

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH RICHARD L. SCOTT, JR.

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

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

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and

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TRANSCRIPT BY

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Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Richard L. Scott, Jr., in Brielle, New Jersey, on April 3, 2009, with Shaun Illingworth and ...

Brian Dib: ... Brian Dib.

SI: Mr. Scott, thank you very much for having us here today.

Richard L. Scott, Jr.: You're very welcome.

SI: To begin, could you tell us where and when you were born?

RS: July 8, 1924, Brooklyn, New York.

SI: What were your parents' names?

RS: Myrtle Scott and Richard Lee Scott.

SI: Can you tell us a little bit about your father's family background, where the family came from, if there was any immigration history on that side?

RS: Yes. We go way back. ... In Central New York, about twenty-five, thirty miles above Poughkeepsie, about fifteen miles above Hyde Park, is a little town called Tivoli, not too far from Rhinebeck and Red Hook in Dutchess County. My father was born and brought up in Tivoli, New York. ... It is on the Hudson River. ... My grandfather was a schoolteacher in Saugerties and, every day, he took his horse and wagon, he went down to the ferry, crossed the river and went to school and taught school there. ... Then, when the river froze over, which it did most of the time during that period, he went across on the ice. They had a sled and they crossed on the ice. So, he did very well that way. ... He never learned to drive; he always had a horse and wagon. So, when I went up to visit him, the horse and [wagon] was there.

SI: You knew him growing up.

RS: Yes, yes. Do you have any questions about [that]? That's my grandfather.

SI: What did your father do for a living?

RS: He was the division manager of Electrolux Corporation, [a manufacturer of home appliances].

SI: He had gone to school at Syracuse University.

RS: He went to school at Syracuse and he had a problem. He was so mad about my mother, crazy about my mother, that he dropped out and married her and he couldn't wait, so, he didn't. ... He didn't finish his education at all, and so, he got a job selling Electrolux in Brooklyn. My mother lived in Brooklyn at the time. ...

SI: It is interesting that your father attended college, as most men in his generation did not. Did he ever talk about his days at Syracuse or why he went to college?

RS: Just [that] the family went to college. My grandfather went to college and he was a teacher and ... one of my uncles graduated from Syracuse, and I was never told what happened to my Uncle Henry. He was a concert pianist, went to Carnegie Hall and Town Hall, [a performing arts theater in New York City], and so forth, and played there. He made his living going to colleges with programs and they would make money on his program, and he did very well. He had a small estate on the Hudson River, south of Rhinebeck.

SI: Had your grandfather also gone to Syracuse?

RS: I don't know what school he went to.

SI: Okay.

RS: He probably went to a two-year; well, now, I forget what they called it, for teaching.

SI: A normal school.

RS: Normal school; I'm guessing. That's what my mother did. So, what else would you like to know?

SI: Where was your mother's family from?

RS: Her family was from the same area. They lived in [the] Red Hook area, which was very close to Tivoli, and that's how my father met my mother, when she went up to visit some of the relatives in that area. ... It was all ... along the Hudson River there, and so, that's where they met. ... She came up in the summertime, sometimes, and so forth. So, that was the meeting part, because she lived in Brooklyn. However, my grandfather (her father) lived in Manasquan, was born and brought up in Manasquan, [Monmouth County, New Jersey], and he moved. He got a job in Brooklyn. So, I forget how he met my ... grandmother, but there was a meeting somewhere and he married her. ... When they got married, they lived in Brooklyn, in a brown[stone] house, [in a] very nice section of Brooklyn, at least used to be, at the time that they lived there. ... He worked in New Jersey. He ... commuted. It was a short distance; [I] think it was Jersey City, [thirteen miles northwest of Brooklyn], but I'm not sure, and I'm trying to remember what he did. ... They were very vague about these things, or maybe my memory's very vague, but I never really got it straight exactly what he did, a very nice guy, person, and I enjoyed him very much.

SI: Your mother went to a normal school.

RS: Mother went to a normal school and she taught for a couple of years, and then, my parents moved to Caldwell, New Jersey. It was a great move that they moved, because guess who else ... lived in Caldwell, New Jersey? my wife.

SI: Okay, good.

RS: She was like "the girl next-door." That's what she was. ... She lived about a mile from where we were, but she was like the girl from next-door. ... I met her in church, I'll tell you ... and the best thing I ever did.

BD: In reference to both your father and mother's side, was there a story of their immigration to the United States?

RS: Okay. My grandfather, Stout, his name is; ... if you know the history around here, the Stout Family is well-known and there's a burial [ground] up here (Monmouth County) where ... some of my relatives are. ... This particular section, part of the family, came over [and a] rather interesting thing happened. She was from Holland, this lady, and she's very much up in ... part of the history of Monmouth County. They had a shipwreck and everybody got off and everyone was okay, but the husband of Penelope Prism [Penelope van Princis], I think her name was, Penelope Prism, was very sick. ... [They] were on Sandy Hook and some hostile Indians came over and killed her husband and thought they killed her, but the Lenni Lenape Indians, who are very friendly, came and rescued her. ... Of course, her husband was dead. She has this big gash in her head all her life, which she managed to cover pretty much with her hair, and then, the Indians kept her for quite awhile. ... In 1820, [1640s] I don't know, it was all within a year or two, a Richard Stout, who was a leader ... in Middletown, one of the council people or something, I forget what--he would be equivalent to, like, a mayor, at the time--and he rescued [Penelope] from them, Indians. He didn't rescue her, because she was doing fine with the Indians, and he married her and she had eleven children. So, there are lots of Stouts, and my grandfather was a part of that family, yes. [Editor's Note: While sailing from Holland to New Amsterdam in the 1640s, the ship carrying Penelope van Princis and her husband shipwrecked on the coast of what is now Monmouth County. Penelope remained with her wounded husband on the shore while the rest of the survivors searched for help, but they were discovered by hostile Native Americans who killed her husband and partially scalped her. She survived by pretending to be dead and was later found by friendly Native Americans who nursed her back to health. They later delivered her to New Amsterdam, where she eventually married Richard Stout. Her story has gained folklore status, but the details vary from source to source.]

SI: Your family has very deep roots in New York and New Jersey.

RS: ... Yes, yes, very definitely so, and so, that's [the family], and most of the Scott Family came over in the early nineteenth century. ... There's a burial ground up in Tivoli, a nice, big burial ground, and quite a lot of our ancestors are buried there. ... I forget; this is important, because it was, oh, the name. Let me holler upstairs.

SI: Sure.

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Okay, great, go ahead.

RS: ... One of the Stouts, my grandfather wasn't, of course, but, in the family, his father married a Morris and she was related to some of the Morrises during the eighteenth century [involved in the] founding of the country. You've probably heard of Morris. Let's see, I'm trying to think of the names, but, anyway, ... these were very prominent in the development of our country during the George Washington era. So, that's our claim to fame, as far as the family's concerned. It's pretty much way back somewhere and it's hard to trace, but I have an eighty-six page booklet of my family history. So, that's why I'm a little more informed than maybe some people would be.

SI: Good.

BD: I understand your father was involved in World War I.

RS: Correct.

BD: Did he share any of his experiences in the war with you?

RS: He sure showed off that experience. I'll tell you, that was his ... claim to fame.

SI: Okay.

RS: Yes, and ... everybody knew. He was the only one in all the family and all, [and] so forth, ... and I pretty much was, too, as far as being in combat is concerned. ... He was a lieutenant and he ... blew that [up] to an extent where I [eventually] got to the point where, and he was in the infantry, ... one of the things I never wanted to do, never, never, never, [was] get in the infantry. You see, so, that was my major goal, to not get in the infantry, because of the horrible things he put together [in his stories], incredible, and the interesting thing was, he was never really in combat. He was at Pershing's headquarters. [Editor's Note: General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing served as Commander-in-Chief of the American Expeditionary Force in World War I.] ... He was a motorcycle driver and he would carry messages. You had to be an officer to do this. He would carry messages from headquarters to the front lines, to the regimental commanders, for example, and they're always back enough so [that] it isn't too bad. Of course, you always have artillery. ... He had all these stories, and [I thought], "No, thank you," which brings [up], maybe I'll run this in with you, one of our ancestors was part of the capture of Burgoyne in Saratoga, and he was a lieutenant. [Editor's Note: British General John Burgoyne surrendered to the American forces of General Horatio Gates at Saratoga, New York, on October 17, 1777.] ... So, we had a lieutenant in the Revolutionary War, and ... I'm trying to think of the name, his name, anyway, we had a lieutenant in the Civil War, and then, my father was a lieutenant in the First World War and I was a lieutenant in the Second World War. So, we have four lieutenants in the family; whoopdee-doo. [laughter] So, what else would you like to know?

SI: When he came back, was your father very involved in veterans' affairs, like the American Legion?

RS: I believe he belonged to the Veterans of Foreign Wars, that I'm sure of. All the rest of it, I'm not sure.

SI: Would you say he was active? Did he go to a lot of meetings?

RS: No, I don't think he was very active. ... His business was so demanding and ... he paid a lot for that, being so that when he finally became division manager, he just worked his tail off, and I didn't see a lot of him. ... Finally, as he got really involved, and so forth, and he had a lot of help, then, he had time to do things, and so forth.

SI: You were born in Brooklyn. When did the family make the move to Caldwell, New Jersey?

RS: Well, ... we're talking about two different families. ...

SI: I am asking about your family, your mother and father and you.

RS: You're talking about the Scott Family, okay. Shortly after, I think I was three years old--I think that's what you need--we moved to an upstairs of a house rented in Caldwell. ... When he became branch manager, then, he had enough money and he built a house in one of the better sections, I guess. ... Caldwell's all very nice, but this was a little bit better than another section, and so forth. He built a very nice house there and they named the street Cherry Lane, because ... we had a cherry tree on it and it was only one or two other houses on it. Meanwhile, of course, it grew. It was fine, and so, ... that was our [home], and I was thirteen when they moved [and] he built a bigger house. He spent all his money; he was not a "thrifty Scout." So, he built a bigger house on a couple acres and [it was a] big property. ... His claim to fame was World War I and ... his money he made. So, he spent it, spent it all. ...

SI: He built this second house in the middle of the Great Depression.

RS: It was 1938, yes, it was the middle [of the] Depression, but, what happened was, he was able to get really good men who couldn't find jobs to go out and sell Electrolux. ... In his prime, they had about four hundred salesmen in the State of New Jersey, and he made money and that was good.

SI: Going back to your earliest memories, do you have any memories about Brooklyn, growing up there?

RS: I was three years old when I left.

SI: Yes, okay. What about that first neighborhood in Caldwell? It sounds like it was sparsely populated.

RS: Where he built the house?

SI: Yes, when you first moved to Caldwell.

RS: When I first moved to Caldwell, we were in the upstairs of a very nice house in the nice part of [Caldwell]. Listen, ... Caldwell has all, mostly all, nice places; not everything, ... we did have a couple sections that weren't marvelous, but, mostly, if you had a house, it was very nice.

SI: In general, what were the neighborhoods like in Caldwell when you were growing up?

RS: Very nice neighborhoods, nice kids, and so forth. When spring came, there was a field on the other side, eventually, built houses on it, but, while I was a kid, there were no houses on it. ... So, we played football in the late summer and fall, and then, [in] spring, we played baseball, you know, this kind of thing, and then, [during] wintertime, ... there was a park down not too far from us. We skated and stuff like that.

SI: Okay.

RS: So, it was very nice, and we got in a little trouble once in awhile, nothing serious.

SI: Was there any organized activity for children or was it all pickup games?

RS: It was all pickup game stuff, no organized [games].

SI: Was there Boy Scouts, Little League or anything like that?

RS: I didn't get involved with Boy Scouts. I was deprived, in my opinion, at this point. ... My family knew nothing about Boy Scouts, so that it wasn't in the family. So, they didn't know. ... If there was anything else available, I didn't know about it, nor did my family, but the pickup games were great.

DB: At this time, you were going to elementary school in the local area.

RS: Yes. I walked to school. It was about a mile-and-a-half and ... that was normal, and it worked out fine.

SI: Which school did you first go to?

RS: Caldwell Elementary School and they had an elementary school. ... Then, they had another building which went up to eighth grade or something, and then, they had a high school, ninth through twelfth [grade].

SI: What did you think of your education in these early schools? Was there a particular subject you enjoyed? Did you think your teachers were good?

RS: I had problems learning to read, and so, that was a problem, but my family had money, so, I had tutors and I was fine. ... I'm an avid reader right now. I mean, I always have been. While the other guys were gambling in the service, I was reading stuff, mostly history.

SI: You described Cherry Lane as being just a couple of houses.

RS: Yes.

SI: Was the school very populated?

RS: They had normal-sized classes, and so forth. The town had ... maybe some five thousand people, or maybe it was more than that, maybe it was ten [thousand]. I don't remember. I wouldn't know that, but it wasn't a very big town. [It was seven thousand.]

SI: Okay.

RS: A small town.

SI: All right. It was more of a suburban upbringing than a rural upbringing.

RS: Suburban, definitely suburban.

SI: All right. Did you ever have the opportunity to travel beyond Caldwell with your family, to places like New York?

RS: Yes. I went to New York a lot, and the main reason was to visit my grandmother and grandfather in Brooklyn. ... My mother would take me, and when she would go to Loehmann's and A&S [department stores] and all those places, ... then, she'd go over to see the family and we'd go home. Usually, we'd take the subways and trains and things like that, and we'd park maybe in Montclair, and then, take the train there and go.

SI: Did you have any siblings?

RS: ... I had a sister (still living). ...

SI: The Great Depression started when you were in Caldwell. Do you remember how it impacted the town at first? Do you remember seeing any changes because of the Depression?

RS: I was oblivious to what that kind of thing [was]. All I know was, my father was really working hard, trying to work things out, and so forth. We were not affected at all by it, because [of his employment], as I mentioned before. So, it was fine.

SI: Your father's hours were never cut back or anything like that.

RS: No. They kept getting worse, because there was a vice-president ... who was in [the] New York office, a fellow by the name of Dietz. ... My father was scared of him. He would get there, "Now, Lee, you only had so many sales this week. What's going on there? ... You'd better get more sales," you know, and he was push, push, push, and it messed up his [father's] health to some extent, but he lived to be ninety, for what that was worth.

SI: He had a very long life.

RS: Yes, he had. I mean, our family is a long-lived family.

SI: Was the church very important to your family growing up?

RS: Yes, we went to church every week. ... I don't know how "important" you would call it.

SI: Was it a center of activity?

RS: No, we just went to church.

SI: Most of your activities seemed to center on going out with your friends and doing these sports and other activities.

RS: Yes. We didn't do an awful lot, come to think about it. We just went to school. You did your homework and you played after school with your friends, and so forth. That was what you did and didn't think anything of it and, as soon as I got old enough, when I turned thirteen, I started working around. ... I mowed the lawn, I did this and did that, and so on, and, oh, I did one thing I forgot to tell you. They had a Junior Essex Troop. This was [New Jersey] National Guard, Essex Troop, National Guard, ... with horses, and my family always had horses. That was important, for the family to have horses. So, I had a lot of activity with horses and we did a lot of riding, and so forth. So, that, I forgot all about that, yes. ... My father was very interested in [the] military, and so forth, so, I joined that, and I was in that for quite awhile. Then, I went to summer camps that were sponsored by the old colonel, ... he was a World War I colonel, who ran our Junior Essex Troop, and so, ... I got exposed to different summer camps and things from that.

SI: What would be involved in this troop? Would you be learning maneuvers?

RS: You'd get on the horse and you would do parade things around, and so forth. Basically, that was it. I don't think we did too much else. You might have done a little jumping, but I don't [recall]. I think some of the older people [might have], I don't think so, though. ... During the summertime; ... no, summertime, they didn't have it, because they had the summer camp, but, during good weather, we'd go out on some of the trails that they had around the area.

SI: Did they have a uniform?

RS: Oh, yes, the whole works.

SI: Okay. Did they play polo? I have heard that some of these troops organized polo teams.

RS: No, no. I did a little polo with our own horses, but it was called "broom polo." You had a basketball and a broom, and you actually played broom polo. So, I've done that, but that's about it.

BD: In reference to your high school experience, was it your plan to go to college afterwards?

RS: Absolutely. ... There was no question about it, I was going to college.

BD: Did you know that agriculture was the passion that you wanted to pursue or did that come up later?

RS: I picked it up. I spent a summer working at my cousin's farm up in New York State, and I said, "This is pretty nice." I liked it, and with the horses, ... and so forth, I liked to work, liked to do things, accomplish stuff. So, that was why I joined. My father was a little skeptical about it. ... He wanted me to come in business with him and go out and sell Electroluxs, and I didn't fight it or anything. ... I just went on, did what I wanted to do, and they didn't object sufficiently to keep me from doing it.

SI: Did you get involved in anything like the 4-H?

RS: No, no, because that wasn't until after, yes, when we managed a farm up in New York State. That's when I could have, but the children were much too small to even think about it, and I'm sure if we stayed there, for whatever reason, ... I'm sure we'd [have] gotten involved with that.

SI: You initially went to Caldwell High School, but you also went to Newark Academy, [a private day school then located in Newark's Roseville section].

RS: Yes.

SI: How long were you in Newark Academy?

RS: It was my last year, and the reason for it was my lack of working sufficiently, with a lot of "Cs" and some "Bs." ... We talked to Rutgers about it and they said, "From Caldwell High School, 'Cs' and 'Bs' will not do it for you." So, my father sent me to Newark Academy and, when I got there, I was absolutely snowed under. They were so far ahead of me. I mean, ... I see why they [Rutgers] made the statement they did. The difference between Caldwell High School and Newark Academy was like night and day, seriously, really. So, I had to spend two years there and I graduated with honors. I learned how to study and it worked out fine.

SI: Was it a day school or did you stay there?

RS: Day school, yes. I commuted back and forth on the trolley from Caldwell to Newark every day, and it was fine. I got a lot of studying done on the trolley.

SI: What did you think was so deficient about Caldwell High School? Was it just the quality of the teachers or did they not offer courses?

RS: I couldn't answer that question at this point. All I know is that they were rated relatively low and they suggested I go to a private school. ... So, my father worked in Newark and they came up with that, and so, I said, "Okay."

BD: When you were going to this private school, did you continue working outside of class? I know you said you cut some lawns.

RS: Oh, yes. I cut some lawns, and our own, and then, other lawns to make money, and I did other things to make money, too. I had a friend who all he did was [work]; I mean, that's what he did, he worked. ... He was working on a car. We had a little business. We went around collecting old newspapers, in the very beginning of the war. We were still in high school at the time and we made quite a few dollars on that. We started out with a wagon and ... I ended up with a car. ... I could drive back and forth, finally, and the back of my car was loaded with newspapers and we'd stack them and sell them, and we made quite a lot of money on it. This is during the war, when things were so scarce.

SI: Before Pearl Harbor, had you been following the news of what was happening in Europe and Asia?

RS: Yes.

SI: What was your opinion on whether or not America should get involved in the war?

RS: Well, my father was an avid Republican and he hated [Thirty-Second President Franklin Delano] Roosevelt, which is unfortunate for him. ... It turned out that he's one of our best Presidents; one of our better Presidents, put it that way. He was not my favorite, but, certainly, his cousin was, [Twenty-Sixth President Theodore] "Teddy" Roosevelt. ... He's one of my favorites. Anyway, that's nothing to do with anything. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

RS: Okay. I kept very close track of what was going on, and so forth, and I was hoping that I wouldn't have to get in, particularly after hearing my father's experiences. ... So, my interest was work and, every summer, when I was in high school, ... I worked on a farm. ... I liked the work and I liked to do what I did. The first couple weeks was murder. ... [In] those days, you really worked physically hard. You didn't have a tractor and things like that. They usually had horses and, if you had a tractor, I wouldn't be the one running it. ... I'd do the physical work, loading bales of hay. ... Whatever was hard work, the kid can do it. [laughter] So, is there anything else you wanted to [know]?

SI: What type of farm was it?

RS: The farm that I finally managed was a fruit and dairy farm up in New York State. Those are two things that they did [the] most of. ... They grew apples, mostly, and then, most of the farms had a dairy, so that they had income all year long with milk, and then, they got enough extra money to pay off all their debts when fall came, when they sold their apples. So, it worked out pretty well.

SI: Was your father against getting involved in the war?

RS: No, he volunteered. He was very eager, volunteered, like many people in World War II were.

SI: I meant, before Pearl Harbor was attacked, did he say America should stay out of the war or get into the war?

RS: ... I think he was ready to go in the war. I can't really remember for sure, but I'm pretty sure, knowing my father, he ... felt we should have gone into the war when it happened. Before that, I can't tell you for sure, and I can't remember how I felt about it. ... Knowing me, I was not particularly interested in having us go to war, but there was a reason, important reason, we went. There was no question that we had to go. I never even thought about it one way or the other. When Pearl Harbor was raided, we went to war; that was it.

SI: Do you remember if people in your community were for getting involved in the war or against the war?

RS: This is before the war started?

SI: Before Pearl Harbor was attacked.

RS: Yes. I think, pretty much, it was, "Let's keep out of it." Yes, that kind of [sentiment], in general. I'm sure there were some that were eager, but most people felt we should stay out of it, "That's their problem, not ours." Most of us were isolationists, as the term was used.

SI: Do you remember any kind of German-American *Bund* [a pro-Nazi American organization] activity or any German or Italian sympathies in the community?

RS: ... Not in ours, but, in general, you'd read about it, and so forth, and we weren't happy at all about them. I mean, [we felt], "Maybe someone should do something about it," but ... it was not something that we were terribly concerned [about] one way or the other.

SI: Do you remember where you were when Pearl Harbor was attacked?

RS: Yes, not that it's worth anything. I was upstairs, working on one of the rooms upstairs. I can't remember exactly what it was; nothing significant.

SI: How did you take the news? Was it a shocking thing?

RS: I didn't get terribly upset or anything, one way or the other, ... wasn't terribly *gung ho*. I just said, "Yes, well, that's what we have to do. *C'est la vie*," you know. That was my attitude, "We'd do it and we're going to have to do something about it now."

BD: What about the attitude of your parents and the community? Was there a call to arms?

RS: Yes, definitely a call to arms, no question about that. ... I would say that would be a very good way of stating it. It's a call to arms; thank you.

SI: Was there any panic or fear initially?

RS: I don't think so. I think we felt that, "We're going to win this thing." That was my feeling. When you talk to other people, do they have pretty much the same feelings about it, or were they much more eager than I was?

SI: No.

RS: It varies, okay.

SI: It varies. You talked about this little business that you and your friend got involved in early in the war. Did things like that start happening right away? Did the war start impacting your life on the home front immediately?

RS: Not especially. It just helped us make a little more money, ... as far as that part of it goes. ... I was mowing lawns for some of the neighbors, and that was fine, too. I just really didn't think much about it. We were not affected by the Depression, because we had plenty of money. As I got older, when I got [to be] about twelve, thirteen years old, we had a lot of money, and I know my father was hit quite a bit by relatives and things. ... A lot of them were in a lot of trouble.

