, and I never quite understood the difference. Oh, of course, later on, [I did], and, well, you know, the Roman Catholics, they have a lot more [decorations], and, of course, candles, candles and everything else, but the Greek Catholic church is even more ornate, I mean, the robes, I mean, fancy and whatnot. ... In later years, when I visited, ... I had kids there, too, I remember, one time, going up to the pastor's house there and mentioning the fact that I'd been a

person there and baptized there, and could I look in? He gave me the key and I went in, and that's the first time I was able to go back behind the thing and see all the closets, with all the clothes and everything else. ...

SH: Was that called the sacristy, or something like that?

CS: I don't know, ... but the interesting thing was, no, ... my father didn't attend much. Easter, he would attend, but my mother, she had us kids there every Sunday, until we finally moved away and got big [laughter] and we stopped going, and it was too much for her.

SH: Were other people there from the same area of Europe?

CS: Oh, there were a variety of people that were, spoke [Ukrainian]. They all could speak the same language, and some of them were, of course, a little better off, the jobs and whatnot, and their houses were a little better off and [had] electricity and everything else. ... We lived right on the river, the Rahway River, running there, and across the river, then, there were people on that side of the river. We lived on Leesville Avenue. ... That avenue is still there, yes, in that town.

SH: Did you grow up speaking, now, we know it is Ukrainian, at home?

CS: Yes, yes.

SH: When did you first start learning to speak English?

CS: ... Now, my brother was the first one to go to school, and I don't think he could speak much English then, but, by the time I was going to school, ... we [kids] were all speaking English.

SH: That six-year difference made a difference for you.

CS: Yes, and, of course, you're associating with other Slavic-type peoples, ... whose kids are growing up and they're speaking English. I'll say that I spoke "street English;" by that, it was not grammatically correct. [laughter] I used to point out, ... when I was a freshman in high school, as an instance of my use of the English language, I was a campaign manager for a kid running for freshman president, high school. ... I distinctly remember saying, [in] my closing remark, as I gave that speech for Bill; his name was Bill (Horney?). [laughter] The kids laugh about that name, (Horney?). But, I remember, ... I said, "I want all youse guys to vote for Bill." [laughter] Now, that was the caliber of my speech, and it took awhile ... for me to improve my speech and writing, but, at Rutgers, I had some good professors. Of course, my favorite professor was Donald McGinn. That was a long time [ago]. ... He was most helpful in pointing me [in the right direction], after the war, when I came back. Our class, the Class of '43, was a little different, because, when I enlisted, in May '42, ... the Air Force said, "Well, you enlist now, but you can finish your [college] years," and that was nice and cushy, you know. ... I'm Class of '43 and I thought that was good, but the Air Force called us up a semester early. [laughter] ... They were needing people. People were getting shot down and they were going to need a lot of people in there. ... I think this was the only class that the college said, "If you finish seven-eighths,

you've got your degree." So, I never finished, but I got my degree in seven-eighths. ... When I came out of the war, I was thinking of graduate school, the GI Bill, you know, and I had my bachelor's. ... Well, I had taken an education degree to be a teacher, but, then, I thought, "Well, you can go to college and get a degree and teach in a university." ... I was thinking of applying to Yale, you know, and McGinn said, "Oh, you don't want to go to a snob school. Go to my school, Cornell," and I really took his advice and I had a great teacher there at Cornell and became a kind of minimalist, in the sense that you don't make a lot of money. [laughter] You don't make a lot of money. I had a good friend that graduated high school with me and he couldn't go to college, but, after the war, with [the] GI Bill, he went to Cornell, too, then. ... He was a bachelor's degree, but in chemical engineering. ... He became a very rich man. [laughter] He's still, well, ... he's at Boca Raton. ... We exchange greetings there, once a year, but Donald, Dr. McGinn, was a favorite professor of mine.

SH: That is wonderful. I want to talk more about high school. Because of the circumstances, with your father's death, did both your sisters and your brother graduate high school?

CS: Well, actually, when things were rough, my brother quit at the end of the eighth grade. He went to work in a dairy, you know, just delivering milk, he didn't drive the truck, delivered the milk [to the door]. But, when we had that little bit of a settlement, he went back to high school, yes, and he completed his years there and he was a good football player. In fact, this Rutgers man wanted to get him a football scholarship to Temple, but he didn't take it. ... Anyway, he went to work and, during the war, he decided he ... didn't want to go to war, but he became a welder and he spent the war years in the shipyards, welding.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes. My sister graduated, too, both of them, and they were helpful in providing me money to go to college. ...

SH: Did they stay in the Rahway area? Did they still live at home?

CS: Yes, they worked at Merck and Company. Have you ever heard of Merck? [laughter]

SH: Yes, I think I have.

CS: Yes, they worked in Merck and Company.

SH: It is kind of hard to be in New Jersey and not know.

CS: Well, Merck's been losing some money over here.

SH: This is true, but they are still in the news in New Jersey.

CS: Oh, my. I even worked at Merck.

SH: Did you really?

CS: Oh, yes, in the summertime. ...

SH: That is what we want to talk about, because of the circumstances, and the fact that your mother had five children, then, you have a younger brother as well ...

CS: No, I was the younger brother.

SH: Younger sister, I am sorry.

CS: Yes, I have a younger sister.

SH: Two older sisters and one younger sister.

CS: Yes.

SH: I am sorry, I got the family goofed up here. Did you work after school? What were some of the things that you did?

CS: ... Yes, during the summer. I got a job at Merck and Company. I mean, my sisters were working there. I got a job in the bottle washing department, you know, sweeping up things, carting bottles from one department to another. I don't know what it's [like] now. That was sixty or more years ago. ... Then, of course, that helped me get money, too. Eventually, I was able to live on campus, in my junior year. I joined a fraternity. ...

SH: Did you continue to work summers at Merck then?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

SH: I am impressed that your mother encouraged all of you to continue with your education, even your high school education. You said your father had very little education and your mother was limited in her education as well. It seems as though her children's education must have been very important to her.

CS: Well, everybody went to school. Well, you didn't have to; I don't think it was a parental thing, I just think, well, everybody, you went to school, I mean.

SH: I mention it because I have heard of families, especially during the Depression, who, as the children got up to eighth grade, asked them to then contribute to the income of the home.

CS: Well, as I said, my mother, it was an interesting settlement. ... It was Pennsylvania Railroad and the settlement was thirty thousand dollars. That's 19--; oh, I don't know, maybe, it wasn't '32, maybe a year or so [later], whatever it is. ... The judge [re]-examined, it wasn't fixed. He could affect the judgment there and he, I guess, thought that that was a little too much. "They wouldn't know what to do with it," and, by the way, the lawyers had a third, the contingency. ... We had none of the contingency. So, he cut it, I think, to something like twenty-two thousand.

... Therefore, they took a third, and then, we had two-thirds and, of that two-thirds, my mother got a half and the other half was divided up, so that we would, at twenty-one, get that amount of money.

SH: Each of the five children?

CS: Yes, and that's the way that proceeded, and, well, everybody had hard times. Joan, of course, Joan's folks ...

SH: Mrs. Sloca?

CS: Yes. Her grandmother started a store. ... It's an interesting thing, their background. ... They, of course, had this house, and chickens and hogs and stuff like that there. ... They had plenty, an adequate amount, of food and whatnot that was there. I don't know that we were ever hungry. As I said, the line that I remember my father had, "If you have bread in the house, you're not hungry," [laughter] ... and my mother used to bake bread. It'd get a little dry after, you know, awhile there. ...

SH: Okay. I thought it was very interesting that you were all able to go to high school.

CS: Yes, Rahway High School.

SH: The coach you talked about was the gentleman who had been your brother's coach. Had you participated in sports at all at Rahway High School?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes. [laughter] I went out for football, and we had a Rutgers grad who was the coach and, oh, I forget just what his name was. ... I was such a lightweight, such a small, light person. My brother was big, and I don't know the difference. He was six-[foot]-two and big, but I was such a small [person], but, in my senior year in high school, I did win my letter. Yes, we had another coach that came in there and, in fact, in my senior year in high school, I started two games. But, most of the time I played, I was a lineman. ... I didn't weigh 140 pounds even. [laughter] But, now, at Rutgers, we had a lightweight football team. Oh, my, yes, I was a stalwart lineman. [laughter] Really, I was; you laugh at that, we laugh at that, but I played. I didn't my freshman year. When I was commuting by train, I didn't go out, but the last three years, I played football. In fact, one of the memorable things that I remember, we always played Princeton lightweights, at the end of the season. ... I remember that Princeton game and Princeton beat us, I don't know, maybe ... [by] eight or ten points and whatnot. But, this coach, his name is Dave Bender. I don't know the history of it, but that's the one that knew my brother and was a Rutgers man and everything else.

SH: Bender taught at Rahway or at Rutgers?

CS: He didn't teach. I don't know where he was. [laughter] ... Anyway, but, ... at the end of that game, he told me I was the best lineman on the field that day. Now, that's many years ago, but, now, one thing I learned about football, football is a game where you can hide and not necessarily put out all of the thing. ... I realized this because, in my senior year, I wasn't too

inclined in it, and then, I got a knee injury and I was gimpy and whatnot, and that Princeton game, ... as I said, you can kind of go through the motions and goof off, and Princeton, I think, beat us something like fifty to something or other. ... Later on, when I dealt with the matter of sports and I was trying to write, and I did write a very good column, I was defending athletics. I said, "Academics, you're supposed to learn what you're striving for, what you work for, what you do, but athletics teaches you how hard to try, how hard to try," and I used that illustration. I said, "In my junior year, I really tried and, senior year, I didn't, and I learned the difference," you know, and it is true. ... Well, I have always taken an interest in athletics and, of course, I remark so much now how athletics served the whole matter of integrating the races, you know. I can distinctly remember when not a single black ever played, ... and that was with the days with Big Ten. They'd go down there and get those blacks and play for those people up there. ... It's been, probably, as good a thing for integrating the races, and people. ...

SH: Let us go back and talk about Rutgers and the fact that it was through your brother and his coach that you came to be there.

CS: Yes, Alpha Chi Rho.

SH: Alpha Chi Rho.

CS: That's our fraternity.

SH: Let us talk about the first time you came to Rutgers. This would have been in 1939. Am I right?

CS: Yes, yes.

SH: You graduated high school in 1939.

CS: Yes.

SH: How aware were you, at that age ...

CS: 1700 kids there, men.

SH: What was an eighteen-year-old aware of, as far as what was going on in the world? We know 1939 is a pivotal year.

CS: Well, the war started, you know.

SH: Were you aware of that?

CS: No, not much, but I'll tell you, when I got into prison camp and I was moved into the [camp], the American compounds were pretty well filled up. ... They had had American prisoners in with the British compound, and then, when they had opened up a new American compound, this is in *Stalag Luft III*, they had moved out the Americans there. [Editor's Note:

Stalag (short for *Stammlager*) *Luft III*, a German Air Force prisoner of war camp near Sagan, Poland, is famous for two mass prisoner escapes. The films *The Great Escape* and *The Wooden Horse* are based on books written by former prisoners there.] If you've ever seen that movie, what was the [movie]?

SH: Steve McQueen's *The Great Escape*?

CS: No. *The Great Escape*, that's not Steve McQueen, but he was in it. He was in it, but, ... anyway, *The Great Escape*, yes; in fact, that great escape was out of the British compound, in which the bombardier and I were put into. ... At that time, they had six to a room, so, it upped to eight to a room. ... In that room, I had several British prisoners that were shot down in 1939. ... They had been prisoners for four years and had been in different camps first. ... Of course, I just felt like, you know, a rookie, you know, coming in there. ... [They had been] shot down over the battle for France. ... They had several, three, prisoners that were shot down early in there and three that were captured in Africa, in that African Campaign, in, I think, '42 or something like that, which were [the] younger people there, and one of those three was in the great escape. ... He had been one of the seventy-six that had gotten out and was one of the, I think, sixteen, at least, that wasn't killed. I think there were only two that ever made it to England, but fifty of them they killed and, when I was there, they had work parties, working in the cemetery, where the remains of those fifty that were returned, the remains of the fifty, [were interred], because it was out of that compound. ... Oh, I guess I got there in September '44, and this took place, I think, in April of '44, [the night of March 24-25, 1944], something like that, but, when I went to Rutgers, no, '39, it wasn't on my mind at all, I mean, too young, yes.

SH: Do you remember anyone that you commuted from Rahway to Rutgers with?

CS: ... Well, I remember one of the girls that was a commuter. She went to the [women's college]. I had graduated high school with her. [Editor's Note: Female students attended New Jersey College for Women, now Douglass Residential College.] Eventually, I married her. [laughter] That's not Joan. She passed away when we were thirty. That was early on, yes.

SH: What was her name?

CS: Maureen Rushmore, Maureen Heldon Rushmore, and graduated in '43. ...

SH: From NJC.

CS: Yes, NJC.

SH: As a commuter student, how ...

CS: Well, you asked me about ...

SH: The first time you came here.

CS: Yes, and, the next year, I commuted by car, by car, and there were two other people commuting. ... I know that you had one of these on your ...

