

RUTGERS, THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW JERSEY

NEW BRUNSWICK

AN INTERVIEW WITH HERBERT W. GANSZ

FOR THE

RUTGERS ORAL HISTORY ARCHIVES

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED BY

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DEPTFORD, NEW JERSEY

FEBRUARY 1, 2018

TRANSCRIPT BY

FANTASTIC TRANSCRIPTS

Shaun Illingworth: This begins an interview with Mr. Herbert W. Gansz on February 1, 2018, in Deptford, New Jersey, with Shaun Illingworth. Thank you very much for having me, Mr. Gansz.

Herbert W. Gansz: Thank you for coming.

SI: Thank you, also, to your daughter and son-in-law [Paul Lehto] for helping to set up this interview. To begin, can you tell me where and when you were born?

HG: I was born on April 27, 1920, in Philadelphia.

SI: What were your parents' names?

HG: Well, my father's name was Anthony P. Gansz and my mother's name was Katherine M. Schmidt Gansz, when she was married.

SI: Beginning with your father's side of the family, do you know anything about the family history on the Gansz side?

HG: I really don't know a lot, except that my father had a number of brothers and sisters and his mother lived in Philadelphia. I met her, my grandmother, but I only saw her for about three or four years before she died. That was the only grandparent that I ever met.

SI: Had his parents immigrated to this country? Were they born in this country?

HG: I believe my father's family emigrated from Germany, but many years before. When my daughter was doing some research, she discovered that my grandfather, Julius Gansz, had served in the Civil War. He was living in the Germantown section of Philadelphia and was in a German unit of the Union Army.

My mother was born in Germany. She came over when she was a child, two or three years of age, and she came over with her family, father, mother, five sisters and one brother, I think it was. They were here for a while. Then, her father wanted to go back. He left and he left all of his family here. So, he deserted them in this country, but they were all older than my mother, who was the youngest of the children that were brought over.

SI: Do you know how your parents met?

HG: No.

SI: Were they living in the same area of Philadelphia?

HG: Yes, they were living in Philadelphia.

SI: Do you happen to know the section of Philadelphia?

HG: South Philly.

SI: Your father was in the textile industry.

HG: Well, he did several different things.

SI: Okay.

HG: He worked on the transportation system as a collector on trolleys for a while, or trolley cars, and then, he had a job at what was called--the name of the company was (Schwartzwalder?). They were shrinking materials. That was his job as a cloth sponger, to help shrink materials. During the Second World War, they went out of business. He had lost his job there before the war, and we had a terrible financial struggle, because he wasn't able to get work.

They put him on what was known as the WPA, the Works Progress Administration, and then, they'd send him around to do work in communities. You didn't make very much, but that was our source of income for my mother, my father, my twin brother--I had a twin brother born on April 27th with me--and an older brother, who was thirteen years older, living with us at that time. [Editor's Note: The Works Progress Administration, or, after 1939, the Works Project Administration, was a New Deal agency that employed millions on public works projects like buildings and roads, as well as in specialized areas, such as the arts, from 1935 to 1943.]

Beverly A. Gansz Lehto: And an older sister.

HG: I had an older sister who was twenty when my brother and I were born.

SI: When did the family relocate from Philadelphia to Jersey?

HG: On Halloween in 1928. We moved from Philadelphia to Brooklawn, New Jersey. It was right on Halloween, and we were shocked, because we're moving in and the kids were asking for coal pieces. My family had never heard of that term before. So, they were not prepared for that. It was something new, but we moved to Brooklawn then. I lived in Brooklawn for a total of seventy-five years, before moving to a retirement community in Deptford, New Jersey with my wife Elsie.

SI: Do you have any memories of your life in Philadelphia?

HG: Very, very little. I only lived there for eight years. I remember going to the local church once or twice. I remember going to school, but I don't remember the school or anything about it. I remember, we lived near Point Breeze Avenue, if you know where that is, in Philly. That was the big shopping center, but I don't really have a lot of memories from there. I remember having the whooping cough when I was there and remember going to the corner grocery to buy bread for my mother. It cost a dime for two large loaves.

SI: Was it very different for you to move to Brooklawn?

HG: Oh, yes, very, very different. In Brooklawn, we had a lawn and room, where, in Philadelphia, we lived in a row house. There was much more freedom of movement for my twin brother and I. We could go all over town and feel safe. It was a different environment completely.

SI: What was the neighborhood that you moved into like?

HG: Well, it was a suburban neighborhood, I guess, at that time. They were much nicer homes than we lived in in Philly.

BGL: The homes there were originally built by Camden Shipyard for their shipyard workers. Many of them, and still are today, row homes. Some were larger, single homes, but many of them were row homes. They were built for workers of the Camden Shipyard.

HG: That's right, built during World War I. They were built for the [New York] Shipbuilding Corporation.

BGL: And the reason they moved there was, their sister, the older sister, married a man from New Jersey.

HG: From Gloucester.

BGL: From Gloucester, New Jersey. They rented a house in Brooklawn. The rest of the family moved over to New Jersey after that.

SI: For the record, can you tell me your siblings' names, your sister and brothers?

HG: Okay. My twin brother is Raymond, Raymond F. Gansz. My other, older brother is Ralph A. Gansz, born January 31, 1907, and my sister's name was Florence M. Gansz Blosser, born January 13, 1900.

SI: Would you describe the area that you moved to as a melting pot, or was there one ethnicity that dominated the area? Were there many people from different backgrounds living there?

HG: Oh, yes, but most of the people were people who had lived here for many, many years in town. They weren't so much from all over. They had, evidently, moved there when the homes were built and most of them were still there. I served papers, my brother and I, for probably four or five years. We used to know every house and everybody who lived there, the number of that house. The people would stop along the road, "Do you know where this guy lives?" "Oh, yes," like, we could tell them the house and the name of the people. We had served papers so long.

BGL: Tell him what you made serving papers.

HG: Oh, well, our family didn't have any money. We struggled for money. So, Ray and I had no income at all. We served *The Camden Courier*, served the morning edition and they had a pink edition at night. So, we'd have to cover the town twice, and then, on Saturday, we had to

collect all the fees, and then, pay it to the woman that owned the paper route. At the end of the week, we got a dollar apiece.

SI: Wow.

HG: We worked, probably, twelve, fifteen hours for a dollar.

SI: Did you have to take on any other jobs or work to help the family?

HG: Well, what we did, we cut lawns when we could. When there was snow, we were some of the first ones out to try to get people to let us shovel their walks, that type of thing. One, two people, elderly people, asked us, "Would we be willing to put their trash out on trash day?" We made a dime apiece for putting their trash out on trash day, but the money was scarce.

SI: Did your mother work outside of the home?

HG: No, Mom never worked.

SI: You mentioned that your father went to work for the WPA.

HG: Right.

SI: Do you remember any of the projects that he worked on?

HG: No, but what they would do many times, they'd go around, they'd clean the streets, they'd trim the trees--things around the borough that needed to be done and they wouldn't want to hire people for. They'd use the WPA people to do it. It's actually a service for the community, and they would get paid for doing it. I don't remember what he got. I think he maybe got fifteen dollars a week. I'm not sure.