SI: Going back to the Depression, do you remember any transients coming through town, any hobos?

RS: Oh, yes, people coming looking for jobs, [who] would walk around and knock on your door, "Can I do anything for you?" ... but, usually, we said no, because I did what they needed done. I was glad to help out, do stuff. I think my mother had a gardener that came once a week and did stuff. I didn't do that details kind of stuff. I mowed the lawns and cleaned up things and did the trimming and whatever else needed [to be] done that way. ...

SI: What about rationing in World War II? Do you remember that having an impact on your life, using booklets and such?

RS: Oh, rationing. ... Yes, it definitely affected your life. [If] you wanted to get something and you couldn't get it, ... you were limited in what you could get. ... You only have so much butter or so much this and so much that. ... That didn't [affect us too much]. We worked it out. ... My father wasn't up to slipping somebody a few bucks to get something, if she [his mother] wanted it badly enough, which I thought of [as], "Hmm, well, maybe we shouldn't do that," but I figured, "Well, I'm not going to fight it." So, I didn't, and so forth, but ... those are the things that happened, but I look back and I think, "That wasn't too good."

SI: There was some black market activity in the area.

RS: Oh, there sure was, a lot of black market activity, and I wasn't involved enough to tell you specifics about it, but I know my father, ... you know, if he wanted something, he went out and got it. ... He didn't tell how he did it or what he did, but we knew that he gave the guy some extra bucks and he got what he wanted.

SI: Electrolux, your father's business, sold mostly consumer goods.

RS: Consumer? Oh, they were selling door-to-door, yes.

SI: Like appliances, that sort of thing?

RS: Well, it's a vacuum cleaner. ...

SI: Was that production affected at all by the war? Did they stop making those?

RS: During the war, they had problems, and what they did was, if the vacuum cleaner wasn't working right, they would recondition it, and so forth. ... He had to cut way back on a lot of things, because it did definitely affect how much money he was making. He wasn't making big bucks anymore. He had to really be careful, which is very unusual for my father. He was a good man, nice man, and he was very generous, but he seemed to have that problem, [that] he had to show that he was making a lot of money. ...

SI: Did they have any war related material that they worked with?

RS: No.

SI: There were no additional things that he did during the war.

RS: No, no. It's strictly what he did and he was strictly in the sales area only, had nothing to do with the manufacturing, and so forth. Originally, it was a Swedish manufacturing [firm], and then, ... fortunately, they had a factory in America also, an American division. Otherwise, they would have been in a lot of trouble in 1939, when everything's cut off.

SI: Do you remember any Civil Defense type activity in the area, blackouts and drills?

RS: Yes, definitely. I forget; I think my mother was involved. ... She went around and made sure everyone had their lights off, or something like that. It's a little vague in my mind at the moment what she did.

SI: Like an air raid warden?

RS: Something like that, yes. I'm not sure just what she did. ... I'm trying to remember what it was, but she was involved, let's put it that way.

SI: Would you help out at all?

RS: No, I was not involved with it. She didn't ask me to be involved, and so, I wasn't. I was in school and I did my homework and whatever else needed doing, the work around.

SI: Was the school affected by the war? Did they have to cut anything?

RS: I don't remember them cutting anything or ... being affected by it.

SI: Did you take part in bond drives or scrap drives?

RS: Not really, no. ... If they said, "You're supposed to collect this and do that," whatever they asked them to do, they did, yes, but they weren't involved with the organization parts or the picking up parts, things like that.

SI: You said, at first, the war did not affect you as much.

RS: Well, most of us were, like you call it, isolationists, before the war. We figured that, "That's their problem," and we were very sympathetic for the English, unquestionably. We were very, very pro-English. Most of our relatives and ancestors ... came from England and Holland. So, this was very important to us. However, as far as actually [fighting], no; the lend-lease and all those things, we wholeheartedly approved, but actually getting into the war itself, we needed Pearl Harbor.

SI: When did you start realizing that you might get involved in the war personally?

RS: After Pearl Harbor. ... When the United States went into war, ... what was it, '41? you know, I was getting close, but, fortunately, you see, I had two years to go to graduate, instead of one. So, that helped. So, I didn't really think about that, but, thinking back, in retrospect, I said that ... kept me out a year. So, that was good.

SI: In high school, did they add any classes, like additional physical training or any war related classes?

RS: ... My recollection is nothing was significant ... in the Newark Academy.

SI: Do you have any questions before we get into his military service?

BD: After Pearl Harbor, was there a feeling that you were ready to enlist once you were of age, or was it a feeling that it would inevitably affect you personally?

RS: Well, I guess I'll do it this way. When I graduated from high school, I was eighteen at the time. I went up to work on my cousin's farm. ... I had worked on a whole bunch of different farms in previous years, but I went to my cousin's farm upon graduation--he was a cousin being my mother's cousin, a different generation--and I started working there. ... They had a bunch of girls there and they were out picking crops, and I was ... sort of in charge of them. Now, which would you rather do, get in the service or be in charge of seven lovely girls? [laughter] I give you my reasoning; let's face it. So, in July or August, I forget what it was, I got my notice, "You are being drafted into the service." My father tried to fight it, but it was a joke. ... He thought he had a lot of influence--nothing, and rightfully so, no question about it. If I had to go in, I had to go in, but [it] sure wasn't my choice. I would much rather be up there in charge of seven lovely young ladies, and ... there was one or two that were really nice. I'll show you a picture of one of them; I'm not going to show you a picture, but she was really nice. ... I dated her after the

war for a couple of times, but ... I had somebody else more interesting, but, anyway, when I was up there, something else happened, which was terrible but wonderful. I developed pneumonia. My uncle lived in Tivoli, in that old family place, and I went in the hospital and I had a terrible time. ... Of course, obviously, you can tell, I made it okay. So, I spent several weeks with my uncle, a wonderful, wonderful guy. I loved it. It was absolutely marvelous, and then, I got better. So, I went home to Caldwell. Meanwhile, I'm being drafted and this and that and trying to check this out, ... and so forth, and all the things that you do when you're in a war, [like] when you go to [do your] shopping. It's just ... all kinds of problems, but nothing, none of that stuff, worried me one way or the other. What worried me [was] that I was going to be drafted, a concern, serious concern, but it happened. January 1st, I went in and that was it. ... I chose the Army because it was traditional in our family. ... My father said, "You don't want to be in the Navy. They sink ships, you know," [that] type thing. I mean, he didn't specifically say that, but that was the idea, "You want to be in the Army." He was delighted I was going in. ...

SI: Did you go down and enlist, rather than be drafted, or did you just let yourself be drafted?

RS: I resisted as long as I could, but ... it was no resistance. I mean, you ... couldn't do anything about it and I was drafted. Absolutely, positively, I did not want to serve, because I was taught all the things you go through [as a soldier] ... during World War I. I didn't want to go through that. ... I think, fortunately, most people didn't have that, because, when Father came back [from World War I], a lot of people didn't want to talk about it, and so forth, but my father loved to talk about it. So, I learned, "You don't want to get in the infantry." So, of course, I was drafted in the infantry; they needed infantry people.

SI: What was the induction process like? Do you remember going through your physical, what it was like to leave home and where they sent you first?

RS: None of that bothered me any. I mean, this is what you do and you have to do it, and so, I adjusted without any problems. That was not a problem at all for me. Whatever adjustments had to be made, I had no trouble making it. That was part of my nature.

SI: You said you went in on January 1, 1944.

RS: Yes, or January 3rd, or whatever it was, the very beginning. I don't know ... whether [it was] the 1st, 2nd or 3rd, but it was on or before the 3rd.

SI: They sent you down to Fort Dix, or did you report to Fort Dix?

RS: Yes, Fort Dix, [New Jersey], and went through the process, and then, I went to Camp, I think it was Wheeler, Georgia, ... Camp Wheeler, Georgia, and, there, I had ... seventeen weeks, I think it is, whatever it was, [the] number of weeks. I went through it and I had no problems with it. I just adjusted and you did what you did and you did what you're told and, as I said, I read instead of gambled and I was picked for a lot of things. ... I know, one lieutenant comes up and says, "All right, anyone here in college?" No one raised their hand. "How about high school? Who graduated from high school?" Well, I didn't know. ... I figured, "Maybe he's going to do something special." "Okay, ... you four people who were graduated from high

school;" I happened to be, at the time, [with] Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia people. I'll tell you why it happened, and so, there was four of us. We all had KP [kitchen duty]. That was not [the problem]; I didn't like what he did. The KP, I don't have a problem with. Well, that was it. What happened was, about when I was about three-quarters completed my basic training, I got sick. I forget, I don't even remember what it was, but I was really sick, and so, I lost a couple of weeks. ... So, I went back to start with the Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia [people], and my culture and their cultures, I won't say they clashed, but they sure were different. ... It was a real learning process and, unfortunately, I became a [temporary sergeant?]. I had a little thing [armband] that wrapped around, with three stripes on it [a sergeant's insignia], and that was not a happy situation. These guys gave me a hard time. Most of the time, they didn't, as long as another person was around, but, back in the barracks, they [gave me a hard time]. Pretty much, I got along with them. So, I didn't question anything, I didn't do anything bad. ... If they did something good, I said, "That was a great job you did," and so, I got along with them, but, sometimes, they'd come out and holler something to me, ... you know.

SI: Like what?

RS: I don't remember specifically, ... only because I wore those three things, the buck sergeant stripes. ... They [the leadership] just told me, "You want to be this?" and I said, "Yes, I guess so. I don't know," and that was a mistake, as it turned out, but, then, again, probably it wasn't--a good experience for me.

SI: The initial group you were with before you got sick, were they mostly from the Northeast?

RS: They were from New Jersey, mostly. ... They were my contemporaries, let's put it that way, same culture. ...

SI: What are the differences that stand out with the second group of Southerners?

RS: Well, their first thing is, they were very prejudiced. ... I mean, it's changed tremendously, but, at 1944, the South was very bitter towards the North. ... People may say, "Well, dah-dah-dah," but that is not true; they were very bitter. They were still our enemy, and so, [for] me, a Northerner working with the Southerners, I had to adjust, and I did [adjust]. ... It was not always real easy, but I had a father who was (a point?) and I had to adjust to him, my mother was very strict, I had to adjust to her, and you adjust to things. ... So, I was adjustable and it worked out okay and I managed okay. I had no big problem. Did I answer your question?

SI: Yes. Was this your first time in the South? Had you ever traveled to the South before?

RS: ... Oh, I see, I was in the South besides [being in camp], yes. I don't know, I just was there and, if you were going around looking for something to buy, they were very friendly. So, the stores and things you worked with was fine, but I'm talking about my cohorts, people with whom I slept with. ... Twenty-four hours a day, I was with them. ...

SI: This was your first exposure to the Southern mentality.

RS: Yes, yes, definitely, definitely.

BD: While you were in the South, did you see racism in the local areas outside the camp?

RS: I'm sure there was, but I was not cognizant of what they were. ... [It] just didn't occur to me, ... or maybe I felt, maybe, "That's the way it is," and so, I didn't think anything of it, one way or the other. I'll tell you about my family. They felt that they were not prejudiced, and she [his mother] said, "We had a maid and I loved her so. So, I even kissed her, but, of course, I put a little thing in front of me, a little veil thing in front of me." I mean, this, you couldn't even kiss her. You had to have something between them, between the lips.

SI: This is your mother.

RS: This is North here; this is [in] retrospect, back to when my mother was [young]. She was telling about her youth. ... She said they had a maid they loved, and so forth, and she put a little something in-[between] for when she kissed her, so [that] she wouldn't actually touch her lips. So, that's why, but they claim they ... weren't a bit prejudiced, and, basically speaking, I was not brought up being prejudiced, but it was there, it was there, no question about it. They were [considered] inferior, no question about it.

SI: What about the training itself? Did you think it was good training? What stands out most about your basic training?

RS: ... I won't call it an ordeal *per se*, but it was. By the time I went to the second part, I was well taken care of in that area. I had no problem at all then, at that time. It was definitely some adjustment, but I expected it. I mean, ... if it didn't happen, I would've been surprised, yes.

SI: Was it more the physical training or the discipline that was an adjustment?

RS: A combination of everything, living twenty-four/seven under the roof of ... this situation, with a cot and this and that, and so forth, which I had never had before. I was not a Scout, and so forth, and I didn't get any kind of experience in camping or things of this sort.

SI: Was there a lot of weapons training? Do you think that was adequate?

RS: Oh, yes. The weapons training was good and we did a lot of things and no one ever worried about your ears. You notice I have hearing aids, and none, nothing, ever, but, then, when I joined the National Guard, they said you had to do this and that, ... to protect your ears, which ... made sense, but, during World War II, ... no, nothing like that was done. So, now, I wear hearing aids. ... As you'll find out, I was a machine-gunner and, when you fire a ... machine-gun, you're there, right there, firing. ... Even with a rifle, it's the same thing, but a rifle, you don't fire that much, only certain situations where you would fire a rifle [rapidly]. We were attacking most of the time. If you're defending, then, you fire a rifle a lot, and we ran into a couple situations where the guys were really something. They were pumping out shells ... almost as fast as we did. They were really fast, the M-1 [Garand semi-automatic] rifle, [Mr. Scott imitates rapid rifle fire], just pull the trigger fast.

BD: Do you feel the training that you had adequately prepared you for your experience in Europe?

RS: I don't think whatever training you have is going to prepare you for combat. ... Being a good soldier, so that you can handle it, absolutely, they did excellent training, but, when you get there, it's unique, combat experience.

SI: Did they try to make the training more accurate by simulating battlefield conditions that you might find in Europe or Asia?

RS: I don't think we had time to mess with that kind of thing. ... When I was in the National Guard, they had things like that, but not [then]. ... At this time, they had to get you so that you could shoot, do the things you needed to do, and then, they sent you on, seventeen weeks, and you went [elsewhere].

SI: You told the story about how they picked you for KP by tricking you.

RS: Yes.

SI: Did you run into that kind of, not hazing, but that kind of picking on people, or was that an exception?

RS: Well, after, once you're out of basic training, that didn't happen, the picking on, unless you happened to have a noncom or somebody who wanted to pick on you because he didn't like you. I'm sure it happened. I didn't seem to have a problem that way and I didn't notice that much going on. There were some of them, probably, could use a little discipline, from time to time, and, if they did, they seemed to take them off and do it, which was smart. It was the right thing to do. ...

SI: Was it more frequent in basic training, though?

RS: It was basic training where they really went after you, and I think that's part of what they expected. They wanted to make sure you did it right and, if you did anything wrong, they hollered at you, and so forth, ... but, once you joined a unit, then, it was different, unless you really screwed up. It was a fairness thing after that.

SI: After you graduated from basic training and left Camp Wheeler, where did you go next?

RS: We ended up in New York, to be shipped out, and we were, what would we call them, call ourselves? replacements. We were replacement infantry and we would sort of go with groups, but, ... once you got on the ship, you're sort of on your own. It was a delightful trip across, but ... I went to there, and then, went to New York and on the, oh, boy, *Normandie*? no, the *Ile de France*. ... [Editor's Note: According to Mr. Scott's written account of his wartime service, "A World War II Survivor's Journal: Machine Gunner Under Patton," he went overseas on the *Ile de France* on August 16, 1944, landing in Glasgow, Scotland, on August 25th.]

SI: Was it one of the *Queens*?

RS: ... I don't remember for sure. ... It was a beautiful [ship]. I have a picture of the ship and all, everything ... in the journal I have. ... It was a very nice trip over, but, as far as anything that was slightly luxurious with [it], you'd never find it. It was just strictly a troopship.

SI: You were just down in the hold.

RS: You were way down in the hold, and so forth. I never went down. I went [down and] found out where my bunk was. I think it was the third bunk up. We had four bunks, you know, boom, boom, boom, boom, and I put my stuff there and I went back out and slept on deck, and so on, ... a very, very nice trip. It was September, beautiful September.

BD: Before you left America, was there any particular advice that your father gave you? Knowing that you were going into the service, in the infantry, and knowing his experience in World War I, was there anything additional, once you enlisted, that he told you, to prepare you, any informal training from your father?

RS: Very interesting question. I can basically say no, that I don't remember him giving me anything that would be [considered advice]. ... Well, let's put it this way; he was very proud and he was delighted that I was in the infantry and going to fight for my country. I would say that would be the basic thing. I understand where you're coming from in your question, however, and it was a good one.

SI: Did you get to see your family before you went overseas?

RS: Yes, yes. ... When I was in New York, I spent some time [there]. ... All my relatives and everything came over and I spent some time--I can't tell you [if] it was a day or six hours or whatever it was, but in Brooklyn--with my grandparents.

SI: Was this Camp Shanks that you were at? [Editor's Note: Camp Shanks, an embarkation camp for soldiers in World War II, was located on the Hudson River in Orangetown, New York.]

RS: That rings a bell. It very likely might have been.

SI: It was just a port of embarkation.

RS: Yes. It might have been Camp Shanks, very possibly, yes.

SI: How long was the crossing over to Europe?

RS: I think it was seven or eight days, something like that. They ... zigzagged all the way up, all the way up, all the way across.

SI: Was this one of those ships that could go by itself?

RS: Yes, yes. It moved. It was a fast ship, and zigzagged, and I think, ... whatever it was, it would normally take half the time to go, instead of zigzagging all the way across and back. ... I was very pleased that they zigzagged, thought that was a nice trip and I liked it, and I met some very nice people. ... It was great, and there were some WACs [Women's Army Corps personnel] there and I had a nice time with them, nothing out of the ordinary, but just enjoyable. After working with the Southerners, it was very pleasant.

SI: Did you have any duties on the ship?

RS: No. We just were on our own, did what we wanted. When the food was served, we went there and it was awful, [laughter] but, that, we didn't care. ... It was British food, unbelievable. They fed you twice a day and it was [not good]. Anyway, at the time, ... I remember that I put it in my notes. I can really give you some details, if I'd just go over and get my journal, but this is much better.

SI: When did you start keeping your journal?

RS: Come to think of it, I didn't start until I got over there. I'm not sure, I'm not sure, whether I started when I embarked or whether I started when I got there, but, definitely, when I got there, I started. ...

SI: Where did you land in England, or did you go directly to France?

RS: I went to England, on the top, and worked my way down, and I'm trying to remember the name of the dock, the name of the port. I can quickly get it for you if you want it.

SI: Was it in Scotland?

RS: Yes.

SI: Was it Glasgow or Greenock?

RS: Yes, I think so, yes, Glasgow, yes, thank you. You would know this stuff, because you've done so many of these.

SI: A lot of people traveled the same route.

RS: Right. ...

SI: How long were you in England for?

RS: A couple of weeks, about two weeks.

SI: Did they put you in a replacement depot there?

RS: Yes, yes. They didn't do much. Of course, when everything else fails, they always give you training, and so, we did some training. ... I went over in August and, by September, I think it was the middle of [September], we were there for a couple of weeks.

SI: Okay. You left the United States in August.

RS: Yes, middle of August. By the time we got to England and went in there, it turned to be September. It was in September.

SI: The invasion had happened earlier that summer.

RS: Yes, in June. ...

SI: Had you been following the progress of the war?

RS: Oh, yes, very interested in the war and what goes on. I've always been interested in current events and history.

SI: Were you getting apprehensive about what you might face in Europe?

RS: I don't think so. I think I was involved with what I was doing at the time, and I remember, we went [to] an area [that] was fairly close to something I wanted to see. I think it was [that] one of my ancestors lived in a town south of where we went. In other words, we went from [the camp], like this, up, and then, down in here, right about here, was this town I wanted to see. ... I said, "Should I tell the driver to go in down there and take a look and come back?" and he said, "You're crazy." So, I didn't [go], and so, we went on up, and so forth. I'm trying to remember what it was. I have it in my journal. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott may be referring to his 2002 trip to England, during which he considered asking his tour bus driver to stop in Warminster, on their way to Bath, where he was stationed during World War II.]

SI: Was it in England?

RS: It was in England, yes.

SI: Okay.

RS: It was probably some ancestor or something there, or something. I forget what it was.

SI: When did you join the unit you served with? Was it in England or was it ...

RS: Oh, it was in France.

SI: Okay, it was in France.

RS: Oh, yes, replacement, yes.

SI: How did you feel? I have heard about these replacement depots from different people. What was your experience like in there? How did you feel about just being a replacement and not being attached to a unit?

RS: Oh, it didn't affect me one way or the other. This is, you know, ... you adjust to whatever situation it is. They tell you to do this, you do it, and that's what I always did. I didn't worry about what, how it was or what it was, or I [would] try not to complain too much about stuff, because it wouldn't do you any good anyway. That was dumb, as far as I was concerned, trying to complain about this and that and the other thing. My philosophy is, "*C'est la vie*," that's the way it goes.

SI: Did you get any rest and relaxation in England or get to do any sightseeing? Did they give you a leave?

RS: We got time off and we went to the local town in the area and spent some time in there, and so forth. ... Of course, there's always women that wanted to help you out, ... but, by the time I got finished with basic training, they had me scared stiff--going to get syphilis or gonorrhea or this or that and the other thing--and I decided it wasn't worth it. I'd see these ladies and I'd say, "I've [got] stuff at home much nicer than those," you know. I mean, usually, they were older, and anything older didn't interest me at all. I liked girls my age. So, ... I didn't get involved with them.

SI: Yes, many veterans have talked about the scare films that they had, trying to scare people from contracting venereal disease.

RS: Oh, yes, they did a wonderful job. I think it was good. In any way you think about it, it was good, and it did happen. We had guys that couldn't care less and they just went ahead and went with these prostitutes and ... they ended up with problems. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Thank you for a lovely break, and to you and your wife for showing us your home. We were talking about your interaction with the English people. Did you get to know any regular civilians and interact with the people themselves in England?

RS: ... Didn't really get to know them. I've talked with them, and so forth, ... as you see people. ... By the time we got there, in '44, they'd pretty much had it up to about above my--I'm signaling above my head--with GIs. [Describing the British view of American servicemen] Their attitude is, as you know, what it is; their interests are one major interest.

SI: Did you get to see any of the impact of the war in England? Did you see any damage from bombings or get a sense of the hardships they went through?

RS: When we went from Glasgow to where we ended up, ... it'd be in there [his journal] where it is [that] we were, I was asleep. It was the middle of the night and it was black and, of course, stayed black, because I don't think they were bombing England [in] particular anymore, at that

point, but it was black. ... The little bit I did look up, you didn't see anything, and so, I went back to sleep and went through London, and so forth. So, I didn't see anything at all [in] that area.

SI: After a few weeks, then, you went over to France.

RS: Yes.

SI: What was that move like?

RS: Well, we went on a small ship, and the harbor is on the bottom [of England], across, sort of across, to Normandy. ... We went out, the ship docked, excuse me, ship anchored, and then, we got into landing boats and figured we're going to land on the shore, but we didn't. They had a big, long, long dock. So, I didn't even get my feet wet, and I said to myself, "This sure is the best way to go." ... June 6th was not a good time to come, and even shortly after. So, I thought September was a much nicer month to land in France.