SH: Recordings?

CS: Yes.

SH: One of the other two commuters also gave an oral history.

CS: Yes, [I know] because, somewhere, one of my daughters picked it up, something that had been written, and she made a copy of it, but his name is James Wells, and the other fellow was Bill Hasbrouck there. Now, Bill didn't amount to that much as a student or whatnot, but his brother, I forget his brother's first name, but he was memorable in Rutgers Football history, because Rutgers, you know, won that first game with Princeton and they didn't win another game until, I think it was the year that the stadium was built, and this older Hasbrouck was the quarterback ... on that football team. ...

SH: That would have been your freshman year, right?

CS: Well, I don't [know]. It could have been, or maybe a year before; I don't know. ... Well, anyway, Jim Wells and Bill; ... they hadn't pledged the fraternity and, eventually, they left the fraternity. Jim Wells, I think, pledged some other house, somewhere, sometime, as I think I recall. I did have some correspondence with Jim Wells after that, and then, we lost contact there. I don't know what's happened to him, but that's the way it was.

SH: What was your first reaction to Rutgers? Was the first day of class, in the fall of 1939, your first time at Rutgers?

CS: Well ...

SH: You did not take a tour before then.

CS: No, no. ... I may have, in [the summer of] my year between junior and senior high school. I remember, there were two friends of mine and we had bicycles and we thought we'd go and check out the colleges. ... I think we pedaled down to New Brunswick, on there, and that was only thirteen miles, but quite a bit, a little bit of hills and stuff, and then, we went to Montclair State Teachers [College]. That's nineteen miles, and, anyway, ... it was interesting to cross the bridge, you know, and go into the town, but, no, it was a lot of buildings there, you know. At that time, the gym was like a new building, I don't know, and then, there was ... what they used to call "the Holy Hill," the Seminary. What ever happened to that seminary?

SH: It is still there.

CS: Is that right?

SH: Actually, my office looks out on the Sage Library.

CS: Is that right? Dutch Reformed, that was what it was, that is, there. ... Then, oh, I don't know, ... I don't know if there were classes in Winants. ... Was there an Old Queens, or something, building that was there?

SH: Yes.

CS: ... I remember having to go for history [classes]. You had to go clear up the thing [campus] to near opposite the gym. There was something there.

SH: Bishop House?

CS: Yes, something like that. I remember that. That was a long walk, [laughter] and in wintertime, too, you know.

SH: It is actually up behind "Holy Hill," up College Avenue.

CS: Yes, yes. That was there, but, no, it was a nice college. ...

SH: Did you have an initiation as a freshman? If you were a commuter, did you have to wear the dink?

CS: Oh, yes, yes. We did that. Yes, that was typical.

SH: You were commuting by car when you went out for the football team in your sophomore year. Were the other men that you were commuting with also involved in football?

CS: Yes, I think Bill Hasbrouck was there, and then, the junior year, of course, I was living on campus. That made it a lot easier.

SH: Where was your fraternity house?

CS: Oh, it wasn't a rich fraternity, so, it wasn't one of those nice brick buildings and whatnot in there. [laughter] I don't know where. It was on Union Street or something. I don't remember.

...

SH: Did you have a housemother?

CS: I don't think we [did]. I think we had a cook. We had a cook that was there. ... My roommates in there, you may know him, because he's probably put in this, [recorded an oral history], Domer Zerbe, and Fred Detrick, that was there. I know they're big, too. They're still surviving and they're going to go march in the sixty-fifth [reunion parade], ... and then, Wes someone, passed away. I forget his name now. ... We had four to a room, double-deckers and whatnot, but so be it. [laughter]

SH: Did you have any interaction with the University administration as a fraternity man?

CS: Actually, Alpha Chi Rho had some pretty good people there. I think Ralph Schmidt, is it Ralph Schmidt, who's still there?

SH: Class of 1942.

CS: '42, yes. He was in Alpha Chi Rho, and Hasbrouck, the older Hasbrouck, was a '40, and there were a few others that I recall, but, when you're not living full-time at the house there, [you are less involved]. ... Of course, I would go home very often on weekends and get my laundry done at home. [laughter] ...

SH: Did your brother or any of your family ever visit, prior to graduation?

CS: Oh, no, no. ...

SH: When you graduated, it was under unusual circumstances. Was there a graduation ceremony for those who completed the seven-eighths degree?

CS: Oh, no, no, no. The only graduation ceremony I attended, in all my degrees, was high school. [laughter] The seven-eighths was there, and then, when I got my master's degree, I couldn't afford a cap and gown. [laughter] ... You didn't have to [attend], or a doctoral degree, I didn't have to go to those, and, besides, there were so many there. ... In fact, I took a couple of my kids and went up ... there, at the campus, and watched them assemble and move on out there, at "far above Cayuga's Waters," [at Cornell] there. Anyway, so, that's the only [graduation], but, of course, once I got into academics, ... then, I was at many degrees [graduations], and then, I became a dean at a small college and had many commencements and whatnot. [laughter]

SH: You sat through enough to make up for yours.

CS: Oh, my, yes.

SH: Tell me more about what you remember of Rutgers. For the first two years, outside of commuting, you must have had traditional Rutgers experiences.

CS: Well, I'll tell you, ... I was interested in getting good grades. ...

SH: Did you go in as an education major?

CS: Yes. Well, that was an interesting thing that I became [that]. I didn't have parents that could influence you there, and so, basically, as you see, McGinn and other people, the teachers, [did], and my favorite teacher, the one that was most influential in high school, was my Latin teacher. I had four years of Latin and I loved that class, because we talked about Latin, but we talked about a lot of other things. I really liked that class, and then, when I decided to go to college, ... one of my teachers, who had been my biology teacher, so, I only had him in the sophomore year, but he had been class advisor in high school and I had been class president my sophomore year, ... he was talking about it. ... He says, "Well, Charlie, what are you going to

major in when you go to college?" and I said, "Well, I sure would like to be [a Latin teacher]. I'm going to major in Latin and be like Mr. (Prine?)," my Latin teacher, and he said, "Charlie, you'll never get a job. [laughter] You'll never get a job." He said, ... "What can you do? What are you interested in?" and I said, "Oh, you know," I said, "I like to read." "Well, be an English teacher." That was it. I went off, "I'm going to be an English teacher." [laughter] Even if I couldn't speak perfect English, I was going to be an English teacher.

SH: This was after you had gotten your friend elected.

CS: Yes. Well, that was the freshman [year], yes. That was that, but that was a memorable thing. "You'll never get a job teaching. There's nobody hiring any Latin teachers." ... So, I went, you know, and, [in] freshman year, the kids asked me, "What are you majoring in?" ... Well, I set them down, ... "I'm majoring in English," and some of the kids, you know, don't know and they're in their sophomore years and wondering what they're going to major in, ... but I was set to major there. ... Other things about grades, it struck me, I think I got first semester grades there and I think I had ... a 3.5. I think maybe I had half "As" and "Bs" and I don't know what struck me, ... how I got to thinking Phi Beta Kappa ... and what the averages were. I thought, "Boy, if I could keep this average there, I could make Phi Beta Kappa," that's there, and, from that point on, I was grade conscious and, boy, exams and studying and all that, and I did make Phi Beta Kappa. [laughter]

SH: Congratulations. I think you neglected to put that on here.

CS: ... Oh, yes, I did.

SH: For those who lived on campus, there was mandatory chapel. Were commuters also required to attend?

CS: Yes, oh, yes, yes. ... I don't want to get in to this, because Rutgers, ... well, they're one of the leading universities that are teaching, basically, the secular godless view of life, and I've written to [Rutgers University President Richard L.] McCormick and I've written to some of the Rutgers people that have communicated with me and I've shared my thoughts about that. ... I understand; I'm a student of religion and [the] Bible, and, even as I taught full-time ... in academics, I studied religion, eventually got an ordination, and dealt, part-time, for twenty-one years in little churches and had a Scripture study program on radio for nine years, and I continue. I'm a student of the religion and I'm conscious of the change and the reasoning for it. I don't know if you're interested at all, but what it was and what it is is that the outmoded and limited learning of Scripture, that was passed on for centuries, primarily, through the power of the church, the literal word of the Bible, which, ... if you're dealing with it reasonably, ... many of the instances are totally incomprehensible, in terms of experience. You either have to suspend a belief in life as your experience and do that, which, of course, the church did, and, to some extent, still does. Well, what has happened in the last, well, [it] began early on, with Darwinism and whatnot, and it's even earlier than that, at times, you know, ... but, in the last forty years, I look at Eisenhower's Presidency, [it] was probably the last time that we had a God-fearing President. ... Of course, he put in and he had Congress pass the two words [laws], "One Nation, under God," in there, and to make certain, "In God We Trust," that he saw those things there and

he said, ... "We're getting a little too secular on that," but, now, it has gone full circle. The leading universities, which, then, mean the lesser universities and the public schools, have written out the whole statement of the self-evident truths from the Declaration of Independence. ... I'm not asking people to teach [the] Bible, but the principles that are laid down in that Declaration of Independence, ... that's mighty important. ... What people don't realize is, because, and I'll share this with you, after all that, what happens in the world is either blessed or permitted by God. This is my view on it, and so, when you look at why has this been permitted? that the universities, the learned institutions, which dominated, and therefore influence, all of education, all our courts, all our government, why was this done? and I think it's basically been done so that the literal word, which is important, literal word would no longer be considered the whole of that Hebrew scripture, but it is a container for an allegorical form of writing. ... I've worked on some of this and I have interpreted, as well, the allegory, but this is not unique. There's been, at least, well, the whole Christian Science movement. I don't know if you're familiar with Mary Baker Eddy, but Mary Baker Eddy has moved, and moved their church, to see that the Bible is not a history book, it's a spiritual book, and there is a considerable amount in her teaching and her scriptural understanding which illuminates larger, correspondent meanings that are there. ... I've written to the President [of Rutgers University] to say, "Why couldn't ... there be some real scholarship?" I condemned the fact that they just blanket, and therefore remove, the principles, the self-evident truths of the Declaration, from study in our schools, as if the concept of God as a creator is outmoded, that is, there. "Why couldn't they examine this?" and I may still confront him with some of my own scholarship, ... because, if Rutgers could provide an opening in that, it might begin to see a change. I've dealt with science in this sense and I've pointed out, in one of my pieces of writing, that natural science deals with the physical, material world and that ... was important in the eighteenth century, beginning and continues, and, of course, it is the natural scientists that have input the Darwinian view in and replaced it there, and then, well, nineteenth century, now, it's the twentieth century, the time of the social science, where you're studying society. ... Then, I said, "The twenty-first century will very likely be the ... intellectual science," and that's not original. That term, "intellectual science," goes back to [Ralph Waldo] Emerson, Emerson there, and Emerson was very much impressed with an eighteenth century scholar, [Emanuel] Swedenborg, who dealt with the Bible as representative, that it is not a literal book, it has correspondent meaning, and, in the representative men, Emerson, as long ago as that, he had Swedenborg as his "representative mystic," that is, there. ... In that sense, he saw that nature is language. All that is natural has representative meanings, that is, there, but, anyway, I'm delaying you.

SH: [laughter] No, you are not, but we started with talking about mandatory chapel for commuters.

CS: Yes, oh, yes, and I thought ... it's too bad, because, ... what Rutgers stood for, as a church college, they've turned their backs on, and the lovely chapel that was there. ...

SH: How often did you have to attend, as a commuter?

CS: I think it was weekly.

SH: Weekly?

CS: Yes, I think it was.

SH: Do you remember some of the speakers that were there?

CS: No.

SH: Do you have any Dean Metzger stories?

CS: Metzger, Metzger; I don't have any Dean Metzger stories. That name is familiar, I think, but I don't know.

SH: There was another man who many times led the convocation, Dr. Demarest. Do you remember him?

CS: ... Vaguely, I don't know, no. ... What do they do with that chapel now?

SH: It is still there. During Reunion Weekend, there is still a service on Saturday morning before the parade.

CS: Oh, I see. [laughter] They go through the motions, huh?

SH: Walter Seward, the oldest living graduate of Rutgers, is the driving force behind that, and has been since I have been at Rutgers, the last twelve years.

CS: Well, it seems, but you can rail against the Darwinians, see, but it had its purpose, it has its purpose, because the church had allowed that limited reading and understanding to persist, and I've written to bishops. ... We're members of the Methodist Church and I write to the bishops, ... trying to waken them up, or, seems to me, to waken them up, but they're more concerned about numbers and giving and whatnot, but that's the way of the world.

SH: As a commuter student, was ROTC still mandatory?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes, and, in fact, I would have loved to have gotten into the upper ...

SH: Advanced ROTC.

CS: Advanced. In fact, Domer Zerbe did get it, did get in, and he was all set. You know, second lieutenant, and, when the war came along, he was all set, [laughter] and I had to search around to find a home. ...

SH: Let us talk about that.

CS: No, that ROTC, yes, everybody had to take two years there.

SH: Pearl Harbor was attacked halfway through your junior year. What do you remember about that time?

