

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH LESTER CARBONE

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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and

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and

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RED BANK, NEW JERSEY

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TRANSCRIPT BY

SYDNEY RHODES

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Lester Carbone in Red Bank, New Jersey on November 5, 2013 with Shaun Illingworth.

Vanessa (Olivera?): Vanessa (Olivera?).

Alexandra (Rudy?): Alexandra (Rudy?).

SI: Also in attendance is.

Phyllis Carbone Clayton: Phyllis Carbone Clayton.

(Janet Kranis?): (Janet Kranis?).

SI: Thank you very much everyone for having us here today. To begin, can you tell us where and when you were born?

Lester Carbone: I was born January the 18th, 1930 in Red Bank, New Jersey. I was born in a house on Locust Avenue in Red Bank.

SI: What were your parents' names?

LC: Lucia was my mom's maiden name and my father's Charles Carbone, Sr. He was from Crabtree, Pennsylvania. That's where their coal mining district [is]. He was a barber.

SI: Do you know anything about your father's family background? Where the family came from?

LC: Yes. All of my father's family came from Sicily. We were there and most of them were in a fishing village, Seculiana in Sicily, and they migrated to the larger city, Agrigento, in Sicily. My grandmother's family is from--Naples and my grandfather is from Calabria. All right.

SI: That was your mother's parents?

LC: That's my mother's parents, yes.

SI: Did your father's family settle in that part of Pennsylvania because of the coal mines?

LC: Well, no. I guess that was the opening, when they came over on the boat or whatever it is. That was the opening. They had openings in Pennsylvania. They had openings near Chicago or in that area. So they picked--I guess they got a chance to choose, and what's funny about it, it's Crabtree, Pennsylvania and I think when they had the printout, it was "Craptree," wasn't it?

PCC: Yes.

LC: "Craptree," I think, Pennsylvania. I mean, they couldn't understand the people too well and they don't speak English. So, they made a few mistakes with the printing and stuff.

SI: Your mother's parents, coming from Calabria and Naples, do you know approximately when they came to the United States?

LC: Approximately 1886.

SI: Your father's family came over.

LC: No, my wife's family. My wife's family from Russia came over on April 21st, 1919, with baby Charles. [He] was three years old and Sadie was twenty months old and Ann was three months old. Charles, Sadie, and Anne were my wife's older siblings. My father's family, I think they came over--it had to be before then, also. I don't know the exact dates. We try to find it on the--what is that?

JK: Ancestry. My mother's family came over in the late 1800s.

SI: Ancestry.

LC: Yes, and they don't have all the dates, I don't think, properly. That's all I can remember about it. [laughter]

SI: Do you know why your mother's family settled in the Red Bank area?

LC: That I don't know. I think it was the same thing as they had certain areas to choose from and I guess they probably just picked Red Bank because it was the closest to the New York area, I guess. So, they didn't have that far to go. So, I think that was the reason, yes. I wish my mother was still alive. She lived to be ninety-nine. She probably could answer all your questions.

SI: She was born in Red Bank?

LC: Yes, she was born in Red Bank. Yes. She was one of sixteen.

SI: Oh, wow.

LC: [laughter]

SI: Wow. Do you know how your parents met?

LC: That I don't know. My parents, how they met, he came for a visit, I think, to the Red Bank area for something, a barber convention or whatever it was, and that's when he met her. She was nine years younger than my dad. She was seventeen, and he was almost ten years older. So, they got married pretty--on Thanksgiving in 1925 at Saint Anthony's in Red Bank. Yes. Very good.

SI: What was your father doing at the time? He was a barber.

LC: He was a barber. He was a barber since he was eight years old. He was cutting hair on a milk box. That's what he told me anyway.

SI: When he came to Red Bank did he open a barber shop here?

LC: No, he went to work at Fort Monmouth, thank God. Fort Monmouth was there. It wasn't Fort Monmouth then. I think it was Camp [Alfred] Vail, but he worked as a barber in there for all the GIs and everything. So, he worked at Fort Monmouth most of his time in this area. For a while he went to South Amboy and opened his own shop. But that didn't do too well, so he came back to Fort Monmouth and did very well. My father was a great man. They'll tell you.

SI: When he went to South Amboy to open his own shop, was that during the Great Depression? Was that part of the reason?

LC: It was during the time just prior to the Second World War. It didn't go too well because when the Italians entered the war with Germany--so, I guess nobody wanted to go to him, being Italian, [they] thought maybe he was part of it. So, the shop didn't do that well after a while, and so he came back to Fort Monmouth. Then, they always had a place for him at work. He was a good worker. In fact, he was one of the bosses in one of the shops.

SI: Tell me a little bit about where you grew up in Red Bank. You said you were born in a house on Locust.

LC: Locust Avenue. Then, we went to--of course, we went to South Amboy to live for a little while. I went to Saint Mary's Catholic School there for a few years. Then we came back to Red Bank, Little Silver really. Then, I went to St. James [Elementary] School in Red Bank. What else did you want?

SI: I was just curious about the places where you lived. What do you remember about the neighborhood you grew up in?

LC: Well, South Amboy was nice, but mostly Polish people exactly where we lived. In that section was Polish people. We lived in that section and it was about half a mile from the school and I used to walk back and forth. No busses or anything. We used to get a lot of snow there years ago. So it was good. Yes. So, we had a good time. Then, when we moved back to Red Bank area, or Little Silver really, we used to play. We had our own little places to play. We used to play football and baseball near the railroad station. We grew up. I got a lot of friends. Thank you, dear. Yes, I needed that. Good girl. You're hired.

SI: How old approximately would you say you were when you lived in South Amboy?

LC: I was probably from four to six to eight years old, I guess. I don't [know] exactly when. If my mother was still alive, she had a better memory than me. Yes. I guess about six, seven. Because when I came back to St. James, I think I started in the fifth grade. So, I may have been

a little older than I'm telling you. ... I graduated from St. James grammar school, fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth--about four years before that. So, I was probably a little older.

SI: What did you think of St. Mary's?

LC: St. Mary's was very--well, all the Catholic schools were good. Of course, they were crowded, but we learned. St. James was the same way. We had thirty or forty kids in the class, but we still learned, because the nuns made you learn. We had a good time in the school, really.

SI: What interested you the most in school? What was your favorite subject?

LC: Sports.

SI: Sports, okay.

LC: Sports and girls, of course. Sports mainly. Baseball.

PCC: Dad was a fantastic baseball player.

SI: Okay. What position did you play?

LC: Infield, short-stop, third base, whatever. Yes.

SI: Did they have teams at that level in junior high, fifth through eighth?

LC: Well, in high school, they had these teams. Yes. I played with the Red Bank Catholic High School, yes. In the grammar school, they just had playing in the backyard and the back recess area. We were able to play back there then. Now, there's too many buildings. They can't really play it back there anymore. That's at St. James in Red Bank.

SI: Just to go back to the neighborhood in South Amboy for a minute, you said most of your neighbors were Polish.

LC: Yes.

SI: Was there any friction between the Polish and your family being Italian?

LC: No, no. It's just that as soon as the Italians entered the war, the people, I guess, said, "Maybe we better not go to Charlie to get a haircut, maybe." [laughter] So, we moved back. It was probably a better move. They probably did us a favor or him a favor, anyway. That's what he says. But there was no friction. We got along good with the kids who were all Polish and we got along good. So, there was quite a few other Italians up in the other section. So, we all got along well. So, I got no complaints. We had a good raising. We did good.

SI: When you moved back to Little Silver, would you say it was a mostly Italian neighborhood or was it a melting pot?

LC: No. Little Silver, no. We had one Italian neighbor. They had the business there. Put together, we were just Americans, born in America and stuff. There was a lot of Italians in that area. Red Bank had a lot of Italians in that one section, and they had blacks in the other, farther section. So, they got along pretty good. There was no friction or anything at that time, that I remember anyway. Yes.

SI: You moved back to Little Silver during World War II.

LC: No.

SI: Was it just before?

LC: When World War II started, we were still in the Amboys. After the World War II, we moved back to Little Silver. So, that was--what was it, '41? '42 it started, '43 or whatever.

SI: December '41.

LC: So, we were there, yes. So, I was only around thirteen or whatever. Twelve or thirteen.

SI: You were very young but do you have any memories of how the Great Depression affected your family or affected the areas where you lived?

LC: Not really. We managed. My mother was--they made pasta every day, I guess, but I didn't care because I liked pasta. [laughter] Well, they managed to get by. My mother used to do seamstress work and she used to be a very good seamstress. She worked at a factory where they made the military clothes and stuff like that. So, we got by between my dad and my mom and they kept us out of trouble.

SI: Was that up in South Amboy that she worked at the factory?

LC: No, it was in the Red Bank. That was in the Red Bank area. In Red Bank they had a big building. It's still there now, but it's all shops. That used to be [the] Eisner [Factory] and they made the military uniforms. Most of the people in that area worked at Eisner's. They made a pretty good living of it, as well as they paid at that time. You didn't get paid too good during the war, but it was good. So, we got along. My childhood was good.

SI: Did your mother ever talk about what it was like working at Eisner's then, what the conditions were like?

LC: Well she got along with everybody, my mom. Even if it was bad, she wouldn't say anything anyway. [laughter]

JK: I think that his family was pretty unique in that as he was growing up, he had a two income family, which was probably very unique during that time. My mom used to say every once in a while, "I didn't have steak and eggs for my breakfast." I think occasionally they did, which

made them quite a bit better off than most of the people. They had more money than most of the people that were in that working class during the Depression.

LC: Yes. True. That's true. Yes, mom made everything work. Best cook in the world.

JK: You bet.

PCC: Oh, you bet.