SI: Did they put you in a unit right away or did you have to go to a series of camps?

RS: We were [in the] "reple-depple," as they called them, [replacement depots]. We went from one to the other, slowly but surely worked our way across France. I remember taking advantage of my farming experience. We [would] see a bunch of cows out there. I would take my canteen cup and put it down and, "Tshh, tshh, tshh," then, milked the cows, bring it back and we'd all use it for coffee. ... I would drink it straight and it worked out fine. I'm not much of a coffee drinker, although I drank a lot of coffee in the service, and, as soon as I got out of the service, haven't drunken any since. I don't know whether it's good, bad or indifferent, but I don't like coffee.

SI: How did you join the Fifth Infantry Division?

RS: I didn't have much choice. [laughter] We worked our way down to Frankfurt, Frankfurt-on-the-Main, [Frankfurt-am-Main in German], and Frankfurt, at that time, up until then, had never been stormed by force. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott joined the Fifth Infantry Division during its assault on Metz, France, which began in mid-September 1944 and lasted through November 1944, not Frankfurt, which the Fifth did not reach until the end of March 1945.] It had been [be]sieged many times, and, after a few months, it surrendered, but never by force, and we were still fighting some of the Maginot Line. They reversed the Maginot Line as best they could and we were in all these pillboxes and things, and our unit was still surrounding some of these and working from there. ... I went to Frankfurt [Metz], met my company commander and we stayed there for a day or so, and then, went out into our unit, which was in an airport right next [to it]. Well, we were in an airport building that had been bombed and, every time it rained, you'd get in all this [sludge]. Walls would all dissolve and come down on you, and so forth, but we did find [shelter]. We were in a cellar, and so, it didn't leak down there, worked out fine. We had a machine-gun set up where there was an entrance to the pillbox that the Germans were holed up in. It's a big, huge pillbox and they were surrounded and they couldn't do anything. ... We just stood there and [would] fire away like mad, from time to time, just for fun. ... Then, the

riflemen in front of us started to complain, so, we had to stop that. [laughter] So, anyway, that was the "fun," in quotes, that we had there, and you had to be very careful. It's terribly slippery, with all this dissolved [material], or almost liquid form; it was like grease from the walls that had dissolved. Well, one day, we found a submachine gun, I think it was, something. I think it was a submachine gun, or whatever it was. It was a fully automatic, sort of like an automatic rifle or something. It wasn't a BAR, and so, I decided that would be fun to shoot. Oh, I know, it was a German machine-gun, and I held it and started firing away and, when I let up the trigger, nothing happened. It kept firing away until it finished the rounds that were there. ... It went up and it went up and up and up and, finally, I went down. I was an absolute mess, with all this white stuff all over my back, and so forth. ... I got thoroughly chewed out for it and I deserved [it], as I always deserved it, [and] so forth, and then, they sort of laughed at me, but they said that wasn't too bright. So, that's some of the dumb things people do, and I was one of them. ...

SI: Tell us about your first few days in combat.

RS: Well, this is basically [it]; it's no combat, because they're not fighting back. So, I wouldn't really call it combat. ... I mean, you knew there was no danger. Nobody saw [the enemy]. The Germans themselves were on the other side of Frankfurt [Metz], maybe five, ten miles away, and so, there was nothing. They weren't firing back at all, and so, there was no fear or any problems with it.

SI: There were just a few people pinned down in these boxes.

RS: ... Maybe, I think there were about four hundred Germans in this huge pillbox.

BD: How was your initial experience when you joined as a replacement? Did the group welcome you? Do you recall any specifics of that situation in the initial days with the company?

RS: My job was to carry ammunition. I'd just follow them around, but, I mean, ... I didn't actually do that until we moved from that spot, but that was my job. I knew what it was going to be and the people were there. They just ... [said], "Nice to meet you," da-dah, da-dah, da-dah, and that was it and nothing much else happened. No, there was no ... celebration or no reprimands. ... I'm sort of ignored, I guess, would be a better way of stating it, although I didn't feel that way about it at the time, but I think that's what it was. So, it didn't matter; I just did it.

SI: Did the unit have to take on many replacements then? Had they lost other men before that?

RS: Yes, yes. In the process of going through the back end of it ... and crossing one of the rivers, they lost a huge number of people and, when I got there, I would say at least half our unit was probably replacements, at least half.

BD: What were some of your initial experiences with your commanding officers? Is there anything that you recall feeling towards the officers? I know you said you had encounters in which you were reprimanded for certain things.

RS: Well, I had one situation before I got into [combat], before I got into the Fifth Infantry Division, that my honesty did not pay. There was an officer ... who had been wounded, he was a lieutenant, and we were in line to get chow, and I forget, I don't know, where. I think he was in line, too, and so, somebody started singing some derogatory song about lieutenants. So, I ... joined them. ... There was a whole bunch of us [who] did that, and so, the Lieutenant turns around and he didn't catch any single one person. "All right, who was singing back there?" and dumb Richard raises his hand. So, I was the only one who was dumb enough to do that, and so, he pulled me off and he said, "What I should do with you is to give you a six-by-six." [Do you] know what that is? You dig a trench, six-by-six-by-six. ... So, he started talking to me about it and I told him my background, and so forth, and he realized ... I was going to go to college and I was going to do this and that, and so forth. ... He probably figured I was the only honest guy there, and so, he said, "I'll let you go this time, but don't you ever," blah, blah, blah. ... So, I got out of it. So, that was [okay]; he was fair. He was fair. He realized ... what the situation was, and I was one of "them," so-to-speak, and I turned out to be one of them.

SI: After initially joining the unit at Frankfurt [Metz], where did they move to next, after they left this pillbox? What happened to the pillbox? Was it stormed?

RS: Oh, in about three days, they surrendered

SI: Okay.

RS: And they all poured out, and so forth, and that was that. So, then, we all went back to Frankfurt [Metz], and then, we went to another spot in Germany, I mean, in Frankfurt [Metz], and it was very pleasant. They had a piano there, which I play, and so forth. ... The women there were very nice, and so forth, and very pleasant. I got along with the people. ... When you have ... blue eyes and blond hair, it's very dirty blond right now, and was ... starting to get dirty blond at the time, and so, they sort of accepted me, the Germans [French?] did. So, I got along with [them]. ...

SI: Were you allowed to interact with the Germans?

RS: You weren't supposed to fraternize, but you're in this same house--you're living [there]. ... You [usually] make them go down the cellar and we took the other part of it, but they were actually in the main area, also, which was unusual. Usually, we'd just shove them all down the cellar, take over, and this was this house we took over. So, it was very pleasant and I liked it. Well, I said, "This is a pretty good war." So, it very quickly turned to [be] much more difficult.

SI: When did that happen? When did you leave this house? [Editor's Note: According to Mr. Scott's journal, his unit stayed in homes in the area of L'Hopital, between Metz and Saarlouis, then named Saarlautern, from December 6th through approximately December 16th, when the Fifth Division moved out to assault Saarlautern.]

RS: ... I remember exactly what we did. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Can I put this back on?

RS: Yes, please. On December 16th, the Germans broke through--Battle of the Bulge. [Editor's Note: The Battle of the Bulge, also known as the Von Rundstedt Offensive or Ardennes Offensive, was the failed German attempt to break through the Allied lines in the Ardennes Forest in Luxembourg and Belgium.] Von Rundstedt Offensive is the official name for it. I don't know how many people ever use that, but that's what it is, Rundstedt Offensive, started and everybody was up, and this and that and the other thing. So, [General George S.] Patton said; ... he was in the Third Army. I was in the Third Army, unfortunately, and you'll find out why later, why I say unfortunate. So, we packed off from where we were. We were attacking in near the border, in the border of [Germany], in inside Germany, and we piled in and went north. The Bulge is like such and we hit the side of it and we attacked, and I've never been in such terrible battles, really, really bad. [Editor's Note: On December 20th, the Fifth Infantry Division redeployed from its position in the Saarlautern area to a hundred miles away near Luxembourg City in twenty-four hours to relieve the Fourth Infantry Division. The Fifth attacked into the Germans' southern flank.] The German soldier, all of a sudden, these people are really terrific soldiers, and they held us. We had a lot of casualties, and so forth, at that time.

SI: Before Patton took you north to confront the Bulge, you were mostly fighting outside of Metz.

RS: No, then, ... from there, we went ... into Germany. We were already in Germany, but we went where the frontline was and went into a town, and our job was to take the town. So, we set up [our] machine-gun in a house and did a lot of firing, and so forth, and we got mortar and artillery fire, and so forth--which wasn't that bad--ourselves, and so forth. ... Then, they knocked down one of our tanks, and then, ... knocked out one of our tanks, and so forth, which didn't have a chance with the German tanks. They were mainly the Tiger tank. It was terrible. So, what we did, we piled into the; what do they call them now, the transportation?

SI: Two-and-a-half-ton trucks?

RS: ... They were two-and-a-half-ton trucks, we'll let it go for that, ... and went north and we dug into the top of the military crest of a hill. In the town below, the Germans sat. They were there and they were there in force. They were there, had a lot of artillery and lots of mortars, and we were ordered to fire our guns, our gun. Fortunately, I always dug deep holes and my foxhole was the deepest one anyone ever had. I mean, the other guys would get tired and they'd stop. I would keep on digging and got a nice, real deep hole. ... So, when the [enemy spotted us], we were showered with mortar and artillery [as] soon as we opened up, because every sixth round is tracer. So, they spot you immediately, and then, they order [artillery strikes] and they came. I didn't believe how much, ... how bad it was, and it was. So, I was talking to this fellow from West Virginia and he was laughing at me. He says, "What are you digging such a deep hole for? What's the matter with you?" and he said, "You know, doesn't matter how deep it is or where you go, if your name's on that bullet, your name's on that shell, you're going to die." So, I said, "Well, this is my insurance." "Well, you're ... a dumb Yankee." That's what I was. ... I didn't have to mess with the gun, because I just carried the [ammunition]. So, I and the ammunition

piled into my little hole, and guess who came up? When the barrage came, guess who was on top of me, who fit nicely? I was delighted he was there--this fellow from West Virginia. So, when it was all over, they stopped firing after awhile, he piled out and I piled out, and I said, "I guess your name;" what? I had some remark that he did not like at all. I said, "I guess you;" oh, how did I word that? Anyway, the idea was, ... "Why was he in my hole if he felt, [no] matter what he did, if his name was on it, he's going to get it?" So, I made a very short statement to that effect, and then, he had an even shorter statement, and I won't mention the word, but it was a very, very appropriate word. It was a four-letter word. [laughter] ... [It] begins with "S" and ends with "T," and it's drawn out with an accent from West Virginia.

SI: Before that, you said you had been under some fire. Had you become acclimated to being under fire? Were you able to differentiate between different noises in the battle, what was incoming and outgoing, or was it all new to you at that point?

RS: ... Basically, when we were in town, it's hard to tell that kind of thing. ... It was a scary experience, I mean, when you're in combat and you know people are shooting at you, and they were, but I wasn't [acclimated?]; no, not that much. [I] mean, the only thing they had at that time was small mortars and things for the [riflemen to use], because we were right across from each other. So, they didn't dare do too much. No, the answer's no.

SI: Had the unit been in a quiet sector of the front before, one of these areas where the Germans would fire some times and the Americans would fire back in response, but they would not attack each other too much?

RS: You're talking about ...

SI: Initially, before the Bulge.

RS: Before the Bulge, First Army was there and there was nothing much [that] was happening. They were just sort of there. The First Army was spread out to the point--as you probably know, that's why they attacked them--pretty thinly. ... We [further south] were doing the attacking at that time and we were fairly concentrated and we were making progress. So, this is a reason why, one of the reasons why, the Bulge was so successful. They picked an area where we were spread out.

SI: You initially were an ammo carrier.

RS: Correct.

SI: What would you be doing during a firefight?

RS: Staying deep in my hole.

SI: Okay. Did you carry a weapon with you?

RS: Yes, I had a [M-1] carbine.

SI: Would you feed the ammo in or would you just bring a box of ammo?

RS: That would be second gunner; I was an ammo carrier.

SI: Okay. After this barrage, where the West Virginian soldier dropped in on you, what happened then? Did you attack the town?

RS: Then, we attacked the town.

SI: Okay.

RS: Then, when we attacked, we were always, with very few exceptions--there were exceptions--we were attached to one of the rifle companies and we were their machine-gunner. In other words, they had two of their own. Each company, they had four platoons, and so, our section would go [with] the two platoons that did not have machine-guns. We would go, each'd be attached to one of them. So, we were, basically, a rifle company's machine-gun. ... In their machine-gun [platoon], in their fourth platoon, they had two machine-guns and two sixty-millimeter mortars.

SI: Where would you usually be positioned during an attack?

RS: In the back of the [company], directly in back of the company that you're attached to.

SI: Okay.

RS: Along with the other people in the back in the company.

SI: What kind of machine-gun was it? Was it air-cooled or water-cooled?

RS: It was water-cooled. The receiver was forty-one pounds and it was round barrel, ... filled with water, actually, with ... a lot of coolant in it, to keep it from freezing; coolant? alcohol or whatever. ... So, it's forty-one pounds, and the stand it sat on had three legs to it, was fifty-one pounds. One side would go here, one side would go there, and then, ... the other one would be in your back.

BD: For the typical battlefield you were involved in, was there additional preparation besides digging the ditch to get the machine-guns in? When you were given orders, how much were you aware of the overall scheme for the battle?

RS: Well, it depends upon the terrain and the situation. That is an answer that is given to you if you ... have no specific question. As we go on, when we come [to] when I become assistant machine-gunner, I'll go in[to] more detail with that.

SI: How long were you an ammo carrier for?

RS: Maybe a month, at most, maybe less. I don't remember, but our turnover was very high and you got up very quickly, but no one made squad leader. [It is] very simple why it didn't happen, because, as time goes by, ... the professional soldiers; ... this division was a professional unit, with all people before the war [who] had joined, and so forth. [Editor's Note: The Fifth Infantry Division had been an active Army unit since 1939.] ... So, what happens is, those that were wounded come back. They might have been privates, but they're very well trained, they know what they're doing, and we're a bunch of replacements, we didn't know what we were doing, so-to-speak, or had very little experience. They would be, then, made the sergeant for our company, squad. So, there was no [chance to advance further]. I didn't even think about it at the time. I mean, I didn't think I was going to be anything more than machine-gunner, ... and I wasn't. So, you end up with these people coming back and taking over the squad, which was fine with me. I didn't want that responsibility at this time, because I just didn't have enough experience.

BD: Were you treated differently by the other soldiers? You said that they were professional soldiers. Did they try to give you harder tasks or was it just like you said before, that they just said hello and you went about your business?

RS: More or less, they got to respect you and got to realize that you're doing the same job they're doing and ... that you were a part of it. ... You became part of what they're doing, once you've gotten that combat experience with them.

SI: During the time you were an ammo carrier, were you ever in a situation where you had to fire your carbine?

RS: No, no. We always had [infantry support]. ... Whenever we dug in, the riflemen are all [around]. ... We'd be here and the riflemen'd be here. We'd be right on the frontline like they are, but, when they attacked, they would be ahead of us. It may be twenty yards ahead or fifty yards ahead, but they would be ahead of us. We'd be the last ... of that company going along, along with a few others.

SI: Was it difficult to move and keep setting up the gun positions?

RS: It took time and was a lot of work. You'd dig a deep hole and build up parapets all around, and so forth, simple, and the nice part of it is that the squad leader got to carry a pick and shovel. So, he had to carry something, too. I mean, without a regular pick and shovel, it'd have been awful digging that big hole, but the one we had for our smaller holes, it took a lot of time, but, still, it wasn't too bad. ...

SI: Did you feel like you were adequately supplied with ammo? Did you always have enough ammo to do what you needed?

RS: ... Our supply was excellent. We used to grumble all the time about, "These rear echelon guys, boy, they got it made. They did this and that," and, of course, *Stars and Stripes* didn't help any, because there's always somebody who wants to make a few extra dollars by doing something crooked. ... Back in the headquarters and these supply places, they would manage to steal stuff, and then, sell it and things like this. ... Some get caught, and so, they write it up in

the *Stars and Stripes*, and that would make us bitter. We were very unhappy about it, but, overall, if you look at it fairly, which we weren't at the time, they did an excellent job of keeping us supplied. We had all the ammunition, always had food and the basic [things], I guess that's the basic things, food and ammunition.

SI: It was in the middle of winter and it was one of the worst winters in European history. Did you feel like you had adequate shelter against the winter, clothing, and so on?

RS: Clothing. It's hard to tell. I don't know what else [to say]. I guess there were other things you could wear, but they weren't issued. So, you've got to have one issued, and I had two of everything. I had two pants, two shirts, two underwears, two field jackets--oh, I had one field jacket--and, oh, two sweaters, one field jacket, and then, an overcoat. ... Most of the time, you were very cold, and I usually used two socks, but it didn't do any good. My feet are still [affected]. Soon as I [go out], if I go out now, like when I was pruning trees up in New York State, when I was managing a farm, I really had to have ... these special boots and things. Otherwise, my feet would never make it.

SI: Did you have winter boots and winter uniforms?

RS: What I described was the regular uniform, but I had double of everything. I managed to get extras, and so forth, never gave it to me. I don't know how, I forget how I did it, but I did it, and the extra everything kept me from freezing, but it didn't keep me from being very cold. ... It was very unpleasant, the whole [thing]. All the conditions were very unpleasant. That was probably the worst of it, with the conditions. Living in a hole, in very cold weather, and living, sleeping, da-da-dah, [that way] for several months is poor conditions.

SI: Let us go back to this town that you attacked at the beginning of the attack that rolled back the Bulge. Did anything stand out about when you were taking that town? Was it street-to-street-type fighting, or house-to-house?

RS: Well, see, what's nice about being a machine-gunner, you're better off being a machine-gunner than you are an infantry[man], a rifleman. The riflemen had it the roughest, no question, no nothing, whatever, but, in this particular case, we were going down a street and there are buildings on either side and, [in] one spot, there was a gap. This is just an incident. Would you be interested in that?

SI: Yes, absolutely.

RS: Okay. ... The Germans are over there and, if you go in the gap, they can shoot at you. So, what we did, one at a time, we'd stop going, and then, we'd run across this gap, maybe fifty yards, whatever it was, and different people did it. ... Of course, the carriers were last and we'd lost two of them and I and another guy were the only one[s] left. ... So, I was the last one, and so, I ran and I hit a slippery piece of ice. ... One went this way, the other ammunition box went that way and I went flat. ... Within half a second, our medic came whipping through and he said, "Are you all right?" and I said, "Yes." So, he grabbed my ammunition boxes, tore off. I scrambled up and left, too, and I don't know whether anybody shot at me or not. I just don't

remember, and I'm just telling you what [happened]. Our medic was so good and he was one of the best looters in the outfit. He was free. ... Once again, and I'm not sure why, but it seemed like half the people were from the South, ... Kentucky, Tennessee, West Virginia, the hills of the South. ... So, when you have someone who seemed reasonably educated, [and] so forth, he's your potential friend and the other ones are not your friend, because they don't like you, basically, because they're prejudiced against you. Let's put it that way; that's the better way to state it. Well, that's the excitement for that town.

SI: Were you usually in a situation where you could actually see the Germans or were you just firing into an area where you knew the Germans were? How close would you be?

RS: ... On a number of occasions; well, if we get to one, I'll tell you about it, because it was very close, but, most of the time, we were here and they were over there, and so forth. ... There was no [prolonged battle]. When we attacked, they'd either leave [or surrender]. When we got after [them], ... they'd take some casualties, ... mostly riflemen, and then, we'd go in and set up our guns, and so forth. ... Meanwhile, they'd leave, or, and/or, you might get some prisoners, which, near the end of the war, that happened more and more. They surrendered, and they were the smart ones.

SI: Particularly during the Battle of the Bulge, when you first went there, how did your unit feel about taking prisoners? Did they send them back?

RS: Well, not being a rifleman, I didn't get too much close contact under those circumstances. The riflemen would be picking up the prisoners. We were carrying this stuff, and so forth, and, once you become an assistant or a gunner, you have a .45, and that's not very much of a weapon.

SI: How long did this whole operation to take that town take?

RS: Two days. One day, they shot the dickens out of us and, the next day, we attacked. ...

SI: After you took that town, what happened next?

RS: Good question; turn it off.

[TAPE PAUSED]

RS: ... We came to the Sauer River and the Germans were on one side of the river and we're on the other. We stopped them from continuing the attack. See, we saved Luxemburg City. They would have definitely taken that if we hadn't come. So, now, we spent several weeks in these foxholes that the Germans had dug, and they ... made wonderful foxholes. By foxholes, what they were, they were deep entrenchments, and then, ... when a shell explodes, it spreads out and you have shrapnel all over the place, but, if you have it covered, you're safe. So, we're, once again, on the ridge, military ridge, which means you're just below the top of the ridge. Otherwise, you'd be a sitting target. You're below the [ridge] and you're there and down below is the Sauer River. I think it was the Sauer River. ... What we didn't have was our gun emplacement, so, we dug a gun emplacement, set up the gun and made sure there were several of

us there, and we got new replacements. We kept getting new replacements. We kept losing people, and we finally got all settled in. ... I had one place there, it had three or four logs, and then, in the side of the hill, and then, it went above and the logs kept the hill from collapsing down into the hole. It was actually, I guess you'd call it a cave, something like that. ... They were constantly throwing shells at us, and so, what we did, when they started, when you hear the, "Swish, swish, swish, swish, swish," you'd dive into your cave or foxhole or whatever you have handy. ... One day, I didn't quite make it. If I didn't have my helmet on, I'd probably be dead. I hit that so hard, almost knocked me out, and so, I was laying flat there and, fortunately, the shells that came over weren't close enough. ... They didn't get me, anyway, but, oh, that was a terrible [injury]. ... We have these dumb things that take place that you don't think anything of and there I was, half knocked out. I didn't say anything to anybody, because all they would have done was laugh at me. So, I figured, "I don't need that." So, I finally got conscious enough to crawl in and stayed there for awhile until I was okay.

BD: When you were setting up machine-guns for the different emplacements, was it the same people that you were usually around? If so, did you get to know them personally, beyond just the war effort, learning about their families, during that experience?

RS: Yes. Once I left basic training, I usually had some friends. ... It worked out very well and I mentioned the names of them in here [in his journal] as I go along. We would go to town together, we would do this together, and so forth. You have a buddy, so-to-speak, and I can't remember exactly when, this would tell me, but I ... got one really nice guy that joined and he ended up being my assistant gunner. ... We got along real well, but I regret to this day that neither one of us did anything about it. He lived in the Middle West. I think I still have his address someplace. So, that was one of the things you do, ... but, when you come home, under those circumstance, well, when I tell you [about] when I get home, what happened, and so forth, you just don't even think about it anymore, until later. Then, it's too late.

BD: During this time, were you writing letters back home?

RS: Absolutely.

BD: Were they to your parents?