SI: Did your older brother get involved in any New Deal programs?

HG: No. He was older and he worked for a place making lamps, (Horn and Brandon?), the name was. He worked in there, but he was always interested in trains. So, when he was twenty, he went over to the Reading Railroad and put in an application. Well, you had to be twenty-one to work on the railroad. So, he lied and told them he was twenty-one, and they never checked it. So, they hired him. He worked on the railroad until he retired forty-five years later or so, but he was drafted into the Army in the meantime, in between there.

BGL: They were drafted and left on the same day, he and his older brother Ralph.

HG: Yes.

SI: Okay. Was your twin brother also drafted the same day?

HG: Not my twin brother, no.

BGL: He was deferred.

HG: Ray was in an ...

BGL: Essential service.

HG: A profession in laying out ships, and he was deferred for the entire war from service.

BGL: He worked at the Camden Shipyard.

HG: But, as soon as the war ended, then, he was drafted and sent over to the Army of Occupation in Japan, but he wasn't in the war during the war.

SI: Going back to the Great Depression for a moment, do you recall anything that you and your family would have to do to stretch out a dollar and help the family? For example, would you have to go collect coal or wood for heating your home?

HG: No, but I'll tell you what we did do with coal. We had a coal stove and we'd have to sift the ashes every week and pick out what little pieces of coal that didn't burn and put that aside, so that we could re-burn it. We did, Ray and I, my twin brother and I. We had to do that every week, sift the ashes and take the coal out of it, but we just bought the coal.

SI: Do you recall if people would travel through town looking for work or food? Did you ever run into any transients?

HG: I don't have any memory of that, no.

SI: Okay.

HG: People came through town selling things, clothes props, which were wooden poles with a notch in the top to prop up clothes lines when hanging laundry outside. There were a couple of guys brought vegetables around on Saturdays or so in the summer, but I don't remember anything like that, no.

SI: How did your family view Franklin Roosevelt and his efforts to alleviate the Depression? Was your family in favor of FDR and his policies?

HG: Oh, yes, oh, yes, they definitely were. Yes, they were pro-Roosevelt definitely, yes. They felt he was doing things to help the poor.

SI: Tell me a little bit about your early education, where you went to school, but, also, what you found interesting in school.

HG: Okay. We went to school. We started in Brooklawn School, in third grade, and we went all the way through this school, three through eight. Then, we went to Gloucester High School. We got out of Gloucester High School and there was no work around.

We couldn't get jobs until, finally, a year-and-a-half later, my brother got a job as an office boy in the New York Shipbuilding Corporation located in Camden, New Jersey. Well, when he did that, I served all the papers myself. Well, eventually, he got a new job, moved over to another department, in the Shipbuilding Corporation, which was laying out ships. He made more money, and I got his job as the office boy in the shipyard, the one he had. Then, I moved up after a while to a clerk position. I kept all kinds of records and files.

I worked for what was known as the ordering department of the New York Shipbuilding Corporation. What we would do is order the materials they needed and the purchasing department would then have to go purchase it. I had to keep records of everything we ordered and, if I didn't get a notice from them that it had been purchased within a certain period of time, I'd have to go around and remind them about it. Well, one day--this is one of the bad days of my life--my boss called me in. Three of the head bosses over in the shipyard didn't have materials to work with and they've got all their men there to work but no material. So, what's my boss do? He automatically blames me.

So, I went out and got the records. I showed him that I had fulfilled everything I was supposed to. Then, they headed for the purchasing department to find out where the fault was, but his attitude toward me was very negative. I learned a valuable lesson then about how to handle people and deal with them.

SI: I want to return to your time at the shipyard in a moment. As you were going through school, what interested you the most as a student?

HG: In high school?

SI: Yes.

HG: I was in all business courses because we could never have afforded college. I enjoyed math and was good in it. My brother and I, we were interested in basketball.

SI: Okay.

HG: But, when either of us had time, we had to serve papers. We couldn't go to practice basketball. So, neither of us ever went out for the basketball team, but we did like baseball also. When baseball season came around, Ray was a better ballplayer than I was, I said, "You go out for the team and I'll serve the whole paper route," which I did. He played on the high school baseball team.

In fact, he hit the major hit that won--they were in the playoffs--the championship, and he got the big hit that won the championship for the school. So, I felt good about that, but that was our

primary interests. We didn't have much time for anything else, because we had to serve papers. We didn't have any money to participate in some of the other things that were going on.

BGL: They graduated--he didn't mention--in 1938.

HG: Yes.

SI: Right at the height of the Depression.

HG: Yes.

SI: You said that you were unable to find employment for a year-and-a-half. Were you still serving the papers?

HG: That's right.

SI: It sounds as though you were working at the shipyard for a few years before Pearl Harbor was attacked.

HG: I was working at the shipyard, yes, until December 23, 1942, when I got a letter from the government greeting me and telling me I was to report for service on January 1, 1943.

SI: Okay.

HG: And they told me I had a little time off, because they notified me on December 23rd, because of Christmas, to give you the extra time. So, my brother Ralph and I both reported for service on January 1, 1943.

SI: As the war developed, did you notice changes at the shipyard?

HG: Well, I left the shipyard.

SI: Okay, I meant before, as America was building up its Armed Forces.

HG: Oh, yes, there was great changes, because there was more and more pressure. They needed ships badly. I remember when we were building the battleship, number 421, the [USS] *South Dakota* [(BB-57)], everything on the *South Dakota* was priority, priority, priority. You had to get those things first. The pressure built for getting the materials, so that they could work on them, but it increased during that time, when we needed ships so badly.

SI: Do you recall how you heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been attacked?

HG: Yes, I think I either had just left church or something, I'm not sure. I'm not very clear on that. It was sometime during that day. Well, it just upset you, but I don't remember a lot about it. I really don't.

SI: Had you followed the news of the war up to that point?

HG: Oh, yes, oh, yes.

SI: Did you expect that America would get involved, or did you think that America would stay out of the war?

HG: Oh, I thought, eventually, they were going to be involved, because it was just spreading so badly, and we're losing ships and men by some of the German subs. So, we couldn't tolerate it very long. So, I thought, really, we'd get in.

SI: Your twin brother was deferred because of his work at the shipyard.

HG: That's right.

SI: Was there any chance that you could have gotten a deferment as someone who worked at the shipyard?

HG: I don't think so, no.

SI: Okay.

BGL: Actually, the first time, when he registered, he was deferred, because he only has hearing in one ear.

SI: Okay.

BGL: He was deferred the first time, but, then, they started calling people that did have some type of disability.

HG: Yes. The first time, about a year earlier, I was notified, but I couldn't pass the test because I was deaf in my left ear. They would not take you then. So, I was classified as 4-F, and then, the second time was December of '42. By that time, they were taking you.

What they wanted to do, the sergeant that was there when I finished the exam, he said, "because of that deafness, I'm going to classify you as limited service," which meant that you were going to be out of anything. I indicated to him, "Well, look, if I'm going to be in the service, let me go in the service." So, he removed that classification. So, I was in regular.

SI: Were you excited to go into the service or were you apprehensive? How did you feel at that time?