CS: Well, I think I was at home and listening to a football game, and I think that's where it broke. Then, I went to college on Monday and, of course, that's where I heard that President's speech, "Day in Infamy," and whatnot. ... That's '41, and then, '42 is when the other branches of the service started coming ... onto campus.

SH: Sending recruiters?

CS: Yes, and officer training, you see.

SH: The ASTP?

CS: ... Well, they were recruiting, first of all, for the Marines, and I, of course, ... didn't want to be [drafted]. I knew that my number would be called up in November '42, you know, the draft, in '42, and this now is spring in '42 and the Marines came through. ... Of course, I [had a] good academic record and everything else, and, lo and behold, they turned me down. I was really upset, irate, I mean, good student, everything, physical, a football player and everything else, turned me down, the Marines, and I just wouldn't let it rest.

SH: Did they say why they turned you down?

CS: No, but, then, I pursued it. ... I think I went to the head of the ROTC or whatnot there and he gave me the technical reason why they turned me down. ... I couldn't understand. He said, "Well, to put it in simple terms, they're really saying you couldn't be a Marine; you didn't have it," [laughter] and do you know, I've remembered that, because some of those Marines had a terrible time. ... Jim Wells was on Iwo [Jima], and I was so glad, so glad, that I was not a Marine. ... About two or three weeks later, or maybe a month later, came the Air Force and I made it and, boy, I was sworn in in May '42. Now, that's pretty good time. I mean, '41, it was attacked and, here, I'm doing my duty and, yet, going to college, living it up, my girl's over at NJC, yes, yes. [laughter]

SH: The University changed from semesters to quarters during the war. Did this happen while you were still at Rutgers?

CS: ... No, we were still in semesters. ...

SH: Did you go to school in the summer of 1942 or did you go home to work?

CS: Oh, yes, I went home to work, yes.

SH: For Merck?

CS: Yes.

SH: Was there a difference, after Pearl Harbor, in the way the University began to look at their curriculum, such as a new emphasis on physical conditioning? Did anything change that you were aware of?

CS: Well, I don't know. I couldn't identify anything that was singular there. Maybe ROTC took on a more meaningful [role]. ... One of the things that I remembered about our Class of '43, because that class, we were too young to have any advanced [training], you're going in, probably, at basic [second lieutenant's rank], if you're an officer. "Dutch" Zerbe went in as a second lieutenant and was up there in Italy, and others that went in were at that [level]. If you were even a year or two older, you might have a little rank, captain or whatnot. But, that Class of '43, if I'm not mistaken, we had the greatest number of fatalities out of that class. We had a good number in '44, '42, but '43 [had the most], and some of those, ... I remember a fellow [student] of mine, that I had freshman chemistry with him, and I was an awful science student. I used to go to the lab and try to do everything that was done, you know, followed it, and I remember this fellow and his partner, they always worked in partners, ... they'd be done about half the time. They were kind of killing time and their answers were all right and everything else, [laughter] and, here, ... taking the whole three-hour lab, I couldn't get my lab results there. ... What, of course, they were doing, they were just reading the book and doctoring their figures and everything else. ... That fellow, then, he was shot and killed in the war, ... but I remember him distinctly from that freshman lab; talk about getting grades.

SH: How hard was that, after Pearl Harbor happened? You said you were focused on making Phi Beta Kappa, and you were successful, but was it hard to concentrate on academics after Pearl Harbor and once the recruiters came to campus?

CS: No, bookworms are bookworms. [laughter] ... Chemistry was a tough thing. ... A third was the laboratory work, a third was tests, three tests, and whatever it was, another third, anything, but, then, there was ... one-tenth left over and that was your notes, you know, class notes there. ... I could see, I mean, if you had three tests and that's a third, so, the notes are going to count like one test. I got a hundred on my notes. I had them typed. I typed those notes. I took those home and typed them. [laughter]

SH: You could have sold them later.

CS: No, but the fact is, I got an "A" in chemistry, first semester, and a "B" in the second semester. Oh, I was an awful student in that, but I was a bookworm there. I looked for the advantages that could be there, but ... getting that hundred even, I mean, he couldn't fault me on those beautiful notes.

SH: It was not difficult to stay focused throughout this period.

CS: No. In my senior year, that was the one, and I was really going to live it up. [laughter] ... I was only going to take a few courses that were there, the second semester. Took a few courses, and I had a part-time job somewhere, someplace, something there, that was near the women's campus, I don't remember. ... They had a factory or something there.

SH: Johnson and Johnson?

CS: Well, Johnson and Johnson was on the men's campus. Yes, it was something. ... They were hiring something and we had nothing to do and [I was] getting money. ... I thought, "This is great. I'm just going to love this second semester. My girl's here; twenty miles from New York City; finally, I've got some money; you know, I'm just [set]," and I was called up in February '43; oh, my.

SH: Not even six weeks' worth.

CS: No, no, nothing, absolutely nothing. That shattered it. It took that whole period that was there. ...

SH: Did you attend the Military Ball or some of those social activities?

CS: Oh, boy, the social activities there, the Military [Ball]. I had my own tuxedo in time. Maybe the first year, I may have rented one, but I even got a black tuxedo and the girl that I eventually married, we went to those balls and the Big Bands were playing. Oh, my, those were glory days, dear.

SH: They came to campus, but did you also go to New York to hear them?

CS: ... Well, actually, I didn't. The biggest things that I ever remember were going on ... class trips, when I'd been in high school, when we went out and, always, ... we'd see a play, you know, and eat at an automat, oh, my. [laughter] Why, you laugh; you can't have the pleasure of an automat there.

SH: When I first came to the East Coast, they had been like a folk legend to me, but I was impressed the first time I saw one.

CS: I'll tell you one of the things, that, when we had the legal case and our lawyers, we're there in the morning, and then, we're going to go back, and our lawyers took us, the family, took us to, it wasn't an automat, but to a little diner of a sort, and I had ... a delicious soup, cream of celery soup. ... To this day, I keep telling Joan, "I'd like that cream of celery, you know, cream of celery." She's not big on cream of celery. ... The other creams, she'll take, but that was some of the highlights of there. But, I had planned to make those trips. I mean, the Pennsylvania Railroad, you can get in there, ... but I had not really gotten that worldly. ... Some of my fraternity brothers were better beer drinkers, you know, and, occasionally, I would go in there and I really wasn't a big beer drinker, ... but I'd said, "Oh, I'll have a Bud," you know. [laughter]

SH: Did you ever go to the Corner Tavern?

CS: Yes, yes, there, but I still don't like beer. [laughter] I drink wine, but I don't like beer and I don't drink hard liquor.

SH: Were there other activities that you were involved in? Did you hold an office in the fraternity?

CS: Yes, but I was very active over at NJC, in the theater.

SH: Really?

CS: Oh, my, yes, dear.

SH: Tell me about that.

CS: Oh, I got into their productions, you know, and there was that director. She was an old woman, an older woman, but she was good, and I think ... I got in, probably, three times a year. First, I had smaller parts and, the last year, the senior year, she was going to put me in to star in Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

SH: Oh, my.

CS: Yes. That was going to be the fall play and she just couldn't understand [why] I said, "I can't go out for that; I'm playing football." [laughter] She couldn't understand how I could sacrifice my theatrical [career].

SH: For *Richard III*.

CS: Yes, starring in that, and I was going to be the whole thing, oh, my. But, she couldn't understand, but, no, I really liked drama and plays. ... Dr. McGinn, too, I had a course in Shakespeare and modern drama from him, and, later on, when I went to Cornell, eventually, my thesis was dramatic conflict, but it was on a conflict in life between a man's sense of ... infinite importance and infinite insignificance. ... I dealt with this as a truth of life that was there, and that was my basic view, and my guiding professor there, he wanted to discourage me. I said, "Well, ... if I can't do it, I'll start all over," but he wanted me, you know, to get something more conventional, historical, something like that, but, no. ... When I came to my exams on the thesis, and I still remember the compliment, "He brings the thesis in the original sense of the word," that is, there. That was complimentary. ...

SH: That certainly was. How much time did you have between being called up and reporting?

CS: Not much notice.

SH: Really?

CS: No, and I can distinctly recall ... getting off at Newark, where they assembled us, and, you know, the goodbyes to my family and my girl and everything else, going off now to the Air Force, and we got on the train and I called up the night when we got there. ...

SH: Did you report to Fort Dix?

CS: Yes. [laughter] ... I mean, it was just down the road, you know. ... Here, I'm thinking, "Oh, we're going there," and then, ... for my first basic training, Atlantic City.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, we lived in [hotels]. You know, they took over those hotels, but you learned. You learned to make your bed, you learned to march, and sing songs while you were marching, and I was there a month, and you learned to handle a gun, at least to port arms and whatnot. ... Making that bed, there were times, you know, you'd be up there and you'd have a little time after breakfast, before the next fall out, and you'd go up to your room; you would never lie down on that bed, to ruffle it. You'd sleep on the floor, you'd lie on the floor to catch a few winks, that is, there. [laughter] You did not touch that bed, anyway, and then, the amazing thing was, they had called up so many from all the colleges around, ... into the Air Corps, well, they were going to be pilots, navigators, bombardiers, but they had to bring them into different classification centers and they had to store them, in a way. ... They'd leased college facilities. We didn't know. ... After Atlantic City, we just got on the train and just [Dr. Sloca imitates a moving train], ended up somewhere there, on some siding. ... Eventually, that [train] brought us in, but, lo and behold, they brought us, our group, to Penn State, yes, in State College, and not only that, not only that, they took over fraternity houses. ... We were there in the Army, ... living in our fraternity houses, but not having to do any KP [kitchen patrol]. ... Some of the students that were not in the Army or whatnot, they worked on it, but we would get our food. ... I used to say my life in the Army was like a grade-B movie. Now, you don't understand, but, when we always had double features, there was always the feature that was, I mean, real action, ... and then, the "B" film was always, "Eeh." [laughter] ... The serious parts, you might not even take it, and I remember, from that Penn State experience, it was a little bit like that. It really was.

SH: Was this where they tested you to see which jobs you would be given?

CS: No, no, ... you had to wait in the classification center, yes.

SH: That was in Atlantic City.

CS: ... No, that was down in Nashville, Tennessee, ... in the classification center, after Penn State. ...

SH: They sent you to Dix, then, Atlantic City, then, Penn State. They were just holding you.

CS: ... Yes. Well, we learned. Of course, in Penn State, ... remember, we had to patrol the fraternity house. ... No one could pass the fraternity house and I remember marching up there, in front of the fraternity house, and [saying], "Who goes there?" you know, and he identified himself. He said, "Colonel at the post," you know, "Pass," you know. Now, all you had to do is cross the street and you didn't have to do that, but you had to stop him and nobody could enter that after hours, the certain hour, except the people that were bringing ice cream and whatnot, ... bringing that stuff in, but, then, we had classes over on the campus.

SH: You did?

CS: Yes, and we marched down from the fraternity to clear across town, you know, over to the university area, and I think they were taking a physics course. ... I couldn't understand much of what was going on. ...

SH: Was this part of the Army Specialized Training Program?

CS: Well, I don't know what they called it, [the Aviation Cadet Program], but, anyway, it was there. ... I can distinctly remember, as we passed, when we marched down there, ... coming home to the fraternity house, we passed a little place where a woman was selling doughnuts [laughter] and that was the place you'd drop out of your formation, run in there and grab doughnuts and go marching down the line. Now, that was not very military. ... We were anxious to get along, get ahead, you know, and I think I went out with one of the earlier groups. I don't know how many weeks we stayed there, but some of the older men that had been in the Army, who then had been able to get into the pilot training area, these men knew a good thing. Boy, they didn't want to go, there. ... What we did then, we went then to Nashville for classification, and I don't know what tests they were taking, and we took tests. We had an enormous amount of physical training, I was in the best physical shape I've ever been in, on all kinds of things, cross-country and doing all kinds of things that are there. I was a really good specimen, [laughter] and then, you had a few things that you didn't do right and you maybe got a KP and whatnot there, but I got classified for pilot training. ... I think I spent about four or five weeks there, and then, I went to pre-flight at Montgomery, Alabama. That was Maxwell Field.

SH: Had you ever traveled before you went to Nashville, aside from the other places the Air Force had sent you?

CS: I never traveled.

SH: You had never traveled before.

CS: No.

SH: Was this an adventure in itself?

CS: No, you just go on, just followed around. [laughter] No, there was no enlightenment. You're just checking with your different people that are there, and we had good times there, in the fraternity house, but, then, ... we got into considerable military, cadet [training]. We now were really official cadets. ...

SH: This would have been in the fall of 1943 that you reported.