SI: I wanted to ask, were there a lot of Italian traditions that were kept up in your family, particularly food in food?

LC: Well, the food--

PCC: Just keep it coming.

LC: [laughter] My mom made everything from scratch. She made her own spaghetti. She didn't buy it in the store, she made it. She loved to be in the kitchen. She was a terribly good cook. That's the reason why my wife stayed with me.

JK: We used to go over there, my grandmother's house, for holiday dinners.

PCC: Sunday dinners, too.

JK: Thanksgiving, she would bring out--the first course was the (manicotti?). Then would be antipasto. Then there'd be the lasagna. Then, there'd be the turkey dinner. The food never ended and it was all homemade.

PCC: The desserts, my favorite part.

JK: The desserts. Yes, mine too.

PCC: So, Sundays, I remember going over there. It wasn't every Sunday, but almost every Sunday we were there for family dinner. In the nice weather, we'd had it out in the backyard. Always, she was in the kitchen all the time cooking, but laughing and cooking and laughing and cooking.

SI: Is that how it was when you were growing up?

LC: Yes, yes. We had a good life. I can't complain, really. When I started to go with my wife and she tasted the cooking; she wouldn't leave me.

SI: When you were growing up, did you speak any Italian in the household?

LC: I wish they had, but they never did. They knew how to speak some Italian but they just never did. I can't figure it out but I didn't want to put them on the spot. I learned some of the

bad words. I learned that right away. [laughter] We all do that, I guess. No, they didn't speak it and I wish they had. They did amongst my aunts and uncles, but not amongst the kids, I don't know why.

JK: He remembers his grandfather speaking Italian, not being able to speak very much English, right? Your grandfather out in Pennsylvania, your dad's dad. Right?

LC: Yes.

SI: Would you travel out to Pennsylvania to visit your father's family?

LC: Oh, we've been out there. We've been out a few times. It's a six and a half hour ride to Crabtree.

PCC: We were just talking this morning, they have a restaurant out there, Carbone's restaurant. They're celebrating their seventy-fifth anniversary next week so dad and I were just talking about maybe driving out there.

LC: Yes, might be a good thing. I haven't seen--there's only two left. There's a daughter. The owner's daughter and son are still alive. Of course, they got children and grandchildren. I think they're all in the business. It would be nice to see them maybe before I pass into the next generation. [laughter]

SI: Are those cousins of yours?

LC: They're the first cousins, yes. Well, they're Carbones and of course their name is not Carbone now' it's a different name because she married, but there is a Carbone. The boy is of course still a Carbone. So, he's in the restaurant and I don't think he does much work. The kids, grandchildren and the children are running the business. So, I'll give her a call and ask her if I can invite myself to the celebration with my daughter and anybody else.

JK: What day is that?

PCC: I don't know. I have to find out. It said next week.

SI: So, going back to your family and the food, I know a lot of Italian families raise a lot of food on their plots, big gardens behind their house, things like that. Did your family do anything like that?

LC: My grandfather always had a garden. Always he did. Picked his own tomatoes and made his own sauce out of the tomatoes and he used to make his own wine and stuff. They had a grapevine in the back. They had sixteen children but they left enough room to have a garden and a grapevine, so they can make his own wine and stuff. It was good. It was nice. I consider myself lucky. I had a good family life and I got good kids, too.

JK: Your grandfather used to go back and forth to Sicily for the business, right?

LC: What was that, Janet?

JC: Didn't your grandfather used to go back and forth to Sicily for the business?

LC: Yes, yes. He used to travel to Italy and come back again, of course, my grandfather in Pennsylvania. Not from the Red Bank. My grandfather from my mother's side. He didn't go back. As far as I know, he might have gone back once. That was it.

SI: Did you have any siblings? Any brothers and sisters?

LC: Yes. I have an older brother that's still alive. He lives in Colorado Springs. He's Charlie Jr. My other brother passed away. He was older too, Natale, Nat Carbone. He passed away from Leukemia. He's been dead now about thirteen years, I think. In that area. I don't know the exact date.

SI: Did all three of you go through the Catholic school in your area?

LC: Oh, yes. Yes. Nat didn't quite finish the senior year, but they put him on the list. He went into the Navy, World War II. My oldest brother was in World War II, ... too.

SI: What service was your oldest brother in?

LC: Oldest brother was in the Army and my Nat was in the Navy. I was in the Air Force. We had all three services.

SI: Do you guys have questions about his early years, childhood?

F: Were all three of you boys into baseball?

LC: Pardon?

AR: Were all three of you boys into baseball or was that just your choice?

LC: Just my oldest brother Charlie. He was very good. He was good at all sports.

AR: Were you competitive?

LC: And Nat never, Nat was a motorcycle rider... He loved motorcycles and pigeons. He had a pigeon coop. He had his chickens and stuff. My oldest brother, he was good at sports, good at everything, Charlie. He still plays golf. He's eighty-six.

JK: He just stopped skiing a couple of years ago. He skied at least through his eightieth birthday, right?

LC: He just celebrated. [laughter] He's got more energy than I do. He's a few years older than me. Yes, Charlie's good. He was easy going. I said I'm a little easy going but my brother Nat was a little fiery.

PCC: He was the family rebel, right?

LC: Yes, but he never got into anything real bad. He got the motorcycle ... He was a little rebel, but he did okay.

SI: Vanessa, you had a question?

VR: Do you still keep in contact with your brother today?

LC: Oh, yes. I was talking to my brother Charlie yesterday. We call each other every week. If I miss, he calls me. You got to keep in touch. You never know. Tomorrow may never come, right?

SI: Since you all went to Catholic school, did the Catholic Church play an important role in your life growing up?

LC: Well yes. It did. I mean, of course, when you're young you didn't think of church what you think of it now, but we were pretty--we used to go to mass every Sunday and holy days and stuff. I happened to marry one of my classmates and we kept going to church. We never missed, especially her. She was very religious.

SI: Were you active as an altar boy or any kind of youth groups?

LC: I never did altar boy, but I used to get into the choir. We sang any funeral masses. We used to sing. They used to take us out. We did it [to] get out of school. We used to sing--[laughter] we wanted to get out of school. So, if they had a funeral mass, I always volunteered and my wife sang in the choir, too. So, we used to get out of class. I wanted to get out but I don't think the rest of them wanted to get out of class. I can't speak for them. My wife is deceased.

PCC: ... He used to be an usher at church. Dad goes to mass every day. Every day.

F: At Red Bank Catholic, would they give you detention if you chewed the Eucharist? I heard they do that.

LC: What is that?

F: At Red Bank Catholic, would they give you detention if you chewed the Eucharist during mass?

LC: [laughter] I got detention--I guess you would call it detention--once when we were in high school and we skipped school to get into a Saint Patrick's Day parade in New York. We didn't realize they had a television in the auditorium. So, we got in and marched with the Ancient

Order of the Hibernians and we had a good time. We were having a ball. All eight of us skipped school and they had us on television. All heck broke loose when we got back. We were all on detention.

JK: Because the nuns were watching.

PCC: Yes, the nuns were watching.

LC: Skipped school.

JC: There's dad in the middle of the parade.

LC: I was the only one that had a note from my mother saying it was okay for me go. She says, "That doesn't count," the principal. So, I got in trouble once, really. That was it.

PCC: They didn't give out detention at RBC if you chewed the Eucharist after you received Communion?

LC: No, no.

SI: When you went to RBC, did they mostly have lay teachers or did they still have clergy?

LC: When I went there they had mostly nuns. They had a few--one music teacher, extra music teacher, and some of the athletic directors were lay teachers, but most of them were nuns. There's still one and she still goes to mass there. She's about ninety-six I think, can hardly walk, but she's still there, in where the nuns still have a convent.

SI: A retirement convent.

LC: Yes. They have their retirement nuns are in there. They must have quite a few in there. So, you see them at mass. There's only two teachers, two nuns that still teach at the school and they're at mass every morning when I go to mass 'cause then they go to school and teach. Red Bank Catholic is nice. All our children graduated from Red Bank Catholic. So, it was a good. I think it was good. The kids didn't like it, I don't think. They would have rather gone to public school.

SI: You were about ten or eleven when Pearl Harbor was attacked.

LC: I guess. I think I was maybe--Pearl Harbor started in '41, right?

SI: Yes. You would have been just about to turn eleven.

JK: Yes. You would have been ...

PCC: Just about to turn--it was twelve, yes. Almost twelve.

LC: Yes. I was just a young kid then.

SI: Do you have any memories of hearing about the attack?

LC: Oh, yes. Well, that's all you heard. That was a big thing. Everybody was helping out as best they could in the war effort and stuff. . . . That's when they made those pennies out of alloy, or whatever. Remember those pennies they had? Everybody gave up a lot of stuff and sacrificed for it. The women did most of the work in the home front. They were good. My mom was making uniforms and stuff. Yes, it was a patriotic call to arms, is what it was and it was nice.

SI: Do you remember where you were or how you heard about the attack? Was it on the radio?

LC: I guess I must have been--yes, I think we heard it from Roosevelt speak on the radio. We didn't have television. We heard it over the radio. He spoke. "This day will live in infamy." That's what I heard over the radio. My throat is still dry.

SI: Sure, sure. Go ahead. Do you want to take a break at all?

LC: No. How about you? Do you want some water or something?

F: No, thank you.

SI: I'm okay.

LC: You're all right?

SI: Yes.

LC: You can continue. I got a bad throat anyway.

SI: Any time you want to take some water, it's fine.

LC: If I take a rest, I'll go to sleep.

SI: Was there initial fear in the Red Bank area after the war broke out that there might be an attack or anything like that?