RS: Parents, relatives, friends. I wrote a lot of letters, a lot of letters, and some of them gave [them] back to me, which was helpful for this, but I had, if you said anything too specific, censored. So, you couldn't give that much information. The information was from the little journal I kept.

BD: Were you receiving letters back? Did they contain information about what was going on on the home front?

RS: Oh, yes, yes, ... nothing that was [too bad]. They wouldn't complain about shortages and things like that. They'd just say what's happening with the family or what they're doing, and so forth. No, I had slews. Everyone was jealous, [laughter] but they didn't bother to write letters, most of them; some did.

SI: Was it difficult to write letters when you were out in the field?

RS: Well, out in the field, you couldn't, but, see, one thing I didn't mention, we didn't have to be at that spot every minute. You'd get maybe a several-hour break and you go back, and then, you're in a house or something, and then, you can do what you want. ... I used to write letters, play the piano, read.

SI: Was this before the Bulge?

RS: This is after the Bulge

SI: After the Bulge.

RS: And we have chased [the enemy]. We stopped the Bulge where we are, and then, meanwhile, the Fourth Armored Division went [ahead], broke through, and just above us, and captured; memory, that big town, that they then were surrounded, the Fourth Armored. Was it? No, it wasn't the Fourth Armored. ... [Editor's Note: The Fourth Armored Division, also known as Patton's Vanguard, raced 150 miles in nineteen hours to support Allied troops in the Bulge, then, pushed towards Bastogne.]

SI: Are you talking about Bastogne?

RS: Yes. They pronounce it, "Bas-tone-yah," yes. I don't know why. Bastogne is the way we pronounced it, and the Fourth Armored, which we called "Patton's Pets," he was the commander of the Fourth Armored [earlier in his career] and it was one crack unit, I'll tell you. Those guys were crazy and they did a job. ... I'll tell you, ... how they broke through, I don't know, with those little, old tanks they had, compared to their [adversaries]. I mean, they had a seventy-six-caliber [millimeter] gun, which the Tiger tank, it just bounced off, you know, but every time a Tiger tank, or even the other ones, I forget what they're called, Panthers, Panthers, fired, they'd go right through our tanks, and it was very sad. So, I was glad I wasn't in the armored division. So, we had our own tanks in the Fifth Infantry Division, we had them, ... not a regiment, but it was a battalion of tanks, I think it was, and we would get those from time to time.

SI: How would they be used in conjunction with your forces?

RS: The infantry and tank attack. ... I'm sure you're familiar with that.

SI: Yes.

RS: ... Usually, the infantry crowded in back of a tank, or whatever, how ever the unit commanders want to do, and then, they attack, and the tanks would sit there with their machine-guns and fire away like mad to keep the Germans down. ... If they don't have an "eighty-eight" sitting there, [the German eighty-eight-millimeter artillery piece, a renowned anti-aircraft and antitank weapon], everybody's okay, but, usually, they do. It's an antitank gun, which is the

same gun that they have on the Tiger tanks, and very effective. So, the Fourth Armored took a lot of casualties. They lost a lot of tanks.

SI: Were the tanks you were working with Shermans?

RS: Yes.

SI: You would be working nearby them.

RS: Well, sometimes, we'd work with them, but most of the time, they were off with the armored division, but our particular tanks that were in our division would be, sometimes, allocated to us. ... I think that we had a battalion of them in the regiment or something. I don't remember what; no, must have been the division. Who knows? I don't. [Editor's Note: During Mr. Scott's tour with the Fifth Infantry Division, the following armored units were attached to the division: the 735th Tank Battalion, the 737th Tank Battalion, the 748th Tank Battalion and Company B, 17th Tank Battalion (Seventh Armored Division).]

SI: You told us that you were positioned above the Sauer River when you stopped the Bulge, or the German advance. Did you wind up crossing the river?

RS: Yes, we did.

SI: What was that like?

RS: Not too good. You ready for that one?

SI: Sure.

RS: Okay. On February 1st, I believe it was, and I don't know too much what's happening between, whatever, but this is a big one. On February 1st, we had [heavy rain]. Now, ... in the process, ... I think it was Christmas, or right around Christmas, they had fifteen inches of snow, and it kept re-snowing, to keep it at least fifteen inches, and made it very interesting for walking around, ... hiking around, doing stuff, very hard. So, fifteen inches; it started to rain and it rained, sometimes in torrents, for three days. So, when they got all finished, instead of being a hundred-yard river, maybe not even that, flowing nice and gently downstream, it was a torrent--I mean, seriously, a torrent. [Let me] see if I can get a picture of it. Anyway, this torrent was so bad; ... turn it off, please. [Editor's Note: In his journal, Mr. Scott records this series of events as having taken place between February 6, 1945, and February 10th on the Sauer River near Echternach, Luxembourg.]

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: Yes, the picture looks pretty rough. How did you cross the river? Was it in landing craft or small boats?

RS: Yes, fifteen-foot plywood boats, and our squad would get in it, we'd put the machine-gun

there and we'd paddle across. That's how we crossed all the rivers, and particularly with this one, you wouldn't have ... a big boat or anything, or any sized boat. So, when we go back to where we were, Patton says [to advance], on February 2nd, or whatever it was. Right after this [thaw], the snow left, was washed away, plus this three days of rain, and, believe me, there was rapids, I mean, serious, serious rapids. That is not a real good picture of it, but that's the only one I could find, and General [S. Leroy] Irwin goes up to Patton. He's supposed to be always on the frontlines; guess who I never saw? Patton, and I was always, pretty much, on the frontlines, except when we were in reserve. So, Patton, General Irwin explains to him that what has happened and what is then in the river, [that] you're not going to be able to do [the crossing] with these small boats. ... So, he says, his big ego comes out and says, "You'll cross when I tell you to cross." So, on February 3rd, I believe it was, the Second and Third Battalion were ordered to cross. We were in reserve, most fortunate, because we had; I forget what it was. The last ... time we were in battle, we had the most casualties and ... had the worst problem. So, they picked the other two and would leave us in reserve. So, that probably saved my life. Now, we have these poor guys crossing the river in these little fifteen-foot boats and where we were, the river was probably not a half a mile, but [at] least maybe a quarter of a mile wide, because it came up off the banks and way over here, but, when you hit the river itself, ... I mean, it was terrible. So, they were ordered to go across and, by the way, we're crossing into the Maginot Line [Siegfried Line]. So, they crossed. We lost 250 men, drowned. Thank you, General Patton, I mean, and so, people, when I say [I served under Patton], they say, "Oh, Patton, General Patton, he's..." whatever. I said, "I don't agree," and then, I tell them the story, and they have sort of a different picture now of what kind of a man he was. He had a very serious ego problem, that's how I interpret it, and we were all very, very, very bitter about Patton. Of course, he wrote up some wonderful things, how wonderful our division was, but I think that was in guilt, yes.

SI: How did the unit recover from losing 250 men?

RS: We had a very large supply of replacements, and so, you're taking away the people who are experienced and putting in people that don't know what they're doing, and so, you're watering down your army, and this is exactly what happened to the German Army. They got watered down to the point where they lost the war and, of course, they didn't have the replacements, also. No, when we crossed the river, three days later, nobody had any problem at all. He [Patton] just had to be patient and wait three days. We crossed, we rescued a group of eight that got in there, and then, we went downstream and we rescued one of thirty-one. That was what [survived the initial crossing], and then, some came back. So, we did get [some survivors]. Some of them made it. I don't how they did, but ... a few made it, but this next experience I'm going to tell you was very upsetting to me, and I'd made a big mistake. Most of the people that were in these forts were from Hungary, Czech [the Czech lands of Czechoslovakia] and Romania. ... They were not German. They were commanded by Germans. I mean, ... all the officers were German, and all you had to do was shoot at them and they surrendered, which was fine with us. So, these three guys came down to the river, for whatever reason, and the group of thirty-one captured them. So, when we got them, we said, "What about the mines that you have here? Do you know where they are?" They said they had no idea, except they know how to get up and down to the river from their pillbox. So, the Sergeant says to them; I was there, more or less, [for support]. It was the sergeant from the [squad?]. We hardly ever had second lieutenants. They'd come and go. I mean, they'd get killed or shot. So, that was the last thing I wanted to be, in combat, that

is. So, anyway, they said, "You're going to lead us, because you know where they are." They protested, but my mistake was, the fellow from Hungary, he spoke perfect English, probably better than me, and he explained that he really couldn't, had no idea what it was, what's going on, and so forth. So, the Sergeant says, "You're going to lead us." So, guess what happens? They hit a mine. We're going this way, not where they knew, and two of them were killed and one was badly wounded. The fellow that I talked to was killed. I mean, these are the kind of things that get you, a little bit, somewhat. That bothered me, but, then, you have to rationalize, "It may have been one of us, so, I guess he did the right thing." Anyway, we managed to get where we were supposed to go, and then, we made our attack up. Well, we organized, and then, we attacked up, very easy. You ever heard of a Bangalore torpedo? Okay, they used those. Just for the record, they are long pipes, ... the end[s] of them are filled with explosives, and so, if you don't dare go where you can't be protected, so, you take these pipes and run them and run them and run them, maybe fifty yards, a hundred yards, up to where the pillbox is. Push it against the pillbox, let her go, and it blows a hole in the pillbox, and then, you attack. ... When you come [up], they've always [evacuated]; they'd come out the back and they look awful there. They didn't kill them, but ... their faces are all black and they're stunned and ready to surrender, and they were ready to surrender anyway. So, that was a pretty easy thing to do. The riflemen did all the work. We just sat back and watched, and then, we came to the top of the hill, dug in.

SI: At this time, were you an assistant gunner or were you still an ammo carrier?

RS: That, I'm not sure. I think about this time, ... we had enough casualties that I was a second gunner. I'm pretty sure, yes, I was second gunner at the time, definitely, yes.

SI: Does that mean that one of your gunners was killed or wounded?

RS: No, what it means is that you took the ammunition, fed it into the gun, and then, the gunner fired it. You sat there with him and helped dig the hole and place the gun and do all those kinds of things. You and he are a team, to work together to put this gun in place and shoot it.

SI: Did you move up, though, because one of the men was killed or wounded?

RS: I moved up there for that reason, yes. You worked your way up and, as people get killed or wounded, you get there. So, within a month or so, whatever, I was a second gunner. I'm not sure about the numbers. ...

SI: Was it difficult to lose people in your unit?

RS: Fortunately, for the most part, at that point, there weren't too many that I was real close to, during that time. Somehow or other, we ended up with these fellows from West Virginia, Kentucky, and you didn't know them, [and] so forth. So, that was [okay], worked out fine, and so, I wasn't real close. There was one fellow, ... well, we were friends ... and everything was fine, but I was not close to anybody, at that point.

SI: Were you ever in a situation where you had to help give medical attention to somebody?

RS: No. There, most of the time, we had a medic within hollering distance, as long as you're with a regular unit. There's only one time, when we needed him the most, he wasn't with us, and that's because we were by ourselves. He was for our section; no, for our platoon. So, we had four guns in the platoon. So, he had to distribute about [to the different platoons]; just so happened he was with us the time he helped me, and he was around a lot, because our platoon, a lot of times, worked together. Most of the time, it was just the section and, sometimes, he's with us, sometimes, he was with the other section.

SI: After you went up this hill, after crossing the river and rescuing those thirty-one people, what happened after that? What was the next objective?

RS: Yes. Like I said, ... we got to the top of the hill, dug in, it was in a [woods], in front of a field, and we were actually dug into the woods. ... The hardest part about being in a woods is, you get tree bursts. So, stuff comes down on you and that's deadly, and we lost our squad leader when we were there, with a shrapnel [wound]. Now, he was wounded, but he didn't die. He was the one we'd take back. That was our particular single [casualty]. I think he was the only one that was hurt at that time. So, he was gone and someone else--I forget, someone else, anyway--someone else was made squad leader, that has come back.

SI: During all these advances, did it quickly become routine, or do any problems stand out in your memory, any particular difficulties at any of these points?

RS: Well, now, we're ready, now, we're on the offensive, and, ... from here on in, we're on the offensive. ... So, on the other side of the field, about 150, two hundred yards, maybe more, [was] where the Germans were dug in, and they were in a woods, and so forth, and we had to cross that to get to them. So, they gave us four tanks and we attacked and chased them out and got a few prisoners on that one. ... Then, we continued from there, slowly but surely went from one to the other, and then, we ... spent a lot of time in Luxembourg, attacking, and so forth. This is all taking place in Luxembourg. Oh, one thing I forgot to tell you, very important; I say very important. It wasn't very important, but it was. The people of Luxembourg, the ones that were where we were, in front of the Sauer River, sitting there for a couple of weeks, gave us sheets and pillowcases. The Germans had ... turned their uniforms, the coats, around. Have you heard this before?

SI: No.

RS: Okay. That surprises me, but, anyway, they turned their coats around, I mean, knowing the Germans did this, and they put the hood on and, in the snow, they're not easy to see. So, this is important, and so, the people of Luxembourg gave us sheets and pillowcases. The pillowcases tucked into our helmets and the sheets, we put a slit in it, put it over our heads, and we too were not easy to see in the snow. ... I think they saved a lot of lives, a lot of lives. ... Now, the next phase, we come to Bitburg, I believe. It's a town and the Germans [were] trying to hold it very desperately, and we're now doing night attacks. ... They have an artificial moon, they call it. You shine one of the large searchlights they used for airplanes onto the cloud and you can see enough so that you ... won't be tripping on everything, but you're hard to see as an individual, and so forth. So, you have some protection from the dark, but it's like a moonlight night, and this

one was very helpful. The attack on Bitburg was [successful]. We lost some people, and so forth, but we got to Bitburg. ... Our medic, [to] show you how good he was, we had more stuff that we could have stolen, taken, and so forth--I did get a couple little things, memento-type things, and sent them home--but he made out like a bandit, because ... [whoever] is in charge of him, who knows where they are? He's on his own. He's very dedicated, and so forth, but, when we're in a town, ... and I believe this is where the Fourth Armored broke through--I'm not sure about that, but, in any case, no one's shooting at us. ... There were no problems with anybody getting hurt, so, what we did was just have a marvelous time. You go in and there's a table set with dinner on it, for example, and, of course, we sit down and have some, and then, clear the town out, and we went in reserve. So, there we are, having a marvelous time, and he just made out like a bandit. He just had a marvelous [time]. It was great, at Bitburg, and the battle for Bitburg wasn't any fun, but, ... once they were chased off; ... somewhere along the line, can't remember where it was, the Fourth Armored broke through and it went to the Rhine River, the Rhine River, but they forgot to pick up all the prisoners and all the other people, and so forth. They were twenty, thirty miles that way. No, wait a minute, ... I'm skipping; ... maybe it isn't worth bothering [with], but we had another river to cross, and it wasn't too bad, between Bitburg and the river. I could look it up, but it isn't that important. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott is referring to the Fifth's crossing of the Kyll and Moselle Rivers in March 1945.] It was fairly easy. They had a couple machine-gun things sitting there and they were worried more about the people up on the other side of this, but you could hear the machine-guns firing. ... Once in awhile, you go, [Mr. Scott imitates a machine-gun firing], could see it, but they weren't actually shooting at us. So, we crossed, went up the steep hill, up, and the Germans had left and the Fourth Armored broke through. They went twenty, thirty miles ahead. So, our major job was picking out from a few people that were fanatics. ... We ran into some during our trek to the ... Sauer River and they sat in there. They fired at us, and so forth, and we finally shot him. He just stuck there and shot at us ... until he got killed. ... Of course, that was something that the riflemen have to worry about and they did a nice job. I think he got a couple of them before they got him, but this is the kind of thing you do run into, but, mostly, the riflemen had the problem. We were immune to most of that. We did run into one that was a problem, but, once again, there was a rifle squad in front of us. We were in a row and there was a squad of riflemen, then, us. So, that's why I know so much about it. So, now, the Fourth Armored Division is on the Rhine River, and so, we have to catch up to them, and a lot of little incidents took place in the process, but, mostly, people surrendered. ...

SI: What do you mean by incidents, Germans who put up resistance?

RS: Yes, once in awhile, but, then, again, the riflemen took care of it, if they had something like that. Oh, I skipped something important, so, I'd better go back. ... Before this happened--I'm trying to remember when it was--I think it was in February, well, beginning in January. Anyway, let's put it this way; this incident was such that, ... at the time, we didn't know what the story was, but we were told to follow this big, open valley to an area where there was a line of mostly fields. ... So, what we did, we would go [spaced out?]. The Germans, of course, saw us, sitting in the middle of a field, walking along. We were about ten yards apart at least, so, they started ... hitting us with it, and it was snowing. There was snow on the ground, so, it was in January, and we finally got to the [woods]. When we got to the woods, we walked up ... through the woods to the end of the woods, set up our gun and started firing at the town where the

Germans were. Well, the response was not too good. They had a tank there and the tank kept firing at us. Now, we're in the woods; not good. So, we lost [men]. ... Two guys were killed and one was wounded. ... I had a rather interesting experience. I don't know whether you'd call it interesting or not, but what happened was, two fellows from the Air Force that washed out; now, here you are. ... I didn't think of it at the time, of course. Two guys get washed out from the Air Force, so, their "punishment" is, you know, in quotes, that they now are forced to go in the infantry, and they're given maybe two weeks of training. ... They didn't know what they were doing and in they come and one of them was with me in a foxhole. I think I was assistant gunner at the time, and, no, maybe I wasn't, no. Anyway, he was one of the ammunition bearers and he and I had this little dugout thing that we lay in, and the artillery was still coming over and spreading all out. This is why two guys got killed, and so, I showed [my head?]. All of a sudden, I hear a, "Boop." So, I look over and I pick it up--a piece of shrapnel, like this.

SI: Like an inch by an inch.

RS: ... Yes. So, I said, "Look how fortunate we are. They just missed us." I mean, he's here, I'm here and the shrapnel's here, and he just found out his buddy, who is his only friend now, was killed, and so, he cracked up. He started crying, asking for his mommy and it was awful, and I think that helped me from having a problem, because this was absolutely awful. The whole incident was just terrible and we were there like [sitting] ducks. I mean, that's what they put us there for, so [that] the Germans would be busy with us while the infantry came along the side and attacked the village, but this lasted most of the day. So, the next morning, I don't know how we got them out. ... Nobody said much of anything. They just took the two dead bodies, ... and the mad guy, other guy, I guess they radioed and they came and got him and took him away. ... It was one of the worst incidents that I had, and you're all by yourself, ... no rifleman to protect you or no rifleman to work with you. ... We had no business being in there, but it was strategic. That's what they wanted us to do, to draw the fire, instead of the infantry getting it. So, we did and we lost [men]. Two men were killed in the process.

SI: Had there been other situations where men could not handle it in battle and had to be taken out?

RS: Yes, but they were other people, yes, not personal.

SI: Not direct contact.

RS: See, this is personal.

BD: You said, at this point in the war, you were on the offensive.

RS: Yes, definitely.

BD: Did your role change at all as far as what you were responsible for doing once you were on the offensive?

RS: Yes, you attacked. [laughter]

BD: Right, but I meant specifically.

RS: I'm being funny, a wise guy; go ahead.

BD: I understand, before, it was mostly that you were dug in the trenches in sort of defensive placements. How did your role evolve now on the offensive?

RS: Well, I think I more or less covered that, but I will certainly repeat it. ... I have several incidents, later, that will clarify ... that question for you.

BD: Okay.

RS: Very good points, that will be very specific.

SI: When you got out of these pre-made foxholes in the defensive positions and you were moving forward, did you usually find homes to occupy or would you have to dig foxholes in each new position? How would you live in the field when you were on the move?

RS: Both. If you're actually in combat, unless you're in a town, you're in a hole. If you were in reserve, which you get every so often, you'd come back in reserve; it may be only a few miles back. Then, about every two to three weeks, if you're lucky, you'll go quite a ways back and you get a shower. Maybe you have two, three days off, you have a shower and things, ... and then, get all new clothing, and so on.

SI: When did you become the head gunner or the main machine-gunner?

RS: That, I don't remember exactly, but it was somewhere in this period of time we've been discussing. I know I was first gunner when we crossed the Rhine River, that's for sure, but I'm not quite sure when it happened before. These two incidents were not significant to me enough to [recall]; I don't think I have it in here [his journal], either. Maybe I do, because, ... yes, it would be in my journal that I wrote.

SI: How did you feel at that point about having responsibility for the gun team and actually doing the firing and making sure that these things went properly?

RS: I was not responsible. The squad leader was responsible. All I did was physically carry and shoot the gun. So, I didn't have any serious responsibility, except the gun itself, I had to carry. ... What to do with it and how to shoot it and where to shoot it and where to dig the holes and all those things, the squad leader determined, or there could be the platoon leader. If it was along a big thing when everyone's there, then, maybe a lieutenant or a platoon leader might tell you.

SI: Did you feel any differently about actually firing at the enemy now, because, before, you had not really fired at the enemy, correct?

RS: No.

SI: You had only helped somebody else fire.

RS: Yes. No, ... I just did my duty. ... I've read this enough times that, when I put it together, ... I probably would have remembered that, whether I felt something like that, but I didn't put a lot of feelings in at all. I just put down, mostly, ... not even where we were, but, in general, "We had a rough day today," da-dah, da-dah, da-dah. Mostly, these other incidents, you didn't dare write, because it might help somebody if I was captured. That's why you weren't allowed to write one. So, I tried to be very careful not to put anything down that might help the enemy if I was captured.

SI: Do you remember at all what you thought or how you felt during moments of combat, when you were being fired at or when you were in the attack?

RS: Okay. I think I'll bring this out now then, to try to answer your question. We went in reserve. Whoopdee-do, it was marvelous, and the worst, the most horrible feeling I have, [was] going back in combat. That's why I was so glad I was never an air pilot, because they did that all the time. Most every day, they go on a mission, combat mission. They'd be in this terrible firefight, and so forth, and it's a long way down. Even if you're not killed or shot, [the] chance of making it is remote to none, practically. The plane crashes and you're done. So, with this, I felt I knew how they felt when they started in, some of them, and I'll say some of them are "whoopdee-dos" and maybe didn't feel that way, but I think most everybody would have felt that way, but that was the most horrible time for me, going back into combat. When you're there, a sort of, not a calm, but a deadening of the senses, in a sense, [occurs]. Did you find others that felt this way?

SI: You became more fatalistic or did not feel as much.

RS: No, no, ... my feelings became deadened. Fear, and so forth, wasn't quite so bad. Now, when someone actually fought, when they started raining in, then, you get the scare back, but, while you're there and you know you can get clobbered any time, or, if it's [that the] fire's up here or back there, that's okay, but, when you hear them go, [Mr. Scott imitates enemy fire], coming in at you, then, you get real scared. ... Basically, ... something, your brain, or maybe mine personally, I don't know, sort of deadened it, so that I wasn't so scared, but I sure was scared ... when we said, "All right, men, we're going back into combat," you know. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott sighs very loudly, emphasizing his anxiety.] That was the scariest time for me. ... Were there any other people you've interviewed [who] have the same problem?