CS: Yes, I think so, but, no, it was still hot. No, it was still in [summer], really hot in Montgomery, Alabama, that we had at pre-flight. All you're really doing is marching, marching and all this and everything else, but that's where my Maureen came down and we were married.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, on the base, and that was a little hectic in a way. ... In the room in which we were, there were seven of us, seven men were there, and I had announced that we were going to be married. ... Well, other people, sometimes, had gotten that and, lo and behold, that was the Saturday night before Sunday. ... We got a message; my wife got a message, we had been asking the Church to rule on this, to approve, because I was not a Roman Catholic. She was a Roman Catholic, I was not a Roman Catholic, and I forget what it was they had to do on it, and they wouldn't approve of it. [laughter] So, here it is, nine o'clock, it's Saturday night and you're going to get married in the morning, and we couldn't get married in the morning. So, early in the morning, I went over to the other chapel, the Episcopal, I guess, chapel there, and explained to him my problem. "Could we be married here?" and he said, "Well, yes," we could, "But, I'll have to speak to your future bride," and so that, he wasn't going to proselyte her, you know, that Roman Catholic. No, she was just glad, delighted, and so, we were married there, ... in that chapel, and, here, ... the six other people had borrowed, you know, the swords, borrowed swords, and they were the only people at the wedding. ... We walked out and they held the swords. [laughter] It was like a comedy and that was my wedding day. ...

SH: Did she find a place to live close to base?

[TAPE PAUSED]

CS: ... Anyway, no, she followed me and she had to find a room at each base, and flight training was at two-month intervals. After pre-flight, you went to primary, ... two months. ... If you stayed in, weren't washed out or whatnot, then, you went on to two months of basic training, and then, the decision was, "Where do you go, to a single-engine or multiple-engine?" and I was basically a conservative person and I preferred to fly straight and level. [laughter] So, I went into multiple-engine and went on to advanced training there.

SH: Where were you the first time you were in a plane?

CS: Well, in primary.

SH: When you were down in Alabama?

CS: No, no. ... I was trying to figure out exactly what towns I was in. It was in a town in Mississippi, that was there. The primary flights were at a private place, where ... they were civilian instructors, too.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, at that. Then, when you went to basic, then, you had military officers who were pilots there. So, that's where it was and I had to learn to fly. ... One of the biggest things I had to learn in early flying was direction. You have to learn, constantly, when you're there, exactly where you are, in terms of [direction]. ... The first flights that we'd take, he says, "Well, take us back to the field." [laughter] "Oh, my," and the last time that he said it, maybe it was after maybe four

hours or something I had him, and he's taking us back to the field. ... I looked up and he was pointing right, to the field, and [I said], "Okay, right," but that was one of the early flying lessons [that] I had, and, of course, in primary, you learn all the different things. You learn acrobatics and stuff like that. You're flying a relatively easy plane. The hardest part, of course, is always landings that are there. ... Then, in basic training, you're getting involved with some cross-country, night flying, that is, there. ... One of the things that I remember that was particularly harrowing in basic was, ... you're off at night, on a cross-country, and looking for some landmarks and getting vertigo, losing sense, totally, your sense, so that you don't know what it is. ... People did crash on these, if you didn't go to your instruments. We didn't have a lot of instruments, but you did have an instrument which you could see [if] you're going down or you were there, and, to right that, that was the most harrowing experience I had in those first ... four months of flight. ...

SH: Were there several casualties because of this change?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes. ...

SH: How unnerving was that for someone who is learning to fly in basically the same aircraft?

CS: Oh, you don't think. You're just you and your instructor and where you're going and what you're doing; that's [it]. It's worse when you're losing people in combat. ... I didn't have a lot of combat experience, but I've read enough of that, of combat, where they did lose, lose, lose, a great many.

SH: When you were training there, was your wife able to come to each of the training areas?

CS: She'd get a room. ... I remember that one room she had. ... There was a little gas stove or whatnot and she made supper on that stove, ... but you didn't have much time. You didn't have overnights. ...

SH: Really?

CS: Oh, no. ... I got married and I don't think I got an overnight for six weeks or more, no. ... They discouraged having wives.

SH: Was that something that was ...

CS: No, no. ... Women, they just plugged along, and a lot of them did, and you'd be very glad if your wife could get a room somewhere that was half decent, and then, she'd try to get a job, you know, and try to make [money].

SH: Was she able to find work?

CS: Yes. She would find some work, sometimes, on it, and then, after advanced; I did have a crash in advanced training. ...

SH: Do you remember where your advanced training was?

CS: Yes, it was in Lawrenceville, Illinois, which was pretty cold. ... It was in the winter months there, and that's close to Indiana there. ... There would be snow on the runways, and off the runways, you see, and I think that [was the] one, when I was shooting landings, ... with my instructor still. ... I think we were running off the runway and I think he applied brakes, some, and I think I applied brakes. Now, this is like the plane that we flew in twin-engine, with a rear wheel, you see, [conventional, or tail dragger, landing gear]. It wasn't like the ones you have that you're on it, [tricycle landing gear]. ... With the brakes applied, what happened is, we turned over. Yes, we turned over, and so, ... we're strapped in here, he's strapped on the right, I'm strapped on the left there, and then, you hear the sirens coming up and everything and the trucks coming. ...

SH: Meanwhile, you are hanging there upside down.

CS: Yes, upside down, I'm hanging there, because I distinctly remember this, that the man had a hatchet, you know, and he was going to chop that. ... I heard a man say, "Don't, don't do that, a spark will set this off," because gas was dripping out of the tanks. So, that, I distinctly remember.

SH: I bet you do.

CS: Yes. Well, it was part of it and they took him out, and then, they dragged me out and I think that plane was in the junkyard. Later on, the next day or so, we saw it there, but I had washed out a plane. ... Now, my career was as a co-pilot, you see, and that may well have contributed to ... making it, and then, I had one other incident that I think may have contributed to being assigned to co-pilot school, rather than first pilot school, and I'm not ashamed of it, but I did this. Well, I did run off the runway, but that wasn't bad; not at that one, I ran off another time. ... By the time I was in advanced, I was, like, one of the cadet officers. I hadn't been ... down in Montgomery, Alabama, where I could wear a sword. ... The cadet officer, what you did, you were in charge of your squadron and you marched them to mess hall, you marched them to the flight line, marched them wherever you were, and that was your job. Well, now, we got to be kind of raunchy there, in that, I mean, you're nearing the end of your training, you know. Men would not get up early enough, so, they didn't make their beds, they're running out, buttoning their clothes. [laughter] ... We're falling out and some of the men are straggling along and I'm marching them all right in there. Well, one of the ground officers, not the flying officers, thought that was very unmilitary, and I was called up about that. He reported me to the flight officer and the flying officer was a captain, and that's important to him. ... I was brought before him on that, as [to], "Why didn't you report these men? Why, when they're falling out, ... beds weren't made? Why don't you report them?" ... "Look," I said to him, "in a couple weeks, we're going to finish up there. We're all going to be the same after. ... I'm not going to do that. Why, I'm not going to do this," and he said, "Well, you should have done that," and I said, "Well, if I had to do that, I resign." Well, you don't resign in the Army. [laughter]

SH: During war.

CS: No, you don't resign, but that may have contributed to being a co-pilot, too, you know.

SH: Could have.

CS: It could have, anyway, but I then ... went to co-pilot school. Now, first pilot school had two months' training. I had one month [of] training on the B-17. ...

SH: Where was your training?

CS: ... It was down in, I think it was Panama City, Florida, yes, and my wife went there and she got a room somewhere and I remember that. ... Then, they took us to Salt Lake City, where we were put into crews, not the full crew, but the officer crew. So, I met the first pilot and the bombardier and the navigator. So, the four of us, then, we had a chance to bond. Well, it wasn't long, about a week, and then, we moved down to a town in Oklahoma; I forget what town it was. That's for replacement training, and then, we got the rest of the crew and that was for two months. We flew missions and flying formation and all kinds of things like that, preparatory, then, to flying overseas and going into combat.

SH: Where were most of the people in your crew from?

CS: Well, the first pilot was from California and the second one was from St. George, Utah. He was a Mormon. ... I hadn't known much about Mormons and my wife doesn't think a great deal about Mormons, because she has read the books on what they have done to women. She has been, oh, so strongly opposed to Mormonism. But, he was from St. George, Utah, and, of course, a member of the Mormon Church, and I spent my ... POW experience with him. The navigator, on our mission in which we're shot down, he was terribly wounded ... by the flak that had hit the plane. ... We got him off the plane and we saw that they, somehow, had taken him somewhere, and we thought, "Oh, he's in the hospital," but, when you're on the ground and everything, you put that out of your mind and you're glad you're alive. ... Eventually, we learned, actually learned, his wife learned, after the war, when the graves commissions went through, checking all of that, ... they found that he was buried in, near that place. ... I think they may have exhumed him, ... but he was from Independence, Missouri, and, as I said, one from, [of the] officers, California, and I was from, I guess, New Jersey, yes, and I have some of the [records]. I know the names and whatnot of those people that were on the crew, that I have there. ...

SH: As a replacement crew, is that how you would go in, as a full crew?

CS: Yes, yes. ... Well, what they did was, they spread you out for a mission or two, with the experienced crews, and then, after that, you flew as a crew, yes.

SH: From Oklahoma, you said you were there about two months.

CS: Ardmore, I think, was the town, Ardmore, Oklahoma.

SH: Near Fort Sill. You were there for about two months.

CS: Yes.

SH: Then, where did they send you?

CS: Well, we went to Lincoln, Nebraska, to get a new plane, and flew across to Massachusetts, I guess, ... then, flew across ... up to Newfoundland somewhere, I guess, and then, the old question was, "Where were you going? You're going to England? You're going to the Pacific? You're going to there?" ... In time, we learned, when we finally had our papers there, we had to get to Italy, 15th Air Force, heavy bombers, and we had to actually fly from this place, up there in Canada, to the Aleutian Islands, little islands in the ocean there, and then, from that island to the coast of Africa.

SH: To the Azores?

CS: No, not Aleutians, the Azores. Azores, sorry; [laughter] Aleutians are up there in ...

SH: By Alaska.

CS: Yes. ... All right, the Azores, that's right, and those little islands then, and I admired the navigator to get us there. ... Then, we flew to Western Africa and it was almost every night that we [flew] (there?). Then, we went to Tunis, I guess, and then, across the Mediterranean.

SH: How many of you flew at one time? Was it just your plane or were you flying in a group?

CS: No. Well, across the ocean, you flew alone.

SH: Did you?

CS: Yes. They did that to the Eighth [Air Force], everyone did, and some of those experiences, those people that had to go to the Eighth and some of the harrowing experiences they had, up there in the northern climates there, but ours were [less dangerous]. ...

SH: Where did you first report in Africa? You said you went to the western part of Africa.

CS: I think it was maybe Marrakech, Africa. It was right on the coast there.

SH: Did you stay right on the base? Did you get to get off?

CS: No, just stay on the base and have a meal and get ready to go. ...

SH: Then, you went from Marrakech to Tunisia.

CS: Yes, I think it was to Tunis, I think. ... I have my scar, my war scar.

SH: Wow.

CS: Yes. I went into the restroom and I reached up for the soap dish, to wash my hands, and it was a thin blade. It was a blade. Somebody had left their razor blade in. [laughter]

SH: Oh, no, so, your middle finger of your left hand is scarred from that. [laughter]

CS: That is my war scar, that is, there, and I remember, as I said, to grab a thin razor blade and just put that there, and I had to bandage it up and everything. I didn't want to get left behind or anything. So, then, we had to fly to Foggia, Italy, and that's where the 301st Bomb Group was located. ...

SH: What did you see of the combat that had taken place in North Africa and, again, when you got to Foggia?

CS: I didn't see anything.

SH: Nothing?

CS: No.

SH: No bombed out buildings?

CS: No. I read about them in those war books that I have. Oh, my, my kids have given me more war books ...

SH: Trying to get you up to speed. [laughter]

CS: Anyway, but, no, actually, being a bomber pilot, the dreadful part, the dreadful part, and I didn't have many over-the-target missions, was going through the flak field. I do remember one of the first reactions to going in there and seeing these big things there. ...

SH: The big flak explosions.

CS: Of the explosions, you know, big explosions, black smoke.

SH: This was in July of 1944 that you reported to Foggia.

CS: Yes, yes, and I reported July 7th and I was shot down August 7th. It's not hard to remember. ... When I was going through that first time in there, you know, [training] back home, ... we had some war movies, you know. We'd had Spencer Tracy going over into that particular one and seeing this, and we saw I don't know what other movies that we had. [Editor's Note: Dr. Sloca may be referring to *A Guy Named Joe* (1943) a film in which Spencer Tracy stars as a bomber pilot.] ... My first reaction was, as we're heading in, "This is just like the movies, just like the movies." [laughter] ...

SH: It was just the movies that you saw. They had not spent any time on this in your training.