LC: I don't think they were worried about having an attack in our area. You know, you figure the Japanese are in the Pacific area, but I guess some of the people that live in California, in that area, must have had some apprehension, but not any apprehension in this area that I remember. Of course I was young. Maybe my mom and dad did. I don't know, but it was a tough time.

SI: Did your oldest brother go in the service first?

LC: Yes, Charlie went in the service and then Nat. The war was winding down when they got in, but they were still in World War II's time. So, they all went in towards the end. But Charlie I

asked--I called him yesterday. I'm waiting for a picture of him in uniform and he can't find any in uniform. But my brother Nat, I got his picture. So he's supposed to--if he finds it, he's going to send me one. But some people never took a picture in uniform. All of my gang have uniforms.

SI: I was curious, when your brothers went into the service what kind of impact did that have on you and your family?

LC: Well, it didn't. As I say, the war was winding down and they probably figured we were going to win. So, they hated to see the kids go, but this is what they wanted to do. They weren't afraid that I could see, unless they hid it from me, I don't know. Yes. Of course they signed when I wanted--when Korea started, they signed for me to join, so I guess they didn't care. [laughter] I would have gone anyway.

VC: They had to sign for you? Were you underage?

LC: What?

VC: They had to sign?

LC: Well, at the end of the year, I was going to be drafted. So, rather than be drafted, I figured I would try to get a better schooling in the Air Force or the Navy. So, me and one of my high school buddies, we graduated, we enlisted together, and it was good. They let us go almost three or four months before we had to report. December the 29th I think, reported to Newark and then they took us on a big train to San Antonio, Texas for basic and stuff. So, the Second World War was over, but when Korea started, I guess there was a little apprehension there, but I didn't know I was going to be sent right over when I did, after we finished schooling.

SI: Going back to when you were growing up during World War II, you kind of alluded to this before, there were a lot of scrap drives, and a lot of home front activities like that. Do you remember participating in anything like that?

LC: Well, the kids, they had something in school, I guess. I can't remember too much about it, but they would save tin foil and stuff like that for the war effort and it was something that they had in schools. I think not just Catholic schools, all the schools, saved the aluminum foil and all that stuff, metal, and so they tried to use it all for making tanks and whatever, guns and whatever, but it wasn't too bad. I think they did quite a bit in the schools. They let the kids help out as much as they could.

SI: Do you remember having any blackouts or air raid drills in Red Bank?

LC: They had practice drills. Yes. It wasn't anything that was scary or anything. I guess we made jokes of it and not in this--especially in our area. Maybe out west they practiced a lot, but they let the sirens go off and they would tell you where you had to go and they had special places. You had to go to a school or something to hide out or whatever, but we didn't have too many of them here. I would imagine California, out west, they probably had more practice. Yes.

SI: Do you remember seeing a lot more servicemen around during World War II?

LC: Oh, yes. Well, Fort Monmouth is here. Fort Monmouth and Fort Dix, and McGuire Air Force Base. So, we were in the area where--they just closed Fort Monmouth, but then it was loaded with soldiers, and they had the--one area was for the women that were in the--WACs [Women's Army Corps] were in there. So, it was loaded with--all you saw were a lot of soldiers in the area and the train station. When they would go home they would use the train. So, it was a lot of soldiers in the area. Not too many Navy, but mostly Army. But Fort Monmouth, it was loaded. My dad was always busy cutting hair. He was [makes cutting noises]. They used to give you a one minute haircut, like that. It was a quarter apiece. [laughter] Yes. Now you go, fifteen, twenty dollars apiece.

SI: Did your family ever have any soldiers in your house for dinner or anything like that?

LC: Not that I remember. Not that I remember. I don't think. They might have, but I don't remember. They probably did. Of course, remember they had Italian prisoners in Fort Monmouth? They were talking about it but they didn't want to do any of that. [laughter] Yes, they had a lot of Italian prisoners of war at Fort Monmouth.

JK: I didn't know that either.

LC: I couldn't believe it.

SI: I heard that they would basically parole those guys on the weekend. They could go out on the town.

LC: Yes, they were let loose. They weren't going to get into trouble, that's for sure. Yes, they kept on their good behavior. Of course, Italians are that way.

SI: Did you see them in church or anything like that?

LC: I don't think we saw them too much in church. You would see them roaming around town and stuff like that. They would wear certain uniforms. But it was funny. It was funny to see prisoners of war in the United States. I thought so, anyway.

SI: Did rationing affect your family at all? Were there things that you couldn't get?

LC: Well you couldn't--you had to go get an A card or a B card for gas and stuff and for sugar and stuff like that. So, it affected my mother's cooking. She used to use substitutes for everything else, but she knew what to use. She was something. But it really didn't affect, not when we were kids. Them, it affected, but not us. Yes, I don't think anyway.

SI: Did you correspond with your brothers when they were in the service?

LC: Yes, yes, but they didn't go that far. Nat did. He was on a ship. But I wrote them letters, but I didn't write like I write my wife. I would write her every day, but with my brothers, maybe once a month send them a postcard or something. [laughter] But when you write your wife you better write every day. [laughter] Yes, we had a pile of love letters that I brought home. Your sister and the youngest daughter, she got into them. So, my wife burned them.

SI: Really? That's too bad.

LC: My wife got rid of them.

SI: You guys have questions about World War II?

F: Your dad was a World War I veteran, so what was that like growing up?

LC: Well, that was pretty tough. His brother was blinded with mustard gas. He was still able to--he was a masseur, whatever they call that, a masseuse or whatever. He was able to do that. He was blind, but he could see a vision, but he was able to give you a massage or whatever it is. But he lived in Long Branch. My father didn't get into it because he had got in trouble with the first sergeant, so they didn't send him on the trip. He's lucky; it probably saved his life. [laughter] The other brothers--I don't know if the other ones went into the service. There was quite a bit. There was thirteen children on my father's side and I don't know if the rest of them went in the service. That I don't know. That's all I can remember. I wish I could remember all this stuff.

SI: No, no. You're doing great.

F: During World War II, there's not a lot of newsreels.

LC: What is that?

VR: Newsreels.

LC: Newsreels.

SI: Yes. In the movies?

VR: The movies?

LC: Oh yes. They had, of course, no television, but they had the--that's all you heard [was] radio. We had one of those little radios, like this. Everybody listened to their radio. We used to listen to certain shows, with Jack Benny and Bob Hope occasionally. Bob Hope came over to Korea when we were there. He was great. He was something else. He used to bring some pretty women over with him. Yes. So, the newsreels--we used to listen to the radio all the time. I can't remember what the name of the announcers--Kaltenborn. I don't know.

SI: Oh yeah.

LC: Yeah.

SI: H.V. Kaltenborn.

LC: Yes, yes. I can't remember all their names, but we used to listen to [them]. We were interested in it because a lot of life was lost in World War II and Korea too. Yes.

SI: Did a lot of the young men and women from your neighborhood go into the service?

LC: In our [neighborhood], there wasn't that many at that age in the Second World War. Jim, other pals were my age, so they were young, but some of the people--if you go to Little Silver, they have a plaque of all the men that were killed in there. Quite a few. I, I never realized there were that many and Red Bank, same way and Rumson. They all have their own different monuments. I never thought there were that many in Little Silver, but they had a quite a few that were killed in the war. Some that you didn't know, but I was too young and ...

SI: You don't remember going to any memorial services or going to comfort any family that lost someone?

LC: No. I would have remembered that.

SI: Do you remember hearing about the end of the war? What do you remember about that?

LC: Well, the end of the war was in 1945, so I was still in school. So we were all--I was worried about trying to pass the tests. So, the war really didn't bother me too much. I didn't think about it. I worried about playing ball or getting an A, which I never got. I copied off my wife, so I was able to get out of school. [laughter] I'll get in a lot of trouble.

SI: When did you meet your wife?

LC: We went to school together. We were in the same class. We graduated together. She wouldn't leave me alone. Oh, boy. I'm going to get in trouble. She's going to come back and haunt me tonight. [laughter]

SI: Was she also from Little Silver or was she from Red Bank?

LC: No, she lived in--I'd say about seven miles away. Matawan.

SI: Oh yes, Matawan.

LC: Yes. You know that section?

SI: My grandparents live in Matawan.

LC: Oh, yes? She was unique. She was an orphan. Her parents were deceased. I guess, four years old when her mother died. Yes. She wanted to go to Red Bank Catholic. She got a job in Red Bank, paid her way, had to take a train in and out. She walked to school. Walked from school to work, went to the train station and did it every day. She was a tough girl. To marry me she had to be tough. ...

SI: Where did she work?

LC: What?

SI: Where did she work then?

LC: She worked in a---they called it Crate's Beverages. They used to make soda and they had a liquor store there. She did bookkeeping. She did good. She paid all of her tuition in school and paid for her transportation back and forth. She was young. They all look like her, thank God. But she was a good girl. The first day I saw her in school, I think maybe it was, I knew it was over then.

SI: When you were growing up, when you were a teenager, did you have any part time jobs or after school jobs?

LC: Yes, well I worked at the racetrack, Monmouth Park. Yes, I worked for Harry M. Stevens Company. I'd sweep the floor or something like that. Make a few bucks. Before I went into the service, I got a job putting up television antennas. That's when the big boom was going and I was making pretty good money. Of course I gave most of it to my mother and she put it aside and gave me the rest of it back. So, she never kept any of it. We did good right up until the time I went into the service. I always worked. I always did something. I didn't want to freeload.
[laughter]

SI: You mentioned playing baseball for RBC. You were in RBC from '46 to '49?

LC: '46 to '49, yes.

SI: What was it like playing baseball on the high school level in those days?