HG: Well, I just said, "Everybody else is going and all my other friends are going." So, I just felt that I had to go. I didn't look forward to it, but I felt it was part of my job, because everybody else was going for our country.

SI: Where were you told to report to first?

HG: Well, I went in on January 1st and I went up to Fort Dix and stayed there only three days. Then, I was put on a troop train to Fort Eustis for thirteen weeks of basic training. In those days, they were afraid of the Germans and the Japs learning of troop movements and destinations. So, we were put on a troop train at Fort Eustis, Virginia, and we went up to Chicago. We came back to Dallas. Then, we went out to San Diego, then, we're up to San Francisco.

That's where we disembarked to get on the ship, but we were on that train for four or five days, just because nobody was to know where we were going. You never knew when you were going on the ship or anything. You never had any idea where you were going. Everything was super, super secret and censored. You never knew. When we got on the ship in San Francisco, we had no idea where we were going.

SI: Can you tell me a little bit about your training at Fort Eustis?

HG: Well, at Fort Eustis, it was the regular, routine training. You learned to fire a rifle and march and getting physical training. You'd start off two miles a day and, by the end of the time, you're walking twenty-four miles a day with your full field pack and everything. Then, you do the other basic training things, so that I had no trouble with the basic training. Then, we were sent to San Francisco, where we boarded a ship and we had no idea where we were going. About five days later, we landed and they told us, "You're in Hawaii," and we disembarked.

SI: Do you remember the name of the ship?

HG: I think it was the *Haleakala*. That was an inter-island ship and it went to Oahu. From there, I was sent to a camp, Fort Schafter. We camped for a week or so until they sorted us out, and then I think there were twenty of us sent to a pineapple field. We were stationed in this pineapple field and we were trained on radar, searchlights, forty-millimeter machine-guns and thirty-five-caliber guns.

Our primary job was the radar. Twenty-four hours a day, any foreign plane, or any plane that didn't belong in the area, you report and they take action from there. I was there for seven-and-a-half months and we had one scare, I guess, once when they had a full-scale mobilization, thought there was somebody coming, but, then, it was called off. Otherwise, there was nothing as far as action there.

SI: What was a typical day like for you in this unit?

HG: Well, that's according to what duty you had. You had either KP [kitchen police] duty or radar duty, and then, it'd be like two hours on and four hours off, or whatever the hours were on. The rest of the time, we'd do training on the searchlights, training on the radar and training on, usually, the guns. It was training time, but radar was primary. That was primary.

SI: Did you have a specific job that you were assigned to do, or would they have you do several tasks?

HG: Well, you do all of them, but, on the radar, there was horizontal and vertical, I was horizontal seat on the radar at that time.

SI: Do you happen to recall what type of radar it was?

HG: No, I don't.

SI: Were you always positioned in this pineapple field?

HG: Always during that time. For the first seven-and-a-half months in Hawaii, we were in the same field, yes, same spot.

SI: How did you get along with the men that you were serving with?

HG: Oh, we got along fine.

SI: I would imagine that, before you went into the service, you probably had not traveled much outside of the South Jersey/Philadelphia area.

HG: Yes.

SI: Do any experiences stand out from traveling across the country and out into the Pacific?

HG: Not at that time, no. I didn't do much. No, we didn't have any money.

SI: Okay. [laughter]

BGL: You also left Hawaii. When did you leave Hawaii?

HG: Well, seven-and-a-half months after the time there, we were put on another ship and taken we didn't know where--you never knew where--and we landed at a place called Palmyra Island. It's a thousand miles southwest of Hawaii. It was about three miles long maybe, and it had some trees and some shrubbery and things on it.

After we got there, I was stationed on what they called Sand Island. Now, Sand Island had no sand. It was just all coral, strictly white coral. There was one little bush on it, on the far side in the water, but nothing else, no shrubbery. It was all coral and it was shaped like a toadstool. It had a flat top and a support, and it was a half-mile wide and a mile long. There were twenty-five men stationed on Sand Island.

Our job there was radar and searchlight, if we happened to need it, but our primary role there was to forewarn Oahu and Pearl Harbor if there were planes in the area that we didn't think belonged in the area. That was our primary job. Now, a secondary job we never had to do anything with, if planes were damaged in the Gilbert Islands or Eniwetok and couldn't get back to Oahu, they, supposedly, could possibly land on ours, but our land was too small. If a large ship, a large

plane, landed on there, he'd never get off of it, because it was only a hundred feet long, but we never had them.

So, we didn't have to face that problem, but, otherwise, our primary role was support and checking for the others. I will say this, that all it would've taken was one bomb and that whole island would've gone under, because the support for that island would have been destroyed. So, we were really expendable. There was only twenty-five of us on the island.

SI: Was it all Army personnel there?

HG: Yes. You had to wear heavy shoes on it. Our mode of dress was heavy shoes and socks, shorts and a light shirt, because it was so hot, sunglasses and a hat. You had to wear those because of the heat. We were there for just about eight months, and then, I was sent back to Oahu again. Right then, the war was going downhill. I was sent several places to do several things to help, our group of us, help them someplace else. Finally, we got located on a place called Makapu'u Point and we then were set up with machine-guns and things, defensive. Then, the war kept coming, going.

Depending upon how much time you had, men were being called to be sent home. Some of the guys that we joined when I first went over were over there for four years already. So, they got sent back early. One of these guys I had become friends with, who lived in Norwood, Pennsylvania, had a four-year-old son who he had never seen. What happened then--there was very few left--I was made charge of the placement, but I only had four or five men. I had the cafeteria, had all kinds of things that I had to run. It was impossible. So, I called the captain and told him, "I can't do it." [laughter] So, the next thing I knew, he sent me a dozen men to help out, but, then, shortly after that, my number was up and I was sent back to the States to come home.

SI: How did you take to this leadership role? Was it something that you enjoyed doing?

HG: Yes, I guess so, yes, and that led me into some other leadership roles later.

SI: At any time, whether you were in Hawaii or Palmyra, did you ever have any trouble with things like supplies or your living quarters?

HG: I don't remember any, no.

BGL: This is the ship they came back on.

SI: Great. You came back home on the USS *West Virginia* (BB-48).

HG: On the *West Virginia*. I was on the coast waiting and, when any ship came in, whoever was there, they called out names. When the *West Virginia* came in, if I remember the numbers pretty closely, they had eight hundred sleeping bunks available for soldiers. Everybody else, you'd get on, but you'd find your own place to sleep anyplace in the ship. I think there were twenty-one

hundred total and eight hundred got bunks. The rest of us had to sleep on the floors or wherever we could find space, but we wanted to come home. So, that was the big thing, getting home.

SI: While you were out in the Pacific, did you ever get leave?

HG: No. I was in the service three years and I never got a furlough, never got a furlough.

BGL: His father passed away while he was out there.

SI: Oh.

BGL: There was no way to come back.

HG: One thing happened to us. We finished basic training and, most of the time, they'd send you to other places to train more--we weren't. We were sent right out and we got trained in the fields over there.

SI: Do any of the men that you served with stand out in your memory? Do you have any stories about friendships you may have formed?

HG: I know one thing that happened. While I was on Hawaii, one member of our outfit--I don't know what happened on the radar, but something happened, and he got electrocuted. He had shoes on with nails in and these nails had burned holes in his feet. It was terrible, but that was one thing that I remember about one experience. Otherwise, I don't remember anything much.