CS: No, no, we had no training with flak or anything, no. The main thing there, actually, ... what we had, the pilot and co-pilot, for us, some people did it differently in the Eighth, I've read, but, for us, we shared the formation flying, fifteen minutes on, fifteen minutes off, and there was nothing, nothing, that took your mind off it. You rested for your fifteen minutes, but, [for] your fifteen minutes, you're flying off this wing of this particular plane and ... nothing. You just keep it there and, of course, ... you have four engine throttles, but, for formation flying, you use two, so that if you fall down a little, you need to give extra throttle, extra on two engines, and then, if you're going [to] get too close on it, you had to pull back and drop down. ... Flying formation becomes the big thing and first pilot, of course, you had to take off the plane, you had to land the plane, and that's no small part, ... taking off with a full load of bombs, and then, having to get into your group formation and everything else. ... I was a co-pilot. If I had lasted a good long time, some of those were moved up to first pilot and, in fact, on my second mission, where I was put in with a different crew, the man that I was flying with had been a man just recently moved up from co-pilot to first pilot there. ... That was a rather harrowing mission, because we hit clouds over the area of the thing [target]. Clouds are the terrible part. I read where people flew formation in clouds, but, for us, ... clouds, you just spread out there, and this guy said, and we were close to [the] target, "Drop the bombs, drop the bombs, just get rid of it," and then, later on, as we were all alone, ... he looked like ... [he was] losing one engine and he feathered that engine. So, we came home on three engines, all alone, could have been shot down, but we landed in there. I don't know what they said to him, but we survived. That was my second time over the target on it. ...

SH: Do you remember where the target was?

CS: I don't remember that one. I do remember the one we were shot down on; at least where we were hit and knocked out of the formation. That was way, way up there. ... Now, originally, for the Eighth, they had to do twenty-five missions, but, when some of those people were beginning to live and not die, they moved it up to thirty, and then, they moved it up to thirty-five missions that were there. For us, on the 15th [Air Force], we had some shorter missions, Southern France, the Balkans, some of the shorter ones. That would count just one time over there, but, when we flew a mission eight hours or more, just like the Eighth, we got doubles, you see, we got doubles, but our tour was fifty. That's counting doubles. So, when I was shot down, I had, whatever, in terms of number of missions, I had nine missions, but six times over the target that was there, six times over the target. ... We were shot down and there were oil refineries, Blechhammer oil refineries, way up in Northern Germany, which now is a part of Poland. It was there. It was Breslau, [now Wroclaw, Poland], there. ... That was where we were shot, and then, we straggled back and we didn't know where we were going, really. The navigator was the one who was absolutely wounded and I remember distinctly, and I did recommend our bombardier, at that time, for a Silver Star, which is [for] bravery. Now, I didn't know that exactly, what we were flying back [into], but we ... all had our chutes on, chest chutes on, and we're all ready to possibly jump and whatnot, and I don't know how long it was, ... but, there, the navigator could not jump. He was absolutely out and the bombardier took his chute off. He was going to go down with the navigator, and I thought that was; I still cloud up a little.

SH: I would think so.

CS: Yes, yes, but we were going toward our base, but we had the Alps to pass over. There's no way, and the pilot sent me and said, "Go out, see what the crew is doing. Take care of the crew there," and so, I moved on back with the crew and the crew, they had their chutes on, the escape hatch was sprung and were just waiting for the word to jump, and then, I looked down at the ground. It was so close and I realized that he was going to crash the plane. He was going to land it, the plane. ... Basically, he was going to do that to try to save the navigator's life, that is, there, and so, we had a regular procedure for crash landing. You go into the radio operator's room and you sit down and you spread your legs and one sits down and [another] sits down, but before ... we're going, I said, ... "We're going to go, we're going to crash land," ... and then, I said to [the crew], I lifted my hand up and I said, "He's going to protect you." ... You know, it's funny, when you have thoughts, at this very second that I said that, "He's going to protect you," the thought came to me, "What are you saying? You haven't been in church in years," you know. [laughter] ... There's a kind of a judgment that takes place there and, yet, ... I really was glad to say it and, when we got on the ground, the ball-turret man, ... he was the smallest kid in the [aircraft], he had been in tears there ... when I came there, and then, he said, "You were right, Lieutenant, He took care of us." Those are a few of the things you remember, you know, ... sit in your memory. ...

SH: How many were on the crew?

CS: Six enlisted men, they're all sergeants, everybody was made a sergeant, and four officers, but the bombardier was there in the nose of the plane and we landed, in August now, in a cornfield, wheels up, on your belly there. ... The bombardier was saying, "I just saw those ears of corn just flip-flopping all over there." That was one of the amusing things that was there. [laughter]

SH: The things you remember, right?

CS: Yes, that [we] remembered of that thing. ...

SH: Where did you come down?

CS: I'll tell you, with these natives that; I mean, the people. ... We couldn't communicate with them and ... I had some French and I was trying to speak French to them, you know, trying to say, "We're Americans," you know. ... This man is saying, "*Ungar, ungar*," [meaning, "Hungarian,] and I thought, "We're in Hungary," [that] he was speaking Hungarian, and I thought for a long time, many, many years, that we had landed there in Hungary. ... Oh, maybe four or five years ago, somebody contacted me from Slovakia and he says, "I was tracing your plane. [They] found the remains of your plane in Slovakia," there, and I realized that that's probably what [it was]. I thought he was saying [that] he was speaking Hungarian, ... but those people speak there; ... I mentioned Ruthenia. I have an article of a family in Ruthenia and he said, ... the article's funny, he said, "We've lived here in six countries and have never moved once," the farm. "We've lived in six countries and never moved once." [laughter] That was ...

SH: Very telling.

CS: Yes, it was a good article, and I have a copy of that article there.

SH: Did you completely follow the procedure that you had been trained to follow if you were to go down like that? Had you been trained, maybe is the better question?

CS: Well, what training you get, you're shot down, you either have to bail out, and ... we didn't have to have bailout experience. ...

SH: If you would have jumped, that would have been your first parachute jump.

CS: Yes, well, assuming that [we made it], but some of the people, their planes just blew up, you know. ... Well, the Air Force, percentagewise, had the greatest number of fatalities and, of course, they did it over in Japan, too.

Joan Sloca: I thought you said you burned the plane.

CS: Yes, we did. I didn't burn it. I was there, fine, but the crew chief; ... we had, oh, those things that you could shoot off, you know.

SH: The flares?

CS: Yes, flares, ... in the plane, and he shot some flares into the plane after we were all out and everything else, ... and then, the whole plane got [burned], the gasoline and everything. So, there really was a great big burning of that cornfield, [laughter] ... but we were moved to a local jail.

SH: Who took you prisoner?

CS: Some ...

JS: Farmers.

CS: Farmers with rifles.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, and they put us on a truck and took us to a local jail and put us in a big jail room. I was glad that I was able to get a place pretty far from the door, because some of the people that were irate came in and were kicking on some of the people that were close.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes.

JS: Well, you destroyed their cornfield.

CS: Yes, and they got us into military [custody]. They didn't keep us there. They got us into the hands of a German officer, people there, who then took us to a big interrogation place in, I think it was Budapest, in Hungary, and some people stayed there as long as thirty days or so, but we were in solitary. ...

SH: Were there other American prisoners of war there at that time?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes

SH: Really?

CS: And then, we had interrogation and, you know, you're taught that you give them name, rank and serial number, and the man speaks good English, "We don't need that. We have all the information about you," and he gave me information about the squadron that I didn't even know.

SH: Really?

CS: But, it is true, and I've read books on it, they were well informed, as we were as well on them.

SH: How many planes went down on this mission? Was it just yours that went down?

CS: On that particular mission?

SH: Yes.

CS: I don't know how many.

JS: I thought you said yours was the only one that went down for months.

CS: Yes, on that one. This was now in '44. '43 was the dreadful year, dreadful year. I was fortunate to [come later], and then, of course, '45 was even nicer, but, then, they kept adding more missions to people. ... One of the interesting things in this Budapest prison, where they finally then [were] getting us ready to go and take us to a permanent camp, and I don't recall, but I must have [seen] a lot of people scratching their names into the walls and stuff, but this friend that I mentioned early on, that went to Cornell, ... he had been shot down as a bombardier and had gone through there and had seen that I had carved my name into that particular reception center. [laughter]

SH: Your high school friend from Rahway.

CS: Yes, from Rahway.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, ... but that was a time when they had a whole group of them there.

SH: How many people were in this interrogation center in Budapest?

CS: Well, I think there must have been, I don't [know], thirty or forty that at least were being sent out.

SH: Really?

CS: ... I don't know, because what you did, you'd get into a cattle car, and I don't know what they had or how many or whatnot. ...

SH: Were you able to stay together as a crew? Did they separate you?

CS: Well, remember, the enlisted men never went with the officers.

SH: They separated you.

CS: Yes, they went to others. So, we had three crewmembers, pilot, co, and the bombardier. As we were going through Vienna, the pilot had terrible dysentery. He was taken off the train and we lost contact with him. So, it was just the bombardier and I that were moving on up, and then, we stayed in that compound, *Luft III*, until the Russian advance, where we then had to break camp and move out, because the Russians were coming. ... The Germans still valued us as hostages, we may be of some use, and we had what was called "our Death March." It was below zero, snowing through the night and we lost two of those old, older people. I don't know whether we lost them permanently, but they didn't keep up. But, we managed together, six of us, the bombardier and I, and then, four of the British people. The British, ... one was from the islands, the Caribbean, and one was from South Africa, ... and two of them from [England], one from Yorkshire, another from Dorset, and so, we stayed together. ... At that time, when they finally stopped us ... for a certain time and got us into safe quarters, they said, "All right, all the Americans are going south," to this particular city, and, now, we were Americans, but the bombardier and I, ... we don't know any of these Americans. These other people have survived this long, we're just staying right with them and we stayed with them and we went up to another prison camp, which was a prison camp for naval officers, British naval officers. ... We're with them and in this group of six, but that room had fourteen, eight Canadians and six of us, ... but we prepared our meals in sixes and they prepared theirs in eights. ... I have a picture of the pot; that was a precious element, which we kept. We kept this cooking pot, which [was] from *Stalag Luft III*, that was there. We took it. ... Some people cooked for a week, and then, traded off, but the man that we had said, "I'll cook, I'll cook all the time, but I'll do no chores, no chores, peeling potatoes, anything, washing dishes." ... The rest of the room would take chores for a week, but ... he liked to cook and one of the things that [they had], when that was an established camp, *Stalag Luft III*, ... there was a mart, you know. You could trade cigarettes, ... a pack of cigarettes was sixty points, a candy bar, sixty points, and different things that you could buy and sell, you know. ...

SH: Where did you get them?

CS: Well, parcels.

SH: You were able to get them.

CS: Yes. The British Red Cross had parcels, and the American Red Cross, and they came and, I mean, the Germans couldn't supply nearly enough. You were supposed to get a parcel a week, but we were lucky if you even got half parcels on there, but the cook saw there was a pot. I don't know where it had come from, obviously, ... 1400 points. I mean, 1400 points; he was even embarrassed to say, "Boy, that would be a good pot [laughter] ... [to] boil all our potatoes and stuff," and, of course, ... we did chip in and we bought that pot. ...

SH: You were buying this from the Germans.

CS: Whatever. I don't know where he got it, from the mart. It was there. Well, they were trading with Germans and whatnot, but the interesting thing was that we kept that pot on our thing. ... I have a picture of our cook and the Canadian cook, ... near the end of the war, when we were eating in the countryside and they're boiling material ... with this pot on it. ... I don't know how I got the Sunday section of a Canadian newspaper, which had these pictures and stories on it, and I've kept that a little bit on it. But, that particular pot, that was a precious item, that is, there. [laughter] ...

SH: Can we go back to the crash scene? The farmers rounded you up. As you said, they were irate.

CS: Some of them were. ... We were feeling real good when they herded us into a pickup truck and I said, "Well, going to prison in a pickup truck," you know, "sunny out," August 7th, "a nice day," and, long as you ... weren't isolated, somehow, you were relatively secure, kept from the civilian population. ... I remember a friend of ours who did a fair amount of work for us, ... when we were living in Iowa there, and I told him that I was shot down over there, and he says, "Really?" He said, "Did they actually get somebody?" It seemed to him that it was always they [that] were just being bombed ... and that nobody got shot down. ...

SH: When you flew the nine missions you were credited with, were you flying escorted?

CS: ... They say that the fighters were escorting. They may well have been escorting some, but I never saw any escorts. I never saw any, no. ...

SH: What was life like at Foggia before you were shot down? What was a typical day for you?

CS: Well, now, as I said, being in flying missions, the harrowing part is always when you're on call, and you knew that the day before, when your name was posted. But, if you didn't have [duty], it isn't like infantry. I mean, there, those poor souls are under duress all the time, and many of those in landing parties and all these other groups, but, for us, we were completely free. You [could] go into town. Foggia didn't have much to do. I can remember, once, we took a trip out to the ocean, I think it was the Aegean Sea or something like that, take a look out and [to] see

that, see something there, and you really ... were under no restraint. ... Some of the people could go into town and carouse, drink and pickup women and whatnot, but ... my bombardier and I, we were pretty [tame]. I was married; he was a good, straight-laced guy. He could swear a bit, but he really was ... a really kindhearted soul. ...

SH: How were the Italian people? Were they doing well?

CS: Oh, Foggia was really a dirty [place]. It never has been and still isn't, it isn't like Northern Italy, where Florence [is] and all these other places there.

JS: Was Angela stationed in Foggia, there? ...

CS: No, no. [laughter] Ang was never down in Foggia. One of my daughters went into the service. She's a nurse and they told her, when she got her nurse's training, that, if she would enlist in the military, I mean, she'd get her commission and she could have any branch of service she wanted, that is, there, and she wanted ...