LC: Well, we had a pretty good team. They were just starting football the year after, couple years after I started school, but the baseball teams were pretty good. We used to do pretty good. Only trouble is, in I think the first year, they broke my leg. They slid into me real high and they broke my leg, so I was out of--I missed that whole year. I think it was in 1947, I think. So, I missed that year, but I did play and I got the letter and all that other stuff. So, I enjoyed playing after it healed and I played with the semi-pro local team, the Red Bank Towner's, and I played with them until I went into the service and when I came back out, I used to play with them. Yes.

SI: Where would the semi-pro team play?

LC: Well they had a big field in--I guess, it's actually Tinton Falls section and we used to all play there. The Red Bank Towner's were one of the best teams in the area ... another Red Bank--I forgot the other name [of the] team, but, they were all pretty good. We used to play pretty good ball. Then I had a tryout with the Yankees and I can't remember the year it was. I was about seventeen, I think. By the way, anybody want to use the facilities, there's one there and one in the back.

SI: Tell us what it was like trying out for the Yankees?

LC: Oh, it was a beautiful day. Well, I knew I wasn't going to make it because they told you in order to make it, you had to be five foot ten [inches]--Phil Rizutto was the reason why. I guess they figured that they had to make a cutoff limit, but I had a good tryout. I did very well, but I knew it was just going to be fun. So, I had a good time. I did very well. I can't complain. Competed against a lot of big guys and I think I just as good as they did. [laughter] It was good. It was something you always remember. We had it at Bear Stadium in Newark. I don't know if it's still there, but it was a beautiful stadium. Newark Bear Stadium I think. [Editor's Note: Originally, the Bears & Eagles Riverfront Stadium in Newark, New Jersey was called Riverfront Stadium until 2001.] That's all I can remember. It was good. We had a nice turnout. They had a lot of guys tryout. It was a couple hundred I guess. Yes.

SI: When you were in high school, what did you want to do as a career? What did you see for yourself in the future?

LC: Well, there wasn't really anything that I--I just wanted to get out of school, to be able to-- [laughter] you wanted to be able to finish school. I wasn't that zealous with my marks, but I passed and I did fairly well. I used to tease the kids that I was valedictorian--I was nowhere near. [laughter]

PCC: More like class clown.

LC: Careful now. I'm going to remember this, yes. But, I enjoyed the school year. The class that we had was the best. We all kept in touch for the most--not everybody, but for the most part. My wife and I were one of the main figures in the class reunions. She used to do most of the work. So, we had class reunions every five years that I can remember and then after we got older, it's not easy to get together. So, we wouldn't have class reunions. We would have maybe a brunch, afternoon brunch because a lot of the old timers couldn't afford a couple hundred dollars for--put out for a big bash. The Molly Pitcher [Inn] in Red Bank, we had our fiftieth class reunion there and it was very nice. We had a lot of good class reunions, thanks to my wife, really.

SI: How did you get interested in or find out about the opportunity to get into installing television antennas?

LC: Well, it was a job. The job was opened and I asked. I knew one of the families. Frangella was the name of the family and I knew one of the parties of the family. So, they said, "Sure." So, I went over and I was lucky enough to have a guy that's about six foot four [inches] and him

and I, we used to be a team. He was big enough to put an antenna up himself. So, we worked as a good team. So, I was making pretty good money, I think, in those days. As I say, I used to give it my mother and she put it aside. She never spent it, and gave it back to me eventually. But I enjoyed it. It was a little tricky sometimes in these roofs. You got slate roofs, Whoa. But we had a special ladder and made sure we put it up. But we got by and I didn't get killed. So, I'm still here. [laughter]

SI: How long were you working at that before you went into the service?

LC: I'd say maybe six, seven months, something like--maybe a little bit more. Yes, and it was good.

[Tape Paused]

LC: I'm ready.

SI: Tell us a little bit about the process about getting into the military. You gave us an overview that you went in with your friend.

LC: Yes.

SI: What was it like to leave your home to go into the military at that time?

LC: It was a great adventure. Of course, we enlisted some months ahead of time and then it gave us the 29th of December, the time where we met. But it was a really good adventure. [laughter] From here, we went from Red Bank to Newark and it must have been about five hundred of them all enlisting at that time and we were all reporting at the same time. We got on this train. We must have gone two miles an hour and they were all loaded with the fellows going to Texas. We had a good time, it was a ball, and I enjoyed it. I figured if you're going to go in the service you might as well do the best you can, and I did. After basic, they sent us to Wyoming. They needed teletype operators and I figured I wanted something else, but they didn't give you a hundred percent choice. So, I did the best I could. I did very well. I graduated top three of the class. So, they gave me an extra stripe. So, I was corporal when I left the school. So, it was good and when we came back, we knew we got our orders, that we were going to go up to Korea after we finished school. They gave us a couple weeks before we left and of course I had a--my wife and I, we weren't married then. We were going together and she didn't--we were having a good time. We were having a ball. Yes, we enjoyed ourselves. So, they saw us off and we got on a train to New York and from New York, we went on a big train to go to California and, Camp Stoneman California. We got on a ship, it's a British ship, and it was loaded with men from the Air Force and the Army too, I think. So, it took us two weeks to go from there to the--I guess they went to Tokyo. Then we got on a flight to Korea. So, it was a good adventure.

JK: Was that your first time on a plane, when you flew to Korea from Japan?

LC: That was my first plane ride, yes. It was an adventure. [laughter] Whew. But, I enjoyed the whole thing. I made the best that I can of it. In four years, I made staff sergeant, so, they aren't going to give you staff sergeant if you don't at least produce. But the work in Korea--

SI: Before we talk about Korea, can we ask a few questions about your time in the States?

LC: Sure. Okay.

SI: When you went down to Texas, to San Antonio, were you training at Lackland or one of the other bases?

LC: Lackland Air Force Base. I did very well. We had to qualify for carbine and I was a sharp shooter. I guess expert is a little higher. But I got sharp shooter, which is pretty good because I used to do some shooting around, but I did pretty good I think. But the basic was good. It was taxing, but it was good.

SI: Was it mostly physical training?

LC: Oh, yes. You went through obstacle courses and all that stuff. It was basically the same as what the Army would do. but the Army, everything was rifles. Then you would learn how to take care of another rifle or a machine gun or whatever, but the Air Force was, your carbine was yours. When you signed out for it you better not lose it. You knew how to take it apart and clean it and stuff. But it was basically, you were getting shape and then you learned how to use the carbine and then they sent you to school.

SI: Did they have drill instructors in charge of you guys?

LC: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. [laughter] Same as you see on TV, if you've seen, what's his name? What's his name was a sergeant there. Oh, god. John Wayne. [laughter] They don't let up on you. You just got to learn to listen and obey. That's what the service is. If you can't take it, you're not going to survive, but it was good. I got along very well. We had a good crew, good bunch of guys.

SI: Did you make friends with these people from all over the country?

LC: Oh yes, everybody seemed to get along. They couldn't understand some of the accents of the South or New Orleans. They speak a little different, but we got used to it after a while. You get around them long enough you learn. Yes. But we had a good group as I say. Then, after the basic training then they sent us to Francis Warren Air Force Base, Cheyenne, Wyoming. Excuse me. They needed teletype operators badly, so I figured I'm going to do it, I might as well make the best of it, and I did good.

SI: How long was that training in Wyoming?

LC: I don't know, it was quite a few weeks. I guess, it was a couple months, yes. It was good. I got pictures of the graduating class. There was a couple of--two or three girls. They were in the

class and we got along very well. Then, after Wyoming, then they gave us the two weeks before we had to go to Korea. So, everything was an adventure, and if you're apprehensive you won't have a good time. You've got to have a good time doing whatever you can. So, I got along with everybody and we had a ball, really.

SI: Does anything stand out about travelling in the South or going up to the West back then, such as the areas that you got to see or if you got to meet any of the civilians there?

LC: In other words, travelling in the United States?

SI: Yes.

LC: No, I haven't done--I didn't do that much travelling before this. I went from Newark to Texas and, as they say, it must have taken three days. It was going one mile an hour. I don't know why they went so slow. But I think they had to make--going that way, they had to make arrangements to pull off when the regular trains would move. So, we had a good time and good thing they had a facilities on the [train]. [laughter] Yes, we had a good time. But the language, as I say, New Orleans has their own way of speaking.

SI: Creole.

LC: Texas, too. It's not as much now. My son lives in Oklahoma and I think he's got a little accent from Oklahoma.

SI: Did you ever get to go off base and meet civilians in these areas?

LC: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. After we would finish the basic training, certain weeks of it, that they would give us time to get dressed, get our uniforms on and we would be able to go to San Antonio. We went to the Alamo and all this other stuff. We had a good--they gave us time off. It wasn't all gung ho stuff. Like the Marines, I guess, is a hundred percent gung ho, but the Air Force wasn't. It was good, it was strenuous, but it wasn't like the Marines. We had time out and we met some of the people in town and they got along with their--well, that was where their money was, with the base. A lot of their jobs were in the base too. So, we got along very well. As I say, I got along with everybody, except your mother. [laughter] I'm in trouble now. I might as well keep going. No, she was good. I always got along with her.

SI: So, when you got to Japan, how long were you in Japan before you flew over to Korea?

LC: Right away. After we got off, we were in one group that was going to Korea right away. So, we weren't there, maybe the one day and then we got on the plane and flew over. The planes they used to transport you, [laughter] they were the two engine planes. Whew. Wow. Anyway, you had no seats. You sat on the floor. You just learned the hard way, but we had the good billets when we got there. We were lucky enough, our group. We stayed at a--it was a university. They had a big university there. So, they had some of us billeted in part of the university. That's not where we had the teletype machines set up. That was a little closer to the

front, but we used to have to get there on a bus of whatever. They'd take us to the work. So, we went right to work because there was a lot of work.