SI: When you were in Hawaii, were you able to go into Honolulu for any time?

HG: Yes, we were. We were probably fifteen to twenty miles, from where we were stationed, from Honolulu. Once in a while, we'd get a day off and we'd go in there. Our chef was a Greek and he was very good. He was in some hotel in Chicago, but he took us downtown to a restaurant. He told them what he wanted them to do, make a Greek salad, and told them what to do with it. So, we'd go down there. That was very, very good, but he knew--he told them just what to make.

SI: When you came back home, you came into Los Angeles.

HG: Well, no, we were in San Francisco, and depending upon where you were going to be discharged from determined your transportation. Well, I don't know why or how they determined I was to be discharged from Fort Monmouth. If I was discharged from Fort Dix, you'd get a plane home, but if you were to get discharged from these smaller ones, then you take a train. So, I was sent home on the train as opposed to a plane.

SI: Coming home, what was that like for you? You had not seen your family in a number of years.

HG: Well, of course, it was a big, big pleasant surprise. My mother and my brother and my girlfriend Elsie, my future wife, all came up to the fort to meet me and bring me home. It was great. The next day--this was the day before Thanksgiving--the next day, our Gloucester High School was playing football and we always went. So, the next day, I got to the football game of Gloucester High School, first day home.

Then, when I got home, I had a problem. I had learned no skill in the service that would help me for getting a position now. My work was not related to anything to help me get work, but, when I learned Uncle Sam was going to pay for my education, I said, "Well, I'm going to school." So, then, I had to get home and talk with Elsie. She really wanted to get married. I said, "No, I can't marry you until I can support you." So, she continued to work and I went to school. They paid, I think, thirty dollars a month for support while I was in college. I went to school. When Elsie and I married in November 1946, then I think we got sixty dollars a month for living expenses.

BGL: You went to Glassboro State.

HG: I went to Glassboro first, but I wanted to go to the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, because, before the war, I had struggled and taken four or five courses there. So, I wanted to go there full-time. So, I went over to register full-time and they said to me, "Oh, I'm sorry, but there are too many full-time students, that they're all first priority, but, because you've been a student, probably a year from now, you'll have first priority." Well, I said, "I'm not going to be out of school a year. I'd be married and have children or something."

I said, "No, I can't do that." So, I decided to go to Glassboro. What I wanted to do was take a year there, and then, transfer the credits and get ahead that way. I did that, but, when I went to University of Pennsylvania, they wouldn't accept any of Glassboro's credits. So, then, I decided, "I'll stay here right now," and I went through and became a teacher and school administrator. So, my whole career was in school administration. I was a superintendent of schools for more than thirty-eight years.

SI: Let me go back to getting into a college setting again. Was it difficult to go from the service to being back on a college campus?

HG: Well, I had to discipline myself. It had been seven years since I graduated high school in 1938. I'd been away for so long, but I guess because I wanted it so bad and I knew, "This has to be my opportunity to get ahead," so I gave that first priority. In fact, I went to school for ten straight summers, because I wanted to get ahead quickly.

SI: Was that while you were pursuing your bachelor's, or was that later on?

HG: I got both. I got my bachelor's and my master's and was a couple of courses away from my doctorate. I was signed up for them, but the job I had at that time in school work was overwhelming. We were getting kids in so fast that we didn't know what to do with them. So, I had to take the summer off to find where I'm going to put these kids that are coming in school. Once you interrupted your education, you're done on the GI Bill, but, as long as I was going continuously, I could've continued.

BGL: The GI Bill continued to pay, but, if you missed any time, then, you were done.

SI: Okay.

BGL: As far as the GI Bill was concerned, he was working in Deptford Township, which was a huge, growing township at the time, big developments, like Oak Valley. They even had to, a number of times, set up temporary classrooms in trailers and rented classrooms in other districts.

HG: Oh, we had many temporary; I rented classrooms in other districts. We finally, finally got approval for building two elementary schools, but what was happening, I could have a school close with twelve hundred students and, when they opened in September, I'd have 350 new students. Now, what am I going to do with them? How do you handle it? So, I had a lot of hard planning to do, but we got through. Later, we built our own high school and got a good reputation.

BGL: All the Baby Boomer kids were coming in. Deptford Township was the first place he was superintendent.

HG: Yes.

BGL: After graduating Glassboro in 1948, he worked a couple of years in Barnsboro School teaching seventh and eighth grade in the same classroom.

HG: Then three years in Mantua Township.

BGL: He was a teaching principal at the time in Mantua.

HG: And then in 1953, I was hired as administrative principal in Deptford Township. They could not call it a superintendent position, or they would have to pay more money. A couple of years later, I got the title of superintendent.

BGL: When you started at Deptford. They had how many schools there?

HG: They had seven small elementary schools.

HG: And thirteen hundred students. When I left, the last year I was there, we served fifty-eight hundred students. So, I had to book supplies and facilities for all those kids.

BGL: In 1957-58, they built the high school in Deptford Township.

HG: Yes.

BGL: High school kids from Deptford before that time went to Woodbury High School. Then, they also built a large junior high when the high school became too small.

HG: Yes. We built five large elementary schools, a junior high and a senior high, and, because our students weren't primarily college-oriented, we built three ...

BGL: Vocational classrooms.

HG: Three other rooms for training them for work, so that we built that as part of our high school.

SI: I want to go back for a moment. You said you had met your wife before you went in the service.

HG: Yes.

SI: How did you meet your wife?

HG: Well, we always, from the day we moved to Brooklawn, we attended the Brooklawn Methodist Church, and I attended Sunday school and other activities. Well, they had youth groups, Epworth League, it was called, and that was on Sunday nights, usually for an hour. Well, when Elsie came--she moved into Brooklawn probably three to five years after I did--she was in the girls' group of the Epworth League. One night, I asked her, "Do you want me to walk you home?" She said, "Yes." So, I walked her home. She invited me in and I met her aunt and uncle, who she lived with, and then, we started dating. We were dating for just about a year when Uncle Sam said he wanted me, and then, we separated. I was away just about three full years, and she wrote me a letter every single day, every single day. We were married for seventy-one years. She passed away in December 2017.

SI: I am sorry to hear that. Getting those letters must have been very important, being so isolated out there in the Pacific. I have just two more questions about World War II before we discuss your time as an educator. You mentioned that religion was important to you. When you were in the service, out in the Pacific, were you able to go to services?

HG: Yes, every chance I got, I went to church services. There were times I couldn't, like, on Palmyra Island, there were no church services.

SI: How important was it to you to get the letters from home and have contact with your family and your girlfriend?

HG: Oh, I had frequent contact with them, because Elsie sent me letters. She'd write them every day, but I'd get them in packs of four or five and I'd get some letters before the earlier ones arrived.

While I was overseas on Palmyra Island, my father passed away. My sister and my mother decided that my sister should write me and tell me about it. So, she did, and they told Elsie, "Don't send any letters for a bit." So, she didn't. So, then, she started writing again and Elsie's letters got there before my sister's letter about the death of my father.

SI: Oh.