SI: Yes, some people have said things like that.

RS: Okay.

SI: Like you said, airmen have that problem. Sometimes, they do not want to go back up.

RS: Well, it isn't that I didn't want to go back. Oh, of course, I didn't want to go back. ... There's no question in my mind, I wasn't going to try to do anything to keep from going back, but I [was] just scared stiff, really frightened, [by] the thought of having to go back into combat.

SI: What about basic things, like sleeping and eating? Did you have trouble sleeping? Did you have much opportunity to sleep in an average day? Would they get food to you on a regular basis?

RS: Food was no problem. Sleeping, if you're in combat, you get very little sleep, and I was just [absolutely fatigued]. Maybe that was the reason why I wasn't as scared as I was when I was all rested coming back from a three-day pass. That might be an answer, because you just felt so tired and so sleepy, mostly tired, just absolutely exhausted, constantly, that maybe that protects you from the fear to some extent; thank you.

SI: I do not know if that is the case.

RS: I think that might be an answer to why I wasn't as constantly as frightened than I was in the thought of coming back.

SI: Was it difficult to function after being in combat for so long, being that tired and being so stressed out?

RS: It was absolutely delightful, getting out of combat.

SI: I meant, if you were in combat for a very long time, would you have difficulty functioning after awhile?

RS: Yes. Oh, I see. Yes, oh, nobody functions well when they don't have enough sleep and are constantly tired. ... You're constantly digging holes, you're walking for days, ... for a couple of hours, or this or that, particularly in the snow. One does not function well, yes, but youth helps.

SI: Would you start making mistakes, or would you see other people making mistakes?

RS: Never noticed one way or the other, never occurred to me, that I don't remember making [mistakes]. Oh, I made a lot of mistakes, but I'll tell you about one of the worst ones I made when we get to it.

BD: When you went on your three days away from combat, I know you said you liked to write letters, were there any other things that you particularly set aside for that time?

RS: I never set any time for it, because you never knew when you were going to have [leave], be off, or this or that. ... When they said, "Okay, we're going back for a couple of days," meaning it could be three or two or whatever, then, you went. ... You just got to the point where whatever they told you to do, you did. Now, I don't know whether I answered your question, though.

BD: I meant beyond eating and sleeping and stuff. Was there a lot of camaraderie shared during that time? How did you fill the time during the day?

RS: Well, as you know, I did a lot of writing, reading, and so forth. ... For about much of the combat, I didn't have a close friend until Al Raab arrived--and he arrived about this time that we're discussing now--and he was my friend from then on in. ... We discussed the families and all those good things, and other times, I did, too, when we were coming out, ... a fellow by the name of Wambow and various other people, that we were friends. We were friends. ... We weren't real close friends or anything, but friends.

SI: I hear from a lot of combat veterans that, even in combat periods, there was a lot of down time and boredom to deal with. Do you remember that and how you dealt with that, or would you just be kept busy so much that you did not have that experience?

RS: What I did was, if I got some downtime and had nothing else to do, I'd read, but I'd always have some book in my pocket. I started reading historic novels, and then, by the time I finished a lot of the historic novels, then, I'd gotten so [that] I was reading history, but that ... pretty much happened mostly after the war, reading straight history.

SI: What would you do on a typical day in combat? You have to do a lot of preparation. You said you would have to move around a lot. What would a typical day be like?

RS: ... I'm not sure just what different things we did. ... You'd talk to people and you sat around. I don't exactly remember that, because that was something that wasn't out at me, and I didn't write anything like that. I wrote things that were, happened, happenings, and, if I was in a house or a place where you could write, I would write, and, probably, I did some reading. ... I'm really not sure. You remember those things that are memorable, and the downtime, I don't, not memorable. So, I can't answer your question.

SI: Then, you said most of the other men would gamble at that time.

RS: Well, this is in the barracks and things like that.

SI: Okay.

RS: Yes, not in combat.

SI: Did you smoke during the war?

RS: No.

SI: Was there any drinking or anything during the war?

RS: Oh, yes, lots of smoking, lots of drinking. I probably inhaled an awful lot of secondary smoke.

SI: Tell us about when you went up to the Rhine, what crossing the Rhine was like in your unit.

RS: Okay. There was a rather interesting thing [that] took place. The day before we crossed, a ME-109 came over, right over our heads. We were dug in in a spot, which we really didn't need to be dug in, but we dig in anyway. The Germans were busy trying to cross the Rhine. We were within a short distance of the Rhine. [The Messerschmitt] came over and around, and this seems really neat. ... I positioned the machine-gun so that I could fire at it. So, as it came around, I was leading it, you know--all things you're supposed to do--and, somehow or other, I just missed it. ... So, then, he went down, he bombed the town in back of us, where the company headquarters was, and swung around again. He came around again. "Oh, now, this time, I'll really get him." So, I was shooting away and, somehow or other, I missed him. ... So, ... Al Raab, my second gunner, says, "Let me try it." So, he came around again and he strafed the town, I mean, the same [area]. He missed him, too. So, there it is, now, we have a dirty gun. "So, okay, let's go." So, we go and we arrive at night and we go into this house looking down on the river. Well, this is fine. "Okay, we're going to cross the river." "So, all right, we'll cross the river," and so, we got on our little things. ... When we get another set of washout fellows; ... right now, I feel real sorry for these guys. I didn't think much about it before. ...

SI: You got more guys who had washed out of the Air Force.

RS: Yes. We keep getting replacements, as people got killed and wounded, and I figure, total, we turned over at least three times, because Patton liked us. We were regular Army, and so, anything [that] was tough, we got it. It didn't exactly occur to me at the time, but it's pretty obvious that he liked the Fifth Infantry Division. You see, it had [a unit insignia that was] nice and red, you see. [Editor's Note: The Fifth's division insignia is a red diamond.] So, we got on our little boats and the Germans are across the way. Fortunately, ... Patton had broken his butt trying to get everybody up there and get all these things set, and so forth, and [we were] going to cross before they really get ready. Well, they were sort of ready for us. So, we're paddling away, artificial moon, so [that] you could see what you're doing and they can see you, and so, what happens? Well, first thing, [Mr. Scott imitates machine-gun fire] and machine-gun fire, and we had the two guys paddling, ... the two that are from the Air Force. Well, what they did, they got so scared that they paddled so fast that we'd made a complete 360. So, the squad leader said, "You get over here," and so, then, we went straight. ... These guys [the regular Army personnel] were good. These were regular Army guys, and they think and they worked out. ... Then, when the next one came, ... it all worked out, but we were one of the fastest boats going across that river.

SI: Were you near the bridge, the bridgehead, the Remagen bridgehead?

RS: No. We were south of it, by quite a bit. This is the Third Army. First Army went across, they were across, and this is what made Patton so mad. They were ahead of us, the First Army, ... that one we had to rescue. So, he was quite bitter. That's why we weren't really prepared, but we did, and we made it, because the German Army was broken by that time. This is March.

SI: Was the machine-gun fire coming from an airplane or from the shore?

RS: Shore. They fired twelve hundred rounds a minute, when we fired six hundred rounds a minute, and so, it was, "Brrrp," [Mr. Scott imitates a German machine-gun] like that, and so, "Splash, splash, splash, splash," and it's scary as the dickens. ... So, these guys, understandably, started paddling like mad. So, it all worked out fine--we landed, was okay. ... Next thing we did after we landed was dig in. I forget what company. I could find out, but it isn't that important. We're digging in with a regular [company]. It might have been C Company or something. We dug in on the top of this railroad embankment. [The] railroad went right along the river, within a hundred yards of the river, and so, that's where we dug in. The railroad embankment was up here, was just behind it. So, when you fired the machine-gun, your whole body and top of your head, your head and half your body, is exposed. So, that wasn't too good. So, we had to counterattack. ... Hitler says, "Put them [back], ride them back across the river, drive them back across the river." So, these poor guys, that wouldn't have a chance, attacked us--big mistake. So, they come tearing out at us. ... Somebody who could speak English said, "Yankee, we're coming after you." Well, we had a large number of Southerners in this group and they got real mad, and I never saw a M-1 rifle fired as fast. I mean, they fired--unbelievable, absolutely unbelievable, these guys firing, goes [Mr. Scott imitates a rapid volley of M-1 fire in which the clips are ejected rapidly], you know--and they just kept firing and firing and these poor guys didn't have a chance. ... Guess what our machine-gun did? It jammed. So, I hadn't cleaned it. My responsibility, "Clean the gun when you're finished with it." I didn't do it, because of all the excitement and things continuing, and so forth. ... Well, we got it working, so, it was all right. Nobody said anything. Then, we go on the attack and we go several hundred yards ahead, and so forth. ... We're in this spot and there's a big field in front of it. It's still black, ... still dark, I'll put it that way, and there was a town way--about a half mile--ahead of us. That was our objective, but, now, what are we going to do? "All right, we dig in here," ... they say. So, we dig in here, and, when you get all finished digging in here, and so forth, then, they said, "Okay, we want your machine-gun to go about 150 yards ahead of us and start firing." So, Al Raab, I and, for some reason, our platoon sergeant went with us, and I'm not sure why. ... He's probably ordered to do so, because what do we know? you know. ... I don't know what happened to the squad leader, but he didn't go with us. We were short of people, as we always were, or generally were. ... We dug in, [and] so forth, and then, they told us to fire. So, here we are, firing with the [gun]. We have all these rounds that are so nice and easy to see the tracers, and so forth, having a marvelous time firing at it. However, it didn't happen; the gun jammed, and so, we clicked it, clicked it, and it didn't go again. We clicked it, clicked it. No, I know what happened; the platoon sergeant knew. ... We hollered back that ... the gun was jammed. So, the platoon sergeant comes up. ... I think it was just the two of us, and so, he comes up and fixes it. I don't know what he did, but this man knows what he's doing. We didn't know. No, we knew that you fired it and you did this, ... but [not] how to fix something. When we're in basic training, we had to take it apart, but this is dark and you can't see anything and we hadn't taken it apart since we're in basic training. ... So, he took it apart and fixed it and it fired nicely, and so, that was fine. The platoon sergeant got, for this bravery that we did, no one ever fired back at us, ... a Silver Star, my assistant gunner got a Bronze Star and guess what I got? a reprimand, for not cleaning the gun, but something happened in 1947. ... Are you aware of this? If you have a Combat Infantry Badge, you get a Bronze Star. That's true? [Editor's Note: This policy was instituted in 1947.]

SI: Yes.

RS: Okay, because I was told that [by] somebody else, but I've never been told officially, but you're official. This other guy, I think, was from Brookdale [Community College in Lincroft, New Jersey]. I went there, did this same thing [within the last decade], but it wasn't anywhere near as extensive as this.

SI: Did you find out about the Bronze Star in 1947 or was it more recent?

RS: ... Whatever it was; I had no idea it happened. I just found out a year ago that ... you [can] get it, you're supposed to have one, but my cousin has one that he earned. This is the way I feel about it, and I would feel very embarrassed to wear one around him, because he earned his and I was just given it to me. In a sense, I earned it, but ... only by good fortune that it worked out okay. ...

SI: I want to stay on that topic for one second. Did you feel like decorations and awards were ever given out arbitrarily?

RS: Not at all, not at all. I think most of them were earned. Certainly, under the circumstances, [it was warranted], although it ... turned out to be absolutely no danger, ... what I feel of it, but, now, as I look back at it, I didn't realize at the time, we were victims, like we were in that [situation] when we lost three guys and one guy cracked up. We were victims. I mean, they put us there to draw fire, so [that] they [could] save other people. We weren't told that, what the circumstances [were] or anything about it, just, "You're ordered to do such-and-such. You do it," and, strategically, I guess it's a good idea. ... They thought this was strategically a good idea, but, then, they awarded [these medals for] valor, which is fine. I don't think I deserved anything for what actually happened. I don't think we deserved it, because we weren't ... under fire. ... The Germans were over there throwing artillery once in a great while. We'd throw over ten and, once in awhile, they'll throw one back, but they were in bad shape, really bad shape.

SI: Was this the point where you started seeing more prisoners and they start surrendering in large numbers?

RS: Oh, huge. When we saw the huge numbers of prisoners is when the Fourth Armored Division broke through and went to the Rhine. We got huge numbers of prisoners as we tried to catch up with them and, usually, rear echelon people took care of it. We didn't. ... Our job was to get there and we had to fight our way part of the way, crossing a river; no, I'm sorry, yes, I wonder how the Fourth Armored ... crossed that river. Maybe it was at that river that they crossed and went on. ...

SI: After the river crossing, what happened after that?

RS: We went town after town and took the towns. ... Right after that, it was a rather interesting incident [that] took place, so, I'll mention that to you. ... We went in, took the town, drove the Germans out without any problems, took some prisoners. ... Company C was up front, in the front end of the town, sitting there, and we, Company B--I think it was Company B we were with, we were with them more than anybody--Company B was back. We were sitting in a house,

our machine-gun was sitting to one side and ... relaxing, "enjoying life," in quotes. That was fine. Now, what happens next? ... That night, we hear a lot of shooting and firing up ahead of us. So, we stick our heads out and look and we see a lot of flashes, and so on. ... What happened was, they had three tanks and a company of (things?) going in, attacking the town. Hitler says, "Drive these Americans back;" no way they could have done it. Fortunately, very fortunately, they [Company C] knocked out [the attack], with a fair amount of casualties, Company C. ... One Company C machine-gun outfit got completely blown out with a tank and things looked bad. Fortunately, sitting to one side, back just a bit, is a TD, tank destroyer. They had a ninety-millimeter gun on them and a fifty-caliber for anti-aircraft, sitting there, and it was an African-American crew. So, they're supposed to not do so well, according to everybody at that time. The "Nine-Deuce," you may have heard of them, the 92nd Division, yes? They got a real bad deal. The Germans, just to step back a few seconds, the Germans took three divisions and found our weakest point, they thought, and it may or may not have been the weakest point, but I think any unit that was there would have been driven back. ... So, they crossed a river, drove the "Nine-Deuces," they called themselves, way back and they scattered. ... It was a mess and, finally, they came around and stopped them and drove them back again, but the point was, that said to everybody, that was a big story, "Oh, the African-Americans," they're called colored people in those days, "The colored people, that's typical. We expect that. They're not any good." [Editor's Note: The 92nd Infantry Division suffered a series of setbacks during the Italian Campaign in February 1945, which were erroneously seen as proof of the US Army's racist view of its African-American soldiers at the time.] Well, I have another story. Here, we have three tanks attacking. We have a company of soldiers, one TD. They'd driven back the infantry. Those guys [the tank destroyer] stood there. They knocked out a couple of the tanks. The other tank took off. The fellow sitting opened up the lid, hatch, yes; these things, by the way, have no armor, or any to speak of. They'll stop a machine-gun bullet and that's about it. I think a fifty-caliber'd go right through them. They weren't meant for that purpose. They're meant for knocking tanks out, and they were the only thing that could knock a tank, knock a Tiger tank, out. They were excellent. So, this guy takes his fifty-caliber for the aircraft, points it down and starts blazing away with it, and a fifty-caliber, ... you know, it's a lot of noise and very heavy and very effective, and he drove the [German] infantry away. He saved our town; these three guys saved our town. I certainly hope they got something real good. They deserve one of the [higher honors]. I don't know [about the] Medal of Honor or not, ... I don't know how they do these things, but either it or something very [close], next to it, that's what they deserved. What they got, I have no idea. I certainly hope they got a medal, well-deserved. I mean, they saved our butt, I know. So, I've had some pretty good experiences with African-Americans and that's one of them. [Editor's Note: According to Mr. Scott's journal, this incident took place on the night of March 24-25, 1945, near Wallerstadt, Germany.]

SI: Did you have other experiences with African-American soldiers in Europe?

RS: I did, but that comes much later, as a civilian.

SI: Was it mostly the Southerners in your unit that were telling you this about the African-Americans?

RS: Well, the Southerners pretty much have been shot or killed or whatever, for the most part, and replaced by, as I said, we had several people. About four or five of them were from [Army Air Corps] washouts, and so forth, and so, finally, now, we're getting [more diverse]. I don't think we had any [of the original Southerners]; we might have had one. I didn't really keep track, but it seemed like the unit completely changed, ... like Al Raab, for example, my buddy.

SI: Do you recall ever running into any *SS* units or *Waffen SS* units, the real diehard units?

RS: ... The only units we ran into were top infantry groups, and they were very good. They weren't fanatics, but they were good soldiers, and the Germans in general [were good soldiers]. Now, when you get the other [soldiers], like I mentioned before, the Hungarians and the Romanians, and so forth, they were very unhappy they had to be ... in this thing and they were very happy to surrender if they could. They did not like--they hated--Hitler and they hated the Germans, but there they are, fighting for them, and a very bitter experience for them. I felt very badly toward them, that they were put in this situation.

SI: Did you think the Germans were good soldiers?

RS: Absolutely marvelous soldiers. Even near the end, they were still good soldiers, but they were smart enough to surrender readily. [I] mean, they knew the war's over, as far as they were [concerned]. ... They knew the war was over, but they continued as good soldiers until they got an opportunity and they surrendered, and I think that was smart, smart and made sense.

SI: What was the last month-and-a-half of the war like for you?

RS: After we crossed the Rhine [River] and had that one bad incident, the rest of it was reasonably good. I'll give you one incident, to answer your question that you asked before. This is very typical of how we took a town. Most of the towns were protected by *Volksstrum*. I'm sure you're aware of the *Volksstrum*. [Editor's Note: The *Volksstrum* was a national militia created on October 18, 1944, by Adolf Hitler to defend the German homeland.] They are the older soldiers that were drafted in. They're fifty-year-olds and sixty-year-olds, and so forth. ... So, they were very unhappy that they had to do what they had to do, and so, they ... give very little resistance. When they're in a situation [where] they could fire at you without too much problem, they'd fire at you, of course. They're Germans and they did obey their officers, who were regular German soldiers. ... So, in this town, there's a big, open field, and, [of] course, the infantrymen, the riflemen, are in front. We're right in back of them. ... The major thing is, I remember all the [Mr. Scott imitates bullets firing] bullets going over your head, and we just kept going, and so forth. We had very few casualties, however. They shot high, and people who are not experienced people usually do shoot high, and so, we're very fortunate, had very few casualties. ... As soon as we got close, they'd take off. ... So, we went into the town, and then, started street fighting, which was pretty easy and worked out fine. ... To answer your question, we were right behind them and walking along, and, again, I think with Company B. ... We got there and the riflemen were working their way up, firing at the people who were firing back, but they were always, maybe, a hundred, two hundred yards back, in buildings. ... Then, we'd chase them out of the buildings, and then, they'd go to more buildings, and so on. ... Then, they'd usually, probably, end up surrendering. When they had to go out to an open field, ... instead of

going there, they would just surrender, and we had practically no casualties. Again, they were either shooting high or not shooting at all, and so, we saw no reason we needed to use our gun. We just sat there. ... So, these two guys, I don't know where they came from or what they were, said, "Why don't you take your gun out and put it in the middle of the street and shoot at them?" I said, "We have infantry in front of us. Why would we want to do that?" and so, somebody said, "Oh, let them go ahead and do it." I don't know who it was or what it was. ... It might have been just some other guy or one of my guys, and I said, "Well, okay, if you want to do that, that's fine. It's up to you." So, they did. They got in there and they started shooting away like mad. ... Then, we radioed back and [the command post?] said [that] the fellows who are ahead of us were complaining about these bullets going over their heads, and I said, "That's my point," and so, they stopped firing. ... It was dumb, stupid, but people do that, the big, *gung ho* people. I mean, these guys were [like that], and I didn't see them before, didn't see them after, but there they were.

SI: Was friendly-fire ever a concern or a problem?

RS: I don't think so. I don't remember having friendly-fire. Maybe we had it, we didn't know it, or something, but I don't remember any friendly-fire. ... We created friendly-fire in a couple spots, as I mentioned to you before. No one got hurt or anything, but it wasn't [enemy fire]. ...

BD: At this point, how aware were you of the atrocities the Germans had committed against the Jewish people? Did your awareness change as you moved through Germany?

RS: We were made aware of ... [it as] the Fourth Armored [Division] "liberated," in quotes, many of the [concentration] camps, and so forth. [General Dwight D.] Eisenhower and Patton went to a couple of the camps, and they had pictures of them doing that [touring the camps] and it was in ... the paper; what'd they call it?

SI: *Stars and Stripes*.

RS: *Stars and Stripes* paper, and so forth, but we never personally liberated any [camps]. The armored divisions did that. They [armored divisions] were in front of us, usually, and we were just collecting prisoners until we got to a river, and then, we had to cross it, and I can't remember what the next river was.

SI: How far did your unit eventually get by the time the war ended in 1945?

RS: Okay, well, ... we come next to Frankfurt, [Germany], Frankfurt-on-Rhine. [Editor's Note: Frankfurt is located on the Main River.] I guess it was on the Rhine, but it was way up, a different spot [from] where we were. ... Then, we went there, we went north. ... We tacked north to go to the Rhine, and we were doing the same thing, from river to river. ... There were other rivers that I didn't mention that we crossed, also; just so many of them. Do you know what Patton called us? ... He said, "The Fifth Infantry Division have webbed feet." That's because we crossed so many rivers, and that's where you get the bad casualties, if they have any army left, and, by that time, there was no serious resistance. There was resistance, but not serious

resistance. ... Once again, we captured ... Frankfurt-on-the-Rhine, it says. Is it right? ... It is on the Rhine.

SI: Do you mean on the Main River?

RS: Frankfurt-on-the-[Main], yes, thank you, thank you. ... So, Frankfurt-on-Main, thank you for straightening that out for me, because it didn't make sense that it was on the Rhine, because that's much further ... east. It wasn't a real heavy battle or anything and we made it fine, no problems. ... Then, we occupied the town [Frankfurt] for about a week or so, and that was kind of fun. Why did I run into a problem one day? Well, I finally decided to see if I could hit anything, this is just sort of something dumb, ... with my .45, and I couldn't [hit anything]. I forget, I set up a tin can or something--it was near a little creek or river or something--and fired away, seven shots and didn't hit it. That, you had to be close to hit anybody with that, [a .45], and we didn't do any of this kind of stuff. ...

SI: Holding the pistol with two hands.

RS: We did it this way. Now, today, this is the way they do it, and I guess it's a lot more accurate. We did it sort of like this and ...

SI: With one hand.

RS: I wasn't that excited about it. We tried it and it didn't work out too well, but that was not significant; trying to think what else we did in the Rhine [the Main River], nothing. We were there for a week. ...

SI: Was that towards the end of the war?