SI: The university, was that by Seoul?

LC: Right in Seoul.

SI: In Seoul, okay.

LC: We were busy right away. They were shorthanded. They put us right into the message center and I was in charge of the one. There was three different--twenty-four hours a day. I was on one section and I was in charge of one section. We used send out two or three hundred messages a day to headquarters telling them how many planes were bombing such and such. It was all secret stuff. In teletype they had a special way of sending secret messages. They had certain tapes here and the same type tape would be in where they were getting the message. So, you would set it up at a certain machine and it would send it out and they wouldn't be able to--it was decoded that way. So, we had a lot of top secret and all that, but they had to watch out because I was in charge of the crew and make sure they didn't send it out without going through this and they started to do that. The kids, they wanted to be gung ho. They wanted to send messages out. If it had "restricted" and "top secret" and "secret" you couldn't send it out except in the top secret unit. A couple of the kids didn't--I had to kill myself to stop the machine because it started to send them out, but it worked out pretty good after a while. The crew was good after they got to learn what to do. As they say, eight hours went by, it would seem like one hour because we were so busy.

SI: How many men were in the section?

LC: Maybe around ten. One section was teletype, another section was for radar. As I said, I was in charge of the teletype section of it. I had around six guys that were--we had to watch out what they were going to do, but after a while, they learned and they were doing good. So, as I say, the eight hours went by very fast and the year went by as if it was a month, two months. Thank god. But after three months, they would give you an R and R. They would transport you to Japan, Tokyo. We used to all get together and have a--I've some pictures of the guys boozing it up. But I didn't like to drink that much. I had a beer or something like that. I liked to stay sober. I think it was tough, but it was a good service. We were held on alert one time when they were going to--the Koreans were going to go over the hill, so we were on alert to evacuate. If you evacuate you got to destroy everything or get rid of as much as you can, but after a while, they canceled the alert, so we didn't have to evacuate. So, it was very good and it was strenuous, but I enjoyed it. I really did. The hardest part, really of it, is the two week trip on the boat going and the two weeks coming back. [laughter] No matter how much your rank was, you had to do KP [kitchen police] on the boat, but they never got me to get it. They announced my name, but I was hiding some place. [laughter] I says, "I'm a sergeant. I'm not going to do the dishes." But we did good. We had a good, good--managed to get along. On the ship, if you're seasick, you got to watch yourself. So, I always spent most of my time on the top. If you look at the horizon you won't get seasick too much.

SI: Was it very cramped on the troopship coming over?

LC: Well, yes, it was loaded. The ship was really loaded. I don't know how many men they had. They must have had about fifteen thousand on the boat. They had to. We were sleeping all over the place. Let me take another sip. That's all I can--but, as I said, I think it was a great adventure. It wasn't scary. I can't say it was scary. I was maybe a mile and a half, two miles from the front. If they got close, they would alert you and you would get out, so we didn't have to worry too much about it. I think I'm going to rest my speaking for speaking for a little bit.

SI: Sure.

[Tape Paused]

SI: That's good.

LC: Don't you laugh. [laughter]

SI: WE were talking about your service in Korea. What month did you get there? What time did you get there?

LC: Well, I got my orders here. I can tell you exactly. Let me see if I--yes, I got all my orders. Not too many people kept them, I guess. I think it was probably June. May or June. If I can find them.

PCC: Do you need help dad?

LC: What?

PCC: Do you need help?

LC: No.

SI: It was in '51 or '52 that you got over there?

LC: That was in '51.

SI: '51. Okay.

LC: Yes, I think it was in June, '51. Yes, it was June. It was June of 1951. What else did you want?

SI: By that point, the war had pretty much stabilized along the parallel.

LC: There were talking about having peace talks and stuff, but they were still fighting when I was there. Of course I wasn't on the front. Was about a mile and a half where our headquarters was. I'm trying to think.

SI: At that distance could the enemy shell your area?

LC: No, no. Probably could. Probably could have bombed us by air, but they were pretty--they had a pretty good system. Of course, we let all the generals and everything know how many planes and what they did, what the damage was, but they had scouts that would let us know if we had to evacuate and they gave us good notice if they managed to overrun, which they did one time. They overran and got all the way back in and then they pushed them back, but they had a pretty good system to let you know that you got to get rid of all this secret stuff and destroy it and get out. So, we had a pretty good system, but they let us know ahead of time and we only had that one alert and it didn't pan out. So, thank God for that. So, we didn't have to destroy all that equipment and stuff, all those teletype machines and all the messages and stuff, but it really wasn't--I really enjoyed it after a while because the people were nice. People were very friendly for the most part. We used to send our khakis out to get--our work clothes, to get laundered. Let the people--give them a few bucks. They'd do all of it for peanuts practically. So, I had good, clean uniforms all the time, to go to work. So, we gave them all some work to do and, and so it was good. The people were very nice. I don't know about in North Korea, but the people in the South, they were happy to see us I think.

SI: Did you ever do any work with the South Korean Army or military?

LC: No. No. We had guard duty. Maybe once a month, we would have to spend two hours in guard duty. But, ROK [Republic of Korea], the ROK group, they had their own setup and they didn't infiltrate too much. So, they kept to themselves really. Maybe they thought we were interfering, but we were helping them. We did all our own guard duty and we had to do it once a month. No matter what your rank was, you had to stand two hours, which wasn't bad, except the winter time. Phew. Cold. The winters were cold, a lot colder there than they are here because they were windy. They were very windy. But as I say, I enjoyed it. I can't complain really. I'm back. I got back.

SI: Do you guys have questions about Korea?

F: What was it like? You had never left the United States before. What was it like being in Japan and then Korea and just seeing new places?

LC: Say that again?

VR: You had never left the United States before. So, what was it like going to Japan and then Korea and seeing these foreign places?

LC: Well Japan was--right now, it's like New York, but Tokyo was built up very good and they treated us nice. I'm surprised. They treated us good when we went on our--we were only on for three days, but we had a good time. All of us would go to one place to drink and have a good time. They set up everything. They set you up with a hotel. You had your own room and stuff. The people in Japan were great. I didn't have any problem with any of the people really, except when I come back. No, I'm only kidding you. No, I had a good four years of Air Force. I really

did. I can't complain. My wife wanted me to stay in. When I came back, there was nothing to do. I got sent to North Truro, Massachusetts, Cape Cod. I don't think we got a message a week. So, eight hours was twenty four hours really, to put a day in. So, I said if it's going to be like this, I don't want to stay here. So, I didn't stay in. She wanted me to, but I talked myself into not staying in. Glad I did. I'm glad I got out, really.

SI: When you were in the message center in Korea, you said you had to do some guard duty but were there any other duties you had to do?

LC: There wasn't time, really. We really didn't have any time to do that. You were sent two or three hundred messages out. That's a lot of messages and you got to make sure--you got to log them all in. You got to put the times and they're verify that they received them. So, it's a lot of time. It's time consuming, but you were busy all the time. Sometimes you didn't have time to go to the bathroom and the bathrooms were outside bathrooms.

PCC: Dad, do you know if they ever archived all the messages that were sent back and forth anywhere?

LC: Did they ever what?

PCC: Did they ever archive and keep a record of them somewhere?

LC: Well, they were all secret and top secret. After you sent them out. they were going to be destroyed. If I was going to keep a couple, I says I better not. I'm liable to get in trouble because some of it was secret stuff. So, I says, "No, I'm just going to keep my records for wherever I--" ... they gave me different records. No, I never kept anything. All of that stuff was destroyed and they used secret stuff. After you finished a spool, everything had to be burnt. Yes. But as I say, after the first couple weeks, I enjoyed the time because time went by fast. You put a year in. I was there for a year, and it went by real fast. It really did. They said, "You're going to be leaving tomorrow." I said, "You're kidding." They told me my time was up. I couldn't believe it. Yes, I enjoyed my time and I enjoyed the crew. We had a good crew. As I say, the boat trip was the hardest. If you didn't get seasick, which I didn't, I was lucky, then your neighbor did and you got to run away. Oh, boy. You're right next to them. So, I spent most of my time--I would sleep up on the deck because if you look out at the horizon you won't get seasick. So, that's what the sailors told me to do and that's what I did. So, I never got seasick. I was pretty elusive about getting away from KP and I did well. [laughter]

SI: Vanessa, you have a question?

VR: Was the one year up because the war ended or you only did one year because that's how much time they told you?

LC: I got my hearing aid on, but it's not as good.

VR: The one year that you spent in Korea, was it only one year because that's when the war ended or was it because that's how much time they gave you?

LC: They were pretty good at that, unlike now in Iraq and stuff, these guys get screwed. But they said we'll get a year and then they got my replacement all ready. So, they were very good. It was just a year and I think it was a day or so under a year that they sent us home. but they had a very good system. I can't complain. The Air Force did an excellent job, I think and I can't complain. None of the fellows that I was with ever complained about spending too much time because the year went by fast.

SI: The men under you, did they pretty much stay the same throughout your year or were they rotating in and out?

LC: No, we kept our crew. When I got there, there was only one fellow that was still there that I replaced and he was only there for a couple of days and he went. So, everybody that I had was new and I had to make--I knew what to do, but I didn't know all these other guys because they have an MOS in the Army, AFSC [Air Force Specialty Code] in the Air Force, and I was AF50 and the masterman would be a 7-0. I was a 5-0 over there. I was able to do everything and was able to type and I was doing sixty-five words a minute, typing, teletype. There was no pressure when you're using a teletype machine. You're cutting a ribbon and you can type things sixty-five words a minute, even more some of them. So, no, I had the same crew and they all put the year in. We basically all left about the same time. The fellow that came and relieved me, I think he was--he was a regular sergeant, so he was in the Air Force for quite a while. So, maybe it was the second tour, I don't know, but they could have sent us back, but I never--they didn't put me down to go back. Of course everything was over anyway, for the most part.