HG: So, I learned of it from her referring back to it, and then, I finally got my sister's letter.

BGL: We have a major amount of bulletins from services he attended.

SI: Wow. In Hawaii?

BGL: There were some from Hawaii. There's some from Virginia, also. My mom saved everything.

SI: When you came back, did you stay in touch with anybody you had served with?

HG: One fellow from Maryland, but, for some reason--I don't know what was wrong--probably two years later, he had gotten sick and died. I went to see him once or twice, and then, one time, while he was in the hospital, I went there. They wouldn't let me see him, but he passed away. He was my closest friend from the war.

SI: When you were going to Glassboro, were most of your fellow classmates there on the GI Bill as well?

HG: Well, I was among the first six new GIs after the war, [laughter] but, then, they began to come as they got out. By the end of the second or third year, there were loads of GIs there.

SI: What did you study at Glassboro, education?

HG: Elementary education.

SI: When you went out into your first teaching position, were you teaching elementary school?

HG: Yes, I was teaching seventh and eighth grades in Barnsboro School. I taught that for three years. Then, I moved to J. Mason Tomlin School in Mantua Township and taught eighth grade for two years. Actually, I was a teaching principal handling both duties. Then, I left and went to Deptford Township as the superintendent.

SI: It is really interesting to me that you went into administration rather quickly and became a superintendent relatively early in your career.

HG: Yes, I did. It was a job that nobody wanted.

BGL: Because the need was great.

HG: Deptford Township was a very poor community with a bad reputation for money and things. Nobody wanted the job, because the salary was not great--four thousand dollars a year, for twelve months, which was nothing. Now, one of the problems with Deptford while I was

there was, they were so low-paying, you couldn't get quality teachers. There was a shortage of teachers at that time.

In Deptford, when I was there, there were thirty teachers. Twenty-eight of them made twenty-five hundred, two of them made twenty-six hundred, because one had been there twenty-five years and the other one thirty years. So, they were longevity payments of a hundred dollars, but the community didn't have any money. They had not paid their taxes to the state and there was no money. There was no Deptford Mall then, while I was there. I'd have loved to have that while I was there, to get some of that money.

SI: At that point, when you first started, was Deptford more of a rural community?

HG: Yes, definitely.

BGL: It was basically a lot of pig farms.

HG: Yes. Piggeries were the primary industry.

BGL: And didn't the pig farmers lend the school money at one point?

HG: Yes. What happened, the Borough couldn't pay the State the money they owed them for all the various things. So, the piggery owners printed scrip money and gave it to the Township, so that they could get money to pay the taxes to the State.

SI: Wow. How early was that? Was that still in the 1950s or later?

HG: Well, that happened--no, I started there in '53, but that happened, probably, in '51 or '52, somewhere back there.

SI: Just before you got there.

HG: Yes.

SI: How did you develop a plan for tackling these major issues?

HG: Well, we got a letter in October of 1955 from Woodbury Board of Education. The letter said that, beginning in the next September, they would be unable to take any of the students from Deptford as freshman, that those in ten, eleven and twelve could continue, but you have to have somewhere for your freshman. Well, nobody around could handle them, and we were growing so fast that nobody would want any part of it.

So, I met with the Board and we talked. We said, "Well, we have no choice. We've got to build a high school." So, we had a lot of good discussions, "Where do we start?" "Well, let's, first of all, get an architect, see how much we're talking about." So, we hired a very good architect firm and they gave us an (outline?) of the school. We had to tell them what we wanted included, so [that] they'd know what they'd include. We're going to build a high school and we were going to

add one elementary school at that time, and so, they came up with an estimate of 1,100,000 dollars that they could give us the school for.

So, we went to go before the Division of Local Government in Trenton to get approval to have a referendum. We went up before this body and the guy's a sharp cookie there. Our mayor went and the head board members and all. The first thing was, I had to show them why we needed this school. Well, that was easy, that was a real [obvious need], but, then, the next thing was, "Now, how are you going to pay for it?" The Mayor said, "Well, we're going to have to run a referendum." "Well," he said, "you're asking for 1,100,000. You know the total value of all the ratables in your township is seven hundred thousand, and you're asking to borrow more money than even all the ratables. Who's going to buy your bond?" He said, "Nobody's going to take a chance on your bond." So, he reprimanded them for not paying their taxes.

So, then, he said, "Well, we're going to go into an immediate recession." So, they went into a recess, and when they came out, they said, "Well, your need is so great and we know you have to have help. So, we're going to provide you with help. Now, you're asking for 1,100,000--we cannot give you that. We're stretching what we should be able to give you." He said, "We'll allow you nine hundred thousand dollars, but there's one condition with this--that all that money has to go into school construction, not to buy desks or supplies. That's got to come from local taxes." Well, our tax base was very low. So, that's what they left us with and that was the charge we had when I left that room. They would approve it, but we would have to go get the money to furnish it.

I'll tell you what we did. We did a lot of things. First thing that gave us a little help was, one of our teachers worked in the Blue Cross Health Plan up in Pennsylvania and they were just going to get all new desks for their personnel. So, I asked him, "Would you ask them if they'd sell those desks to us," and they said, "Yes." We got thirty desks for five dollars apiece, for 150 dollars. So, we got a lot of the desks we're going to need in that particular deal.

At that time, the federal government was paying for new guidance services. They were real high on guidance. So, we had a certain area of this school which was for guidance services. Well, they would pay fifty percent of all these costs, but, then, when the end of the year came, they didn't use all the money that was allotted, so, they gave us the whole thing. So, they paid for the entire cost for our guidance service, and there were a number of things like that.

The primary problem was that all these furnishings were going to cost a fortune. We took in bids from everybody, and we knew they weren't going to be close to what we could afford. So, I met with each of the salespeople and said, "Now, this is your bid. You can take it back or you can leave it, but we cannot give it, because we don't have the money." I did that with each one of them. I said, "You take them back and, if you want to be competitive, you know you've got to bid and bid low." So, we worked and worked and worked and we got them down to where we could accept a bid.

We furnished the school primarily like that. You know what the salespeople called me? My office was in the basement in the municipal building and they called me "a basement bargain bandit," because of my demands. [laughter] "We can't do it. I can't pay for it," and that was the

name they gave to me. One way or another, we got things here and things there. We furnished the school and it's had a good reputation for many years and for many people we passed all the accrediting agencies.

SI: When did the school open?

HG: September 1, 1957, the first graduating class in '61. I stayed for five graduating classes. Then, I moved to another district.

SI: Oh. You were there until 1968 or so.

HG: Yes, I was there fifteen years.

HG: And I was in Haddon Heights for fifteen years, also.

SI: In your time in Deptford--you described how it started out--was the situation, the community and the business, much improved when you moved?

HG: Oh, it's so expanded. There sometimes were six different building developments going on at the same time. Now, again, "How am I going to tell who's going to come in?" so that I can be ready in September. What I did, I worked up a sheet, with the name of the home, the street, how many children, what grade they're in, are they going into public school or private school--a whole series of questions--and I gave that to every one of these builders. "Now, anytime you sell a home, you give this to the person. Tell them if they want a seat in the school, they've got to fill that out."