RS: Basically, ... there was one more significant thing after that. ... Oh, meanwhile, my company commander says--and I know why he talked to me, because I was probably the only person that had some experience in combat. [I] mean, others came in later, but they wanted combat experienced people. ... He said, "How would you like a field commission?" This is February that he mentioned this, and I said, "Well, thank you for thinking of me, but no thank you," because ... we had two lieutenants, one in the beginning, when I first joined, when the Battle of the Bulge took place. He was gone, killed. A second guy, a real nice guy, we got along. He was my buddy, in a sense, because, again, I was experienced, ... but I was middle-class ... and reasonably intelligent, and he was this lieutenant by himself, with all these other people, which were much better people than we used to have. ... The people who were regular soldiers were okay, but they kept away from lieutenants, and a lieutenant, ... when he's around, and so forth, he'd like to talk to some people. ... I was there and I'd [be] delighted to talk with him, and he suggested different things, and so on. ... So, while we're in the situation where I was telling you about the firing of the gun and where ... our sergeant got ... the Silver Star, during that period of time, he decided to volunteer for a patrol, didn't have to do it, because he's with us, but he went out on a patrol with a rifles group, maybe four or five guys, or something, whatever it was. He volunteered and went out--never saw him again. He was captured. So, that's my experience with the lieutenants. So, most of the five months I was there, we may have

had a lieutenant close to ... two weeks, at most. "So, you're saying you want me to be a lieutenant? You're out of your mind," you know. That's what I think; I didn't tell him that, of course. Now, my captain, a very nice man, Captain Furman, very nice man, ... I just felt that I was more at home with the officer people that I worked with, rather than many of the enlisted men--many of the enlisted men, not all of them. Al Raab was a real nice guy, and several others.

...

SI: You mentioned this last incident of the war, before you mentioned being offered the battlefield commission. You had been in Frankfurt.

RS: Oh, yes. Then, we follow the armored divisions again and collected all kinds of prisoners, constantly. I mean, they came in in streams. The armored divisions were gone, and we were the ones that just said, "Keep on going," you know, type thing. They just came in to us to surrender, and they were marching, and so forth, no arms, no anything. It was perfectly safe, and we just said, "Keep going," and the rear echelon people picked them up and took care of them.

SI: Were they all German soldiers or were some of them displaced persons?

RS: No, they were all German soldiers. We did have quite a few displaced persons running [around], going in different places, too, pretty much. ... You see, ... if you were on the Russian Front, there would be huge numbers of displaced persons, because they didn't want to mess with the Russians. ... Of course, we all know why. Obviously, they were terrible to the civilians, but you consider what the German soldiers did to them, you can understand why. Revenge is sweet. So, we didn't have too many civilians, but we ran into quite a few, and so forth. I felt very badly. I had one incident that might be worth mentioning about civilians. I can't tell you exactly where it was, but we had this house. We took it over, sent them [the German residents] down in the cellar, and this young man, fellow, who was maybe fourteen, fifteen years old, came up and talked to me, spoke very good English. ... He's telling [me] about some of the problems they were having down in the cellar, and so forth. So, I tried to work something out, but nobody was interested. So, I didn't have any authority, so, I couldn't help him, but I was very sympathetic toward him. ... I did go down there and tell him that, ... "A lot of our people are quite bitter and they're not interested in helping you, but I feel badly about it. ... I can't do anything about it," but they were very appreciative of me doing this kind of thing, because I really felt sorry for them, ... and particularly when it happened in Luxembourg. I mean, Luxembourgers were not our enemy. They were victims, and a lot of them were drafted into the German Army. ... Some of them were portions of German. The French portion, of course, were not, but they were still drafted and they were all victims. So, anyway, what we did was to try to sympathize, and I did have another incident [that] might be worth mentioning. We came into a town and one of the old sergeants was there, and a fellow and he was starting working on the gate, on the fence in front of this house, trying to break it, see. So, I didn't say anything. What difference does it make [if] he breaks a fence? So, a fellow comes out. He has one arm is missing, one leg is missing. He was an officer in the; I can't remember the name of the [unit]. This was during the African War, North African War. ... What were they called, the Germans there? I can't remember.

SI: The Afrika Korps?

RS: The Afrika Korps, yes, okay.

SI: Erwin Rommel's men?

RS: Yes, the Afrika Korps. ... He was an officer there and that's what he is, came out there [to the fence], and, in good English, he asked the man, "Please, don't break my fence." So, in response, this guy takes his crutch, takes it from him and gives him a good punch ... with the crutch. Of course, he lands on the ground, and I said to him, "What'd you do that for? He didn't bother anybody or do anything." [The Sergeant said], "Oh, these blankety-blank-blank-blank people, they deserve what they get." So, I said this; you know, then, I said, "I'd better shut up [or] ... he'll hit me with it." So, I said, "I just don't understand what people are thinking when you do something like that." It's just cruel and unusual to me. So, this is one of the problems I had with the war, the cruel way in which a few of our soldiers behaved.

SI: What was that last incident?

RS: Well, anyway, okay, we'll go from there. We take off, try to keep up. We had all these prisoners and, finally, we came to what we called the Ruhr Pocket. [Editor's Note: This battle took place in the Ruhr Valley Area in Germany in late March, early April 1945.] ... We have a hundred thousand Germans trapped in this huge area, and I'm sure you're aware of the Ruhr Pocket. The Ruhr was, as you know, their big industrial area, and where we were, it was mountainous and lots of woods and things. So, we're just there, and so, we went on patrols and [would] see if we could find anybody we could capture, and so on. ... So, a couple of us said, "Let's go up and see if there's anybody up there," and so forth, "on our own." I said, "Well, all right, I'll go." So, I grabbed, borrowed, a carbine from somebody and we went up and we ran into seven Germans and their officer and they surrendered--no big deal. So, one of the guys starts beating them with a; no, I didn't have the [carbine]. He had the carbine, and he started beating them, ... beating them in the back. I said, "What are you doing that for? He didn't do anything to you," and he said, "Oh, they just..." you know, the same attitude about it. So, he stopped beating them, but what they did have is some sidearms. So, I was the first to grab [a sidearm] and I got a real nice pistol, very nice officer's pistol, a K43? No, that was the [rifle]; I'm trying to think, a P43? Anyway, I still have it, very nice, very nice. So, I was pleased I went on the little fiasco that we had, and we brought the prisoners down and that was that, but some of this cruelty that went on with us bothered me a lot--no need for this kind of thing. I mean, the poor people couldn't do anything about it. ... This guy with no arm and no leg, it just didn't seem right to me, all this stuff. Do you find other people having the same problem?

SI: Yes, I have heard this before.

RS: You've heard of it.

SI: Did you ever hear of anybody actually killing prisoners?

RS: No, no. We never took prisoners, *per se*. When we caught the prisoners, we sent them back, and particularly in the end of the war, you didn't have to worry about them. They're not going to do anything. They weren't armed. They weren't anything. They just came in and it was

no problem at all. There was no need for it. ... For the most part, when we took prisoners, ... during the Battle of the Bulge, we got very few prisoners, if any. I don't remember for sure; I don't think we did. ... At that time, when you're actually in battle, it's the riflemen who get the prisoners and they send them back ... to their unit to take care of them. So, only during the period where [it was] near the end of the war [did] we get huge numbers of prisoners. So, it wasn't any problem to us. ... We had no responsibility for them, ourselves.

SI: Where were you when the war ended?

RS: What happened was, in March, Captain Furman came to me again and said, "Would you like a field commission?" So, I said, "Well, I'm thinking about it now, because the war is just about over." ... So, I know my father would ... have went crazy if I was an officer. He would love it, but there are some things to think about, and one of the things I didn't think about is points. Are you familiar with points?

BD: No.

RS: Well, what it is, if you had forty-five points when the war is over, you're out.

BD: Okay.

RS: But, for an officer, they had to have seventy-five points to get out. Well, see, I didn't think of this, ... but I thought about my father, and so forth. He would love it if I was an officer, like he was. So, I thought it over some more, and so, in April, when we were in the battle, in the Ruhr Pocket, I says, "Maybe I should talk to him again about this officer thing." So, I did, and so, he said, "I'll set up an interview ... with a group of officers." I think a full-bird colonel was the man, and there were some lieutenant colonels and a major, I think, or something. [Editor's Note: A full-bird colonel refers to the eagle rank insignia worn by colonels, in contrast with the silver leaf worn by lieutenant colonels.] I don't know where they came from or what. So, I get in there and they asked me a whole slew of questions, many of which I couldn't answer, like, ... "In the jeep trailer, how many ammunition boxes can you get in there?" I didn't have the foggiest idea, but, in general, they seemed to think it was okay, and, as I say, they were desperate for officers. Practically none of the unit had any lieutenants. They were all killed or captured or whatever. So, in their desperation, they thought I was okay, and I'm serious about this. They were really desperate. So, I said, "Well?" He said, "Fine," and I said, "Finally." I mean, the war is over, as far as I was concerned and as far as our unit was concerned. We didn't go on. ... The unit went on to the Czech border and stopped within a few days after, ... because, while we were sitting there waiting for these people [the Germans] to surrender, they had gone to the Czech border, and then, shortly, ... it was over. So, maybe they didn't surrender until May 6th [May 8th], but, as far [as we were concerned], it was the end of April when the war is basically over, as far as our units, where we were, were concerned, when it was no more fighting and just slews of prisoners all over the place. When you have a hundred thousand people surrender, you have a lot of people, and that was about it. So, I says, "Okay." So, they said to me, "We really [think] we're going to need you in the Pacific." I said, "Uh-oh." [laughter] I didn't think of that. ... So, okay, so, they sent me back to Fontainebleau, [a commune in metropolitan Paris], in Paris. First of all, I had a whole week in Paris--fantastic. So, I ran into this sixteen-year-old kid. ... I was

still; I was either nineteen or twenty, I forget. Anyway, I looked like a kid, this blond, blue-eyed kid, ... innocent looking kid, and that's what I was. So, when she looked at me, she thought I was a kid. She didn't even know I was; ... oh, I met her after I was an officer. Okay, forget it for the moment. Well, I'll bring it in later. So, we have all these people that were going to be officers, or that are going to ... get field commissions, and so forth, didn't get field commissions because they were going to do that later. So, that was fine. So, what do you do with a bunch of people that you don't know what to do with? You put them in training, keep them out of mischief. [laughter] Well, that really didn't do much. So, ... they gave us passes to Paris. I think I went at least three or four times a week, each, while I was in this training thing. Well, if you need to go so-and-so, or you need it a couple times, ... they give you a pass, whatever you wanted to do, but, meanwhile, if you're around, they'd train you. They'd put you in training, and that was fine. I didn't have a problem. I mean, that was real good. Fontainebleau is a very interesting city. That's where the King of England lived, I mean, the King of France lived. I mean, that was their big palace and everything, and so forth, when it was a monarchy. So, it had a lot of history and very interesting.

SI: Do you mean Versailles?

RS: ... Fontainebleau? Oh, Versailles, I guess it must be right near there or something, or part of it or maybe it was [Versailles]. No, ... we were in Fontainebleau. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott's journal confirmed that he trained at the Palace of Fontainebleau.] ... Well, anyway, it was not too far from Paris and you could always hitchhike to Paris, which we did, and it worked out fine. ... It was a joy time for me. I really enjoyed it. ... I'd go with some friends, and so forth, and another guy says, "I understand you've been to Paris a few times. Could I go with you?" and I said, "Sure, we'll get a pass and we'll go." ... One of these times, I met this very nice young lady, very pleasant. She wasn't too good in English, and I was very bad in French, and [we] spoke. We managed, but she gave me the most wonderful tour of Paris, and the other guy had a girlfriend, too, that went with us. ... We had a marvelous time, and we really got to see Paris from a ... young French girl who knew the town very, very well. ... So, it wasn't just us wandering around, hoping we'd find something, right. We got a real good tour, and we were there well over a week and I got to know her pretty well--nothing romantic involved, especially. ... Then, I had to first meet the parents. This is the kind of situation it was, and that kind of growing up she was, and they looked at us. ... Then, the second time we went, I was an officer. Finally, they decided to make us officers. Maybe it was for; I don't remember what. Whenever it was, I'm sure I was an officer. So, when this happened, I was an officer, and she hadn't the foggiest [idea] that I was one. I didn't say anything one way or the other. ... I guess the parents saw that I was an officer, a young, innocent looking officer, and I guess I was. ... So, it was just a wonderful vacation, and I think a deserved vacation I went on, but it was very, very nice, very enjoyable, and a wonderful experience. ... Then, I went back a couple other times and I went back with other people, and so forth. ... It was just very good and very enjoyable. ... So, then, the war's over and ... summer had arrived, and more training. ... Finally, they found a ship for us.

SI: Was this training with the Fifth Infantry Division?

RS: No. This was just training to keep us out of mischief, but, if you wanted to go on mischief fun for yourself, that was fine, too. So, it was a great time. It was just great.

SI: You were detached from the Fifth Infantry Division.

RS: I was with no unit, no nothing. We were just individual officers that could, if we wanted to get into mischief, go someplace. ... That was not their problem, but, when they were back where we were, [we were the Army's problem], and ... where we lived was great. It was individual rooms or rooms where you had somebody else with you, ... probably have officer barracks or something. I don't remember what it was. Whatever it was, it was really good living, and, as an officer, you got good food. ... It was served nicely, and, I mean, it was just an entirely new life. I didn't believe how things could change so much that way when you're an officer, but, then, when it came to travel, unbelievable. We actually traveled in a forty-and-eight. Are you familiar with those, forty-and-eight? Okay, it's a boxcar, basically.

BD: Okay.

RS: And you can put forty people in it or eight horses; that's forty and eight. So, we didn't get jammed in like you would normally. They ... spread us out, and we took off to the coast, and so, we arrived there, and, of course, they were unprepared. We had to wait for a ship. I think it was near Le Havre [in northwest France] or someplace where there was a thing. ... What we did, ... they didn't have anything for us to do, so, we would go out along the coast, and this is summer now, early summer. So, what we would do [is], I got two very good friends, that we got together--they were also in the Fifth Infantry Division--and the three of us buddied together. ... We would go along the back of the beach and watch these young ladies get undressed and put on their ... swimsuits--amazing. They were good. You really didn't get to see much, but we always had hopes and we enjoyed watching. It was kind of fun. I know, today, with the sophistication, everybody's out showing their things, the women, and so forth, and all the magazines and things, the movies, [and] so on, so that you're used to it, but this was real fun for us. You didn't get to see that much in those days, back in the '40s. So, this is kind of an interesting situation, and we did other things, too, and so forth. So, it was very nice. So, now, ... they finally found a transport for us. It was not a troop [transport], exactly. It wasn't really a troop transport, but that was okay. ... So, we got on, didn't have to worry about any sinkings or anything, because the war is over, and we went back [to the United States]. We did hit a bad storm, and I found the best place to be in a bad storm is in the front deck. So, it's kind of wet out there, but I had a raincoat, and so forth. ... So, I spent a lot of time out on the front bow, and so, I didn't get sick. ... That was the big excitement for the trip back, and it was slow, but I think it took almost as much time as it did for the zigzagging and back. So, it was all right and we got home, and, of course, [we arrived in] New York Harbor. So, now, what do you do? Well, I know a place. I knew all the subway routes and everything, because I'd been there a lot. ... So, I got hooked, went on to a subway, told them I was home, and so, I went over to see my grandparents in ... 1011 Dean Street. Well, I got in, up to [the] seventh floor, or whatever it was, and got into their apartment, walked into the living room and there must have been forty people there. Wow, that was really something. So, finally, I mean, then, what happened was, I was crowded with kisses and hugs and all these wonderful things. ... Then, they wanted to know what it was like. Well, the language I used was different than what I was brought up [using], and all these people were

the people I was brought up with. I was the only person in our entire family, which is very large, it turned out, and quite a few of us went into the service, but I was the only one that went into combat, "big hero." So, I just felt that I did my duty. "World War II survivor," that's how I felt about myself. ... I did survive and it was nice, and the fact that I was an officer, oh, marvelous. ... So, I started telling a few things and it was very hard not to use the words that I used almost every sentence, that they now have ... the first letter and the last letter and the rest of it's blank. Well, once in a great while, I'd slip. I remember, I would tell you one incident, because it isn't that bad. If you were lucky enough to get a sleeping bag, we didn't call them sleeping bags; we called them "fart sacks." [laughter] Well, you should hear the reaction I got, this huge reaction of what I said, [Mr. Scott imitates shocked reactions]. "Uh-oh, I blew it," but this is the kind of thing I had to be so careful with. I had to remember, and you know how I finally solved it? I didn't swear anymore. I said, "Okay, no more swearing. When I get back to my unit, ... no more swearing," and I can get away with it because I had the Infantry Badge, [the Combat Infantrymen's Badge, awarded to infantrymen who actively participated in ground combat]. They didn't give me a hard time about it [not swearing], and I was an officer, too, but, still, all the officers talked just like the enlisted men. So, that solved my problem. ... When I enlisted into the National Guard, while in my fifties, I didn't do any swearing at all and it was strange, very strange indeed, when everyone else is swearing like mad and I didn't swear, but I got away with it. The Infantry Badge made the difference. They didn't give me a hard time about it. ...

SI: It is a very interesting observation. Were there other differences that were brought to the surface when you came home? Did you see differences in your family? Did they seem very different to you?

RS: No, they were just ... there, and they were there when I left and they were there when I came back. ... It was delightful to see them all, and I was most pleased to be home for forty-five days. ... Something absolutely marvelous happened in that forty-five days, and you've already guessed it--the Japanese surrendered. So, my fears of ... leading a platoon into Tokyo or in the beaches somewhere [were allayed], but I was also very fortunate that I would be a platoon leader of a machine-gun company, or platoon, machine-gun platoon. I wouldn't be [in] an infantry rifleman platoon. So, that was helpful, very helpful, for my fears that I would have fighting the Japanese. ... I thought sure, sure, that I would be there. I mean, there was no question in my mind. "These people are fanatics. They're going to fight every village, every town, every mountaintop, until they're all dead," and a couple million of us would be dead, no question in my mind. ... Somebody did something right, as far as I was concerned. Now, a lot of people disagree with this, ... and then, [I feel it is] very likely that the atomic bomb saved my life, and the life of ... a couple of other million Americans. ... It saved the life of millions, probably ten or fifteen million, Japanese. We sacrificed several hundred thousand of them to do it, but we saved their lives and our lives in the process. ... That was the best thing that happened ... in 1945. I don't know how you feel about it as a civilian.

BD: I have a follow-up question regarding when you first found out you had your commission in the field. You said that you were told while you were still in France that there was a chance you might go to the Pacific.

RS: No, not a chance. That was [that] I was going to the Pacific.

BD: How closely were you following the events that were going on in the Pacific at that point in time?

RS: I always [read] whatever I could find. Current events were very important to me.

BD: How much was shared in the newspapers?

RS: It was hard to find. *The Stars and Stripes* did have information that you could read, and local papers. I couldn't read French that well, [and] so forth. ... You hear things that are going on, but ... I had to work at it to get what information I could get. I think the other guys weren't that worried and they didn't care. All they wanted to do was win the war in Germany, and then, they were finished. That was it, as far as they were concerned. ... If it wasn't for the atomic bomb, I probably ... did a very dumb thing, getting my commission, very dumb, but the atomic bomb saved my life. That's my feeling. Then, when I took some courses, just for kicks or fun, in Brookdale [Community College]; no, I didn't really take [them]. Most of them, I took just audit, and there was a lot of people in there, a lot of young people, particularly, particularly girls, that thought dropping that atomic bomb was the worst thing that we ever did in the United States of America. ... If I had an opportunity, I would tell them my experience, and I usually did not, but, when I did, sometimes, a professor would let me, they would ask, "What is your opinion about [this]? What is your opinion about [that]?" and they got a very long opinion of mine. ... Whether I changed anybody's mind, I don't know, but I hope I did.

SI: Do you remember the day that V-J Day [Victory in Japan Day] was declared, what that was like?

RS: Whoopdee-doo. I don't remember specifically, but I sure felt that my life was saved. Now, I'm going to die a natural death or whatever, automobile accident, whatever it is. Now, I'm back to normal.

SI: Was it difficult to readjust to civilian life, or to adjust to not being in combat?

RS: Not at all. I was already adjusted, and, when I came back, I was absolutely delighted that I made it. So many of my colleagues did not. A lot of them were wounded and they were okay, and I was pleased with that, of course, but ... those who died, they didn't make it. ... Before me, an awful lot of them died in the process of landing. Well, actually, the Third Army landed later--big surprise. The Germans didn't realize it and that's how we broke through and got to Metz, [France]. That's why we were in Metz, because [the] Third Army, and other ... armored divisions, broke through and made it to the Mosel River, [in northeastern France]. ... That's where they stopped us, and we lost a lot of people crossing that Mosel River, the ... Fifth Infantry Division. Now, I'm glad I wasn't there.

SI: After V-J Day, were you released right away or did you have other assignments?

RS: I had another year to go. I didn't have enough points to get out. So, as an officer, I spent another year in the service. That was fine. ... As an officer, I had to get used to the idea of

people saluting me, and so forth. ... I went to the replacement depots and trained ... them to replace [men], so that the troops that were fighting could come back, and that's what I did. ... I trained, and I think the one interesting experience was, I had the whole battalion in front of me. Here I am, this new kid, [laughter] standing up there with a microphone, explaining how to take the M-1 rifle apart, or I don't remember exactly what it was, but it was something similar to that, and I had no problem with it. I just did what I had to do and it all worked out fine. ... I wasn't nervous or anything, because I had this Infantry Badge, and that got me respect, which I didn't ... deserve, probably, because of my attitude about getting out of "this man's Army." I was ready to get out when the war was over, but I had supposedly made this terrible mistake. ... As I look back, I guess it was a good experience for me, and I'll tell you why, because I liked teaching, and guess what I became?

SI: A teacher.

RS: Yes, I became a teacher. ... I taught some, and, now, all I had was a degree in agriculture. Guess what I taught? No way you could probably guess, but do you have any theories or ideas?

SI: Vocational agriculture?

RS: ... That was my thought, but that was not a possibility. I looked into it while I was selling boats, or whatever it was I was doing for a short while. ... That came after the farm. So, I guess I should get into that first, and then, I could tell you what I taught.

SI: Let us talk about Rutgers before we get into your career.

RS: Yes. That's going to be [next]; that's the next step, Rutgers.

SI: You had to still remain in the Army for a year.

RS: For a year.

SI: Did you start looking at what you were going to do after the military?

RS: I knew what I was going to do exactly, because they had agriculture at Rutgers University. I was planning to do that before I went in and I was planning to do it when I came out, and I did. ... At the time, it was not called Cook College, it was called the College of Agriculture, and it was right next to "the Coop." Are you familiar with the Coop?

SI: Yes. That was Douglass College.

RS: Right. I didn't know you were [aware], at your generation; you may not be. I guess you [Shaun], because you listened to all these people, I'm sure they called it the Coop, yes. You [Brian] know ... why it was called the Coop?

BD: No.

RS: Because all the "chickens" were there, all the "chicks" were there, and we dated a lot of them. I dated a lot of them. My fraternity brothers dated a lot of them, and a lot of nice girls there and most all of them were smarter than we were. It then was a lot harder to get into the Coop than it was to get into Rutgers, ... not unless you went into engineering or something like that, and we had quite a few engineers in our fraternity. So, we had a lot of smart people and they were wonderful to have when you take some of the courses I took. ... I got a lot of good help from them.