SI: Now, Korea was the first war that was fought after the forces were integrated in the late '40's. Do you remember serving with a lot of African American airmen?

LC: Oh, yes. Oh, yes. Yes, we had, I'd say, basically--what is the ratio? I think the ratio was ... We had a lot of blacks and they were just as good as anybody else at work. Yes, we had quite a few and I don't know about the teletype school. It all depended on what school they sent you to. Yes. If you took a test when you were in Lackland, you took a test. They gave you a couple of tests to find out what you're really adapted for. I didn't get what I was really adapted for, but they needed teletype operators, so I did pretty good on that too.

F: What were you adapted for?

LC: Mechanics. What I did when up here. I don't know if I got it here. I shouldn't have kept all these damn things. I thought maybe you'd need some of this.

SI: No, it's great. Like you said, most people don't save their records.

LC: Well, I kept it and then I got my discharge and stuff, papers all in one thing.

SI: Did you see any friction between, the African American air men and the white southerners or any other group?

LC: No. It was pretty well--they got along pretty good. I don't think, that I saw--that I don't think there was any people calling an "N-word" or something like that, no. No, I think they--I get along with everybody anyway. I don't care what color you are, and I'm a mailman. Mailmen get along with everybody, So they say.

SI: What were your living conditions like when you were in Korea?

LC: As I say, we were lucky. We were in the billets. Not everybody was in this. This was a university.

SI: You stayed there the whole time.

LC: Right in the billets, in the university hall and the first floor--I was on the first floor with--you had cots. You had your little section and everything. So, it was good and you had bathrooms, big shower bathrooms because they would all take showers, four or five at a time. So, I was lucky, as I say. I could have gotten there and had to stay in a tent. A lot of them did, but I was just lucky at the time. I guess because I was stationed in Seoul, that's the reason why they put us in that billets. Some guys were in Kimpo, they didn't have that, and the rest of the area. I think I got a picture with them. It's a university. I think that's what it was.

SI: What about the food?

LC: Well, we were fed by the Army and the Air Force, so I got good food. I just didn't--I got sick on chicken. They gave me raw chicken and I got sick as a dog, so I don't eat chicken anymore.

PCC: Ever, ever. Not since 1950 ...

LC: I've eaten southern fried chicken. I know it's cooked. But I got sick. I was sick for--I think it must have been a whole week. You never seem to get over that. Food was good. Army food, Air Force food. I'm trying to think of which one that would be in, Phyllis.

PPC: I don't know dad.

LC: Don't worry.

SI: Do you guys have questions?

F: Hearing what was going on outside your walls of the Korean War, how did that effect you?

LC: Well, what was going on?

AR: When the war was going on, seeing all this stuff, what was being bombed, how did that affect you?

LC: That didn't really--they were bombing mainly--that didn't affect us too much.

AR: Mentally, I mean.

LC: They were bombing mostly towards the end, in the north, way up near China area. Because Chinese were the ones that were doing most of the fighting. So, it really didn't affect us. No. We used to see the planes go over all the time. I mean you got used to that. You got a picture, dear?

PCC: Well, you can find which one it is, but this is the book with all your Air Force pictures and pictures with the little Korean kids, giving them candy bars.

LC: Oh, is that here? Okay.

LC: Well you keep [asking]. I'll keep looking. [laughter]

SI: Okay. That brings up an interesting topic.

LC: That's it.

SI: Oh, great. Did you have interaction with local kids?

LC: Well, we used to give the kids candy.

LC: Oh, yeah. We used to do that. The kids used to love us. "You got chewing gum?" [laughter] Yes.

SI: This is a very nice looking ...

LC: Yes, as I say, I was lucky. I just happened to be where they needed to fill in for that group and it could have been worse. I could have gotten closer to the front there. There's a couple of them. [laughter]

SI: It looks like you got to do some sightseeing in Korea.

LC: Yes, I did. Yes. When I finished eight hours, I used to get maybe two or three hours' sleep and we used to go walking, just to get out of the rat race. I used to--we used to do our target practice. We have to have the shoot our rifles off so much and--I'm trying to think. That's it.

SI: One of these pictures just reminded me of something.

LC: Good tea, Janet.

SI: Did you go to religious services often when you were ...?

LC: Yes. Well, I went to--a protestant would say some of the Catholic service. They all knew all of it, but most of the time I had a Catholic chaplain. Yes.

SI: I forgot my question again.

JK: Dad, you see any aftermath of any fighting? Did they ever bring any wounded people to your area or anything like that?

LC: No, no.

JC: You didn't really see any of that?

LC: No. There were MASHs close, pretty close, maybe two miles from us. A couple MASHs, but we didn't see any wounded. In fact, I don't even know if they had a hospital in the area, working just for the civilian people, I think. Yes. They had MASHs, but they were a distance away.

SI: You mentioned earlier that USO shows would come in. Did you actually go to the shows or did you just hear about them?

LC: Oh, yes. We used to go and they used to say, "Bob Hope is coming." He used to always bring girls galore. He was great. He was one hell of a man. We had a good time. I can't remember, Bob Hope--oh, god. Quite a few others. I'm trying to think of the girls' names.

SI: Were you there when Marilyn Monroe was there?

LC: No, she wasn't. No, she wasn't there. Oh God. I'm losing it.

PCC: You'll think of it. You can come back to it later if you think of it.

SI: Did they have other R and R options within Korea, things you could do like go to servicemen's clubs or films or anything like that?

LC: Yes, they had a NCO [non-commissioned officer] club. Of course, I wasn't considered an NCO, so I really wasn't supposed to go. We used to go in and have a drink. As far as R and R goes, most people wanted to go to Japan, go to Tokyo. You want to get away from what you're doing for three months. They really treated you nice in Japan, I think anyway and the food was good. I even ate some of the Japanese food.

PCC: Really? Wow.

JK: Sushi?

PCC: Seriously?

JC: It wasn't pasta?

LC: They had a dish, Chisan they used to call it and I enjoyed that. It was rice with cheese and something else. It was good, but I'm not too good on some of the other stuff. [laughter] She knows.

SI: Did you get to eat any local Korean food, like kimchi or anything?

LC: Yes. As I as say, I tried it all and it wasn't my cup of tea, but I would eat it. It wasn't that it was bad or anything. I had that. I had kimchi and they had nice soup. I had a good soup. Itt was good, but I'm American. I eat American [food]. [laughter] Spaghetti and meatballs, Italian, or baked beans, or whatever--potato man, whatever.

SI: You said you and your wife were corresponding almost every day?

LC: She wrote me a letter every day. I think I got more mail, I think, than the generals got. She never missed. I had to get rid of--I had to carry them all in the big duffle bag. But my youngest daughter got into them so my wife made sure--because she said, "You're not supposed to read any of my personal mail." A lot of personal stuff in there.

SI: Was it important for your morale to get the mail all the time?

LC: Oh, god, are you kidding? Couldn't wait. I got more mail I think, than anybody, but we weren't married then. If maybe we were married she probably she probably say, "To hell with him." But, no she was good. She was really a gem. Yes, top notch. You didn't see the pictures. No.

SI: I saw some of the pictures.

LC: You didn't see the wedding pictures though.

SI: No, I don't think I did.

SI: Let me take a look.

LC: Take a break?

SI: Did you get married as soon as you came back home?

LC: Pretty close. I got home in '52 and October the 25th, we got married. That's when she proposed.

SI: I'm curious, had you discussed getting married before you went overseas?

LC: Oh, yes. Yes. We got engaged. We weren't going too long before we got engaged.

JK: You got engaged right before you left for Korea, dad?

LC: Yes, we really did. She didn't want to get married young, but when she found out I was going to Korea, she said, "Let's get engaged." So, we did. I didn't want anybody else to grab her. Are you kidding?

[Tape Paused]

SI: When you came back to the States from Korea, did you have some time off?

LC: Yes, they gave us a few weeks off because we didn't use any of our leave while we over in Korea. So, they give me a couple of weeks and I came home and I had to go back to Cape Cod, which is five or six hours. So, I took a train the first time to go back. Then, I used to hitchhike home. I did. I hitchhiked home quite a bit. Because every so often I would get three days off. You would work and then you would get three days off. So, I would--this other guy who used to come home too, we used to both hitchhike. They picked us up right away. People were good then.

JK: You hitchhiked in your uniform, right?

LC: Yes. Oh, yes. Always wear your uniform. They picked us up and only one time going back I got caught in a snowstorm. I think I walked half of the Cape, at least to get back. A big truck, tractor trailer, stopped and picked me up. Thank god. I gave him a big hug. I was freezing to death, but he took me right to the entrance of the base. But, as I say, eight hours was twenty four hours. Time did not go by. We used to--maybe one or two messages a week.

SI: How many men did you have under you?

LC: In the Highlands? I think there was only two. Two or three. Janet, after a while, she had gotten sick, so I went to the CO and asked him if I could get a compassionate transfer to Highlands, 646th Air Control Warning Station. It's only a hop, skip and jump from here. So, the COs got together and approved it and I was stationed in the Highlands towards the end. It was great because she was sick.

JC: What was wrong with me?

LC: I don't remember the reason why you were sick, but you were sick. She had her and Tony was--and all three of you, except Claire. Claire wasn't born then. But I think Phyllis--when did Phyllis--? No, she wasn't born yet. Just the two oldest were born and then I got out of the service. So, I came back and went up to McGuire to get out of the service.