So, I got a lot of help from that, because, when they'd come in, "Oh, he's here," and he'd go to this school in this grade. So, that helped me a lot, but I had to do all that kind of stuff, to be sure I knew who was coming in and how many teachers I need and where they would be needed. It was a big, big job, a planning job.

SI: You described how difficult it was to get funding for the physical plant. What about the teachers and staff?

HG: Well, that's a long story. Let me just briefly tell you. They were at the bottom salary because of money. So, my first budget, I went to them and I decided, "I can't do the job without good teachers. That's primary." So, the first thing I did, they were getting a fifty-dollar increase a year. Some years, they wouldn't get any, because they weren't having negotiations at the time. So, I went to them, I went to the Board, "I want a two-hundred-dollar increase for anybody for ten years or less, 350 dollars for anybody eleven years or more," and they looked at me, "Who's paying you, Herb, the teachers?" "No." I said, "You're paying me--you're paying me to give you good schools. If I'm going to give you good schools, I've got to have good teachers, and so, I propose that," and they approved it.

The budget passed, and they didn't believe it could pass. The teachers couldn't believe they were going to get that kind of an increase, because they'd never had anything like that. If a hundred-

dollar increase was big for them, some of these teachers were getting 350 dollars more a year. I did that kind of thing and, when they'd argue about it, "Why are you doing this?" I always come back to the same thing, "You employ me to give you good schools. My job is to tell you what I can do to get [good schools]," and I never lost. I never lost. They believed in me. So, I was very fortunate.

SI: The teachers did not have a union then.

HG: Well, in Deptford, they didn't. In Haddon Heights, they did, and we had our battles. That was the nastiest meetings I've ever attended. When they come up, they would make up all kinds of lies and things. We had a professional negotiator. He says, "No, you don't say anything. I do all the talking. Don't say anything." Well, every once in a while, they'd come up and say something. I said, "That's a lie. That's not true," so, I'd hop up.

Then, they wanted things that were unreal. One of the things they wanted, we had a school year of 183 days and the minimum of the State is 180. They wanted to go down to 180 and they kept after that. Finally, the Board would call me, "Herb, what do you say to that?" I said, "Okay, wait a minute," I'd get a pencil and paper, "Give me all the advantages to three less school days. Give me all the advantages." They sit there, they sit there--finally, someone said, "Teacher morale." Well, I said, "Bull." I said, "We're here to give the kids as much education as we can. Also, those days, if we do have to close a day for inclement weather, we'll use one of them. We'll still have our 180 days," but, after two years of trying, they gave up on that while I was there. I'm not sure if they didn't get it after I left.

BGL: There was quite a bit of racial unrest, wasn't there, when you first went to Haddon Heights?

HG: Oh, yes.

BGL: It was in the early 1960s.

HG: Haddon Heights was made up of two white communities and one black community. They came together at ninth grade; wouldn't be together at any other time. Actually, some of the people on the staff at the high school were somewhat racial prejudiced--they were wrong in their attitudes--but the students sensed that.

Well, the first day I went on the job in Haddon Heights, I walked in the office and the secretary said, "There's a group of students out there waiting to see you," because they were unhappy from the previous year, probably fourteen or sixteen of them. They were all there making all these demands. Finally, I said to them, "Look, you don't know me, and I don't know you. I don't know what the problems were or who caused them, but, while I'm here, I'll take care of any problems that happen while I'm here. You just go to the Principal and tell him. If he can't solve them, then, he'll send you to see me, but, as far as I'm concerned, I'm not listening to any of your complaints." So, I sent them on their way. That was the one big problem.

Then, I had another black problem. A teacher, black teacher--they hadn't hired any black teachers until I got there and I started bringing some black teachers in. I hired this one girl and she was from Philadelphia. I hadn't heard anything. Finally, the principal called me, said, "I don't know what I'm going to do." "Well, what's the problem?" He said, "She's been late eighteen out of the twenty-one days of school. She misses her first or first two classes." "Well, why didn't you tell me?" I said, "Give me her whole record, the whole thing." So, he gave me her whole record. I said, "Now, the next time she's late, don't let her go to class. Send her over here to my office." So, he did.

So, I had her whole record. "Now, when you were hired, you were hired to work from this date to this date, from this time to this time, and you haven't complied with your contract." I said, "Now, I want to tell you something. You can return to school tomorrow, but, the next day you're late, I'm going to accept that as your resignation. You're no longer interested in our school." So, the next day, she was very early, earliest she had been all year, they said. The next day, she was late.

So, Gordon, the principal says, "What do I do?" I said, "Send her over." So, I told her that she was no longer a member of our staff, on the basis of what I told her before. I told her not to go back in the school and stir up the kids. "You don't go back to school until after it's all over and get your things and go home." She went down to the black community and told them a lot of lies about other teachers doing the same thing and getting away with it.

So, they sent down people from the State. They put in a complaint, and they came down. They investigated and spent a day or two there, trying to find things. I never heard a thing after they left. One year almost to the day later, I got a letter indicating, "We find no reason for the complaint," but it took one year for them to find that, but, otherwise, I had a lot of black students in Deptford and no black problem, but there was some discrimination previously, I guess, by others there.

I had a long history of service and a lot of satisfaction from starting a whole new school in Deptford.

SI: Why did you make the decision to go from Deptford to Haddon Heights?

HG: That was a tough decision. I now had things smooth in Deptford, compared to what they once were. We had a full school system to graduation. The President of the Board from Haddon Heights had his business administrator call me. His words were, "Mr. Rodman Lynch wants to know if you would be interested in the Superintendent job at Haddon Heights Schools." "Well, I never thought about going." "Well, he'd like you to come over and be interviewed." "I'll be interviewed--I'm not sure I'm interested." "Well, could you come over Friday night to be interviewed?" I said, "I'll come over, but I'm not sure I'm interested."

So, I went over and I told him certain conditions under which I would not even consider the job. One of them was that, "If you want me to move into your community, I will not do it, because I have three daughters in school and I'm not going to have their grades influenced by their father's

[career]." I told them, "I live four miles away and, any meeting that I'm needed for, you can rest assured I'll be there." So, I answered questions until eleven-thirty at night, and then, I left.

Monday afternoon, the next Monday--that was a Friday--the Board business administrator called me, said, "Rod wants you to take the job. They want you to be the Superintendent." I said, "I told you I didn't know if I wanted the job." He said, "Rod said, 'Take a week and we're not going to do anything for a week. You take a week to let us know.'" So, I did. The ironic part of this whole thing, which I never knew, they had interviewed thirty-four people and narrowed it down to four. Saturday was when they were to make the decision on one of those four. That was what they were going to do, and then, they cancelled that, and they offered it to me.

All my family and friends and doctors and everybody said to take it, and so, I moved. I had a good experience there, and they treated me wonderfully each place I was. The board members were great to me. They respected me. I was a guy that, if you didn't, then, I don't want to work with you, but I had a real rich experience and one that was rewarding, when you start your own school and see it come to fruition.

SI: For a relatively short period in your career, you are in the classroom teaching.

HG: Yes, five years.

SI: Did you miss that at all?