SI: Did you live on campus when you first came to Rutgers?

RS: [When] I first came, I lived off campus, [for the] first few months, before I was inducted into the Delta Upsilon. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: When you first came to Rutgers, you were living off campus.

RS: Yes, first few months.

SI: What was getting back into school like, since you had been out of school for at least two years?

RS: At least, almost three. ... I never was in school, into Rutgers, until after.

SI: You went right from high school into the military.

RS: Absolutely.

SI: Your education was interrupted for those two or three years.

RS: Yes. It was close to three years by the time I got back into Rutgers.

SI: Was it difficult to pick up the books again and get back into the studying mode?

RS: I was far more mature, far more dedicated. ... Probably, if I had gone directly from high school, I would have flunked out, but, ... now that I graduated from Newark Academy, I would have made it. That was the big one, Newark Academy. So, I was going to do well, and I did. I was even a lot more mature and I was ready to study to get good grades. ... I'm not the smartest person in the world, but I had to study and had to work to get good grades, and I did. Now, I didn't answer your question. ...

SI: I just wanted to know about your first few weeks at Rutgers. What was it like, getting back into the swing of things?

RS: ... I adapted quickly, had no problem with it. I liked it. I forget ... if I had history the first year. If I did, I loved history. [Of] course, I was not a history major, but ... one of the

requirements was history, and I think I had [Professor] (Peterson?). [I do not know] if you ever heard of him or not, but he was a really good teacher.

SI: Was he a historian or in philosophy?

RS: No, he was a professor of history, and he was an old professor. ... He was fantastically good, and that involved me more, [got me more] interested, in history. So, I had to do it on my own, and I did, ... but, then, I had this, another big stimulus for history, but I had to give it up for studying, except for when I was taking the course.

SI: Was your major just agriculture or was it a specialty within agriculture?

RS: It was ... agriculture, the whole thing, but the first two years, I was told, they were almost identical to pre-med.

SI: Yes. Agriculture is very science heavy.

RS: Yes, very, science and math, and biology was very strong, which is part of science, of course. ... Two things happened while I was there. Well, do you want to finish with the getting into the [fraternity]? Well, go ahead and ask a question.

SI: What were the two things you were going to mention?

RS: Why don't we just go [into] getting into the DU [Delta Upsilon] house? ... I think that comes next.

SI: Did they rush you? How did you become aware of DU?

RS: My father was a DU, my uncle was a DU, and that was my introduction to Delta Upsilon. My cousins were Dekes [Delta Kappa Epsilon], right next-door, as you probably know. ... So, I was rushed both places and I liked the DU. I don't know whether you ever heard of Frank Burns or not. Yes, he was a coach for awhile. At the time, he was an undergraduate. [Editor's Note: Frank Burns, Rutgers College Class of 1949, was the Rutgers Football Team's quarterback during his undergraduate career. He subsequently joined the football coaching staff and served as head coach from 1973 to 1983.] He was a member of DU House and he was a fantastically good quarterback. He couldn't run, though, but he was absolutely marvelous. ... They had a fellow by the name of [William] "Bucky" Hatchett, and those two won us lots of games. I mean, you're playing Lehigh, Lafayette, Bucknell, Columbia, Connecticut. We're talking about schools that were like we, us, only we weren't as good academically as they were, but, in any case, we won a lot of games and we did very well. ... During the four years at Rutgers, I don't think I missed a game. I was a tremendous enthusiast of football. The other ones [sports] are okay, I guess. ... I just loved it, and the nice part of it is, my ... father had some money, [so], I got a car, albeit [it] wasn't that marvelous, but you could squeeze in six people. It was a four-door sedan--two-door, well, four-door sedan--and you could squeeze in six people. We went to every game. They liked to be my friend. I mean, I had friends that I liked, and we went to every game. We ended up having to squeeze girls in, too, but that happens. We managed, and it was four years of

just terrific [times], marvelous. I worked hard, but it was four years of payback, in a sense, for my duty to my country.

SI: It sounds like you really got into college life.

RS: ... Oh, I really got into college life.

BD: While you were at Rutgers, did you have a chance to meet any other veterans from World War II?

RS: Oh, yes. We had some, and we had quite a few. We had quite a few, but it's amazing how few served in the infantry. ... The reason for that [is], I believe, someone was in the V-12 Programs, somebody was in other programs and things, and most of them did not get into combat. I was one of the very few that were combat veterans there. ... It didn't make me special, as far as I was concerned, but I was treated with respect, always. I was ... one of the older ones particularly, and ... I was twenty-something.

BD: You said before, while in high school, that you had planned to go to college. Do you know if other veterans, among your friends, were influenced by the GI Bill? [Editor's Note: The GI Bill, passed in 1944, offered funding for college or vocational education, as well as one year of unemployment and loans to buy homes, to returning World War II veterans.]

RS: I think most of them, far as I know. I never questioned ... them about it and they never said anything to me about it, but the GI Bill was wonderful. My father was able to pay, but he didn't have to pay very much. I think my whole college education cost about two thousand dollars. ... You think of today, ... the first two weeks, you probably spent two thousand dollars ... in a semester. So, in any case, that was the story, and I was there. ... My father, if I needed anything; ... I didn't need a lot. My dress was--I didn't care. I've never been fastidious in my life. I'm still not. The one upstairs [Mr. Scott's spouse] tries to get me to [be]. She's not a problem, either. I mean, she doesn't go out and spend money on clothes or anything, either. She's a "thrifty Scout." We had to be, what with my job, and I was the only breadwinner, until I retired. So, ... we all had to be "thrifty Scouts." ... We worked hard, everybody. So, the point was that it was a tremendous vacation for me, in that sense, even though I had to work hard to get what [I got], do well, but I loved it. It was just college, Rutgers life, I loved. I loved the whole thing about it. It was great, and I have great affection for Rutgers.

SI: How involved were you with your fraternity?

RS: Involved. ... After the rush, then, ... you're there for awhile as a whatever, [pledge], and then, ... when you join, they have this really tough; oh, I forget what it's called, some awful situation--it's supposed to be--to make it hard on you and see if you can handle it.

SI: Like hell week?

BD: Like hazing?

RS: ... Whatever it is, that in order to be a member of the fraternity, you have to go through. ... I don't think it's called hell week. ... I forget what it was called, but you had to go through an initiation, an initiation, and whatever, and I just laughed to myself through the whole thing. It was so ridiculous, so dumb, so nothing, and a few guys didn't like it and they had problems, but you consider combat and you come back to this hazing--nothing. ... I'll just sum it up and say it was a breeze, incredible.

SI: I had heard that they would not make veterans do that in joining fraternities. They would excuse them; no?

RS: No.

SI: Not in DU?

RS: I went through the whole thing and it [was a] breeze. It was ... supposed to be real hard and it was nothing.

SI: How did the non-veterans and veterans get along?

RS: Well, I didn't have a problem either way, one way or the other. No, ... if they were nice guys, I liked them. If they were veterans and they weren't nice, I didn't like them. I mean, I didn't dislike them; let's put it that way. I just didn't associate. Most of the people who were the [athletes], including Frank Burns, nice man, nothing wrong with him, very nice, but most of the football players ... were not very much of a student and we, most of us, were, and so, we had not very much in common. I think that's the best way of handling it. It wasn't like the different culture we had with the South and the North, but they were different, and they had easy, very, very [easy courses]. Yes, I took one course that's the same course they took. ... I'm trying to remember what it was. Organic was tough, organic. ... No, what was it? It was biochemistry, then, there was another chem; I'm sorry. ... It was biology, and it was something that sounded very hard, [but was] unbelievably easy, and they had a lot of people in there that were in sports, a lot of football players and things. I didn't believe how easy that was and I didn't understand why I was even taking it, but it was one of those things you took when you're [in that curriculum], ... but most of the things we took were not easy, in the first two years, no. After that, it was [the case that] if you didn't get an "A," something was wrong with you. ... That was my feeling. I don't know how everybody else felt about it.

SI: Do any of your other professors, besides (Peterson?), the history professor, stand out in your memory?

RS: There was one person who was in; I can't remember the name, unfortunately. I just lucked out when I hit (Peterson?). It just came to me, but most of the names don't come to me anymore, but I had some very good professors. I liked them and I learned a lot from them, and a lot in agriculture. They were good professors. I liked them. They did a good job and I was pleased [with] what they did. ... I would commend [that] my course was a good one, although a lot of the things, I used to tease people [by saying], "I'm taking 'Chicken 101,'" or something like that. [laughter] I didn't. No, that wasn't, of course, the case, but ... some of them were pretty simple,

pretty easy, and you had to memorize a bunch of stuff, but that's not that bad, nothing like organic chemistry and things like that. That was not easy, did a lot of memory work on that, but Chemistry 101 and 102, I know that isn't the number, but that wasn't that easy. There's a lot of math in it, and so forth, and you had to know what you're doing. I did okay in it, but had to work, and I had to get some help, from time to time, with some of the things, problems they had, and so forth. The math in it was [such that] ... you just had to have a good working understanding of advanced algebra, or algebra. ... I hadn't had it in a long time and it was good to get some help. ...

SI: You also played lacrosse.

RS: ... Yes, I started in ... as a freshman, and the reason I got involved in it at all was two guys from Maryland State, ... College of Maryland, whatever it was, and they're big on lacrosse. ... They came in and they immediately ... were on the senior varsity team, doing very, very well. So, they kept pushing me, said, "Why don't you join? Why don't you join?" So, I did, said, "That's good. I should learn." This was my sophomore year and I ... went out for lacrosse and got a lacrosse stick and I started doing it, and so forth, and I thought I was, not that marvelous, but I don't know. ... So, finally, by the spring, I was adequate, you know--wasn't great, but adequate. I thought maybe I might be [able to] sit on the bench or something. Well, just about the time as I was ready, that I was going to be able to be a substitute, guess what happens? The football team comes out for lacrosse. [laughter] Forget it, that was [it]. There was no way in the world I was ever even going to be sitting on the bench as a substitute. So, I said to these guys, I said, "Do you really think I should stick with it?" and they said, "Yes, with the football team here," he said, ... "you now would never get into a game." So, I left. I explained--the coach was glad to get rid of me, being honest. Sports is okay, I guess. I've never been marvelous in it, but I've always enjoyed them. So, that was fine. So, that was the end of my sports things. Oh, I did do--fraternities used to play different sports and ... I played 150-[pound] football. ... You weren't allowed to be a football player, ... if you played for the fraternity, and I was a guard or something like that and I did fine. I held my people about as good as anybody else and I liked it. I forget what else we were involved with. Anyway, whatever it was, if it was fraternity, for the fraternity, I did several, worked with that a little bit, and I was adequate for that, not marvelous, but adequate.

BD: Looking back at your time at Rutgers, what sticks out as some of your fondest memories?

RS: Well, then, we go to social. That's what sticks out, ... what happened at the ag farm, and so forth, doing different things there, and so on. ... We got into some conservation things, which interested me very much, and I was very interested in that kind of thing, and I did ... some things on the farm. ... I also showed a heifer at one of the; what would we call them? There were contests to see which one had the best [animal].

SI: Like county fairs?

RS: Well, it was at Rutgers. It was like a county fair, yes, it was like a county fair, but it was at Rutgers. [Editor's Note: Mr. Scott is referring to Ag Field Day.] ... We used to show these various animals and you'd get a prize if your animal won, and so on. So, ... you go out and you

try to train the thing, so [that] it would go this way, and then, go that way and stop and look pretty, and so on. Then, something came up that I was needed [for], and I was ready, but I'm supposed to show this cow, this heifer. Fortunately, I married this lady, or ... she was pinned, I think, at that time; maybe she wasn't, but, anyway, whatever it was, she was very glad to do the duty, whatever it was to do. ... I went to do something which is far more important than doing that--I forget what it was--and I don't think we won anything, but it wasn't her fault. She did well. ... My junior year, I met Ann, the girl next-door type thing, but across town. We ... lived about a mile away. I mentioned this, I think, didn't I or did I?

SI: At the very beginning, yes.

RS: Yes, very beginning, okay. I thought I had mentioned it, and so, we went to all the activities and all the dances and all the proms and all the things that you do socially. She was going to school at Newark College of Fine Industrial Arts at the time. She's a very talented lady and she was a very smart lady, very smart, very intelligent lady. That's why my son, our son, is a professional engineer. He went to Lafayette, which has a good engineering school and he has a good job. ... Anyway, it was a wonderful romance, I mean, all the social parts of it, especially, and so on. Our first date, all right, we went to a movie and, after the movie, we went to a hamburger place. I don't know whether it was McDonald's or whatever it was, but we went to a hamburger place. I think it was just a hamburger place, and I told her very specifically, I said, "Don't order anything too expensive, because I'm on GI Bill," paying. I didn't mention; she knew I was well-off, but that I wasn't, my father was, and I've always kept it that way. I don't get money from him, I get money from me. I earn it and it seems only fair. My sister never understood that. She thought I was nuts, but, anyway, that wasn't the point. The point was that she still remembers that ... [on] our first date. I did, too, but not for that reason. Anyway, the point was, ... I knew her before I dated her. I met her in church--nice place to meet a person. So, the point was that she understood that I was thrifty; no, I was cheap. I was cheap, or ... I didn't like to spend money, and she still kept dating me. [laughter] All right, are we graduated yet? No, anyway, I pinned her, best thing I ever did, and graduated with honors, not top of my class or anything, but graduated with honors. For a guy like me, who is not the smartest guy in the world, I did fine. So, ... after I graduated, we married, and then, we went up to my [farm]. I went up ... and worked on a farm.

SI: How did you get that job or find out about it?

RS: ... My cousin, who I went up to farm with, was selling his farm and he was selling it to a man who wanted to find a tax shelter, and this is a very good tax shelter. [Editor's Note: A tax shelter is an investment strategy that legally helps one decrease or avoid taxation.] So, he [saw that] I was a college graduate, I had farm experience and I was hired as manager of the farm, but he felt he wanted a bigger farm. This is a hundred and some acres. So, he bought the farm next-door, which ... had a lot more property and more things and had a nice house on it. ... Oh, he didn't buy their house, because my cousin, my second cousin, Herbert Saulpaugh, [who] is my mother's cousin, as I mentioned before, [still lived there], and he decided that he wanted to buy this other house, I mean, this other farm. So, now, I had a house. Well, that was nice, a nice, large, seven-room house, not exactly dilapidated, but it didn't have running water--plumbing--and it didn't have this and it didn't have that and didn't have the other thing. He said, "Don't

worry about it. I'll put a bathroom in;" it had an outhouse. So, he put a bathroom in and he put a furnace in; no, it had a furnace. It had a pipeless furnace that came and kept the hall nice and warm. It came up the hall, and then, of course, it had seven, six other more, seven rooms to handle, but that, it sort of drifted in there a little bit, and then, what did we [have]? ... Oh, yes, it was in the kitchen, there was a heater in there, ... from a propane tank. It had a gas stove. So, it wasn't that bad. It actually had a gas stove, you see, and so, anyway, ... it was sufficiently modernized, so that we could exist in it, live in it. Now, I look back; you ever heard of a cotillion?

SI: Yes.

RS: Yes. You know what a cotillion is?

BD: No.

RS: I assumed you didn't know, because it's back when [I was growing up]. He [Shaun] knows only because he's been doing all these things, and, if you didn't do those, you wouldn't know what it is. It's like a dancing class, but, now, you're older and more sophisticated and you don't go to dancing class anymore. You're fourteen, you're fifteen, sixteen years old. So, all these girls that I knew from the cotillion--as I say, my father had money, and so, they had me go to the cotillion and meet nice girls from Essex Fells and South Orange, and so forth. I don't know whether you're familiar or not, but these are people [from] where the rich people lived. Now, we lived in Caldwell, where the rich people didn't live, but he wanted me to meet these rich girls, and so [that] I can ... find a fine girl to marry. Well, if I'd gotten anyone that I could think of in that cotillion and brought them up to the farm and showed them that kitchen, [laughter] they would divorce me [Mr. Scott snaps his fingers]. This lady took it in. She loved what she did, she took care of it, she took care of [the farmhouse], and, if I needed help, she was there for me. Let's say we did [something] where everyone's too busy, but we had some hay to pick up. So, I'd need two people and a tractor driver. ... She'd take the baby, park it in the carriage in one end of the field and we'd go around. ... I'd throw the bale [of hay] up and Clarence would pile it on the wagon, the four-wheel wagon that used to be for horses. ... You ever try to back up a four-wheel wagon? forget it, but he could do that; I mean, Clarence could. So, we went around the field. ... Every time we came back, she'd stop, get off the tractor, make sure Jimmy's okay, and she'd get back on the tractor and go on around. Whatever I needed--to give you another example, ... I'm trying to remember what the name of it was (insecticide), but, anyway, ... if you're going to grow apples, you've got to spray them. Now, it took three days to spray these 278 acres each cycle and [we had] over a hundred acres of apples. The rest of it was farms, pasture, hay, corn, ... field crops. So, now, we have a rain coming and I haven't put on the sulfur, and that kills the scab that comes onto the apples. If that happens to you, forget about your crop; you've got to spray. So, what I decided to do, instead of spending three days [with] some guy spraying, it's going to cost a lot of money; I don't know why I did this, because it would be easier [the other way], ... because the fellow who owned the farm didn't care. He wanted to use it ... to save taxes. He wanted a loss. That was very helpful, but I still ran it like I should run a farm, and so, at three o'clock in the morning, it'd been raining for several hours, and, after a half inch of rain, you've got to spray. In this case, you had to dust. So, we had the sulfur dust. I don't know [if] you ever had sulfur dust or not; it's not very pleasant. It burns and it

hurts, and it ruins your eyes and your nose runs, and so forth, if you breathe any. So, here we are, dusting, at four, three, four o'clock in the morning, and it's a good six hours. Well, when the gang comes, when the two workers I had [come], if it's early, before harvest, during this period of time, they would continue the dusting, but we had to start at three o'clock or two o'clock or whatever it is. ... We would dust for three, four hours, until seven o'clock. Seven o'clock came, we'd come back and they would take over, but that's the kind of person she was, and we did [have problems]. You'd come back with tears and you're all yellow looking and ... it's a mess, and she'd get it, too. [Editor's Note: To clarify, Mr. Scott would call his wife, Ann, into service to drive the tractor in the middle of the night rather than call his men in, while he stood behind on a platform and "dusted."] Of course, it blew. If it blew at all, she'd get it, too, but she handled these things. That's the way she is. ...

SI: It does not sound like you had a lot of equipment to help you out. It sounds like you had to do a lot of the work yourself.

RS: Well, you're not going to get an employee to go in there at four o'clock or two o'clock or whatever. Sometimes, you started at ten o'clock, whatever it was, to do that. So, we did it, until the six hours and completion, because you turn around. ... The only trouble with touring around is called groundhogs. You ever heard of a groundhog, Groundhog Day? ... They dig a hole, and then, if it's in an alfalfa field, you'll find about a hundred feet all around them is gone. So, we didn't like it, and so, ... some people think this is awful, but we shot them. I mean, this, you're a farmer now, you're protecting your crops, but we didn't shoot them in the orchards, unless you hunted them, which I did once in awhile, but, ... usually, after ten hours, I wasn't interested in going out hunting things. So, they'd have a groundhog hole there. ... It's pitch black--you can't see anything. ... It [the duster] has a huge fan on it with a big pipe going out and you hold the pipe and do this with it [spray it around]. ... Then, when you hit the groundhog hole, guess where you end up? on the ground, and, of course, Ann couldn't [hear]. I could holler all I wanted, but all you could hear was the fan, the duster. So, she would, when she made the turn, she always looked back, make sure everything's okay, and, if I wasn't on there, she'd stop, run back and see if I'm okay. Meanwhile, I'm trying to catch up to her, get up, and you usually don't get hurt or anything, but you're going maybe fifteen miles an hour. ... So, then, she'd stop and I'd turn the thing off, and it could be whipping around like this. [laughter] ... We'd get settled back, and then, we'd go again, but those are the interesting things that happened.

SI: You did this for six years.

RS: Not quite five.

SI: Okay.

RS: She did it for four full years and I did it for part of, almost; well, I did about ... seven or eight months, or six months, before she did, eight months maybe, before she came on. Oh, wait a minute, I didn't get married until November. What's the matter with me? I didn't marry her ... when I first went up. I was not married, but, on Saturday night, I'd drive down and have Sunday with her, and then, drive back Sunday night. So, I'd be there for Monday morning, ... except in

harvest. Then, you couldn't do it, because we worked Sundays, too, in harvest time. Anyway, that's the story on that part of it and there were a lot of little stories that go along with it. ...

SI: Then, you became a teacher.

RS: Okay.

SI: You went back to school and became a teacher.