SI: Your wife was raising three young children while you were up in Massachusetts?

LC: Well two young [children].

SI: Was she living with your family or was she all on her own?

LC: We had a house in Red Bank. Luckily, we got the house and we figured I'm only going to be a little while and thank God it worked out very well because when I got the transfer I didn't have to travel. Just seven, eight miles back and forth to the Highlands. So, it worked out very well. So, this way we had a house equity and then we bought--from the house we had in Red Bank, from the equity there, we bought a piece of property in Colt's Neck. Colt's Neck was a top notch city. [laughter] The kids didn't like it because they wanted to be around Red Bank, but we got it. We had a shell put up and I did all the work putting the house together and we did good. Thank God for her. If it wasn't for my wife we wouldn't have nothing, I don't think. Yes, she was a good woman.

SI: You went to work for General Motors after you were discharged.

LC: When I got out of the service, I got a job at General Motors in Linden. They were doing Buicks, Cadillac and Oldsmobiles. I was making very good money, but I wasn't seeing the kids at all. So, after three years, it got a little bit tacky and I was making real big money. So, I took a job, took the test from the Post Office. I says, "If they call me, I'm going to--" I didn't think they were going to call me. They called me right away. So, I gave it up, and I was making peanuts from the Post Office, but at least I got a chance to see the kids. So, it was good. When you ... family--I like family.

SI: You were living in Colt's Neck at the time or was that later on?

LC: Well, we were living in Red Bank for the first ten years of our marriage. After that, we moved to Colt's Neck. We got the house built up and the kids were raised up in Colt's Neck. The youngest was born--we moved there in '63 and that's when the youngest was born, 1963. Am I right?

JK: Yes.

PCC: Yes.

LC: I didn't make a mistake? Are you sure?

JC: No, you're doing good.

LC: Yes, she was born there and within ten years all of the children were born. We gave my wife a break. After she had the youngest, she couldn't have any more. She had problems.

SI: Did you join the Reserves?

LC: No, I didn't have to. My son had to join the Reserves when he got out, but I didn't have to. So, they didn't have that for me in my area. I wouldn't have gone back in it.

SI: When you were at GM in Linden, were you involved in the union at all?

LC: Oh, yes. Everybody was union. As I say, I was making good money, but, as I say, what good is the money if you don't see the kids?

SI: What were you doing in the factory?

LC: I was on the assembly line up until maybe the first year and then I got to be a repairman and I made more money. I would stay on the end of the line and pick up the ones that they had missed. Well, the assembly line, they missed something, so you got to take care and put it together and do it. I was making big money then. As I say, big money. At that time, it was big money. So, I can't complain. I never was without a job. All of my life I worked. I never collected unemployment, not once. I went from the GM, went right to work at the post office. I wasn't making much, but as I say, family is more important.

SI: Were you a letter carrier?

LC: Letter carrier. Yes. I did everything, all around Red Bank, Middletown, Fairhaven, Shrewsbury, Fort Monmouth, RFD [rural free delivery], but after a while, get seniority, you get a route--you might be able to get a route. So, I got the route in Shrewsbury and the last twenty-five years I was in Shrewsbury. So, I got to know the people very well and I enjoyed it. Very nice. Yes, carrying mail was good. It was good for you, too. Physically, you were in good shape. Yes, after you quit walking, you get everything wrong. Oh, god, but I did okay. The kids did okay. They're still around. They kick me out of the house ... But it's good to have the girls. Girls are good. Tony was good too, but he's too far away.

SI: Did you ever use any part of the GI Bill?

LC: No.

SI: Like for home mortgage.

LC: I might have. I could have, but I didn't really use it. I didn't really need it. Leave it for the guys that need it. No.

SI: You guys have questions?

F: Your son was in the Air Force, did you encourage him to pursue that?

LC: No, he just, made up his mind. I didn't say anything to him. He, went in and he did good himself. He retired as a master sergeant and he was the top master sergeant. You couldn't go any higher. So, he's got a good retirement.

JK: He was in the first Persian Gulf War?

LC: What?

JK: He was in the first Persian Gulf War, too.

LC: Yes, he was at Desert Shield and Desert Storm and his sons, his oldest son, was in the Marine Corps Band. He was in the Marines and the other son is still in. He's a captain. He was in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even one of my granddaughters was in the Air Force. She's not in there now, but she was in the Air Force. So, we got a pretty good group. Charlie's, I got to go see if I can get a--when he comes, I'll put him in somebody's uniform and get a picture of him because I want to send it to--I got an Italian newspaper in New Jersey, *The Italian Tribune*, and every year you can send a picture of your family in uniform. So, I'll put them all in there.

JK: I've got to tell you, dad, looking at these pictures of you in basic training, I have never seen a picture of anybody in basic training who has so much hair. I thought they used to give you--I mean, look at all this. I thought they used to give you haircuts when you went into basic training.

LC: Well they didn't--

JK: You have enough hair to share with about ten people. Look at it all.

LC: Well, I didn't--

JK: They didn't give you haircuts there?

LC: No, I didn't have--I wasn't worried about what I looked like because I had a girlfriend.

JK: I thought in basic they cut your hair.

LC: No, the Air Force didn't do that.

PCC: Oh, the Air Force didn't.

LC: The Army would cut you all--and the Marines cut all your hair off.

JK: But the Air Force and the Navy didn't do that?

LC: They just got a regular haircut if you wanted it. If you wanted a crew cut, which is better for you, you didn't have to worry about showering and combing your hair, which was good. I've still got some hair left, you know. [laughter] Not much, but some. Yes.

SI: After you were out of the Air Force, did you get involved in any veterans' groups or anything like that?

LC: Well, no. I belong to the VA now, but a couple of years ago, I joined it. But I never used any of their facilities because I have Medicare and the post office had a pretty good retirement. So, the only thing I have to pay for is a copay for the prescription drugs or something, because I haven't paid a copay on any of my service in years. So, I didn't have to use the veterans [benefits].

SI: Did you join the American Legion or the VFW?

LC: Well, I belong to the Knights of Columbus and I'm a fireman, Red Bank fireman. I was in 1955, I think. I'm an honorary member of the fire company and I'm an honorary member of the Knights of Columbus. So, I was busy in those two. I was the secretary of the fire company and I was a financial secretary of the Knights of Columbus. So, I did good there, but there's too many meetings. You missed the kids.

F: Did you march in the Freehold Memorial Day parade?

LC: What is that?

F: Would you march in the Freehold Memorial Day parade with the Knights of Columbus?

LC: Was I watching the Memorial Day parade?

F: Would you march in it with the Knights of Columbus?

LC: No, I didn't march in any more parades after that, after I got punished, but the Ancient Order of Hibernians, they were great. They let us mingle right in with them. They knew we were skipping school I guess. But most of them were Catholic anyway and they didn't care. But we had a lot of good times.

SI: You said you joined the fire company in 1955?

LC: I think it was '55 or in that area. Anyway, I'm an honorary member. It's good because the town, when anything happens, there's insurance, fifteen thousand dollars of insurance the kids will get, which is good. The Knights of Columbus, of course I always got policies from them. I took the policies to protect my wife and she's gone, so, what are you going to do?

SI: So, you said you were the secretary for the fire company? Were you always that or were you ever a volunteer fire fighter?

LC: No, after ten or fifteen years I put in as the secretary and then you get tired of it. So, I tell I'm going to retire and the financial secretary's job in the Knights of Columbus is a big job. So, I had it for ten years, twelve years. It was a new Knights of Columbus. They just started, so I took over as their first financial secretary. It was good. It was a lot of work. There's always two meetings a month, which is a lot. Is that Mike? Doing okay?

JK: Yes, yes. I think the carpet's done.

SI: When you first joined the fire company would you go out on calls?

LC: Oh, yes. Yes, we used to have, at first they had the sirens and ninety-five was our number. If they called ninety-five we would go or ninety-six would be the other company, but after five

o'clock, everybody went, no matter what number they would, everybody would go. Yes, we went to quite a few fires. But after a while they got the Plectron they called it. You had it in your house and when there was a fire, "Beep," it would call you and tell you where to go and Red Bank was numbered, each area had a number, two-twenty or five-fifty. Anything in the fives was a big building or something. So, we knew where we had to go. But, it was good service and I did the best I could.

SI: Do any fires or calls stand out in your memory?

LC: Oh, they had one fire, a big fire in Red Bank. It was a liquor store. We loved the liquor store. [laughter] The guy says, "Help yourselves. Take it." I didn't drink anyway, but most of the guys were able to take the--the owner says, "Go ahead," because he can't sell it. I don't know whether they drank it or not. [laughter]

PCC: Wasn't there a fire in one of the shoe stores or something?

LC: Yes.

PCC: Because I remember you brought home--when I was little, you brought home a bunch of sneakers and boots and stuff.

LC: Yes. I don't know. It was quite a while. But they give them to you. You didn't go in and steal it.

JK: I remember Prown's burning. Wasn't it Prown's that burned, or Woolworths, or something like that?

LC: Yeah. Well, Woolworths I thought. I can't remember.

JK: Something in downtown Red Bank burned.

LC: Yes. Well, one of them was the liquor store down there.

JK: A big store.

LC: We had quite a few fires. They had a good fire company. They have six fire organizations in town. They got a big hook and ladder for the big buildings and our company was just a regular company. So, we had a good group. They all got along great, all the fireman. Of course there's some of the guys that used Sunday mass. They would have their Sunday mass drinking beer. But I never did that. I was a homebody. That's the way I was.

SI: In those days, did they have first aid squads or did the fire company have one?

LC: Yes, they had two first aid things in Red Bank. I think there may be more now. One, two, three. The lady that passed away.