HG: Oh, no, I guess I didn't, because I was so overwhelmed with work. I stepped into a job that was so demanding and I didn't have time to miss that, but, when I stopped school administration, then, I missed the things I used to be doing. "Oh, I'd be doing this today, I'd be doing that," but I didn't miss the teaching part.

Then, well, once in a while, particularly in the democracy classes, there was one of the teachers who would call me, maybe once a year, "Would you teach a lesson on, particularly, budgeting?" or something special he felt that I could do a good job with his class. I'd go over and teach in his classes, and I'd get a little fun out of that.

SI: Do you think your time in the service had any impact on your later career?

HG: Well, I guess it did, because it gave me some security that I probably wouldn't have had, because I was a very young guy in the first part of my administrative career at Deptford. There were some negative people on the Board. My predecessor told me, "You're going to have to do this for this guy and this for that one." I said, "I'm not going to do that." He said, "The President of the Board will be after you to report to him."

He told me, "You need to go around every week," and tell him what's going on in the school. Well, that was ridiculous. So, I said, "I'm not going to do it." So, two weeks after school started, I got a call from the board president and he wanted to know, "Where have you been?" I said, "I've been right here working." "Well, I haven't seen you," and I said, "Well, if I have a problem, I'll be around to see you," but I never went around to see him.

Oh, yes, I did. Once in a while, there's something I knew that he would be fighting, because he was against anything that cost money. So, what I would do, I'd go around, and I'd tell him all about this, "This is what we need." Then, I'd get him sold on it. Then, he would pass [it], but what they would do with that board, he would ask, if he wanted the vote to go a certain way, negative, he'd call for a rollcall vote. He would start with the Vice-President and, how he would vote, everybody would vote, and he'd vote no, they'd all vote [that way]. So, I got control of that sometime later, when a new member came on the Board and that changed the whole thing, the whole scope of it, but I had some real [challenges].

Back to that, I think I got some of the guts to stand up and speak out on some things from, probably, being in the service, a little self-[reliance], because I was alone on some of the things I was saying. I had to convince six other, seven other, board members to overcome the President and the Vice-President and I won, I won. I won big, but, finally, we got rid of them.

BGL: He was, of course, the first person in his family to go to college.

SI: You mentioned that you had hired African-American teachers and that that was somewhat new; perhaps you were the first to do it. Was there any pushback when you started doing that, from the Board or other people in the community?

HG: Any favoritism, is that what you're saying?

SI: No. Was there any negative reaction or people try to stop you when you began hiring black teachers?

HG: Oh, no, no. Let me tell you, teacher candidates would go to board members and ask if they could use them as references. I know the board member, one of them, she'd say, "So-and-So has asked to use me, but, remember, Herb, you make the decisions." My boards would always let me make the decisions. They wouldn't interfere. I never had one time when they recommended, "Would you hire this guy?" I never had any of that. My board respected me.

Let me say this--I didn't have three votes in my fifteen years in Deptford that went against me. I knew that they would pass things and I could get them by. One member, I remember him coming to me, he voted negative and the vote was 8-1, but, after the meeting, he apologized to me, told me why he had to vote negative on it. I had that kind of respect with the board, which was unheard of.

SI: Are there any other activities that you want to talk about? I would guess that your duties as Superintendent really kept you busy, but was there anything you are doing outside of your job?

HG: Well, I don't know if it means anything, but there were five couples of us that we enjoyed dancing. Usually, one night a month, we'd go out dancing somewhere, and we had a very, very good time together. There were five couples and we just enjoyed that.

I did play--like before, when I was in the elementary or high school--we had a basketball team and we played teams from all over. None of us were in high school ball, but we played teams from every place. We'd play in Camden Convention Hall and we had to use a Camden address to be able to play there. So, somebody manufactured the whole thing and we played there. We won the championship over a black team and the police had to escort us out of there, because we wouldn't have been safe without a police escort. [laughter]

BGL: You also held a lot of positions in the church.

HG: Oh, yes. Oh, I was very active in the Brooklawn Church, Brooklawn Methodist Church. I held many offices there.

BGL: He was the Sunday school superintendent. You were head of the Pastor-Parish Relations Committee, right?

HG: Yes, and head of the official board.

HG: About ten years, twelve years. Yes, I had all kinds of positions there, but I didn't have any other positions in the community. I didn't have time for them.

SI: Sure.

BGL: Just a little aside thing; you were asking about when he taught school. As he said, my mom passed away recently. He got a sympathy card from a kid that was in one of his eighth grade classes. The guy is now eighty-three and saw the obituary and remembered him.

HG: Yes, the church has been an important part of my life. I started there in 1929, going to Sunday school, and I still--how many years of membership am I now?

SI: The same church?

HG: Yes, I became a member in 1935. So, this year will be eighty-three years, the longest member of the church.

SI: Wow.

BGL: And my mom was second.

SI: You and your wife had three children.

HG: Right, three daughters, five grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren.

BGL: And he is a graduate of Glassboro, I'm a graduate of Glassboro and my son is a graduate of Glassboro.

SI: Wow. Is there anything else you would like to add to the record? You also noted that you worked with troubled youth, I suppose is the term.

HG: Well, yes, while I was in Deptford, they had--I forget what they called the committee--to help youth in the community who were in trouble. We'd meet with them, this whole committee, and try to work out some system to help them. So, I worked on that for about three or four years, while I could, but, otherwise, I didn't [do much else with that].

Let me tell you something about Deptford; I guess about three or four years after I left Deptford High School--no, it was before I left the school district, but three or four years after we had graduating classes. A lady in the community called me. She was in charge of juvenile delinquency for all of Gloucester County. She said, "Mr. Gansz, I thought I had to call you." "Yes, what's that?"

She said, "Well, every district in this county, juvenile delinquency has been on the increase, but, since after the first two classes of Deptford High School, delinquency has gone down in Deptford, but every other district has gone up." So, she said, "I thought that would be interesting for you to know." Well, that's the kind of thing we were working on, so that we got some satisfaction out of that.

SI: One last question, you described how you worked with the State to build the high school in the late 1950s.

HG: Yes.

SI: Over the next thirty years of your career, did you see how the relationship between the State and local powers changed or worked?

HG: Yes. Well, we worked directly with the State, and I've got a couple of experiences I can give you with that. One of them, we were supposed to get help from the state government to build three classrooms for industrial or vocational work, like a machine shop and a woodshop, specially designed to train people to go out to work, and hair work for girls. Well, we got approval and we're waiting and waiting. We can't put out bids, and we had changed things to the government's specifications. So, we had approval, except we didn't get the go-ahead.

So, when I went up to the office of the guy that was in charge of it, the Assistant Commissioner, I asked him, "What happened?" He says, "Well, didn't you know? You lost your approval." I said, "What? We lost our approval, after you told us all the things we had to do?" I said, "Now, you tell me the reasons. I've got to know the reasons. I've got to go back and tell my board and our people." He says, "Well, it was a committee decision." I said, "Whoever made the decision, they had to have reasons, and I want to know those reasons. I've got to have them."

So, he says, "Okay." He says, "Can you come back to my office tomorrow morning at nine?" I said, "I'll be here." Well, the next morning at eight, he called and said, "Never mind, you won't have to come up. You're going to get that approval." That money was going to go to someplace else. Somebody was a pressure point with more influence in the state, and they were going to

take it away from us, but except that I screamed at him a bit and let him know I wanted to know the reasons why. So, I didn't even have to go back up. We got approval and the funding.