JS: Surgery. She wanted to be in surgery.

CS: Yes. She wanted to be in surgery.

SH: In the Army?

CS: Yes, and so, she went in and, eventually, ... she actually spent eight years there and came out a captain.

JS: ... She'd probably still be in, but she wanted to have a family and her husband said, "We're not going to have kids if you're moving to Italy, and then, you're moving somewhere else." ...

CS: ... Yes. ... She spent, I think, two or three years in Italy, but, ... well, of course, that was peacetime.

JS: A long time afterwards.

CS: Yes, that was a long time [afterwards].

JS: She thought Italy was the dirtiest place she'd ever seen. ... Then, she's a fanatic; she's a nurse.

SH: Cleanliness expert.

JS: Oh, mercy.

SH: When you were transferred from Budapest, then, you were sent just south of Berlin, right? Is that where *Stalag III* is?

CS: The *Luft* III?

SH: Yes, *Luft* III.

CS: I think it was further north than that. No, it wasn't south of Berlin.

SH: It is north of Berlin.

CS: I think, yes. I think Sagan, S-A-G-A-N, was the nearest town and it was up near where we had been shot down. ... *Luft* III was up there. ...

SH: This march that you went on was obviously not voluntarily. The Russians were approaching Germany very quickly. That was why you were transferred out.

CS: Yes, they're emptying [out the camps], and they had ten thousand Allied prisoners, two thousand to a compound, and we were moved out on, I don't know, pretty sudden notice, a half hour, an hour's notice, or something.

SH: Really?

CS: All you can take is whatever you can carry, and some people made sleds and stuff like that.

JS: They burned the camp.

CS: I still remember one of the worst things that I did on that march. Now, my bombardier, he was a rancher, but he also was a schoolteacher. He was a musician, played great clarinet, great clarinet. ... While we were in *Luft* III, in a stable compound, we had an orchestra.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes. We had an orchestra and he played hot clarinet in that band. They gave concerts. They had theatrical stuff going on there.

SH: Did you participate?

CS: No, I did nothing. [laughter] ... The only thing I did was, I once was a kind of gopher. They always kept track of what guards were in the prison camp, and I spent a week with one of the notable people and I was a runner, and, if there was a dangerous combination of German guards in there, whatever they knew, then, my job was to run to the different barracks and notify them [that] that's there. ... The bombardier, he was great, and, when we went on this march, he took his clarinet along. ... It's terrible, and I think of it now, and then, when we got to where it was, (Bromberg?) or whatnot, and the snow had melted and you couldn't carry anything, I had to lighten up and I said, his name was Stanley, but we called him Sam, I called him Sam, "Sam, ... we're going to have to get rid of the clarinet," [laughter] and I feel guilty to this day that I had him throw that clarinet away. Oh, we could have carried that clarinet. Oh, my, that's one of my

awful thoughts, thinking of it. "And we can't carry that, too. We're going to have to carry this and carry that." Oh, my, I had him throw the clarinet away, oh, my.

SH: Talk about when you reported to *Stalag Luft III*. It sounds like it was very organized.

CS: Yes, they did. ...

SH: There were no escapes while you were there. Had they already taken place?

CS: No, no. There were no escapes while we were there, but ... we were interviewed by certain people, the higher-ups.

SH: Who were they?

CS: Well, the British officers, yes. ...

SH: It was the Allies who were interviewing you. How did the Germans treat you?

CS: Well, they just; when they marched us into whatever ...

SH: *Luft III*.

CS: ... Place there, but we were called up by the certain authorities there on it, to make certain that we were who we said we were, yes.

SH: That you were not German infiltrators.

CS: Yes. ... They did have to make [sure]. Now, as I said, my bombardier, he was involved with music. They had classes and he could give classes in ranching and, that one, he'd do that, but they had a lovely library of books, which had been built up over the years by the Red Cross, and, to me, I was reading. ... I always had three or four books that I had and I was reading, reading, reading, and that was my [recreation], except for walking. You'd walk around the compound, yes. ...

SH: Were there any conditioning exercises?

CS: No, no, but I'll tell you what, in the wintertime there, the Canadians there built an ice rink, plenty of water, plenty of cold weather, ... and they also built a couple little rinks for amateurs, and I learned. I borrowed skates, which were available somewhere, and I learned to ice skate. [laughter]

SH: They actually had ice skates there.

CS: Oh, yes, well, in the wintertime, and they had ice skating. I mean, the Canadians had games. ...

SH: Hockey?

CS: Yes.

SH: Curling?

CS: No, no. They didn't have curling.

SH: How often were you inspected by the Germans? Did they just basically leave you alone?

CS: Well, we had to fall out every morning.

SH: Okay.

CS: And every evening, and they counted us. Everyone had to be accounted for and, if anyone was missing, that created a problem, that created a problem, and so, they kept track of every barracks and every single one that had to be taken care of. ... Now, when they had the big escape, that was really [something]. Well, I wasn't there then, but, boy, that cost the Commandant his job and everything else and whatnot. ...

SH: Who was the ranking Allied officer?

CS: ... We had a [British] group captain, which is equivalent to a colonel in ours, and we were with that ranking officer. Now, ... as I said, we went with the British to the naval compound and that was up north. We went up north and that was not too far from Lubeck there, and we were very fortunate, because Red Cross parcels had been stored in Lubeck and they were able to provide some transportation from Lubeck to our area that was there. ... Then, in the last month of that time, when the Allies were moving, then, they moved us out of that camp and, basically, for that last month, we were on the countryside, just living on the countryside. ... But, we had walking sticks, April, in springtime, weather was good and [we were] sleeping out in [the country]. ... There was a little close encounter with one of the guards. I can remember, distinctly, one, where we were going out to try to grab some hay or some straw to put on the ground and this guard was right there and he just leveled his gun and shot the guy right in his thigh. ... It looked like he just tripped, you know, but he was just like you and me, that close, ... but you just run, that's it, and you forget about it. I don't know what happened there, but, now, ... they were planning, as I said, to march us into Lubeck, which is where they had a prison, and the group captain absolutely refused to have that. ... He said, if they did that, they would be responsible, when the war was over, for having done that criminal act, because, I mean, that could still be bombed, that place, and he didn't want to go into any concentrated area, better to be out in the open. ... That was the way it was, and, eventually, as I said, we got into a farm area and waited and, lo and behold, coming up a farm road were two big tanks, two British tanks, that are liberating us, you know, liberating us, and the tanks, the men [who were] driving tanks, they were sergeants. You don't have them, but the German officer, who was a major at that, he was still the nominal [leader], he handed over his sword to one of the sergeants.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes, and then, of course, as always happens, there is liberation of equipment, looting taking place. Prisoners went into towns, taking, looting, taking cars. Some of them got cars, started heading back ... toward France in there, and I was very conservative. "Oh, this is terrible," you know, and somebody had liberated a big fire engine, a big hook and ladder fire engine, and he'd come reeling into the farm area with this blanging. I don't know what they did with it. [laughter] I thought, "Well, that's terrible, what we've done to these people." I thought it was. We should have been more respectful, but I guess I was pretty square. [laughter]

SH: When you were in *Luft III*, did you hear any of the American airplanes going overhead?

CS: Oh, yes, oh, yes, and we used to get [news], I don't know who had the radio set, so [that] you could get British ...

SH: Really?

CS: Oh, yes. Now, the Germans would post notices on what was taking place, but the BBC, ... that was more up-to-date and, daily, there was a time, along around lunchtime, that there would be someone that would come into the barracks and we'd come in to the hallway and we'd get what had taken place and everything else that was happening. Yes, so, we did have [news]; we were conscious of up-to-date events, yes.

SH: Were you able to send or receive any letters? You talked about the Red Cross packages.

CS: ... We had, like, sheets of paper, which could be folded up and which were then to be mailed as letters. I got one letter from Maureen. I think I got it near, in January, but it had been written in October, and she told me that we were going to have a child in December and that was all I knew. ... When I landed, after being liberated, and then, getting into Camp Lucky Strike, and then, waiting and, finally, getting onboard ship and [being] transported home and getting into New York City, and then, trying to get a phone and whatnot, I knew that I would have, if everything [went] well, a child of six months, didn't know whatever sex it would be, or anything, and that's where it was. I called up and I got my mother-in-law and she said I just [missed Maureen]. "Well, what was [the baby]?" ... "Well, no, Maureen said I was not to say anything," and [I said], "Where is she?" "She's out shopping." [laughter]

SH: She did not know you were coming home.

CS: No, no. ...

SH: You did not have a chance to send a telegram or anything.

CS: No, you'd have no communication.

SH: I thought they would at least let you telegraph.

CS: No, but she did come while I was on the phone and I did learn that [I had a son], and she had had that child baptized in the Greek Catholic Church. She said, "Well, we're Greek Catholics, have him baptized." He's now, what is he, sixty-some, three, four?

JS: Well, honey, you have to go back to the year he was born and figure it out from there, '44. He was born in December of '44. ...

SH: He is sixty-four.

CS: Well, he'll be sixty-four, won't he, in December?

JS: Yes, in December.

CS: Yes, just sixty-three. He's the oldest. ...

SH: When you were in *Luft III*, they had the different activities, like the orchestra. How did you celebrate the holidays? Also, how did the Germans treat you?

CS: Well, I'll tell you. Now, Christmas is the only, really, holiday that we had and the cook wanted to have a special thing. Now, when we had first landed and we'd gotten into their room, ... the cook had prepared something nice for the two new people. ... He made a cake. He made a cake out of biscuit flour.

JS: You said he pounded the biscuits.

CS: Yes, pounded the biscuits into flour and made a frosting of margarine and powdered milk and sugar, you can make that, and that was a cake and they cut a little piece there for us and ... he wanted to give us that. I could barely eat it. It was so [bad, I was] nearly gagging on it. [laughter] Well, at Christmas, he made that cake.

SH: Again?

CS: Oh, well, I'll tell you, that piece, which was, maybe, ... it would be about like this, a slice.

SH: About two inches by an inch.

CS: Two inches, yes. I cut that in three ... pieces, make that last. That was delicious, oh, my, oh, my.

SH: How times had changed.

CS: Oh, times had changed, yes. Now, that big pot, we never would boil a skin[ned potato]. We never peeled the skin, and those potatoes, ... they always cooked on a communal stove in the thing and, ... some of the times, people saw them, how dark those potatoes were, but we saved all the skins and we had an "in" with one of the kitchen help.

SH: Was the kitchen help German?

CS: No, no, they were Allies, but they were not officers. They were non-coms, but one of our men in our room, he had an "in" with him. He said, ... "I have this garden and I need those skins for fertilizing the garden there."

JS: Compost.

CS: Yes, there, and he would get [skins] regularly. ... In the kitchen there, they would peel a lot of things there. He would get nice, big buckets full of skins, but that would not go into his garden; that would go into our pot. [laughter] Oh, my, that was ...

JS: But, you cleaned them first.

CS: Yes, oh, yes. The stooges had to do that. You had to clean them, get every eye out or rotten spot out. I've cleaned a lot of peels on that, but I also enjoyed having them, and that pot, why, that was a blessing, yes, anyway.

SH: You said there was a combination of guards that you had to be aware of. What did you mean by that?

CS: Well, there was a certain sergeant that seemed to be a principal sergeant amongst the German guards and, if he happened to be in there and if they happened to have another officer or whatnot, ... somehow, the combination, that might suggest there would be a search there, and they did have some searches that were there.

SH: What were they looking for, your radio?

CS: Well, I don't know. ... Well, they were looking for possible escape materials.

JS: Tunnels.

CS: ... Actually, there was a tunnel, even though it was not used. There was another tunnel, after that great escape, and the man that was in my room was involved with that tunnel making. I didn't know it. I mean, you're going there and whatnot, ... but it was under the theater, under the theater. ... When we were being moved out, some of the people wanted to stay in that tunnel, and then, be rescued by the Russians, and the British principal officer denied them that right. He said that they could, Germans were that way, ... if you lost a certain number, then, you would kill a certain number, and so, some people who were not in[volved], totally innocent, might lose their lives because these people would have the benefit of being saved, that were there.

SH: Did you have any input, as an American officer, in these decisions or discussions?

CS: Oh, no. You're just a little flunky. [laughter] They're all officers, everybody's an officer. ... Of course, the British, they went up in rank automatically, you see, up to a certain stage, so,

... so many of them were flight lieutenants, which is the equivalent of captain, but, in our service, there was no automatic promotion. I went in, I was a second lieutenant, I came out a second lieutenant. I could have, maybe, stayed in a month or so and pushed it for [a promotion]. No, I was glad to get out. ... No, there was no [consultation]. I don't know what was being done on the higher-ups.

SH: How many Americans were there in *Luft III*? How many more British were there? Were there Australians? Were there Polish?

CS: Oh, in the North Compound, where we were ...

SH: After you moved up.

CS: Yes, our compound, which is, I call, a British compound, but they were Canadians, South Africans. ... Any of the British Empire people, they were considered the British, British Empire. Now, Americans, the Central Compound, East Compound, West Compound, they were pretty much a bunch of [Americans], and they had senior officers, too. In fact, I think one of the senior officers flew in ... and [was] allowed to be captured, to take over.