RS: Okay. We left the farm. ... I started in sales a little bit, for a short while, and I met somebody who was a teacher. I was selling boats at the time, down here, and he was a teacher. ... We were talking about different things, and so forth, and I said, "When I was in the service, I really enjoyed teaching, even though it was how to shoot a machine-gun, but I liked it." He said, "Why don't you become a teacher?" and I said, "What's the story on it?" He said, "They need teachers. You would be excellent. You've a lot of experience," and so forth, "you have a degree and you can get a job right now. All you have to do is go look around and I'm sure you'll be able to find a spot to teach." So, that's what I did. So, my father says to me, "I just hired three teachers," you know, in his business. So, I didn't pay much attention to him. ... Oh, okay, that was another story. So, that summer I spent going to NYU and one of my fraternity brothers and good friends was a teacher and his father was a teacher. ... He said, "You really should be a teacher, should be a teacher." So, everyone was saying I should be. I mean, other people were saying I should be a teacher. My father was the only one who was against it. My mother was a teacher, for a short while. So, teaching's in the family, my both sides of the family, my grandfather, my mother. ... So, I said, "Okay." So, I went to Manasquan, which I would love to have taught there, but ... they didn't need [anyone]. They were all set. So, then, I went to a couple other places and [was told], "Well, [you can] teach eighth grade or something." "I don't want to teach eighth grade." That's about the worst grade--eighth and ninth grade are horrible, ... you know, junior high school. ... So, I went to Neptune. Now, Neptune is considered a ... city school. It has a lot of poor whites and a lot of blacks, half, half are black and the other half, about half of those are poor blacks. So, I tried it and it wasn't the most pleasant experience in the world. Once again, being a combat veteran was very, very helpful to me, very helpful, and I was able to maintain some discipline, although it's very hard. The first year or so, I taught general science. Oh, it was awful, but, then, my department chairman [left]. The department chairman [position] came up and I had a choice, "Do I want to teach chemistry?" which what do I know about chemistry besides organic? and, let's see, I had, yes, I had organic and two semesters of freshman chemistry. ... I said, "Well, maybe, might be; I certainly don't ... have enough experience to be department head," and Chuck Hibbard had some--had a lot more teaching experience than I did. So, I felt he would be much better at that. So, I opted for the chemistry, and it was [challenging]. Now, I'm well on my way with credits now, with this [program], as we went along. I was getting [credits], going every summer, and went in some winters, to NYU to get my degree in teaching, graduate degree in teaching. So, I felt that, probably, I should handle this. ... Six o'clock in the morning, they had a [television] program, and I can't remember the name of it, but, from six to six-thirty, or something like that, it was chemistry. ... It was a program that they had for this kind of purpose, and so, every morning, I got up at six and looked at the program for a half-hour, and then, got ready for school and went to school, and it was extremely helpful, extremely helpful. ... I fumbled through my first year, first semester,

especially, first year, and made it okay, because I had some pretty good kids in there. ... That was a bit of a problem, too, because they found that I didn't know some things that I should have, but, finally, after my first year, then, I started to roll and I really loved it. I really enjoyed teaching good kids, and Neptune had a section where they had a whole bunch of little houses that they built after World War II. ... In those houses were a lot of people who worked at the fort [Fort Monmouth] and they were research people, but they didn't pay them anything. So, they lived there and, slowly but surely, after ten or fifteen years, if more than that, they finally start paying them something and they finally started to move out and move to places like Colts Neck and some other places that ... had nice homes and had better schools. Our school was pretty good, considering. I'm not drawing the school down, because it was a good school and, ... well, they had good people running it, and so forth. So, my teaching got better and better and better. ... My deprivation of Scouting was taken care of. Ann was a Girl Scout who would go on to the highest rank in Girl Scouting, my daughter went to the highest ranking in Scouting and my son was an Eagle Scout, became an Eagle Scout, and I was involved in all of my son's things, everything, right up from one to the next to the next. ... I said, "This Scouting is great." ... So, in my process, one of the people I [was] involved with at the Scouting headquarters said, "Why don't you take your science club that you are in charge of and make it an Explorer post, Senior Scouts?" and so, I said, "That sounds great. I'd love it." [Editor's Note: Explorer posts are work-site based programs that offer youths a chance to visit community organizations and explore various careers.] So, that's what I did. I recruited kids from my classes--I had five classes, always had 125 kids to work from--to start with, and the first year, I had a big bunch of kids. I think about thirty-five of them joined. It was fantastic, and a couple of them were Eagle Scouts and some of them were ... the highest rank in Girl Scouting, because it's boys and girls, as you probably are aware. Are you aware of that?

BD: Yes.

RS: Good. ... This Scouting group ... turned out to be what now is called High Adventure. It wasn't called that then, whatever. If you wanted to be a policeman, you'd belong to the police Explorer post ... for that sort of thing. If you wanted to be a nurse, you'd join the nursing Explorer post. So, now, we have this Explorer post going. So, first thing we did was go to Osborn Island, [an island in Ocean County, New Jersey]. By the way, I was on the Environmental Commission, we'll put this in at this point, ... from 1972, I think it was, to date. I'm still on it, and one of the things I did, ... my background, ... [was] conservation, conservation and more conservation. So, I don't consider myself exactly an environmentalist, which, of course, I am, but, [when] I call people, they tell me, "Oh, those environmentalists." I said, "I am a conservationist. If you don't believe me, talk to Teddy Roosevelt, what he conserved." ... He's one of my heroes for ... what he conserved, but, of course, my history tells me all about this. ... The first thing we did was get some canoes, I borrowed some or I had some, and we canoed over to Osborn Island, a seven-acre, wooded island, and we'd camp there for the weekend, Friday afternoon, after school was out, until Sunday. We even had a little Sunday service, because, "A Scout is Reverent," and the girls loved this. They would run it for me, and so forth, and they ran the whole thing, actually. The leadership was mainly from Eagle Scouts and highest ranked Girl Scouts. I don't know what rank they were, ... what they called it, because they changed it about four times over the years, so, I'll just say "highest rank" for that. ... My daughter was involved with it, and then, my son got involved with it, and he is an Eagle

Scout and he was tremendously helpful for me. So, it was very interesting, and then, ... we would have other things. We'd go hiking, we'd go biking, ... we'd go camping, ... canoeing. ... We did those, and then, ... I got my driver's [license], school bus driver's [license], and I had access to this nice, big, huge, yellow thing. ... We went to Philadelphia, we went out northwest to Delaware Water Gap, ... you know, you name it, we'd been there, over the fourteen years I was there, and we went all over the place. We went into Pennsylvania, we went down [to] Maryland and various other places, whatever, within a school bus day's drive, we would go, ... if we're going to stay overnight. Otherwise, you'd have to be [close] enough so [that] you could get back by nine o'clock or eight o'clock or whatever it was, and we'd leave at seven o'clock in the morning. ... So, this, I enjoyed, because you know what? when you teach chemistry, you really don't get to know the kids, and those kids, a lot of those kids, are really nice. I bet you were a good student, nice student. [laughter] ... I don't know, anyway, and they basically ran the ... post. They came up with some ideas, but I was bubbling with ideas of where we could go and what we could do, and so, this worked out well. We had a couple interesting experiences in the process of all these things going on. ... Every year, we would go to the Girl Scouts and we'd do a project for them, like, we'd build a bridge around a swamp, so [that] they could [cross it], and so forth, and they loved this stuff. They really went into it, and, whenever we went to Osborn Island, we always cleaned up the island or did some kind of a project there, or something. Wherever we went, we did a project or we did a good deed, so-to-speak, and we were Scouts, no fooling around Scouts. Many of the Explorer posts, ... like the policemen and ... these other types of things, they weren't exactly Scouts. They were where you learned how to be a policeman or things like that, but we were Scouts and we really enjoyed it. ... Oh, I bet you didn't think you were going to stay this long, did you? ...

SI: Yes, you have done a lot of things.

RS: A lot of things have happened--at least in my life, it did--and a lot of interesting things, a lot of fun things and some difficult things. So, anyway, now, then, in the spring, right after school, maybe it was the summer, there was something in-between there we went to, but we camped at least three times. Now, the first one is "camping" camping, meaning you dig a latrine, you set up a tent and there's nothing there and there's no place to wash yourself or anything like that, except in the river, ... but it's only a weekend. Now, we're going to go for a week, or maybe five days, four or five days. My cousin; this is not the cousin from the farm, this is the daughter of the cousin. So, she's my second cousin, I guess, or, no, first cousin once removed; no, she's the second cousin. ... Herbert was my first cousin once removed, ... one generation removed. I guess you're familiar with that. Now, what do we do? ... We hopped in. We all got into this big bus, with all our equipment and stuff, everything. Whatever you brought, ... that's what you had to live [on] for four days or five days, whatever it was. ... So, we loaded up the bus; we usually had about thirty kids. We normally had sixty to seventy that were actually in the post, for Explorer Post 189, Senior Scouts, and, when we get up there, what there is, my cousin married a very nice man, very nice man. ... She used to live in New York City and they both lived in New York City and they got married. They never had any children and, now, they are retired and they're up on the farm (a different farm). They bought a farm out there. It might be, maybe, of actual farmland, maybe ten or twenty acres, and they had a farmer that came in and cut the hay, and so forth. ... In back of their property is a three-by-five-mile area. Some of it, right after the Revolution, the Revolutionary soldiers were given land. ... Much of this land, some of this land,

was farms, but it's all grown up in woods now, or most of it's grown up in woods, and there was a Hill, something, 89, I forget what. It was over a thousand feet high from where we were. You had to climb up a thousand feet and we always had to climb up [Hill] 180, whatever the topographic map said it was. I don't remember what it was at the time. I always used those topo maps for everything. I have about seventy or eighty of them upstairs in a section, from all over the country, mostly in New York and New Jersey, some in Pennsy and wherever else we visited--I always bought a topo map for it. ... You're familiar with them, topographic maps?

SI: Yes, I know what they are.

RS: They're green, if it's [forest]; they're green wherever there is wooded areas. ... I think they have colors, and so forth, and they have topographic lines telling you how high they are. Are you familiar at all with them all?

SI: Yes.

RS: Okay, good, and we would have certain activities, and so forth. One of the activities is worth mentioning. It's called orienteering. [Editor's Note: In orienteering, a person uses a map and compass to navigate from one point to another. Competitions on preset courses allow people to test their orienteering skills.] Are you familiar with that?

SI: Yes.

RS: Okay, how about [you]? Have you been in Scouting?

BD: I have not been in Scouting.

RS: Well, orienteering, what you do, you set up stations and, [as] a person [in the completion], you have a USGS [United States Geological Survey] topographic map of the area and they have pinpointed a spot that you're supposed to locate.

BD: Okay.

RS: And they may have five or seven stations, over maybe a five or six, seven-mile area, I mean route, and, when you get to the station one, you sign in and [prove] you've been there, and so forth, and ... then, you go to find station two, and so forth, down there. Well, we didn't have anybody to do that, but I happened to know the area very well, because we went up there at least once or twice a year. ... I had plenty of time to find places that you could recognize when you got there, you see. For instance, there, one of these places was an open area and there was ... a rock cemented in, where the house was there once and the vestiges of a little farm. Most of it was woods, but this particular area was a little open. So, when I reached that, and, of course, I had pointed [out] where it was on the map and I put a number on it, and so forth, and then, print them out and give one to each group. [The Explorers] always went with groups and I always tried to put in charge of the group one of the Eagle Scouts, so [that] they knew how to ... read a map, and so on. So, we start out maybe after lunch; right after lunch, they'd go on their things. So, they had maybe from twelve o'clock or one o'clock until eight-thirty or so, ... or maybe close

to nine o'clock, before it got dark. So, I figured they should be able to make it, and I figured right. So, they would go off, and then, we'd have one group go at a time, every ten minutes or so. ... Of the thirty, we'd have maybe three, four, five groups, and they'd try to decide what they wanted to do, but I made sure there was an Eagle Scout with each group, and so, they went. So, one of the places they had to go was up to--[Hill] 936 is the word. It was 936 feet above sea level, but we were at four hundred, or something like that. So, it was a nice little climb, had to go to the top of there and look out and tell me what they saw at a certain point, and it was very easy to see. It was very obvious what it was. ... Every time, they had question, "What is here? What was left there?" or, "How many of the certain things were there?" and so forth. So, there was no question, if they saw it or if they were there, it was an easy question for them. If they weren't there, there's no way they could do it. I had one here locally, also; locally, I mean it was in New Jersey, not too far from here. ... Kind of interesting, there was a car that came to the bottom of the gulch and couldn't get out, and there it sat, and so, you say, ... one of the points was, "What is at the bottom of the gulch?" and it was pretty easy to know if you got there, ... but that was some of the kind of thing that I did. ... Then, seven o'clock would arrive, then, eight o'clock, then, I started [to] get a little nervous. Most of the groups were back, but maybe there's one group that hadn't made it yet. ... I did this every year and I tried to change things as I did, because ... you could go [to] an entirely different area and go to another spot, and so forth. ... Once in awhile, I wouldn't allow somebody to go because they'd been there before, [and] so forth, but, most of the time, I had to change it, to make it work out, and I did this the last few years, anyway. ... We didn't do it all [the time], every year. ... About eight-thirty, getting dusk, the very weary small group came back and the poor Eagle Scout was so embarrassed that he couldn't find his way, but, "Woop-dee-doo," he made it. That was the big thing. I don't know whether he got all the parts or not. I didn't care. The main thing, he was here. ... We did a lot of interesting activities of that sort, and one of the things that was very hard for the kids [was] using the latrine that we dug, yes, and, of course, I always helped dig. It was good exercise for me, and the fact that I'm not above them, that I wouldn't be willing to dig a latrine, and I ... always had this little, tiny pup tent I used, very handy and very comfortable. ... The thing that [slowed me down], I was getting to the point where the hips kind of [hurt], after a few hours, ... when you're in your fifties, and so forth. ... It's an air mattress, and that was fine. I had no problem with any of that and, every year, they elected me to ... the Order of the Arrow. Are you familiar with that? [Editor's Note: The Order of the Arrow is a Boy Scouts of America national honor society that uses American Indian-style ceremonies and traditions to recognize Scouts chosen by their peers who exemplify the ideals of Scouting.] Are you familiar with that, Order of the Arrow? What it is is a special [honor]. I'd let you explain it, normally, but I suppose I'm supposed to do it. So, what it is, it's a camping honor organization, that you have to camp at least two weeks every year, not necessarily after you get it, but before you get it.

BD: Okay.

RS: After every two weeks, and then, you have to be elected by your peers. Now, I didn't have any peers. So, now, what'd I do? So, they said, "Your Scouts ... could elect [you]," and I didn't even ask this. I ... hardly knew much about it. Well, my son; no, he got it after I did. I didn't know much about it, but these Eagle Scouts, they knew about it, and a couple of them were in that and they found out, or did know, that if you are in an Explorer post, a Senior Scout, that your Scouts elect you. I mean, they didn't have to; they could elect somebody else. ... When I found

out about it, I felt a little badly, because one of the other Eagle Scouts or somebody could have been elected, but they elected me anyway. So, I'm very pleased that I was elected and ... I did my duty to do a lot of camping, and so forth. So, I was qualified in the sense that what I did [qualified me]. So, I'm very pleased ... and proud that I am ... on the Order of the Arrow. Then, I went on to get the next step, which is pretty easy. ... Actually, I don't even remember what you had to do, but it was easy, and which makes sense, because you're talking about kids that mostly do this, but there ... is an adult program, as you probably know. ... They are elected by the committee and all the people that are in Scouting, in your troop, and they elect you. So, that's what happened there, but there was nobody. I didn't have anybody. I had an assistant, who usually didn't want to go camping. So, that was okay, too. [As] a matter-of-fact, I don't think I ever had an assistant come up with me. I was lucky to get one. It was one of the other teachers and ... that was not their bailiwick, but they're willing to do some of the things on the trips and things. So, that worked out very well.

SI: Is there anything else you would like to add to the record right now?

RS: ... I mentioned before ... I was a charter member of the Environmental Commission [of Brielle, New Jersey], because of my background. ... What I wanted to accomplish was [to] save as much as I could [of] what was left of Brielle, because Brielle was, theoretically, built up, ... you know, nothing there, but we had an island. We had a developer coming in to take up a big, huge section of wooded area, and I just happened to be chairman of the Planning Board at the time. ... I had a lot of fights with a lot of people, because I felt these people should go by what we have in town. In other words, we have a zoning ordinance and the zoning ordinance tells you what you can do. In this particular area, you can build this size house and this size property, under these circumstances. Well, when a developer comes in, he wants to make as much money as he can, which is understandable. However, that's what the Planning Board is for, to make sure he follows our ordinance, very important, and I felt very seriously about this. ... It was a miserable time, miserable seven years that I had, but I was able to save two pieces of property, besides the island. That was on our own, and I won't get through the details of that, but it took a lot of work and heart, and so forth, to get that, but I didn't have to fight a developer. There was a section that was not developable. It was a swamp and an area that went down to the swamp, and he was planning to go down to the swamp, build, and so, I said that, "Why don't you save from this area here across, and the other side you save because it belongs to the golf course?" ... This huge, big area, ... there's a big hill there, on the other side, a nice, little thing, and then, there's a swamp with a creek running through. It's ideal for saving. I mean, part of it was not developable, but he could have developed it, because they get away with all [sorts of things], but there was more room for him to develop, let's put it that way, probably another hundred feet of property, but he gave that, including the swamp, to the borough. ... With that, I didn't fight him on some of the concessions he wanted. Most of them were not unreasonable for our development. So, he had a couple unreasonable ones [and] I did fight him, but that [which] was reasonable, I didn't fight him on it, and I think that's the reason he gave it so [easily]. He knew that he had this chairman who was real nasty. [laughter] I'm not real nasty, but I really got upset with some of these developers who wanted to rape the town. ... The other one was an Indian campsite, [dating back to] 5000 BC, and people have gone through and gotten all kinds of artifacts and things from it, and it's going to be developed. Well, I happened to know the developers quite well. They were people who live in town. They've developed a good portion of

this town; they owned a good portion of this town. My aunt and uncle owned about sixty acres and he had property also that he could develop, and he had his own big property. It's ... several hundreds of acres that he could develop, and he does three, four, five houses a year and he lives on this. The father died and the son's doing the same thing, and they're good developers, they're good people. We're very fortunate to have them, and so, I talked to him about this and he was reluctant to give as much as I wanted, but he did give enough environmental easement so [that] we could go in and have a nice, big plaque, and then, fairly near the swamp, he gave up some area he probably could have developed, and so, we had another piece there, call it an Indian site, or so forth. So, we have three things that we got that we wouldn't have gotten, and so, I'm very pleased and proud of myself for doing that. ... I had some people on my commission who were very, very supportive and worked very hard to see that it happened. ... I was very pleased that I [could] have it happen and, if I wasn't on the Planning Board, it wouldn't have happened, because ... I'd be out in the audience and, as it was, a majority of the Planning Board didn't like what I was doing. They felt that this guy could do what he wants. ... What the one person did over here, on the river, ... the whole riverfront was bought, and back quite a ways, ... by a developer and all the fishing boats and things were there. ... I don't know how he got it, but the fishing boat has ... this much space and that kind of fishing is pretty well gone anyway, because the fish aren't out there. This is at the time the fish were pretty well gone. So, the fishing was dying, and so, they sold the property to this guy, and so, what he wanted to do is put up fifty-foot townhouses, ... little boxes inside these huge buildings. ... He wanted to take up huge numbers of per; what's the word I want to use? ... Per acre, we allowed something like five or six and he wanted twelve per acre, and we compromised on that. So, it's pretty heavy, but at least it's down to forty feet, and we compromised on that. It was supposed to be thirty-five, ... because the board wouldn't support me on anything more. They weren't going to support me on much of anything. We had one guy who was a councilman, and [I am] almost a hundred percent sure, 99.999 percent sure, he's being paid by these guys, almost positive. ... Then, the inspector, our inspector, was also pretty much, I can't say a hundred percent, but the way he got up there and spoke, and so forth, he was getting paid, and the rest of the board didn't seem to worry about it much one way or the other. It was very disappointing. I had one lady that supported me a hundred percent, but the rest of them ... [thought], "We'll live with this. ... Don't worry about it," but it was very, very frustrating, one of my most frustrating times. In a sense, it was almost as bad as combat, in some ways, but, of course, it wasn't, yes. ... I've had a pretty good life and this part of it was not very nice at all. Now, where else were we? Oh, yes, ... I think, yes, that's good enough. ...

SI: Thank you very much. We appreciate all your time and all the stories. It was great. Do you have any other questions?

BD: No. I look forward to reading your memoir. Thank you.

RS: Yes. ...

[TAPE PAUSED]

SI: You were going to tell us another story about the sheets and pillowcases.

RS: Yes. Well, actually, [for] three weeks, a very good friend of mine--who I've known since I'm nine years old--and I went to Europe. He went to look for his old field, airfields, and I went to look for my old "foxholes," in quotes, foxholes, holes. ... One of the first things we did [was], we went to Luxembourg, because a lot of the fighting took place there. That was part of the Battle of the Bulge, was in Luxembourg for us. ... When we got there, we met a man. We talked to the people ... where we went, to this very inexpensive hotel, because he's even cheaper than I am. Oh, by the way, now that I'm a Scout, I'm thrifty, no longer cheap. I'm a "thrifty Scout." ... When we got there, I told him what I wanted to do, said, "What I'd like to do is give someone who gave a sheet and pillowcase to the Army during World War II ... a token sheet and pillowcase," and I was very pleased I thought of that, but that was [it]. So, they said, "Karen;" well, there's a picture of this fellow in there and, of course, I can't remember his name. He's passed on since then--it's about in the middle somewhere--and this guy was terrific. He spoke five languages and he spoke with a distinct German accent, but he could speak fluent French, because they're there, and, of course, he spoke Luxembourgesse, [Luxembourgish, a Franconian language similar to German dialect], which is an entirely different language, which I never realized. It's a combination of German and French and whatever. So, he came [to see us]. He was really excited that we're there, because this is what he did [in the war. I am] trying to remember what he was. I think he was an engineer, I believe, very intelligent man, and not necessarily that all engineers are intelligent, but, anyway, he was, and wonderful to work with. ... He says, [after] I told him what I wanted, he's very, very pleased, very pleased indeed, and there's more to this, but this is sufficient. So, he said, "I would like to make some arrangements for this." He said, "Rather than just give it to somebody," he said, "you could give it to me right now if you want, because I did [give them out], and my wife, and so forth," he said, "but I think what we should do is give it to the mayor." He said, "So, I'll make an arrangement, so [that] you can see the mayor and a couple of the councilmen some evening when they're there and you can hand it to them." So, we said, "Fine." So, we had a rented car, so, he took advantage of that. ... I guess he had his own car, but they're thrifty, too. So, we drove him to the ... mayor and council office; what would they call it, town hall, or something like that? I don't think they call it [that], but that's what we drove to, and we went in. He introduced me to the mayor and a couple of councilmen and he said, "Follow me." I said, "All right, ... okay." So, we went upstairs and he opened the door. The whole town was there. The place was full of people. Oh, you know, we practically ... collapsed with shock, seeing all these people. So, we walked in and we were heroes for the evening. They were the ones that did this, you know; they were the ones that gave away this sort of thing. ... So, the mayor, we sat down and relaxed and, of course, our good friend, we'd just met recently, introduced us, and then, pointed to us, and so forth. ... He said, "The mayor would like to speak and talk to you about some things." ... He had written out everything in English and he really didn't know much English, and so, he spoke for about twenty minutes. I don't know what he said, because I couldn't understand his English, but I could tell that the people liked what he said. He's very nice and very pleasant, and we were most pleased to hear that. So, finally, then, our friend spoke quite a bit and said ... how wonderful we were, that we liberated this town and got rid of the enemy, and so on. ... Then, I finally got up. He said, "Come up," and I handed the sheet and pillowcase to the mayor, and it was funny, I mean, a funny situation. So, now, what do I do? I make a little speech, which I had prepared, ... a very short one, and so, I make a little statement and he translates for me to Luxembourgesse, I think it was called. I'm not sure, and so, I would say a sentence and he would say a paragraph of what I said. Well, so, I say another sentence, another paragraph, sentence, paragraph, and so, I said,

"Maybe you should cut this short, Richard," to myself, and so, I did. ... Then, he went on some more about a whole bunch of stuff, and then, we had a little party afterwards. It was great; it was absolutely fantastic. I was so pleased about it and my friend was so pleased that he found someone that spoke English, and he was in the German Army, very interesting man and very enjoyable to talk [with]. ... So, we spent this time, walked off. So, he had a good time doing that and I got to shake hands with a lot of people, ... just absolutely enthralled and so surprised with what happened. ...

SI: Thank you for including that. This concludes the addendum to Mr. Scott's interview.

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

Reviewed by Sylvia Pokrzywa 12/1/10
Reviewed by Andrew Esler 12/1/10
Reviewed by Peter Sims 12/1/10
Reviewed by Nicole Giuliano 12/1/10
Reviewed by Kathryn Robitzski 12/1/10
Reviewed by Casey Curtin 12/1/10
Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 12/13/11
Reviewed by Ann Scott 7/14/12