SI: That was part of the Deptford High School, when you were building that.

HG: Yes, but most of the people from the State that were in the Division of Education were very cooperative, very cooperative. One wasn't. [laughter]

Another instant happened when I was in Haddon Heights. We were a receiving district, as we had the high school, and then, we had students from two other districts. Well, as I made out the budget, I felt there's something wrong here. I just don't know what it is, and the minute I saw it, suddenly, it hit me--we were paying more money to educate the kids from Haddon Heights than they were from Barrington or Lawnside, the two sending districts. They were paying a hundred dollars less than we were for our kids. So, I looked at the formula. The formula was made in 1938. It was outdated.

So, I went up to this division in Trenton and pointed it out to them, "This is wrong. We're paying [too much]." So, he looked at it, and he knew that he was going to have to step on some other toes to increase their share. He said, "What do you want me to do about it?" I said, "I want you to go see that it's brought up-to-date." He almost shook his head no. I said, "(Vince?), you know what your problem is? You don't have the guts enough to do your job," I said, "but, if you don't, I'll go."

So, I got the President of the state Board of Education to come down to my office, went through it once with her. She could see it. "Well, this is ridiculous." So, she went up to the state Board of Education, they changed the formula, but he wouldn't even hear of it, the guy that was supposed to be doing it. That helped us out, because that brought in more revenue for the home district, but, oh, I could tell you stories all day. [laughter]

SI: I have appreciated the opportunity to listen to them. Is there anything else you think we should add to the record now that is a big part of the story?

HG: I would say this to you.

SI: Sure.

HG: In Deptford, the community were worried that their kids would graduate from an approved high school, with all the approvals. I told them, "We'll do all we can to be assured of that." So, the main group that approves them, the state does one and the Middle States Association of Secondary Schools also gives their approval. That's the one that's looked upon most favorably.

So, I called them the year before and told them I'd like to have them come down to evaluate our school, so that our kids could graduate from an accredited school. He says, "We don't usually come down the first year. We usually like to come the second or third year." He said, "You may be taking a chance." I said, "Look, I told our people we would have them and I'd like to have you come down." So, they sent twenty-six people down. They go over everything, every least

little thing. They talk to everybody--parents, teachers, kids. Then, they give you an oral report, and then, they follow up with a written report.

Well, the county Superintendent of Schools, who was very knowledgeable and who'd chaired a number of these committees and was on a number of them where he was chairman, he asked me if he could come and listen to the report. I said, "Sure you can, come." So, he listened to it and he came over to me, after the report was done. He said, "Herb," he said, "I've listened to a number of those reports. That was the highest and the best report I've ever heard for a high school from that committee." So, again, that told me that we had done something right, felt good. So, I don't know what else I can tell you.

SI: That is a good note to end on. You had a very successful career. I appreciate you sharing a little bit about your life. You can always add things to the transcript later on, but, for today, I appreciate all your time. I also appreciate you guys putting us in touch. Thank you very much, thank you for your time and for your service.

HG: Thank you.

[TAPE PAUSED]

[Editor's Note: Recording begins mid-sentence as Mr. Gansz describes how he arrived at Palmyra Island.]

HG: ... Island, there was no docks or anything. So, you had to go over ship's side, and [in] absolute darkness. You were not to have any light. They'd know who was out there. You couldn't make any noise, but you go over the ship's side. You have your whole duffel bag, your rifle, anything else you own. You go down this rope ladder, down the sides of the ship.

Well, the ship was not a big one. One minute, you're right flat with it; the next minute, you're hanging out here--it was shaking so. What they said up above, "You get down as fast as you can, without a sound. You get in the ships, or the boats, and we'll take you--but you'd better go fast, because the guy above is going to step on your hands if you don't. So, you've got to move," but that was an experience. You go down the bottom, there's a twenty-five-foot boat there. It could take twenty or thirty of you and take them on to the island and come back, take another load. You weren't allowed to make a sound, you weren't allowed to use any kind of light, because they didn't know who was out there around.

SI: Sure. I turned on the recorder. That was at Palmyra that you were talking about, correct?

HG: Yes. There was no docks on any of them.

SI: I asked the question earlier about getting supplies. I would imagine that the Navy just came and dropped things off. Was that how it worked?

HG: Yes. When we were on there, we ate very well. Actually, we were in the Navy supplies, so, they supplied more food and better food than the Army did. We ate well when we were there, and we had a lot of pineapple, a lot of pineapple. [laughter]

SI: You noted before, when we were off the record, that volleyball was your main form of entertainment and recreation.

HG: That was the only form of recreation, really. Oh, let me say this; on Saturday night, one of the sergeants had a radio. He'd start trouble. We all wanted to hear what was known as "The Hit Parade" at that time, but he was a hillbilly, [laughter] so, all we got was hillbilly music for the Saturday night when we sat around, when he could get something. So, all of us learned hillbilly music, [laughter] but the real recreation was the volleyball every night.

SI: Did you ever hear Tokyo Rose? Did you ever pick her up?

HG: No, never heard her, no.

BGL: Didn't you say, too, they warned you not to swim because the waves were too strong at one place where you were?

HG: Oh, yes, that was at Makapu'u Point; right there was a huge, huge dip. You were not allowed to go near that water--and, yet, we saw other groups of men come for recreation and go swimming in there--but they were not supposed to, and we were sworn not to, "Don't go near that water."

SI: In general, would you say that you had a good relationship with your officers?

HG: Oh, yes, I had a very good relationship, yes. My head officer in basic training was a fellow by the name of (Tomar?) or something, but he was an All-American running back for two years at the University of Tennessee. He was a tough guy. He was tough on training you, but he was a good guy. No, I didn't have any trouble with any of them.

SI: Again, thank you very much. I appreciate it.

[TAPE PAUSED]

[Editor's Note: The recording begins mid-sentence as Mr. Gansz discusses his older brother.]

HG: I don't know of anybody, but I'm sure I don't know [every case], that was sent to someplace because of their background, training. My brother Ralph was a railroad man. He worked on the railroad for fifteen years before being drafted. When they assigned him, he went to Bucyrus, Ohio, [Camp Millard], and he was put in the railroad group, so that that's what was his job, working on [railroads]. In the Battle of the Bulge, when they were [there], he wasn't in the fighting, but he was in the background, working on trains to carry the stuff forward, but that was his assignment during the war.

BGL: He was thirteen years older than Dad.

HG: Oh, yes. He was thirty-five when he was drafted.

BGL: He had never married. So, he didn't have dependents.

HG: Yes, he was thirty-five when they [drafted him]. I was twenty-two and he was thirty-five.

SI: You are correct, though, that is very rare, to have somebody actually do something in the military that was related to what they did in civilian life.

HG: Yes.

BGL: He had worked on the railroad for quite a few years.

SI: You said your twin brother also went into the service after a while.

HG: After the war was over, he was drafted and sent over to Japan in the Army of Occupation.

SI: Thank you very much.

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Reviewed by Shaun Illingworth 5/17/2018