F: Yes, (Daphne?).

LC: She was in the first aid. I went to a wake yesterday. She was in first aid. She was ninety-five. Yes, they had the first aid squad and they were all affiliated with the fire company and the town takes care of them, too. Our company, we owned the building, but they pay all the rent. They pay for the water and electric, and they pay for the trucks of course. So, we own the building, but the town pays all the utilities and stuff. All the buildings. I think there's five of them in Red Bank. But, I enjoyed it. After a while, as you say, you get too many meetings and you miss out on something, so the kids get married and whatever. Got to give these girls away. [laughter]

PCC: Throw us away.

LC: [laughter] Oh, I'll take you back. I keep telling her husband I'll take her back any time. No, the girls are good and Tony was good, too.

SI: So, do you guys have any other questions about any part of his life?

F: Did you receive and awards or recognition for your time served in Korea?

LC: Yes, they got the medals up here. They gave us quite a bit of recognition. Most of them are Korean service. This is the Air Force Good Conduct Medal, which they didn't have, so I got this one to begin with. This is the Army. When they came out ... Let it ring. ... service ... This is Korean and this is Korean and this is Korean ... This one I think is the United Nations Korean Service Medal. They all give us medals and recognition. So, this is the New Jersey Distinguished Service. They gave us--if I can ... This was when you passed the meridian, they gave you this on the ship. But this is basically the awards that I got. So, you asked and I answered.

SI: We were just looking at, your medals and decorations. There's the United Nations Service.

LC: They're the ones I'm allowed to wear.

SI: Korean War Service, the two Good Conduct Medals, one from the Army and one from the Air Force.

LC: Yes, one from the Air Force and one from the Army.

SI: National Defense.

LC: For the service and the service that New Jersey State service gave us.

SI: New Jersey Distinguished Service Medal.

LC: Yes. The Korean, I think there's three or four medals we got. One from the UN, one from the Korea, South Korea itself, and a couple others for something else. I got the papers some place, but I can't remember all this stuff.

SI: We also saw your certificate for the Order of the Golden Dragon when you crossed the 180th meridian.

LC: Right.

SI: Was there any kind of ceremony on the ship?

LC: Well, they made an issue of it on the loud speaker. "You are now passing the meridian and you will be getting a certificate," which they did. I'm glad my wife saved it. Everything you see here she did. She was something. She saved all the stuff and they made an issue of it maybe for a day and then went back. They gave you the certificate and I'm glad I saved it. As I say, the ship was the hardest part of the four year service. Two weeks going and two weeks coming back.

PCC: How was the food on the ship, dad?

LC: Not bad. I can't complain about the food on the ship. They just didn't have clean dishes because I wouldn't do them.

[everyone laughs]

LC: No, they had pretty good food. They had a British ship and I guess it was the British cooks any everything, so they had pretty good meals. I can't complain. Any fried chicken--any chicken I just did without. [laughter] I didn't eat anything.

SI: When you were in Korea, did you have any interaction with any of the other international forces like the British or the Australians or UN forces?

LC: Not really. No. We were centralized. Communications was one place and we were just in that communications. There was no--the Army would be in--the Army was up ahead, the Army and the Marines. So, we didn't have any interaction, even with the ROKs. I think they resented us for the most part, the police and they thought they could take care of them, their own self, and maybe they could have. I don't know.

SI: Where are you getting that sense from? From personal interaction or rumors?

LC: Well I, we saw them. We met the ROKs and the other group, but they were aloof, a little bit, maybe because they couldn't understand our language too well. I can't say that they did it because they didn't like us, but I think maybe they resented us a little. That's what I gathered from it. Maybe I was wrong. Had some good memories over there. I mean, the people were great, I think. We kept them--we gave them money. Do these clothes and have them ready by--and they always had them ready. I don't know how they cleaned them, banging them on a brick

or something. That's the way they did it, but some of them towards the end got machines. I don't know where they got them.

PCC: From all the money you gave them.

LC: I wouldn't be surprised.

SI: Did you remain friends with anybody that you served with after the war?

LC: Yes, there was a fellow that came back and he was still in the service and then after he got out of the Air Force, he went into the Army. (Plotchen?), he was a heck of a nice guy. ... good Pollack. Oh, he was something. I think he's still alive in Florida. But he was something else.

PCC: I went to high school with his son.

LC: Yes.

JK: Yes, he had a German war bride.

JC: Right? She was German. Well, she was German, right? A German war bride?

LC: Yes, she was nice. She was great. Good looking woman. Frank was a--I don't know how she got tangled up with Frank. But he was good. He was good hearted. He made me a drink one day. I don't know how I got home. Honest to God, I don't. He made me a--

JK: Was it planters punch? I think I remember.

LC: 151 proof rum. Oh, I didn't know anything about-- I don't drink liquor. I had that and I don't know how I got--and I got the car in the garage. I don't know how the hell I did it, to this day. I think God was on my shoulders. But I made it home. Never drank. Only other time I got in trouble with her mother, and my neighbor called me down to do some work and he was giving me drinks and giving me drinks and giving me drinks and I don't drink. So, when I got home, I got sick and boy, wow-wee, was I in the dog house. Wow. She's only five foot one, but she was tough. Yes, we had a good life. Can't complain. Miss her every day.

SI: Any other questions?

F: What was your reaction and the result of the end of the Korean War?

LC: After the Korean?

AR: Yeah what was your reaction of the result of the Korean War?

LC: After it was over? Well, I thought we did a pretty good job. I think we did a good job. I don't know any more whether it's worth doing what they did in--there weren't appreciated, the last one. They called them all killers and everything.

SI: In Vietnam?

LC: So, I don't know. Yes, Vietnam. I hate to even mention the word because they were treated like dogs I think. They did what the country wanted them to. I think we've got to start taking care of our infrastructure. It's going all to hell, it is. All the bridges--I'd say, ninety percent of the bridges need work. All the roads are in bad shape. I don't know. We spend some money here and stuff. Do you realize how much money we lost in Iraq? Oh, god. It gets me sick. Really it does. Well, now you know my opinion on that.

SI: You guys have heard stories your whole life. Are there any stories that should go on the record?

PCC: We really didn't hear very much. We learned so much sitting here today. Dad was always man of few words.

JK: Yes.

PCC: It was either that or he had so little time to get a word in edgewise.

JK: Mom was the talker in the family.

LC: Well Tony, my son, wants a copy of whatever because I was talking to him last night.

PCC: We all do.

LC: He didn't know that this was coming. He says, "Let me know how you made out. Let me know. Give me a copy of whatever." Yes. Tony, he was in the service a lot more than me. He was on the big planes, refueling the planes. Yes, he was a crew chief and he went on a lot of missions.

JK: He was on the flight line in Kuwait. Kind of like dad in that he was kind of behind the scenes in the war. More kind of supporting but not on the front lines.

PCC: Most of the stories that we heard revolved around the candy with the kids. We would look at the pictures and ask him questions about that.

JK: Some of the tangible things he brought back. He brought back china from Japan for mom and some tea sets from Korea. So, we had some tangible things.

LC: Yes. I don't know if there's still any left. They're still in there?

PCC: Well, you brought back that one silk negligée.

LC: Ooh. Wow-wee.

PCC: I have that at my house. He brought it back for my mom and apparently there's a story where he asked the woman in the store to model it for him before he bought it.

LC: Yes, she did.

PCC: Which doesn't surprise me.

LC: Well, she had clothes on too. A slip at least. I says, "That's about the right size." They gave us pretty good breaks. But your mother says, "I ain't going to wear that."

JK: There's a whole tea set from Korea that he brought back.

PCC: Mom passed that negligée down to me at one point so I still have it.

LC: Who has it? Anybody?

PCC: I do.

JK: Phyllis does.

LC: Oh, god. I brought a lot of stuff back. Yes.

SI: Being kind of close to the lines, did you ever look for souvenirs, like shell casings, things like that?

LC: We really never did. As I said, we didn't have the time. The time we did have, we wanted to have--we had to go shoot our riffles once in a while. Then we would go wandering around together and just to look the town over. We used to have a good time, I think. But I was the quiet one in the group, you know. There was always somebody that was a loud mouth, but I wasn't ever a loud mouth. I got along with everybody, I guess. That's my nature I guess. I don't know.

SI: Well, is there anything else that you would like to add to the record?

LC: No. Just, I enjoyed my service time. I made good use of it. Got all I could get out of it. In fact when [I was] going to get out, they asked me if I want to--would I stay, they would give me another stripe right away, but I says, "No, not worth it." I wanted to get a job where eight hours went by in eight hours. I enjoyed it and I'm happy for it. If anything you needed as information in this, you let me know any time and I'll look it up because I got the dates and all this other stuff.

PCC: Yes, I can always scan something and email it to you also.

SI: Oh, good. Thank you. In general, how do you think your time in the service kind of shaped who you were afterwards? Do you think there's any way you can point to?

LC: Well I always liked to work. I always liked to work. I always kept busy. Sometimes, two jobs. After I got in the post office, I used to do two jobs to make up the loss there. So, I always had a pretty good feel for work and life and tried to behave, stay out of trouble. I don't know if the girls did. Yes, I had a good group. Good group. I never had to bail any of them out.

SI: That's good.

LC: It worked out pretty good. No.

PCC: That you know of.

LC: I think my parents, they did a good job. I had good parents and they treated me nice. I just don't know how my wife did it with all she did. She's up there, probably, yelling at me now for what I said about her. I better not go out in the car, huh?

SI: All right. Well, thank you very much. We appreciate all your time today and thank you for your service.

LC: Well I'm glad you got some sandwiches too.

SI: Wonderful. All right. Well, thank you very much.

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

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