SH: Really?

CS: I think so, but I'm not [sure]. ... I think he had a general rank. Most of the highest rank would have been, for the British, group captain, which is equivalent to our colonel.

SH: Were there any Jewish flyers, that you were aware of, and were they treated any differently?

CS: Yes, they were [there], oh, yes, oh, yes. No, they weren't treated differently. ... My daughter, one of my daughters, she's in the TV business and she works for the woman's channel [Lifetime?] and she's in the business end. She says she arranges deals. She had an interesting career. She went to college as a theater major. [laughter] Well, you know the plans of theater majors, you know, and, when she graduated, there was ... nothing, nothing. She just came home and she was the only child, in a sense, that wasn't, with a college degree, had nothing. ... That summer, we did see a notice in the paper, ... this was one of the Iowa papers, that they were looking for Iowans to serve as nannies in New York City. New York City's right, you know, in the theater. ... She went as a nanny and she lived as a nanny and worked. She eventually got to be a nanny to a big-time ...

JS: Phil Hartman, Phil Hartman of Saturday Night Live, and his wife. ...

SH: I am sorry, who?

CS: Hartman.

SH: Okay.

CS: Yes, the one whose wife killed him. She killed Hartman there, but ... they went to LA and she went with them, too, and [as] a nanny. ... Then, she never got along well with ... the wife, and, as I said, eventually, the wife killed Hartman there, but our daughter knew the kids, as a nanny, in that household. But, she then worked her way, ... as a replacement and whatnot, and got into this and got into that and she's doing extremely well. She lives in Santa Monica and, anyway, ... when we had a *Stalag Luft* reunion, the fiftieth reunion ...

JS: '95?

CS: Anyway, she came down, with a camera and a crew of people, and did interviews, everything, and, subsequently, went to other places and has a wonderful video, *For You the War Is Over*, she calls it. ... I had her send [John] Archibald, [a Rutgers classmate of Dr. Sloca], a copy. So, if you ever see Archibald, you can see that copy on it there.

SH: I will have to ask him for that.

CS: Yes, yes. ... I'm in it there.

SH: Really?

CS: Yes. ... Well, they're all ex-prisoners. ...

SH: It must be extremely interesting, though.

CS: Well, if you're interested, ... you certainly can. Arch would certainly share it with you, and I don't know how I got started on that.

SH: You were going to tell me about how Jewish prisoners of war were treated.

CS: Oh, Jewish, yes. Well, there's one of those Jewish prisoners of war who was being interviewed on her thing, and what was he, dear? ...

JS: Well, he said that some people over there would have chocolate or they would have stockings ...

CS: Used for trading, you know. ...

JS: ... For privileges, and he decided, when he got to Italy or wherever, that he would just, instead of that, he would just keep condoms, and so, he had a lot of them. ... He knew that, when you went up on a mission, sometimes, people would steal your stuff while you were gone. So, he just pushed them into his flight clothes and carried them with him, because he wanted to use them for trading later. Well, the plane was ...

CS: Well, he got shot down.

JS: Yes, and he bailed out, and I think he lost his legs, didn't he?

CS: I don't know.

JS: It was really bad, but, anyway, as he was coming down, he thought that, he said, "I'm going to die and, oh, my God, they're going to take my effects and send them home to my mother and she's going to look at all these ..."

CS: This Jewish boy with all these condoms.

JS: Yes, and she's going to say, "What kind of a little Jewish pervert did I raise?" It was really funny. [laughter]

CS: Yes, he's on that film.

JS: He's on Becky's DVD.

CS: Yes. So, yes, they were Jewish, and that created problems for some of them, when they thought that they would be interrogated and whatnot. ...

JS: I think he said they were all going to say they were Jewish. If they started to ask them, ... everyone on his crew was going to say they were Jewish.

CS: Yes. Anyway, no, ... well, I think maybe a lot of them merely said, "We're American," whatever it is. ...

SH: Were you interrogated alone or as a group? What kind of interrogation did you have?

CS: ... I got interrogated alone, by an officer, ... but I only spent about a week in that interrogation place in Budapest. Some of the people spent as much as thirty days and really got starved. I can remember, ... we had that group, when I was telling you we were getting ready to be moved, and I shared a piece of, like, crust of bread with some people, a man that hadn't [eaten], and he was just there holding it, wouldn't want to lose a crumb. "Just like cake," he said, "just like cake," that kind of hunger. ... For some reason, some of those people, some of those flyers, were dealt [with] differently. ... We were fortunate. We would get a little dishwater-type soup there and [were] in isolation there, and it was a buggy place and everything. ...

SH: You were not physically beaten.

CS: No, no, no. ... I lost a lot of weight, you know, in the prison camp, but, when we were liberated and we got to where this big holding area [was], Camp Lucky Strike; have you ever heard of that, Camp Lucky Strike? That was there; all we had to do was to ...

JS: Sunbathe.

CS: Just sunbathe, eat, sunbathe. Here it was, May, beautiful weather in France, and eat, put on weight, and I said [that] I came home a bronze giant. [laughter] I mean, you know, you're

looking at coming home and the poor souls in Japan, you know, and everything, all emaciated, and here I am, deep tan, ... my waist's fine, I'm in great shape. So, I left and I am a bronze giant.
...

SH: Hard to elicit sympathy.

CS: Yes, ... and I always have measured myself against those poor souls in Japan. That's why, ... when people say, "Well, how was it?" [I reply], "Well, it wasn't bad," you see, in comparison to those people in the Pacific and the suffering that they had, oh, my, terrible, terrible, terrible. Of course, some of those B-29s got even. They were burning everything in Japan; even before the [atomic] bomb, they were.

JS: Firebombing

CS: The firebombing that was being done.

SH: How did the Germans react to news of that going on in Dresden and places like that? You were still in the camps when the firebombing of Dresden took place.

CS: Oh, that, I don't have any ...

SH: They did not ...

CS: No, no.

SH: You said the Germans would post news.

CS: No, ... and, besides, I wasn't that much interested.

SH: No, but I thought maybe the Germans retaliated in some way.

CS: Oh, they didn't have a means to retaliate.

SH: They did not withhold food or packages.

CS: Oh, well, they ... may have withheld packages sometimes, but they didn't have food; they didn't have food for themselves. ...

SH: Did the quality, and I hate to use that term, and the experience of the guards who ran your camps change over the course of your incarceration?

CS: Actually, ... a lot of the guards, most of the guards, maybe, were just old men.

SH: Were they?

CS: Yes. I felt sorry for them on the march. We were young, ... but, to have to carry a rifle, ... I don't know how many of those men fell by the wayside on that march.

SH: What kind of medical facilities did you have in *Luft III* and in the other camp?

CS: ... There was an area where, ... if you had some ailment, you could get some kind of treatment. I can remember, I don't know where I got the treatment of it, I got impetigo. That is an awful skin thing and I can remember that, wherever I was and what I did, whatever it is, they had me not only wash but shave my face and put this violet stuff [on]; was it Gentian violet or something?

JS: Yes, yes, yes.

CS: Yes. They didn't have any other kind of stuff, so, I went around with a kind of purple face, but that's the only ailment that I can recall.

SH: Was your treatment by Germans or by Allied physicians?

CS: I don't remember. I don't even remember. ...

SH: Was there a chaplain?

CS: There were chaplains. ... I don't recall ever going to services and I remember reading, in the American compounds, they had services. ... I've known certain people that were, I mean, amongst the POWs. I subscribe to *Ex-POW* [the American Ex-Prisoners of War newsletter], and [there were] people that were chaplains and whatnot ... and POWs there, ... but I don't recall, in the British compound, ever having a religious service.

SH: Was anyone ever put in solitary confinement?

CS: Well, they probably were. ... It wasn't like *The Great Escape*, where Steve McQueen got put into [solitary confinement]. He wasn't in there, Steve. [laughter] Actually, the picture there of the buildings and everything else, very, very authentic, very much so, and that Fourth of July celebration had some reality to it. ... That was before my time, where there were American prisoners in that compound. Eventually, those Americans were moved out. ... They had made drinks and they celebrated the Fourth on that. So, that was an interesting little bit in that movie on it.

SH: You were in a barracks-type of building in *Luft III*.

CS: Yes.

SH: How big was the building and how many people were in there?

CS: Well, it would be a big one. Now, ... as I said, we had eight people in our room and triple-deckers and there would be, in that barracks, I would imagine, six or, oh, maybe eight, and

maybe more, of such rooms. They were smaller rooms ... and a higher officer might have one with another officer there. ...

SH: How did you communicate with the other parts of the compound, or did you? Maybe not you personally, but would you get reports of what was going on?

CS: Well, wherever that reporting was done, it was done by people that were in better contact with life than I was. [laughter] ... My life was pretty regimented. You got up in the morning, you had a cup of coffee, and maybe, I don't know, if we had a piece of toast, but lunch is a piece of toast, but, with the British, British, you know, tea time, ... at four o'clock, we had a tea. We had "a spot of tea," that is, there, and then, we had a supper. So, that was nice, yes. As they said, "Boy, you have four squares a day," ... and I learned to eat British style. You eat with the left hand and you can use your right hand as a pusher. Now, you don't take and switch forks, you know. You eat with two hands there. [laughter]

SH: Did you keep in contact with any of the people after the war?

CS: I kept in contact, for some time, with my bombardier and, sorry to say, everything went whatever it went. Yes, you get caught up.

SH: How were you treated as a POW, once you were liberated? You were transported immediately from this Lubeck area to the Lucky Strike camp.

CS: ... Actually, we waited until, there ... were the procedures ... to get us. So, trucks were brought in. We got on trucks and, ... eventually, I think that we were brought into Brussels, Belgium, [the] British area, and I can remember, it was V-

JS: -E Day.

CS: V-E Day, there, in Brussels. ... We had been given a clean uniform, and so, we weren't scrungy and dirty, and we're only a few Americans there and we were in this hotel. ... We said we needed rooms and they said, "Well, it's only majors and up," this second lieutenant, and there was one of these kind of lawyers there, amongst the exes, [ex-POWs], "We went out there and we fought and we served and, now, we can't even get a room." ... Eventually, I don't know what it is, but they put us in a room ... in this hotel, a huge room, and I had one and the bombardier had one, great, big room in there, all by ourselves. ... Well, we washed up a little bit, and then, we went down to the bar, on V-E Day, and everybody there [was] buying drinks, you know, and we were right there, you know, and had just fought and suffered. ... I remember a man from Rutgers, who had been in the guidance area at Rutgers, at the time, yes, at that V-E Day [celebration] and he was there at the bar, with a beautiful, big blonde, and we exchanged [greetings], you know. I recognized him and we were talking, and then, ... when I said, "You want me, when I get home, to call your wife and tell her you were here?" "Oh," he had said, ... "Boy, I tried to get over there. [It is] just things got thin; I just couldn't get there in time." [laughter]

JS: I'll bet.

SH: Do I dare ask what his name is?

CS: ... I don't remember, dear.

JS: You didn't intend to call his wife and tell her.

CS: No. He said, "Yes, do, do," but I didn't. ... Well, I got caught up with trying to go to graduate school, ... but I remember that. ... That was the highlight of that day. The next day, they put us on a train and took us to Camp Lucky Strike, where we were one of thousands. There [in Brussels], we had been [in] really nice, big [rooms]; now, we're one of thousands. ...

SH: Back to living in the barracks.

CS: Well, in tents. Yes, we were in tents, and some of the people got brave and said, "Oh, I'm going to Paris. I'm going to see [Paris]," and, me, I'm so conservative, "I'll miss the boat," you know.

JS: There would have been another boat. [laughter]

CS: "I'll miss the boat." [laughter]

SH: Which boat did you come back on? Do you remember the name of the ship?

CS: No. ...

JS: It was coming this way.

SH: Was there any sort of a celebration when you hit New York Harbor, when you came back?

CS: Well, I think people blew their horns and whatnot, whatever it is. You see the Statue of Liberty and everything, ... but we had to be processed and whatnot, and we didn't immediately have access to a telephone, but I think, I don't know, maybe a day, maybe the same day, I don't know. ...

SH: Were you given a leave?

CS: Oh, yes. ... I think I got a sixty-day leave; no, maybe thirty days. I don't know. ...

JS: Well, you had to have enough time for the bombs to be dropped and everything.

CS: Yes.

SH: Were you still on leave when the war ended in Japan?

CS: Yes, yes. I got an extra leave of fifteen days or something, and then, it was getting close to [the beginning of the school year]. It was September, ... but college, at that time, may have been now on quarters, because the next semester wasn't going to start there until October, that is, there, and that's when I got discharged, in September. ... I got in contact with my professor there and the nice thing about the professor is, he says, "I'm having a house guest from Cornell, one of the professors there." ...

SH: This is McGinn.

CS: Yes. ... "And I want you to come over, so [that] you can meet him." So, I actually was admitted to the graduate school even before I applied, because it was kind of arranged in that way. ... The professor that I got at Cornell was a great professor.

SH: Did you ever entertain the thought of staying in the military?

CS: Never. [laughter]

SH: I had to ask.

CS: Never, never. [laughter]

SH: When you came back to the States, was your wife and child in Rahway?

CS: Yes, yes. She was living there, with [her family at] home, and, of course, I came there. ... They had a place in Michigan. Her dad had been from Michigan and they had a lovely, old country home in Old Mission, Michigan, on the peninsula that, it juts out from Traverse City, and they would go there every summer. Now, her father worked for Merck and he would get a three-week vacation. He'd come up there. ... So, we went, very shortly after, in a car. Her mother and our family, and she had a sister and brother, we all went up to Michigan and spent a summer there and, as I said, I had time off, leave, and, eventually, I used to go there every summer. ... In fact, they had a house, which we called a cottage, that we had, and I would spend summers there, until things then changed.

SH: Would you like to talk a little bit about your career? You finished at Cornell, got your PhD there.

CS: Well, I'll tell you, girlie, ... I went to a school; when I finished Cornell, I had two job offers and, of course, Cornell, I would have loved to have stayed on as an instructor, oh, "high above Cayuga's Waters" there. ... I got an offer. ... I didn't want to go to these rinky-dink colleges that are there, [no] rinky-dink colleges. I said, "I'm just going to write to universities," and I wrote to a hundred universities, put all my stuff in there. I got one job offer. I think it was an offer from the University of Montana. [laughter] He said, "We have lovely springs, but they're short summers," thirty-six hundred dollars. That's now 1950.

SH: Job market is a little tight at that point.

CS: Well, I'm telling you, ... I did buy a new car for fifteen hundred dollars, so, I mean, inflation has taken its toll. But, there was another little college. ... The head of that department, it was a two-member department, he was the head and he, of course, was a PhD and they had a master's and he felt that he'd like to have another PhD on it. ... He, apparently, had circulated to different universities [for] possible candidates, and that's how he got my name. I never applied to that place and you might call it a rinky-dink college, ... but that was in Pennsylvania, yes. It was out here in Annville, Pennsylvania, not too far from Harrisburg.

JS: Lebanon Valley College.

CS: Lebanon Valley College, that is, there, and for thirty-five hundred dollars, and I thought, "Well, ... for a hundred dollars, to go clear to Montana? ... I'll take less and I'll be near our family," you know, I mean, all the family in New Jersey, my family in New Jersey, and so, I went to Lebanon Valley College, where, eventually, I met her.

SH: Her being?

JS: It was meant to be.

CS: Where it was meant to be. ...

SH: Was she on faculty there?

CS: Oh, no, she was...

JS: I was a student.

CS: No, she was a student, but ... I had a lot of work in drama, so, ... I became head of the drama group that put on several plays a year and everything. ... In due time, when she was there, she was very good in reading and whatnot and she became a star in some of my plays. That's how I got to know her, there, ... and she was in my classes, too. ... I taught Shakespeare and I taught some other classes, and so, I got to know her as well as I knew other students that are there. ... But, after I became a widower, I don't know. Anyway, ... at that time, you were not spoken for.

JS: That's true.

CS: Yes, and I tried to take her to a theater.

JS: Summer theater.

CS: Summer theater, out here in the ...

JS: Lancaster area.

CS: In near Philly, and she agreed, and then, she backed out, and then, she backed out, and after; oh, well, you don't want to tell her all your story, Jo?

JS: Tell her; she's not interviewing me.

CS: ... But, in time...

SH: You won.

JS: He convinced me to marry him and his three children.

CS: Yes.

SH: I wanted to ask how many children you have.

CS: Yes, by then, we had three; my first wife had three children.

JS: And he thought that his family was complete.

CS: And I had it pretty rough there for awhile. I was teaching school, I was directing plays ...

JS: At night.

CS: At night, and I needed babysitters, and she was involved, and she'd get me babysitters at night, that was there.

JS: From our dorm. [laughter]

CS: And we got a little better acquainted on some of those, but things took time and she was, as I said, the star in some of my plays and, eventually, we were married in, what, '54, hon?

JS: Yes. We just had our anniversary. We've been married fifty-four years.

SH: Congratulations. I understand there are more than three children in your family now.

CS: ... Well, we had six.

SH: If my math is right, that is nine

CS: Yes, and the youngest is, what, forty-four, honey, Anna?

JS: She was born in '66.

CS: Forty-two.

JS: Yes. Well, yes, Steve was born in '44 and Anna was born in '66.

CS: And we have eighteen grandchildren, but no great-grandchildren. ... We do have one grandson who's married, ... but they said they're going to invest in animals first, before they have children. Then, we have another grandson who is engaged to be married, but he's in law school, and they're waiting ... and she works in different things. ... Then, we have a granddaughter ...

JS: Who's going to be married this summer.

CS: Who's going to be married this summer, and, in fact, she's going to be coming up next week, I think, to introduce her husband-to-be, because we're not going to the wedding. We're not going to Florida. ... It was bad enough when we went up to Springfield, Massachusetts, to that wedding, and I thought, "That's it, I'm too old," and I am too old. [laughter]

SH: Did you stay at Lebanon Valley College?

CS: Not when ... I married the student.

JS: That was a no-no.

CS: Oh, yes. ...

JS: Well, they gave us a choice. One of us had to leave and I didn't finish my last semester, because I figured he needed to work.

CS: Well, I resigned and they were glad to have my resignation, and I had some touchy moments. I had to get another job and that other job didn't quite work out. ...

JS: Well, you were there a year.

CS: And then, I got another job, which, then, I got a little extra money and more rank, you know, assistant, associate, full professor. ... From that Pennsylvania college, I was at Waynesburg College, in Pennsylvania there. These were little, church-related colleges.

JS: Rinky-dink schools.

CS: Rinky-dinks, yes, they were. [laughter] ...

JS: And we were having babies.

CS: ... I got an invitation to become a dean at even a more rinky-dink school in Iowa, and that was a very much learned job and I was there for a fair amount of years.

JS: No mountains in Iowa, and I said, "I can't stand this. I've got to have mountains." He says ...

CS: "Well, we'll be there three or four years."

JS: "Four years," you said, "and then, we'll come home to the mountains." We were there forty-four years. [laughter]

CS: Yes. Well, it was an interesting experience there. ... That college eventually folded and, by that time, I was in my fifties and I thought, ... "I'm not marketable," a fifty-year-old person, you know. ... I guess, the next place is that I should be in the beyond. So, what I did, I went into public school work, and do you know? I've developed what I consider to be the best K-12 program ... for the teaching of reading and language that there is in existence. I tried to get the education people at Rutgers interested. They don't know what's going on in public schools. ... I know what's going on in public schools, because I went into the public schools.

SH: Where did you teach in public schools, or were you administrative?

CS: I taught in Iowa.

SH: In Iowa?

CS: Yes.

SH: Okay.

CS: ... I was overqualified. High schools wouldn't consider me, "Oh, you're too qualified," but things were tough.

SH: Did you go into administration?

CS: No, no, I went into the classroom, but I developed a K-12 program ... and published it, the K-12 program, and it is the best program. But, the people at the Graduate School of Education, they were talking about this and that, and then, they publish a paper or something that tells them about this or that. ... They have deans and that and this, and there's nothing being done in the public schools. They continue to crank out [students]; two-thirds of the kids can't really ... write and think. ... At a minimum, a child has to know the toughest subject that there is for reading, the alphabet, and they don't test for the alphabet. I know, I've checked on the things. I couldn't even get them to test. I have a test in which they can determine, and I've used this test in higher grades than the kindergarten or second or third grade. ...

JS: And he used it in fifth grade, when he was teaching fifth grade.

CS: Yes. ...

SH: Did any of your children become educators?

JS: Yes.

CS: I have two daughters who are teachers. ... Both of them were full-time. The younger one is part-time now, because she has little children and she just does some subbing, but the other one is full-time.

JS: She has her master's degree and, now, she's working for her national accreditation.

CS: Our kids are degreed. My son, the oldest one there, he graduated Yale Law, became a hotshot lawyer out in LA, and then, when he got divorced, he had to give his wife a million and he kept a million, and he lives out here in Washington Crossing. Have you ever heard of Washington Crossing?

SH: In New Jersey?

JS: Pennsylvania.

CS: In Pennsylvania, ... where Washington crossed the Delaware. They cross the Delaware every Christmas Day. They do. [laughter] ... Anyway, he was a big-time lawyer, and my second daughter ...

JS: First daughter.

CS: My first daughter, she got her PhD.

JS: Oh, she went to Bryn Mawr, and then, to Georgetown. ... Well, it's hard to remember where they all went.

SH: I was going to say, maybe we should introduce you to the tape.

JS: Oh, well, that's all right. ... I'm just wife number two.

SH: This is Mrs. Joan ...

JS: It's Joan, [pronounced "Joanne"]. ...

CS: But it's spelled J-O-A-N, but it's Joan.

JS: I've explained that all my life, you can imagine.

SH: Oh, I am sure.

JS: ... Sue went to Bryn Mawr, and then, she went to Georgetown and she got her ... PhD from Georgetown and her MLS from Maryland.

CS: And she works for the government.

JS: Yes, Department of the Interior.

CS: Yes, Department of the Interior, been there and she's waiting to retire.

JS: Counting the days until she can retire. [laughter]

CS: She is an extremely gifted child. ...

JS: And then, Molly, who was only two when her mother died.

CS: Yes.

JS: She's a chef at the convention center in Philadelphia.

CS: She graduated Temple, Phi Beta Kappa in English, and she's a chef. [laughter] She is, in this great, big [convention center], oh, my, the jobs they do, oh, my, it's staggering.

JS: ... Martha is in Portland, Oregon.

CS: And she runs ...

JS: She owns, with another woman, they own their own business, the Collins Group. It's a ...

CS: Fundraising group. They're actually the leading fundraising group in Oregon and Washington, yes, and she works the Oregon office and her partner works the Washington, Seattle, one there. ... She was in theater, too. [laughter]

JS: Very big in theater, and her children are, too, so, that's nice.

CS: And then, Amelia, ... well, she's a ...

JS: A teacher.

CS: What's it, fifth grade or sixth grade now?

JS: Middle school, sixth, in Davenport, Iowa.

CS: And then, the nurse that went into service, she's ... head of intensive care at Keokuk Hospital in Iowa there, and they wanted her and she says, "Well, I have not had any work on intensive care." They said, "We'll teach you all that." ... They wanted her for her administrative work. She had moved up the ranks, you know, in dealing with doctors and everything else.

JS: She came out a captain. She's not intimidated by anybody.

CS: ... Yes, they wanted her because they have to collect money from three different states, you know.

JS: Iowa, Illinois and Missouri.

CS: ... Yes, they're right in [the] place [where all three meet], yes, ... and then, the next one is my son, who used to deliver papers, and he eventually went into newspaper work. [laughter] He is now an assistant managing editor for a big daily in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and he eventually may well move up some day, he's in his forties, to be a full managing editor, but he's gone through the different ranks.

JS: ... He cannot find people to hire who can write a sentence. ...

CS: And then, as I said, Rebecca, who's that next one, she's over there in ...

JS: California.

CS: California, Santa Monica.

JS: She never married, because all men are jerks.

CS: But, she adopted a little girl, ... and then, the other one is a teacher ... who adopted, too. So, of our eighteen grandchildren, three are adopted. Isn't it terrible, some people don't want to have children? ...

JS: Well, Lee's adopted, too, so, we have four adopted.

CS: Oh, Lee, yes, Lee's adopted. Yes, he was Vietnamese. My son ... went to war in Vietnam. He met a Vietnamese girl. He brought her here, but she had a Vietnamese son, a young [son] there, and they adopted him. ...

JS: He's in his forties now.

CS: Yes, I believe that ...

JS: Yes, but all our kids had to work hard. You can't put them through college if they don't have good grades, ... nine of them.

CS: I have decided opinions about what's in academics, because that's my life, and that's why I said I feel no compunction to tell McCormick ... they're doing nothing at Rutgers, and at Harvard, but he's just following the Harvards and the Yales and the Princetons. Rutgers is never quite up there ... and I told him that in a letter. I said, "You're just following ... those Ivies, you know. Rutgers could somehow be a leader, if they just didn't follow the [Ivies]." Well, what do you do? McCormick, why, he never even answered the letter.

SH: Oh, that is too bad.

CS: Oh, that's all right; he's too busy.

SH: Thank you both so much for having me here and letting me come today and talk with you. I hope that there are a lot of memories that we have dredged up that perhaps did not get on tape that you will add.

CS: I hope not. [laughter] ... I'm putting this behind me.

SH: Thank you very much.

CS: Well, thank you for your patience, my gosh. What do you have to do, seventeen thousand, you had to do, or something?

SH: No, the program has done over 750 now. I did not do them all, no, sir. Thank you so much.

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

Reviewed by Julia Gourley 10/10/08
Reviewed by Priscilla Fasoro 10/10/08
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 11/11/08
Reviewed by Sandra Stewart Holyoak 11/24/08
Reviewed by Charles Sloca 12/30/08